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Yoga in Britain: Stretching Spirituality and Educating Yogis

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PROLOGUE – Rethinking Yoga

Over 200 million people, it has been estimated, participate in ‘yoga’ globally, including over 100 million in India.¹ In 2016, active yoga practitioners in the United States were estimated to include 36 million individuals who spend over \$16 billion on classes, clothes, and other yoga accessories.² While in the United Kingdom, more conservative estimates suggest that about 500,000 a week are participating in a yoga class. Yoga practice is also increasingly found in locations such as South America, Africa and Japan. The popularity of yoga practice has been undoubtedly influenced by the Indian Prime Minister Modi proposing to the United Nations International Yoga Day which was first celebrated on 21 June 2015. This event marks a growing trend of increasing acceptance of something called yoga. While practices called yoga have been becoming more socially acceptable and popular since at least the mid-nineteenth century, much of this rapid growth has been very recent, with millions more becoming aware of the practice only in the last decades. What we now see as yoga, spreading in popularity across the globe, represents a flexible and multifaceted group of related traditions.

Although ‘yoga’ is increasingly popular and acceptable, yoga does not mean the same thing to 200 million people. For some yoga is primarily a physical exercise which gives better health and wellbeing; for many Indians, yoga represents union with the ultimate reality at the spiritual heart of their religious understandings. Therefore, it is not surprising that with this growth in popularity during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, there has also been a crisis in authenticity amongst practitioners. Yoga in the post-1980s, neoliberal context, has particularly demonstrated a diversity of ‘brands’, a focus on selling products as well as a number of high-profile scandals exemplifying unethical behaviour by teachers of what might be interpreted as primarily an ethical discipline.

In trying to justify their participation in yoga, some practitioners wed themselves to narratives of belonging to ancient traditions; some emphasize pragmatic

mental and physical benefits, some emphasises a lineage of teachers and techniques, while others focus on ethical and spiritual development as the measure of their discipline. Where an understanding of history is absent, various fundamentalisms can rush in to fill the narrative. By fundamentalisms, I mean stories of origin or a ‘true essence’ of yoga based on over-generalisations, stereotypes and other unempirical assumptions about the nature of others’ experience and practices.

In the course of the twentieth century, yoga was studied, popularised and practiced in ways that have all influenced the kaleidoscopic understandings of yoga present in the current environment. Most of the key popularising individuals had their own sense of authenticity. Some voices became more powerful and influential than others. But all those who had an enduring influence on the popularisations of yoga were searching for something deeply meaningful on a personal level. Most had genuine interest and respect for the Indian traditions from which yoga originated. Yet, how these various understandings were articulated and how the ideas shaped embodied practices varied immensely. All of those in this story are imperfect humans, who at times behaved less than ethnically, and introduced their own biases and limitations to their teaching of the subject. It is legitimate to criticise interpretations of yoga that may have later proved to have been harmful to specific individuals, or general cultural assumptions, e.g. colonial, post-colonial, and/or neo-liberal biases. But it is also important to appreciate the multiplicity of practices and beliefs associated with yoga and seek to understand what the practitioners are doing in their own terms.

Yoga consists of embodied practices and ideas about the meaning of those practices. There is often an expectation to explain and define yoga. A standard narrative might touch on Indus valley seals, ascetic practices in the first century BC, the codification of Patañjali’s sutras, various tantric and haṭha developments, into more modern accommodations with scientific worldviews. Writing this linear introduction to what yoga is often seems unavoidable. But this standard piece places the researcher in an ideological position that may obfuscate other aspects of critical observation. The essentialist, linear narrative legitimates and delegitimizes a variety of political positions of actors involved with yoga globally. Often unspoken assumptions and

essentialist understandings of yoga lead to different traditions speaking at cross-purposes, unable to engage in dialogue, or actively antagonistic towards other understandings of the practice.

As is often mentioned by yoga enthusiasts, the etymological root of yoga is ‘*yuj*’ which means ‘to join’ or ‘yoke’ and many contemporary yoga practitioners would explain that yoga means joining of the self to God, or the finite to the infinite.³ However, there is a vast variety of meanings, practices and associations attached to the word yoga. The word itself has meanings as diverse as ‘skill in work, desire-less action, acquisition of true knowledge, indifference to pleasure and pain, addition (in arithmetic), and conjunction (in astronomy).’⁴ As the scholar David Gordon White has famously summarized that “‘Yoga’ has a wider range of meanings than nearly any other word in the entire Sanskrit lexicon.”⁵

An important part of the appeal of yoga in Europe has been its practical benefits in association with an ancient (i.e. legitimate) spiritual tradition – the roots of yoga are sometimes claimed to be based as far back as 2500 BC.⁶ Although usually associated with Hinduism, the techniques of yoga have been used by Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs while maintaining their own metaphysical beliefs.⁷ The philosophical tradition of Yoga was traditionally understood as a technique for realizing the nature of consciousness (*puruṣa*) unfettered by the real empirical world (*prakṛti*) and codified in Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* written sometime between 374 and 425 AD.⁸ The first evidence we have of a variety of meditation techniques which have become associated with yoga date from around the time of the Shakyamuni Buddha (c. 400 BCE).⁹ But the first records we have of physical postures now associated with yoga (*Haṭha Yoga*) were recorded by groups of renunciates in northern India and can be dated to around 1100 AD.¹⁰ Traditionally, instruction in yoga was imparted in a pedagogical relationship between teacher and student and not by the solitary reading of texts.¹¹ Therefore it has been difficult to trace accurately the development of yoga traditions through the centuries, although important work in this regard for the medieval period has recently begun.¹²

Therefore, I concur with the assertion of several colleagues, that yoga only can

be studied in a particular context.¹³ Complicating definitions of yoga – understanding yoga in non-essentialist, but in instrumental, situational terms – is important. It is only by considering yoga in precise locations that statements about yoga's significance and effects can have any meaning. This book is an effort to articulate one such precise location, that of yoga in twentieth-century Britain. As such, it contributes to a small but growing literature on the development of yoga traditions in both India and beyond. Key literature includes works by Joseph Alter, Keith Cantú, Philip Deslippe, Elizabeth De Michelis, Elliott Goldberg, Mark Singleton and Julian Strube which have demonstrated that periods of colonialism and *fin de siècle* exchange caused a reframing of the yoga tradition within India in response to European thought and culture.¹⁴ The popularization of yoga in Britain is but one recent chapter in thousands of years of a fluid and responsive practice of things called yoga.

While this book attempts to create a narrative of how yoga was popularized in Britain during the twentieth century, it must be understood as incomplete and partial in its account; my research is most comprehensive for the period between 1945 and 1980. Aspects of the popularisation of yoga in the first half of the twentieth century are outlined in the first chapter of this book. Karl Baier, Henrik Bogdan, Gordon Djurdjevic and Julian Strübe have done some good initial exploration of the overlaps between yoga and various esoteric milieus.¹⁵ There is quite a lot more research to be done on how yoga began to be practised in Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

This book also deals only very lightly with elements of transformations and popularization after the 1980s. More contemporary developments in yoga have been covered with a variety of social science perspectives in recent academic literature.¹⁶ The chapters of this book might be best understood as vignettes, or windows into understanding how yoga became a popular and acceptable leisure activity in Britain during this period. Future research will undoubtedly uncover more windows which offer different views.

The multiplicity of actors and motives involved in the popularisation of yoga makes reductionist narratives of neo-colonial oppression, or cultural appropriation

unsustainable based on the empirical, historical evidence. Those who popularised yoga were both Indian and British by ethnicity. Ankur Barua has pointed out that the architects of modern, independent India ‘often critically interrogated, rejected, and appropriated specific aspects’ of the British colonial frameworks for what they perceived as their country’s most pertinent and genuine needs.¹⁷ Likewise, those who investigated, interrogated and taught yoga traditions in the twentieth century were usually attempting to respectfully explore a tradition which might meet present needs. A great many of those popularising yoga in Britain were Indians by birth, but a number of other influential individuals were not.

Of enduring influence, but not directly discussed in this narrative is the influence of Swami Vivekananda’s presentation of yoga. The significance of Vivekananda’s presentation has been argued by Elizabeth de Michelis.¹⁸ Although also of crucial importance, a social history detailing the activities and influence of the Theosophical Society in Britain has yet to be written.¹⁹ These themes are important back-history to what is discussed in this book. This volume focuses more exclusively on how yoga was popularized in twentieth-century Britain. During the twentieth century, Vivekananda’s categories and presentation on yoga are demonstrably influential through their re-iterations and re-presentations by other yoga teachers in the twentieth century.

This narrative considers the practices commonly pursued under the title of ‘yoga,’ who participated in these practices, and what were the perceptions of the purpose of these practices. Attention will focus on the groups which were most significant in establishing yoga as a widespread social activity in Britain, and whose historical record is recoverable. In the twenty-first century, economic imperatives have moved the teaching of yoga from the educational context and into the consumer high street. However, the aims and motives of contemporary practitioners are still deeply influenced by the groundwork and narratives created during the twentieth century. In Britain, yoga was popularised in a way that suited a centralist, adult education context. This context emphasised physical safety and health over enlightening transformations. This emphasis on safety exists in tension with the potential for transformation,

paradigm shifts and radical re-evaluation of an individual's sense of meaning-and-purpose in life. The regulated educational or therapeutic context does not absolutely exclude such potential experiences, but perhaps it does make them less frequent.

During the twentieth century Britain was a Christian country experiencing a secularising of public space; the British public became increasingly sceptical of religious language, but not necessarily disinterested in religious aims. During the mid-twentieth century, in the public sphere, religious beliefs increasingly occupied a place in individuals' private consciousness. But that does not mean that spiritual quests were absent from the individual practitioners' minds as they approached a largely physical practice. The educational syllabuses and public forums where yoga became popularised in Britain transformed yoga into a product that could be transmitted globally and that was less dependent on a few charismatic teachers and their direct students. The methods and literature produced in twentieth-century Britain have been globally influential on how yoga is and assumptions about how it should be practised. These assumptions have at times filtered back to the Indian subcontinent, even as competing narratives of the place of yoga in Indian culture and heritage continue to evolve.

By offering the stories in this book, I hope to complicate the stereotypes of others' practices and bring more nuanced history into the discussion. How yoga was popularised in Britain provides an important background to understanding how and why yoga enjoys such contemporary popularity. The current popularity of yoga cannot be explained simply by reference to some of the current, neoliberal forms. It is my hope that the scholars and yoga practitioners reading this volume will discover a more multifaceted narrative of what yoga has been for various people in the twentieth century. By getting a handle on how yoga practitioners were educated in the last hundred years, we educate ourselves to face the future - not necessarily with clear answers, but hopefully with fewer erroneous assumptions, less prejudice and more empathy.

CHAPTER 1. The Literary Elite – Booksellers and Publishers

If you wanted to find out about yoga in early twentieth century Britain, you would most likely turn to a book. The people who could access this literature in the early twentieth century were largely, middle and upper-class eccentrics who read widely. Some of these also practised exercises related to concentration and relaxation in the privacy of their own homes or with small groups of interested friends. Indian texts on yoga had been imported from India since the late nineteenth century, becoming more available with cheaply produced English translations sponsored by the Theosophical Society. In the late Victorian period, there was a growing interest in alternatives to Church of England, especially amongst the educated elite. Explorations on the edge of scientific understanding of religious phenomena and possible psychic abilities of humans were a subject of educated fascination, as science became able to address these areas in a significant way for the first time. Many of those interested in these kinds of explorations found their way into the networks of the Theosophical Society or the Spiritualist Society. These organisations were more eclectic than dogmatic, forming bulletin boards where newly published books and dates of public lectures on esoteric subjects could be found.

Printed books on yoga came out in a slow trickle; no more than twelve new titles a year on the subject of yoga are found in British copyright libraries before 1963. Publication of titles on yoga rose rapidly in the 1960s assisted by the publication of paperbacks, and the increasingly visible appearance of Indian yoga teachers in Britain. After 1963 the number of yoga titles grew upwards toward a pinnacle of 49 new titles in 1978. From the Beatles' public association with the Maharishi in 1968, interest in yoga became even more widespread. Although new titles levelled off in the 1980s, they were still being produced at more than double the 1960 rate. Yoga was offered as a regular television feature from 1972 onwards, with cheap paperback books accompanying the series. The print media producers and sellers had an important

influence on how yoga was received in Britain throughout the twentieth century, even as yoga was popularised in new venues during the post-war period.

Figure 1: Number of Titles on 'Yoga' Published Each Year that included the word 'yoga' in the title held in the British copyright libraries published in each year between 1940 and 1990.¹

Yoga was not just in books however. Throughout the twentieth century, social networks connected these largely independent readers and their solitary practises. This network consisted of the booksellers and publishers who traded in esoteric subjects such as Indian religions. Those involved in print media had significant influence in deciding how yoga was presented and defined. Their choice of which materials to promote was often based on personal experience of the practices and on general knowledge of esoteric religions. While the object was to sell books, British booksellers and publishers also wanted to uphold reputations for quality products. Only a handful of publishers and booksellers were active in this field. Therefore, certain individuals had significant influence in approving and recommending certain yoga teachers or books. Perhaps the most influential hub in this network centred around Watkins Bookshop in central London.

WATKINS BOOKSHOP

Watkins Bookshop had its origins as a Theosophical distributor; the founder of Watkins Bookshop, John Maurice Watkins (1862-1947) was a personal friend and secretary to the Theosophical Society founder Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891).² John Watkins began distributing Theosophical Society books, largely published at the Theosophical Society's headquarters in India, to subscribers in England from stock lists from 1893.³ Watkins Bookshop became independent from the Theosophical Society in 1896 and the list expanded to encompass a wide variety of specialist religious, esoteric and occult titles. From 1901, Watkins Bookstore operated from a shop front in Cecil Court off Charing Cross Road.⁴ Its central London location and specialist expertise made Watkins a gathering point for those interested in esotericism, unusual religions and 'rejected knowledge.'⁵ John Watkins fostered an atmosphere of comfortable discussion, serving tea in his office to regular visitors in the interwar period among whom were prominent esoteric and cultural figures such as William Butler Yeats, George William Russell (who wrote about Celtic mysticism and Irish nationalism under the pseudonym *Æ*), Aleister Crowley, G. R. S. Mead, and A. E. Waite.⁶ From 1919, Watkins senior was joined in running the bookshop by his son, Geoffrey 'Nigel' Watkins (1896–1981).

The bookshop was sometimes described as an 'event' with browsers networking together, sharing information about spiritual teachers and techniques. Writing near the end of his life, the popular writer on Buddhism and Eastern spirituality of Buddhism, Alan Watts (1915-1973), described the role of Watkins Books in his early self-education. According to Watts, Nigel Watkins:

runs the most magical bookshop in the world, and is the most unobtrusively enlightened person I have ever known.... He sells books on Oriental philosophy, magic, astrology, Masonry, meditation, Christian mysticism, alchemy, herbal medicine, and every occult and far-out subject under the sun. But he himself has, if you will take his own advice, perfect discrimination in what one should read, for he knows that much of this literature is superstitious trash. ...Nigel not only became my bibliographer on Buddhism, comparative religion, and mysticism, but also my trusted advisor on the various gurus, pandits and psychotherapists then flourishing in London.⁷

In Geoffrey Watkins' obituary frequent visitor and Blake scholar Kathleen Raine remembered:

From all over the world seekers converged upon the bookshop in Cecil Court where in the back office (where books not on sale to the public at large were kept) first old Mr. Watkins, and later young Mr. Watkins, held court under the scrutiny of a faded but magisterial photograph of H.P.B. [Blavatsky] herself. ... Geoffrey Watkins was a mine of accurate information about all those esoteric groups, societies and individuals who were concerned with the Western esoteric tradition.⁸

Thus, Watkins Bookshop was an important location for finding information about all alternative religious and spiritual traditions. As one of the few specialists in sourcing books on yoga, patrons of Watkins included some early members of the British Wheel of Yoga, which would become one of the most influential networks for promoting yoga in Britain from the 1960s onwards.⁹

Watkins Jr. took sole control of the bookshop in 1947 and was a well-known figure amongst those interested in unusual forms of religion and spirituality. He was understood by many to be a 'book guru' suggesting 'perfect' books on subjects that included yoga and Indian spirituality. Jim Pym, who worked in Watkins Bookshop as Assistant Manager, specialising in second-hand books recalled Nigel Watkins:

He just was an incredible fount of knowledge for everything spiritual. I remember many times someone at the till with a book, and Geoffrey saying, "No you don't want that, try this one..." "Well, okay," they might reply "but I still want this one..." Then, later they would come back and say, "No, you were right I didn't want that book." Geoffrey was a guru who taught you by pointing out the right books. And he did this with loads of people. He wouldn't claim any special ability – just saying "I'm a bookseller, I can pick the right books" – but he was, he was more than that... and just to be with him was a wonderful experience.¹⁰

This personal assistance with the search for esoteric religious knowledge made Watkins Bookshop a place frequented by those pursuing a variety of spiritual quests. Under Nigel Watkins the bookshop expanded from its roots in Theosophy and spiritualism into a wider variety of 'rejected knowledge.'¹¹ In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Pym remembered Watkins Books as 'in the heart of everything. Spiritualism,

psychology, yoga, Christian meditation, Buddhism, it was all around that whole thing...'.¹² By the mid-twentieth century, Watkins Books was an established and well-connected source of information for all sorts of esoteric knowledge beyond books.

But in this specialist field, Nigel Watkins was more than a guide to consumers of esoteric books, he also advised publishers. As the premier esoteric bookseller in Britain, Nigel Watkins was positioned to identify and influence the popularity of a particular esoteric field. As the quotes above emphasise Watkins was widely considered a source of accurate information about the various esoteric groups and activities in London. His advice in both these capacities was solicited by British publishers interested in publishing esoteric materials. Both Penguin and Allen & Unwin publishers had occasion to directly or indirectly consult Nigel Watkins for information about yoga books. This placed Nigel Watkins in a uniquely important role for determining how yoga was received in Britain. In 1956, A. S. B. Glover (1895-1966), Senior Editor for Penguin publishing and well known for his encyclopaedic memory, approached Nigel Watkins with the idea of commissioning a book on yoga.¹³ This shows significant regard for Watkins, as Glover was himself a Buddhist who was also interested in Theosophy and other religious groups and would have known quite a lot about the field of potential authors himself.¹⁴

PENGUIN YOGA

Penguin had established a reputation for affordable paperback books with a very wide readership by buying up publication rights for out-of-print and uncopyrighted classics. Since 1935 Sir Allen Lane sold 'six-penny copies of high quality fiction' in established bookshops, newsagents, and even from dispensing machines (called a 'Penguincubator') at popular railroad stations.¹⁵ Penguin's Pelican imprint began in 1937 with commissioned books designed to educate as well as entertain. The Pelican imprint encompassed a wide remit of subject matter offering both new commissions and non-fiction classics in low-cost paperbacks. Penguin was a highly influential and profitable business. By 1968, the Penguin Publishing Company, Ltd. had over 3,000 titles in print and distributed its books widely throughout the English-

speaking world; it had around 600 employees and an annual turnover of over four million pounds.¹⁶ While the educated reading public could still be considered a minority of the British population, the cheap and accessible Penguin books moved to widen this population.

With an inspired and disciplined eye for marketing, Penguin staff had identified a market for books on yoga by July 1956. One travelling representative reported that a Penguin bookseller in South Africa:

showed me a number of expensive books on Yoga and advised me that there was a considerable interest in this subject. He was unable to obtain any cheap editions on Yoga and suggested that we might very well include a book dealing with this in our series.¹⁷

This representative also read that Indian booksellers were anticipating high sales for a new yoga book and thought Penguin might be able to profit from this market.¹⁸ The Penguin employee continued in his memo, 'I believe it was at one time our intention to publish a book on this subject and perhaps you would advise me of the present position.'¹⁹ This question was quickly addressed by the editorial committee and by September 1956, a letter was written to Christmas Humphreys (1901-1983), founder and President of The Buddhist Society, asking for suitable candidates for a commissioned book on yoga.²⁰ Glover had first approached Humphreys as an author for the Penguin book on Buddhism for this new series in March 1948.²¹ This commission on Buddhism related to an established Penguin project of publishing books on each of the 'world religions.' In 1948 titles on Islam, Judaism and Christianity were also commissioned for Pelican.²² Penguin settled for an adaptation of Humphreys' 1928 pamphlet 'What is Buddhism?' for its book *Buddhism* published in 1951.²³ The first print run for *Buddhism* was for 38,500 paperback copies, of which about 26,000 were sold on subscription before publication.²⁴

Brainstorming with Glover for an author of a Pelican title on yoga, Nigel Watkins suggested former-Theosophist Ernest Wood (1882-1965).²⁵ Wood was born in Manchester, left school at sixteen and, after becoming involved with the Theosophical Society, pursued correspondence courses for university qualifications.

From 1908-1921, Wood worked for the Theosophical Society in India, studying Indian religions and administering schools and colleges. After the Second World War, Wood settled in the United States where he served as Dean and President of the American Academy of Asian Studies during the 1950s.²⁶ Although published in popular edition, the 1959 Pelican book is densely written and omitted any illustrations of yoga asana although some photographs of Swami Vishnudevanada were tentatively suggested by the author.²⁷ It would have been very hard for an uneducated reader to wade through its philosophical analysis and descriptions of concentration and breathing exercises. Nevertheless, at least two readers were inspired to write to Penguin asking for the author's address for further instruction in yoga.²⁸ The copy sold well; *Yoga* was reprinted in 1962, 1965 and 1970.

Penguin also published a translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā* in 1962, making this book easily accessible to all with an interest in Indian religions at an affordable price. It was a standard book on the reading list of the Wheel of British Yoga and probably purchased by many with an interest in Indian religions.²⁹ The translator, Juan Mascaró (1897-1987),³⁰ had already published and translated selections of the Upaniṣads in 1938 with the well-established publishers John Murray in their 'Wisdom of the East' series, under the title of *The Himalayas of the Soul* in 1938.³¹ Penguin bought the rights to reprint *The Himalayas of the Soul* and brought it out under the title of *The Upaniṣads* in 1965.³² Sections of the Upaniṣads had been available in English from the early nineteenth century, although they were printed in India. The first easily accessible English translation was Max Müller's, published by Oxford University's Clarendon Press in 1879. The transition of the Upaniṣads being available only in distinguished hardback copy in 1928 to the issuing of a popular paperback in 1965 illustrates the change in popularity and accessibility over the twentieth century.³³

Penguin's aim was to deliver popular literature with fairly decent standards of scholarship. However, there is no evidence in the Penguin archive that another Sanskrit scholar was consulted about the accuracy of Mascaró's translation.³⁴ A few years later Professor Ninian Smart, who had studied Sanskrit at Yale and was pioneering the secular study of comparative religion at Birmingham and Lancaster Universities

during the 1960s, wrote to complain that Mascaró's translation of the Upaniṣads and Bhagavad Gītā were 'very poor and we should find substitutes.'³⁵ But within limits, accuracy at Penguin was secondary to sales and Mascaró's translations sold well and were reprinted several times.³⁶

From the correspondence in the Penguin files, it appears that Mascaró maintained a strong personal interest in his publications. He wrote to Penguin when they requested reprinting his earlier translation of the Upaniṣads: 'I am glad that they become well known as I am certain, I think I know well, that the Upaniṣads are amongst the greatest conceptions and visions of man on our earth.'³⁷ There was a lot of correspondence regarding approval of his proofs and one of Penguin's internal memo's remarks:

I have had Juan Mascaró on the phone from Cambridge worry about his proofs... I think we should let him have his way, as this means so much to him, and he has a true mystic's obstinacy, if he is opposed he will pay you a long visit and charm you into agreeing with him...³⁸

Regardless of his accuracy as translator, Penguin ensured that Mascaró's translations reached a wide audience. Both Mascaró's Upaniṣads and Bhagavad Gītā regularly featured in the reading lists and book stalls in the British Wheel of Yoga's journal *Yoga* and remain in print.³⁹

HARI PRASHAD SHASTRI AND THE SHANTI SADAN

The Penguin series on 'world religions' also commissioned a book on Hinduism. But it proved rather difficult for Glover to find an appropriate author for this subject. In 1948, Humphreys suggested a Dr. H. P. Shastri 'who has an enormous following, is a genuine scholar and is a very fine lecturer.'⁴⁰ Hari Prashad Shastri (1882-1956) was at this time teaching his particular interpretation of Indian philosophy, Advaita Vedānta, and meditation in London under the name of the Shanti Sadan (Peace Temple). It is likely that it was Shastri who wrote a book for Penguin that was not considered suitable; the title appears to have been dropped until an alternative author was found, and a Pelican title on *Hinduism*, published in 1961.⁴¹

But despite the disapproval of the Penguin editorial staff, Shastri had developed a small but influential following amongst the intellectual elite.

Shastri arrived in London in 1929 and initially was engaged to lecture at the Theosophical Society's meeting in Holborn (central London) for a period of a few months. Theosophical politics eventually terminated this arrangement, perhaps because Shastri clearly was promoting his own teaching. But this association lasted long enough for a nucleus of interested students to become established. Shastri has been described as a charismatic speaker that mixed erudition with clarity; the current president of the Shanti Sadan remembered Shastri as embodying a quality of "genuineness," and described him as a speaker that wasn't trying to manipulate his audience.⁴²

By 1935, Shastri had built up enough of a following in London to start a newsletter. During the second half of the 1930s twenty to thirty people regularly in the weekly worship (called Sat-sang). Shastri gave public lectures on the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, Buddhism, Taoism and comparative religion and philosophy. Some of these were held at the centre's headquarters, others at Caxton Hall. Occasionally Shastri lectured out of London.⁴³ During the 1930s, the Shanti Sadan occasionally took out advertisements in *The Times* for lectures in 'Yoga or Spiritual Training' or 'Eastern Philosophy and Mysticism.'⁴⁴

According to autobiographical and hagiographical accounts, Shastri was born into a Brahmin family in the United Provinces and took a doctorate in Sanskrit at the university in Varanasi (Benares). Although exact details are unclear, he apparently had a number of academic positions teaching philosophy and eventually accepted teaching positions at the Imperial University and Waseda University in Tokyo between 1916 and 1918. According to the Shanti Sadan, Shastri then accepted an invitation from Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder and first President of the Republic of China, to live and work in that country between 1918 and 1929.⁴⁵ After the death of his Chinese patron in 1925, political instability probably led Shastri to leave China for London.

While still living in the United Provinces, though exactly when is not clear, Dr. Shastri was accepted as a disciple by a man known as Shri Dadaji Maharaj, born

Narayana Prasad (1854– 1910). This guru maintained a regular job as a clerk on the Indian railways, was married and had children. However, Shri Dadaji was considered an enlightened saint and groups of disciples would form around him as he moved from city to city with his employment. Shastri wrote a detailed account of his life in *The Heart of the Eastern Mystical Teaching* (1948) which is an account of his guru's life. Shastri recounts that Shri Dada taught a kind of leitmotif that there was a spiritual affinity of yoga with Britain, e.g. According to Shri Dada 'There is only one country in the West which is fit to attain eminence in the realm of spirituality and it is Angala Desha [Britain]'.⁴⁶ Apparently, Shri Dada felt a personal 'call' to Britain, Shastri reports that his guru was overheard praying to Shiva thus:

'... Yet the supreme task which Thou has given me still awaits fulfilment. The only Adwaita, based on the traditions of Manu and Ikshwaku, is not yet transmitted to Angala Desha, where many of Thy daughters and sons are to incarnate and to have the privilege of being pioneers in the spiritual field. ... but if my wishes are worth being listened to, I would remain in an obscure spot near Anupashar on the Ganges and sing out the remaining breaths of my life in Thy praise...'⁴⁷

Shastri's understanding that amongst the British population there were to be found reincarnated Indians ready to receive the teachings of Advaita Vedanta would have encouraged his resolve to teach in Britain and also fortified the confidence of his new British followers. Shastri also claimed to have been a disciple of Swami Rama Tirtha (1873– 1906) and wrote an alternative hagiography of Tirtha's life which was highly critical of Tirtha's main disciples who remained in India.⁴⁸

Shastri's teaching had a particular appeal to the well-educated British middle classes.⁴⁹ Shastri tells a British devotee that the 'Truth' will be conveyed in Britain 'without any show, without any drum-beating...' commanding him to 'practice spirituality in obscurity.'⁵⁰ This idea that spirituality is properly a private matter fits in well with middle-class English sensibilities. This attitude would have been advantageous for Shastri in finding sponsors in Britain and encouraged more Britons to consider taking Shastri's teaching seriously. There was a certain similarity to some of the patrons of the Theosophical Society where well-educated women of independent

means were particularly active supporters. The second president of the Shanti Sadan, Marjorie Waterhouse had graduated in 1930 from Girton College, Cambridge. In 1943, an elderly woman with a long-term interest in meditation endowed a house in Landbrook Grove, London for the use of the organisation.

The yoga Shastri taught was not focused on asana, but on concentration exercises contemplating the nature of reality as defined by Advaita Vedānta.⁵¹ Shastri's somewhat idiosyncratic interpretation of explains that the essence of Advaita Vedānta (non-dualist soteriology) as taught by the eighth century philosopher Adi Śankara is embodied in the couplet:

*Brahman sattyam jagan mithya
Jivo Brhamaiva na parah.*

Which Shastri translates as:

God is real, the world is illusory
The individual soul and God are one and the same.⁵²

Contemporary translations of this couplet would stress that Brahman is an impersonal divine without attributes, whereas translating it as 'God' implies an equivallence with Judeo-Christian ideas of a divine with a particular personality. For Shastri, the goal of yoga, and human life, is to experience this statement as truth; he recommends his students meditate on his translation of this statement, or an equivalent statement such as 'Know that Allah is nearer than the neck-vein' from the Quran.⁵³ This knowledge, embodied, frees the individual from all fear and sorrow as well as the cycle of rebirth assumed in Indian culture. For his practical program of yoga, Shastri suggests an hour's practice first thing in the morning. There are several parts to the recommended practice: reflecting on a scriptural text, concentration on a light in the middle of the body and repeating the word 'OM' as a mantra 108 times. Shastri suggested breathing exercises, or *pranayama*, to assist with relaxation and concentration. Initially, Shastri suggested that the interested reader commit to this program for six weeks to test its

effect.⁵⁴ For members of the Shanti Sadan, meditation exercises might be modified in personal consultation.

Besides these practical techniques, Shastri taught understanding and tolerance between religion and cultures. According to Shastri's presentation, Advaita Vedānta asserts that all paths of religion point towards the same ultimate reality. In *Yoga*, he presents the life stories of three 'yogis', his two personal teachers Rama Tirtha and Shri Dada as well as Kobo Daishi (774–835), also known as Kūkai, the founder of the 'True Word' tradition of Buddhism in Japan. Shastri reports stories of Shri Dada explicitly teaching that all lovers of God are on the same path and should be respected. This theology is described as "universalism" by the current president of the Shanti Sadan. Therefore, Shanti Sadan members who wanted to remain Christian could still incorporate the practical techniques into their lives and test their effects. In 1943, *The Times* (London) found this universalism unusual enough to comment on the language used in an unveiling ceremony of a painting of Sri Krishna at the newly opened Shanti Sadan; the reporter noted that the unveiling was done with prayers to the 'Inner Ruler worshipped as Krishna, Christ and Allah.'⁵⁵ In the 1940s, Shastri gave all his students yogic (Sanskrit) names, but members did not change their names publicly. The yogic names were used within the Shanti Sadan, to symbolized how the initiate 'sheds his earthly titles on entering the Path of the ancient and Royal Science of Yoga and assumes henceforth a new Name bestowed by the traditional Guru.'⁵⁶ This combination of seriousness, culture, erudition and discretion suited, at least some, middle-class English sensibilities.

By the time of Shastri's death in 1956, the Shanti Sadan was well established as a small circle of individuals continuing in the tradition of quiet dedication to Shastri's articulation of Advaita Vedanta. While the Shanti Sadan still survives, it has remained numerically small. However, Shastri's *Yoga* circulated widely in the 1960s and 70s and is maintained in print by the Shanti Sadan.⁵⁷ The major London bookshop Foyles used Shastri's manuscript to publish its handbook on *Yoga* which was printed in 1957, 1958, 1966, 1974, and 1976. Shastri has maintained a quiet legacy over yoga in Britain with a small group of dedicated initiates. The yoga of this group emphasised

Vedantic realisation, personal meditation exercises, and the company of like-minded ethical people.⁵⁸

THE ATLANTIS BOOKSHOP AND PAUL BRUNTON

From 1922, Watkins had competition from The Atlantis Bookshop which was a ten-minute walk from Cecil Court on Museum Street, near the British Museum and Library. They shared customers with a friendly sense of competition. Atlantis emphasised Western Magic in its booklists, while Watkins traditionally focused upon theosophical, Indian and other Asian movements.⁵⁹ Atlantis was founded by Michael Houghton and Paul Brunton (born as Ralph Hurst 1898– 1981) who shared a flat on Tavistock Square around the time of First World War.⁶⁰ It appears that Brunton was originally the son of undistinguished working class parents; the 1901 census lists Brunton's father as a factory hand in a margarine plant.⁶¹ That Brunton later led his son to believe that his roots were in more elite Hampstead perhaps reflected the circles of London cultural elite who were involved in the esoteric, spiritual milieu of 20s and 30s Bloomsbury.⁶² Houghton and Brunton and their friends frequented meetings of the Theosophical Society and the Spiritualist Society, the latter being particularly popular after the First World War.⁶³ During the 1920s, Brunton was writing articles in journals of *Success* and the *Occult Review* under the name of Raphael Hurst.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century in particular, yoga and occultism had some interesting links in the esoteric milieus of Britain. Alistair Crowley (1875–1947) advertised his *Book Four, Part I* (1911), which combines reflections on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali with European, ceremonial magick was advertised in periodicals like the *International Psychic Gazette* which explore a variety of alternative topics.⁶⁴ The pages of this journal often featured items from Theosophists, but also a variety of physical culture, Indian mystics, will-development courses, palm reading, 'psycho-photography', spiritual healing; advertisements featured books from the publisher Rider & Co., Theosophical and New Thought publishing houses.⁶⁵ That there were none directly advertising 'yoga courses' at this time reinforces the

hypothesis that most yoga was learnt from printed material in Britain during this period. However, within the pages of this periodical can be found an advertisement for a 'Divine Healing Centre' near Victoria in London which featured interviews with 'Brother Ramananda' (with Sister Sita in attendance).⁶⁶

Figure 2: Advertisement for Aleister Crowley's *Book 4* from the *International Psychic Gazette* (1913)⁶⁷

During the early years of the twentieth century, yoga was a subject of interest for occult initiatory orders such as the Order of Oriental Templars (OTO) and often associated with sexual magic and ideas drawn from Indian tantra.⁶⁸ In 1920, Crowley experimented with living his philosophy in the residential setting of the Abbey of Thelma, attracting much attention in the tabloid press in Britain. Thus yoga, the occult became more popularly associated with wild and immoral behaviour. While repelling the majority, this also increase the curiosity of a minority. Crowley continued to lecture on yoga in the 1930s, publishing his *Eight Lectures on Yoga* in 1938. For Crowley, his teaching on Thelma and those of yoga are nearly synonymous in their goals. Crowley unites what he calls "magick" – defined 'as the science and art of causing change to occur in conformity with the Will' – with an understanding of yoga as 'Union with the Absolute.'⁶⁹ Crowley's ideas on yoga and Thelma resurface in the 1960s as various countercultural movements interacted.⁷⁰

A fascinating figure called Rollo Ahmed also billed himself as an occult yoga teacher during the 1930s. Based largely in Brighton, he was also associated with Aleister Crowley, the Wiccan Doreen Valiente (1922–1999) and the popular novelist Dennis Wheatley (1897–1977).⁷¹ Although not all the presentations of yoga at this time were directly associated with the occult. There may also have been a man called Sri Nandi teaching yoga in Hampstead, North London, possibly as early as 1939.⁷² A first incarnation of a Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre also existed in London from around 1934.⁷³

It was from being immersed in these milieus of alternative religious exploration that Brunton first came into contact with yoga and Indian religiosity. In the early 1930s, Brunton travelled to India and wrote a travelogue of his experiences seeking spiritual enlightenment. The resulting manuscript was published as *A Search in Secret India* (1934) under the name of Paul Brunton and it was by this name, or the initials 'PB', that Brunton was known for the remainder of his life. In 1935, the Atlantis bookshop had established its own small publishing company, The Neptune Press, to bring out esoteric and occult titles. Sometime after Brunton's return from India, Brunton and Houghton parted company.⁷⁴ Houghton retained the ownership of the Museum Street bookshop and The Neptune Press, which then turned more strongly towards Western esotericism, publishing Aleister Crowley's works. It was also the first publisher of pagan revivalist Gerald Gardner's practical book *High Magic's Aid* (1949). Despite this focus shifting away from Indian spirituality, The Atlantis Bookshop continued as a centre of networking for alternative spirituality, and the clientele of The Atlantis and Watkins Bookshop overlapped throughout the twentieth century.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, Paul Brunton continued to influence understandings of yoga. *A Search in Secret India* (1934), detailing Brunton's personally transformative meetings with mystics and holy men of India was extremely popular, being constantly re-issued in the 50s and 60s, and is still in print today.⁷⁶ In 1971, the popular magazine *Yoga & Health* claimed that Brunton's books have 'probably turned more people onto the path of Yoga than any other books of their kind.'⁷⁷ This book develops the idea of the spiritual 'Quest', a kind of twentieth century *Pilgrim's Progress* for middle-class seekers. It culminates with Brunton's encounter with Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950), who lived on a hill near the south Indian city of Tiruvannamalai. Brunton is widely credited with bringing the Maharshi to the attention of spiritual seekers worldwide.⁷⁸ However, Brunton's ultimate conclusion is that the "true guru" is the "inner guide" or "higher self." Brunton also corresponded with some readers and encouraged them to treat him as a guru figure. He travelled in India during the 40s and published several more influential books on yoga. He developed a small following of disciples, but

remained a largely distant figure living with sympathetic supporters in New Zealand, America and Switzerland.⁷⁹ His books were re-popularised in the 1970s when excerpts appeared in the journal *Yoga & Health* and he regularly appeared on the Wheel of Yoga reading lists.

ALLEN & UNWIN AND GERALD YORKE

Publishers Allen & Unwin played an important part in popularising yoga in Britain. Perhaps their most significant title on yoga for Allen & Unwin was B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga* (1965). Elizabeth De Michelis argues that *Light on Yoga*: 'played a major role in raising postural practice standards to higher levels of performance' and became 'the acknowledged point of reference in the sense that no modern postural yoga practitioner or school could afford to ignore its existence.'⁸⁰ As will be described later, *Light on Yoga* helped convince the Inner London Educational Authority to allow yoga as an approved subject in the capital's adult education syllabus.

The best-known story of how *Light on Yoga* was 'discovered' by Allen & Unwin relies on serendipity and an implicit concept of God's grace. B.K.S. Iyengar was initially brought to London as personal yoga teacher to the violin virtuoso Yehudi Menuhin. According to an oft-repeated story, two of Menuhin's personal friends and Iyengar's yoga students, Angela Marris (1916– 2007) and Beatrice Harthan (1902– 1998) accompanied the Menuhin family during their annual stay in Gstaad, Switzerland. There, Menuhin had founded and oversaw an annual month-long music festival. During this festival, Menuhin employed Iyengar's services for a daily yoga class.⁸¹ Iyengar showed these women two chapters of a book he was planning on writing, 'to help all his pupils during the eleven months of each year' when he was in India. In their free time, Ms. Harthan and Ms. Marris offered to type the manuscript out to make it more presentable. As the women found accurate touch-typing on a European typewriter difficult, Beatrice Harthan put a copy of her manuscript into her briefcase to re-type on her return to London.⁸² Returning from the airport in London,

Harthan 'paid an unpremeditated visit to [the] Buddhist Society Summer School' and arriving late, took one of the few empty seats which happened to be next to Gerald Yorke, who worked for Allen & Unwin publishers sourcing India and esoteric books.⁸³ Yorke reportedly whispered to Harthan that he was looking for a new book on yoga to replace Theos Bernard's work, *Hatha Yoga*, which had been in circulation for fifteen years. During the break, Harthan got out Iyengar's manuscript and Yorke 'became at once most excited about it.'⁸⁴

The origin of Yorke sourcing what would become *Light on Yoga* is likely to be less magical. Yorke was well known to attend and lecture at The Buddhist Society's summer school and had been working for Rider publishers sourcing books on Hinduism and Buddhism throughout the 1950s.⁸⁵ However, according to Harthan, the events that led to the publishing of *Light on Yoga* seemed to result from a compulsion outside of her own volition. She later wrote to Gerald Yorke about the 'very SUDDEN impulse' which led to her attendance at the Buddhist Summer School where she found the only empty seat next to Yorke.⁸⁶ Yorke saw a first version of the manuscript in late 1962, suggesting extensive revisions which Iyengar. Upon receiving the revised manuscript, he was able to advise Allen & Unwin to offer Iyengar a contract in the summer of 1964.⁸⁷ This draft then underwent further extensive revisions by the hand of both Beatrice Harthan and Gerald Yorke. Gerald Yorke's son Vincent remembers his father taking a lot of time and expressing his frustration over the extensive revisions of the English in Iyengar's manuscript. The book finally made it into print in early 1966.

However, the collaborative effort that went into publishing *Light on Yoga* began many years before these events in Europe. Iyengar's student, B.I. Taraporewala, reported that Iyengar had been working on the book since 1960.⁸⁸ According to Taraporewala, a legal journalist in Bombay, it was rumoured that an unnamed Bombay publisher was interested in producing a book of asana instruction; Taraporewala first showed photographs of his teacher to this publisher in 1956.⁸⁹ This was the year that in India, Yogenendra's *Yoga Asanas Simplified* was re-issued in an affordable

‘popular’ edition and was expected to attract large numbers of middle-class Indian book-buyers.⁹⁰

Taraporewala claims to have developed the format found in *Light on Yoga* in dialogue with this unspecified Bombay publisher. In contrast to other books on asana, ‘it was decided that some text had to be written to show the technique of performing the asana by describing the intermediate stages whereby one reached the final pose.’⁹¹ Additionally, it was decided that further information on each pose was to be presented in a specific format:

First the name of the asana was explained and a brief note given about the personality or legend connected with the name. Next, the technique was described in numbered paragraphs step by step in a language as simple as possible. Last, the benefits of the asana were stated.⁹²

The process of composition, according to Taraporewala, was collaborative although it was always clear it was Iyengar’s book:

Every few weeks Iyengar would come to Bombay [from Pune] with handwritten notes... Every Saturday evening after the asana sessions, Iyengar, a friend or two, my wife and I would proceed to the flat of Smt. Martha Wartenburger, one of Iyengar’s oldest pupils, with our papers and files. There, after refreshments... we would read the typescript prepared by me. Martha would... tell me that I should yield to the words selected by Iyengar for after all it was his book and not mine and I would hold on to the view that the word did not correctly reflect what was in Iyengar’s mind...⁹³

Taraporewala was also responsible for referencing Iyengar’s asana to the personality or legend associated with the name. For this he used a variety of traditional source books including the *Hatha Yoga Pradīpka*, the *Gheranda Samhitā*, the *Śiva Samhitā*, the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Upaniṣads*, Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* and other standard books on Indian philosophy.⁹⁴ Officially, Iyengar employed the services of Taraporewala to ‘re-English’ the manuscript and Taraporewala eventually received £250 of Iyengar’s royalty money as payment for his work.⁹⁵

Both Iyengar and Taraporewala have written that Gerald Yorke had a major contribution in fine-tuning the English in *Light on Yoga*. Iyengar later admitted that ‘Though I was a teacher with thirty years’ experience, I had never attempted to write

even an article on yoga. Also my English in those days was not good.’⁹⁶ Iyengar reflected further on Yorke’s influence:

In his admonitions about my style, Mr. Yorke was as forceful as my guru, Sri T. Krishnamacharya, was about my yoga. ... His encouragement was my touchstone, spurring me to express my thoughts in as exact and precise a form as possible. Since then [the editing of *Light on Yoga*] I hold him to be my ‘literary guru’.⁹⁷

As Taraporewala reflected later:

His [Yorke’s] command over the English language and his ability to condense and clarify are uncanny, and with a few excisions and revisions, he can improve what one has written... immeasurably.’⁹⁸

Light on Yoga became so successful in part because of the considerable input of Gerald Yorke of Allen & Unwin on presenting Iyengar’s concept to an English audience. Although the introduction outlined the religious/philosophical context of yoga, *Light on Yoga* delineates practical benefits without reference to anything overtly magical or religious. The result was a book that was often referred to as the ‘Bible’ of asana practice.⁹⁹

Figure 3: Gerald Yorke reading a paper with his iconic pipe in his mouth. Photograph courtesy of Michael Yorke.

After publication was agreed, Phillip Unwin discussed with Yorke the best ways to publicise *Light on Yoga*. Iyengar had appeared on television in 1963 with Yehudi Menuhin and there was an attempt to arrange another appearance to publicise the new book. However, there appeared to be a problem with potential presenters’ time as well as a refusal on Iyengar’s part to appear next to yoga teachers unknown to him. In a letter sent to Yorke, Iyengar wrote:

It was suggested to me that I should take part with other yogis. As I was not known to them, nor I knew their practices, I did not like to involve my name or Mr Menuhin’s name with them.¹⁰⁰

Although a promotional television appearance did not occur, the book launch was well publicized. They sent the book to major papers in India as well as the BBC and leaflets to British yoga groups. Leaflets were also distributed at Iyengar's 1966 demonstration at the London Commonwealth Institute.¹⁰¹ Exporting books to India was relatively problematic, involving import quotas and local politics. But Philip Unwin was sure that 'There is no doubt however that the book is going to India all the time in small quantities.'¹⁰² Watkins Bookstore also continued to be an information centre for those in London who wished to purchase the book.¹⁰³ Although issued in a comparably expensive hardback edition with over two-hundred high-quality black and white plates, *Light on Yoga* was a commercial success for Allen & Unwin.¹⁰⁴

Gerald J. Yorke was personally involved with introducing the first three major circulating books on 'hatha yoga' to the British public; Bernard's *Hatha Yoga* (1944), Yesudian and Haich's *Yoga and Health* (1953), as well as *Light on Yoga* (1965). Both *Hatha Yoga* and *Yoga and Health* were considered to be very successful in profit margins and sales figures. When recommending the publishing of *Light on Yoga* to Allen & Unwin, Yorke wrote:

The nearest equivalent to it that Rider have published in 1944 on my advice – is Theos Bernard's *Hatha Yoga* - 68 pp text with 37 pp. half tones and only describing 37 asana etc. but selling at 21/- has sold to date over 13,000 copies and still sells at the rate of just under 300 a year. The first imprint was 7,000.¹⁰⁵

Allen & Unwin eventually settled upon a first imprint of 5,000 copies for *Light on Yoga* and the final publishing price was a rather expensive £3, 15 shillings in 1965.¹⁰⁶ However, it wasn't only because of Bernard's book that Allen & Unwin trusted Yorke's judgement. In 1952 Yorke read a revised manuscript of Selvarajan Yesudian and Elisabeth Haich's *Sport and Yoga* for Unwin.¹⁰⁷ This book sold very well (at least 9,500 in Britain by 1958)¹⁰⁸ and on this basis, Unwin was very willing to trust Yorke's advice on yoga books.¹⁰⁹

From the late-1920s, Yorke corresponded with Aleister Crowley, eventually becoming an associate and providing financial support.¹¹⁰ From the late 1920s, Yorke took several retreats to practise magic and meditation, wandering in 'native garb' in

North Africa for several months in 1930, as well as spending two months ‘practising Yoga’ in a Welsh cave in 1931.¹¹¹ Due to financial demands from Crowley, in March 1932, Yorke’s father presented his son with an ultimatum – he must place his funds in a trusteeship or resign from the family businesses and sever all relations with the family.¹¹² As an opportunity appeared for Yorke to travel to China as a newspaper correspondent, Yorke agreed to place his funds in a trust (thus maintain his inheritance) and went to work in China as an occasional correspondent for Reuters between 1932 and 1935.¹¹³ While there, Yorke used the opportunity to experience life inside Buddhist monasteries.¹¹⁴

Figure 4: Photograph taken by Gerald Yorke of an event at a monastery on his travels in China in the early 1930s. Photograph courtesy of Michael Yorke.

When he returned to Britain, Yorke adopted the ‘country gentleman’ lifestyle expected of his family.¹¹⁵ After marriage and having a role with the home guard during World War II, Yorke found a way to make use of his personal experience with, and continued interest in esoteric religions, by advising publishers on manuscripts.¹¹⁶ By the late 1950s, Yorke had a formal arrangement as regular advisor for Rider’s list of books on Buddhism and Hinduism.¹¹⁷ In 1964, when the Hutchinson’s group decided to either sell the Rider list or ‘run it down,’ Yorke offered his services on a freelance basis to Phillip Unwin at Allen & Unwin Publishers.¹¹⁸

It is important not to overstate Yorke’s influence on the publishing of yoga books in Britain. Books on the subject found their way to publishers without Yorke’s sourcing and many Yorke turned down were published elsewhere.¹¹⁹ But Yorke’s influence in choice of books was substantial and he was gifted with an ability to change Asian authors’ writing into smooth English prose. Yet Yorke’s influence may help explain, in part, why the publications of the disciples of Swami Sivananda (1887-1963) were not more influential in Britain. From a global perspective, Swami Sivananda has been one of the most influential proponents of yoga. The young Mircea Eliade (1907–

1986), the influential Romanian scholar of comparative religions and yoga, studied with Sivananda during the early 1930s.¹²⁰ By 1936 Sivananda had enough followers to establish the Divine Life Society as a more formal organisation, which printed books and pamphlets propagating the society and its guru. Swami Vishnu-devananda (1927-1993) was ‘sent’ by Sivananda to popularise yoga in the West and was considered a specialist in yoga asana.¹²¹ Vishnudevananda made his home in Quebec from 1959 onwards and opened many Sivananda Vedanta Centres in Europe (particularly in Germany) and North America; the first Sivananda Yoga Centre in London was established in 1971, being taken over more centrally by Swami Vishnudevananda’s organisation in 1972.¹²²

Sarah Strauss has argued that the promulgation of Sivananda’s English-language publications worldwide helped create an ‘imagined community in Anderson’s sense – a global community of people who, though they are rarely acquainted in the face-to-face sense, nevertheless feel themselves connected through their shared interest in and practice of yoga.’¹²³ However, Gerald Yorke was not impressed with Sivananda’s pamphlets and did not assist with the creation of this particular ‘imagined community’ of yoga practitioners in Britain. Writing in 1964 to Philip Unwin, Yorke reflected:

Sivananda has about 100 books and booklets to his credit, none of which will sell much over here. Refused to publish him with Rider. He blows his own trumpet continuously. ... I mistrust him.¹²⁴

Most of the publications from the Sivananda organisation were published by Sivananda’s own Divine Light Society press and thus did not undergo the rigorous polishing of style that Yorke provided for his chosen manuscripts. Another early illustrated guide to asanas was Sivananda’s disciple, Swami Vishnudevananda’s *Yoga Asana*, which was published by the large British publisher Thorsons in 1959.¹²⁵ Sivananda’s disciples maintained a more overtly religious focus than some yoga authors, taking religious vows and forming ashrams. Thus, Gerald Yorke may have had a significant personal influence on Sivananda yoga’s relative lack of popularity in Britain.

While anticipation of popular demand was an important consideration, booksellers and publishers often had a personal interest in the subject matter of yoga and esoteric religiosity. The few teachers in Britain actively offering instruction on yoga were well known to the booksellers and publishers who were in a position to promote those teachers they valued. To some extent, choice and discretion were used in choosing which teachers would be published and promoted. Book sellers and publishers had an important role in identifying and determining the forms of yoga that were received and integrated into British culture.¹²⁶

The population interested in reading books on yoga and other esoteric religions was a subculture within British society. However, booksellers and publishers could not be considered agents of a counter-cultural project. Their interests were towards expanding interest in yoga to enlarge their potential sales market. The expansion of the print media from hardback to paperback books, particularly through Penguin publishing, also expanded the accessibility of yoga as a subject to general readers. The increased number of books on yoga published from the 1960s onwards suggests that the market for books on yoga was expanding. Throughout this period, the accessibility of yoga in the printed media increased the numbers of those interested in the subject. This created a portion of the population which had a pre-existing interest in yoga classes when they began appearing in Local Educational Authority evening classes.

CHAPTER 2. Self-Taught Yogis, Adult Education and the Wheel of Yoga

By the late 1960s, yoga in Britain was being practised in groups by several thousands of people.¹ This environment was created first through networks of magazines and postal courses, then, in the post-war period through the framework of educational evening classes for adults which were heavily subsidised by the local government.

There were a few sources of mail-order courses on yoga in the interwar period. One important source could be found in the advertisements in the pages of physical culture journals such as *Health & Strength*, which also featured articles on yoga. These articles began to appear in the context of physical culture in the early 1930s and continued into the 1950s. Many of the postures which are now in the repertoire of asana-focused yoga classes in the twenty-first century were also part of the physical culture exercises of this time period, especially for women.² The tone of the physical culture movement was of perfecting and making the body as healthy as possible. However, this idea was not simply about glorifying the physical body, for example an article by ‘Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool’ enjoined readers to look after their body as a vehicle of the soul. He wrote ‘the living body is the instrument used by the mind for the soul’s expression; and the finer the instrument the more brilliant will be the results of its activities’ before going on to describe the importance of *prana* and effective control of the breathing.³ Rasool did not provide many details of how to master *prana*. Therefore, readers likely expressed an interest in the subject as by 1933, there were a series of five articles by Cameron Hannah on “Introductory Health Wisdom of the East” which, as Mark Singleton has described fit in well with ‘the magazine’s staple weekly advice on holistic health, hygiene, and personal morality.’⁴ The articles by Hannah focus largely on pranayama and the importance of physical and mental control.

Simultaneous to this, Indian physical culturists like K.V. Iyer and Ramesh Balsekar, both of whom also had associations with yoga, regularly featured in photographs in *Health & Strength* in the interwar period, putting Indian physical culturalists on equal footing with icons like Prussian-born Eugen Sandow (1867–1925) who popularized bodybuilding on global tours and the *Sandow's Magazine of Physical Culture* from 1898. Sandow relocated to London in 1906 thanks to the generosity of a wealthy Indian-born Parsi who attributed his return health to Sandow's physical culture regime.⁵ London has a well-established physical culture milieu, with *Health & Strength* magazine having been established in 1898 and having a physical school at Ludgate Circus near the City of London as early as 1902. The idea of physical culture was more than a 'body beautiful' – early literature emphasized the importance of exercise as preventative medicine, especially in cases of consumption, and as a means to a better life. For example, an instructor of The Health and Strength School was interviewed in *Vim* magazine in 1902:

in athletics what is one man's meat is another's poison. From further observations, which he made quite spontaneously, I was to gather that, though a professional exponent of physical culture, he was well aware that physical exercise ought to be merely a means to an end, and not itself the end and aim of existence.⁶

As the British government were attempting to recruit soldier for the Second Boer War (1899-1902), they discovered that a surprising proportion of the population (up to 60%) was unfit for military service due to their poor levels of physical fitness. This resulted in a government-led Committee on Physical Deterioration who produced a report emphasizing the importance of improving the health and fitness of the general population.⁷

An association between physical culture and yoga in *Health & Strength* continued from the 1930s into the 1950s. For example, in 1956 Bennoy Chowdrey wrote a series of article on 'Yoga for Women' and the nineteen-year-old Hazel Cleaver, who won the 1954 Health & Strength League Miss Britain title attributed her physique partially to the practice of yoga which was taught to her by a former

professional dancer, Tom Wheeler.⁸ Although yoga was seen as suitable for women, in the pages of this magazine, it was not an exclusively female activity. The virtues of good posture, diet and self-control were moral imperatives for all involved with the League of Health and Strength. The idealized male bodies in photographs held to the muscular ideal of the global physical culture movement.

Figure 5: Portrait of Bennoy Chowdrey 'Yoga for Women' author from *Health & Strength* 1956.⁹

Advertisements in *Health & Strength* occasionally included yoga correspondence courses as well as yoga books on sale alongside other books on physical culture, mental control, diet and Judo. This interest in physical culture was perhaps a minority activity. But improving the health of the population was seen as both an individual responsibility and a national imperative in the early twentieth century. Eugenic ideas were still widespread, with beliefs that more health adults would transfer their physical process to their offspring and create a healthier nation or race. However, improving health and fitness with something like the Heath & Strength League were still largely leisure time activity, a luxury for those whose lifestyles and incomes allowed.

Figure 6: Advertisement from the publisher Thorsons from *Health & Strength* in 1952.¹⁰

Figure 7: Advertisement for a Course in Yoga from *Health & Strength* 1956.¹¹

The first popularisation of sun salutation exercises (*surya namaskar*) in Britain, at first not associated with yoga came in 1936 in the context of the physical culture movement. In this year, Bhavanarao Pant Pratinidhi (1869-1951), the Raja of Aundh,

travelled to London to promote a film screening at the British Film Institute which documented his family's promotion of *surya namaskar* exercises in schools within their jurisdiction. Bhawanarao Pant had a long-established interest in physical culture and promoted *surya namaskars*, as well as yoga asanas, gymnastics, wrestling and other sports in the compulsory and free schools in Aundh which he established in 1923. In 1928, he published *Surya Namaskars* (1928), a step-by-step guide to the exercises in English.¹²

In 1936, Bhawanarao Pant travelled to London to promote the practice of *surya namaskar* by giving lectures and screening a film at the British Film Institute in London. He was interviewed at the Savoy Hotel by the American-born journalist Louise Morgan (1886?-1964) who had relocated to England. Morgan had advertised Rajah's film in the *News Chronicle* with the headline 'Surya Namaskars – The Secret of Health: Mothers Look Younger Than Daughters – Rajah's Way to Banish Age and Illness' and ran a four-part series of articles in the *News Chronicle* from 30 July 1936 providing a step-by-step guide to performing *surya namaskar*. Her upbeat lifestyle advice prompted many correspondents to write in describing 'told me of remarkable cures, of the restoration of faith and hope...'.¹³ Morgan edited and introduced Bhawanarao Pant Pratinidhi's *Ten Point Way To Health* (1938) with photographs of Bhawanarao Pant's son Apa Pant illustrating the postures.

During the mid-1930s, *surya namaskars* were not only promoted for women; in December 1937, Indian R. S. Balsekar graced the cover of the British bodybuilding magazine *Superman*, with an article detailing the 'World's Oldest P.C. [Physical Culture] System' – that is *surya namaskar* (a part-two in the next issue detailed yoga-asanas). Although the book and practice dropped from public attention during World War II, Apa Pant, resurrected the concept with his publication of *Surya Namaskars: An Ancient Indian Exercise* (1970) while he was the Indian High Commissioner in Britain.¹⁴

DESMOND DUNNE – YOGISM, RELAXATION AND MIND CONTROL

Towards the later 40s, a Briton by the name of Desmond Dunne (b. 1913) taught something called Yogism, later teaching under the name of The Insight School of Yoga. In the 40s and 50s, Dunne emphasizes the mental aspects of yoga as being suitable for westerners, while stressing the physical aspects are of historical interest only.¹⁵ Dunne paid the British social research organization Mass- Observation (MO) to interview 'a representative cross-section of the public in a London district about their reactions to life' and reported the responses in his book *Yoga for Everyman* (1951).¹⁶ The MO questions focused on discovering how much of the general population was affected by 'a lack of energy, frustration, the sense of purposelessness' -- problems which Dunne believed could be alleviated through his system of Yogism. According to Dunne's report of the survey 47% of the general population felt that they did not have enough energy, 56% reported that they were either definitely not or doubtful that they were 'getting what they want out of life.'¹⁷ In Dunne's view, the afflictions of civilized life create a 'lack of energy, frustration, [and] the sense of purposelessness.'¹⁸

However, Dunne believed that the public was neither looking for a 'spiritual' solution nor was familiar with the term 'yoga'. When asked 'What does the word *Yoga* mean to you?' 44% admitted they had no idea what the word meant and another 20% offered that it was something foreign. However, a minority of respondents had specific ideas, suggesting that yoga was 'a religion or religious man' (26%), 'a system of exercise' (16%) or 'a system of mental and physical control' (4%). As a self-appointed expert on Yoga, Dunne concluded 'that the average person does feel the need of some stimulus to happier living, but is ignorant of Yogism as a solution. He looks instead for some new physical or material boon that might help him redress his impediments.' Considering that late 1940s Britain was still very much recovering from the war, and that rationing lasted into the early 1950s, this dismissal of the importance of material comfort was perhaps a bit idealistic. While Dunne was not emphasizing the religious or spiritual elements of yoga, he recommended that his readers consult the books of Paul Brunton, 'who has written the best English books on traditional Yoga'.¹⁹

Dunne taught primarily by correspondence course from an address in Surrey. There were also overseas branches in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway and the USA. By 1956 he was promoting his mail-order ‘School of Yoga’ in the pages of the US-based *Mystic Magazine* and appears to have had success in publishing his later books first in the United States.²⁰ At this time, he was charging £4 for the twelve-lesson course (equivalent to about £88 in 2018), requiring a correspondent with a certain amount of disposable income and ensuring some commitment to the course.²¹

Figure 8: Insight School of Yoga - Receipt 1958²²

The first correspondence exercises taught by Dunne focus on ‘Deep Relaxation’ through progressively concentrating on relaxation of every muscle for a period of ten minutes, followed by a period of ‘Deep Contraction’ or conscious stretching, followed by six deep, ‘Revitalizing Breath[s].’ The second lesson details specific breathing exercises, specifically ‘The Cleansing Breath’ (kapalabhati), ‘The Bellows Breath’ (bhasrika) and ‘The Saturation Breath’ (ujjayi). Later lessons focus on aspects of good hygiene, ‘Dynamic Concentration’ and positive thinking for ‘mind control.’ Dunne encouraged regular correspondence with his students, sending out questionnaires with the weekly lessons and publishing various testimonials from satisfied customers. A few physical postures are introduced in lessons five and six including shoulderstand (sarvangasan), back arching (bhujangasan), and bending forward over straight legs while sitting (pashimatanasan). A few more asana, mostly seated positions, are introduced in the following lessons, with ‘cleansing exercise’ of *uddiyana bandha* and *navli kriya* recommended for those under the age of fifty. In a later book, *Yoga Made Easy* (1962) published first in the USA, Dunne includes more yoga *asana* probably influenced by the popularity of other books on yoga *asanas* that had been circulating in the English-speaking world.²³ For those who completed his twelve-lesson correspondence course on Yogism, Dunne also offered an ‘Advanced Course’ based on the writing of Paul Brunton which are promised to include ‘advanced

Yoga meditation routines and steps to full Initiation' for a fee of £1.10 (approximately £22 in 2018).

Figure 9: Lesson XI: 'Uddiyana Bandha and Nauli Kriya' from Desmond Dunne's postal course in yoga c. 1958.²⁴

Dunne also had a keen interest in hypnosis, publishing *A Manual of Hypnotism* in 1959.²⁵ A relationship between hypnosis and yoga is also evidenced in *Strength & Health* with the advertisements and articles emphasizing the relationship between physical and mental control. Dunne attempted to create a new form of yoga which he believed was more suitable to the western body, largely by combining themes of mental control and relaxation. What Dunne calls 'Yogism' also has similarities to the idea of 'salvation through relaxation' that was current in the *fin de siècle* New Thought, the books of 'Yogi Ramacharaka' and the work of the psychologist William James.²⁶ Dunne advises his public that:

The first thing, then, to be done by any Westerner contemplating the study of Yoga is to abandon the idea of practicing it in traditional form. Since it is evident that there is no one 'authorized' system of Yoga – on the contrary, there are many conflicting traditional versions – why not have a modern system adapted to present-day Western needs? This is exactly what I myself evolved and have taught with success to several thousand students...²⁷

Much of Dunne's advice is focused dietary and moral advice, much in parallels with Edwardian 'How to Live Life' manuals and the physical culture movement.²⁸ Dunne was also reading books on Naturopathy or Nature Cure, also an interest of Mahatma Gandhi, recommending many titles of this nature in his correspondence course.²⁹

Dunne argued that his Yogism was a solution to the general public's dissatisfaction with their material conditions. However, his yoga students report more simply that they simply found their lessons helpful. Dunne reports that his students reported specific mental and physical benefits, elaborating: 'at the early and middle stages of Yogism training, the most frequently mentioned physical benefit of the Yogism exercises was the feeling of relaxation or refreshment which they induced.

Towards the completion of the Course, however, these effects seem to be superseded by the sense of greater physical alertness, fitness and suppleness.³⁰ Dunne's yoga was neither mystical, nor particularly spiritual. Dunne concluded that his Yogism made people feel 'more energetic, purposeful and happier.'³¹

ADULT EDUCATION IN BRITAIN

In the early 1960s, yoga practitioners began using the structure of the Local Educational Authority (LEA) adult education evening classes to facilitate the teaching of yoga. LEAs typically put yoga classes into the physical education department and encouraged yoga teachers to concentrate on physical exercises promoting health and relaxation. While LEAs were responsive to public demand for courses, they also felt that they had a duty to uphold standards of quality education for their populations. The LEAs encouraged yoga teachers to produce assurances that they were qualified to teach, stimulating a professionalisation of yoga practitioners. Initially, this was satisfied by the simple issuing of certificates, but soon training courses developed along educational frameworks. Yoga's integration within the institution of adult education was an affirmation of, rather than a challenge to, British middle-class values. Yoga was received into British culture as a continuation of an established tradition of autodidactic study that had recently become institutionalised as adult education evening classes. As we have seen, prior to the LEA system, autodidactic study of yoga included physical cultural journals and correspondence courses (both academic and personal) in addition to formally published books.

Education in Britain was a private initiative until the late nineteenth century; the idea that all children should be educated for basic literacy was only established with the 1870 Education Act.³² Before then Victorians had initiated a variety of private institutions with the purpose of educating working class adults and children.³³ Where the wealthy studied privately in their own home, the working classes needed pooled resources for study materials and facilities. In London, the Recreative Evening Schools Association was founded in 1885 which encouraged schools to widen 'the curriculum

(on a self-supporting basis) by introducing subjects like cookery, wood-carving, physical training and music.’³⁴

Both working and middle classes had a long history of autodidact study. Adult education relied upon the motivation of working men and women to educate themselves. Sometimes with an implicit socialist or Marxist ideology, workers ran mutual improvement societies from the late nineteenth century onwards. These associations encouraged the government to provide funding for non-political adult education.³⁵ In 1903 the Worker’s Educational Association (WEA) was formed with the late-Victorian ideal of providing both vocational and ‘liberal’ education for those denied such an education in their youth.³⁶ The WEA became a powerful lobbying and organising force for both the technical and liberal education of adults and was seen as offering an appropriately un-Marxist curriculum.³⁷

The 1906 Education Act allowed local authorities to spend government funds on higher education. Councils often provided support for a variety of private educational initiatives and university extension programmes. In some areas there was no shortage of organisations promoting adult literacy and education. For example, by 1920 Staffordshire had ‘some 40 organizations including miners’ classes, tutorial classes, co-operative societies and working men’s clubs’ promoting classes in adult education.³⁸ According to Lowe, while many of the working men’s groups promoted an explicitly socialist agenda, the WEA ‘and those involved in university extension work, were opposed to such developments and worked to achieve social harmony in the belief that education was of value for its own sake.’³⁹

The 1944 Butler Education Act made it a statutory duty for LEAs to provide for adult education.⁴⁰ While some LEAs already supported adult education institutes, across the nation legislation provided an influx of money and enthusiasm for further education as the economy recovered after the end of the war. By 1960 adult educational institutions included two and quarter million people, from the age of school-leavers to the retired.⁴¹ In dedicated adult education buildings, there were courses on dressmaking, bookkeeping and car maintenance as well as subjects such as Esperanto, ‘great books’ and physical fitness. The formation of the Open University in 1970,

specifically designed for mature and distance students, was an extension of this already well-developed further education movement.⁴²

While LEAs saw it as their duty to promote the acquisition of useful and employable skills in their populations, the ethos was not necessarily one of quantifiable results; as a 1969 H.M. Inspector Report on Dressmaking courses in Birmingham reflected:

Some members attended the class for reasons other than dressmaking but the creation of attractive clothes and the fact of belonging to a congenial group must surely contribute to their personal development and wellbeing. The warmth of the atmosphere in a very large proportion of the classes is especially noticeable. The social benefits are unmistakable while the good integration of immigrants ... is particularly commendable.⁴³

Here, while teaching a particular skill, H.M. Inspectors argued other benefits were also important. In quite a different way, Staffordshire's Pendrell Hall offered subsidised weekend residential courses on such diverse subjects as 'Machines in our Society, The Buildings of Staffordshire, Choral Singing, Photography for Beginners and 'Holiday for over 60s – National Trust Houses in the Midlands.'⁴⁴ In many of these classes it was not so much a particular skill, but an enrichment of life that was supported 'on the rates.'

After the rationing which continued long after the Second World War, material prosperity was still a novel experience in the 1960s for the majority of the British population.⁴⁵ In 1960 the WEA commissioned a report on the state of adult education in Britain. It described the country as increasingly becoming what American Sociologist John Kenneth Galbraith described as an *Affluent Society* (1958).⁴⁶ The 1960s were an optimistic moment in British history where the possibilities of technological advance made it seem, for instance, that a four-day work week was a real possibility in the near future.⁴⁷ But the WEA Report argued that the increasing importance of leisure made adult education more rather than less important, it also noted that the increased affluence had led to less rather than more leisure time available for educational pursuits. The authors wrote, 'Houses with gardens and the more widespread ownership of cars impose new leisure responsibilities, while the 'do-it-

yourself' movement, one of the most important recent trends in the use of leisure time, has limited the amount of time available for all kinds of non-domestic activities.'⁴⁸ During the 1960s, those attending adult educational institutes were much more affluent and less associated with political radicalism than those who had been attending the institutes before the Second World War.

Although the adult educational constituency for non-vocational courses still numbered a million in 1960, the place adult education held in society was changing.⁴⁹ The 1960 WEA report concludes that "about 57% of the total number is going to classes from a vocational motive, sometimes as a compulsory condition of their employment" and that "about 43% go to classes of a non-vocational kind." A social class comparison with the national statistics in this report shows that the adult education participants mainly reflected the social classes of the general population.⁵⁰ However, the WEA report also implied that the middle classes enrolled more in the liberal education courses and the working classes were disproportionately enrolled in the vocational courses, possibly as a requirement of employment.⁵¹ An over-representation of the middle classes was also commented upon in the journal *Adult Education*, which was aimed at professionals within adult education. One 1973 article described the situation graphically with the comment: 'People think that LEA adult education consists of bingo substitutes for the middle classes.'⁵²

State-funded education was revolutionised with the 1944 Butler Education Act that attempted to equalise opportunity by ensuring every child a full-time education up to the age of fifteen. The new educational system was designed to 'equally' reward achievement. However, critics charged it with ignoring the structural elements that gave middle and upper-class children greater opportunities outside of school hours to support their learning. Historians generally concede that the restructuring of the educational system in 1944 did more to reinforce class divisions than alleviate them.⁵³ Compounded class division in conditions of prosperity created a situation in which the middle classes were positioned to benefit from non-vocational courses, while those in full-time working class positions were more interested in vocational courses to improve employment prospects.⁵⁴ Additionally, those whose backgrounds had valued

learning and education, and had already completed more than the minimal amount of schooling, were more interested in accessing the non-vocational resources of adult education. The expanding middle classes, with education being valued within the home, were much more likely to see learning as a lifelong process and attend non-vocational evening courses for personal enjoyment. Thus it becomes understandable why the middle classes attended LEA evening classes for leisure in venues originally designed for working men's self-improvement.

LEAs varied greatly on how their adult education courses were organised. London had several independent adult education centres including the Mary Ward Centre in Bloomsbury, the City Literary Institute in Covent Garden and Moseley College in Waterloo. In some areas, like Manchester, further education was almost completely preoccupied with ensuring their school leavers had employable skills and employment placements in the local community.⁵⁵ The term 'institutes' often referred to a geographical area without a full-time building dedicated to adult education. Often, an 'institute' consisted of a 'principal' who co-ordinated and negotiated evening classes' times and venues with the head teachers of day schools and other premises.⁵⁶ For example, Manchester adult education was divided into four cardinal institutes, each with its own 'principal.' Occasionally, these 'area principals' rented church halls, or other venues for courses. In Birmingham and London there were buildings dedicated to specific aspects of adult educational interest, e.g. physical education.⁵⁷

Because adult education was required in the allocation of government funds to specific local authorities, classes were offered at subsidised rates. LEAs were given quite a lot of autonomy for determining how these funds should be spent within their particular area. The fee system for adult education classes often enabled students to attend several classes on a fee scale, which offered every class additional to the first at a substantially reduced cost.⁵⁸ The Principal of the Birmingham Athletics Institute noted that many women attended two and sometimes three classes on the same evening.⁵⁹ This system made it easy for the curious, but not committed, to try a yoga class. While yoga classes were available to all, it appears that the middle classes were particularly well positioned to take advantage of these non-vocational courses.

THE BRITISH WHEEL OF YOGA AND WILFRED CLARK

Yoga spread as a subject throughout Britain's adult education network largely through south Birmingham resident Wilfred Clark (1898-1981). A working-class autodidact himself, Clark became very involved in adult education as part of the Army Training Corps in World War II. From here he combined a personal interest in yoga with his professional experience as an adult education tutor and local journalist. In 1963 Wilfred Clark and Margaret Ward organised the Birmingham Yoga Club, expanding it to the Midlands Yoga Association in 1964, and renaming it the Wheel of British Yoga in 1965.⁶⁰ Now known as the British Wheel of Yoga, Clark's organisation continues to be an important influence in the promotion of yoga in Britain. In 1995 the Wheel was recognised by the British Sports Council as 'governing body' for yoga in Britain.⁶¹ The Wheel has changed dramatically over this time but important aspects of its character and focus were determined by the vision of its founder, Wilfred Clark.

Wilfred Clark was born in Wells, Somerset but spent most of his youth at Poole in Dorset. In the 1901 Census, his Islington-born father named George William Clark was listed with the working-class profession of a 'Coach Body Maker.' At the time of his son's first marriage in 1921, George William Clark reported his occupation as a 'Wood Machinist'.⁶² No siblings are mentioned in the census records or in any documents about Wilfred Clark written later. Clark described himself in his youth as a loner, 'a virtue that was to prove a great help to me many years later when I took up Yoga practise' then added that he was 'a complete duffer at arithmetic, but by gum could [I] WRITE essays [sic].' He reported that he came top of the borough in English when he was in technical college.⁶³ Subsequently, he applied for a job as a reporter with the local *Poole Herald* just before war was declared in 1914.

Clark volunteered for active duty, as soon as he was old enough, in 1916. He was introduced to his first yoga *asana* during his military training. When an older soldier noticed his enthusiasm for physical training without apparatus, he showed Clark a few 'Indian PT' postures he had learnt while serving in India. Wilfred Clark recalled he did not connect these exercises with the word 'yoga' until much later.⁶⁴ His

first understanding of ‘yoga’ occurred during the First World War when he was in contact with Indian cavalymen.⁶⁵ In retrospect, Wilfred Clark attributes the Indian soldiers’ conversation on ‘the True Self, equanimity and non-attachment’ as what enabled him to live through a year and a half of fighting.⁶⁶ The parallel with Arjuna’s instruction by Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield in the Bhagavad Gīta was important to Clark. Although, he would later consider himself Buddhist, Clark described the Wheel of British Yoga’s symbol of the *dharmacakra*⁶⁷ as representing the wheel of ‘Krishna’s glorious chariot’ and referred back to some of his first associations with yoga as inner peace on the battlefield of life.⁶⁸

Figure 10: First Logo for Wilfred Clark's Wheel of British Yoga. Image courtesy of Ken Thompson.⁶⁹

According to his own account, after returning from military service in France, Wilfred Clark resumed his newspaper work and continued his education. He married Winifred Ada Farr on 28 September 1921 in a Congregational Church while he was working as a reporter for local newspapers.⁷⁰ According to Clark ‘I was so overworked at my job we decided that a family was out of the question, or, rather, unfair on the child’ and the couple divorced sometime after 1929.⁷¹ However, during the 1920s, Clark educated himself in his leisure time and developed an interest in yoga and ‘Oriental philosophy.’ First Clark read independently the works of Max Müller, then began a correspondence course on Oriental philosophy from the Oxford University Extension Society. Clark reported that he never connected the photographs of Indians ‘tying themselves up in knots’ with the philosophy he was learning through correspondence.⁷² Clark’s later writings show that he read a variety of books on yoga, mysticism and spirituality. His involvement with adult education increased during the Second World War. Too old for combat duty, Clark served in the Army Educational Corps where he reported that he tried to interest ‘the troops’ in yoga. Clark, however, had the impression that ‘the boys regarded this as ‘airy-fairy.’⁷³

After his discharge in June 1945, Clark returned to Dorset, again working as a journalist. Here he met and married Joan Latimer, a 45-year-old widow. Both were very active in amateur dramatics during this time Mrs. Clark appearing under the name of Janet Latimer.⁷⁴ There is no mention of children in this marriage either. In 1948, the couple moved to Wootton Wawen, a village near Stratford-upon-Avon.⁷⁵ Wilfred Clark reported that he took employment as an assistant editor of the *Solihull News*.⁷⁶ He claimed to have risen to editorship of several local weekly papers, naming the *Sutton Coldfield News* and *The Erdington News* which are both Midlands weeklies.⁷⁷ While in Birmingham, he became well known for his amateur dramatics and became dramatic art tutor at the Hockley Heath Further Education Centre. He also taught 'the art of writing for pleasure and profit' at the Erdington Further Education Institute under the auspices of the WEA.⁷⁸

Through his position as a part-time lecturer in these further education Institutes, Clark was in a position to present his self-taught expertise in yoga as a fit subject for these venues. According to Clark, on his WEA paperwork, he had offered 'Oriental philosophy' as one of the subjects on which he could lecture. The Coventry WEA agreed to let Wilfred Clark give a general talk on 'yoga.' The response to these lectures was positive enough for Clark to propose the introduction of yoga classes into the further education curriculum in Birmingham.⁷⁹ Clark reported that he submitted a proposal to the LEA in Birmingham for a course on yoga early in 1962, which put him in contact with Margaret Ward, who became a co-organiser of the Wheel of British Yoga (the Wheel). Ward took the title of 'national organiser' while Clark took the title of 'honourable organiser.'⁸⁰

In the way Clark and Ward narrated the history of yoga in Britain, the influence of other individuals on the development of yoga in Birmingham has been elided. The Further Education Sub-Committee reports for 1963-64 record at least five classes in the Birmingham Adult Education system, only one of which was run by Wilfred Clark and none by Margaret Ward. By the academic year 1964-65, Yogini Sunita (who will be discussed in the next chapter) was teaching three classes at the Birmingham Athletics Institute and there were four other teachers of yoga in Birmingham who may

or may not have been aligned with Wilfred Clark and Margaret Ward at this time.⁸¹ However, Clark did not concentrate his energies on classroom teaching. Instead he worked on developing a national networking of yoga practitioners. Using his expertise with local newspapers, he sent in letters to local papers throughout the country asking for any individuals interested in yoga to write to him. He would file the letters, usually also sending a personal type-written reply. When Wilfred collected a few names and addresses in vicinity, he chose one correspondent and suggested that they organise group meetings. When the Wheel was more established he would publicise classes in his newsletter.⁸²

Known from 1965 as The Wheel of British Yoga, Clark and Ward attempted to nationally catalogue and coordinate yoga classes throughout the country. These small cells sprouted up all over Britain and Clark kept in touch with them through a monthly carbon paper type-written newsletter, the *Bulletin*, in which he suggested further reading on yoga. Coordinating correspondence, Wilfred Clark acted as the centre of the Wheel operating out of a caravan in the garden of his Wootton Wawen home; individuals wrote to him with their interests in yoga and he helped individuals to form groups across the country. For example, in the December 1967 Wheel *Bulletin* reports:

Several inquiries as to the nearest class have lately come from ladies in different parts of Surrey: all have been referred to Mr. Clark by, of all people, the beauty editor of 'Women's Journal.' Why he is at a loss to know. Anyway, he has written to two county papers and hopes to get something organised in that county; the nearest classes at the moment are in London.

Wilfred Clark also encouraged regular correspondence and questions from yoga students to whom he offered advice.⁸³ Some groups founded via Clark met in church or school halls, some approached their LEA to organise a class, while others met in private homes. By 1967, Wilfred Clark reported that he was regularly corresponding with at least fifty individuals throughout the country, many of whom were leading groups themselves.⁸⁴ With the help of Margaret Ward this network became more formally organised and run by a committee.

Figure 11: Wilfred Clark c. 1969. Photograph courtesy of Ken Thompson.

In May of 1967, the Wheel organised a national yoga rally attended by ‘close to 200 Yoga devotees from all over the country.’ The first conference had educational lectures addressing ‘various aspects of the great science of good living, including an unexpected and impressive demonstration of the power of the Sacred Syllable “AUM.”’⁸⁵ By 1970 the Wheel journal *Yoga* reported that it was co-ordinating ‘some 80 [yoga] groups, more than 100 teachers ... [and] thousands of students’ across Britain.⁸⁶ This organisational structure held until around 1969 when Wilfred Clark was beginning to find that the Wheel needed to be run by a committee. In this year the typewritten newsletters were replaced by a more professional A5 stapled journal. Now nearly seventy, Clark stepped down from official organisation duties but remained an important personality within the Wheel. He travelled all over the country to give lectures to yoga groups and offered ‘pranic healing’ sessions.⁸⁷ During the 1970s, Clark gradually withdrew from the Wheel, although he maintained a friendly association with it.⁸⁸

In a tribute to Wilfred Clark published on the occasion of his death, the magazine of the Wheel, then called *Spectrum*, explained that:

When the Wheel grew too big for him [Clark] (having confessed that what suited him best was a benevolent dictatorship) handed over to a committee. In 1972 he went off to start another one-man association – the Friends of Yoga.⁸⁹

The Friends of Yoga was not entirely a one-man show. There was a group called The Friends of Yoga (India) which Clark joined in 1972. From this position he was asked to represent the UK on The All-Indian Board of Yoga and the International Yoga Co-ordination Centre (Yococen) with the purpose of establishing worldwide teaching standards that encompassed the more spiritual and philosophical aspects of yoga.⁹⁰ Wilfred Clark travelled to India for at least one conference and soon was issuing teacher training certificates based on the guidelines agreed at the meeting. Although the Indian organisation changed to ‘Yococen,’ Clark kept the name of the British branch and its affiliates as the Friends of Yoga (FRYOG). This smaller organisation continued in Clark’s promotion of what he felt was the ‘correct’ approach to yoga. As

the Wheel developed in parallel to the requests of local educational authorities for the issuing of certificates, FRYOG maintained the more flexible approach of the early wheel, issuing teaching certificates both through its own teacher-training programmes and taking into account prior personal experience.⁹¹ FRYOG however never approached the success in national networking that Clark crafted in his organisation of the Wheel of British Yoga.

THE BRITISH WHEEL'S YOGA

The initial environment of Clark's Wheel of British Yoga was like that of the mutual education societies, where groups of individuals pooled resources and books to study a new subject together. Clark began issuing teacher certificates on behalf of the Wheel of British Yoga to those he felt had acquired adequate knowledge in the subject of yoga, by whatever means. Certificates began to be requested by LEA officials who wanted assurance that yoga teachers could be trusted as adult education tutors.⁹² The first few certificates were simply given on the basis of Wilfred Clark's personal opinion. Ken Thompson, who believes that he holds one of the first certificates (issued in 1967), remembered that he was simply given a certificate when he told Wilfred Clark that his Local Educational Authority (Ilford) required one.⁹³ Although Clark had been running correspondence courses in yoga throughout the 1960s, by 1969 it was time to develop a more formal teacher-training programme.

Figure 12: The first Teaching Certificate issued by the British Wheel of Yoga in 1967. Image courtesy of Ken Thompson.

After the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA) decided not to recognize Wheel teachers within the Inner London Adult Education classes (a decision that will be discussed in the next chapter), Wheel members Ken Thompson, Velta Wilson and Chris Stevens put together the first 'educationally approved Wheel teacher-training course' that ran from September 1971 at The Hermitage, Brentwood Evening Institute in Essex.⁹⁴ The programme involved workshops on yoga asana and pranayama,

teaching skills, and yoga philosophy. There were also other teacher training courses that were informally approved by the Wheel.⁹⁵ Clark wrote in 1971:

[I have] run such courses for nearly three years, covering technique in all the branches of Hatha Yoga with practical meditation and lecturing on many other forms, Raja, Gnana, Bhakti, Karma, Mantra, Yantra and Japa Yogs. These are enumerated to give some idea of the ground which should be covered at such courses.

In some classes – not necessarily associated with the Wheel – there is a tendency to specialise, maybe in Pranayama Yoga or postures, breathing and relaxation; it is respectfully submitted that this can only give students a restricted idea of what Yoga is.⁹⁶

Wilfred Clark's approach was based on an informal network of adult education tutoring. Yoga was presented as a subject that should be covered in breadth rather than depth. This approach treated yoga as an adult education course, to be covered in all its aspects, in summary form.

One of the hallmarks of Wilfred Clark's approach to yoga was an appreciative exploration of a diversity of yoga teachers and traditions. His approach, a survey of different yoga traditions, fitted easily within the context of adult education and did not depend in any significant extent upon the personal charisma of the teacher. Wilfred Clark worked hard to ensure that the Wheel of British Yoga took no single teacher as guru. According to Clark 'True Yoga' meant individual exploration towards living more ethically and more at peace; any path towards this goal was yoga. This theme was continued after Wilfred Clark retired from the Wheel.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, some of the many teachers who travelled to Britain in the 1970s were more influential with members of the Wheel than others. Generally, Indian yoga teachers who did not encourage exclusive loyalty were preferred. Teachers who found favour with the Wheel included Swami Satyananda Saraswati, founder of the Bihar School of Yoga; T.K.V. Desikchar, son of T. Krishnamacharya and teacher of what was formerly known as Viniyoga; Swami Sachidananda of Yogaville in Virginia, USA; and Dr. Swami Gitananda, a Canadian-born medical doctor with an Indian father, Irish mother, and American wife who set up an ashram in Pondicherry in 1968.⁹⁸ The Wheel did not

discuss the more sectarian International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON – or the Hare Krishnas) and Transcendental Meditation in its journal *Yoga*, although it occasionally listed some of their publications.

Although there was not an official Wheel book list, several books continued to be mentioned in Wheel newsletters and magazines and could be considered standard texts. In response to one enquirer about what to read on yoga, there was the following ‘Editor’s Note’ in *Yoga*:

Editor’s Note: Yoga literature is voluminous and growing. A small basic library might contain, in addition to translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads and the Sutras of Patañjali, ‘Fourteen Lessons in Yoga Philosophy’ – Ramacharaka, ‘Yoga’ – Ernest Wood, ‘Light on Yoga’ – B.K.S. Iyengar, and ‘Autobiography of a Yogi’ – Sri Yogananda.⁹⁹

During the 1970s, Wheel member Chris Stevens offered a ‘bookstall’ that advertised books-by-post on the back pages of *Yoga* which stocked these titles and many others. This allowed those who joined the Wheel to deepen their interest in what might be a difficult-to-find subject in bookshops outside of central London. The books of David Dukes, Ernest Wood, Theos Bernard, Desmond Dunne, Paul Brunton and Richard Hittleman were widely circulated. Chris Stevens offered the Penguin editions of the Bhagavad Gīta and the Upaniṣads as well as the more sectarian translations by the Theosophical Society, ISKCON (Hare Krishnas) and the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (Transcendental Meditation). The Penguin *Krishnamurti Reader* (1970) and Alan Watts’ *The Way of Zen* (1957) also feature.¹⁰⁰ From the evidence of this bookstall and the letters from readers printed in *Yoga*, it appears that Wheel members were reading widely about spirituality and mysticism in Indian traditions, both Hindu and Buddhist, as well as exploring spirituality as presented by Far Eastern, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic authors.¹⁰¹

After Wilfred Clark passed his position of ‘Honourable national organiser’ over to Chris Stevens in Autumn 1971,¹⁰² The Wheel of British Yoga became more focussed on producing teacher-training certificates and international networking. The national secretary Margaret Ward wrote in *Yoga* in 1972:

The Wheel's most important task at the moment is propagating and organizing teacher-education; a watertight and comprehensive scheme has replaced those of the past and all education authorities have been contacted, and groups have taken it up with enthusiasm.¹⁰³

By the winter of 1973, the leadership of the Wheel decided to register as a charity. At this time, it was proposed to rename the organization The Western Yoga Federation and there was a physical headquarters at Acacia House in West Acton, London which ran workshops as well as serving as an administrative centre. However, at the national congress it was found that the word 'Wheel' was very important for the membership and in August 1973 the organisation became The Wheel of Yoga.¹⁰⁴ It explained its main objectives in autumn 1973 as follows:

The Wheel of Yoga is a co-ordinating organization mainly operating in the United Kingdom, although having a membership in many countries overseas. It is a focal point for Yoga groups and individual devotees and its activities include public meetings, instruction seminars in all aspects of Yoga, the supervising of Yoga teacher education, co-operating with local education authorities in Yoga tuition, and the publication of literature.¹⁰⁵

While these objectives remained the same, the Wheel was looking more to Europe than India for competitive professionalisation. It was actively networking with members in 'Lebanon, Greece, Ethiopia, Africa, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France and South America, (all except Lebanon, it will be noted WEST of Suez) not to speak of others in Australia and New Zealand who are certainly not "Oriental."'¹⁰⁶

**Figure 13: British Wheel of Yoga event at Loughton Hall in June 1971.
Photograph courtesy of Ken Thompson**

The European Union of Yoga was founded in 1972 and the first British delegation of 26 individuals attended their annual conference in 1975.¹⁰⁷ After attending this conference, it was decided that a national designation was important and The Wheel of Yoga became The British Wheel of Yoga in the Summer of 1976; it has kept this name to the present date. By 1975, the Wheel had standardised these general

directives into a teacher-training course with approved teacher-trainers. In this it saw itself as ahead of many of the European yoga organisations.¹⁰⁸

The European Union of Yoga was largely formed at the initiative of millionaire Gerard Blitz and his Club Méditerranée in Zinal, Switzerland, which served as a base for international meetings.¹⁰⁹ A major part of these meetings was an attempt at cross-cultural networking and sharing audiences with favoured Indian teachers. It was from these meetings that T.K.V. Desikachar's teaching began to influence the Wheel. While some of the main lectures were professionally translated from French or German into personal headsets, smaller sessions were held in the native language of the speaker without translation.¹¹⁰ The annual conferences attempted to draw together some cross-cultural agreement about standards of yoga teaching and an exchangeable qualification across the continent.¹¹¹ However, the British Wheel of Yoga was sometimes lukewarm towards the European Union of Yoga, weighing the British contributions greater than the potential benefits of the continental exchange. The desire of some Wheel members to teach on the continent and the gravitas of an international qualification has kept the Wheel actively involved with the European Union of Yoga.¹¹²

Once the Wheel was established, Wilfred Clark dedicated himself towards an attempt to ensure that 'the whole Yoga be taught and not merely a part of it'¹¹³ – something that he described in the 1970s as 'True Yoga'. The early Wheel emphasised the 'spirit' of yoga over any specific content, stressing a balance between postures, breathing, meditation, concentration exercises, and philosophy. Decrying the focus on physical postures (asana) that was popular in many adult education classes, Wilfred Clark reiterates in the pages of *Yoga*, 'Yoga is not Yoga if such factors as meditation and short philosophical talks are omitted.'¹¹⁴

In 1967, Wilfred Clark recommended an asana practice primarily of Salute to the Sun (*Sūrya Namaskār*) as well as breathing exercises and quiet contemplation. Clark emphasised that every lesson or home practice should contain 10-15 minutes of lying down and relaxing in the dark (*śavāsana*).¹¹⁵ To assist yoga practitioners in relaxation, a variety of techniques were practised.¹¹⁶ Sometimes the practitioner concentrated on different points of the body to relax them; sometimes a tense-relax

action was used. Other techniques included guided imagery and counting the breath.¹¹⁷ Breathing exercises, called pranayama, were emphasised as well as a number of meditation practices. Wilfred Clark suggested teachers introduce at least one new breathing exercise to each class he taught throughout the course of an academic term.¹¹⁸ For the concentration and meditation element popular exercises included concentration on a candle flame, silent repetition of a word (mantra), counting the breath, guided images, or trying to feel energy (*prana*) in the body.¹¹⁹

The Wheel's idea of teaching philosophy was essentially short lectures on a number of different topics. In introductory classes, ideas of karma and reincarnation might have been introduced. In more 'advanced' groups, Wilfred Clark suggested discussing ideas of 'oneness,' 'vibrations,' astral planes, chakras and pranic healing. The meaning of the word yoga as 'union with the divine' was a possible topic for exploration. Another topics suggested by Clark for the 'philosophy' section was outlining the various 'types' of yoga; i.e. *hatha*, (focus on postures and control of the body), *karma* (focus on selfless action), *gnana* (discriminating knowledge and intellectual study), *bhakti* (devotion to God), *mantra* (use of sacred sounds) and *raja yoga* (literally 'kingly yoga,' and usually referring to the eight-limbed system described in Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras*).¹²⁰

One woman interviewed described her first yoga class, taught by a Wheel of British Yoga member in south Wales in 1969. At the time, Vi Neale-Smith was working part-time as a medical secretary and had an eight year-old daughter. Mrs. Neale-Smith's age and situation in life was typical of those attending the LEA classes during this period. She had heard about the yoga class after expressing an interest in the subject at a church tea. A friend in her young-wives group attended class in a nearby village and took her along to her first class.

It was brilliant. It was fantastic. Mostly *hatha yoga* . . . mostly posture work, mostly exercises. There was a relaxation and we did sit quietly just for a few minutes at the very end. But he [Jones] didn't call it meditation. And I suppose it wasn't because it wasn't long enough really. But it was certainly a very good feeling.

But this class held a good enough feeling for Neale-Smith to know that she wanted, someday, to be a yoga teacher; she began attending classes regularly and taught yoga with the Wheel from 1974 onwards.¹²¹ In her experience this first yoga class gave her a feeling of certainty that was only comparable to when she first met the man who would become her husband. Neale-Smith could not articulate exactly what it was about the yoga class that she found so appealing, but she had a strong intuition in that first yoga class that she had found something she wanted to continue.

Neale-Smith's first teacher, Philip Jones, was a well-respected teacher in the Wheel. Jones had been a Welsh mining engineer, but his lungs had become seriously damaged from coal dust. His yoga education was also in the autodidact tradition. According to a biographical summary:

Then by chance, he read a book on yoga which concentrated on breathing techniques and decided he had nothing to lose by trying the exercises. He found he had a great deal to gain: his lungs gradually began to recover, his general health improved and he is now fit enough to be a full time yoga teacher. He does two hours of breathing exercises every morning and says his lungs are getting better every year.¹²²

He became a committee member of the Wheel and founded the Welsh Yoga Teachers Association. Jones became well known for a distinctive and charismatic teaching, and for the emphasis on *pranayama*. Neale-Smith remembers the usual format of Jones' classes:

And as he got us more into the classes, that [pranayama] took up quite a bit of time – maybe 20 minutes out of every lesson. Then there would be about a ten minute relaxation and maybe about 10 minutes meditation at the end of it. So his lessons were quite well balanced from that point of view.

Wilfred Clark was very happy to champion Jones's approach to teaching yoga in preference to other teachers who focussed more on the physical postures.¹²³

CONCLUSION

The development of the Wheel of British Yoga was not the introduction of an alien cultural activity into Britain. In this context, yoga was received as a subject among many that could be studied during leisure time for personal self-improvement.

The yoga tradition of Wilfred Clark and the British Wheel of Yoga developed yoga as a subject within the LEA adult education evening class structure and was an extension of liberal (non-vocational) adult education. Clark designed yoga as a subject and argued that ‘all aspects’ should be presented in outline rather than too strict a concentration on any particular aspect. The Wheel of British Yoga believed that yoga was essentially a philosophical and spiritual subject. Yoga classes, in the early Wheel’s view, should consist of asana, pranayama and meditation practices as well as short talks on important concepts for a ‘well-balanced’ yoga class. If individuals wanted more depth and personal instruction in one aspect of yoga, the Wheel encouraged students to look at a number of Indian gurus. Allegiance to any single guru, however, was considered unhelpful in limiting a student’s understanding of yoga. This approach to yoga was developed within mainstream British culture; it promoted yoga from within the increasingly middle-class British adult education tradition.

The integration of yoga as an adult education subject within the LEA system provided a bureaucratic structure where classes could be advertised, organised, and taught on a low-cost basis. This allowed an affordable way for classes to expand as well as provide yoga with an indirect approval from the government. It enabled those with simple curiosity to try the subject in a trusted venue. LEAs influenced the shape yoga took in Britain by encouraging yoga teachers to have a qualification and requiring that yoga conformed to the overtly secular expectations of government-funded adult education in Britain. Subjects taught in the LEA structure were regulated by the principals of the institutes, were accountable to the elected officials of the local authority. Thus, there was an accountability that prevented the subjects from diverging too much from what the society found generally acceptable. Conversely, the acceptance of yoga in these institutions conferred a legitimacy and may have encouraged some to pursue the subject when they may not have had an interest in it as an autodidact. Adult education had been established for the purpose of expanding personal and educational horizons; yoga became popularised in Britain as a continuation of these goals.

CHAPTER 3. Charismatic Gurus in Adult Education

As early as 1965, Birmingham City Council was concerned about the proper qualifications for yoga practitioners. The city was concerned about the ‘hundreds’ who had enrolled for yoga in adult education venues. Apparently, there had been an attempt at ‘methodological investigation’ of yoga but this was found to prove ‘an irritating business.’ The *Times* described how one popular Birmingham yoga teacher had Keep-Fit qualifications but had learned yoga from books; while another teacher was a woman of Indian origin who “appeared to know quite a lot,” but had not ‘graduated from a yoga academy’. The article questioned, however, ‘If there were yoga graduates, would they, on the whole, be quite the sort of people one really wants?’¹

In the 1960s the British adult education system was faced with a demand for yoga teaching, but without any established means of assessing the quality or qualifications of a yoga teacher. The guru-*śiṣya* relationship is often considered an essential aspect of the transmission of yoga. Is it possible to have transmission of an authentic yoga tradition without an immediate guru-*śiṣya* relationship? In this chapter I will argue that an important characteristic contributing to the successful popularisation of yoga as a global phenomenon has been the institutionalization of charisma away from a direct guru-*śiṣya* interaction. In many ways, this model of yoga teaching and teacher-training certification developed in response to the needs of the British adult education context. This can be exemplified by examining how a woman named Sunita Cabral (1932–1970) gained the trust of the authorities at the Birmingham Athletics Institute where she taught from 1963 to 1970; her relationship with the local authority teaching bureaucracy will be compared to that of B.K.S. Iyengar (1918–2015) who was given special recognition by the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA) in certifying appropriate ‘yoga gurus’ for the British adult education context.

According to those who knew them Sunita and Iyengar had an exceptional ability to give an almost immediate experiential understanding of something understood as ‘yoga’ to many they interacted with, although the means to obtain the

same aim were somewhat different for each. According to Max Weber's theories, this type of authority could be termed charismatic.² Weber characterised charismatic authority as the motivating force for change in society, an inherently unstable, potentially revolutionary force that is 'foreign to everyday routine structures.'³ For any lasting organisation to be created from charismatic authority, Weber argues that charismatic authority must be 'radically changed,' and he termed this process the routinisation of charisma.⁴

For the case of yoga in Britain, Iyengar and Sunita show two different trajectories for integrating their charismatic authority into the adult education bureaucracy. Although resident in India, Iyengar created a significant bureaucracy whereby his understanding of asana could be transmitted in his personal absence. Initially Iyengar corresponded with his students in London answering their questions and commenting on photographs. Then, with the involvement of Peter McIntosh, chief inspector of physical education in the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA) Iyengar established a structure for training teachers within the LEA system. Although still living, Iyengar effectively routinized his charisma so that a recognisable teaching of yoga could continue in his absence. While highly popular during her lifetime, Yogini Sunita's approach was personal and she never developed – or intended to develop – a bureaucratic framework for transferring her knowledge. Before her death in 1970, Sunita trained a group of 20 teachers in Pranayama Yoga. While this group has continued teaching Pranayama Yoga and training new teachers, no new charismatic authority has revived the popularity or visibility that Sunita herself achieved. With limited social structures to transmit her knowledge, Sunita's tradition has faded as a social movement while Iyengar's charisma has become a globalised institution. In 2004, Iyengar was one of the United States *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world and 'Iyengar Yoga' entered the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

'PRANA FORCE ON RATES' - YOGINI SUNITA IN BIRMINGHAM

The majority of those in Birmingham doing yoga in the early 1960s were inspired by a woman called Yogini Sunita, the 'lady of Indian origin' mentioned above. Sunita dedicated herself to popularising yoga, largely in north Birmingham, between her 1959 arrival in Britain and her death in 1970. Sunita was raised in Bandra, a wealthy Catholic suburb of Bombay. She was born with the name Bernadette Bocarro, reflecting Portuguese ancestry, and her family were devout Catholics. English was spoken at home and the family considered itself to be of Brahmin caste.⁵ As a child, Sunita excelled at playing piano and thought she might have a career as a pianist. Then at sixteen when Bernadette rejected an arranged marriage with a business associate of her father, she felt the only alternative was for her to enter a convent. Therefore, Bernadette Bocarro joined a Franciscan order of nuns near Bandra and became Sister Teresa.⁶

She explained to a newspaper reporter in 1961 that, at first, she idealised religious renunciation. However, when she refused to keep writing to her mother for gifts of antique furniture for the convent (her family ran an antique shop in Bombay), her life in the convent changed. Suddenly unpopular, the sparse food and 'rigorous discipline' began to affect her health.⁷ She claimed that in her time at the convent she was 'deeply unhappy' and suffered from typhoid fever, lock-jaw and 'several operations.' According to her own report, Bocarro fortuitously found the outer gate of the convent unlocked during evening prayers and walked out of the convent, returning to her parents' home. She described her family as 'horrified' that she had left the convent, but they allowed her to remain hidden at home.⁸

After leaving the convent, Sunita described her 'only comfort' as solitary walks by the seashore. Here, she was struck by a man with 'wonderful eyes.' Her father recognised Bernadette's description as the well-known yogi 'Narainswami' who was believed to have 'cured leprosy, tuberculosis and many other diseases.'⁹ When Bernadette saw Narainswami again, he offered to teach her yoga. Through the practice of what Narainswami called Pranayama Yoga, Bernadette reported that confidence and peace of mind returned.¹⁰ There is no outside source of confirmation for this period of Bocarro's life.¹¹ She did not leave any detailed descriptions on teachings

Narainswami gave her. It is possible that Sunita herself did not know any history of Narainswami's yoga tradition. Her son Kenneth emphasised the nature of a teacher's traditional authority in Indian culture would have made these types of questions unnecessary for Sunita herself.¹² Yet by the time Bernadette reached Britain in late 1959, Yogini Sunita felt confident imparting both Pranayama Yoga and Japanese Massage to others.¹³ Recordings of her voice highlight a calm authority and confidence in giving instructions.¹⁴

After some time, the Bocarros were able to arrange a marriage for Bernadette to Roydon Cabral, another Catholic Indian of Portuguese ancestry, who worked as a printer for *The Times of India*. Bernadette accepted this marriage and had two children in India, Kenneth and Mignonne. She took employment as a secretary for the Italian Embassy in Bombay and also claimed to have taught yoga in schools while living in India.¹⁵ During the 1950s, the Cabrals began to think that the situation for anglicised Indians was becoming precarious and felt their children would have a better education abroad. The family decided to emigrate to England where some of Roydon Cabral's family had already relocated.¹⁶ Around December 1959, Roydon Cabral found work as a printer in the north Birmingham area and the family settled into a home in Walsall, an industrial town northwest of Birmingham. The children, fair in complexion and native English speakers, integrated into the local school without an experience of racism.¹⁷ Bernadette initially attempted to return to a career as a pianist, but also taught yoga to a few friends. These yoga students encouraged others to try, and Bernadette found that her knowledge of yoga was in more demand than her skill on the piano.¹⁸

Figure 14: Yogini Sunita c. 1965. Photograph courtesy of Kenneth Cabral and the Lotus and the Rose Publishers.

By mid-1961, Bernadette Cabral, a westernised Indian, had transformed into 'Yogini Sunita' a sari-clad Indian yoga teacher. Cabral transformed herself into a living promotion for Pranayama Yoga. Her dress and manner excited curiosity from

onlookers and encouraged interest in yoga. An interviewer for the BBC Radio 4 programme *Woman's Hour* described meeting Cabral in September 1961:

I met Yogi Sunita at a smart West End hotel. She was wearing a flame-coloured sari, sandals and long silver earrings with her dark hair swept back in a chignon. She was young and attractive and as she took off her sandals and sat cross-legged on the floor. I wondered how she had become interested in yoga.¹⁹

Dressed characteristically in a sari, Sunita usually squatted or sat on the floor for her media interviews, which increased her intrigue.²⁰ Having got her audiences' attention with her unusual appearance, Sunita impressed her listeners with a calm authority and skill in guiding them into an experience of relaxation.²¹

Her oldest child, Kenneth, recalled Sunita's hectic schedule during his childhood. Sunita taught yoga on most weekday evenings and ran the massage clinic all day Saturday. On Sundays the children often attended mass with their father before returning home to a lunch Sunita had prepared.²² In August 1961, Bernadette Cabral registered a business in the name of 'Yogi Sunita Clinic' in central Birmingham. In 1964 she used the name 'Sunita Cabral' to register 'The Yoga Relaxation Centre for Great Britain' and 'The Training School of Oriental Massage' as businesses both at the same address in Sutton Coldfield, a predominantly middle-class suburb in north Birmingham.²³ In 1963, her youngest child, Yasmin, was born in what Sunita claimed was a twenty-minute labour. Sunita also claimed to be up and working one hour after Yasmin's birth and that she normally needed only three or four hours of sleep daily.²⁴ While one can remain sceptical about these claims, Sunita was undoubtedly very busy.²⁵ This, combined with a presence that inspired calm and relaxation in her audience, was a striking and attractive combination to many.

When Sunita was interviewed for BBC *Woman's Hour*, the interviewer commented that 'I had always thought of yoga as mind over body, you know, the practice of physical exercises to achieve complete control of the body'²⁶ However, the interviewer went on to explain that 'Yogi Sunita teaches only relaxation of the mind' and has made a record of the relaxing formula. While the *Woman's Hour* transcript did not record Sunita's words, it is likely that she repeated her 'slip second' on the

radio. This is a mental exercise, which takes a minute and a half at most to perform, in which all those people and situations which require personal attention and involvement are brought to mind. Then one tries to let all of these attachments and worries go – just for one second. According to Sunita this practice will relax the mind and allow one to engage with all the demands of life more effectively. Sunita claimed that one ‘slipped second’ was equivalent to eight hours of ‘perfect sleep.’ Sunita advocated that her students practice this exercise thrice daily, upon waking, between noon and 2pm, and before sleep at night. She also maintained that hearing the teacher’s voice was necessary for beginners to learn this method and made recordings for this purpose.²⁷

Much of Sunita’s charisma was experienced through how she inspired students to ‘slip a second’ and experience ‘deep relaxation.’ In her book, she explained several times how the experience of peace **‘CANNOT BE TAUGHT’** (emphasis Sunita’s own).²⁸ But her calm and authoritative voice provided instructions which many experienced as leading to relaxation.²⁹ By personal example, she attempted to show the efficacy of the techniques she taught. She claimed that the primary qualification to teach Pranayama Yoga was not technical expertise. Rather, she explained **‘Above all, there must never be a furrow on the forehead, THAT IS THE NECESSARY QUALIFICATION.’**³⁰ This comment points to the personal example of relaxation and detachment in the midst of a busy life that Sunita attempted to model for her students. Sunita’s personal charisma was commented upon by the principal of the Birmingham Athletics Institute (BAI): ‘She had a rare gift of making every student feel they were the only person who mattered to her.’³¹ This was significant considering the numbers of students in the adult education classes; in 1965 the BAI reported that Sunita had taught over 780 students that academic year.

In the autumn of 1963, Sunita began yoga classes in the Women’s Section of the BAI. In the 1963-64 annual report the Principal reported that 131 students attended the ‘experimental’ yoga classes, continuing to state that:

[The yoga classes] have proved most popular. Many older women find great value from the carefully prepared exercises and the great stress on relaxation both of the body and the mind. Under the right supervision, I think these classes can be very valuable...’

From the principal's comments, it was clear that the yoga classes were slightly different from many of the Institute's other activities, which included traditional sports, gymnastics, judo and courses on 'beauty culture' for ladies. The principal of the women's section of the BAI further commented upon Sunita's 'great ability in the art as both teacher and performer' and the students' constant reports of benefits from the concentration and relaxation exercises.³²

Many students were enthusiastic in their praises of Sunita and her Pranayama Yoga techniques. Testimonials printed in the first issue of Sunita's book *Pranayama Yoga* included:

Lack of good sleep made life unbearable. Taking drugs did not solve anything. ... And today, I enjoy all the things I have wanted from life.

It took me three months to achieve the elusive slip-second, but it gives me tremendous energy to cope. ... I have learnt to be more tolerant.

When I mastered the slip-second, I learnt to rise above seemingly impossible situations.

Suffering acute attacks of migraine for twenty years, a friend... suggested I go along and take a course... I am quite over the migraine now ... it was really Sunita and the amazing calmness that really did the trick...³³

Sunita's students found that her personality and methods worked to help them cope with their lives more effectively. The large student numbers Sunita attracted at the BAI also testified to her appeal. The force of her personality was felt as the Principal for the Women's Section of the BAI remarked that attendances for yoga classes dropped significantly after her death.³⁴

Pranayama Yoga, as presented by Sunita, was a non-religious activity. She wrote that in India, 'Pranayama Yoga is by far the most popular form [of yoga], widely practised, and accepted by recognised organisations, because there is NO form of religion attached to its teachings.'³⁵ One of her students, a clergyman, wrote about Sunita's response when he broached the subject of God with her:

Do you believe that there is a God? She said, "I come from God, and I will return to God one day"

Do you ever ask God for anything? She said, “Never, I only thank Him for everything.” By this time, I was most interested.

When ill, or there is trouble in your family, surely you ask for Divine help? She then answered, ‘I trust God all the way. God knows what He is about. My children live this way too.’”

I thought she had gone very quiet, she is usually full of beans. Then she told me that at public lectures many people asked her similar questions and she would tactfully divert the conversation as she felt that religion was a very personal matter. Very wise I thought. There was another question, I wondered whether she would mind? ... *whether she ever prayed for any length of time?* “Never, I offer my whole life and all it contains as a prayer.” She excused herself politely and was out of the room. Remarkable, I thought, don’t you?³⁶

Thus, Sunita did not have to adapt her tradition away from a more explicit religiosity when she began teaching in Britain. Her understanding of Pranayama Yoga was that religion was private, while the techniques of relaxation were a subject of public teaching. The comments of this vicar suggest that Sunita avoided the subject of religion in public forums and thus separated her relaxation techniques from religious questions in the mind of her students.³⁷

Figure 15: Yogini Sunita's Teaching at the Yoga Relaxation Centre c. 1965. Photograph courtesy of Ken Thompson and the Lotus and the Rose Publishers.

Sunita trained her first group of about twenty Pranayama Yoga teachers at the residential adult education centre of Pendrell Hall in rural Staffordshire.³⁸ She did not intend that her teacher-training course would provide an automatic qualification for her students to teach yoga in adult education:

Assuming a student takes the Teachers’ Course, and a Yogi is confident that some of the students will be able to teach, it may well be that the Education Authorities do not select a single one from this group to teach for them. In this case a teacher will teach privately... on average, one in every thousand is chosen to work for Education.³⁹

She expected adult education officials would choose among Pranayama Yoga teachers those that had the personal charisma to transmit the tradition of Pranayama Yoga in this context. She wrote that:

Pranayama Yoga always remains a tradition. The education authorities respect this at all times. A dedication, such as this one, remains a 'pure vocation.' The technical qualification required is a thorough knowledge of psychology, the nervous system, the causes of tension in all its forms in mind and body... and in all three hundred exercises involved in Mind Control – Body Relaxation – Breathing and Physical Exercises. The degree of such a Yogi lies in the completion of all these requirements, but... the gift and ability to impart such a subject can never be decreed by letters. The recognition lies entirely with human beings who seek the study of the Art of Relaxation, which is the 'key' to health and calmness.⁴⁰

This method of integrating yoga within adult education was very dependent upon the personal charisma of future teachers. Yogini Sunita's means of transmitting her knowledge ensured the continuation of the tradition of Pranayama Yoga, but not its popularity. There are still Pranayama Yoga teachers practising in Britain, some of whom never met Sunita but were taught by those who did know her. However, these teachers numbers remain small and have not sought to increase visibility or align themselves with the larger yoga organisations, e.g. The British Wheel of Yoga.⁴¹

In April 1970, Yogini Sunita was fatally hit by a car as she crossed a road on foot at the age of 38.⁴² After her death the Principal of the BAI commented that Sunita's newly trained students carried on well and classes continued to be popular.⁴³ However, Sunita did not organise or standardise her teaching in a way that made national popularisation possible.⁴⁴ Her emphasis had been on a personal transmission from student to teacher and she made sure each of the potential teachers under her understood the principles of relaxation; passing her teacher-training was not a result of competency in physical exercises or memorization of technical information.⁴⁵ While Pranayama Yoga has continued via teachers trained by Cabral, these teachers have not attracted the same kind of student numbers. Cabral taught that Pranayama Yoga was a way of life, of doing one thing at a time, in the present moment, without anxiety. Primary qualification to teach this 'way of life' was the approval from the teacher that this understanding was embodied by the student in daily life as well as the yoga class.⁴⁶ Although Pranayama Yoga continues to be transmitted in Britain in this manner, it remains un-institutionalised and, therefore, less visible than other forms of yoga.

B.K.S. IYENGAR IN BRITAIN

Although based in Pune, India, B.K.S. Iyengar made annual trips to Britain between 1960 and 1974. Instead of focusing on relaxation, Iyengar attempted to make his students completely absorbed in the physical performance of postures and then relax completely at the end of a physically challenging class. Iyengar began to routinise his charisma by standardising the teaching of technical points for asana and pranayama and corresponding with his students during his absence. This put large aspects of Iyengar's teaching into a legal-rational framework that was transmissible without his personal guidance or reliance on personal charisma. Yet the experience that Iyengar wanted to transmit through his asana instructions relied upon the ability of yoga teachers trained in his system to embody their own personal charisma within the legal-rational structures. Iyengar also hoped to transmit more than simply physical instructions; however, some individuals understood this more clearly than others. By 1969, Iyengar's yoga had also become accepted within the framework of adult education evening classes. The way Iyengar was able to integrate his distance-teaching with the structure of the LEA system allowed Iyengar's teaching to be widely popularized and less reliant on the charisma of individual yoga teachers.

Born during the 1918 influenza epidemic, Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja (B.K.S.) Iyengar was a sickly child of a poor Brahmin family. One of Iyengar's older sisters was married to Tirumalai Krishnamacharya (1888– 1989) who lectured in Indian Philosophy (Yoga, Samkhya and Mimamsa) and also taught asana and pranayama, under the sponsorship of the Maharaja of Mysore.⁴⁷ At the age of sixteen he was invited by Krishnamacharya to stay with his sister and learn yoga. In the beginning Iyengar recalls that he 'had no genuine interest in yoga' and that when he was given exercises, the 'pain of the body was unbearable.'⁴⁸

Krishnamacharya had traditional authority over Iyengar as his brother-in-law and benefactor, but he also had considerable personal charisma. In one account, Iyengar reflects that it could have been his fear of Krishnamacharya's anger that kept him practising yoga. Krishnamacharya trained Iyengar, who was living in his home,

to obey his commandments unquestioningly. On his 70th Birthday Iyengar recalled that:

My Guru is a man of unpredictable knowledge with unpredictable moods. It was not easy to read his mind. If he said one thing at one time, he used to contradict the same at other time. We were made to accept and obey him without questioning. If I sit in the ordinary cross legs with the left leg first, he would say, take the right first. If the right is placed first, he would say, take the left first. If I stand, he would say ‘is that the way to stand?’ If I change, he would say ‘who asked you to change?’ ... Life became perplexing to me. Difference in age set fear in my heart and his presence was like a frightful nightmare.⁴⁹

Several times Krishnamacharya demanded yoga postures of Iyengar in public demonstrations which Iyengar only was able to perform by injuring himself.⁵⁰ Krishnamacharya’s teaching of Iyengar was never limited to asanas, he pushed Iyengar into the zeal and self-discipline that allowed him to dedicate his life to excellence in the ‘art’ of yoga. Despite his harsh treatment, Iyengar considered himself very fortunate to have been favoured by Krishnamacharya. Like in the case of Yogini Sunita, instruction in yoga was not about religious dogma or specific beliefs, rather, instruction in yoga was an approach to life.

Although Iyengar has claimed that personal instruction in yoga asana with Krishnamacharya was limited to these three intense days only, Iyengar practiced regularly in the yogashala with the other students.⁵¹ By October 1935 Iyengar reported that he was judged to have given the best performance of all of Krishnamacharya’s students in all three grades of ‘elementary, intermediate and advanced courses’ of yoga asana.⁵² These might be earlier versions of the sequences which have become Astanga Vinyasa Yoga as taught by another of Krishnamacharya’s students, Pattabhi Jois. At the age of nineteen Iyengar was sent by Krishnamacharya to the north Indian city of Pune (then Poona) to teach yoga for a six-month contract. After this initial appointment expired, Iyengar remained in the city practising asana for many hours a day and trying to find students.

Iyengar recalled that when he arrived, ‘yoga was not a popular subject. The economic condition kept people away from Indian thought and heritage.’⁵³ He later

reflected that fear of Krishnamacharya's temper kept him dedicated to earning a living through teaching yoga. He later reflected: 'I was [more] afraid of my Guruji's moods than to be called a madcap. The freedom had come to me by chance which I did not like to lose at any cost. If I go back, I have to join my Guruji only. That means to live in the web of constant fear.'⁵⁴ He found particular success when he tried to popularise yoga by taking on patients of medical professionals. In 1945 Iyengar began teaching the daughter of a rich and influential nationalist, who was severely affected by polio. After his success with the girl was verified by respected Pune doctors, Iyengar made more contacts and gained referrals within Pune's Indian elite.⁵⁵

Due to his ill-health as a child Iyengar concentrated on perfecting asana. While his inspiration and concentration on this particular aspect of yoga can be seen as a novel development, Iyengar considered that he was simply working with what his guru had taught him. Reflecting on the transmission of knowledge and charisma through the yoga traditions Iyengar has commented:

I consider my Guru, and my Guru's guru as father of Yoga who sowed the seed to think and analyse the practical side for further development in this art. ... coming from the seed, whether it is myself or a colleague, we might change techniques like the branches of the tree, but we all belong to that one tree alone. With this traditional background I carry the message of Yoga when opportunities are thrown.⁵⁶

The educational influences on Iyengar beyond Krishnamacharya are all auto-didactical, consisting of a survey of books on yoga asana in his first years in Pune during the late 1930s, with reference to traditional texts and visiting yogis' lectures as Iyengar saw appropriate. Iyengar considers he has always taught traditionally because he had not been educated in any other method. Iyengar's primary education was observation in his own asana practice. He reflected:

In order to enjoy freedom, I thought I should practise more and struggle to learn English as I was not well familiar with it. I began picking up some books on Yoga to read, to get the basic ideas of Yoga. I saw lots of books on Yoga, but they did not interest me at all. I watched a lot of asanas from books. Shirsasana of one person was different to the other. I thought that the practitioners must be presenting according to their whims and fancies. Doubts and confusions led me to do all types of their presentations to find out by trials and errors, for

uncovering the wrongs to discover the right ways. I began imitating the poses according to the illustrations which never never gave me any satisfaction of right feeling. I never read or looked at books on Yoga again. The moment trials and errors stopped daunting and taunting, my journey truly began in Yoga.⁵⁷

Although this was a type of autodidacticism, Iyengar continued to work with the model his guru had taught, testing his experience against the tradition as he understood it.

In 1954, Iyengar arrived in Britain for the first time on the invitation of the violin virtuoso Yehudi Menuhin (1916– 1999). A child prodigy, Menuhin sought in yoga a way to bring release to his bodily tension and improve his performances.⁵⁸ He had begun taking lessons from Iyengar while touring India in 1952 at the personal invitation of Prime Minister Nehru. Famously, Nehru made a friendly challenge to Menuhin and the two were found in headstand as the butler came in to announce dinner. When this story reached the press, ‘gurus began to queue up wherever [Menuhin] went, each recommended by some prominent patron.’⁵⁹ A student of B.K.S. Iyengar was part of Menuhin’s welcoming party and convinced Iyengar to get on the train to visit Menuhin in Bombay. According to Menuhin, he warned Iyengar that he only had five minutes for him, however Iyengar guided the violinist into a deep sleep from which he awoke not five minutes, but an hour later. Impressed, Menuhin enthusiastically requested Iyengar to teach him during that visit.⁶⁰

This began a regular teaching relationship between the two men. Menuhin brought Iyengar to Europe in 1954 and the United States in 1956.⁶¹ Then, between 1960 and 1975, Iyengar travelled to London to teach Menuhin every summer and was usually resident for at least a month.⁶² The New York-born Menuhin was an influential figure in British society, not only for his outstanding musical ability but also for his philanthropic and humanitarian interests.⁶³ Menuhin's second wife was the British ballerina Diana Gould and from 1950– 1984 the couple made their family home in Highgate.⁶⁴ It was through Menuhin’s annual requests (from 1960) to be taught by Iyengar in London that Iyengar found his first British students.

Figure 16: B.K.S. Iyengar teaching Yehudhi Menuhin photograph courtesy of Menuhin Center Saanen.

Figure 17: B.K.S. Iyengar teaching Yehudhi Menuhin photograph courtesy of Menuhin Center Saanen.

Amongst Menuhin's circle of friends in London was the Angadi Family. Patricia Angadi [née Fell-Clark] (1914-2001) was born into an 'affluent and conservative haute bourgeoisie' family in Hampstead.⁶⁵ She had met her Indian husband, Ayana Angadi, at a Ram Gopal Kathkali dance performance in London that received good reviews during its pre-war 1939 tour.⁶⁶ Ayana Angadi was a tanpura player and Trotskyite intellectual who saw himself as a 'cultural ambassador between East and West.'⁶⁷ When Patricia was elected head of the Hampstead Arts Council in 1953, the couple was well placed in Britain's cultural elite to introduce their passion for Indian music to Britain.⁶⁸

They founded the Asian Music Circle to promote performances of Indian music in Britain in 1956 and Yehudi Menuhin was made the nominal president.⁶⁹ Menuhin turned to this group to find additional work for his yoga teacher, who had much free time on his hands during his London visits. In 1960, the second time Menuhin brought Iyengar to London as his personal teacher, Iyengar gave a private demonstration to the Asian Music Circle and a public demonstration in Highgate; that year three people attended private classes at the house of the Angadis in Finchley, north London.⁷⁰ Iyengar's impromptu demonstration at a pre-Wimbledon party attracted press coverage as did the demonstrations he gave at public venues like the Everyman's Theatre in Hampstead.⁷¹ Despite this press coverage and high-profile students, in the early 1960s, Iyengar only had a dozen or so regular students. The morning class consisted of musicians, including the well-known pianist Clifford Curzon and famous cellist Jacqueline du Pre. The evening class consisted of six others.⁷²

The small size of these early classes created an intense personal interaction between the keen yoga students and Iyengar. Diana Clifton, along with several of these

first students corresponded with Iyengar regularly during the 60s and 70s, exchanging news of their families as well as receiving Iyengar's advice on yoga. In 1962, she sent a series of photographs to Iyengar and as reply he wrote:

I went through all the pictures and remarked in the back. In the whole you have made a good progress. For your husband standing postures and twistings are good.... Hope members of the yoga class are fine.⁷³

This personal feedback was very important for many of Iyengar's early students and they could ask Iyengar directly for advice about how to deal with particular problems.⁷⁴ Initially, Diana Clifton led the small group in a weekly meeting to practice their yoga after Iyengar returned to India.⁷⁵ She was chosen to lead the group because she had no health problems and had already been practising yoga from Indra Devi's *Forever Young, Forever Healthy* (1955).⁷⁶ Slowly, friends and acquaintances became interested and Iyengar authorised the group to teach in pairs from 1962.⁷⁷ In addition to this correspondence, Iyengar returned to Britain for a month every year over the next fifteen years; in this way a closely-knit network of students was established.

Figure 18: Photograph of a performance of 'The Temptation of Buddha' organised by the Asian Music Circle in London during in 1966/67. Diana Clifton is on the left. Photograph from the Diana Clifton Collection, Courtesy of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK).

IYENGAR AND THE INNER LONDON EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY (ILEA)

In 1969, it was decided that only teachers approved by Iyengar could teach yoga in the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA). The process that led to this decision began in 1967, when a yoga class had been allowed to run on an 'experimental basis' at the Clapton Adult Education Institute. Even before this initial class opened, ILEA had decided that yoga could be an appropriate subject as 'a means of keeping

fit'.⁷⁸ Before allowing the class to begin at Clapton, the committee contacted the Birmingham City Council and discovered that 'despite initial adverse press comment and some opposition by Members, the Birmingham Education Committee established the [yoga] classes with continued success.'⁷⁹ Therefore, the committee recommended a trial yoga class. The author of the report also noted that the Chief Inspector of Physical Education for ILEA, Peter McIntosh, was 'keen to assess the value of such a class'⁸⁰

Peter McIntosh (1915– 2000) shaped how yoga was understood and practised in Britain. Something of a visionary, McIntosh's influence on sport and physical culture in Britain extended much further than the ILEA position (which he held from 1959-1974). McIntosh wrote the first substantial historical and sociological studies of sport in Britain. He passionately argued physical education developed the cultural, economic and political interests of society.⁸¹ But McIntosh was also an enthusiastic advocate of sport for "its own sake" and firmly championed the importance of physical culture, linking it with classical Greek ideals. Having read Classics at Lincoln College, Oxford, McIntosh had a deep appreciation of Grecian physical culture.⁸²

Previously, as the Deputy Director of Physical Education at Birmingham University from 1946 to 1959, McIntosh designed the first university degree courses on Physical Education in Britain and helped set the culture of physical education in Birmingham which allowed Yogini Sunita's classes to thrive. After leaving Birmingham, McIntosh became more involved with the politics of contemporary sport in Britain as a 'key figure in the formation of the Sports Council,' serving on its committee between 1966 and 1974.⁸³ Among other activities, McIntosh drafted a paper delivered at the 1960 Rome Olympics that catalysed the formation of the International Council of Sport, Science and Physical Education.

It was McIntosh who took a personal interest in introducing this new subject of yoga to the physical education curriculum for London. While excited about the potential of yoga, his influence on ILEA officials led to a focus on identifying a suitably qualified teacher:

Owing to the growing demand for classes there is a tendency for well-meaning enthusiasts – some perhaps not so well-meaning – to push themselves forward as teachers. Inspectors of physical education do not have the experience in this particular subject necessary to ensure good standards of teaching and work.⁸⁴

A September 1968 report to the ILEA noted the newly founded Wheel of British Yoga as a possible authority for certifying quality Hatha yoga instruction and suggested that it be investigated further.⁸⁵ However, ILEA documents made no further mention of the Wheel. As the Wheel argued that yoga was misplaced as a physical education subject, it is likely McIntosh believed that the Wheel's syllabus did not guarantee high standards within a physical education department.⁸⁶

McIntosh found the assurances of how to find 'competent and reliable' instructions on asana and pranayama through B.K.S. Iyengar. Reportedly, at a social event, McIntosh had a casual conversation about yoga with Yehudi Menuhin's sister, Hephzibah Hauser, who felt she had benefited from Iyengar's teaching.⁸⁷ McIntosh then spent a period investigating and discussing yoga as a subject with Iyengar. Beatrice Harthan recalled that Iyengar often stayed with Lady Coleraine while he was teaching Menuhin in London, she further recalled that:

Lady Coleraine, who was in our practice group, arranged for Peter McIntosh and the late Lord Noel Baker, Nobel prize winner and president of UNESCO's International Council on Sport and Physical Recreation, to watch Mr Iyengar teach during his summer visit to England...⁸⁸

McIntosh reported that he discussed with Iyengar 'the difficulties in the way of ensuring that those who offer themselves as teachers at Hatha Yoga are competent and reliable.' McIntosh and his colleagues were also impressed by *Light on Yoga* which the ILEA report considered 'probably the most reliable English text on the subject [of Hatha Yoga]'.⁸⁹ It was due to Iyengar's standing as a 'master of Hatha Yoga' (i.e. an expert authority) that Peter McIntosh agreed to let yoga enter the ILEA adult education system. The idea of a qualified 'master' ensures some level of competence but does not have quantifiable standards like those required of passing biomedical examinations. When Peter McIntosh approved 'gurus trained by Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar, the author of 'Light on Yoga', a recognized authoritative book on this subject,' he gave

Iyengar-trained teachers a bureaucratic authority as well as an expertise-based authority within the ILEA.⁹⁰

Figure 19: Flyer for a 1966 demonstration by BKS Iyengar in London to promote the publication of *Light on Yoga*. Photograph courtesy of John Yorke.

In Iyengar, McIntosh found a quality of instruction in asana and pranayama which he felt could be approved. Yoga was also only to be taught ‘provided that instruction is confined to ‘asanas’ and ‘pranayamas’ (postures and breathing disciplines) and does not extend to the philosophy of Yoga as a whole.’ All yoga tutors were subject to ‘prior approval by the Senior Inspector of Physical Education.’⁹¹ In practice, McIntosh approved the yoga teachers that were put forward by Iyengar’s appointed trainer in London, Silva Mehta (1926-1994), who was giving, weekly yoga teacher-training class at the ILEA Physical Education College in Paddington from 1971– 1979. This was a compromise which recognised the traditional-charismatic nature of Iyengar’s authority and it was combined with the bureaucratic authority of an ILEA-approved training course.

Figures 20 - 21: B.K.S. Iyengar teaching at an ILEA gym in 1971 from *Yoga & Health* magazine.⁹²

Figure 21: BKS Iyengar teaching prospective yoga teachers in an ILEA gym in 1971 from *Yoga & Health* magazine.

Figure 22: Figure 20: BKS Iyengar teaching prospective yoga teachers in an ILEA gym 1971 from *Yoga & Health* magazine.

Silva Mehta was born in Czechoslovakia but had attended university at Oxford. During 1957, while she was living in India, Mrs Mehta began studying with B.K.S. Iyengar twice a week to help with a painful back condition she later described as a ‘fractured spine.’ She recalled that her two young children Shyam and Mira ‘came

with me to class and made an attempt at some of the postures, but often they played quietly instead.’⁹³ She returned to England in 1960 her children, continuing her yoga practice by meeting with the groups organised by the Asian Music Circle. Thus, Silva Mehta was one of the more ‘senior’ students of Iyengar and an appropriate choice to lead these classes. Both teachers and those hoping to become yoga teachers would attend the class. For the first few years there were no standardised syllabuses of postures or contraindications for specific medical conditions. However, within a few years Iyengar did develop three ‘grades’ of progressively difficult asana for the ILEA classes.⁹⁴ By 1979 approximately 200 yoga teachers had been trained on this course.⁹⁵

These classes are remembered by participants as being ‘tough’ and ‘highly charged.’ John Claxton, an Iyengar teacher in the ILEA from 1974 to 1983, remembered Iyengar’s teaching approach as being:

A strange experience because – he taught in a way that was very un-English really. ... He wasn’t afraid to express his anger. He wasn’t afraid to show real disapproval of what was going on – and to humiliate the teachers for not teaching the practice properly. ... He demanded a very high standard of practice and got it.⁹⁶

Much of the instruction was focussed on details of how to work in the basic postures. One pupil’s notes taken from a May 1974 class taught by Iyengar in London consist entirely of anatomical instructions. For example, notes for the yoga posture *Virabhadrasana I* (Warrior I) include ‘Turn at the kidneys. Inner arms straight. Raise arms stretching from coccyx.’⁹⁷ A large part of the class was practical, with a focus upon teaching and demonstrating asana in front of students in mirror image. Iyengar would approve would-be yoga teachers on his annual visits. According to some reports, Silva Mehta sometimes decided when the students were ready to teach in Iyengar’s absence.⁹⁸

In response to criticisms that he only taught physical postures, Iyengar described his approach as a pragmatic expedient: ‘Better life can be taught without using religious words. Meditation is of two types, active and passive. I took the active side of meditation by making students totally absorbed in the poses.’⁹⁹ A student quoted Iyengar teaching during one of his London visits:

The end of discipline is the beginning of freedom. Only a disciplined person is a free person. So-called ‘freedom’ is only a license to act and do as we like. Yoga is to train and discipline the worries and anxieties of men and women.¹⁰⁰

Through disciplining bodies Iyengar hoped to discipline his students’ minds.¹⁰¹ Iyengar attempted to give his students control over both their minds and bodies by demanding precision in asana. The continuation of this part of Iyengar’s yoga tradition relied upon the ability of other yoga teachers to create this experience within the framework of the legal-rational structure of Iyengar’s certification system.

Some of Iyengar’s approved yoga teachers were able to embody yoga with their own personal charisma. A particularly influential teacher under the Iyengar system was Penelope (Penny) Nield-Smith (1922– 1989), who inspired many students to train as Iyengar teachers through her classes all over London.¹⁰² Students recalled that when Penny ‘exalted us to stand and concentrate on the way our feet were planted on the ground, she was fond of remarking how man is in a hurry to explore outer space, but is not yet sufficiently aware of what his own feet are doing on earth.’ This comment related to her personal dedication to global environmental and social causes. Her students remember that she was passionate about environmentalism, the writings of Krishnamurti and African culture among other causes.¹⁰³ Former students Sophy Hoare and Mary Stewart recalled that ‘she seemed to involve us in these causes in the very manner in which she told us to drop our shoulders away from our ears or stretch our little toes.’ In particular she used the same words and phrases in every class, often with implicit ‘double meanings’ – one simple meaning in the class and a greater meaning if applied outside the class.¹⁰⁴ In this way Penny Nield-Smith created an environment in her classes where attention to the physical body during the asana practice could be transformed into an attention for personal and global entelechy. She was a particular example of a yoga teacher under Iyengar who generated her own personal charisma and inspired others to continue within the increasingly legal-rational authority of Iyengar yoga in London.

IYENGAR YOGA IN MANCHESTER

Manchester was also an area where Iyengar found students who organised to propagate his teaching. Iyengar first came to Manchester in 1968 at the invitation from two women who were already teaching yoga in the LEA evening classes. The more senior of the two, Pen Reed, had been teaching yoga in the South Manchester Withington Further Education Centre from 1965 after having taken lessons in yoga in Birmingham from an Indian, probably Sunita Cabral.¹⁰⁵ The second woman, Jeanne Maslen, came to yoga after Reed demonstrated yoga *asana* at the end of a Keep-Fit class in the mid-1960s.¹⁰⁶ After seeing a demonstration given by Iyengar on television, the two yoga teachers arranged for Iyengar to give a public demonstration on 4 July 1968 at Spurley Hey High School in Gorton, Manchester.

Over five hundred tickets were sold for the event. The two women had arranged for some of their regular students to join them for a demonstration in front of friends and family before Iyengar's demonstration. As one student recalls:

Jeanne was performing a graceful Virabhadrasana III to the gentle strains of Brahms, balancing on one leg ... when, to her horror, she looked down and saw a brown face with a thunderous expression looking up at her. In front of the 500 people he berated them soundly for desecrating his art, then proceeded to give a demonstration of postures with such purity and clarity that the audience was spellbound and Pen and Jeanne complained not at all about their rough treatment, and only asked to be taught themselves.¹⁰⁷

According to Maslen and Reed, Manchester's Withington Education centre, which sponsored the demonstration, was inundated with demand for yoga classes after Iyengar's demonstration. Jeanne Maslen remembers queues that went 'out the door through the front gardens and round the corner' for the classes.¹⁰⁸

To meet the demand for yoga teachers, the two women quickly set up a teacher-training programme in the Withington and Trafford areas.¹⁰⁹ According to the Manchester and District Iyengar Yoga Institute newsletter:

The decision of Manchester Education Committee to endorse a course for yoga teachers at Withington, emphasized the need for a specific standard of excellence. With these thoughts in their minds, a number of teachers attended meetings of other groups and looked at their methods. They came back more, rather than less convinced that Iyengar's method with its precision and profound understanding of the body and its needs should be the guiding

principle. More decisions followed. The need for a formalized system of training teachers (the present syllabus for our training course is included in this journal) and the need for an information source for the many hundreds of students. All these things led ultimately to the forming of the Manchester and District Institute of Yoga...¹¹⁰

This 'Institute' had no official premises but was a network of teachers qualified in the Iyengar system in the Manchester area. The Manchester yoga teacher-training programme started in 1971–72. It was open to those who had taken yoga classes under a 'recognised teacher' for at least two years. The course lasted 34 weeks, with 4 contact hours per week and an emphasis on physiology and anatomy. The purpose of this focus was to 'safeguard against physical injury which can be incurred if the complicated posture exercises are taught by a person uninstructed in this direction.' The successful passing of a written and practical assessment in front of yoga instructors and 'educational experts' would result in a diploma 'recognised by the Manchester Education Committee.'¹¹¹ While Iyengar did not personally select teachers as in London, he was consulted on the syllabus, which further facilitated the growth of a bureaucratic means of transmitting Iyengar's understanding of yoga.

Figure 23: Manchester Demonstration by B.K.S. Iyengar Advertisement from 1972. Image courtesy of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK).

Unfortunately, there was no discussion of this course or its assessment in the Manchester Further Education Committee minutes. Unlike London, Manchester had no subcommittee with an interest in Physical Education; unlike Birmingham, Manchester had no institution dedicated to promoting access and excellence in sport and physical education. Physical culture offerings at Manchester evening classes during the 1960s and 70s were more limited than in either Birmingham or London.¹¹² Further Education Sub-Committees regularly discussed their difficulty in addressing the further educational needs of the Manchester community.¹¹³ It is possible that yoga classes were not closely examined because they subsidized other further-education courses.¹¹⁴ However, it was in Manchester that courses on 'Iyengar yoga' further

developed their content of asana syllabuses and anatomy basics which increased the legal-rational authority of the adult education environment.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF IYENGAR YOGA

As the 1970s progressed, Iyengar teachers in Britain in both London and Manchester began to work together to create a national assessment body which issued certificates. In June 1978, the B.K.S. Iyengar Teachers' Association explained to ILEA that:

In view however of the great increase in the demand for teachers over the past few years, and in order to safeguard potential students, Mr Iyengar recently decided to issue Certificates to those of his pupils he considered qualified to teach.

Certificates in different grades have been issued. Most people hold the Elementary Certificates which authorise them to teach a number of basic postures and preparatory pranayama. This is perfectly safe for ordinary adult education classes. Some people hold Intermediate Certificates, and a very few Advanced Certificates. We consider, however, that teaching of intermediate and advanced work is outside the scope of ordinary adult education classes.¹¹⁵

Elementary and Intermediate Certificates were assessed in Britain, while Advanced Certificates were issued by Iyengar personally.¹¹⁶ From 1978, formal assessments of all Iyengar-trained teachers were made by a professional organisation of Iyengar teachers, the newly founded B.K.S. Iyengar Teachers' Association. At the end of a training period, potential yoga teachers would be assessed by a panel of qualified yoga teachers whom they did not know personally. This system replaced successful completion of a course and the informal approval of the course tutor. This formal issuing of certificates was partially taken to ensure that teachers using Iyengar's name would have accountability for at least a certain standard of training.

In addition to teaching in Britain, Iyengar increasingly made visits to North America, Europe, and Southern Africa. Iyengar made his first trip to southern Africa in 1968 after a South African yoga practitioner attended his London classes. White South Africans travelled to Mauritius for his classes because the Indian government would not allow Iyengar to travel to apartheid South Africa.¹¹⁷ Iyengar returned to

Africa, teaching in Malawai and Kenya in 1971 and Swaziland in 1972, 1973, and 1976.¹¹⁸ He made his second visit to the United States in 1973 and subsequently gained a larger following of teachers.¹¹⁹ The facilitation of Iyengar's international networks was assisted by the form of legal-rational structure developed in London and Manchester.

Figure 24: Photograph of Diana Clifton in Pune 1977. Photograph in the Diana Clifton Collection, courtesy of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK).

When Iyengar's international students funded the opening of a yoga centre in Pune this became the centre of the international Iyengar network. Opening in 1976, students worldwide began traveling to Pune for a month or more of intensive daily lessons with Iyengar, his daughter Geeta and son Prashant. This ensured that students felt a personal relationship with Iyengar as a teacher and that teaching was controlled and standardised at this one source. Many of the committed teachers would travel regularly to Pune. However, a new generation of British-based teachers was developing who did not necessarily have a personal experience of Iyengar.¹²⁰ Furthermore, extensive bureaucratic structures Iyengar developed ran with minimal personal involvement. For example, in 2006, there were 85 newly qualified 'Introductory Level Iyengar Yoga Teachers.'¹²¹ Many of these would have become 'Iyengar Yoga Teachers' without having traveled to Pune or met Iyengar personally. It currently takes a minimum of six years of practice with Iyengar teachers and passing a standard assessment to become an Introductory Iyengar Yoga Teacher in Britain; to apply for classes with Iyengar's children in Pune eight years of practice are required. Other countries with less density of qualified practitioners have less rigorous requirements, particularly for being allowed to take classes at RIMYI in Pune.¹²² Iyengar has developed a successful method of routinising his charisma and ensuring the continuation of his yoga tradition.

CONCLUSION

Both Iyengar and Sunita presented yoga as a non-religious activity that could provide physical and psychological benefits to the British public. In contrast to the Wheel, they both concentrated upon a single presentation of yoga rather than a broad survey of different approaches to the subject. Both Iyengar and Sunita had considerable personal charisma, attracting students by what was perceived as unique insight to what was essentially a new cultural practice for Britons. Sunita's classes were popularized by word of mouth, local newspaper reporting and the institutional framework of the Birmingham Athletics Institute. While this initially popularised yoga in Birmingham, by relying on traditional transmission of the tradition from one charismatic teacher to another, Sunita did not institutionalise her charisma.

Pranayama Yoga's lack of institutionalisation can be partially attributed to Sunita's early death, but there was also a fundamental difference in the method of transmission between Sunita and Iyengar. Sunita's approach was essentially a traditional transmission of charismatic authority; those students with a deep understanding of her tradition would in turn transmit Pranayama Yoga to others. The permission to teach others Pranayama Yoga would be given at the discretion of the established teacher, based on how well the students understood the system rather than any formal, bureaucratic method. Her teacher-training course was not designed to automatically qualify students for adult education classes. For this, Sunita recognised that few would have the charismatic quality required to inspire educational authorities' trust. In her book on Pranayama Yoga Sunita wrote that: 'on average, one [yoga teacher] in every thousand is chosen to work for Education.'¹²³ After her death, some students did continue to teach Pranayama Yoga within the Birmingham-area adult education system. However, Sunita anticipated that most of her teachers would work privately. As the memory of Sunita's personal charisma has faded, this has become increasingly the case. While Sunita's Pranayama Yoga continues to be taught in Britain, none of the teachers she trained have had the charisma to further popularise this yoga tradition into a visible social movement.

In contrast, Iyengar managed to incorporate a legal-rational structure for transmitting important aspects of his yoga tradition. This allowed for entry of

significant numbers of recognised, 'qualified' teachers into the adult educational system in Britain. Adult education courses for yoga teacher-training were approved first in London (1969), then in Manchester (1972). Local authorities felt assured of a standard of competence and excellence in the performance of asana, an aspect of yoga that was felt to be appropriate in this context. This successfully popularised Iyengar's tradition of yoga beyond the sphere of his personal influence or reliance on his own personal charisma. Although, the routinisation of Iyengar's charismatic yoga teaching into institutional bureaucracy has created an internationally recognised form of yoga, yoga is less defined by the teacher-pupil (traditional guru-*śiṣya*) relationships than it is by the institutionalised system. Although yoga now has the benefit of more worldwide availability, the contemporary experience of yoga in Britain is not defined by a relationship with a charismatic personality.

CHAPTER 4. Middle Class Women Join Evening Classes

Yoga classes were often in physical education departments in adult education facilities during the 1960s and 70s, in ostensibly gender-neutral categories. However, by most estimates, 70-90 per cent of the students in classes were women.¹ Women began practising yoga for a variety of reasons, but improving their own feelings of physical health and mental wellbeing was a primary concern. Although yoga classes often focussed on participants' subjective somatic experiences, women reported that its effects in terms of better emotional and physical well-being motivated their attendance. Women often reported that they attended a yoga class because it improved their ability to perform social duties and responsibilities at home and work. It was felt by many women that improving their health and emotional equilibrium, two attributes often attributed to yoga classes better enabled them to care for themselves, their husbands and children.

The politics of health have long been intimately related to national welfare and ideas of citizenship.² Dorothy Porter attributes the concept of 'health as a right of citizenship' to eighteenth century French and American revolutionary ideals.³ Furthermore, public health and modern sanitary reform has been on the British government's agenda since at least the 1830s.⁴ Following other states, notably Prussia, in the early twentieth century Britain began encouraging its population to be fit and healthy for the possibility of military action.⁵ As Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska has shown, during the interwar period, physical culture and public health became associated with eugenic notions of national interest as well as the focus of both private and governmental health campaigns.⁶ From its inception, the goal of public health was coupled with a need for public education about the causes of disease and its prevention.⁷

There has often been a class element associated with both ability and willingness to act upon public health recommendations. For example, Simon Szreter has argued that the educated and relatively wealthy middle classes of Britain's South

were able to enact community sanitary reforms with greater efficacy than in the North.⁸ More relevant to the case of British yoga practitioners, Avner Offer has shown that in the second half of the twentieth century, middle and upper class women have been more successful at maintaining ideal body-mass than women of other classes.⁹ The participation of middle class women in yoga classes can be understood as continuing a long British tradition of improving health and educational standards. An important element of yoga's appeal in post-war Britain was the way it supported a national agenda of individual responsibility for health and wellbeing. This was a social message that middle-class women were particularly interested in upholding and well-positioned to act upon.

WOMEN IN ADULT EDUCATION IN POST-WAR BRITAIN

Courses offered at evening institutes were often highly gendered and women were becoming an increasingly important population of those in adult education. During the 1950s there was a rapid growth in numbers of Women's Institutes and the Townswomen's Guilds as well as women's membership and participation in co-educational bodies. While the 1960 Worker's Educational Association (WEA) welcomed this development 'unreservedly' it also noted that:

so far the influx of women has consisted mainly of those from a comparatively favourable social and educational background. There is still a lack of women recruits from lower income groups and who left school at the age of fourteen or fifteen... recruitment difficulties are obvious: the growing practice of married women going out to work, the low age of marriage and child bearing, and also perhaps lingering traditional self mistrust...¹⁰

While in 1960, 49% of female attendees for adult education did not work outside the home, the WEA report also noted that increasing numbers of women were working outside the home for reasons of personal fulfilment as much as economic necessity. Middle class women did not generally need to work for economic reasons during the 1950s, but wanted more connection to the world outside the home and the personal autonomy earning money entailed. For many middle class women, the goals of freedom and autonomy were more psychological and ideological rather than due to

economic necessity.¹¹ The more economically disadvantaged who had to support a family simply did not have the leisure time for either yoga or other non-vocational pursuits.

The revival of feminism in the 1960s was largely pioneered by middle class women addressing problems originating from their own class. Women had long been part of the British workforce, before, after and during the world wars. But for the most part, 'gainfully employed' women were not working from choice. They had to work in order to provide food and shelter for themselves and possibly their relations. In previous generations, unmarried women and working-class women worked out of necessity, middle class women generally only took paid employment when the men were absent in war. Hobsbawm has speculated that 'the very demand to break out of the domestic sphere into the paid labour market had a strong ideological charge among the prosperous, educated middle-class married women which it did not have for others, for its motivations in these milieus were seldom economic.'¹²

The resentments of middle-class women under their new duty of managing every aspect of housework and childcare were an important part of how aspirations conflicted with restricted social roles. Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska points out that until World War II the majority of middle class households employed domestic help of some kind.¹³ Where they previously had leisure time to devote to culture and liberal education within the home, there was now 'only' housework. This was an impetus for second-wave feminists to compare their positions less favourably to those of men. Other classes of women may have felt similar tensions between a personal and family identity. However, the middle-class women were articulate about their concerns while enjoying a relative economic freedom that allowed for reflective thought and experimentation in lifestyle. Additionally, their sentiments were reinforced by increasing numbers of publications (many by women) addressing these issues.¹⁴

Many influential books voiced the discontent and frustration of women's attempts at having an independent identity, these included Virginia's Wolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and the second-wave feminist manifestos of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* (1970) and Ann Oakley's *Housewife* (1974).¹⁵ The complaints

and desires of second-wave feminists were echoed in the pages of the British yoga journals. Yoga was described as a cure for women's specific problems, such as 'housewife syndrome.'¹⁶ For example one yoga teacher in the 1970s conducted a survey and found many of her yoga students to be housewives who suffered from 'monotony and lack of recognition, indeterminate pains and psychosomatic symptoms' and identified this as 'housewife syndrome.' Through the practice of yoga, the teacher concluded that most students suffering from the 'housewife syndrome' found that their lives improved. In fact, she stated that through yoga, 90 per cent of 'sufferers' regained 'lost vitality' and enabled a woman to 'face her problems without tension.'¹⁷

Educated, middle-class women's discontent at being confined within the home was noted explicitly by those in the adult education community. One participant in a Liverpool initiative to train women as teachers of crafts reported in 1968 that: 'the ever-increasing desire of women to do some kind of work outside the home has resulted in many housewives with young families coming forward, eager to develop an outside interest and to achieve some degree of status and financial independence.'¹⁸ In 1973, another tutor involved in the same programme reported on the reasons given for wishing to join a course to teach crafts in the adult education system. The largely married female candidates would often report in their intake interviews: "I feel like I am becoming a cabbage"; "I cannot stand the four walls"; "I need adult company" etc.'¹⁹ She went on to analyse the situation, remarking that many of these women had educational qualification that could allow for university entry. But 'these women, like many others, being conscientious about their role as mother, will not train at the expense of their children's security. ... [furthermore] The drive is not an economic one. ... employment is not guaranteed, and trainees do not receive any grant.'²⁰ The course only required six hours a week attendance and none of the interviewees were reported to have asked about employment prospects at the time of the interview.

Attending courses on traditionally feminine subjects like crafts, flower arrangement or cooking might have felt less threatening and more respectable than employment outside the home, particularly if there was not much economic motivation

to leave home. It is likely that yoga was more gendered in Manchester and the North than in London and the Southeast. In an essay on North-South differences in England, Raphael Samuel observed that the North appears to be ‘wedded to more patriarchal ways.’²¹ Gender distinctions were more institutionalised in Manchester further education than in London. Principals of Adult Education Institutes in Manchester had to negotiate classroom space with the head teachers of their area’s schools. During the 1960s and 70s, the East Area Principal complained that gender specific secondary schools meant that certain adult education classes could only be held in certain schools:

At Lady Barn (a boys’ school) there are no cookery classes and dressmaking takes place in ordinary classrooms. At Levenshulme and Mosely there are now no classes in woodwork and metalwork... I would urge the governors to seek some accommodation where both men and women may have adequate facilities.²²

Also in Manchester, the Withington Further Education Centre listed its mid-1970s yoga course in the Department of Domestic Science, sandwiched between ‘cake icing and decoration’ (both 1st year and advanced), flower arrangement, and ballroom dancing. Although the course description assured prospective students that ‘these courses are equally suitable for men and women of all ages,’ it is doubtful than many men would have even bothered to look at the page.²³ During the same year the Mary Ward Centre in London offered its yoga classes under the more gender-neutral department of Health Education. This may also have been influenced by the agenda of the teacher at that centre, Alan Babbington, who was male and committed to the ‘philosophical side of yoga’ as well as teaching the physical postures.²⁴

As a career, yoga teaching in adult education classes offered flexible and part-time hours that particularly suited those who could use extra money but did not require a full salary. Teaching was a traditional women’s profession and the rates of pay for yoga courses in the LEA compared favourably to other part-time employment open to women during this period. Vi Neale-Smith remembers when she started teaching yoga in 1974, the local authority would pay her £6 an hour for teaching yoga compared to the £3 an hour she made as a part-time medical secretary.²⁵ More money and fewer hours was an attractive option for married women who had domestic duties and

childcare to arrange. Yoga teachers were able to pick and choose classes they wanted at times that suited them – particularly since the family income was not dependent upon the work. This flexible and independent employment met middle-class women's desire for freedom and autonomy more fully than many other available options. Still, teaching for the LEA did not offer a living wage and men who made it a profession in Britain took this into account. Ernest Coates and Indra Nath, both males teaching yoga in the 1970s, never relied upon yoga for their primary income.²⁶ It is likely that very few individuals relied on yoga teaching as their main gainful employment. Most likely the majority of teachers were either able to rely on the financial support of their husbands, or like Coates and Nath, had reached a point in their careers where they had saved enough money to retire.

British yoga teachers numbered less than a thousand during the 1970s and the majority of these teachers were married women.²⁷ In 1975, one writer in the *British Wheel's* journal estimated that '99% of Yoga teachers [in Scotland] are housewives with families.'²⁸ In the Manchester area, a 1972 list of Iyengar teachers includes 17 names: 15 Mrs., one Miss, and one Mr.²⁹ In 1978 a list of B.K.S. Iyengar certificate holders for Britain includes 214 names, of which 36 or about 16% have male first names.³⁰ During much of the twentieth century, middle age has been a difficult period for women in 'obtaining and retaining well-paid employment' because of a double discrimination of gender and age in many positions.³¹ Many LEAs enforced a retirement age (60 or 65), but some women continued to teach yoga privately well into their seventies.³²

Figure 25: Yogini Sunita's Teacher training class of Pranayama Yoga 1966. Photograph courtesy of Kenneth Cabral and the Lotus and the Rose Publishing.

In 1982, 72-year-old Clara Buck was offering two private lunchtime yoga classes from noon-1pm for the cost of £10 a month in London.³³ This yoga was at times a meaningful and gainful activity where older women could feel valued. The situation described amongst those training to be crafts-teachers also applied to those

attending and teaching yoga classes in the local educational system. It was women's desire for freedom and autonomy, both mental and financial, that made the adult educational centres an attractive place to spend time. Being state funded, women attending courses were seen as participating in a socially acceptable activity.

YOGA AND FEMALE PHYSICAL CULTURE

Women's attendance at physical culture courses for reasons of improving health and beauty had become part of popular middle-class women's culture during the first half of the twentieth century.³⁴ In the first half of the twentieth century a woman's physical fitness was sometimes believed to have eugenic implications for the betterment of the national population.³⁵ However, it was generally considered that appropriate physical movement suitable for women and girls' bodies was different than the physical activities appropriate for men and boys.³⁶ In the nineteenth century, middle class girls might have been taught Henrick Ling's Swedish gymnastics at school while boys were taught military drills and competitive games such as rugby and cricket.³⁷ Ling and his students designed movements to exercise all aspects of the muscular-skeletal system of the body. Employment as an instructor of Swedish Gymnastics was a professional career available for women in Britain from the late nineteenth century onwards.³⁸ Swedish Gymnastics also offered 'remedial exercises' that could correct postural defects that might cause further ill health. A further attraction was that Swedish Gymnastics or 'Drill' required no equipment and could be used to promote public health for schoolchildren.³⁹ During the later period, teaching yoga became a socially acceptable women's profession partially due to this precedent. Singleton has also argued that the global popularity of these exercises for health likely influenced the development of posture-oriented yoga in the modern period.⁴⁰

In the early twentieth century, women interested in physical practises could continue with Ling's system. By the 1930s, they could also join Mary Bagot Stack's Women's League of Health and Beauty, or perhaps participate in Greek Revival dance.⁴¹ In particular, Bagot Stack exercises had many parallels to the forms of yoga as group physical activity that became popular after the war.⁴² In her autobiography,

Mary Bagot Stack claimed that some of her exercises were based on yoga postures learned while living in India with her husband in 1912.⁴³ Bagot Stack's group movements, often done to classical music, were designed to create health and beauty from the 'inside out.'

During the 1950s, 'Keep Fit' and 'Medau Rhythmic Movement,' both of which had been influenced by Ling's system, were attended by large groups of middle class women. Medau Rhythmic Movement was introduced in Britain in 1931, by the German national Hinrich Medau (1890-1974). Medau had a background in gymnastics and sport and worked with modern dancers Bode and Dalcroze on rhythmic movement. The technique attempted to incorporate a:

variety of rhythm, pace, form, and pattern support and basic training in the technique of movement, which should be effortless, natural, harmonious, skilled and controlled but at the same time retain the unique quality which expresses personality. Instead of teaching exercises, the emphasis was on creating a class to suit the needs of the individuals.⁴⁴

Medau was a popular form of exercise with women and incorporated a variety of aids into its strength and stamina routines, such as Indian wooden clubs.⁴⁵ The Medau technique spread throughout the country and was often used in combination with other techniques of women's physical culture. In 1959-60 there were 16 Medau courses advertised in the London guide to evening classes, *Floodlight*, and in 1971-72 there were 18 Medau courses compared to 13 yoga courses on offer. After the 1970s, Medau classes declined in popularity, possibly due to many more physical activities becoming socially acceptable for women.⁴⁶

Also developing during the 1930s was the nascent Keep Fit movement. Eileen Fowler (1906-2000), who would later be associated with the movement, began teaching exercises for fitness and health during the 1930s. During the Second World War, Fowler organised shows and events advocating general fitness as part of the war effort with the Central Council of Physical Recreation. After six years of retirement after her marriage in 1945, Fowler decided to return to teaching physical education in 1951. The Keep Fit Association had its inaugural meeting in 1956; Fowler being a

founding member. Keep Fit exercises have been described a modified version of popular women's' gymnastics.⁴⁷

Fowler popularised it by giving the first BBC radio 'Keep Fit' classes from 1956. It has been estimated that as many as half a million people, mostly women, were up at 6.45am to follow along with her radio broadcast. She blamed conditions of prosperity for decreasing levels of fitness from the 1950s onwards and maintained regular radio and occasional television appearances.⁴⁸ Fowler had a disco-dance Keep Fit programme on television during the 1970s, providing a more energetic way for women to 'keep fit' at home than the Hittleman-Marshell television yoga classes (which will be discussed further in Chapter Six).

The yoga classes on offer in adult education had much in common with Keep Fit and Medau classes. While quick to declare yoga's difference from Keep Fit, in 1970 the founder of the British Wheel of Yoga, Wilfred Clark, also commented that 'Keep Fit programmes in all Further Education Institutes include quite a large number of Yoga postures'.⁴⁹ The 'yoga postures' were perhaps part of the general interlacing between British and Indian physical culture in the early twentieth century. Yoga teachers were often recruited from Keep Fit instructors. As a woman from the 'North of England' reported in the British Wheel's journal *Yoga*: 'I was originally a teacher-trained Keep Fit leader but after studying and practising Yoga from books I changed over because Yoga is so much better from a health point of view. They (her pupils) all say that they feel marvellous after a class meeting.'⁵⁰ Yoga enthusiasts were constantly reiterating that yoga could not be reduced to Keep Fit. Nevertheless, yoga appealed to the same population as Keep Fit and Medau Rhythmic Movement. All these activities were presented as an aid to women's health and beauty and taught within the adult education evening class structure.

All of these physical fitness courses were a safe and interesting place to learn new things and make new friends with similar interests. This social element was an important part of the appeal of a class like yoga to many women. In 1966, the Leicestershire advisor for PE noted that in the journal *Adult Education* there were three types of evening classes in his subject: men's activities, women's activities and family

activities. This advisor considered that the non-threatening expansion to the social network was an important appeal for both women and men, reflecting that men's classes were 'often an opportunity to get-together with the "boys" away from the feminine home influence and yet with a clear conscience,' while women's 'keep fit' classes were often perceived as 'an opportunity for a good "natter"' between women.⁵¹ This PE educator highlighted a tradition of gendered physical education in Britain. For example, the BAI had separate women's and men's principals from 1937 to 1975.

From the late nineteenth century, certain types of physical exercise had been acceptable and attractive activities. During the Second World War, women were encouraged by the sponsorship of Eileen Fowler to 'Keep Fit' for the war effort, equating their physical health as women 'at home' with national fitness. Bagot Stack's Women's League of Health and Beauty was also active in the war effort to move the nation's women towards 'A1' fitness.⁵² Women attended keep-fit classes for a variety of reasons – not the least of which was likely to be personal enjoyment. However, keeping the individual body fit and healthy in the mid-twentieth century was also a goal associated with a greater social and moral good. Certain types of exercise became associated with class distinctions. Middle class women have a longer tradition of interest in physical exercise as part of gender and class identity. Women of other classes have only more recently acquired the leisure and education to devote to physical activity for health and enjoyment.

YOGA AND WOMEN'S HEALTH AND BEAUTY

As discussed above in relation to women's physical fitness in Britain, health and beauty had long been related concepts. During the 1970s, the health-and-beauty aspect of yoga was brought to the forefront of media presentations. The glossy magazine *Yoga & Health* and the Richard Hittleman ITV series both featured toned and beautiful women as models in matching leotards and tights; often the models wore fishnet stockings and a tight-fitting leotard top.⁵³ Perhaps the female image of yoga

on magazine covers originated from a long tradition of women selling things in advertisements, a proven way of attracting the interest of both women and men.

That yoga might be some sort of elixir of youth was its particularly appealing allure during this period of British history. Fashion followed the growing consumer market of the youth; designer clothes, such as Mary Quant's short dresses, emphasised and glorified a youthful rather than womanly body.⁵⁴ The middle-aged population that made up the bulk of yoga practitioners were also affected by the social discrimination against their age relative to the cultural standard of youth as essential to feminine beauty.⁵⁵ Youth has long been associated with good health, thus a young, fit body was also a healthy body; this was one of Mary Bagot Stack's most consistent emphasises in the Women's League of Health and Beauty.⁵⁶

A book on yoga published by a British woman in 1969 is specifically centred on this popular association between yoga, youth and beauty. Illustrated with middle-aged women assuming yoga postures in the author's garden, Joan Gold promised that through Hatha Yoga exercises:

You will radiate good health,
Your eyes will sparkle,
Your complexion will glow,
Your step will regain its youthful spring,
Your arteries will become elasticized and healthy,
Your system will be regulated and constipation will disappear,
Your figure will improve, and your body will become supple,
You will be able to relax.⁵⁷

Here, traditional marks of a women's beauty are combined with medicalised language of idealized 'elasticized arteries' and a regulated and un-constipated system. If these claims were not enough to convince the reader, Gold goes on to claim that: 'yoga will open the door to the secret of eternal youth – it will reverse the ageing forces of nature.' Yoga was presented by Gold as a way for women to achieve both health and beauty 'with a minimum of effort and a great deal of pleasure.'⁵⁸

These types of claims are widespread in 1960s yoga books aimed at women. One 1963 book entitled *Yoga for Women* declares:

Women can become better-looking through yoga, not only by improving their health but through the development of a more positive interest in life and their own physical and mental problems. Most yoga teachers know cases of women who have astonished everyone, including themselves, by exchanging a drawn and harassed, middle-aged look for a youthful, vital one; by discarding stiffness and tension for suppleness, slimness, serenity and poise.⁵⁹

As Swami Sarasvati who had a successful television programme on yoga in Australia during the 1970s claims:

Breathing, gentle exercise and a little relaxation each day will not only reveal your inner beauty but will also give you a firm body and a healthy mental outlook. ... you will become more energetic, active and younger looking (Would you believe I am forty?)⁶⁰

Nancy Phelan (1913-2008), Michael Volin (1914-1997) and Swami Sarasvati (born c. 1941) were based in Australia, but their books had a wide circulation in Britain.⁶¹ After being a model in the series with Richard Hittleman, British actress Lyn Marshall went on to publish several books based on her yoga practice. These books were marketed on the basis of Lyn Marshall's reputation as a beautiful woman with a kind of knowledge of how to maintain this physical appearance and good health rather than her intimate knowledge of Indian esoteric religion.⁶²

A 1970 *Evening Standard* article demonstrates how widespread claims about the 'youth giving' qualities of yoga were during this period. The journalist was sent a copy of a booklet that reported: 'those who take hatha-yoga seriously believe that we do not reach maturity at 21 but at 33 and to them the springtime of life is between 55 and 75.' The author of the article telephoned the editor of the beauty section, who had been attending yoga classes for seven years already. When asked if yoga made her look younger, the Beauty Editor commented: 'the furrows on my brow look the same as they always have but maybe they would have been worse.'⁶³ The Beauty Editor was happy to attribute the lack of further ageing to yoga without clear evidence. Women were likely to feel comfortable to make these claims because they felt a real sense of 'well-being' when they practised yoga regularly. This idea of 'well-being' was nebulous and could be expressed in a variety of ways. For the more elderly a manageable activity that increased fitness and mobility was certainly very important.

This 'well-being culture' was supported by government encouragement towards individual responsibility for personal health. Encouraging personal well-being was understood as a social good, not just an individual indulgence.

In 1982, at the age of 72, one woman, Clara Buck, explained to a newspaper reporter how she began her yoga practice at the age of 60:

In 1972 at the age of sixty, I was farming in southeast England. One day a neighbour dropped in and asked me if I would like to go out with her to Hastings, Sussex – our nearest town – where an apprentice Yoga teacher needed “guinea pigs.” I said I would go anywhere just to get away from the farm for a while, since I worked all hours that God gave me. I was permanently tired and that day more than usual. After one hour of strenuous exercises I felt refreshed and decided to make further investigations. I enrolled in an adult education class and though I had to travel one hour each way, I never missed a lesson. One-and-a-half years later I sold my farm and went to visit Mr BKS Iyengar, in India, who is my Guru. After five years he encouraged me to start teaching, and now, at the age of seventy, I have a profession that makes me feel younger than I felt when I was twenty.⁶⁴

Further in the interview, she went on to explain in detail how she had found yoga an aid to ageing gracefully. She saw it as her own responsibility to be as fit and healthy as possible, not unnecessarily burdening her children or the public health system:

To keep your body fit and your mind alert is like putting money in the bank for your old age or taking out a life insurance. We tend to forget that family and friends are directly or indirectly subjected to our influence. Growing old in a youthful manner is doing them a favour as well as to ourselves. It is self evident that a healthy person would be more jolly, kindly and affectionate than one who is suffering from various ailments and who would be inclined to be grumpy, moaning and dissatisfied with life. Which way would you prefer to grow old? The choice is yours.⁶⁵

While the age and activity of Clara Buck was exceptional, yoga classes offered vitality and interest in life for many women who took up the practice. The perception that yoga was something you could continue learning and teaching well into old age added to its popularity. Long past the age of childbirth and into retirement, as some middle-class women were, they described yoga classes as a benefit to their wellbeing on many levels. For Clara Buck, maintaining health and emotional wellbeing through yoga was a social and moral good that benefited more than just herself.

The way of thinking about women's health and beauty in these yoga books fit well with the more mainstream ideas being presented in popular culture. For example, *The Vogue Body and Beauty Book* (1978) was illustrated by Richard Avedon photographs of young, thin models wearing revealing designer clothes in yoga positions. These photographs imply that yoga is not only health-providing, but also glamorous and fashionable. The introduction explains the popular assumption that 'Beauty, today, is not a perfect face or a certain look ... it is glowing health and vitality, it is awareness and action, it is science and technology and of course marvellous looks, a perfect skin, a superb body.' The Vogue book provides sensible advice on nutrition, sexual health, and exercises including yoga. Again, yoga was being presented as an enjoyable method for improving both health and beauty as related and desired categories.

A decrease in ideal body size with associated health benefits was also a motivation to begin a practice of yoga.⁶⁶ The support for physical fitness and weight control was clearly an appeal to yoga. One article in *Yoga and Health* described an Iyengar yoga class in 1972:

Like most classes in the West, this one is heavily weighted towards the ladies – who also sometimes appear to be heavily weighted. Weight, however, would appear to be removed in direct ratio to attendance at Iyengar classes.⁶⁷

Manchester yoga teacher Penderell Reed reported to a local newspaper in 1972 that she 'took up yoga a dozen years ago in an attempt to lose weight. She succeeded so well that now as a qualified yoga teacher, she can hardly meet the demands for more and more classes.'⁶⁸ However, there might have also been an element of self-elimination of the unglamorous women from the yoga classes. One teacher, Sophy Hoare, remembers that in early classes 'there were just as many thin people as fat people – [but] in fact I found that fat students didn't last very long in classes because they felt encumbered or self-conscious.'⁶⁹

Figure 26: Iyengar teacher Diana Clifton at the age of 73 in a yoga posture in 1992. From the Diana Clifton Collection, courtesy of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK).

However, the self-reports of women who continued to practise yoga suggested that the activity naturally increased vitality, beauty and serenity; it was presented as having inherent benefits to a woman's self-confidence and sense of 'well-being'. In one article, a 'Sandwich West housewife,' described as 'an advanced student of the centuries-old discipline' and 'turned on' to yoga, explained in the *Windsor Star* 1976 that yoga leads to 'radiant health of mind and body.'⁷⁰ In the comments given to local newspapers, these women reinforced middle-class ideas of femininity by claiming that yoga provided a woman with increased vitality, beauty, serenity, and implicitly better health. In a medicalised post-war society, these qualities were associated with an individual moral duty to the state, family and self to care for the body. Offer also argues that the means by which to exercise self-control and fitness disciplines are more accessible to the middle and upper classes of society.⁷¹ The popularity of yoga amongst these middle-class British women supports an association between exercise and class.

However, many women reported attending yoga courses simply to have an activity that made them feel happier and provided social contact with other women. For example, Jeanne Maslen, who was influential in establishing Iyengar yoga in Manchester, first attending keep-fit classes at her local FE College because 'as a housewife with two small children, I wanted to do something more with my time.'⁷² While most people in Mrs. Maslen's position were restricted to courses during times that someone could be found to watch the children, at least one Manchester FE College allowed for a nursery to look after children during their mother's courses. The kind of courses advertised to these mothers included 'yoga, experimental art, dressmaking, modelling, languages, cookery, embroidery, tailoring, ballroom dancing, piano lessons, wine making, social science, flower arranging, and keep-fit.'⁷³ British Wheel trustee Vi Neale-Smith remembers attending her first yoga class through another contact in her 'young wives group.'⁷⁴

The appeal might not have always been directly to do with yoga. Yoga teacher Claire Buckingham often felt that ‘Quite often I felt that ... they didn’t come to class so much to practise yoga. It was their time out to just be still... that was part of the attraction to women I think.’⁷⁵ Many middle-class women found their lives stressful and experienced the exercise and relaxation of yoga classes beneficial for ‘well-being’. Attendees did not need to define exactly what was efficacious about a yoga class, but modest improvements in fitness and mood, a place of calmness, as well as an extended social network were all important elements to how yoga was considered to improve ‘well-being’. Well-being was part of a social duty for the general health of the individual. As well as providing some time for themselves, women perceived yoga as enabling them to better fulfil their duties as wives, employees and perhaps most importantly, mothers.

YOGA AND CHILDBIRTH

The late 1960s and 70s saw educated women becoming increasingly aware of their problems in relation to the medical profession. Initially, the focus for women’s discontent centred upon their experiences during childbirth. A leader in the subsequent ‘natural birth movement’ of the 1970s described in retrospect the birth of her first child in the early 1960s:

The day the baby was due I was despatched to hospital by my doctor, although I had no sign of contractions. My blood pressure was up a little and I was told it would be more convenient for the doctor if I were to agree to an induction the following morning. Not knowing the pros and cons, I could not weigh them.

Labour was induced at eight in the morning. While I was under general anaesthetic, the membrane holding my waters was broken. I drowsily awoke from the drug half an hour later to find my body in the grip of something like a wrenching tool. ... I asked the nurse to call my husband and my mother, but she gave me pills instead, and my husband and mother were only allowed to stay an hour before being sent home.

I was in labour for fourteen hours under the kind of medication which made me too woolly to deal with myself or anything that was going on. Too weak to stand up for my own rights. I’d forgotten I had any rights. I didn’t care how

my baby was born. I was put on an intravenous drip to speed up contractions and left alone for most of the labour; shovelled from bed to stretcher to delivery table at the most intense point of discomfort, had a gas mask slapped on my face, and although I summoned all remaining strength to push it away, and was oblivious when my baby was born... for reasons never explained to me, I was not permitted to hold my son until hours later, when he was wheeled in to me bathed and cleanly wrapped in his first trappings of so-called civilization. I had to unwrap him like a sterile parcel before I could touch his newborn skin.⁷⁶

The feelings of isolation, lack of body awareness due to medication, and absence of consultation with the woman about possibilities for intervention were just a few of the discontents many women were increasingly vocalising with their experience of labour. Very often, women felt like they were given no choice about the nature or extent of medical interventions and that their own experience of labour was less important than what the medical professionals expected to happen.⁷⁷ As educated women talked more about their experiences, feelings of disempowerment and a need for more information and autonomy over their bodies during the birthing process inspired a number of women's self-help organisations.

The subject of women's labour has been a perennial concern of both doctors and families. In 1907, Mary Bagot Stack's initial training in physical culture at the London 'Conn Institute' focused on a 'scientific system of health-building' designed for all prospective mothers.⁷⁸ However, women in the post-war period were concerned enough about informing other women about the latest advances in biomedical treatment and technology available during the birthing process. With an eye on the fast-changing medical technology of the time, Prunella Briance set up the National Childbirth Trust in 1956 to facilitate the accessibility of information on pregnancy, childbirth and parenting. The natural birth movement in Britain was primarily an attempt to educate women so that they could make informed choices about the medical interventions they wanted during labour.

Then in 1961, trust in medical expertise was severely undermined when severely deformed children were born to expectant mothers prescribed thalidomide for morning sickness during pregnancy.⁷⁹ Women increasingly considered that doctors might not always know best. Anthropological comparisons with other cultures stressed

the ‘unnaturalness’ of giving birth on one's back in stirrups sounded by male ‘experts.’⁸⁰ Following from this insight, the natural birth movement encouraged women to listen to their bodies during the labour process, and published images and exercises of alternative positions that can ease the baby out during labour. Many of these had overlaps with yoga as taught at this time.⁸¹

Yoga and natural birth were linked in experience by many of the women staffing the Birth Centre which had an office in the East West Centre near Old Street (1977) and near Battersea (1980).⁸² The East-West Centre itself was an early and enthusiastic promoter of macrobiotics and shiatsu and more associated with Japanese culture than yoga. Several women volunteered on phone lines and in an open office for a few hours each week to give advice on the birthing process and related issues and provide speakers on these topics. The Birth Centre also sold a chart of yoga poses for pregnancy.⁸³ Sophy Hoare remembered that the users of the centre could not be defined by class but were ‘women of any class who had had bad – sometimes appalling and traumatic – experience giving birth in hospitals.’ However, she reflected, the group running the Birth Centre was ‘probably largely but not entirely made up of educated middle class women.’⁸⁴ Also involved in the early Birth Centre was Janet Balaskas who was very much influenced by the psychological processing and human potential explorations of the (anti-) psychiatrist R. D. Laing, who wrote a forward for a book on exercises for childbirth. Balaskas went on to found the Active Birth Centre in North London which incorporates yoga for health in pregnancy.⁸⁵

The Birth Centre group arranged screenings of Frdrick Leboyer’s film *Birth Without Violence* (1969) and made available his book by the same name (1975).⁸⁶ This title evocatively depicted the experience of birth from the child’s perspective, encouraging the viewer to empathise with the newborn child rather than accept medical opinion. The book opens:

‘Do you think babies like being born?’
‘What do you mean, like being born?’
‘Exactly what I said. Do you think children are
happy to come into this world?’
‘Happy? But a newborn baby doesn’t feel anything.’

So it is neither happy nor unhappy.’
‘How do you know that?’
‘Well, it’s obvious. Everyone knows that.’
...
‘And that makes you think that they don’t feel anything
either?’
‘Of course, they don’t.’
‘Then why do they cry so bitterly?’...⁸⁷

The highly influential *Birth Without Violence* poetically championed the personhood of the newborn and called parents and physicians to care for the newborn as a person, not a thing. Leboyer was very influential in some circles among middle class women; his films and photographs emotively illustrated what other authors only described in words. The body awareness, attention to personal somatic experience and a championing of non-violence all resonated with the ideas commonly upheld by those practising yoga in Britain during this period.

Leboyer was a French physician who specialised in gynaecology and obstetrics. After undergoing his own psychoanalysis in France, he became very interested in birthing techniques. He travelled to India in 1959 and returned annually for two decades. During his time in India, he reports having studied birthing practises, yoga and karnatic singing.⁸⁸ In 1976, Leboyer published *Loving Hands*, a book on baby massage with pictures of an Indian mother. The attention to the newborn infant as a conscious being and the idealisation of India continued in Leboyer’s works; this reinforced a connection between the natural birth movement and yoga. In 1978 Leboyer published a book containing inspirational photographs of one of B.K.S. Iyengar’s daughters practising yoga late in pregnancy, making his personal connection between ‘natural birth’ and yoga more explicit.⁸⁹

In valuing a woman’s embodied subjective experience, yoga was a natural complement to the reproductive awareness of the active birth movement. Yoga as practised in Britain was generally done cautiously; the Principals of the LEA evening institutes were under pressure to provide safe and non-controversial activities for their populations. Most yoga classes emphasised increasing body awareness through postures and breathing exercises, and not on inducing notably altered states of

consciousness or dramatic contortions. In a prosaic way, the practice of yoga increased awareness of subjective embodied experiences and provided techniques to manage stress as well as emotions and physical pain.⁹⁰ This appealed to pregnant and non-pregnant women, as well as some men.

One of the few books explicitly discussing yoga and pregnancy during the 1970s was Wheel member Tony Crisp's *Yoga and Childbirth* (1975, 1976, and 1977).⁹¹ Tony Crisp was concerned with getting the woman's 'body, mind and soul ready for the event of childbirth.' He spent more time on diet and influencing the unborn child through the mother's emotional and psychological well-being than on any asanas, pranayama exercises or anything that might be taken from a Sanskrit text. In fact, the idea of yoga for pregnant women had more to do with 'being' in the body – he suggests:

let any movements or positions occur which suggest themselves to you. Let your emotions flow and arise as postures and movements. Open to the light, while holding firmly to the earth. Then let the light penetrate your very being.⁹²

This is accompanied by suggestions and photographs of 'being a lioness, being a snake, being a baby, being a turtle...' ⁹³ The idea that women's behaviour during pregnancy could have a profound effect on the unborn child was part of an increasing emphasis on the mother's importance on the psychological development of children during the 1970s.⁹⁴

As was often noted when women used yoga exercise during pregnancy, the physical practice created a sense of freedom and confidence. For women participating in yoga classes during this period, the physically liberating experience may have parallels to the way that cycling was perceived by a previous generation of women.⁹⁵ Yoga provided a technology for experiencing the body as freer and more autonomous.⁹⁶ In valuing a woman's embodied subjective experience, yoga was a natural complement to the reproductive awareness of the birth movement. Until the 1980s, there was little explicit instruction on modifying yoga postures for pre- or post-natal women. In general women carried on in normal evening classes as best as they were able, using this increased body awareness to monitor their body's ability.⁹⁷

Although much of the emotive strength of the challenge against biomedicine came from birthing experiences, women also found that yoga addressed chronic complaints that general practitioners could not adequately help. Kathleen Pepper was drawn to yoga in the mid-1960s after finding a book called *Yoga and Your Health* in her local London library. She was suffering from serious pain and fainting during her menstruation and found relief by following the instructions in the book.⁹⁸ Particularly with chronic ‘female complaints’ such as menstrual pains, many women found it difficult to get sympathetic or effective treatment from their (mostly male) physicians. Even after the feminist-led medical reforms of the 1970s, the organization Women’s Health London explained the difficulty many women continued to have with the medical profession in the early 1990s: ‘Many women feel distanced from or intimidated by their doctors. They often felt that they are not taken seriously, that they are considered malingerers if they return more than once with the same complaint.’⁹⁹ Due to this experience, many found self-help an important complement to their traditional medical consultation.

Yoga was an important part of women’s self-help: ‘SELF HELP – yoga, massage, and relaxation techniques, available in many women’s centres or adult education institutes can help with high blood pressure, back pain and symptoms of stress.’¹⁰⁰ Although the limitations of such methods were acknowledged by feminist health groups, activities including yoga, had an important impact on women’s quality of life. The Women’s Health group went on to write: ‘Alternative medicine, a change of diet, massage, or yoga may still not make you feel “well” if you are struggling alone to bring up children on social security and living on the tenth floor of a high-rise. However, receiving treatment and/or support for a particular health problem may help you deal with other aspects of your life.’ The attitude of self-help that yoga practise fostered in women was as important and supportive as the alleviation of specific physical complaints.¹⁰¹ That the same activities were felt to make one more slim and attractive was often a secondary, though appreciated benefit.

CONCLUSION

Yoga in the LEA structure was able to support the educated woman's desire for freedom and autonomy while simultaneously supporting her traditional obligations to be beautiful, available (for both husband and family) and responsive to her duties towards others. The popularity of yoga amongst middle class women can be understood as a continuation of the message that women were responsible for their personal health and the health of their children. This was especially significant in the connection between a positive childbirth experience for the child and yoga in the natural birth movement. The popularisation of yoga amongst middle-class women was directly related to how this population perceived their social responsibilities as wives and mothers. Yoga was believed to be capable of creating the 'body beautiful' while simultaneously drawing attention away from physical perfection towards goals of mental stability and general health. Yoga for health and beauty was not simply a selfish endeavour on the part of middle-class women. Yoga as an aid to health and relaxation can be understood as a continuation of the wartime messages that many of these women's mothers understood of keeping fit as a national duty. As citizens and mothers within the British welfare state, women's attempts to improve their health and well-being are more socially significant than narcissistic longing for lost youth. The way women practised yoga during this period supported their 'traditional' responsibilities while encouraging, in a socially acceptable way, feelings of freedom and autonomy.

CHAPTER 5. Yoga in Popular Music and ‘Counter Culture’ (the 60s and 70s)

As this steady base was growing for yoga amongst the LEA classes, celebrities were beginning to embrace India as sources of musical and personal inspiration. In comparison to some of the high-commitment groups that were brought to media attention, like Swami Prabhupada’s International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), LEA evening classes would have appeared a very safe way of exploring Indian culture. Widespread coverage of celebrity interest added glamour and mystery to the idea of yoga. While celebrities were exploring what was already an established cultural presence, the publicity around celebrity interest did much to make Eastern spirituality and ideas more familiar by regular appearance in the media.¹ Press coverage generally described celebrity involvement in Indian spirituality with scorn or at least scepticism, which perhaps encouraged youth to explore the subject further. Muz Murray’s London project of *Gandalf’s Garden* brought yoga to youth culture by promoting it through association with musicians who would soon become celebrities, including Marc Bolan (T-Rex), David Bowie and radio personality John Peel. Exploring yoga and Indian religion became an increasingly acceptable way of looking outside British culture for inspiration, a post-imperial embracing of foreign ideas that had been part of colonial dialogue for several centuries.

INDIA AS AN INSPIRATION FOR MUSICAL ICONS

Many British musicians and cultural icons of the 1960s experimented with the image, spirituality and sounds of India. These musicians were often musically inspired by African American jazz and rhythm and blues music. In deeply racist pre-1960s America, many African American musicians had turned to non-European cultures for musical and personal inspiration.² Indian, African and Arabic cultures were all sources

of cultural inspiration; Middle Eastern forms of Islam were a profound influence on jazz musicians during the 1940s and 50s.³ An extreme example of this movement is the jazz musician Sun Ra (1914– 1993) who attempted to obscure his human origins and claimed to have been sent from Saturn to preach a message of awareness and peace. Although always considered at the edge of avant-gardism, Sun Ra was respected musically, and many major jazz musicians spent time playing with his Arkestra, including John Coltrane (1926–1967).

As early as the 1950s, Muslim bebopper Yusef Lateef is reported to have introduced Coltrane to the Koran, author Kahlil Gibran, and the writings of Annie Besant's protégé Jiddu Krishnamurti and Paramahansa Yogananda.⁴ As he experienced withdrawal from heroin in 1957, Coltrane 'communed with God' and experienced a spiritual rebirth that reoriented all his musical output.⁵ According to one biographer, Coltrane heard a beautiful droning sound which became Coltrane's 'Holy Grail':

...and the pursuit of it would lead him to the music of India, the Mideast and Africa and to a hypnotic chanting rhythm most easily discernible in compositions such as 'India' from the 1961 *Impressions* and 'Africa' from *Africa/Brass* the same year.⁶

In November 1965, Coltrane met sitarist Ravi Shankar (1920– 2012). After corresponding with him, he is said to have named his son Ravi as a mark of respect.⁷ Shankar began touring the classical music venues of Europe and America in 1956, often with the backing of Yehudi Menuhin. This influence began several years before the overtly Eastern *Love Supreme* album which made Coltrane 'Jazzman of the Year' in 1965.⁸ Coltrane's respect for Indian music and spirituality that transcended specific religions inspired many. One admirer wrote that, 'I am not a religious person, but John Coltrane was the only man who I worshipped as a saint or even a god.'⁹ Musically, Coltrane's sounds have also had extensive influence on other musicians on both sides of the Atlantic.

Such personal journeys were not unknown in the British jazz scene either. A well-known jazz 'blue-hot' clarinettist, Cy Lauries, appeared to 'have it all' – a jazz

band, a country cottage and town house, three cars, and a successful theatrical agency – before he ‘mysteriously disappeared without a trace to the consternation of trad jazz fans all over Britain.’ In fact, he had ‘dropped out’ to be with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in 1961. Lauries spent several years in India before returning to continue his meditation in an ‘isolated farmhouse in England.’ By 1969, at the age of 42, he was again playing jazz and spreading his spiritual inspiration to the younger generation of musicians.¹⁰ Also inspired by Eastern spirituality, British jazz-drummer Glen Sweeney formed a jazz group called The Third Ear Band. Sweeney, like Coltrane, experienced a spiritual rebirth in the process of coming off heroin. By 1969 he felt he was acting as a ‘channel’ and bringing an ‘Eastern sound’ into his jazz performances at popular underground venues, such as UFO Club in the basement of 31 Tottenham Court Road in London and became good friends with Muz Murray at *Gandalf’s Garden* (see later in the chapter).¹¹

THE BEATLES AND INDIAN MUSICAL INSPIRATION

Perhaps the most significant promoters of Indian spirituality in Britain were The Beatles. The Beatles’ celebrity status in 1960s Britain was unprecedented; their lives and interests were avidly followed in the press like ‘some all-embracing strip cartoon.’¹² While The Beatles only began their music chart success in 1963, their impact on British culture had already been so substantial in 1965 that the Queen gave them all MBEs. It was also in the spring of 1965 that guitarist George Harrison (1943-2000) discovered what would become a lifelong interest in Indian music. He first saw a sitar on the set of The Beatles’ movie *Help!* and immediately had one purchased for himself at Indiacraft, a small import boutique opposite Selfridge’s on Oxford Street.¹³ Later that year, Harrison played a sitar on the single ‘Norwegian Wood’ that was recorded in October 1965.¹⁴

Help! (1965) has often been dismissed as a ‘lightweight’ movie. In fact, at the time of its release the director, Dick Lester, told the press that ‘There’s not one bit of insight into a social phenomenon of our time.’¹⁵ While it might not have been making any self-conscious political statements, viewed historically, *Help!* is a significant

document of anti-establishment sentiments and Orientalist stereotypes. The plot of the movie is an extended chase where members of a Kali cult first attempt to steal the 'sacrificial ring' from Ringo and, when that fails, try to sacrifice Ringo to the goddess. The movie relies upon Orientalist stereotypes with white actors playing the part of rather dim-witted Indians. The word 'India' is never used, but Lennon asks at a restaurant, 'Does this Eastern flavour come expensive?' and another character cannot read a label because 'It's written in Eastern.' Equally significant, *Help!* consistently portrays an anti-authority sentiment, where both Scotland Yard and Buckingham Palace are found to be incompetent in protecting Ringo from both the Kali cult members and two English mad scientists.¹⁶

Religion is specifically targeted for anti-establishment sentiments in *Help!*. In the opening scene the leader of the Kali cult, 'Clang,' played by Leo McKern, is thwarted in his attempt at human sacrifice (which looks like Hollywood-style Satanic Mass) and reasons aloud, 'Without the ring there will be no sacrifice. Without the sacrificed there will be no congregation. Without the congregation... No More Me!' With the last sentence turning into a pathetic whine, the cult leader is no figure of religious inspiration or devotion. Likewise, Ringo himself apparently has a religion, but he is not sure what it is, explaining to the superintendent of Scotland Yard, 'They have to paint me red before they chop me – it's a different religion than ours... I think.' In the final scene, religion is shown to be elective with the ring finally falling off Ringo, who puts it on Clang with the line, 'Get Sacrificed! I don't subscribe to your religion!' The Beatles' portrayed a world in which neither religious institutions or political and governmental authority systems deserved much respect. But *Help!* portrayed life as a fun, sensual romp where anything was a potential source of amusement.¹⁷

Amusement for The Beatles was focussed into potential sources of musical inspiration. While filming in the Bahamas, it has been reported that Swami Vishnudevananda (who was beginning to establish Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres in North America at this time) approached the group and gave each member a signed copy of his *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga* (1957). Reportedly, none of the

group gave it any significance at the time, but Harrison later recalled it after he became interested in Indian spirituality.¹⁸

While very influential, George Harrison was neither the first nor the only musician to look towards India. Other contemporary pop-music groups were already experimenting with the sitar, Dave Davies of The Kinks imitated a sitar on the single 'See My Friend' (March 1965) which possibly was an immediate inspiration for Harrison exploring the Indian sounds. A friend of Ray Davies, Barry Fantoni, recalled listening to this single with The Beatles who then decided to get a sitar.¹⁹ The Yardbirds' June 1965 single 'Heart Full of Soul' also featured a sitar-like sound made with a guitar and reached No. 2 in the UK charts.

Indian inspirations were also part of the classical music scene; in the summer of 1966, Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar preformed a duet at the Bath Music Festival that formed the basis of the *West Meets East* collaborative album.²⁰ There was crossover from the classical music to popular music scenes as well. During 1966, Marianne Faithful remembers Mick Jagger dancing around to Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan during an LSD trip and the sitar, possibly borrowed from Harrison, appeared in the Rolling Stones' single of the same year 'Paint it Black.'²¹

Harrison's interest in the sitar may have also been specifically encouraged by socializing with The Byrds' members David Crosby and Roger McGuinn during The Beatles' 1965 summer tour of the United States. Both Crosby and McGuinn were known to be enthusiastic about Shankar and Crosby had attended Shankar's Los Angeles recording sessions in the early 1960s.²² It is likely that Harrison heard Shankar's recordings around this period.²³ Indian music was also entering the consciousness of British music aficionados with the lauded appearance of the karnatic singer, M. S. Subbulakshmi (1916– 2004), at the Edinburgh International Festival in 1963. She subsequently gave performances in London and was recorded by the BBC, before embarking on successful tours of Europe and the United States during the 1960s.²⁴

Sometime in late 1965 or early 1966, Harrison was personally introduced to Ravi Shankar at the house of Asian Music Circle founder Ayana Deva Angadi, who

was also facilitating B.K.S. Iyengar's classes in Britain when visiting Yehudi Menuhin. When recording Norwegian Wood, Harrison's sitar broke a string and Angadi was phoned for a replacement. The entire family came out to Abbey Road Studios to deliver the string and stayed to watch the recording through glass; Patricia Angadi sketched the performance.²⁵ Harrison remained in contact with the Angadis for several months. The Asian Music Circle found Harrison a more local sitar tutor and possibly provided musicians for the track 'Love You To' recorded in April 1966.²⁶ Ayana Angadi's son Shankara remembers Harrison and Boyd coming several times a week, staying for dinner, and playing recording sessions to the family.²⁷ However, Harrison had stopped coming to the house by late 1966 and had no further association with the Asian Music circle, although he continued his friendship with Ravi Shankar.²⁸

Figure 27: Photograph Dating from mid-1960s showing Diana Clifton in the foreground and George Harrison Standing central with members of the Asian Music Circle and a dance group. Image from the Diana Clifton Collection, courtesy of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK).

In September 1966, Harrison and his fiancée Pattie Boyd spent six weeks in India to continue sitar lessons with Shankar. During this visit, Harrison also began to learn yoga postures to enable him to sit and hold the sitar properly and was given books on Indian religion.²⁹ Two books significant enough to be mentioned by Harrison's biographers are Swami Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* (1896) and Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1946).³⁰ Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952) was very influential in the popularization of yoga in the United States, having founded the Self Realisation Fellowship in California in 1920.³¹ However, in Britain, his organisation was less influential, only establishing a formal charity in 1988, though there were devotees who met in each other's homes and corresponded by post in the 1970s.³² Yogananda was widely known during the 1960s through his voluminous

‘autobiography’ which chronicles meetings with a variety of Indian saints and holy men.³³ Harrison never made public statements about Yogananda, yet reportedly carried the book with him, at times reading pages out loud and was known to present friends with copies.³⁴

Yogananda’s face and other spiritual teachers illustrated in *The Autobiography of a Yogi* (namely Paramahansa Yogananda, Śrī Yukteswar Giri, Śrī Lahiri Mahasaya and Mahavatar Babaji) can be found among the crowd on the cover of *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967). As MacDonald suggests, ‘when The Beatles visually name-checked their cultural icons on the cover of *Sgt. Pepper*, they meant to encourage popular curiosity.’³⁵ In the estimation of David Reck:

The acclaim which greeted the Sgt. Pepper album when it was released on June 1, 1967, was almost universal... *Sgt. Pepper* quickly became one of the canonical icons of 1960's counterculture – joining such works as J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, Hesse's *Siddharta*, the *I Ching*, and the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and was read for hidden messages, cosmic metaphors and divination of future events.³⁶

Reck also notes that except for Harrison’s ‘Within You, Without You’ there is very little Indian influence to the music itself. This list of ‘countercultural icons’ refers to an idealised, Orientalised vision of the ‘Eastern’ other. Although perceived as new and different, The Beatles were so widely popular that *Sgt. Pepper* should not be considered ‘countercultural.’ The album release was a major cultural event, with many radio stations playing the album almost constantly.³⁷ Popular understanding was most often about a more generalised spiritual vision without commitment to any specific tradition, teaching or belief.

In 1966, John Lennon gave a now infamous interview with Maureen Cleave at the London *Evening Standard*. The interview caused problems in the United States by publishing a statement by Lennon claiming that ‘we’re more popular than Jesus now.’³⁸ However, the article caused little stir in Britain, perhaps because in post-imperial Britain Lennon’s ideas were not that iconoclastic. For a British audience Lennon’s relatively casual approach to comparative religion had already been the focus of public debate in 1963 when the popular BBC television comedy ‘That Was

The Week That Was' aired its 'Consumer Guide to Religion'. This episode compared Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Communism and Buddhism as if they were washing machines. Hundreds of Britons felt moved enough to comment directly to the BBC and while many were deeply offended, twice the number were complimentary.³⁹ In their religious posturing, Lennon and Harrison largely publicised a turn away from institutional Christianity that had already been accepted in British culture.⁴⁰ In this interview, Lennon's comment about Jesus was immediately preceded by an expression of admiration for Indian culture. Lennon was playing Indian classical music to Cleave, apparently given to him by Harrison and remarked: 'Don't the Indians appear cool to you? Are you listening? This music is thousands of years old; it makes me laugh, the British going over there and telling them what to do. Quite amazing.' In *The Evening Standard* article, Cleave put Lennon's comment in her own context, remarking that Lennon was 'reading extensively about religion' and that 'his mind is closed around whatever he believes at the time, which is likely to change.'⁴¹

Part of the appeal of India to 1960s pop musicians was musical and creative inspiration. Paul McCartney brought to his band-mates recordings of modern classical composers Luciano Berio, Karl Stockhausen and John Cage.⁴² For McCartney the appeal of Indian music was very practical in terms of song writing. He said that Indian music was attractive because, 'there's nothing greater than not having to bother with a bunch of bloody chords ... 'what's this? F sharp, H flat minor ... Oh my God!' Whereas in Indian stuff there's one. And you can go 'Nyahhh' [imitates sitar] for twelve hours if you like...'.⁴³ For professional pop musicians, Indian music was most importantly another way to find inspiration for writing something new and better than other bands. India also offered a visual referent in a culture of expanding images.

India and yoga became associated with the 'hippy trail' of adventure, drug use and 'dropping out' of office jobs. Geraldine Beskin, working at The Atlantis Bookshop, did not travel the hippy trail herself, but many of her customers did. Rather than defining the path, Beskin reflected that 'The Beatles widened the road.'⁴⁴ She remembered that:

Fairly early on [there] became an established hippy trail if you like. First, there was a dope route that people took along certain places. But there were also established tea houses where you could leave messages if a friend was coming through in six weeks time. Places where you could pick people up to travel with safely. And so on and your mate would come back and say 'go here...' and people would go off. Sometimes they went alone, sometimes they went together, sometimes they came back in the middle of January wearing a saffron robe saying 'I've got no money I've got no where to stay' and you could just crash at someone's place for awhile.

The Atlantis Bookshop continued to be a focal point for seekers after information on alternative religiosity. Geraldine Beskin worked at The Atlantis from 1965 and remembers the clientele of the period.⁴⁵ Like Watkins, The Atlantis served as a meeting place for a sub-culture and from the late 1960s, many of their customers could also have been considered part of a counter-culture. New bookstores within this milieu and alternative publishers also popped up various locations from the mid-1950s onward. Significant among these were the Sa Francisco based City Lights (from 1953) which published Allen Ginsberg's influential collection *Howl and Other Poems* (1956) that was subject to a high-profile obscenity trial in the United States which greatly increased its popularity. In Britain, Brighton's Unicorn Books was open between 1967-73 and stocked copies of the underground newspaper *Oz* as well as other books popular amongst the counter-cultural movements of that time, closed In the aftermath of an obscenity trial; It was then replaced by the co-operative bookstore The Public House Bookshop which maintained the alternative niche locally from 1973 to 1999.⁴⁶

While the Atlantis did not hold meetings itself, it had a notice-board upon which people could post messages for friends that might drop in as well as open invitations to meeting and events. During this period, Beskin remembers that Yogi Ramacharaka on pranayama and Arthur Avalon's *Serpent Power* sold 'endlessly.' The so-called drop-outs, 'hippies' and young protesters were choosing lifestyles deliberately different from those of society in general. Yoga often became part of these people's lives in a very different way than in the Local Educational Authority (LEA) classes. Beskin remembers that yoga practice was a popular activity for many of her customers in the late 60s and 70s:

Many in this group used yoga as a devotional practice, part of being vegetarian, changing your life, contraception loomed large and tantric sex. Yoga became part of people's devotion practice ... and was a way of saying that I'm an alternative person.⁴⁷

She also remembered yoga as something people attempting a communal lifestyle might do together as a group activity. The youth culture of the period used yoga in a new way that fitted into their experimental lifestyles and a search for new ways to access the divine. Yoga, in turn, became associated with this group of people.⁴⁸

During the 1960s, The Atlantis Bookshop had a good section on Yoga, comprising both new and second-hand books. Additionally, the area around Museum Street held a variety of shops for those interested in esoteric and alternative spirituality. Watkins Bookstore was within a ten-minute walk, and on the same street as The Atlantis, 'Books From India' ran a business importing specialist books including those on yoga and Indian religions. Both 'hippies' and scholars from America and the Commonwealth would sometimes make a 'pilgrimage' to the British Library that was then housed in the British Museum and the bookshops in the area. For those with broader interest, within a few minutes' walk from The Atlantis Bookshop was the Steiner Bookshop, a Theosophical Society Bookshop and publisher Allen & Unwin's offices. Also overlapping with clientele during the 1960s and 70s was the science fiction specialist Dark They Were and Golden Eyed (c.1970 to 1980) near Charing Cross and Compendium Books (c.1968 to 2000) in Camden Town which specialised in new and *avant garde* political and philosophical literature.⁴⁹ From 1969, the Hare Krishna organisation's first London temple was also located near Museum Street on Bury Place.⁵⁰ According to Beskin, 'unsurprisingly' some people involved in this milieu had wide ranging interests, while others were only interested in a single subject or tradition.

Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* had important associations for these travellers:

Everyone set off with a copy of Lord of the Rings. Because it was a big thick book. You would split it as well. If you've read the first half and someone came along who hadn't read it yet, you would give them that half. And you know pass it around that way.⁵¹

By using Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* to frame their journey through Asia, travellers were understanding their search in the context of a familiar adventure. Many readers have understood Tolkien's work as an allegorical and archetypal narration of a spiritual quest.⁵² Chris Tobler who was very much involved in some of the yogic milieu in youth culture of the period remembers spending weekends in bed reading the whole thing. In some ways, the 'hippy trail' with *Lord of the Rings* as a guide became an updated *Pilgrim's Progress* for the post-Christian age.

Robert Ellwood has reflected that Tolkien's mythical epic was particularly popular during the 1960s on several counts. One was that mythical and imaginative narrative appeared to teach profound truths that appealed to a neo-romantic sensibility associated with '1960s consciousness expanders and social utopians;' it resonated with an anti-establishment worldview, that was supported by identifying 'The System' – an uncaring social system – with the regime of Tolkien's evil fictional empire of Mordor.⁵³ The identification of many readers with Tolkien's stories was such that social gatherings developed which had public readings, dress-up balls, and discussion groups focused on the fictional books; there was even a woman in the Mojave Desert in the United States who claimed to have found the actual archaeological ruins of Tolkien's fictional land of Gondor and attracted a small following during the 1970s.⁵⁴

In 1973, the 'hippy trail' to India was already wide enough for the new women's glossy magazine *Cosmopolitan* to offer a feature article on travel to India. It advised that a trip to India was possible for all budgets: 'Package tours cost from around £230 for sixteen days. A really cheap way is overland expeditions from £40 one-way to £90 return.'⁵⁵ Also, by this year, British yoga groups were organizing their own tours of India's larger ashrams and holy sites.⁵⁶ There was a way of experiencing the magical 'spirituality' of India for any budget or level of adventure. The publications of yoga groups, particularly the glossy magazine *Yoga & Health*, eagerly embraced this celebrity endorsement of yoga. Also in 1973, *Yoga & Health* headlined the music group Quintessence as a 'Yoga Rock Band' and gave a celebrity roll-call of vegetarians listing Marty Kristian, Pete Murray, Marc Bolan and Cat Stevens, 'among others.'⁵⁷

George Harrison, The Beatles And Transcendental Meditation

In the estimation of music journalist Ian Macdonald, George Harrison was ‘arguably more responsible than any other individual for popularizing Oriental, and particularly Hindu, thought in the West.’⁵⁸ After Harrison famously remarked at the end of The Beatles 1966 US tour ‘Well, that’s it. I’m finished. I’m not a Beatle anymore,’ he increasingly focused on finding the personal contentment that eluded him.⁵⁹ Harrison’s first wife, Pattie Boyd, had some contact through friends with the Spiritual Regeneration Movement of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1917– 2008). Although The Beatles’ association with Transcendental Meditation brought great publicity to the movement, the Maharishi had been teaching his meditation technique in Britain since 1960 as part of a mission to spiritually regenerate the world. During his first visit he gave a series of lectures at Caxton Hall and his teachings found a warm reception with the members of the Study Society (a group associated with the esoteric teacher P. D. Ouspensky⁶⁰) and the School of Economic Science (SES).⁶¹ Both groups had been exploring ways of raising consciousness and practical meditation and were receptive to the Maharishi’s particular meditation technique. In 1961 Andrew MacLaren, the founder of the School of Economic Science, organized an open meeting for the Maharishi in the Royal Albert Hall and in the same year the two groups jointly set up the School of Meditation, specifically to teach and study techniques of meditation. However, the School of Meditation distanced itself from the Maharishi while continuing its interest in Advaita Vedānta.⁶²

In the summer of 1967, the Maharishi widely advertised what was to be one of his last public appearances before retiring into silence, like another famous Indian guru Meher Baba (1894–1969), with a poster campaign on the London underground.⁶³ Lennon, Harrison and McCartney came to hear the Maharishi speak at the Hilton Hotel in London on 24 August 1967.⁶⁴ The Maharishi taught that by concentrating on a personally given sound for a half hour a day, suffering could be replaced by a state of permanent bliss. He taught there was no need for any doctrine and no reason to abandon material and sensual pleasures. A contemporary newspaper article explained,

the Maharishi ‘offers a beautiful soul, without weightlifting or special equipment, without dieting or strenuous training – instant serenity.’⁶⁵ It was billed as a natural high that took away any need for drugs.⁶⁶ Before the talk, The Beatles were granted a private audience and afterwards decided to join the Maharishi for a 10-day meditation retreat in Bangor, Wales the next day.⁶⁷

The Beatles and their wives, as well as Mick Jagger and Marianne Faithfull joined the Maharishi and 300 others on his Wales retreat. Marianne Faithfull remembers the retreat feeling like ‘being at school’ and described the initiation ceremony in her autobiography:

We went in separately to meet him. He gave us each a mantra and a few flowers we had brought for him. He giggled a lot and had very cheerful, light vibes which was a relief. It wasn’t heavy at all. After we had been given our mantras and flowers, we were terribly sweet and serious about it. Nobody even asked anyone else what he’d said to them.⁶⁸

Then The Beatles received a phone call that their manager and personal friend, Brian Epstein had died. The Maharishi, according to Faithfull, told The Beatles that “‘Brian Epstein has moved on. He doesn’t need you any more and you don’t need him. He was like a father to you but now he is gone and I am now your father. I’ll look after you all now.’” I was appalled.⁶⁹

Initially, The Beatles held onto their newfound meditation, possibly as a way to deal with the loss. Lennon remarked to the press ‘Our meditations have given us the confidence to withstand the shock,’ and Harrison rationalized, ‘There is no such thing as death, only in the physical sense. We know he is okay now. He will return because he was striving for happiness and desired bliss so much.’⁷⁰ Six weeks later on 29 September 1967, Harrison and Lennon appeared with the Maharishi on the well-known broadcaster David Frost’s interview show on ITV. The two declared their belief in reincarnation; Harrison affirmed that the goal of life was ‘to manifest divinity and become one with the creator’ while Lennon affirmed that both Christianity and Transcendental Meditation were the answer.⁷¹ So much attention was generated by this programme that the two were invited back for another interview on 4 October 1967 to discuss their religious interests further with members of the audience.⁷²

In early 1968, The Beatles agreed to visit the Maharishi in Rishikesh, India; journalists of many US and British papers were sent to cover the story. According to media reports, The Beatles had expressed a wish to propagate the Maharishi's teaching and they began the six-month training course necessary for teaching the transcendental meditation technique at that time. Ringo Starr and his wife left after two weeks; he compared the experience to a holiday camp except 'the food wasn't any good and you had to check out the drain for scorpions before getting into a bathtub.'⁷³ By the end of February the Beatles had become concerned by a rumour about the possible sexual indiscretion on the part of the Maharishi.⁷⁴ McCartney returned to London at the end of March telling the awaiting press that he would continue to meditate daily.⁷⁵ Harrison and Lennon returned in April. In May, John Lennon said on the US television's *The Tonight Show*: 'We believe in meditation, but not the Maharishi and his scene. But that's a personal mistake we made in public.'⁷⁶ In a more enduring form, the Beatles' disillusion with the Maharishi was pseudonymously expressed in the song 'Sexy Sadie,' which Lennon told an interviewer that he wrote during the final hours of his stay in Rishikesh.⁷⁷ The Maharishi was on tour with the Beach Boys at this time, to a mixed audience reception.⁷⁸

Despite sceptical press coverage and the briefness of the Beatles' association with the Maharishi, the association encouraged thousands to investigate the meditation techniques for themselves. In public libraries, books on Transcendental Meditation were put on the same bookshelf as information on Indian philosophy and B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga*.⁷⁹ Wilfred Clark commented in the *Wheel* news bulletin, 'The only effect of this Beatles business has been increased demands for instruction in meditation.'⁸⁰ Despite the public ridicule of The Beatles' escapade with the Maharishi in the press, numbers of initiations into Transcendental Meditation continued to climb until 1975.⁸¹ This press coverage may have spilled out into a greater interest in other forms of yoga as well. A 1976 article in *Yoga Today* claimed 60,000 in Britain were practising meditation and that: 'You'll find far more ordinary housewives involved in taking TM classes than jet-setting trendies.'⁸² In 1978, a stressed mother of five reported in *She* magazine that she found the experience of Transcendental Meditation

‘delightful’. Although the author reflected that, as her children always interrupted her meditation practice, what she really needed was 20 minutes of silence.⁸³ Harrison never publicly criticized the Maharishi and as late as 1992 played a benefit concert for the Maharishi’s Natural Law political party in Britain. However, Harrison became more associated in popular understanding with another Indian guru Swami A.C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada (1896– 1977) founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

George Harrison and the International Society For Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

Although other Beatles kept a distance from spirituality in future public appearances, George Harrison never went back on his ‘ultimate thing’ as expressed to David Frost on national television, i.e. ‘to manifest divinity and become one with the Creator.’⁸⁴ In 1969, a few ISKCON devotees managed to enter the reception area of Apple Inc. after Yoko Ono assumed that Harrison had invited them. One of the devotees remembers that Harrison walked straight over to him and said ‘Hare Krishna. Where have you been? I’ve been waiting to meet you’.⁸⁵ Although it felt to both Harrison and the devotees like a fated encounter, several earlier attempts by ISKCON members to get Harrison’s attention had failed. These had included sending Harrison an ‘apple pie with the words *Hare Krishna* scrolled across the top in green icing as well as dropping off an inscribed wind-up walking apple and a homemade audition tape of their Vedic chants (for which they received the standard Apple Records’ rejection letter).’⁸⁶ After making contact with the devotees at Apple Inc., Harrison took a personal interest in the six devotees who had travelled to London from San Francisco in October 1968 to establish Krishna Consciousness in Britain.

Worldwide ‘Krishna Consciousness’ was the mission of Bengali Swami A.C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada. In 1965, at the age of 69, Prabhupada took a boat from India to New York City to spread devotion to God in the form of Krishna in the tradition of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, and the next year the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) was founded.⁸⁷ There the poet Allen Ginsburg

became interested in this Indian's teachings in New York and helped spread support for Prabhupada amongst the popular music and 'counter-cultural' scenes.

Ginsburg was influential on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, Marianne Faithfull recalled an incident with the Rolling Stones during this period:

in came Allen with a great flourish. He was wearing big, showy Shivaite beads. He went over to Mick, looped them over his neck and asked if he had ever heard of Hari Krishna. ... Then we all went and sat down in a little alcove in the front room. Allen had a harmonium with him and began chanting mantras to Mick, accompanying himself on the harmonium.⁸⁸

American devotees quickly moved him to the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco and became friendly with some of the celebrity and pop music figures of the area. In 1967 there was a 'Mantra-Rock Dance' at the Avalon Ballroom featuring Srila Prabhupada and Allen Ginsberg, as well as the bands The Grateful Dead and Big Brother & The Holding Company (Janis Joplin's band).⁸⁹ Swami Prabhupada quickly found his goal of spreading Krishna Consciousness furthered through youth culture and popular music.

Formal initiation into ISKCON involved serious lifestyle changes. Initiates were required to take a Sanskrit name and agree to spend about two hours each day chanting what is known as the *mahamantra*: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Initiates also vow to abstain from all intoxicating substances, including alcohol, tobacco and caffeine, to abstain from all forms of gambling and to eat only vegetarian food (no meat, fish or eggs). Sex was permissible only within marriage and then only for the purpose of procreation. Prabhupada taught that indulgence in these activities is detrimental to spiritual growth and causes anxiety and conflict. Those following Prabhupada believed that their practice would bring awareness of God in the form of Krishna into every moment of the devotee's life. In their desire to spread this Indian version of the 'good news', devotees regularly chanted in public spaces, selling and giving away literature on Krishna Consciousness. This form of union with God through love and devotion is known as bhakti yoga.⁹⁰

Although never becoming a devotee with all the lifestyle changes that would have been required, Harrison was instrumental in assuring that ISKCON became established in Britain. By 1969, less than one year after the arrival of six American devotees in London, the ‘overground’ countercultural magazine *Gandalf’s Garden* reported that ISKCON, ‘have made their mission widely known, have set up a commune and temple and have produced a record with the Beatles.’⁹¹ The speed of these achievements was largely due to Harrison’s personal influence.

Figure 28: George Harrison and ISKCON illustration. Image courtesy of The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International, Inc. www.krishna.com. Used with permission.

Harrison instructed Apple Corps to back the loan for their first British temple. Some of the ISKCON devotees lived for several months in John Lennon’s manor home, Tittenhurst Park, and paid their rent by making repairs to the estate. Apple Records released the devotees chanting the Hare Krishna Mantra as a single and with Harrison’s endorsement it quickly shot up the charts, reportedly selling 70,000 copies on its first day of release.⁹² Harrison’s 1970 single ‘My Sweet Lord’ was also a lasting popular success. The robed and dancing devotees appeared on the popular television show *Top of the Pops* twice in 1970.⁹³ Harrison also agreed to fund the publication of Prabhupada’s translation of part of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the *KRṢṆA Book* at a cost of \$19,000 for 5,000 copies of an over 400-page book with 54 colour pages. This book details Krishna’s childhood and youth, giving many anecdotes about the divine life. The idea behind so many stories is to describe the many aspects of Krishna as a way to keep one’s mind on God. Devotional reading was an important adjunct to the chanting for which the Hare Krishnas were so famous.⁹⁴ ISKCON’s efforts to spread literature relating to Krishna Consciousness, especially the Bhagavad Gita, for small donations on the streets of many major cities also did much to raise awareness of Indian religious paths for the general population. The Bhagavad Gita in various translations remained closely associated with other forms of yoga, regularly featuring on reading

lists for the Wheel of Yoga. In 1973 ISKCON devotees moved into Bhaktivedanta Manor, a large estate in Letchmore Heath just north of London, a property that was purchased by Harrison some years earlier.

Harrison established a cultural home for Indian spirituality in popular culture. Many of Harrison's solo albums contain songs based on Krishna and Indian spiritual ideas more generally. The 1971 charity 'Concert for Bangla Desh' set the stage for raising consciousness about Indian music and spirituality with Ravi Shankar opening the event and Harrison acting as master of ceremonies for Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Leon Russell, and Bob Dylan. The event drew 40,000 people into its two performances at New York City's Madison Square Garden.⁹⁵ His 1973 *Living in the Material World* and his 1974 *Dark Horse* tour were both popular, although they received mixed reviews particularly in respect to Harrison's willingness to moralise and proselytise for Krishna consciousness.⁹⁶ Although many of these ventures were not considered commercial or critical successes, they did ensure extensive publicity for India as spiritual inspiration.

Centre House

An influential London-based commune for which yoga was integral was called Centre House was founded by Christopher Hills (1926-1997) in Kensington, London. The *Aquarian Guide to Occult, Mystical, Religious, Magical London & Around* (1970) listed the commune as simply 'Centre':

Join in with us and bring your own 'thing' to the Creative Centre. The community at Centre House, 10a Airlie Gardens, London W.8 is a twenty-four-hour a day encounter group, using the growth techniques of meditation, creative conflict, spontaneous music, awareness and sensitivity sessions, creative projects, experiments and discussions. Share their expanding experiences on Thursday evenings at 8.00pm.⁹⁷

Centre house also hosted one of England's first macrobiotic cafes.⁹⁸ The founder of Centre House, Christopher Hills, was deeply interested in promoting human welfare with both science and spirituality. After an early career as a trader in Jamaica, Hills became deeply interested in the revolutionary struggles of the Jamaican and Indian

people, forging connections with a variety of influential Indian spiritual and political leaders. Although of an older generation than the ‘hippies’, the Centre House commune became a focus for spirituality and exploring human potential. A variety of spiritual teachers came in and out of Centre House during the 1960s while Christopher Hills was writing a book on chakras and the endocrine system, *Nuclear Evolution* (1977 [1968]). In 1970, Christopher Hills and his son John were also closely associated with organising a World Conference on Scientific Yoga (WCSY) in New Delhi, India. Hills was also very interested in the potential for alleviating poverty through aquaculture – in particular in developing high-protein algae – and was responsible for bringing spirulina into modern mass production. By 1973, Hills had moved to the United States where he founded a University of the Trees in Colorado but the Centre House community continued into the later 1970s.

Figure 29: Members of Centre House community with Hatha Yoga teacher Malcolm Strutt and Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar in 1971. © John Hills

Closely associated with Centre House was the yoga teacher Malcom Strutt who wrote several books on yoga through the 1970s.⁹⁹ He was influential amongst those looking to try yoga during his period and his teaching of asana and pranayama was particularly influenced by B.K.S. Iyengar and inspired by Paramahansa Yogananda.¹⁰⁰ However his instructions for yoga emphasized a transformation of consciousness and a reliance on the self as a teacher. He diagrams the effects of the various physical postures of yoga on the ‘direction of consciousness’ and describes a variety of beliefs and practices found in the alternative milieu of the time as having an underlying unity and contributing to a general uplift of the individual and social consciousness. Considering the availability of contemporary teachers, originating both from the ‘East’ and the ‘West’, he wrote: ‘Somewhere in all the new revolution towards evolution you

may find this course a stepping stone in your own growth toward fulfilment and enlightenment. Keep looking!’¹⁰¹

Gandalf’s Garden

An important figure bridging the older generation who set up Centre House with younger generations was Muz Murray (b. 1940). He was born in Nuneaton and, after studying art at Coventry, spent several years travelling around the Mediterranean working on films and other odd jobs. He was taking the opportunity of many of his generation to travel and explore the world. He recalled that one day in 1964, at the age of 23, with £7.10 to his name in Cyprus as he sat by the sea:

I just had this very strange feeling like a ghostly hand crept over the back of my head and pressed a sort of etheric brain on top of my brain. And my consciousness appeared to leave the body and just expand right across the ocean, or right across the universe. And I was given information, knowledge that I couldn’t get in any other way. Which in a few minutes changed the whole course of my life. And from then on, I was on the spiritual path, trying to find out what the hell happened to me!¹⁰²

He claims not to have taken drugs, read spiritual books or had any meditation practice before this experience. Questioning his sanity after the experience in Cyprus, he went to the British Library in Cairo (while working as Art Director for Cairo Television). He was relieved when he discovered a book on *Cosmic Consciousness* which satisfied him that he had had deeply spiritual experience like many in history before him.¹⁰³ After leaving Cairo, Murray had rather more dangerous adventures while hitch-hiking down the whole length of Africa. His journeys were long and harrowing, often without food or money.

Murray considered himself an explorer/adventurer and a poet – not a hippy. Although in retrospect Murray reflected that he ‘looked like [the] hippies and I had hippy philosophy long before they came along.’¹⁰⁴ As he travelled down Africa he found his inner preferences changing and he gradually gave up meat, eggs, alcohol and tobacco. He eventually found himself in South Africa, where he encountered a Sikh

teacher, Maharaj Charan Singh of Radha Soami Satsang who was initiating people into Shabda yoga meditation if the people had abstained from meat, fish, eggs, alcohol and tobacco for three months. Finding himself coincidentally meeting these criteria, Murray was initiated and spent a week, along with sixteen other people, doing meditation practice with Singh from 1 to 2.30am every morning while holding down daytime work in theatre and film. This gave Murray a desire to go to India and learn more from the Indian tradition. However, running short on money for an extended trip, Murray instead returned to London, got a bed sit in Notting Hill Gate and found a job in television to save money for another adventure.¹⁰⁵

Back in London, Murray came into contact with many young people who were ready to 'pour out their problems' to him, seeking spiritual direction but not finding much in the 'underground' movement which emphasised sexual freedom, experimentation with drugs and musical self-expression. He got involved with the commune at Centre House and here Murray met Ramamurti Shriram Mishra (later known as Shri Brahmananda Sarasvati (d. 1993)) who he came to consider as a 'guru'. Mishra was an Indian-born biomedical surgeon, who gave up medicine when he found he 'could cure more people with mantra than he could with the scalpel'.¹⁰⁶ Murray also introduced the yoga teacher Malcom Strutt to the community.

While living at Centre House, Murray attempted, without success, to interest various 'underground' publications with a column on spirituality. Finding little support there, Murray decided to start his own magazine. The first attempt at a magazine was called *Love Ink*, but that venture folded. Murray decided to start a new publication. He was inspired by Tolkien's tale of the fight against darkness – and the way elves, humans and hobbits were brought together in *The Lord of the Rings*. Murray claims he formally wrote to J. R. R. Tolkien to ask permission to call his venture 'Gandalf's Garden' which was duly given despite the author voicing a scepticism of 'hippies'; but, according to Murray, Tolkien did however; write a thank you letter after reading the first issue and expressed his appreciation.

After a while, Murray got Malcolm Strutt (his 'straight-man') to acquire the lease of an old 'Home and Colonial' shop at the 'rough end' of the King's Road in

Chelsea, just opposite The World's End pub. Murray and his friends moved in and cleaned the shop up. Murray remembers:

we cleaned that place out, scraping the pigs' fat off the floor and doing a vibration-changing ceremony. [We] made a meeting place in the cellar, and we had upstairs low tables on the floor and cushions. We were selling hippy-made produce and clothes, selling teas and porridge and stuff like that. Very cheap, 6p, at a time. And looking after derelicts on the street who had nowhere to sleep, so we let them sleep in the cellar overnight, and we fed them freely.

From trying to give the local homeless and drug-addicts spiritual inspiration, a programme of talks from various gurus evolved. Murray believes that the physical location of Gandalf's Garden opened up the variety of existing esoteric groups to a new generation of young people:

all these groups, the druids, the Buddhists, etc. they were all in their own corners. Nobody knew about them and they didn't have young people with them, so I invited all of these, Christians, Buddhists, Hasidim, Chinese, flying-saucer people, every ... the whole spectrum... I gave platforms for all these groups. For the first time, they started getting a lot of young members in their groups.

Spaces like the one generated around Centre Place and Gandalf's Garden were crucial in creating the 'cultic milieu' atmosphere which Colin Campbell (1972) described as a defining feature of spiritual exploration during this period. *Gandalf's Garden* magazine was carried in backpacks of travellers and seekers around the world; people wrote in from all parts of the world and the Lord of the Rings spiritual theme spread in 'headshops' and hippie venues throughout Europe. Chris Tobler (who hung out at Gandalf's Garden and later was involved with establishing the first Sivananda Yoga Centre in London) remembers Gandalf's Garden as much wilder than Centre House with 'long hair all over the place.' It was a place where you could turn up on a Friday night and be introduced to all sorts of philosophies, ideas, buy underground literature and meet travelling teachers like Ramamurti Shriram Mishra.¹⁰⁷

From 1968 to 1971, Muz Murray's project of Gandalf's Garden popularized yoga for a younger generation. Gandalf's Garden had a physical location on King's Road, Chelsea which was already known for Mary Quant's Bazaar and the home for

many cultural icons of the early 1960s. From this location Muz Murray and some dedicated friends produced six irregular issues of a magazine called *Gandalf's Garden* from 1968 to 1970; the property known as Gandalf's Garden continued to be open until 1971. Murray attempted to operate outside of a capitalist structure as much as possible and to a large extent Gandalf's Garden was a counter-cultural gesture. Instead of relying on the capitalist structure of book sales, Murray attempted to spread his ideas by word of mouth and non-capitalist experimentation.

Murray's spiritual vision was inclusive rather than exclusive. Murray called his experiment an 'Overground' movement in contrast to the 'underground' press of the *International Times* (1966– 1973) and *OZ Magazine* (1967– 1973) which also were popular amongst some of the London youth culture during this time, particularly as events listings.¹⁰⁸ Yet there was also an overlap in population between Murray's 'Overground' and the youth-cultural 'Underground.' *Gandalf's Garden's* staff overlapped with these publications, but it distinguished itself by its spiritual focus. Murray drew upon connections with the youth culture more generally to help cover costs. For example, he held benefit concerts in which Marc Bolan/Tyrannosaurus Rex and David Bowie were amongst some of the musicians who helped raise funds for his project and were associated at times with Murray's vision.¹⁰⁹ However outside the system they wished to be, money was still necessary to print the magazine and maintain the premises.

Figure 30: Gandalf's Garden Cover Photo Issue No. 5 c. 1969. Image courtesy of Muz Murray.

Gandalf's Garden relied on British imagery of gardening and Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* to call for inner spiritual growth with the belief that it could transform the world:

Between the leaves of GANDALF'S GARDEN a focal point for creators and beautiful people can be attained, and a communication service evolved, whereby all those alone can get to know about each other, can be put in touch

and visit each other's creative communes, becoming involved in joint ventures arts and crafts and music-wise.¹¹⁰

The magazine was distributed by subscription, street-sellers and specialist bookstores. By its sixth issue, there were stores selling the magazine in the USA, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Germany, Norway, Spain and Switzerland and letters testified to a nationwide distribution in Britain.¹¹¹ However, distribution was largely done via networks of friends, so only a certain stratum of British society would have been aware of the magazine.

Figure 31: Image of Gandalf's Garden from *Yoga & Health* in 1971.¹¹²

While Gandalf's Garden specifically appealed to the youth culture of the late 1960s, it also overlapped with existing networks of interest in yoga and alternative spirituality. *Gandalf's Garden* had some circulation amongst yoga practitioners who were not part of the youth culture. In 1969, Wilfred Clark, the founder of the Wheel of British Yoga, remarked in *The Wheel Bulletin* on *Gandalf's Garden*:

Should you perchance ever see a jazzy magazine bearing this title don't scream; you will find it right up your street. Despite its appearance (which is definitely aimed to attract youth) it is well planted with the Seeds of the Spirit and you shall know it by its fruits. Write to the editor Muz Murray...¹¹³

The 'store manager' of Watkins Bookshop wrote a letter to the editor of *Gandalf's Garden*:

I agree with almost every word you write, although, naturally enough perhaps, I would sometimes express it differently... one can't jump the generation gap. ... the reference was to the pictorial rather than the written content of G.G. For pre-McLuhan, pre-Beat and pre-historic codgers like myself (and there are a lot of us) your lavish (psychedelically contemporary; or just contemporary?) use of colour and above all your imagery are bound to seem a bit bizarre – a marvellous melody of ?Beardsley-cum? Bosh-cum? Private Eye-cum all ye faithful to the call of the Underground (and why not? Nature and History are both on your side. The chrysalis is paradigmatic, the Catacombs provide a precedent). Well, we shall have to go along with your divine madness, that's all.¹¹⁴

The 'psychedelic' artwork may have put off some of the older generation, but the growing British interest in spiritual and esoteric groups was not specific to those in their twenties. Muz Murray's project focused on his own generation of 'seekers' yet Gandalf's Garden could also be understood as a short-lived Watkins Bookshop for a younger generation of seekers. Murray's anti-capitalist organisation was part of the counter-culture.

Gandalf's Garden was an experiment in both magazine production and as an inclusive open-house shop. Murray relied on volunteers for much of the magazine production and invited those who were interested in his project to drop in and join whatever was happening. Friends and interested readers were invited round for events at the *Garden*, particularly for yoga classes on Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings for a mantra-meditation session and co-operative exploration on Friday evenings.¹¹⁵ The invitation to the Friday evening gathering makes the inclusive and spiritual tone of the gatherings clear:

Soul Gardeners and seekers of the miraculous get together for vibration raising, study, discussion, Chinese tea and soul stimulation. Sessions usually begin with Mantra Meditation (no problem for beginners who can just sit and absorb the vibes) to rarefy the atmosphere. (We have to close the door during this so please be early). Then follows reflections on the *Eternal Why* of our existence from any angel open to us, initiated by the Gardeners, or by visiting yogis, occultists, healers, mediums, monks, astrologers, writers, researchers or groups, who are well into their own thing, who have offered to come along and act as the catalytic element for discussion. (Prospective catalysts are invited to contact Muz Murray: FLA 6156 or just come along anyway).¹¹⁶

This attitude of inclusive openness is also part of why Murray termed the shop and magazine an 'Overground' movement. Early issues had columns by the well-known DJ John Peel, who was also celebrated for his fostering a similar sense of community on his early broadcasts. Calling his 1967 past-midnight Radio London show the Perfumed Garden (perhaps also contributing to the name of Muz Murray's enterprise), John Peel encouraged listeners to write in and join in the musical exploration.¹¹⁷

Although *Gandalf's Garden* itself was drug free, many of those involved with its message, were interested in experimenting with various forms of 'getting high' and

opening their mind to the possibilities of human experience and its possible meanings. Like many of those coming to adulthood in the mid-late 1960s, Chris Tobler sought out experiences with the assistance of drugs like marijuana and LSD. Tobler's parents were members of the Study Society, did Sufi whirling, and had initiated the entire family into Transcendental Meditation in 1966 when he was a teenager. However, Chris wanted to find his own path and found the scene in Gandalf's Garden more in line with his generation's searching than the structures of the Study Society or Centre House.¹¹⁸ Many others became interested in a variety of mind-changing experiences and lifestyles initially through drugs. Yoga and meditation practices were often included with these lifestyle experiments. The consciousness expanding properties of LSD were hoped, by its enthusiasts, to have the potential to radically transform the world for the better. In the experimental 'scene' of the 1960s, explorations in consciousness between techniques of yoga, meditation and drugs were very much linked in some populations. The Beatles and other popular musicians were well known to experiment with drugs as well as eastern spiritualities, as well as a number of figures from previous generations such as Aldus Huxley, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, Timothy Leary and 'anti-psychiatrist' R.D. Laing.

Psychedelic drugs were ubiquitous for some populations of young people growing up during this period. As one informant remembers:

In 1971, aged 14, I had LSD for the first time; nearly all my friends took it too in the early 70s. In 1973 there was a big bust in my school in Sussex; around 200 of the 400 pupils were using cannabis and LSD. Psychedelic experiences led many of us directly into yoga and meditation (and everything 'alternative'). By the time I was 16 I was vegetarian, sleeping on the floor and occasionally experimenting with yoga postures and meditation. Some of my friends became initiated by a guru or ISKCON but many of us just dabbled with all this. We started eating whole foods, went to see all sorts of gurus, including the Dalai Lama, attended free festivals, tried Sufi dancing and all things alternative. Nobody I knew ever went to a yoga class but nearly everyone I knew of my age was experimenting with eastern spirituality, meditation, pranayama, sitting in lotus position, doing headstands etc. I eventually got to India in 1977. One of the reasons for this enthusiasm for India was that there were no road maps in the west for the acid experience (nor, incidentally, were there any guide books for India).

LSD became popularly accessible in Britain during the 1960s and was considered enough of a social problem to have it made illegal in 1966. However, it remained readily accessible for those who were interested, until the closure of a major manufacturing centre in Wales in 1977.¹¹⁹ Some of those who were initially introduced to a variety of alternative ideas through the use of drugs eventually tried to find other means to have transformative spiritual experiences.¹²⁰

Figure 32: Photograph of 3HO yoga class in 1971. From *Yoga & Health*.¹²¹

From 1969, Yogi Bhañan (1929– 2004) was explicitly attempting to appeal to those looking for a natural ‘high’ after having had experiences on drugs with the technique of ‘Kundalini Yoga’ and the Happy Healthy Holy Order (3HO). Yogi Bhañan (born Harbhajan Singh Puri) combined Sikh doctrine with physical yoga techniques learned from the Delhi-based yoga teacher Dhirendra Brahmācari (1924– 1994) and introduced his programme in California from 1969.¹²² Bhañan’s Kundalini Yoga was formally introduced to Britain in 1971 when Vikram Singh, formerly Vic Briggs of the band The Animals, established the first London branch and promoted ‘Kundalini Yoga’ in the new *Yoga and Health* magazine.¹²³ *Alternative London* (1972) described the classes thus:

They say that nearly all their students have been into drugs (though of course everyone is welcome), and that their technique is more rapid than other yogas, providing an immediate ‘high’ and lasting result... sessions involve straining to one’s limits using dynamic exercises and breath control... Classes include some meditation and chanting (“God is me, me is God” repeated vigorously) and finish with that beautiful chorus from the Incredible String Band: “May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you and the pure light within you guide you all the way on.”¹²⁴

This early 3HO centre was meeting a similar need to some of the population frequenting Gandalf’s Garden in the years between 1968-1971. It provided a place for meeting likeminded people and experimenting with the possibilities of human experience. However, in contrast to the 3HO centre which affiliated itself solely to

Yogi Bhajan, Gandalf's Garden encouraged a wide variety of approaches and guest speakers at the venue.

The excitement and transitory nature of the population that helped spread the message of Gandalf's Garden also contributed to its rapid degeneration. All those involved in the project were living in extremely close quarters (Murray remembers five to fifteen people all sleeping on the floor in one room) and very strapped for cash. Much of the money made from selling the magazine often did not make it back to those producing it. After the London commune folded, Murray spent quite some time travelling around England and Scotland on his Vespa, trying to help people who were inspired by *Gandalf's Garden*. He made it up to Findhorn in Scotland before returning to Cornwall and wound up leading mantras on the pyramid at the opening of the 1971 Glastonbury Festival.¹²⁵

Then during the 1970s, Murray finally travelled to India where he had another series of adventures seeking out 'every form of yoga available with many renowned masters of many traditions.'¹²⁶ Well known from his Gandalf's Garden projects, Muz Murray continued to act as a point of contact for many on the spiritual search in India. After returning from his three years of travels, Murray published *Seeking the Master: A Guide to the Ashrams of India* (1980). This book is Murray's collation of his own personal experience, and reports sent to him by friends, acquaintances and anyone alerted to his project by word of mouth. This guide summarized many of the spiritual teachers which British seekers in the 1970s might have found during their pilgrimages to India and became the go-to guide to a spiritual journey in India for the 1980s.

The London Sivananda Yoga Centre

Some of those who experienced yoga and meditation at Gandalf's Garden were inspired to delve deeper into specific yoga traditions. For example, one of the founders of the first Sivananda Vedanta Centre in Britain, Barbara Gordon, had initially been introduced to yoga at Gandalf's Garden by Doshia Dupré, a student of Dr. Mishra.¹²⁷ Together with some friends, Gordon was inspired to study yoga at Swami

Vishnudevananda's ashram in Val Morin, Canada. While at the ashram in Canada, Gordon met a fellow English woman Judy Tobler (née Stallabrass) who became interested in yoga while on her breaks in the United States from working as an air hostess for Pan Am. Judy remembers her first yoga classes in Los Angeles in 1969. While attending a talk by Swami Satchidananda (who was taught by Swami Sivananda) she experienced a 'lightbulb moment.' She became a vegetarian and began regularly attending yoga and meditation with Sivananda teachers in Los Angeles who suggested that she do the teacher training course in Val Morin.

Judy Tobler remembers the schedule of the training programme at Val Morin as a very intense few months. According to Tobler, Swami Vishnudevananda was an intense teacher who insisted on punctuality for classes and sometimes criticised the perceived lack of discipline in his students. She recalls:

...very much the principles [they] were following [at Val Morn] were Swami Sivananda's. Often Swami Sivananda's approach was referred to as 'integral yoga'. In other words, he brought together Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, the devotional yoga, and Karma Yoga, the yoga of selfless service. And I would say that Swami Vishnudevananda was very much a specialist in the Hatha Yoga, in the asanas and the pranayama, the postures and the breathing. But he brought everything else in as well. He was strong on the Karma Yoga, that everyone should help and that kind of a thing. You know, and some meditation and chanting and so on.

Swami Vishnudevananda, in Judy Tobler's memory was a very passionate character: 'I think he very much wanted to really offer young people something – and the world something.'

The highlight of her time in Canada was a Jubilee festival during which Swami Vishnudevanda invited:

all his brother swamis, particularly ones who had come to the West, to his ashram in Val Morin. So there was him. There was Swami Venkatesananda, there was Swami Satchidananda, Swami Chidananda. He also invited a bunch of what you would call in India wandering bhaktas or devotees. Men and women who kind of travelled around from town to town playing devotional music and chanting and going into trances and goodness knows what. And all of this kind of descended for a few days on the ashram. And it was the most amazing experience. ... It was very colourful and very, very exciting. And

very, very, very kind of 1960s! I mean, I think every American hippy was on the place as well.¹²⁸

Having built up a respectable amount of savings from the well-paid job, Judy was ready to embrace a radical lifestyle change. She felt an immediate connection with Swami Venkatesananda. She remembers the idea of opening a Sivananda yoga centre in London as arising organically out of conversations with Barbara in Val Morin.¹²⁹

Figure 33: External of the Sivananda Yoga Centre in 1971 from *Yoga & Health*.¹³⁰

They returned to London in December 1970 to the networks of people dropping in and out of Gandalf's Garden. The two women searched all over London for an appropriate building to rent for their yoga centre. Then, in early 1971, the first Sivananda Vedanta ashram in Britain opened its doors at 44 Ifield Road in an unassuming terraced house in Earl's Court. Keeping with the youth culture at the time, from the outset the founders of the centre wanted an open-door policy. The newly launched *Yoga & Health* magazine reported:

There is little to distinguish one Victorian terraced house from the next in the road, save for the number over the fanlight and the colour of the door; but over the bell push of one particular house is a discrete and important little notice. It reads: "Ring hard, there is always somebody in" and it means what it says because it is the home of the new English *ashram* of the Sivananda Yoga Society.¹³¹

From leafleting and word-of-mouth networking, the ashram's yoga classes grew from two students to overflowing capacity within six weeks.

Figure 34: Judy Tobler teaching at the Sivananda Yoga Centre in 1971 from *Yoga & Health*.¹³²

An early resident of these years, Hector Guthrie, remembers only about five people living at the centre during the first few years, an 'inner core' of about thirty people associated with the ashram, and perhaps another thirty 'regulars', with many more people dropping in from time to time. *Yoga and Health* noted the varied population of people interested in classes at the ashram:

It is odd that the classes at Ifield Road seem to have attracted as many men as women, although their ages may range from fourteen to sixty plus, whereas most of the more commercial Yoga classes seem to attract far more women than men.¹³³

Guthrie remembers that they also ran macrobiotic cooking classes at the ashram and 'had a real relationship with every other freewheeling spiritual organisation in London. So, in those days, we were very open, which is unlike today... we mixed freely with the devotees of this guru and that guru.'¹³⁴ Swami Venkatesananda was a visitor in the first year, but there was not a resident Swami.

To some extent those attracted to the yoga of the Sivananda environment may have been reacting against the yoga found in the adult education centres which focused on mastery of physical exercises. Hector Guthrie recalls that:

I do get the impression from the conversations at the time that people thought that what else that there was around was very stark and physical. Goal orientated. You know, the sort of what we used to call the abomination of the Iyengar approach. Which was very, very... hard-line and Iyengar at that time really had a strong influence on the few teachers around, which meant they were trying to mimic him. And it was quite violent actually. And it did have that reputation at the time.¹³⁵

Guthrie remembers beginning to teach yoga classes after about six months of attendance (he had previously trained in Akido), and soon thereafter taking on more of a leadership role, directing the ashram. He recalls the emphasis of the classes at the ashram:

So it was inhale, arch up and back, exhale down, and inhale, twist to the left, and that sort of thing. So there was a lot of emphasis on breathing. In doing the asanas, the physical thing, again what distinguished us was, we were telling people do not strain; there is no goal here; there is no standard you have to reach. Do it very easily. Sink into the stretch, or sink into whatever it is.

And then it finished with a 10 to 15-minute deep relaxation. And it gave people an experience of relaxation which in many cases they had never experienced before in their lives. And in fact took them to a very deep meditative place. And it was a particular way of doing it, in which we took our time, we dropped our voices. We were soft. We were actually modelling the inner state of relaxation, but more particularly, we were modelling something which, then and now, I think is unknown to many people, which they yearn for, which is we were modelling gentleness and softness and actually kindness towards one's self.¹³⁶

Chris Tobler also moved into the Sivananda Centre when it opened and remembers teaching yoga asana in four or five sequences which began with 'standard exercises' and included shoulderstands, headstands and spinal twists.¹³⁷ The early centre was a place where people enjoyed being around as well. In Judy's memory:

There was a lot of hanging out as well. In fact there was a lot of – I really must say there was a lot of fun. I mean, we were very busy being quite spiritual, but we also had a lot of fun. I mean, I can remember, you know, after the yoga classes sitting in the kitchen and just laughing a lot.

The centre grew very quickly and organically at first. This attracted more interest from Vishnudevanda's centre in Val Morin. By 1972, the Sivananda ashram had moved to another property at 16b Wharfdale Road and the main teaching space to 175 Finborough Road, SW10 and the centre was put under the direction of a resident Swami.¹³⁸

Founder Judy and her soon-to-be husband Chris Tobler left London later in 1971 to follow their teacher Swami Venkatesananda, first to his ashram in Mauritius, then to New Zealand, where Hector Guthrie later joined them in teaching yoga and meditation. They finally settled in Cape Town, South Africa in 1976, where they continued to live with devotees of the Swami and practice his teachings. The Swami visited South Africa frequently until his death in 1982. This kind of fluid movement around the Commonwealth countries was not uncommon for those involved in looking for alternative ways of being during the 1970s.

Jiddhu Krishnamurti and Brockwood Park

Jiddhu Krishnamurti (1895–1986) had been identified as the prophesised messiah for the Theosophical Society in 1909.¹³⁹ He was adopted by the English suffragette and reproductive health campaigner Annie Besant (1847–1933), who was at that time president of the Theosophical Society and taken to England for his education.¹⁴⁰ The Theosophical Society believed he was the world teacher for this new age and founded The Order of the Star of the East in anticipation of his mature teachings. Somewhat ironically, in attempting to throw off the expectations of his mentors and refuse to be a ‘World Teacher’, he established himself as one. In the 1929 speech in which he dissolved The Order of the Star of the East he articulated the teachings for which he would become famous:

Man cannot come to it [truth] through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, not through any philosophical knowledge or psychological technique. He has to find it through the mirror of relationship, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection.¹⁴¹

From the late 1920s, Krishnamurti lived mainly in southern California where he became friends with British ex-patriot Aldous Huxley (1894–1963); Krishnamurti’s first book *The First and Last Freedom* (1954) was published with an introduction from Huxley. The influence of Krishnamurti on Huxley’s worldview is evidenced in *The Perennial Philosophy* (1942) and *Island* (1962).

As an adult, Krishnamurti toured the world as a lecturer attempting to remove barriers to an experience of ‘truth.’ By this, Krishnamurti promoted constant awareness, peace and stillness, but also ‘an awareness of self-deception, prejudice and parroted dogmas which can blind us to the wholeness of reality and the oneness of humanity.’¹⁴² Krishnamurti’s message was essentially very simple although he phrased it in many different ways – peace, happiness and an improvement of the human condition were to be found through self-exploration, a tranquil mind and the cultivation of love.

Krishnamurti became an integral part of the formation of understandings of yoga in twentieth century Europe. His teachings were not directly connected to the growing popularity of asana-focused ‘modern yoga.’ However, he was very much associated with the same milieu. Krishnamurti lectured in Europe annually from 1961. Mutual connections led to Krishnamurti being taught yoga asana by B.K.S. Iyengar in Gstaad, Switzerland in the early 1960s, while Iyengar was Yehudi Menuhin’s guest. Through Iyengar’s introduction, Krishnamurti visited the family of T. Krishnamacharya in Madras in 1965 and became a long-term student of Krishnamacharya’s son T.K.V. Desikachar (1938–2016) for asana and pranayama. During the late 1960s, Krishnamurti was closely associated with the Belgian Gérard Blitz, who founded vacation company Club Méditerranée (1950), in 1973 helping to establish the European Union of Yoga (*l’Union Européenne de Yoga*) in Zinal, Switzerland.¹⁴³ Desikachar’s association with Krishnamurti and Blitz greatly increased his visibility in Europe and to some extent in Britain. Krishnamurti held ‘camps’ at Brockwood Park, a property purchased on his behalf in Hampshire. From 1969 to 1984 hundreds of people attended annually to hear Krishnamurti speak, many of whom were also interested in other forms of yoga and spirituality. Krishnamurti started an independent, residential school there based on his philosophy as well as a concert series for classical music which continue to promote his legacy into the twenty-first century.

Many of those teaching of yoga in Britain were in some way influenced by Krishnamurti’s teachings which bridged both those popularising yoga within the structure of adult education classes in the 1960s and the emerging youth culture of the later 1960s. Ken Thompson remembers Krishnamurti’s teaching as being very significant within the Wheel of Yoga during the 1970s and 80s, particularly through the influence of Alan Babington, the founder of the Albion Yoga movement who taught at Mary Ward adult education centre in Bloomsbury during the 1970s and early 80s.

Chris Tobler who was involved in Gandalf’s Garden and the Sivananda Yoga Centre remembers hearing an early ‘town hall’ talk of Krishnamurti and not feeling

particularly inspired, that the philosophical message was quite ‘hard’: ‘He was breaking down, breaking down, breaking down. That was his thing was to get to the core, to get to the essence of whatever issues....’¹⁴⁴ His impression at the time was that Krishnamurti appealed more strongly to an older generation; his parents who were members of the Study Society were very impressed upon hearing that their son had met Krishnamurti. Not particularly associated with the youth culture of the period, Krishnamurti’s ideas appealed to a wide variety of people throughout the twentieth century. Indeed, Krishnamurti had frequent dialogues with a number of very influential public figures and his books remain in print today.

CONCLUSION

By 1972 there was a huge variety of mystical and spiritual lifestyles on offer that incorporated yoga as part of their teaching. Yoga was both countercultural and mainstream. As yoga was popularized, it also diversified. *Alternative London* (1972) lists ten ‘Hindu Oriented Groups’ and eight ‘Hatha Yoga’ teaching centres, along with a number of pagan, Sufi, Buddhist and Islamic ‘mystical’ groups, noting that attendance at these centres is an ‘incongruous mixture of old ladies and young freaks.’¹⁴⁵ Celebrity example created a kind of popular mystique for Indian spirituality, particularly amongst the young looking for alternative beliefs and lifestyles to those of their parents. Post-colonial critical theorist Robert J.C. Young recalled the late 1960s London environment of his youth:

So it was that the first real awareness of India as a country and as a culture came for many of my generation in the later 1960s when India became iconic for the counter-culture, an environment wonderfully satirized years later in Hanif Kureishi’s *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990). India for many of us at that time was fully represented by Indiacraft, a shop bristling with goods from India, which appeared opposite Selfridges on Oxford Street in London, and which became the shrine where everyone went to buy their sticks of incense, beads, silk scarves, trying in vain to look like one of the Kinks, the Moody Blues, or George Harrison. Indiacraft shops sprang up all over the country during those years, and in fact there is one in Little Clarendon Street in Oxford which still improbably lingers on from those days. This was when I first read the *Gita*, along with Basham’s *The Wonder That Was India*, and no doubt other equally orientalist texts. I then also first learnt about and began to see classical

Indian dance and listen to classical Indian music, the result of the fact that a friend of mine who was learning Indian dance at the now famous Bhavan Centre in Baron's Court encouraged me to come along to the performances and concerts. That was the first time I met people from India.¹⁴⁶

Young's memory of this time reflects an idea of India popularized by the musical celebrities of the period divorced from any experience of the actual country or its people. While here he dates his growing awareness of India to the late 1960s, it might more properly be remembering his impressions of the early 70s; the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan opened in London in 1972. While his reflections are no doubt greatly influenced by his later understanding of the post-colonial position (at the time of writing this reflection, he was teaching postcolonial theory at New York University), Young's description of a young middle-class Londoner's idea of India and Indian spirituality during the late 1960s/early 1970s is likely not too far off the mark for many of his class and generation.

A 1965 Guidebook to London, *The New London Spy: An Intimate Guide to the City's Pleasures* included a section on 'Indian London.' While other sections of the guidebook exhibited a detailed and rather subtle knowledge of the section under question, the section on 'Indian London' was focused on food and stereotypes of immigrants. For example, in the chapter on 'London Churches, Part Two' the guide explained that 'in Roman Catholic churches, it's the ceremony that matters, not the sermon. In Nonconformist churches, it's the other way around...' and discussed the subtleties of Christian worship.¹⁴⁷ While the chapter on 'Indian London' primarily focused on Indian restaurants in the capital, complaining that 'Most Indian restaurants in London aren't strictly Indian at all but Pakistani, and from one small part of Pakistan at that.' As for the culture of Indians in London, the guide rather voyeuristically remarked that:

Call at the North Star public house in Swiss Cottage any Saturday night and you'll see most of North London's au pair community [German] with their Indian boyfriends enjoying some typically British pub life.¹⁴⁸

This guide also noted that there was a great diversity of Indian families in London, including Muslims, Sikhs, Parsees, Jews and Christians. The guide also noted that most

Indians were very family-orientated, did not live in specific ethnic neighbourhoods, and found 'it hard to make friends with the British.'¹⁴⁹ If this 1965 description was accurate, it can be understood why it was that many young middle-class Britons took their ideas about India from music and popular culture despite increasing immigration.

Through The Beatles and other celebrities, India became associated with an Orientalist vision of salvation. Cultural icons like George Harrison, Terence Stamp, Pete Townsend, as well as a host of more minor celebrities found salvation in Indian spirituality. Yoga, as something related to Indian spirituality, became associated in this popular search. Of course, Orientalist idealization and selective borrowing from Indian religion had been the practice of the Theosophical Society since the late nineteenth century, but mass media distribution and celebrity example offered a new level of idealization for the idea of India and yoga. As the activities of these personalities attracted national and international media attention, yoga became more familiar. Meanwhile the changes in consciousness which the physical techniques of yoga might promote became a subject of interest for young people who were experimenting with drugs and alternative lifestyles. The involvement of youth and popular culture added another layer to the already complex reception of yoga and Indian cultural ideas in Britain.

CHAPTER 6. Yoga on the Telly

The expansion of the media during this period increased the accessibility of yoga and standardised its presentation. With yoga on television, it was possible to attempt yoga exercises in the privacy of the home without actively seeking out an esoteric printed manual or living teacher. During the 1970s several regular features about yoga on television exposed what was still a minority interest to a much wider cross-section of the British public. Contemporary estimates suggest that the number of committed British yoga practitioners may have increased from 5,000 to 100,000 between 1967 and 1979. A much wider audience was exposed to yoga through the mass media during the mid-twentieth century. The 1971–74 *Yoga for Health* television series alone reached an estimated audience of four million and the accompanying book sold over a million copies.¹

Year of Estimate	Number of Practitioners in Britain
1950	+1,000 ²
1967	5,000 ³
1973	50,000 ⁴
1975	25,000-80,000 ⁵
1979	100,000 ⁶
2000– 2002	265,000 ⁷
2002	450,000-500,000 ⁸
2004– 2015	2.5 million ⁹

Figure 35: Estimates of Yoga Practitioners in Britain

The content of yoga on television was usually modelled roughly on the format of adult education classes and emphasised safe stretching, relaxation and fitness that had practical benefits for health.¹⁰ As yoga in the adult education system contained a tacit governmental approval (at least on the local level), yoga on television offered an implicit authority beyond that of a teacher. In the case of Britain, the authority of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) broadcasts were explicit in its educative mandate and historical associations as being the ‘Voice of the Nation.’¹¹

Television was a very different medium for yoga than that of an interactive adult education class. McLuhan has outlined a dichotomy between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ forms of media. This categorisation remains a useful intuitive distinction between the different effects that medium can have on information transmission. For McLuhan, hot media like radio and films are ‘high definition,’ i.e. information-dense and involving little participation in interpretation. In contrast, cool media, like television and telephones, provide comparatively limited information and leave quite a lot of room for the audience to ‘fill in’ in the production of meaning.¹² Using this model, yoga on television was cold in comparison to the interactive environment of an adult education class. In the classroom situation most teachers interact to ensure a minimum of standardization to the understanding. In the case of some teachers, like B.K.S. Iyengar, the concentration and attention to details of physical performance demanded by the teacher left very little to the students’ imagination. Yoga on television provided visual examples, but it was up to the viewer how to interpret the instructions and only limited interaction was possible to correct any problems or misunderstandings. This chapter will argue that the presentation of yoga on television encouraged viewers to imagine their own meaning to the exercises. The content of yoga on television, as well as the extension of yoga instruction to a new medium, encouraged yoga to be understood as physical exercises with tacit soteriological and spiritual significance.

THE FIRST YOGA ON TELEVISION: SIR PAUL DUKES

Sir Paul Dukes gave the first demonstration of yoga exercises on BBC television in 1948.¹³ The BBC began experimenting with television broadcasting in 1932, but suspended broadcasts between September 1939 and June 1946. The role of BBC Radio in informing the British public of wartime developments had created an idea of the BBC as ‘the voice of the nation,’ an idealisation ‘unquestioningly accepted by the “television service”’ when service resumed in 1946.¹⁴ There was only a single television station broadcasting from Alexandra Palace in London, until the commercial Independent Television Network began operation in 1955. Thus, the BBC held an authoritative role in informing and educating the public and its programming was

assumed to be for public benefit. While in 1951 only about 5% of British households had black and white television licenses, television was quickly becoming more popular and accessible.¹⁵

The presenter of these instructional broadcasts on yoga was Sir Paul Dukes (1889– 1967), the son of a Congregationalist minister who was knighted for spying services in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution. During this period Dukes' most likely passed on information about the 'operational effectiveness and morale of Bolshevik naval forces in the eastern Baltic'.¹⁶ From his youth, he had an interest in unusual forms of spirituality and had contact with Theosophists and a Gurdjieff-like 'Prince Ozay' during his years abroad in Germany and Russia who instructed Dukes in breathing exercises and the 'vibrational' power of the Lord's Prayer when sung properly.¹⁷ After being knighted, Dukes lectured in America where he visited the office of Yogi Ramacharaka in Chicago discovering that the author likely had no personal knowledge of India.¹⁸ Dukes also spent several months at Pierre Bernard's 'Country Club' in Nyack, New York where 'hatha yoga' techniques were taught.¹⁹ Here he met his first wife the wealthy socialite Margaret Vanderbilt in 1922, who inherited USD\$1,000,000 over the next year; this marriage only lasted until 1929.²⁰ In 1939, Dukes returned to spying, having been asked by the Foreign Office to investigate the disappearance of a Czechoslovakian industrialist on the way from Prague to Switzerland. He then published his observations on the Nazi regime at that time, emphasising its similarities to Bolshevickism.²¹ It is likely that Dukes began teaching physical yoga techniques in Britain during the late 1940s. Duke's high-profile associations with the British national interest might have made him appear a respectable and interesting host for an unusual public interest series.

During this period most material was transmitted live in a 'once-only' performance; filmed material was expensive and 'telerecording' on tape only became available in the late 1950s.²² Therefore, no broadcast material for Sir Paul Duke's programmes on yoga has survived. Yet extant production paperwork provides information about the intention and reception of Dukes' four-part series on yoga which aired at 9pm on Saturday evenings in April, May and June 1950.²³ Dukes was given a

timeslot immediately after the 'main Saturday evening feature' a position which was designed to maximise 'flow viewers' from the previous programme.²⁴ Janet Thumim has argued that this programming design was similar to that of a print magazine where short pieces on various subjects were placed together.²⁵ The promotional listing for the show stated that:

Yoga does not aim to make people live forever, but to keep the temple of the body as a worthy holder of the spirit. Throughout the series of four programmes, Sir Paul will show how the principles of Eastern yoga can be applied to Westerners.²⁶

Thus there was an implication of both spiritual and demystifying elements in the series. Yoga apparently had something to do with an undefined 'spirit', but also was suitable for 'Westerners.' The programme titles emphasized the practicality of yoga for certain categories of British people; episodes were entitled 1. 'What Yoga Is', 2. Yoga for the Office Worker, 3. Yoga for the Housewife, and 4. Yoga for Britain Today. The authoritative voice of BBC broadcasting would have implied to the audience there would be some public benefit in exploring yoga. While some of the audience were interested in an explanation of how yoga related to the 'spirit' and other metaphysical issues, it appears that Dukes mainly focused upon physical exercises.²⁷ Shortly after his television appearance, Dukes published his autobiography, *The Unending Quest* (1950), which narrated his personal journey for spiritual fulfilment without specifying yoga techniques.

He was assisted in these programmes by Russian ballerina Nadine Nicolaeva-Legat and two of her young pupils, 'Beth and Pamela'. He most likely had connections to Nicolaeva-Legat from his time in Petrograd before the Bolshevik revolution. Nicolaeva-Legat's husband Nicolai Legat (1869-1937) had been Ballet Master and Principal Choreographer at the Imperial Ballet of St. Petersburg, before emigrating to England in the 1920s. Legat established high profile ballet schools in Britain during the 1930s, which his wife continued running after his death.²⁸ The high level of fitness of these professional ballerinas may have been somewhat at odds with the presentation of yoga for the average Briton. The programmes received 'about 1000 letters' the

majority of which asked for further instruction and made inquiries about books.’ Another section of viewers appeared to enjoy the programmes ‘if only as a graceful and entreating spectacle.’ About a third of the 1950 audience appeared to be convinced that ‘principles of muscle control, as demonstrated by ‘Sir Paul,’ were sound and valuable as the basis for a health-giving cult.’ While some of the viewers had followed the exercises ‘with considerable benefit’ since the first television demonstration, the total audience numbers declined over the course of the series.²⁹

Figure 36: Still from one of Sir Paul Dukes's BBC appearances in 1949.³⁰

However, this minority interest was not strong enough to pull Dukes’ series out of some of the lowest audience reaction index ratings recorded compared to other ‘television talk’ programmes.³¹ The audience reactions report noted that while Dukes appealed to some, ‘rather more thought he appeared too self-satisfied and several even accused him of talking down to his audience.’³² The BBC production team was also upset by Dukes’ manner; in the first episode Dukes made two references to Madame Nicolaeva-Legat’s ballet school which were perceived as promotional as well as putting his arm around her young students’ waists.³³ The salacious behaviour and marketing allusions were offensive to the BBC’s sense of public duty.³⁴ After this controversial behaviour, the producer of the series reported in an internal BBC memo that ‘after the last of the current series we can afford to give Yoga a good long rest.’³⁵

Dukes himself however, did not give yoga a ‘good long rest’ and continued to make it a focus of his life. He spent a few years in South Africa just after the BBC appearance. Stella Cherfas who ran a successful yoga studio in London during the late 1960s and early 1970s remembers taking her first class yoga class with Dukes in Johannesburg before her son was born in 1951. Pervious to her interest in yoga she was athletic and also interested in Grantly Dick Reed’s methods of natural childbirth. When she was in her late twenties she attended an advertised talk on yoga by Dukes out of curiosity and decided to attend the class he mentioned during the talk. She came back for more classes and he encouraged her to teach.

...slowly I got not so much the postures but the whole philosophy of it. As you saw, using every single part, dividing the class into pranayama breath, which is so important – it's the first thing you take in and the last thing you relinquish in your life and that's paramount. Moving the body and the glands and the joints. And the total [whole body] – we started as relaxation but it is now visualization.³⁶

According to Cherfas, the structure of a yoga class should have three main sections: pranayama (breathing exercises), bringing movement and awareness to every part of the body, and closing with a relaxation or visualization exercise. A mother with two young children, Cherfas taught a few classes in Johannesburg during the 1950s. Dukes spent quite a few years regularly teaching in South Africa, with Diana Fitzgerald, a dancer who would become his wife in 1959.³⁷ Dukes never really discussed with Cherfas how he learned yoga, his experiences in Russia or those in Nyack.

Figure 37: Stella Cherfas teaching cricket player Alan Knott in the early 1970s. Photograph courtesy of Stella Cherfas.

As life in South Africa became more tense after the Sharpeville Massacre, the Cherfas family decided emigrated to London. She remembers being at a Hampstead hair salon in early 1960s where a young man was complaining of anxiety. She invited him for a private yoga class and he was amazed at the effects. Through personal networks, Cherfas began teaching. A student found a property for her first in Westbourne Grove. After a few years one of her students helped secure her a lease to teach out of a more central property on Manchester Square W1 which she called the 'The Yoga Studio.'³⁸ This was perhaps the first location called a 'yoga studio' in Britain, it frequently appeared in mainstream media in the 1960s and 70s and quite a few of those who taught yoga during this period through its doors. Through Cherfas' teaching, Sir Paul Dukes continued to have an influence on the shape of yoga in Britain long after his death in 1967.³⁹

Figure 38: Stella Cherfas teaching at Manchester Square in the early 1970s. Photograph courtesy of Stella Cherfas.

YOGA ON ITV: YOGA AND HEALTH

The next attempt at yoga classes on television came in 1971 – after a very ‘long rest’ indeed – long after yoga was established in adult education classes and music celebrities had made their ‘Orientalist’ turn.⁴⁰ This time it was ITV who spotted the success of Richard Hittleman’s syndicated television programme on yoga in the United States.⁴¹ Like the BBC’s previous presentation of yoga for public health benefits, Richard Hittleman presented his form of yoga as a ‘sensible program for physical fitness on a national scale’ in the United States.⁴² Hittleman (1927– 1991) reported that he had learned yoga from ‘his parents’ Hindu maintenance man at a getaway called Utopia in the Catskills’ (a mountain range in upstate New York).⁴³ However, Hittleman was not too far away from Pierre Bernard’s Nyack Country Club and it is also possible that he had contact with yoga through members of this group, or other teachers in New York City.⁴⁴ Hittleman reported that he founded his own yoga school in Florida in 1957 and produced his first successful half-hour television series in the United States in 1961.

Hittleman’s yoga programme entered New York City’s television schedule in 1966.⁴⁵ In New York, the series was aired on weekdays at 9.30am and the audience would have largely been women at home, perhaps having returned from taking children to school; it was scheduled opposite a popular exercise programme on a rival channel. This format was clearly positioning yoga as physical fitness for women. It also implied that it might offer something more than simply physical fitness; its listing promised that Hittleman would demonstrate how one might activate ‘the great vital forces of the body and mind which become lazy and dormant if not correctly stimulated.’⁴⁶ This formulation is similar to New Thought, a philosophical and spiritual movement that has developed out of the work of America Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802–1866) which had an significant influence in nineteenth century

America and on the yoga books of 'Yogi Ramacharka'.⁴⁷ New Thought is not a strict belief system, but rather a position of personal exploration in relationship to an interconnected reality. While there is no formal theology that New Thought groups share, they are united in an emphasis on positive thinking, affirmations, meditation, and prayer.⁴⁸ By 1970, the pilot had been syndicated as a series on over 40 television networks in the United States.⁴⁹ Hittleman's first book *Be Young With Yoga* was published in the United States in 1962 and his books continued to be reprinted until the end of the 1980s.

The idea of making a British series with the same principle as Hittleman's was one of many business possibilities explored by producer Howard Kent (1919– 2005) on a 1967 business trip to New York.⁵⁰ Kent was familiar with yoga from reading works of Mahatma Gandhi some thirty years before but the Hittleman series popular in New York. After a contact suggested producing a Hittleman-type series in Britain, Kent brought back to Britain some of Hittleman's practice-along-with records and found his whole family enjoyed the exercise.⁵¹ It was decided to make the programme from scratch with new colour technology. Richard Hittleman was not the automatic choice, but a more suitable instructor could not be found. Therefore, Richard Hittleman was flown to England in the summer of 1970 for the filming. He brought with him a regular student, an attractive and thin blond woman named Cheryl. It was decided that a second model was to be chosen in England with no previous experience with yoga. As Howard Kent explained, 'It was necessary to demonstrate the progress which can be made by any reasonably fit person . . . everyone can have a shot at this and feel the benefit.'⁵² Model and former ballerina Lyn Marshall was chosen as the second demonstrator, although her background did not make her body one of an 'average beginner.'⁵³

Yoga for Health ran on ITV between 1971 and 1974 and reached an estimated audience of four million.⁵⁴ Television programming in the early 1970s was not continuous and there were often short gaps in the programming schedule. Initially, *Yoga for Health* was screened for twenty minutes at around 3.45pm on Wednesday and Friday. Its exact broadcast time varied but it appeared to be part of a 'tea time'

programme that included children's cartoons.⁵⁵ The initial series would have encouraged 'flow' watching primarily for mothers at home. After its original run it was screened on a number of regional stations as well. Unfortunately, the original series does not appear to have been preserved. But accompanying the television series Kent also produced practice books and a glossy magazine entitled *Yoga & Health*. Building on the success of yoga in LEA contexts and the celebrity associations with India, the television series 'Yoga for Health' offered new visual associations and exposure to yoga in the privacy of one's own home.

Figure 39: Photograph of Richard Hittleman's Royal Albert Hall appearance on 8 July 1972. Lyn Marshall is on Hittleman's left and Alan Babbington on the right.⁵⁶

The glossy magazine accompanying the television programme *Yoga & Health* ran from 1971 to 1975.⁵⁷ This magazine regularly referred to Hittleman's television series and highlighted minor celebrities practising yoga. In the opening issue editor, Joyce Finch, wrote:

Yoga is for health, relaxation and poise; for anyone to develop the best in themselves in their own particular way. Yoga is a key to prolonged youthfulness and to the power of the mind. It is a way of living and it costs you nothing more than a little time each day. Yoga is not asceticism.⁵⁸

The idea that 'yoga is not asceticism' was a key aspect of the Indian spirituality The Beatles popularised. Yoga was presented as an activity which did not require renunciation from sensual pleasure, but still promised to effortlessly promote improved self-control and physical fitness. Although Richard Hittleman exercises featured in nearly every issue, the magazine promoted a wide variety of yoga teachers including J. Kirshnamurti, Yogi Bhajan, Ram Das (Richard Alpert), Sri Chinmoy, Swami Vishnudevananda, B.K.S. Iyengar, etc. Howard Kent and *Yoga & Health* magazine also sponsored (with Inter Capital Travellers) one of the first British yoga holidays to Yugoslavia in 1972, which cost £65 for the 35 participants and was led by yoga teacher Ernest Coates.⁵⁹

Figure 40: View from the stage at Ronald Hittleman's Royal Albert Hall appearance on 8 July 1972.⁶⁰

The 'Yoga for Health' phenomenon successfully repackaged yoga as a public-health activity in the commercial sphere. It featured many endorsements of minor British celebrities. The *Yoga & Health* magazine offered a monthly step-by-step course of *asana* with a television actress Janet Waldron as 'Yoga with Jan'. The actress was reported to have had a 'genuine interest in yoga' because of a 'genuine problem due to a trip abroad.'⁶¹ A U.S. television actress, Celia Kaye, testified in the pages of *Yoga & Health* how yoga is 'something you can look forward to,' having discovered yoga while working in London.⁶² And more famous celebrities, such as Miriam Karlin who appeared in *The Entertainer* (1960) and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), testified that after two years of yoga classes, her pill-taking for sleep and anxiety had stopped and her self-confidence and fitness was 'much improved.'⁶³ Celebrity testimonials were commonly paired with letters and interviews with more 'ordinary' people who reported benefits of yoga in terms of fitness, health, confidence and mental stability. The implication was that if Hittleman's yoga was so successful for these glamorous women, it could work for the ordinary housewife or office worker.

YOGA WITH LYN MARSHALL

The 'Yoga For Health' television series with Richard Hittleman ran up to September 1975 at which point Hittleman's British model Lyn Marshall (1954–1992) took over with her own series 'Wake Up With Yoga' at 11am on Sundays.⁶⁴ In 1976, the ITV programme moved to 9.30am on Sundays and was renamed 'Keep Up With Yoga' under which it continued through 1977.⁶⁵ These series were also followed up with their own books featuring Lyn Marshall demonstrating simple and practical routines of yoga postures: *Wake Up To Yoga* (1975), *Lyn Marshall's Keep Up With Yoga* (1976), *Lyn Marshall's Yoga For Your Children* (1978). From 1983, Lyn

Marshall took her now 'signature style' of yoga to the BBC with a series entitled 'Everyday Yoga'.⁶⁶

Wearing her signature uni-coloured leotard, Lyn Marshall focused on one posture in each episode. For an episode which was recorded in April 1976 she demonstrated 'the fish movement.' A transcription of her instructions illustrates the style:

The fish movement arches the spine upwards to make it more supple. At home, if you are ready, we are going to begin by lying into the corpse, the total relaxation position. So slowly, there is no hurry, lie back down – legs and feet together. And let's relax by letting the toes fall open. And let the hands rest on the backs of the hands and let the fingers curl. Now close your eyes. Now ideally, if you know the movement, you keep your eyes closed...

Alright, let's begin. Bring the legs and the feet together. First straighten your elbows and make fists of your hands. Push with the elbows, push with the hands. And push up. Don't try to come up as far as I am. Just go to your own limit and stay there. And now we are going to hold for a count of five. One... Two... Three... Four... Five. You can still hear me. And now slowly let your head slide back. Don't rush. Just let the back sink down very gently. Now when you feel your back on the floor just relax. Let your feet relax. Let your hands relax. Now sit up slowly.⁶⁷

While Marshall explored a variety of asanas on her program she always presented the same instructions of relaxing, breathing into the pose, only going to your own limit, holding gently for a count of five, gently relaxing out of the position and finally completely relaxing in the corpse position.

In every episode, Marshall would read letters from her viewers and invite a few of the letter-writers on the show for personal tuition. Those who appeared on screen were very ordinary looking, emphasising the appeal to every member of the public. The gentleness of Lyn Marshall's approach appealed to many of the television audience. One mother and son appeared on screen for help with a 'standing side bend.' The mother began her practice of yoga with the television show, remarking 'I have always been very anti-exercise in the past. I always felt agonised for days after doing normal exercise. But this is so gentle, I feel if you were eighty you could do this and not suffer any adverse effects. And I feel really marvellous!'⁶⁸ The teenage son

(perhaps just happy to be on television) eagerly agreed with his middle-aged mother. Simple physical exercises for health, fitness and beauty with the celebrity endorsement clearly had popular appeal.

Lyn Marshall continued to a popular, evidenced by her continual presence on televised yoga programmes until 1983 when she ran her last programme on the BBC entitled 'Everyday Yoga.' In the book that accompanied the television series, Marshall explained her 'special style of yoga' in more detail. She explained that:

...as you go slowly through each movement, your mind is totally concentrated and absorbed in what you are feeling and doing and whether your mind likes it or not, all other thoughts and preoccupations are simply forced out. ... you are completely indulging in yourself and your sensations and feeling wonderful. At the end of the movement, you feel not only physically good and relaxed but mentally at peace as well.⁶⁹

This popular approach is more in line with that which Heelas and Woodhead's described as 'subjective-self' style of spirituality, except that Marshall did not pressure her viewers to do yoga for a spiritual purpose. She wrote that:

My main concern is that as many people as possible simply use this way of moving their body to improve their lives right now – today!' ...

There are many people who after being introduced to Hatha or physical yoga, do wish to get involved with the philosophy, but in my experience, very many more don't. They simply enjoy what they get out of their practice and the benefit they feel in their lives as a result, and don't want to take it any further. The choice therefore is yours.⁷⁰

At the end of the *Everyday Yoga* book, Marshall listed 'common conditions and ailments helped by yoga' and suggested specific postures for these problems as well as general routines for 20, 30 and 40 minutes. However, Marshall made a point of deferring to biomedical expertise:

Although it is clear that Yoga improves your health and can be extremely therapeutic when used for many conditions, **it must never be used as a substitute for medical treatment.** If you are suffering from an illness or have a history of serious illness you must check with your own doctor before commencing the routine. He knows your personal medical history and therefore is qualified to tell you whether you can safely undertake these movements.⁷¹

By deferring to the doctor, Marshall presented yoga as a self-help complement to medical treatment that did not undermine but rather enforced medical authority. Marshall's yoga was primarily a means of allowing responsible individuals to better care for their mental and physical health.

PEBBLE MILL AT ONE – YOGA ON BBC TELEVISION MAGAZINE

After the success of Hittleman's programme on ITV, the BBC began presenting yoga on television once more. Initially, the BBC included instruction in yoga exercises as a regular feature of 'Pebble Mill at One,' a Birmingham-based lunchtime television talk show.⁷² 'Pebble Mill at One' was a daytime television magazine, broadcast between 1973 and 1986 which included current events, discussions, interviews and guests who demonstrated crafts, dancing and singing. It was a continuation of the BBC charter for educating, informing and entertaining its audience and it carried the authority of a light news and general interest magazine. The lunchtime broadcast again targeted women at home during the day. While Pebble Mill yoga instruction was obviously produced in response to the success of the Richard Hittleman series, Lyn Marshall appears to have had a regular, friendly correspondence with both the BBC and instructors for the Pebble Mill programme.⁷³ However the yoga instructors chosen for this programme were Hazel and Frank Wills who lived within commuting distance of Birmingham.⁷⁴ While the broadcast footage has not been recorded, the BBC produced a small paperback book to accompany the series entitled *Yoga for All*. The book produced by the BBC to accompany the yoga lessons emphasised the postures and pranayama, but also tried to present yoga as a path to peace and serenity. It appears that yoga was successful amongst the audience of 'Pebble Mill at One' during the 1970s; The book *Yoga for All* exhausted its print run of 17,500 copies between 1973 and 1978; the thin paperback volume had a sale price of 65p.⁷⁵

By using the photographic technique of solarisation where the dark and light areas of a black and white photograph are reversed, the visual presentation of *Yoga for*

All attempted to link the youth culture aesthetic with the middle-class women. *Yoga for All* intended to:

cover some of the background common to all forms of Yoga, but deal mainly with two forms – Hatha yoga and Pranayama Yoga. Each chapter contains an introduction to one aspect, with a number of ‘asanas’ or postures which relate to that aspect. Each posture is fully illustrated with photographs.⁷⁶

Although the silver-toned illustrations related to asana practice, much of the text of *Yoga for All* was actually a comment about the need to address the stresses of ‘alienation’ and ‘disharmony between mind and body, between our inner self and the person others see’ which was common to both housewives and the youth of the counterculture.⁷⁷ Wills’ husband, a sociologist, probably influenced the use of the term ‘alienation’ which contains footnotes about its technical use in the discipline of sociology. While the author admits that ‘there is nothing new in this... but the conditions of modern life, the pace of change, make many people feel left out altogether.’⁷⁸ Here yoga is presented as a way to address all sorts of problems related to stress, materialism, and emotional imbalance. Rather than being strictly associated with Indian religion, Wills wrote that ‘hatha yoga is an excellent base’ for all religious and spiritual teachings. The back of the book addresses for learning the Maharishi’s Transcendental Meditation technique as well as the Beshara Centre in Gloucestershire which is described as a “school without lessons, life itself being the lesson” based on communal living and Sufi meditation techniques.⁷⁹ In this way, the BBC promoted yoga as part of a greater idea of mind-body harmony and an appropriate public-service for a happier, healthier populace. But specific religious ideology was not given as part of the public service of asana instruction.

It is likely that Hazel and Roy Wills had learned yoga from Dr. Gopal Singh Puri (1915– 1995) and his wife Kailash (b. 1926), a couple who were both born in the Punjab but settled in Liverpool around 1968.⁸⁰ Dr. Puri lectured in biological sciences at Liverpool Polytechnic’s College of Technology and his wife became a well-known ‘agony aunt’ offering advice to women in the Punjabi language.⁸¹ The couple taught yoga from their large home three times a week, for about twenty years.⁸² Kailash Puri

explained that they began teaching soon after The Beatles had returned from Rishikesh and recalled that ‘when they came back, yoga centres and yoga classes mushroomed like anything. .. everyone who knew even a little bit would open centres.’⁸³ Kailash Puri was not clear about where her husband learned yoga, in her words: ‘I was sixteen when I got married. I had no idea. I had never been to university or college and everything I learnt from my husband.’⁸⁴ According to Kailash Puri, her husband encouraged her to teach asana, savasana and pranayama while he additionally gave philosophical lectures and made ayurvedic herbal prescriptions. He saw yoga and relaxation as an extension of his interest in ecology: ‘For him a sound ecological balance was inseparable from harmony within the human psyche and between individuals and groups.’ He was asked to give talks on yoga and relaxation in Grimsby and Glasgow and at first Kailash accompanied him giving demonstrations on health foods and cooking with vegetables.

The couple were also inspired by a meeting with the Indian High Commissioner to Britain 1969 from 1972, Apa Pant (1912– 1992). Apa Pant was the son of Bhavanarao Pant Pratinidhi, the Raja of Aundh who did much to popularise the modern practice of *surya namaskar* (popularly known as sun salutations) in the first half of the twentieth century. The Puris attended a Day of Yoga and Relaxation that Apa Pant had organised in Crosby during 1971.⁸⁵ Kailash Puri remembers Pant remarking that ‘This [yoga] is the best and subtlest way of Indianising the British’.⁸⁶ During his time as High Commissioner, Apa Pant was proactive in promoting yoga through the British Wheel of Yoga and his diplomatic profile.

Having been inspired by Apa Pant, Kailash Puri remembers the students who came to their home to learn yoga as comprising a high number of middle-class professionals. According to the handbook on yoga Dr Puri wrote, he considered his work on yoga ‘experimental discourses’ which had shown ‘great success.’⁸⁷ Dr. Puri promoted the natural health-giving benefits of relaxation for mental and physical health. The Puris gave many demonstrations and lectures on yoga in Liverpool and across Britain.⁸⁸ While the Puris were observant Sikhs, they did not present their religious beliefs as part of yoga. In later life Kalaish Puri reflected,

Sikhs will object that there is no place in our religion for yoga. Didn't Guru Nanak refute the yogis of his day? Fanatics denounce any Sikh who dabbles in yoga, or worse still, teaches it, as Yogi Bajan (alias Harbhajan Singh Yogi, also a Puri) did so conspicuously in America as the founder of Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere. To these critical coreligionists I say 'Whatever brings true peace of mind is good. I am a devout believer in Guru Nanak and the Guru Granth Sahib from which I read daily. Through my faith will come my salvation, but my faith is not restricted to a narrow path.' Gopal and I both practiced this and learned a great deal both from Guru Granth Sahib and from yoga, the science of relaxation.⁸⁹

Indeed, an appeal to pragmatism, kindness and moderation was a hallmark of all of Kalaish Puri's interventions in her work as an author and educator as well as in teaching yoga. The BBC book *Yoga for All* was dedicated to Dr. and Mrs. Puri and was written in the same spirit of balanced health-promotion.

EVERY BODY KNOWS: YOGA DEMYSTIFIED

In 1975, the BBC broadcast a second series featuring yoga which highlighted themes of mental and physical health. The ten-episode series was transmitted on BBC1 on Thursday at 11pm between 13 January and 24 March.⁹⁰ The programme was categorized as 'further education television' and continued the pattern of presenting yoga as a public health message. However, the late-night timeslot targeted adults only, perhaps in recognition of something more experimental in the programme. The first half of each programme examined 'a different approach to reducing stress and tension,' e.g. two episodes examined the Alexander Technique, others discussed Karate, 'retreats,' meditation techniques, Zen Buddhism and the 'philosophy of the I Ching.'⁹¹ The second half of each episode was an 'elementary yoga classes taken by Arthur Balaskas together with a small group of pupils.'⁹² The weekly yoga sessions offered a continuity between these different possibilities for increasing mind-body awareness and reducing stress.

Only the first episode of 'Every Body Knows' has been preserved.⁹³ This initial episode opened with the lines:

Every body knows that every body experiences tension and stress in their every day life. This programme is about the roots and causes of stress. And while

some tension is needed, we hope to point out some simple and effective ways of minimising unnecessary tension and stress in our everyday life.⁹⁴

After this introduction, lights faded into an image of a naked baby spotlighted on a stage. A voice-over explained:

When we enter the world we are at one with our body and our senses. We are direct with our communication of our wants and needs. We are whole beings... As we grow up we appear to lose the simplicity and directness of early childhood. As our mental attitudes harden our bodies too become less flexible. Our heads, because they carry our brains, for many become the most important part of our bodies...⁹⁵

The introductory programme went on to explain how stress causes the body discomfort, anxiety, muscular tension and illness. The programme's narrator paralleled the human body to a machine and explained that unfortunately the 'manufacturers do not provide a handbook' for the body. The programme presented itself as a kind of handbook dealing with stress and managing the body responsibly, as if it were a machine. The first programme explained: 'Our programmes are a step backward towards expressing that [baby] suppleness of mind and body'. Yoga was presented as a primary means of becoming more youthful and flexible; the guide for this method of bodily upkeep was yoga instructor Arthur Balaskas (1940– 1995).

Balaskas offered a much more edgy approach to yoga than either Hittleman or Lyn Marshall. Balaskas was introduced to yoga through the well-known (anti-)psychiatrist R. D. Laing (1927-1989). Laing's critique of psychiatry and championing of individual experience and expression had been publicly debated in the media from the early 1960s. Additionally, he was an important figure for those experimenting with consciousness-expanding drugs during this period, especially LSD.⁹⁶ As Balaskas' first wife, Mina Semyon, later explained, R. D. Laing 'had these people around him with a similar wish to find their own being from a being that got invaded by other authorities, parents and society, teachers, and others.'⁹⁷

Mina Semyon was Laing's patient, but soon her family also socialised with the famous psychiatrist.⁹⁸ Laing introduced yoga to Balaskas and his wife in around 1970 when he was beginning to explore Indian spirituality himself. Initially, the group

worked through sequences out of B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga*.⁹⁹ In 1971 Laing spent a year in Ceylon and India. Here he studied Buddhism and Sanskrit, spending three weeks studying under Gangotri Baba, a Hindu ascetic, who initiated Laing into his Shakta-Tantra tradition which is associated with Kali worship.¹⁰⁰ During this time, the Balaskas' had daily lessons with Iyengar-taught teacher Donna Holleman and attended classes with Iyengar when he was in London. Holleman originally met B.K.S. Iyengar through J. Krishnamurti; she spent much of 1964 and 1969 studying with Iyengar in Pune. During the 1960s, she ran a B.K.S. Iyengar Work Group in the Netherlands until she moved to Florence in 1972. After moving to Florence, her teaching was influenced by another former student of Iyengar's, Vanda Scaravelli. Holliman often travelled to London and taught yoga, developing a small, dedicated following of students.¹⁰¹ Balaskas was soon teaching yoga at Laing's Philadelphia Association in Hampstead and remained associated with the psychiatrist for many years. Balaskas shared Laing's interest in the birthing process, including work in active birthing and re-birthing.¹⁰²

Like the other 1970s television series, a paperback was produced to accompany it. *Every Body Knows: Yoga Demystified* was twenty-two pages of photographic illustrations of the yoga postures with an initial print run of 20,000 copies at a cost of just 50-60p a book. While the marketing notes suggested a general interest for both sexes between the ages of 25-40, 'promotional opportunities' listed LEA yoga classes and also the women's pages of Sunday papers. The illustrations were attractive and showed some of the more simple postures demonstrated on the programme. The introduction to the book discussed the assumptions behind Balaksas' approach:

Over the last twenty years, an increasing number of people have found that some combination and interpretation of classical physical yoga postures have helped considerably to reduce some of the stress of life. Despite growing popularity a great deal of mystery still surrounds yoga.

... there is no mystery in this; yoga postures work directly on the physical repository of stress and tension – our muscles and joints. Yoga works systematically on all parts of the body, helping to release tension by stretching and contracting those parts which are most tense – most often the shoulders, neck and hamstrings.¹⁰³

Here, Balaskas and the BBC again promoted the health giving properties of yoga exercises and their effect on mental tranquillity. In 1977, Balaskas brought out a 190-page hardback book based on his yoga practice with an introduction by R.D. Laing. This further publication is evidence of a continuing and expanding market for yoga practice during the 1970s.¹⁰⁴

Balaskas was not only the yoga teacher but also the ‘principal consultant’ for the series, probably influencing the choice of other topics explored in the first half of the programme.¹⁰⁵ While the duty to keep oneself fit and healthy was the same as previous presentations of yoga on television, ‘Every Body Knows’ was also influenced by the growing human potential movement in psychological development.¹⁰⁶ On the programme it was claimed that through the practice of asana an individual could find: ‘a new awareness and freedom. And unlike any other system of exercises many people find that with practice these exercises can produce a feeling of outer calm and inner stillness.’ On ‘Every Body Knows’ the presentation of yoga extended from relaxation and fitness exercises towards yoga as a tool for personal exploration and dynamic change. However, the message that yoga was a technique for better mental and physical health remained the underlying theme of the programme.

CONCLUSION

Yoga on television could perhaps be best understood as a continuation of the adult education cultural form. Raymond Williams also identified a close identification between television, national culture and an implicit ‘consensus version of public interest.’¹⁰⁷ Yoga on television also had an important authoritative implication. All these programmes encouraged their viewers to follow the instructions of the television presenters. The television was given educational authority formerly only embodied in a book or living teacher. The presentation of yoga as part of the ‘magazine’ show ‘Pebble Mill at One’ imbued yoga with a semi-official sanction through BBC broadcasting. These observations suggest that yoga was becoming increasingly accepted in Britain as an activity with assumed public health benefits. The presentation

of yoga on British television had an important familiarising and popularising effect, reaching millions of Britons in their own homes. Television added glamour to the yoga provided in adult education classes with minor celebrities and attractive personalities frequently promoting the activity. The presentation of yoga on television was much like yoga in the evening classes with an emphasis on safe, health-giving and relaxing activities for all. The evidence appears to be that television presenters remained silent about any religious or spiritual implications of yoga. The emphasis was on 'demystifying' yoga from its religious and spiritual associations and promoting an activity assumed to have a public benefit in the form of greater fitness and relaxation.

As media theorists have argued and studies on audiences have confirmed that readers (or viewers) have their own interpretations of any presentation of information.¹⁰⁸ However, by leaving the ideological content of yoga undiscussed, yoga on television left quite a lot of room for the viewer's interpretation and variable engagement. As McLuhan has argued, the form of television itself encourages an independent, imaginative relationship with the content. With the absence of a real-time teacher, many questions would have remained unanswered and 'errors' uncorrected. The Orientalist 'turn' of the late 1960s music celebrities towards Indian spirituality was only indirectly reinforced by the presentation of yoga on British television.¹⁰⁹ Visually, there was an association between celebrity exploration of Indian spirituality and yoga instruction. This left the audience free to explore cultural associations and personal experiences without a didactic student-teacher relationship. As will be argued later, the apparent silence on religious or spiritual aspects of yoga did not, however, cause an erasure of these associations from popular understanding or practitioners' assumptions.

CHAPTER 7. Yoga as Therapy

Anecdotal reports suggest that physical suffering was a frequent motivation for beginning yoga practise. Yoga teacher Ernest Coates began yoga in part to deal with stress from work and a resulting duodenal ulcer that he did not want operated upon.¹ Beatrice Harthan came to yoga partially due to a spinal injury. In 1961, she was photographed doing a forward bend in a swimsuit and was quoted as saying:

I've got a damaged spine ... at the hospital they told me I must just learn to live with it and that I mustn't bend forward. Now I find I can bend any way I like. The pain has lightened and I feel much freer.'²

In the May 1973 issue of *Yoga & Health*, an article reported that Swami Satyananda cured 'people who have been suffering from drug addiction, depression and many other mental afflictions' with Kriya Yoga.³ Instead of accepting a surgical supporting belt for spondylolisthesis, another person turned to yoga and claimed that yoga kept her back 'free from pain'.⁴

The individuals who were interviewed about yoga on BBC Radio 4's 'Woman's Hour' in the 1960s attributed improved mental and physical health to their practice. In 1962, Muriel Goodwin in Scotland had developed her own yoga routine from books and reported that yoga has 'helped my rheumatism very much and my husband's hay fever completely cleared up.'⁵ In 1964, Neville Braybrook described that 'I myself began [yoga] in the hope that it might help my lumbago. I now know it can do much more than that.'⁶ Several years later, in 1970, Eileen Williams from Leeds recalled how she began taking yoga seriously when she was bed-bound and recovering from major surgery. She reported that it was 'due to those exercises that my recovery was so rapid and complete' and described yoga as 'a science which points the way to leading a good and healthy life'.⁷ There was a popular assumption that yoga could either alleviate physical pain or help one manage pain better.

By the early 1980s, sociologists had noted a revival of interest in non-orthodox medical treatments. The mood of the period is captured in the introduction to a 1984 edited book on alternative medicine:

A spectre is haunting scientific medicine: the spectre of alternative approaches to health and healing. A popular resurgence of interest and activity has recently manifested in a wide variety of new and age-old therapeutic modalities which challenge the contemporary form of medicine in advanced Western societies.⁸

A renewed popular challenge to the theories and practices of biomedical doctors began in the mid-1950s as Thomas Szasz and R.D. Laing challenged psychiatric diagnosis and the dehumanising treatment of psychiatric patients.⁹ Meanwhile Thomas McKeown argued that improvements to health were more a result of better nutrition and municipal sanitation than improvements in scientific/medical technology.¹⁰ By the early 1980s the language of ‘holism’ and ‘holistic health’ dominated discussions of alternative medicine.¹¹

In the numerous surveys of ‘alternative medicine,’ which began to be published in the post-war period, yoga held an ambiguous place. Brian Inglis (1916–1993), a well-known journalist, historian and television presenter, became a key figure in the popularisation of alternative medicine in Britain. In *Fringe Medicine* (1984) Inglis devoted a chapter to Yoga which he described as ‘the best known of the methods’ by which ‘the individual can train himself to what amounts to a higher level of health.’¹² Yoga was omitted from the 1978 *Alternative Medicine: A Guide to the Medical Underground* which states in its introduction that yoga would not be covered and neither would colour therapy, T’ai Chi or the Alexander Method.¹³ In Inglis’ 1979 book *Natural Medicine*, he positioned yoga as a type of ‘auto suggestion’ along with hypnotism and biofeedback.¹⁴ Yoga was also not included in the report of a 1981 Threshold survey of complementary medicine in Britain.¹⁵ Part of the reason for yoga’s omission was that it lacked a system of qualifying practitioners which could be paralleled to those of more established alternatives such as osteopathy and homeopathy.¹⁶ But by the late 1970s many yoga teachers were leading classes and taking private students with ‘remedial’ conditions, i.e. specific health problems. Soon

British yoga organisations attempted to professionalise, to gain greater social authority in treating these cases.

Because yoga teachers claimed to have specialised techniques for improved health and well-being, they could have been perceived as infringing upon the area of expertise claimed by the medical profession. Medicine and law were often considered the original ‘professions’ and were the focus of initial theories of professionalisation.¹⁷ Two of the major characteristics of medicine as a profession were the relatively high level of knowledge required for practice and income depending on clients rather than employers.¹⁸ The medical profession was among the first to attempt to monopolise their area of professional expertise through a legal framework. However, the ‘orthodox/unorthodox interface still remained relatively fluid and undefined by the end of the [nineteenth] century.’¹⁹ Mike Saks has argued that professional self-interest was the primary motivation for the distinctions between orthodox and alternative medicine, rather than objective measures of efficacy and patient benefit.²⁰

This chapter will argue that yoga in Britain largely avoided overt conflict with the medical profession by simultaneously professionalising with educational qualifications and deferring to medical expertise. There are many different ways of defining professionalisation and professions. Figure 3, adapted from Svante Beckman, defines professional work as autonomous and requiring substantial formal training, whereas vocational work is autonomous but requiring little or no formal training.²¹ The medical and legal careers are professions because they require both autonomous client-centred work and a high level of formal schooling. Vocational work could also be called ‘lay work’ which, Beckman explains: ‘though the successful performance of such work may require substantial skills, there are no requirements of formal training.’²² As will be recalled, two of the main promoters of yoga in Britain, B.K.S. Iyengar and Sunita Cabral, did not possess any internationally recognized standard of training in yoga, although both had high levels of skill and charisma. However, as yoga entered into the adult education system, local authorities wanted evidence of ‘formal training’ to approve of instructors. Therefore, Iyengar and the British Wheel developed teacher training courses to attempt to move yoga teaching from vocational

work towards professional work. These distinctions became more important in the face of treating medical problems with yoga.

As will be shown, yoga teachers positioned themselves socially as working with more than a vocational level of training but deferred to the professional standing of the medical profession. This prevented direct conflict with medical expertise while claiming a degree of professional legitimacy in treating a variety of medical conditions. Two yoga organisations will be used as case studies in demonstrating this social positioning, the Yoga for Health Foundation and the 'remedial yoga' work of the teachers following B.K.S. Iyengar. While there were many other yoga organisations in Britain, these were two of the first established which directly dealt with medical conditions and they took very different approaches. Both groups created policies that helped establish 'yoga therapy' as more than simply vocational work, but with less authority than the medical profession.

The British Wheel of Yoga and the Friends of Yoga (FRYOG) did not directly address medical conditions within their organisations. Teachers associated with these groups who were interested in working with medical conditions networked with the Yoga for Health Foundation or the Yoga Biomedical Trust (established in 1983). Paul Harvey has been the primary student of T.K.V. Desikachar in Britain, a tradition which also works with therapy and established the Association for Yoga Studies for networking within this tradition in 1981. In the twenty-first century there have been new organisations seeking to integrate yoga as a therapy within the National Health Service, with some success at the local level.

Beckman has offered a model of looking at professionalisation in terms of authority. Here, professional authority is positioned between bureaucratic authority and 'expert authority.' As Beckman explains, expert authority is 'goal-based and clings to the presumed performative skills of a person, e.g. expert advice from fiscal consultants to astrologers.'²³ In contrast, bureaucratic authority was derived from 'institutionally defined rules and roles relating to goals and contractual tasks.'²⁴ Professional authority, according to Beckman, has an authority on the borderline between being institution-based and person-based and contains elements of both.

	Little or no formal training	Substantial formal training	
Heteronomous Work	Proletarian Work	Skilled Labour Work	
Autonomous Work	Vocational Work	Yoga Therapy	Professional Work

Figure 41: Where Yoga Therapy fits in ‘Types of Work’²⁵

The authority of yoga teachers in post-war Britain could be described as bordering between expert and professional authority. The British yoga organisations, in regard to the use of yoga for therapeutic purposes, have attempted to establish training with more bureaucratic authority. Yoga therapy organisations have also emphasised their person-based authority as a credential in opposition to medical objectivity; the use of yoga as therapy attends to individual problems and the individual ‘patient’ is the final judge of efficacy. However, through the organisation of yoga institutions that could ‘certify’ yoga teachers as suitable to treat medical conditions there has been an attempt to move towards a more institutional, bureaucratic authority.

Institution-based	Bureaucratic authority
	Professional authority
	Yoga Therapy
Person-based	Expert authority

Figure 42: ‘Types of Authority’ including Yoga Therapy²⁶

YOGA FOR HEALTH FOUNDATION

The Hittleman television series concentrated on lessening the effects of stress, improving fitness and self-esteem through yoga exercises. The series’ producer, Howard Kent, began to focus increasingly on practical techniques that could benefit every person, no matter what their ability. Kent wanted to promote yoga which could ‘combat the strains of present-day living, combining both mental and physical fitness.’²⁷ However, Kent also made general claims for the health benefits of yoga. In 1974 he asserted of regular yoga practitioners:

They will exercise the muscles and create greater flexibility;
They will massage the internal organs, so that they are properly conditioned;
They will eliminate the strain and tension which is automatically reflected in the seizing up of muscles and pressure points and, thereby, they will provide the first step to mental relaxation, since a physically relaxed body cannot be achieved in a state of major mental tension.²⁸

Relaxation was a key component of these exercises. Moving consciously and without tension was emphasised as the most important part of the practice. Kent emphasised the healing potential of this attitude over precision in physical positions. The exercises themselves varied from merely purposefully moving the eyes to more ambitious backbends like *ustrasana* (camel pose). The emphasis was on breathing, movement within an individual’s range of ability and relaxation.

After viewing the Hittleman’s ‘Yoga for Health’ programme in the 1970s, a Scottish physiotherapist contacted Kent and together they developed yoga-based exercises for those with multiple sclerosis (MS). Initial results showed that MS patients experienced significant benefits by their yoga practice.²⁹ ‘Yoga for MS’ was designed ‘to improve both the morale and the mobility of the sufferer.’ Further goals were to contain the disease and possibly to reverse its progress.³⁰ This work on yoga for MS continued to be developed, in 1984 the British Wheel of Yoga’s journal reported on Ickwell Bury: ‘Perhaps one of the most important facilities here is the remedial help given to visitors suffering from multiple sclerosis. I have seen for myself the

improvement in individuals who, when I first visited the Bury some years ago, were confined to wheelchairs and are now walking unaided.’³¹

Becoming more focused on exploring the potentials of yoga for health and healing, Kent extended the idea behind Yoga for Health Clubs by founding a registered charity, the Yoga for Health Foundation, in 1976.³² The Yoga for Health Foundation was run by a board of trustees but was primarily directed by Kent’s leadership. The Yoga for Health Foundation’s registered aims were to:

Research into the therapeutic benefits to be obtained by the practice of yoga both mentally and physically and the promotion of such benefits by means of training therapists, publishing relevant material and setting up centres for the practice of the principles of therapeutic yoga and by any other means upon which the trustees may decide.³³

Initially, the Yoga for Health Foundation focused on organising groups of MS patients to meet regularly for yoga classes under a Yoga for Health Clubs instructor.³⁴ Other groups for people with conditions such as hypertension, arthritis, asthma and back trouble were initiated. There were also groups for the mentally handicapped and partially sighted children.³⁵

Changing attitudes about pain and suffering was an important aspect of the Yoga for Health Foundation’s approach. Tony Perkins had been an alcoholic for 15 years before he was taken off daily Valium and asked to do physical yoga exercises daily at the Ley Clinic in Oxford. Before checking into the clinic, he had been bankrupted, served a prison sentence, and had a twenty-year ban from driving a car for motoring offences. Tony Perkins attributed his recovery to the yoga offered at the clinic, commenting, ‘Yoga taught me to live a contented life without drink. I began to feel more relaxed and free from tension than at any time in my life before.’³⁶ Not only did he find a way to recover his own life, Tony Perkins believed that yoga was a tool which could help others and began teaching with Yoga for Health Clubs. He also ran a yoga class for alcoholics under the framework of Alcoholics Anonymous.³⁷ In 1977, Perkins claimed a success rate of 25% for other yoga-practising alcoholics becoming alcohol-free compared to 1% through medication or psychiatric interventions. However, Perkins did not explain precisely how he measured his success.³⁸

In 1977, Perkins began nagging Howard Kent to start a residential centre and showed him prospectuses of country mansions for sale. Keen to set up a residential yoga centre with Howard Kent, Perkins offered a small, boxed advert appealing for help in this project in the Yoga for Health Clubs magazine *Yoga and Life*:

HELP

It was an act of faith in yoga
that made recovery from
alcoholism possible.
It is an act of faith which guides
me to open a yoga residential
guest centre.
With humility I ask will you help?
I need your suggestions, your
ideas, your unity.
My assets – absolute faith and
untiring energy.³⁹

This appeal reveals an important relationship between faith, lifestyle and healing through yoga. Tony Perkins went on to describe the power of yoga as due to its ability to bring ‘contentment through the realisation of unity – integration of the physical, mental and spiritual self.’ This was something, Perkins claimed, no drug could offer.⁴⁰

The next year, a suitable property for a residential yoga centre was found in Ickwell Bury, a manor house in rural Bedfordshire; although £8,000 was raised, Howard Kent had to mortgage his home to secure a lease on the property.⁴¹ The centre could sleep up to thirty in double rooms. Kent soon organised residential courses at the new centre, most lasting five days, from Sunday to Friday for £65 in 1978.⁴² There was a resident nurse present for all courses and yoga instructors with experience of the special requirements. Many courses were run for people with specific problems, but other courses were open for all kinds of ability or disability.⁴³ A 1997 retrospective on the centre reported that up to 1,500 people stayed residentially every year and conditions including MS, Parkinson’s, Motor Neurone Disease, Diabetes, Asthma, Heart Disease, ME and Arthritis. The centre also offered training for already qualified yoga teachers who wanted to learn more about how to deal with medical conditions.

Over time, the Yoga for Health Foundation made international connections in 23 different countries and received visiting yoga instructors and international groups requiring yoga instruction for specific medical conditions.⁴⁴

The Yoga for Health Foundation approach was that yoga was not a therapy. Rather, yoga had ‘therapeutic benefits.’⁴⁵ Yoga for Health Foundation emphasized the difference between their approach to health and illness and that of the medical profession. An early promotional article stated:

The start of a new life can begin with ‘The Ickwell Concept.’ In the world of treatments and prescription, the new Yoga for Health Foundation Remedial Centre... will stand as a beacon of sanity. We do not have a National Health Service: we have a National Sickness Service...⁴⁶

In contrast to doctors who were seen to emphasize sickness and illness, Ickwell Bury offered an oasis of ‘peace and quiet’ for those seeking to address stress-affected conditions and a supportive environment to ‘develop awareness’ that would give strength and hope. This environment, physical and mental, of the Ickwell retreat was experienced as healing by many.

To further the ‘Ickwell experience’ Kent developed a Yoga for Health Foundation teacher training programme. This course had much in common with the Yoga for Health Clubs approach, but Kent designed the course with the goal of helping yoga teachers integrate all ranges of ability, including those with severe ‘disability,’ into a yoga class. About fifteen to twenty students would meet monthly, with a few residential weekends at Ickwell Bury. Claire Buckingham, who took the course and later became a personal assistant to Howard Kent, described a lot of reading on the course and a focus on ‘personal growth’ through yoga.⁴⁷ The essence of the Yoga for Health Foundation was this inclusive approach for personal betterment:

because in every yoga class you get perhaps one person who is healthy – ordinary, healthy, young people don’t go to yoga classes.

...By not treating disabled people differently, by treating them the same as everybody else, we got a lot of people in wheelchairs, a lot of people who were highly disabled practising yoga. Before we did that, I think that people thought that it couldn’t be done.

. . . if you read the descriptions, the essence of yoga is to be still. The physical practice of yoga is necessary to enable us to become still.⁴⁸

At the Yoga for Health Foundation, the essence of this approach was encouraging stillness through breath and gentle movements. The Foundation taught that those with ‘disabilities’ were as able to participate in this activity as well as those with ‘full’ mobility.

Howard Kent promoted a practice of yoga to improve quality of life that was appropriate for even those with severe physical limitations, such as being confined to a wheelchair. In his book *Yoga for the Disabled*, he states that his focus is on ‘human energy and its development through breath.’⁴⁹ On numerous occasions, Kent gave public demonstration illustrating improved strength that resulted from directing calm, full breaths to weakened areas.⁵⁰ As every human suffers from stress and strain, the Yoga For Health Foundation believed it was offering a way of approaching the stresses and strains of life, which could benefit everyone. *Yoga for the Disabled* makes clear that some movement with breath can be practised even by those with limited mobility. While physical postures and breathing were emphasised, relaxation and energizing breathing within current ability were the focus.

Yoga for Health was founded to help people of all abilities with relaxation, positive thinking, more effective breathing and improved mobility. Kent wrote:

In summary, we are all handicapped – physically, mentally, and emotionally – some more than others, but even that changes with ageing. Man is consciously and unconsciously seeking deep satisfaction. The value of yoga for ‘handicapped’ people lies in its tendency to relax and energize the body and calm the mind. Yoga can transform attitudes, habits, and outlooks from negative to positive, thus permitting the individual more of a freedom to enjoy life in a relaxed and healthy manner.⁵¹

By improving ability and empowering individuals, Kent and those involved in the Yoga for Health Foundation believed that they were addressing not only the physical, but also mental and emotional health. Practitioners attributed improved feelings of ‘well-being’ to their practice of yoga, whatever their level of mobility. This self-empowered improvement of handicaps was seen to have spiritual significance. In

many respects the belief that human limitations, both mental and physical, could be reduced was the most important aspect of the Yoga for Health Foundation's approach.

The Yoga for Health Foundation's approach assumed that many conditions were caused or adversely affected by psychosomatic stresses. It believed that a 'mind-body' approach to yoga was 'to establish a harmonious and peaceful basis to life and to help the body's immune system to overcome a wide range of illness.' It emphasised that the approach to yoga it taught was not 'therapy' or a 'clinical' response to illness. Rather, Kent argued that the Foundation was promoting a 'linking of mind and body to achieve both basic health and happiness, with that greatest boon of all – peace of mind.'⁵² Peace of mind was assumed to be related to better health and synonymous with a feeling of 'well-being.' Rather than an empirically verifiable improvement of a diagnosed medical condition, the Yoga for Health Foundation focused upon a subjective feeling of 'well-being.' This approach placed yoga 'For Health' in a different category to that of medical interventions. As Dr. Bronsan, who was affiliated with the Foundation, explained:

The purpose of yoga for the physically handicapped is identical with the aim and purpose of yoga for anybody. The secondary beneficial results which may be achieved – or may not – remains secondary. Yoga for them is not an alternative form of physio-therapy, a work or a modified PT. It is a form of life, a philosophy of living.⁵³

While this quote expresses the understanding and philosophy of the Yoga for Health Foundation, the 'philosophy of living' promoted by the Foundation largely focused on greater attention to physical mobility, effective breathing and peaceful concentration.⁵⁴ Kent avoided making claims relating to 'cures' of specific medical conditions, while promoting a belief in positive change and improved levels of health and happiness, whatever the basic level of health and ability.

By developing teacher training courses for yoga teachers and further skills training for established teachers, the Yoga for Health Foundation professionalised yoga teaching for those with medical conditions. The issuing of certificates gave socially accepted credentials in the form of other recognized professions, such as medicine or law. However, by emphasising the 'therapeutic benefits' of yoga rather

than yoga as therapy, the Yoga for Health Foundation maintained a separate sphere of expertise than that of the medical profession. Howard Kent emphasised that he was teaching a way towards feeling greater ‘well-being’ and this was not on the same level of action as treating diagnosable medical conditions with specific treatments. In fact, the Yoga for Health Foundation teachers bordered between ‘expert’ and ‘professional’ forms of authority. By not directly competing with the medical profession but offering a more personal and less professional expertise, the Yoga for Health Foundation avoided conflict with the rest of society.

B.K.S. IYENGAR AND REMEDIAL YOGA

B.K.S. Iyengar was a sickly and poor child, and his brother-in-law’s expertise in yoga offered an affordable way to deal his ill health. As a young man, Iyengar achieved a successful reputation as a yoga teacher partially by successfully treating referrals by Pune’s doctors.⁵⁵ All of the 202 asanas described in *Light on Yoga* (1966) are accompanied by descriptions of claims for health benefits and medical counter-indications. As a child Iyengar’s eldest daughter, Geeta, returned from a month in a nursing home still with a serious case of nephritis and a long list of medications that the Iyengars, at that time, could not afford. According to Geeta, her father told her that ‘from tomorrow onwards no more medicines. Either you practise Yoga or get prepared to die.’ Geeta’s health improved under her father’s attentions in yoga and Geeta eventually dedicated herself to teaching yoga.⁵⁶

Iyengar took an intense and personal approach to the health problems presented to him by his students. Geeta Iyengar explained that her father’s approach changed with each patient according to their ability:

The *āsanas* prescribed vary from person to person according to their constitution... old and infirm patients are made to perform [standing] *āsanas* like *Trikōṇāsana* and *Pārśvakoṇāsana* in lying down positions to create movement in the legs. He has made women in advanced stages of pregnancy perform specific *āsanas* after noting their responses and putting them in comfortable positions.⁵⁷

Additionally, Geeta Iyengar explains, 'There are positive effects by practising asanas correctly and adverse effects by their wrong practices.'⁵⁸ Therefore, Iyengar's approach to 'yoga therapeutics' relied upon skill and experience in his method of teaching yoga. Iyengar taught 'remedial yoga' in a way that recalled Henrick Ling's medical gymnastics.⁵⁹ The idea behind 'remedial yoga' was that therapeutic exercise could stimulate the body into healing itself, correcting posture and improving strength.

An example is presented in the case of 'Robert' who was severely injured by a golf ball hitting his head at the age of fourteen. According to his career, Marian Garfinkel, Robert 'survived two major brain operations, but the left side of his body remained partially paralysed and he lost the use of his left arm and hand.' Although doctors and therapists had treated him regularly, fifteen years later calcium deposits formed on his left shoulder, elbow and wrist. In the 1970s, Robert was treated by Iyengar during a lecture demonstration in the United States and eventually spent two months taking daily lessons with Iyengar in India. During this time, his carer writes that:

Through the force of his personality and determination, Mr Iyengar was able to encourage Robert to face the physical pain he had to work through in bringing back to life limbs frozen by many years of inactivity. ... As he worked with Robert, he devised mechanical aids which solved particular problems as they developed. Iyengar treated whatever reactive symptoms appeared. ... Robert progressed enough to stop his medication completely.⁶⁰

But, Marian Garfinkel also writes that, 'Many times Iyengar demanded that Robert face excruciating pain in order to loosen the calcium deposits so that he would feel new mobility in his limbs.'⁶¹ Iyengar sometimes pushed people beyond what they thought their limits were and showed them new possibilities. His approach was individual and intensive and required trust on the part of his students for success. This approach was radically different than the one taken by Howard Kent and the Yoga for Health Foundation.

Although many people went to Iyengar for physical problems, a particular attraction of yoga as therapy was the way some teachers connected mind and body. A Franco-British Cambridge resident, Janet Downs Tourniere, had suffered a 'nervous

breakdown' in the 1970s before travelling to take yoga lessons from Iyengar in Pune. She later self-published diaries of her first visit in which she recalled the physical and mental challenges of the classes:

'Ardhachandrāsana. Lift the left hip more... left upper arm moves up, right one down... open groin of carrying leg!
I was bewildered, ears heard one instruction, arms and legs carried out another. Eyes confused.
'I'm trying.'
'Trying means you are living in the future. With aim. Just do.'
What...? Oh, I see. No, I don't... yes, I do.
Incoherence of mind and body exposed.⁶²

When Tourniere returned to Cambridge, her friends did not recognise her and she reported that she had felt better than ever before. She later wondered, 'How could physical stretches and postures alter the personality as well as the body?'⁶³ Tourniere found sufficient support from Iyengar's instruction to train as a yoga teacher herself and for many subsequent years returned to Pune annually.

Iyengar himself had no bureaucratic or professional qualifications; his institutional learning stopped before he achieved his school leaving certificate.⁶⁴ However, Iyengar's asana instruction was recognized by local Pune doctors to have therapeutic effects for a range of conditions.⁶⁵ Although he was trained in Krishnamacharya's yogashala, Iyengar's authority for using yoga therapeutically was firmly in the 'Expert' section. Like other forms of yoga therapy, Iyengar's work was an autonomous arrangement between himself and a client. Although he did not have 'formal' school-based training, Iyengar spent several years of daily asana practice in Mysore and further taught himself by exploring asana after he arrived in Pune. Thus, Iyengar's yoga therapy fits between the vocational and professional types of work.

Studying under Iyengar's personal charisma and knowledge appeared to have a healing effect for some, but Iyengar also sought to systemise his teaching so that his students could achieve similar results all over the world. In the 1960s, Iyengar personally supervised which of his students had the expertise to claim authority in dealing with health problems in his absence. Until the mid-1970s, Diana Clifton and Silva Mehta were the primary students with the authority to treat people with serious

health problems looking for some relief through Iyengar's system of yoga. Iyengar's early students wrote regularly asking advice on their students' specific problems. In 1970 he wrote to Diana Clifton:

I think you and Silva know more of these things than the others... People who get hot... flushing, breathlessness, heaviness in the head should be made to do *uttānāsana*, dog pose and *pashimotānāsana* before attempting headbalance.⁶⁶

Iyengar used specific asanas to address specific conditions but also adjusted the programme for the individuals in question. Teacher Diana Clifton received the following reply to a request for advice on a student with cancer in 1967:

Go slow. Give deep breathing. Forward bendings with no strain on the throat. In some cases, the practise of yoga do aggravate the disease. Because the malifant blood is drawn to the other cells. If he enjoys give him mild poses. No standing poses and no inverted poses.⁶⁷

By practising certain postures and actions, Iyengar and his teachers believed that they could control and improve a variety of illnesses and physical conditions. The majority of teachers in adult education institutes were expected to instruct those with serious health issues that group classes were not appropriate for their conditions.⁶⁸ This meant that Iyengar's teachers were sometimes seen as not being able to help those with serious health problems. This policy was a major difference between the approach taken by Iyengar's pupils and that of the Yoga for Health Foundation.

Iyengar's therapeutic model of yoga had a complex relationship to biomedical treatment models. By offering specific programmes for individuals with particular medical conditions, the Iyengar approach to illness more directly competed with biomedical treatment models than that of the Yoga For Health Foundation. For example, when asked how to work with emotionally disturbed people with yoga, Iyengar explained that:

As I said, or as Patañjali puts it, *avidyā* – want of spiritual understanding is the mother of all ailments... Various means or methods are given by Patañjali to quieten the distracted mind...

On the practical side... there are certain postures where the subconscious mind is lifted and fed with a tremendous energy, like *viparīta dandāsana*,

setubandha sarvāṅgāsana... This is how we work practically to bring the individual with emotional upheavals to the level of stability.⁶⁹

In this quote, Iyengar presents a completely different model of thinking about emotional problems than that used by biomedicine. His treatment model of ‘feeding the subconscious’ with energy and quieting ‘the distracted mind’ have little in common with biomedical models of chemical imbalance leading to emotional conditions. Iyengar has never had, nor claimed to have any medical expertise outside of his experience of the curative effects of yoga.

But instead of directly challenging the medical model with his alternative epistemology, Iyengar consistently deferred to biomedical concepts and methods of determining successful clinical outcomes. As a young man in Pune, the doctors who recommended medical cases to him continued to monitor their patients and observe for improvement.⁷⁰ Iyengar encouraged medically trained students to test his system with their knowledge and explain his yoga in biomedical terms. In 1989 a long-term physician-student of Iyengar, Dr. S. V. Karandikar established his own clinic for therapeutic yoga in Pune.⁷¹ In 1984 Iyengar had his breathing tested by biomedical physicians and reported that he asked them ‘Please let me know how long I am going to stay on this earth....’ Iyengar delighted at the medical response that his lungs were like ‘that of a 23-25 year old boy.’⁷² The testing of yogic claims by biomedical means has an established tradition, perhaps best exemplified by Swami Kuvalayananda’s long engagement with biomedical tests at his centre in Lonavala outside of Bombay (established in 1924).⁷³ While these examples show a complex relationship between Iyengar’s therapeutic application of yoga and the biomedical profession, Iyengar maintained a position of deference to biomedical assessment and opinion. Politically, this placed Iyengar yoga as complementary to standard medical treatment rather than as an alternative.

Another reason why Iyengar’s therapeutic yoga was not directly challenging to biomedicine was that it professionalized largely in response to the LEA evening class environment. In the context of the LEA structure any medical benefits were an

added bonus, but medical counter-indications were the primary concerns. The 1969 ILEA report noted that:

Many claims have been made for the benefits of Yoga to those suffering from minor and even major disorders. The beneficial effects of increased mobility of the joint complexes, controlled breathing, improved neuro-muscular co-ordination and the reduction of mental and physical tension are difficult to gauge but may be considerable for some individuals.

The ILEA 'Medical Advisor' considered that those suffering from 'five types of disorder' (unnamed in the report) be excluded as unsuitable from general ILEA yoga classes.⁷⁴ By these criteria, the ILEA officials approved Iyengar's teaching of yoga without directly engaging with medical and therapeutic claims for the benefits of asana. In McIntosh's assessment, the public health benefits of encouraging fitness justified the inclusion of the subject; those yoga teachers trained under Iyengar's method were deemed to be unlikely to cause harm through faulty technique or limited understanding.

As Iyengar teachers became more established in the LEA adult education system, Iyengar's advice to prevent injury became more formalised by restricting the asanas new teachers were authorised to teach and specifying that only certain postures were to be taught to beginners. In the early 1970s, it was reported to Iyengar that two people in Oxford were 'taken to hospital from yoga classes.' They were reported to have been taught by members of the Wheel of British Yoga. As a result of this, Iyengar's pupil Diana Clifton was asked to conduct three teacher-training classes at the Oxford College of Further Education. She designed syllabuses with 'an emphasis on safety' and sent it to Iyengar for approval. The course in Oxford involved observing a yoga class for beginners. Later the teachers would be taught, under Clifton's guidance, 'to assist so as to get an understanding of how to teach beginners.'⁷⁵

This teaching method – to observe and correct incorrect physical action in asana – has been an important characteristic of the Iyengar teaching method in Britain. Underlying this approach is an assumption that correct physical actions can both improve health and prevent future injury both inside and outside of the yoga class.⁷⁶ Teaching qualifications were further formalised by specifying asanas that could be

taught by teachers of different levels of experience. Syllabuses specified which asanas teachers were qualified to teach their pupils. This detailed system was organised with the aim of preventing injury in large classes. Postures in which it was considered more likely that the practitioner could be injured were reserved for the more experienced teachers and students.⁷⁷

When an Iyengar Yoga Institute in London opened in 1984, it had a regular ‘remedial’ class on its timetable taught by Silva Mehta. Silva Mehta, who had run the first yoga teacher-training programme in the ILEA, had first come to Iyengar’s classes with a serious spinal injury due to a fall. She was living in Bombay at this time and had twice-weekly lessons from Iyengar for ‘over two years’ between 1957 and 1960. She later reflected on this period: ‘Mr Iyengar’s lessons made me feel a new person at a time when I was in agonies with a fractured spine.’⁷⁸ According to her daughter, Iyengar gave Silva Mehta ‘some poses’, the practice of which ‘kept her mobile and enabled her to lead a normal life.’⁷⁹ She moved to London in 1960 and continued to attend classes with Iyengar during his annual visits. While developing the London Iyengar Yoga Institute during the 1980s, Silva Mehta and her two children Shyam and Mira wrote a book called *Yoga the Iyengar Way*. At the end of this book, specific ‘Remedial Programs’ were given for a variety of common complaints.⁸⁰ While treating medical conditions has been an important part of Iyengar’s yoga tradition, the focus of Iyengar yoga in Britain has been popularising and professionalizing weekly group asana classes. This has meant that, generally speaking, the professional training of Iyengar yoga teachers in Britain has not been specifically focused on therapeutic yoga.

YOGA BIOMEDICAL TRUST

A third important organisation exploring the uses of yoga for improving health was the Yoga Biomedical Trust, established in 1983 by Dr. Robin Monroe who originally trained as molecular biologist. During the 1970s, Monroe held a variety of academic appointments and had a long-standing interest in religion, meditation and philosophy of the east. When visiting a university friend in Bombay in 1962, Monroe

was introduced to B.K.S. Iyengar and sometimes took classes from him during his early visits to London; he incorporated some home asana practice into his daily routine, always with an interest in the therapeutic potential of asana. In the 1970s, Monro's childhood asthma came back in the form of bronchitis and Dr. Parchure, the personal physician to J. Krishnamurti, taught Dr. Monro some breathing exercises which revolutionized his health. Monro's interest in exploring the potential for healing outside of standard biomedicine intensified.⁸¹

Monro was able to obtain some funded research to survey the contemporary status of what the author's decided to term treatments paradigms which were 'complementary' to standard biomedical ones including 'acupuncture, anthroposophy, chiropractic, healing, herbalism, homeopathy, hypnotherapy, naturopathy, osteopathy and others.'⁸² However yoga did not feature as a recognized alternative or complementary therapy in this research. Monro estimated that tens of thousands of people practiced yoga regularly in Britain and anecdotal reports suggested that it had a positive effect on health. Yoga, being largely self-help, was notably also a very economical way of improving personal health. In the winter of 1981-1982, Monro travelled to India and noted that therapeutic research into yoga was growing in that country. Upon his return to Britain, he thought it curious that more research was not being done on the therapeutic benefits of yoga in this country and decided to try to remedy this lacuna.⁸³

After initial discussions with Howard Kent and the Yoga for Health Foundation, Monro decided to survey about 2,000 yoga teachers in Britain through networks of Kent's Yoga for Health Foundation, about their experiences of how yoga may have affected a list of about twenty specific health conditions. After this pilot, all yoga organisations in Britain were approached for distributing the questionnaire. Over 10,000 questionnaires were distributed and around 3,000 were returned. In 1983, Monro founded a charity as an independent body to fund and promote exploration of health benefits to yoga, The Yoga Biomedical Trust which was initially based in Cambridge.⁸⁴

From its founding, The Yoga Biomedical Trust (YBT) wanted to remain independent, collaborating with any interested yoga organisations, but not to become affiliated to any one faction and thus remain ‘unencumbered by sectarian divisions’ and thus raise the standards, mobilise further interest and official support.⁸⁵ It sought to be scientific, but not reductionist, noting that:

We do not advocate “allopathic yoga” – the exclusive application of specific exercises to particular disorders. Yoga is essentially wholistic, and aims for the integration of a person at all levels from physical to spiritual. ... For instance one cannot relax deeply at a physical level unless one is relaxed mentally; and mental relaxation is affected by one’s spiritual attitudes. ... The tailoring of yoga routines to suit individual needs is a highly skilled art and science, which must involve the growing sensitivity of the student as well as the teacher’s insight.⁸⁶

In the first few years, the YBT applied to medical research funding bodies for ‘over a dozen grants’ to further exploration of the therapeutic potential of yoga on the basis of this initial exploration; but none of the funding applications were successful. Perhaps the trust’s holistic understanding was somewhat at odds with the reductionism of most biomedical understandings at this time.

In the first few years, Munro focused the work of the YBT on expanding the analysis of survey research, promoting formal trials, and compiling a bibliography of extant research on yoga as therapy. Munro financed the Trust initially through personal loans in the hopes of obtaining larger grants, but in practice the foundation had to be funded by more small grants and donations. They began small trials (30 individuals) at Addenbrooke’s Hospital in Cambridge with some funding from Cancer Research Campaign and local health funds. As large grants proved hard to secure, the YBT focused on networking yoga teachers with those seeking therapy and more carefully recording the results of interventions and ‘Information Exchange Groups’ to facilitate discussion between various yoga teachers on therapeutic applications of yoga. Specific explorations on the potential benefits – and limitations – of yoga practices for those suffering from diabetes also was a focus of research for the YBT.⁸⁷

In 1987 the YBT created a training course for yoga therapists with practitioners from Vivekananda Kendra in Bangalore which began through a chance connection

between Monro and an Indian affiliate of the Vivekananda Kendra who was working next to Monro at a computer lab in Cambridge one day.⁸⁸ The affiliation between the Kendra and the Yoga Therapy Diploma offered by the YBT continued for three years, after which date the YBT continued to independently offer the Diploma. These courses were available to qualified yoga teachers and aimed to provide a nurse's level biomedical understanding of the human body (omitting acute conditions but expanding upon yoga's physiological effects), as well as exploring in case studies and project work how yoga might affect particular conditions such as asthma, premenstrual symptoms, other specific conditions and yoga for those incarcerated in prisons. The YBT also very much served as a hub for networking, comparing notes on best practice and encouraging critical thinking and research on therapeutic applications of yoga.⁸⁹ It also offered intelligent comment as journalists became aware that some were injuring themselves in yoga classes; not all applications of yoga are therapeutic.⁹⁰

An important member of this network was Paul Harvey, who established a centre for yoga in Bath, based on the teachings of his guru, T.K.V. Desikachar (1938–2016), the fourth child of Tirumalai Krishnamacharya and his wife, Shrimati Namagiriammal, sister of BKS Iyengar. The approach championed by Harvey and Desikachar was that emphasizing individual application of the practice of yoga to meet the needs of the individual. This tradition emphasises Krishnamacharya's teaching after he moved from Mysore to Madras in 1952; here Krishnamacharya was better known for a more individualised, gentle approach to asana and a much greater emphasis on pranayama, chanting and other lifestyle changes towards promoting his students' greater health and wellbeing. Having been introduced to Desikachar initially through European students, Harvey trained intensively in Madras with Desikachar and Krishnamacharya in the late 1970s. Harvey served within the British Wheel of Yoga and taught therapeutic applications of yoga in this tradition in Bath from 1981. In the pages of the YBT Newsletter, Harvey emphasised the importance of relationships and individuality in establishing a therapeutic application of yoga, as well as the influence of Ayurvedic (traditional Indian medicine) ways of thinking about imbalance causing

ill-health.⁹¹ The Desikachar approach to ‘yoga therapy’ was both directly and indirectly influential in understanding therapeutic applications of yoga in Britain.

The Yoga Biomedical Trust moved from Cambridge to London to better facilitate its growing yoga therapy training programme around 1994. After a short period in south London, the centre worked out of a few rooms in the Royal Homeopathic Hospital in central London for several years in the mid-1990s, conducting research on yoga as a therapeutic intervention for asthma and trialling a specific therapeutic programme began to treat back pain under the guidance of Dr. Dayanand Dongaonkar, an orthopaedic surgeon.⁹² From 2002-2014, the YBT operated a Therapy Centre on Pentonville Road near King’s Cross where it offered diploma courses, other training courses for yoga teachers as well as therapy for those suffering from a variety of conditions which might be helped by yoga; it continues to offer training programmes and therapy out of a variety of smaller premises. In 2005, Monro described the approach as ‘Still holistic, new routine for each individual, but oriented around the physical condition and personal capacities.’⁹³ Recommended practices often involving breathing and relaxation exercises as well as some specific asana appropriate to the individual concerned. Over the years, the YBT approach has focused on addressing the problem presented by those seeking therapeutic yoga, not a general introductory yoga class; finding practices which the individual can do at home which might alleviate pain and promote both physical and mental wellbeing.

CONCLUSION

The therapeutic benefits of yoga were presented and applied in very different ways by the Yoga for Health Foundation and the teachers following B.K.S. Iyengar. However, both organisations were more interested in teaching ‘yoga’ than presenting themselves as therapists. Neither group claimed any medical expertise or challenged the authority of physicians; yoga teachers and practitioners did not think of their discipline as an alternative medical model. Both organisations have largely side-

stepped alternative medicine by teaching techniques that they believed could not be confined to a description of physical, physiological or emotional benefits.

In contrast, the Yoga Biomedical Trust attempted to apply biomedical research methods to a non-sectarian breath of practices aimed to alleviate a variety of specific physical conditions rather than a general introduction to a yoga system. While attempting to address specific conditions, the emphasis of the YBT has been on ensuring safety within biomedical understandings of health as a prerequisite to the therapeutic application of yoga. The treatment of specific conditions within a particular school of yoga usually relies largely on personal testimony and anecdotal evidence. Challenging this tendency, the YBT attempts to build a more robust evidence-base to therapeutic benefit based on a broad understanding of yoga and its applications for promoting health. While offering diplomas on yoga therapy, the YBT has not achieved a monopoly on this type of qualification, with many of the other specific lineages of teaching offering their own qualifications and certifications when they allow teachers to work with specific ailments.

Although in many cases yoga groups did not work directly together, they each established training programmes which gave an educational, bureaucratic training to the otherwise 'expert' authority of teaching yoga. The development of qualifications in this model gave a social credibility to using yoga with medical conditions and moved yoga towards professional employment. By maintaining elements of vocational types of work, even as bureaucratic models were developed to professionalise the practice of yoga teaching for therapeutic benefits. By largely avoiding any specific claims for cures, yoga organisations in Britain side-stepped potential charges of 'quackery' or offering false cures.

The yoga presented by each organisation discussed looked very different while still being understood as therapeutic yoga. Different theoretical models and qualifications are by no means unique to yoga; for example, osteopaths had several competing professional organisations until the formation of the General Osteopathic Council in 1993.⁹⁴ But unlike osteopaths, British yoga teachers do not universally claim to be training as therapists to address illness and disease. The majority of yoga

teachers would consider yoga as a broader subject in the first instance, the therapeutic application of which could be an important appeal and application of the practice. Yoga teachers in Britain have not sought to replace biomedical models of health and wellness with another theory. Instead yoga practitioners have promoted therapeutic benefits through a system of physical culture and spirituality. In Britain, public discussions of yoga as therapy have stressed the importance of self-care in regular practising of exercises, changing mental attitude, and focusing on individual responsibility for health and attitude changes. This has largely allowed yoga instructors to avoid a medical model of professionalisation, while maintaining a popular promise of improving health and well-being.

CHAPTER 8. Diversity of Practice and Practitioners

Have yoga practitioners been in the vanguard of a ‘spiritual revolution’ in a secular culture?¹ This chapter will explore the beliefs of yoga practitioners and how they understood the relationship between the physical and spiritual. Practitioners often emphasise an experience of greater integration, relaxation and concentration as essential elements to yoga. The experience of these qualities are sometimes, but not always, perceived as relating to the divine. Most often, these elements were united with the ideas of health and happiness, but delineated from any specific theology. While most presentations of yoga emphasised that spiritual beliefs were not necessary to benefit from the practices, many practitioners believed that their practice was somehow ‘more’ than physical. For the majority of those engaging with yoga, specific doctrine or description of the divine was largely left up to the individual.

From the 1960s onwards, there were a growing number of more sectarian presentations of yoga attracting small numbers of very dedicated followers. Many of these groups have been subject to individual studies of their beliefs and practices.² Yoga has also been a dominant theme in many British pagan and magickal organisations.³ However, many people drift between these specific teachings and teachers over time; additionally, the total number of those fully committed to specific sectarian yoga movements at any given time is likely to number in the thousands, while those who have had some transitory contact with yoga teachers and classes in Britain numbers in the millions. This chapter concerns the beliefs of the general population, who may have attended classes of these two main popularisers of yoga in Britain, the Wheel of Yoga and those teaching Iyengar yoga – or drifted between more sectarian presentations of yoga and more general ‘yoga classes’. When viewed over a lifetime, most of those in contact with the yogic milieu in Britain has preferred to promote a general attitude of ‘seekership’, but more generally private exploration of ideological understandings outside of the context of the yoga class.⁴

The privatisation of religious beliefs has been a theme of many of the secularisation theories which noted how religious (as well as other authorities) were challenged in the 1960s; church attendance dropped markedly in Western Europe from this period onwards.⁵ In the 1970s, Colin Campbell used a model ‘mystical religion’ to describe the British religious landscape of people drifting between spiritual teachers.⁶ Those intent on finding some kind of spiritual inspiration outside of organised religion have also been described as ‘seekers’, which Steve Sutcliffe has also emphasized accurately describes important aspect of alternative religious and spiritual culture in post-1960s Britain.⁷ Paul Heelas has argued that a focus on an essential component of the ‘self’ is a defining feature of the New Age movement and has considered ‘self-spirituality’ as the defining feature of the New Age and neo-Pagan movements in Britain. By this, Heelas argues for a deification or sanctification of an ‘inner essence’ of the human as distinct from social roles and superficial personality.⁸ The beliefs of those popularising yoga in Britain, emphasized that the content of belief was a private concern. This is particularly true for those associated with the British Wheel of Yoga and the Iyengar practitioners who were the most influential groups in popularising yoga into the 1990s.

THE EARLY WHEEL’S YOGA PATH – A ‘SOFT’ ORTHODOXY

For the Wheel, yoga was presented as something that could offer both better health and spiritual liberation. In the 1960s Wilfred Clark produced a small A5 ‘Yoga Handbook’ that was intended: ‘to give newcomers to Yoga a straightforward insight into the more important aspects of Yoga as a science of good, healthy and ethical living.’ This phrasing emphasised the secular appeals of yoga for health and moral living. The same handbook wishes for practitioners of yoga: ‘May they through Yoga find sound health, increasing awareness and happiness supreme by following the Yoga Path which leads to Contentment.’ For the Wheel, the physical and emotional benefits were united to the ‘higher goals’ of yoga through an understanding of self-realisation and self-knowledge. The Yoga Handbook explained:

The study as well as the physical practice of Yoga brings to every normal receptive person greater tolerance towards people and events, supreme calm and in all this self-realization is the keynote.⁹

This ‘greater tolerance’ and ‘supreme calm’ through ‘self-realisation’ was a kind of well-being that can be understood in both physical and ‘higher’ terms. Health, increasing awareness and ‘happiness supreme’ were goals that did not require overt religious belief or contradict liberal interpretations of most religions. Although those attending a yoga class were not compelled to attach spiritual meanings to their activity, it is clear Wheel members writing in *Yoga* understood that yoga should be spiritual.

In Wheel literature, the overtly secular goals of ‘ultimate’ health and happiness were understood to necessitate a spiritual framework in order to be fully realized. The Wheel saw this as the important characteristic that made yoga different from other forms of exercise and relaxation. Wilfred Clark often complained in *Yoga* that yoga in LEA classes was in danger of being reduced to ‘Keep Fit’ or even a kind of therapy. For example, in 1972 Clark wrote:

...If one takes up physical Yoga merely for therapeutic purposes, one is in a sense “cheating”; certainly one is depriving oneself of True Yoga; one may as well join a gymnastic club or Keep Fit class.

To say one is practicing Yoga and stopping at the physical is akin to joining a church choir for the joy of singing without any thought for Christianity, or kidding oneself that one is learning mathematics and going no farther than the twelve times table!

What to do about it? What will happen? As within the orbit of the Wheel, no teacher must be considered qualified to teach until he or she thoroughly understands the true implications of Yoga; further education authorities must insist that True Yoga is taught; if any would-be students do not like this, then they must transfer to Keep Fit!

No education authority would tolerate shortcomings in other subjects; the trouble is that most general educationists know what is required in other subjects; all they know about Yoga is that there is a physical aspect but they are completely ignorant of Yoga’s real nature.¹⁰

Clark was concerned that the means of achieving ‘union’, e.g. the physical postures that were experienced as improving health, had become mistaken for the ‘ends’. It was

clear to Wheel members that the ‘general public’ understood yoga to be: “‘postures” – which are said to help tone up and replenish the nervous system when it feels depleted by the demands of modern urban life.’ However, in Clark’s opinion, ‘Yoga is not Yoga if such factors as meditation and short philosophical talks are omitted.’¹¹ These meditations and philosophical talks are where the physical practices were connected to the ‘real nature’ of Yoga, which was understood as union with the divine.

Sometimes, Wheel literature described physical and spiritual aspects of yoga as separable and hierarchical and in other places the Wheel presented the idea that the physical aspects and ‘ultimate goals’ of yoga were inseparable. The Wheel ‘Yoga Handbook’ stated that yoga means ‘union’ and that ‘this unity is nothing less than that of the Individual Spirit with the Divine Source of Life, that is to say, the unity of the finite with the infinite.’¹² The Handbook also explained that:

By whatever name one calls it however, self-realisation does mean happiness and nowadays many people seek an intermediate goal such as better health or relief from mental tension – happiness.¹³

This statement implies that the immediate benefits attributed to yoga practice could be understood as an intermediate part of the ‘higher goal’ of yoga, i.e. ‘the unity of the finite with the infinite.’¹⁴ Though not synonymous, better health and ultimate self-realization are connected in this presentation.

While it wanted to emphasise the importance of the ‘higher goals’ of yoga, the Wheel felt it necessary to distinguish between yoga and religion.¹⁵ Jim Pym a practising Buddhist and Quaker explained in the opening issue of *Yoga*:

Whenever a soul begins to approach the philosophical aspects of Yoga and to practice meditation, the question always arises, “Is Yoga, then, a religion?” Though the answer may be that Yoga is not a religion, but is the basis behind all religious systems, those who are Christian by choice may feel some dismay at the predominance of Hindu terms employed.¹⁶

In *Yoga*, there was an emphasis on individual experience of the divine, without an explicit, prescriptive definition. Although the Wheel promoted an idea of ultimate truth, this truth was to be found in experience and not in a religious label or dogma. A member of the Anglican clergy told a Wheel member in 1972 that she was providing

‘a technique and a vocabulary that is really going to help people get through to God.’¹⁷ This quote was interpreted by the Wheel as a significant approval of the Wheel’s yogic path.

The Wheel’s journal *Yoga* was addressed to practitioners who may or may not have been teachers. It is probably safe to assume that those who wrote into *Yoga* were more committed practitioners. Many, although certainly not all would have also been teachers. Additionally, yoga teachers would consider themselves yoga practitioners. As has been documented in previous chapters, those who considered themselves knowledgeable in yoga increasingly needed to complete a training course to be accepted as yoga teachers in LEA venues. While the Wheel urged its teachers to educate their students about the ‘Supreme Goal,’ it allowed each individual to chose their own way along the ‘Yoga Path’. This position allowed for a ‘soft orthodoxy’ of understanding the goal and the path of yoga. As another part of the ‘Yoga Handbook’ explained: ‘Yoga teaches us that all people are One, that all are One with God and that all religions are true in that they are varying Paths towards the same Goal.’¹⁸ If something was ‘filling you with energy’ the early Wheel advised: ‘perhaps you are not following the right Path, for it is not apparently “Enlightening” your Way.’¹⁹ As long as this underlying assumption was maintained, a variety of sources interpreted by an individual as giving insight into their personal ‘Yoga Path’.

Rather than underscoring representations of God directly associated with a particular religion, the pages of *Yoga* demonstrated experiences of the divine in nature and a greater appreciation of the beauty of life. The ‘Yoga Handbook’ explained that: ‘A teacher of spiritual and ethical Yoga need not be a living person – the sky, the stars, the sea, the wind and so on can all inspire us; the best teacher of course is experience.’²⁰ The idea parallel to the ‘Kingdom of God is within’ ended Sir Paul Duke’s autobiographical *The Unending Quest* (1950) was an important theme in Wheel ideology and popular yoga literature.²¹ One Wheel member wrote a verse and response to an anonymous poem which epitomised the Wheel’s concept of the path of yoga. The introductory poem, entitled ‘The Seeker’ asks:

Where am I going, this body, mind and soul?

...
Hard though I try to tread the path
To the bliss that many have sought
So often Body lets me down
Or Mind thinks an unbeautiful thought.
...
But which direction must I take
To see the Truth unfold? ²²

To these questions which outline the path of yoga as understood by the Wheel, Jane Hamel responded in 1982:

I yearned with all my heart for the Beloved,
He did not seem to hear my call.
No answer came.
No flash of blinding light.
No startling revelation.
Who am I to expect.
Who am I
Who am I.

No longer any need to weep and yearn.
He was always there within my heart.
Had I but known Him.
Had I but known Him.²³

Hamel's response demonstrated the primacy of individual experience within the Wheel's understanding of yoga. The question 'Who am I?' was taught as a specific spiritual practice by Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) who was popularized in the writings of Paul Brunton. Ramana Maharshi was an important inspiration to Wilfred Clark and many other people involved with the Wheel.²⁴ The publication of this poem and response in the Wheel's magazine exemplifies the personal, experiential path that was expected to eventually lead to a single understanding of truth.

Readers wrote in with poetry or favourite phrases from other authors which they felt embodied their understanding of 'experiencing the divine'. The insight nature inspires is sometimes expressed in passages of poetry, such as this poem attributed to Evelyn Scott Brown printed in *Yoga* at a reader's request, 'Gratitude to Nature':

Sweet Nature, when by cares beset
I've sought thy healing balm

Not once hast thou betrayed me yet:
Thy quite majestic calm
Has ever brought me inward peace
And deep emotional release,
All griefs and tensions smoothed away
By thy perpetual roundelay.²⁵

The poem presented nature as offering the same kind of relaxation and inner peace as the practice of yoga was believed to promote. The parallels were understood by the Wheel as encompassing the higher ideals of yoga. Expressions of ‘the divine’ in the pages of *Yoga* were likely to be drawn from British and European culture. In the summer of 1970, *Yoga* quoted John Donne’s ‘No man is an Island entire of himself’ and concluded that it was ‘surely pure Yoga. ... a thoughtful essay on Universal Oneness.’²⁶ William Blake was also presented as a True Yogist with his ‘To see the world in a grain of sand’ sentiments.²⁷

The breath of the personal search within the Wheel’s ‘Yoga Path’ is exemplified by a letter published in *Yoga* by an anonymous ‘gentleman from the Midlands’:

After reading a book called ‘Mysticism’ by a certain Evelyn Underhill, I felt the need to read more on theosophical matters and hence turned towards Yoga, the first book about which I read being ‘Yoga and Relaxation’ by Tony Crisp. After that followed ‘The Politics of Experience’ by R. D. Laing.

From an acquaintance I was able to borrow ‘The Bhagavad-Gita’ which I found the most remarkable of all. Other works which have come to my notice are: ‘Yoga’ by Ernest Wood; and ‘Buddhism’ and ‘Zen, a way of life’ both by Christmas Humphreys.

With each book I read it seems as if I am fitting the pieces of a puzzle together – I feel that with sufficient time, sufficient patience and sufficient thought through meditation, that I shall eventually have a picture of life as it is in reality. ...

I think it is this which gives me energy to go on and on – I feel I must read more and more of theosophical works as to enable me to perhaps glimpse that joy again. But I feel unable to explain any more – I know no more myself ... what I seek is a rather vague goal – perhaps a form of enlightenment, though knowledge and good living – a Karma Yoga of my own perhaps.²⁸

This eclectic mixture is part of the Path identified as True Yoga by Wilfred Clark. Although Wilfred Clark introduced this letter with a declaration that one must ‘first wipe clean the slate on which is inscribed orthodox Western thinking and start afresh with 6000 year-old wisdom which Mother India has given us,’ the letter’s reading lists imply a tradition other than ‘Mother India’ are at work. His thoughts and meditation come from a variety of sources, psychiatrist R.D. Laing, the explanations of Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys, ‘theosophical works’ as well as the Bhagavad Gīta. While reference to the ancient origins of yoga was an important part of Wheel self-justification, the idea of yoga as ‘the basis behind all religious systems’ allowed for inspiration from poetry, psychology, world religions and the Western Esoteric tradition.²⁹

Individual teachers associated with the Wheel had their own explanations of the ‘Yoga Path.’ One example is Indrananda Nath (1923– 2007), an Indian-born civil servant who began studying yoga while living in London during the late 1960s. His introduction to yoga was when Ma Yoga Shakti, a disciple of Swami Satyananda visited the Hindu Centre in Chalk Farm, London where Nath was acting as secretary to maintain contact with his homeland.³⁰ Ma Yoga Shakti Saraswati (1927–2015) first came to London partially through connections with the then Indian High Commissioner, Apa Pant. Ma Yoga Shakti was also influential in bringing Swami Satyananda to teach in Britain which led to the establishment of the Bihar School of Yoga in London in 1978. A native of Benares, she became a sannyasin in 1961 and eventually opened ashrams in both India and the United States; during the 1970s she was a frequent traveller to Britain.

Figure 43: Ma Yoga Shakti at the Hindu Centre in Chalk Farm, London 1970. Photograph courtesy of Indrananda Nath.

Under Ma Yoga Shakti’s encouragement Nath began teaching yoga classes at the Hindu Centre and also where he worked at the Post Office headquarters as a typist. In 1972, he began calling the yoga instruction he was providing from these and other

venues, the Yoga Centre of North London. By the late 1970s, Nath had renamed his teaching the Patañjali Yoga Centre ‘to reflect its dedication to traditional Yoga’.³¹ He formally registered this organisation as a charity in 1980 and Nath has also dedicated himself after retirement to living and teaching yoga.³² During the late 1970s and early 1980s Nath was very active lecturing and teaching at Wheel events.³³

According to Nath, there are two key points to progress in yoga – discipline and concentration. Translating the first two sutras of Patañjali’s Yoga Sutra’s as his reference, Nath explained that:

It is the first sloka, *atha yogānuśāsanam*, it means now I am going to explain to you the discipline of yoga, so the first thing any student of yoga is required is the discipline. In his or her life. If it is out of the way, whenever you want, you have a time, you sit for meditation, whenever you have time you go to the yoga class – that is not it. That discipline is from the beginning to the end, whatever you may say.

Yogaḥ cittavṛtti nirodhaḥ – the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind. ...

You sit for meditation, you think of something else as well. [If] even one thought creeps in, you have gone away from your path...³⁴

These two concepts formed the basis of Nath’s personal practice as well as his teaching. He regularly taught asana, pranayama and during retreats as internal cleansing exercises (Shat Karma). Nath taught Shat Karma over the course of a week’s residential workshop in which water is flushed through the digestive tract and the colon is believed to become thoroughly cleansed. According to Indrananda Nath: ‘If you want to progress on the path of yoga, you can’t do without Shat Karma. [The] body must be kept clean in every aspect.’³⁵

In Nath’s teaching, this was typically followed by two more weeks of intensive study, the first on improving posture work and the second on concentration and pranayama. Nath acquired a loyal following of several hundred supporters, but his courses were most popular in the 1970s and early 1980s when he was asked to many Wheel events.³⁶ This was also his understanding of how to progress along in yoga:

only one has to do it for ourselves. I can’t give you anything, you can’t give me anything. The teachers are going to guide it that’s all. Nothing else. They are not going to practice it for me or for you.³⁷

For Nath, yoga became an all-encompassing discipline of life that guided all his actions. He also practised an hour and a half of chanting, pranayama and concentration daily.³⁸ An important part of Nath's lasting influence has been inspiration by personal example. In this way the Wheel's spiritual approach to yoga was a continuation of its autodidact roots with an emphasis on individual exploration and self-discipline.

ORTHOPRAXY – IYENGAR'S TRADITION OF YOGA

It was the impression of many during the 1970s that the students of Iyengar were not interested in anything other than the physical performance of asanas. For example, Stephen Annett wrote in his 1976 *Many Ways of Being* that:

...while the Wheel says that the physical practice of yoga and the study of the philosophy from which it emerged are inseparable, Iyengar holds that Western man's spiritual development is as yet too slight for him to be able to grasp the subtleties of spiritual enlightenment. Indeed, some members of Iyengar go so far as to claim that anything beyond postures and basic breathing exercises is dangerous, but nonetheless, Iyengar teachers include some philosophy with their physical exercises....³⁹

Annett contacted all the groups in his book directly for information, but it is likely that he found contacting Iyengar practitioners difficult as he complained that Iyengar teachers were '...very poorly organised. There is no central address to write to and there are no full-time workers specifically to handle correspondence. Added to this, they issue no publications, lists or guides.'⁴⁰ On the positive side, Annett wrote that 'individually, the followers of Iyengar have a full grasp of the basic postures and breathing exercises that make up hatha yoga, and an Iyengar-based class is highly recommended.'⁴¹ These generalisations were particularly relevant when the Iyengar teachers were compared to the Wheel, which was well organised for national and international correspondence, had a quarterly magazine and actively explained in print what it believed during the 1970s.

However, by looking at the Iyengar movement and its publications more carefully, it is unlikely that Iyengar taught that the physical practice of asana and philosophy of yoga could be disconnected. During an early demonstration in London,

Iyengar demonstrated his knowledge of Indian scripture by giving quotes as he performed asana.⁴² Iyengar had written in *Light on Yoga* that the physical aspect of yoga asana was intimately connected to the greater aims of yoga:

Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga complement each other and form a single approach towards Liberation. As a mountaineer needs ladders, ropes and crampons as well as physical fitness and discipline to climb the icy peaks of the Himalayas, so does the Yoga aspirant need the knowledge and discipline of the Hatha Yoga of Swatmarama to reach the heights of Raja Yoga dealt with by Patañjali.⁴³

In *Light on Yoga*, Iyengar outlined these eight limbs of Astanga Yoga as well as the different paths (margas) of Karma, Bhakti, and Jñāna Margas that the Wheel discussed in *Yoga*.⁴⁴ Although the ILEA declared that the physical aspect of Hatha Yoga could be taught apart from yoga philosophy, Iyengar understood himself as teaching from within a traditional lineage of yoga teachers whose aim was moksha, or union with the divine.⁴⁵ However, Iyengar's emphasis in practice was very different from that of the Wheel.

Although his books referred to Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras* as the basis for his teaching, he did not require his students to believe anything in particular. This allowed students to explore their own metaphysical interests and understandings. For example, Iyengar teacher Clara Buck donated her yoga books to the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Maida Vale upon her death. Her collection included books by Hari Prashad Shastri of the Shanti Sadan, Deepak Chopra, Benjamin Crème and several translations of the *Upaniṣhads* and *Bhagavad Gītā*. She also donated a number of anatomy books and a few books about Rāmānuja, whose Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy formed the basis of Iyengar's personal metaphysical understanding. The Iyengars, a caste of Kannaḍa and Tamil-speaking Brahmins, are associated with the teachings of Rāmānuja (c.1077–1157) founder of the philosophical school of Viśiṣṭādvaita; this is a qualified non-dualism, based on a critique of Śankara's non-dualistic theology combined with Śri Vaiṣṇavism, the worship of the divine in the form of Viṣṇu/Nārāyaṇa. Although Iyengar's teaching in Britain has focused almost completely on instruction in asana, personally Iyengar has upheld his traditional family form of worship on a personal level. The idea of surrendering to God is an important element of Viśiṣṭādvaita

philosophy and Iyengar has chosen to focus his personal devotional practice on Patañjali and Hanumān. The ‘monkey god’ Hanumān is a popular devotional figure for all those associated with physical culture, often found in *akhāras* (the gymnasiums for training Indian wrestlers).⁴⁶ Iyengar included a shrine to Hanumān on the top of his Institute in Pune (completed in 1976) and in 2004 installed what he claims is the ‘world’s first’ temple dedicated to Patañjali in the village of his birth, Bellur in Karnataka.⁴⁷ However, when presenting his translation of Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras*, Iyengar wrote that ‘I am neither a learned pundit nor a scholarly academician....’⁴⁸ Iyengar has presented himself primarily as an artist and practitioner and taught from this understanding.

Iyengar explained his personal relationship between texts and practice further in the introduction to his 1985 book *The Art of Yoga*:

Throughout my life, I have tried to blend my yogic practices with the study of the writings of our ancient sages and their experiences of yoga, in particular those of Patañjali. With determined effort I infused their thoughts into my lifestyle to capture the essence of their teaching and to grasp the meaning behind the concise statements of the *Yoga Sūtras* and other yoga texts. Yet the work is my own. As a musician plays his instrument, or a sculptor chisels a statue, I have tried to use my body and mind as instruments and to refine them. I have attempted to expand my consciousness from the personal to the universal.⁴⁹

Iyengar explained that there is a refinement and serenity in his presentation and experience of asana that is hard for him to convey in words. And so Iyengar attempted to teach an embodied experience of concentration and unity of body, breath, mind and soul to his students.

Although his personal religious heritage undoubtedly informed his teaching, Iyengar asked his students to find their own way in their own religious traditions rather than imitate his own. One student recalls that he pointed her to the Bible:

‘Here’ said BKS Iyengar, and handed me a Bible. ‘Look for yourself, you will find it ... I don’t know where it is. These are not my Scriptures, they are yours... Look it up. Your Paul said, ‘Glorify God in your body.’⁵⁰

In effect, the direct theological instruction was not so different than that of the Wheel although the focus on psychosomatic details of experience within asana and pranayama was very different. Individual students of Iyengar were asked to find their own beliefs and understanding. Yoga practitioners who were committed to Iyengar had a very different idea of asana practice than those associated with the Wheel.

Instead of a 'soft orthodoxy' of belief as promoted by the Wheel of Yoga members, Iyengar presented an orthopraxy. Iyengar focused on the teaching of asana, but he attempted to teach a method accessing all the different aspects of yoga within this single limb. Beatrice Harthan quoted Iyengar's comment about why he accepted the ILEA's restriction of no philosophical instruction:

Truth is the same. Better life can be taught without using religious words. Meditation is of two types, active and passive. I took the active side of meditation by making students totally absorbed in the poses.⁵¹

Iyengar later expanded this idea further. He explained that:

In my method of teaching, because I take you through a lot of poses, I keep you for two or three hours, or sometimes four hours, without allowing your mind to go elsewhere. ... do the pupils know that four hours have passed? No. So I have kept them in a spiritual state for four hours...

Suppose I were to ask you to do a meditation, to close your eyes and remain in silence, and suppose I also were to close my eyes. Could I know what was going on in your mind? Perhaps you would call that spiritual, but I would say there is no spirituality there because your mind will be wandering elsewhere. That is not my method of teaching. ...

So I do not need a certificate to say whether this is physical yoga or spiritual yoga. When I am teaching I know that for four hours your mind has not been allowed to wander. And when I teach I make you fully aware of your body, your mind, your senses and your intelligence.

Iyengar attempted to teach meditation and concentration within the absorption of the practice of asana. He explained that for the beginner, the first practice he taught was 'awareness of the various parts of the body' for example, 'look at the foot, then come to the ankle, connect the ankle with the foot...'. Iyengar described this as 'working on the surface level of the physical body.'⁵²

As Iyengar students became more experienced at this level of awareness, he attempted to give them more integrated understanding of the movement of the mind. Eventually, a unity of mind and intelligence within the somatic experience, according to Iyengar, can lead to a direct experience of ātman, a concept in Iyengar's terminology that is often exchanged with the 'soul.' Iyengar explained that:

When the intelligence feels the oneness between the flesh and the skin, it introduces the self... the body is forgotten in that moment because everything is flowing at the same speed and in the same direction. Patañjali says in the third chapter that the yogi's body should move as fast as the speed of his soul.

But if you forget the body before you go through the earlier stages, you will never reach that point. That is the problem. Until the finite is known, how can we touch the infinite? ⁵³

Iyengar taught that by expanding proprioception with correct alignment of the body, a deep peace of mind could be experienced. Iyengar felt that through this experience he could bring his students to an experience of the infinite.

Occasionally students collected 'sutras' of Iyengar, pithy statements that Iyengar imparted during asana classes that reflected his teaching. For example, some of these statements included:

To say 'Ugh' is to abuse God. Say God!

Analytical intelligence is easy to acquire. Practical intelligence is not easy.

The job of the Master is to create disappointment, to teach humility, or there can be no progress.

When the mind says you have had enough in a posture, there is duality somewhere. Only the body must say it.

A preacher is not a teacher. A preacher is a propagandist. ⁵⁴

In these quotes, Iyengar paralleled the Wheel's search for personal understanding and experience. Iyengar pointed towards the student's personal experience but did not provide concrete ideological content to that experience. However, he did point out

physical details of his student's performance with exactitude. The same set of 'sutras' are also full of instructions for physical observations:

See the buttocks are parallel.

Don't clench the skin to straighten, the bones are for that purpose.

The frontal part of the nose must be parallel to the ground.

If the toe is dead, the heel is dead.

If eyes become red, person is resting on forehead or arms (in headstand).⁵⁵

This kind of attention to physical detail had no parallel in Wheel teaching. The emphasis placed on these instructions certainly appeared to give a physical emphasis to Iyengar's instruction.

Some of Iyengar's students and teachers reflected upon their experience of yoga with Iyengar and believed that they were experiencing what Iyengar described. One student recalled:

He never warned us or prepared us for special experiences. He simply led us, all unawares, into an altered state of consciousness and then called our attention to it *when we were already there*. ... my mind had been like a deep pool, unruffled by random thoughts and fancies. If I had the slightest expectation that he was going to lead us into that sort of experience, I would have been so greedy for it that I would have missed it altogether.⁵⁶

Being led into this experience by Iyengar personally was a real possibility for a yoga practitioner in the 1960s and 70s, when Iyengar made annual month-long teaching visits to England. However, the majority of yoga students in LEA classes would have had only an indirect exposure through their local teacher. Although Iyengar attempted to systematise his method for teachers trained under him to pass on, Iyengar's charismatic personality was a significant influence in the development of yoga in Britain before 1980.

It was difficult for both Iyengar and his students to present the experience of their yoga practice cogently in words and concepts. At times, Iyengar himself has complained that many of the teachers he trained 'are teaching without practice.'⁵⁷ It is

also clear that many did not experience Iyengar's intent when they attended his classes. During the 1970s, when there were more yoga teachers to compare, rumours abounded about Iyengar's techniques and harshness. One student remembers being told that 'He is a terror. ... People are shocked by his methods – shouting at students and knocking them around.'⁵⁸ When effective, Iyengar's methods created powerful experiences and loyal pupils. But the emphasis of other British yoga groups on gentle relaxing and stretching was very different.

Iyengar hoped to guide his students towards the entire yogic 'path' of Patañjali through his disciplining of the physical body. Later in life, Iyengar reflected that:

Most people practice yoga within the parameters of the first and second *niyama* which are cleanliness and contentment. They get the immediate payoff of yoga practice (going to a class, doing a bit at home) from the fact that there is increasing health, which is cleanliness, and a deep health, an organic health, a mental clarity, well-being and repose, an ability to relax and rest, to nourish themselves from better breathing. So this brings an improvement in cleanliness, in deep health and concomitantly there is a greater contentment, integration with the environment, in our ability to handle its ups and downs. These are two circles in which most people are living yoga. It is a quick and wonderful reward...⁵⁹

The themes of well-being, feelings of health and greater contentment are reflected in this quote as being important aspects about the practice of Iyengar's students. In this passage, Iyengar acknowledges some of the same things that the Wheel journal *Yoga* discusses; that many yoga students stopped at a level that provided physical and mental benefits. However, Iyengar consistently taught that practising even part of the large yoga tradition was a positive gesture.

INDIVIDUAL NAVIGATION OF THE YOGIC MILIEU

The religiosity of yoga practitioners exemplified a personalisation of spiritual ideas as well as a rejection of ecclesiastical-led authority. Many practitioners reacted against being told what to believe, but still wanted to find a greater meaning to life. In this context, techniques and activities that gave feelings of well-being and 'peace of mind' became more, rather than less, attractive. Importantly, yoga was an embodied

practice that gave experiential benefits, not an institution affiliation based on belief. A long-time teacher in the Iyengar method reflected:

I think for a lot of our generation the desire was for a more universal kind of spirituality, not compartmentalised, not institutionalised, more personal and more universal spirituality, but not things that put divisions between people.

One of the things that drew me to yoga really was that here was this technique, a physical technique which led people towards their spiritual selves without dogma, without creed, without ritual. And that's how I stayed really. I meditate. I do my practice. I don't belong to any church, subscribe to any creed or religion.⁶⁰

John Claxton's sentiments, which emphasised personal practice in opposition to institutional dogma are echoed by Paul McCartney's reflection on the appeal of the Maharishi to The Beatles in 1968. McCartney described the wide variety of ideas in popular culture as well as the appeal of a personal practice that gave an experience of peace and fulfilment:

...and you started to hear of the *Bhagavad Gita* and stuff like that. And it was all a little bit hazy because it wasn't like official religion, you were chucking in bits of Khalil Gibran and this sort of stuff, *Siddhartha*, which wasn't necessarily to do with it, but all seemed the same kind of thing. We'd all been brought up as Sunday school kids or whatever, traditional religious beliefs, and it hadn't really worked for us because we'd say, 'why is there then suffering in the world?' and the vicar said 'Just because,' and we say 'Oh yeah ... that's a great answer.' So none of us had been able to be totally convinced in prayer until meditation. Then you started to get the idea: one note, one concentrating, one lessening of stress, one reaching of a sort of new level did seem to get you in contact with a better part of yourself. It was a very hectic world one was living in and this inner peace seemed to be a better thing. If nothing else, what Maharishi was suggesting was a pleasant relief from all that in order to recharge your batteries – that basically was all he said.⁶¹

Much of the popular practices of yoga and meditation were presented as a technology of the body, free from the dogma of institutional religion. This was true for the British Wheel of Yoga, Iyengar yoga and many independent individuals. Yoga practitioners experienced what they considered physical, psychological and sometimes 'spiritual' benefits, but they were not required to align their experience to 'irrational' belief and could define for themselves the metaphysical significances of their practices.

Additionally, yoga practitioners were also not required to become involved with local church networks; many of the social supports that churches traditionally provided in the case of illness or accident were now met by the welfare state. Thus, yoga practitioners had the benefit of exploring their religious identities without the negative aspects of commitment to a local church network.

The ideas of relaxing, 'inner peace' and 'recharging your batteries' were important elements within the spirituality of British yoga practitioners. Relaxation for a moment of 'inner peace' was an important point in the yoga teaching of Sunita Cabral, who taught the popular series of yoga classes at the Birmingham Athletic Institute between 1962-1970. In a manual she self-published in 1965, Cabral explained that 'One is not born with worry, one grows into it, then passes it on.' According to Cabral, worry creates tension and 'tension tends to tighten the system over a period of years, leaving the system vulnerable to mental or physical disorders.' Cabral explained that methods of relaxation in her 'Pranayama Yoga' allowed one to choose between 'Heaven – permanent health' and 'Hell – permanent tension.'⁶² Kailash Puri (b.1926), who taught yoga with her husband in Liverpool from the late 1960s, also emphasised the importance of relaxation in yoga and its profound and beneficial effects on her students' lives.⁶³ The back of Dr. Gopal Puri's self-published yoga book describes him as a 'Yoga Relaxation Consultant' and quotes from students attribute better health, happiness and 'self realisation' that is attributed to the practice of pranayama and relaxation.⁶⁴ These Indian-born teachers equated relaxation with 'self-realisation' and did not discuss their personal religious beliefs as part of their yoga teaching.

Mark Singleton has argued that the emphasis on relaxation in yoga is a 'relatively new and composite phenomenon' and that the 'theological and ideological frameworks that underpin them tend to remain permeated by assumptions of New Age religion and indigenous Western esotericism.'⁶⁵ Religious and scientific exchange between India, Britain and the United States has been entangled for centuries and it is unlikely that cultural changes in a concept such as 'relaxation' can ever have a definitive genealogy.⁶⁶ However, the idea of 'salvation through relaxation' was important for British yoga practitioners in the 1960s and 70s.⁶⁷ This idea united an

empirical experience of relaxation with both better health and greater spiritual understanding.

During the 1970s there was no shortage of Indian gurus visiting the British Isles; the pages of *Yoga & Health* and the Wheel's journal *Yoga* contained notices of visiting Indian swamis and gurus. However, very few yoga practitioners locked themselves into any one guru or tradition, but most were happy to learn from whoever was available. Following with the well-documented expansion of new religions during the 1970s, yoga-ashrams were established in Britain during this period. In 1970, Swami Satchidananda of the Bihar School of Yoga toured the country included an appearance on Midlands ATV.⁶⁸ The Kundalini Yoga of Yogi Bajan and the Happy Healthy Holy Order (3HO) was often featured in *Yoga & Health* during the 1970s with articles by Vikram Singh, aka Victor Harvey Briggs former guitarist for the successful pop group The Animals. After its impromptu beginnings, The Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centre was more formally established in London in 1972. The Satyananda Yoga Centre in London was founded in 1978. But the numbers of practitioners taking sannyasin vows, adopting Indian names and joining a monastic order, were always dwarfed by the number practicing yoga in LEA supervised classes or exposed to yoga on television. For most practitioners, yoga was not about dedicating life to a guru but rather about finding what the individual needed in order to have a less-stressful and satisfying life. Scepticism towards any external source of authority can help explain the pick-and-choose element of what Colin Campbell characterised as the 'cultic milieu'.⁶⁹

Figure 44: Flyer for Appearance of Swami Sachidananda in London during 1972. Image courtesy of Ken Thompson.

Some of these organisations encouraged exclusive membership and did find a limited number of converts, but more of the population remained distantly curious. Among the high-commitment groups who were most successful at gaining committed members during the 1970s were the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

(ISKCON). 'Core membership' of ISKCON in Britain, meaning temple residents and others with 'full-time devotional engagement,' rose from less than ten in 1969 to almost 250 in 1983. Since 1983, ISKCON's 'core membership' has remained constant but its 'congregational membership' has increased as ISKCON has integrated with the Indian immigrant community.⁷⁰ A late 1970s ISKCON leaflet claimed that 1,500 individuals attended Bhaktidevanta Manor near Watford every Sunday and 'hundreds of other people had come into contact with the movement at the time of its annual processions throughout the streets of London, Leicester and Birmingham'. The growing Indian diaspora were increasingly among those attending ISKCON temples.

Other highly visible guru figures in Britain included the young boy, Prem Pal Singh Rawat (b.1957), who was introduced to Britain at age of thirteen at the Glastonbury Free Festival in June 1971. By the summer of 1973, the movement around Rawat, known as the Divine Light Mission, claimed to have 8,000 devotees (called 'premies') and about 40 designated premie households in Britain.⁷¹ The group was always much more successful in the United States, and in 1973 the group claimed global membership figures as high as 50,000 with branches in Australasia, Canada, South American and Japan as well as through many countries in Europe.⁷²

Prem Rawat's father Shri Hans Maharaj Ji (1900-1966) had established a large following in north India, teaching what he called 'the Knowledge of the Divine Light and Holy Name' and formally establishing the Divine Light Mission in 1960; the leadership of the organisation passed to his young son after his death in 1966. The tradition combines Sant Mat with Advaita Vedanta non-dualist soteriology which emphasised divinity without attributes and focuses on promoting transformative experiential understandings through meditative techniques. During the 1970s, a series of internal problems and negative publicity led to Prem Rawat closing all his ashrams in 1982 and reforming his global followers under the name of Elan Vital (1984-2010). By the late 1980s, the movement (then known as Elan Vital) claimed 1,420 committed supporters, who pledged £5 a month to the Prem Rawat (then known as Maharaji), with 5,000 on their mailing list and 7,000 individuals practicing his techniques called 'the Knowledge'.⁷³ Since 2010, Prem Rawat has been teaching 'The Knowledge'

under his own name and audiences of 2-3,000 thousands on visits to Britain, now largely drawn from the diasporic north Indian population.

Another highly visible Indian-based group in Britain were the followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (1931–1990), later known as Osho. Eileen Barker estimated that in the early 1980s, these initiates, known as sannyasins, ‘numbered 3-4,000; they belonged to what was possibly the most fashionable and fastest-growing alternative spiritual/religious movement in Britain’.⁷⁴ Sri Chinmoy (1931–2007) also attracted large crowds in Britain during the 1970s, largely due to his associations with the British jazz musician John McLaughlin (b. 1942) and Carlos Santana (b. 1947); the two both became high-profile devotees of Sri Chinmoy during the 1970s. In 1973, they released an album together entitled *Love Devotion Surrender* intended as a tribute to Chinmoy and John Coltrane. There were several other numerically small Indian-inspired sectarian organisations during the 1970s such as Ananda Marga and the Brahma Kumaris and many people explored the teachings of the silent teacher Meher Baba who was popularised during this period largely by association with Pete Townshend of the band *The Who* who dedicated his ‘rock opera’ *Tommy* (1969) to his guru. But taken together, the committed members of an Indian ‘new religion’ probably attracted a few tens of thousands of committed supporters at their peak. Yet it would be a mistake to measure these groups’ influence on British society only by means of committed members. Those who casually attended a single lecture or leafed through the ubiquitous ISKCON edition of the Bhagavad Gītā were much more numerous and would have included many yoga practitioners.

When considering the influence of ‘gurus’ in 1960s and 1970s Britain, it is worth remembering that many within the 1970s ‘counter-culture’ were vehemently anti-guru. Scepticism for authority figures included those offering exotic knowledge from abroad. The wife of the leading advocate of ‘beat culture’ in 1960s Britain, Sue Miles, later explained that:

There were all these Indian travelling salesmen, all these gurus who packed up their suitcases and rushed over to England. The first Hare Krishnas were sent to Miles and me... put them in touch with a load of Pakistanis in Ealing, quite

sensibly. People who knew how to eat cauliflower cheese with their fingers or chopsticks – 'cos we didn't and we didn't want to learn.⁷⁵

Geraldine Beskin of The Atlantis Bookstore also recalled a generally negative attitude towards those who attached themselves strongly to a single group or leader. In reference to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, she commented that some 'used to call him Guru Bagwash because everyone was in orange and things' and she had a feeling that those who joined were 'often just escaping things.' Beskin, like many of her generation would not accept any person or organisation with an attitude of 'only because you say so it must be true.'⁷⁶ The combination of scepticism and credulity caused the majority to investigate a number guru figures before settling on one, or none.

However, the presence of Indian spiritual teachers also encouraged many to find their own guru. This process did not necessarily involve rejecting all other spiritual teachers or staying with a single teacher for a long period of time. An example of how a particular individual navigated the yoga courses on offer during the 1970s is that of yoga teacher Ernest Coates. Coates primarily drew inspiration from Swami Gitananda, but Coates only found Swami Gitananda after exploring several other yoga teachers in the London area, Stella Cherfas a pupil of Sir Paul Dukes, as well as Iyengar-trained teacher Silva Mehta. He also practiced Siddha Yoga mediation for many years.⁷⁷ Siddha Yoga was popularized by Swami Muktananda (1908–1982) who initiated many American and European disciples and the main practices of Siddha Yoga are meditation, chanting, seva, dakshina, satsang and darshan rather than asana and pranayama.⁷⁸

Coates considered that all these experiences informed his understanding of yoga, yet Swami Gitananda's tradition had been his primary focus. Coates remembered that sometime in the 1970s he attended a retreat Swami Gitananda was running in Wales:

I met Swami Gitananda after being involved in the Wheel and Iyengar, and I thought at long last I've found a real yoga teacher. He had studied yoga from a boy, had a guru and his lineage was true. That lineage knew so much about yoga – more than any of the others I have come across. And I went to his

ashram in the south of India. So I then found a real proper guru to study with. So that was the direction I went.⁷⁹

Coates began teaching when the regular teacher in the LEA left unexpectedly and a replacement teacher could not be found. Coates acknowledged an Iyengar-influence in his teaching of standing postures, which he presented in the same sequence each week so that students could easily remember the practice outside of class. Coates emphasised the pragmatics of teaching from personal experience and seeing what ‘worked’ for his students.

Obviously all teachers, whoever they are, teaching whatever subject, bring to it their own experience. So I am bringing to my yoga classes many many years of experience. ... I have found out what worked. I have seen over the years the different groups I have done, up in London, weekends, holidays abroad and stuff. ... the biggest thrill I have ever had in teaching is seeing people change and understand. And they do not grow and understand by doing Keep Fit – they don’t. But when they work on the emotional level and, if you like, spiritual level, the energy level, they do change.⁸⁰

Coates considered yoga to be a subject consisting of the specific techniques of asana, pranayama, banda, kriya and meditation as well-being ‘a spiritual teaching of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and more concerned with the spiritual life than the physical life.’ Bandha are energy and muscular ‘locks’ performed at the bottom, middle and top of the torso. Kriyā roughly translates as action but refer to quite different practices in different transmissions of yoga. Ernest Coates defined Kriya in Gitananda’s method as ‘to do with the mind and the way the energy flows....’ and consists of specific mental practices that settle the mind within the somatic experience.⁸¹ Coates emphasised that all these aspects are a necessary part of yoga: ‘if you want to develop yourself in yoga that’s it. Otherwise just do Keep Fit classes but don’t call it yoga.’⁸² Although his path was based on personal experience rather than being developed within any organisation, Coates’ opinion on the essence of yoga parallels those expressed in *Yoga* during the 1970s.

The importance of a personal journey towards wholeness and a greater sense of being is emphasised by other people involved with yoga in Britain. Kathleen Pepper,

a Friends of Yoga (FRYOG) yoga teacher explained how she understood her role as a yoga teacher:

I encourage them [the students] to find their own way and I don't make them join anything. And when they finish here, many of them come back, but many of them don't. And I don't look on myself as a guru. I look on myself as somebody who gives people freedom to be themselves.⁸³

Pepper explained that 'whatever a person's spiritual journey is, it is fine, whether they are a born again Christian or move to Glastonbury, doesn't matter, what matters is their spirituality.'⁸⁴ Pepper unambiguously positioned the authority of defining how this spiritual quest manifests itself as internal rather than external to an individual. This internal placement of spiritual authority has been important for many British yoga practitioners.

Mina Semyon (b. 1938), took a very different path towards teaching yoga as greater freedom from pain, worry and suffering. Semyon was introduced to yoga by her therapist, R. D. Laing in 1969. Semyon recalled that Laing introduced her to yoga within the first six months of her therapy, 'The feeling was that it wasn't enough to just talk...'⁸⁵ At that time Laing himself was beginning his personal exploration of yoga and Buddhism. Challenging the traditional power relationship and doctor/patient boundaries in the mental health field, Laing became friends with Semyon and they studied asana from B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga* while their families were on holiday together in Italy:

We started doing yoga together. He didn't have much experience with Yoga postures but he certainly deeply understood the philosophy of Yoga - practising with mindfulness, unifying mind-body-breath and releasing the emotional patterns held in mind-body, which obscure the wholeness of being.⁸⁶

Semyon said that Laing gave her a manuscript of Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras* that he had copied out in his own hand as a practice. Laing warned her not to read the commentaries, but Semyon commented 'but of course I had to read [some commentaries] to see what he means...'.⁸⁷ She found that, 'The yoga sutras spoke to me directly. It felt like you didn't need any special education to understand them,

whereas the commentaries were more academic and conceptual, taking me away from the direct perception ... so I thought that's what he must have meant.'⁸⁸

In March 1971, Laing departed for Sri Lanka and India where he would spend a year in search for wisdom with traditional teachers and practising meditation.⁸⁹ Both before and after this trip, Laing was very interested in Buddhism and Semyon remembered that Laing often discussed the Four Noble Truths and the importance of alleviating suffering. Laing, Semyon and her husband had daily yoga lessons with one of Iyengar's close pupils, Dona Holleman. She also took lessons with Iyengar during his visits to London in the early 1970s.⁹⁰ Semyon continued her practice of yoga and by the mid-1970s was beginning to teach others.

However, her yoga practice was not embedded with either an Orientalist India or an image of a traditional guru figure. When asked if she encountered other guru figures in the 1970s, Semyon reflected that 'through Ronnie Laing I was introduced to Timothy Leary and Allen Watts.'⁹¹ She found that the practice of yoga postures made her more aware of feeling 'disconnected' and described feeling a need 'to become whole.' For Semyon, yoga is an understanding of awareness, of letting go of habits, of opening up to the present moment. This is what she hoped to convey to her yoga students. In her book *The Distracted Centipede*, Semyon wrote:

This is what I consider my own practice to be and this is what I am inspired to teach:
Effort towards concentration on
The breath,
Being present
Recognising how we disconnect
Letting go of thoughts or emotional reactions
Connecting to gravity and letting the body release from the ground upwards.
Making a connection between feelings and the breath.⁹²

Semyon's yoga is rooted in an experience of Patañjali's *Yoga Sutras*, Buddhism's Four Noble Truths, human potential psychology and the group of people who spent their lives around R. D. Laing. In this emphasis on an internal experience of unity and wholeness in opposition to dogma and institutional authority Semyon's understanding of yoga had much in common with that of other yoga practitioners during this period.

A SOTERIOLOGY OF WELL-BEING?

Yoga practitioners often found meaning and spiritual purpose in their lives through a relatively uncontroversial physical practice. The gains of stress-reduction, exercise, relaxation and better health were self-evident to many practitioners. Although some yoga practitioners committed themselves to a sectarian organisation with specific metaphysical beliefs, the majority were eclectically continuing to learn from different teachers, assessing techniques and explanations within their guidelines of their own experience. The emphasis of yoga practitioners on an individualised, metaphysical understanding within a certain cultural context has parallels with the New Age movement that was also developing during this period.⁹³ While there was overlap between yoga practitioners and those interested in other 'New Age' healing and spiritual practices, yoga practice also offered a distinct set of practices and ideology.

Although yoga was presented as 'something more' than physical, there was not a requirement to subscribe to a particular set of beliefs regarding the unknown 'something more'. The emphasis was on personal experience and private metaphysical beliefs. Practitioners were encouraged to connect well-being benefits of yoga to the 'ultimate goal' – however an individual chose to define it. The greater 'well-being' experienced through these techniques became a kind of 'elastic soteriology.' The ideology of yoga practitioners allowed for a person to embrace a theological understanding of yoga or ignore such an interpretation. For yoga practitioners in Britain during this period, religious and spiritual beliefs were promoted, but as a private rather than public concern. An individual had the possibility of expanding their well-being on a secular or spiritual basis depending on personal preferences and social context. Thus, yoga was a practice that fitted comfortably between secularism and religiosity.

Both the Wheel and Iyengar had doctrines pointing towards an imminent experiential rather than distant divine. The British Wheel presented a normative goal

of yoga as ‘union with the divine’ and recognised a variety of paths leading towards an experience of the numinous. Iyengar has also made statements that the ideology of his practice is to become open to an experience of an imminent divine. Iyengar has written that:

As we perfect asana, we will come to understand the true nature of our embodiment, of our being, and of the divinity that animates us. And when we are free from physical disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mental distractions, we open the gates to our soul (*ātman*).⁹⁴

However, it is far from clear that the doctrine of imminence was a defining feature of the experience and practice of yoga for the majority in the post-war period. As has been demonstrated throughout this book, yoga teachers were often relatively silent about aspects of metaphysical doctrines associated with yoga. Although this silence does not necessarily mean absence of significant spiritual experiences which might not sit well with the word ‘secular’ or understandings of traditional, institutional religiosity.

A more fundamental characteristic of the metaphysical positioning of yoga in post-war Britain has been an emphasis on religion being a subject for personal conscience rather than public discussion. The public value of yoga was in its presumed salubrious effects. The effectiveness of yoga as a technique for improving health and well-being was a subject open for public debate. The values implicit in this position include those of individual responsibility to be part of an education and healthy citizenry. Not less important has been an often-implicit doctrine that mothers are responsible for their family’s educational and physical well-being. While mothers have not necessarily encouraged the whole family to practise yoga, they have often found the practise supportive of this goal in its wider aspects. As one woman explained in 1980:

I am into my third year of yoga now, and this well-being and calm has been an important benefit for me. Like most women today I work as well as looking after two small children and running a home. This can play havoc with your nerves... any doctor will tell you a high percentage of young mothers take Valium. I am these days much better able to cope with life’s daily crises.⁹⁵

The perceived health benefits of yoga have been the primary vehicle for the public presentation of yoga in post-war Britain, not the metaphysical doctrine of immanence. Although it is hard to measure the importance of an unarticulated experiences are to those who continue to practice.

As part of his argument for the 'Easternization' of the West, Colin Campbell has claimed that:

In the early postwar years those who wished to persuade Westerners of the merits of yoga usually had to play down its spiritual significance, now if anything the tendency is rather opposite.⁹⁶

This book has not found evidence that the 'spiritual significance' of yoga became more important as the post-war period progressed. The celebrity interest in Indian spirituality during the late 1960s perhaps increased public associations of yoga and spirituality. However, the relative lack of attention to metaphysical subjects was simultaneously encouraged by the promotion of yoga within LEA adult education and public-service assumptions of television broadcasting. The content of yoga in the presentation of yoga on television remained silent on metaphysical doctrine from Sir Paul Dukes in 1950 to Lyn Marshall in 1984. Furthermore, yoga in LEA evening classes may have encouraged reflection on the numinous, but the culture of adult education did not encourage the promotion of metaphysical doctrine.

It was not the case that the 'spiritual significance' had to be 'downplayed' in the early post-war years. Rather than ignoring the subject of spirituality, the interviewer for the first BBC Woman's Hour feature on 'Yoga' in 1958 assumed that yoga was something to do with 'Eastern religion.' For this feature, the BBC reporter interviewed a Swami from the Ramakrishan Vedanta Centre and a 'Mr. Nandi', who taught yoga in Hampstead and claimed to have been 'a Hindu priest in a silent order'.⁹⁷ The audience response to Sir Paul Duke's presentation of yoga on BBC in 1950 included a significant minority who wanted more information on the 'doctrinal aspects of Yoga.'⁹⁸ This suggests that it was not the case that the spiritual significance of yoga was 'down played' in the initial post-war years. However, the forms of yoga that became most popular were those that emphasised religious and spiritual beliefs as

areas of private concern. Yoga has been popularised in areas that followed rather than challenged the mainstream establishment agendas of improving health, education and contentment. Yoga was popularised because it supported values in British culture that were promoted throughout the post-War period.

Yoga in Britain did have a focus on somatic experience and private religious thought. However, the self-described motivations of women practising yoga in post-war Britain did not include that of rejecting 'life as' roles of wife and mother. Women reported how yoga courses were helpful in allowing them to perform their 'life as' roles with more calmness and effectiveness.⁹⁹ For example, Eileen Williams interviewed on BBC Woman's Hour for Leeds reported that she:

enjoyed the relaxation period. After a busy day with the family chores, this was sheer bliss. I was taught how to relax completely... my friends made remarks about the change that had come over me both physically and mentally.... I didn't shout at the children any more, and they seemed to me to become better behaved.¹⁰⁰

As Mrs Williams found that yoga made her a better mother, Sunita Cabral encouraged her students to 'slip a second' in order to 'give completely' to the demands of the world.¹⁰¹ While yoga practitioners may have been turning their attention towards their subjective experiences, there was an important connection between this and the performance of socially expected roles.

The reception of yoga in Britain illustrates a trend for religious beliefs increasingly being seen as an area of private concern, while health and education became increasingly subject to government regulation and direction. The forms of yoga that became popular in post-war Britain accepted this and promoted private religious exploration. Yoga practitioners were able to achieve a semi-professional status through their independent labour and need for specialised knowledge in the physical techniques of asana, pranayama and meditation. During the 1960s and 70s, the British Wheel of Yoga positioned itself as an educational authority on the different types of yoga, arguing that the job of the yoga teacher was to give a thorough introduction to all the branches of the subject to facilitate the students' personal exploration. Iyengar's yoga became standardised through the development of

syllabuses to prevent injury in the context of LEA classes. The professional authority claimed by both these groups was primarily in the area of education and health.

The British government has long supported policies which educated the population about connections between specific behaviours and negative health consequences. For the population to accept responsibility for personal health there has been a perceived need to educate the population on salubrious lifestyle choices and access to facilities to make these choices a reality for all. This was an ideal taken up by many involved in the adult education sector in post-war Britain. As Lester Burney, the principal of the College of Adult Education in Manchester, reflected upon 35 years of managing the school in 1980:

We defined adult education as the provision of educational facilities for all sorts and conditions... and paid regard to the very much under-rated aspect of adult education as therapy. We thought that it was not so much what we know but what we are that counts and the aim of adult education is to make us better and happier people by our knowing. So, at the one end we had graduates but at the other end of our provision were adult illiterates; most of us enjoyed good health but there were disabled people who badly needed help; there were the young, the middle-aged and the old and we tried to do something for as many different needs as possible...¹⁰²

The ideal of a healthy citizenry overlapped with the ideal of continuing adult education. As this principal described, his aim was to create ‘better and happier people by our knowing’ and yoga as presented in post-war Britain supported this ideology. The yoga that has become popular in post-war Britain supports this position of liberal self-development for greater public health.

The reception of yoga in post-war Britain supported rather than challenged government policy and public opinion on religion, morality, education and public health. Yoga has supported the moral agenda of better public health and adult educational development, while simultaneously inviting private spiritual exploration, rather than public identification with religious dogma.

POSTSCRIPT – Yoga in Britain after the 1980s

Yoga in Britain has not been a linear development. Rather, old and new co-exist, adapting to suit the specific needs of a particular time and place. Throughout the twentieth century, yoga was many different things to different people. In the first half of the twentieth century, it could be found in the pages of *Health & Strength* as well as in the practices of esoteric secret societies, and as a philosophy of the *Shanti Sadan*. Each of these layers developed and changed, and new transformations were added.

A first generation of gurus and teachers of yoga founded new religious movements which developed and changed from the early twentieth century into the present, from the monks of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Hari Prasad Shastri's Shanti Sadan and several other groups which have faded from memory. There were also a number of more esoteric teachers who incorporated yoga into their teachings, like Aleister Crowley, Dion Fortune, Rollo Ahmed, Kenneth Grant and Dadaji Mahendranath.¹ The early physical culture influences of Sir Paul Dukes and Desmond Dunne who ran a postal school of Yogism in the 1940s, helped make a secular yoga form of yoga more acceptable in the initial post-war period.²

Then a new generation of gurus became influential promoting yoga amongst the youth in the later 60s and 70s. The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the School of Economic Science continue to promote mantra-based meditation practices into the twenty-first century. ISCKON went through a variety of challenges after the death of Prabhupada in 1977, but by the mid-1990s had emerged again as a strong social movement, this time supported by both families of Indian-origin as well as a minority of the ethnically British, promoting Bhakti yoga in Britain.³ The Divine Light Mission under Prem Rawat attracted audiences of tens of thousands for public teachings in the 1970s.⁴ More recently new generations of gurus have been becoming popular in Britain, particularly amongst the second and third generations of the Indian diaspora. These have included Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (b. 1956), Sadhguru (born

Jaggi Vasudev in 1957), and perhaps the most importantly Swami Ramdev (b. 1965, 1968 or 1975).⁵

But as well as continuity of groups and teachers, there were also large changes. One of the key changes in the social structure of Britain during the 1980s were the neo-liberal reforms of Margaret Thatcher who was prime minister from 1979 to 1990. In 1987, she famously declared that “There is no such thing as society,” a quote which has been seen to epitomise her philosophy of small government and the primacy of the individual actor in the economic market place.⁶ To this end, much of the government funding for adult education was cut during the Thatcher years. For example the journal *Adult Education* reported in 1982 that enrolments from outer London addresses in the inner London adult education provision had fallen from 32,000 to 8,300 in the last year; this may have been in part because those claiming unemployment benefits were having benefits cut if they attended courses (the government was arguing at this time that attending educational courses made them unavailable for employment).⁷ While it was probably the middle classes who always benefited the most from the physical education classes, adult education providers had to scramble to provide services for much less money in the 1980s.

This meant that yoga classes, which had largely been popularised in an environment of promoting public health through physical education, slowly found other venues. Ever flexible, practices called yoga adapted into the neoliberally-flavoured private market place. Peter McIntosh’s vision of physical discipline underpinning a stronger and more fit citizenry was not entirely lost to those who had the resources to develop themselves. The gyms of the 1980s initially did not include yoga classes, but yoga classes did not disappear from venues still offering various forms of adult physical education classes.⁸

Initially, new forms of fitness became more popular in the 1980s. Jane Fonda’s fitness classes and aerobics provided popular and secular exercise for women. But there was still quite a lot of cross-over in women’s physical culture. Fonda’s opened ‘The Workout’ studio in Beverly Hills in 1979 as a way to fund the

non-profit Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED) which promoted solar energy, environmental protection and renters' rights policies, amongst other ideas founded by then-husband Tom Hayden, a left-leading politician in California. The Workout studio originally had three studio rooms and a bathroom, and offered 'Pregnancy, Birth and Recovery Workout' as well as 'ballet, jazz and stretch classes' as well as a signature 'The Workout' routine.⁹ She also made what is likely the first 'workout' videos for home viewing, *Jane Fonda's Workout* (1982), on new VHS technology. In some ways Fonda's exercise programme filled a huge market gap, in other ways, it was a more modern way of packaging many of exercises that might have been familiar to those attending a Women's League of Health and Beauty class in 1940s Britain. Fonda recalled in her autobiography:

Letters began coming in by the basketful from women who were 'doing Jane,' as they called it, all over the world... these women poured their hearts out, about weight they had lost, self-esteem they had gained, how they were finally able to stand up to their boss or recover from a mastectomy, asthma, respiratory failure, diabetes...¹⁰

Certainly, many of the benefits women felt by doing the exercise routine sound similar to those attributed to yoga classes in the 1960s. And the model of the multi-roomed studio, would become more prevalent for yoga as the end of the twentieth century approached.

By the end of the twentieth century, private venues gradually overtook publicly funded programmes as the primary providers of yoga. These ranged from the individuals with relatively small circles of students who found each other by word-of-mouth, to classes in church halls, to larger charities like the Iyengar Yoga movement and the British Wheel of Yoga. Both organisations continued to network amongst their affiliated teachers, providing training, certificates and increasingly became focused upon sports qualifications and educational standards. The British Wheel of Yoga was given recognition by the Sports Council (now Sports England) as having 'National Governing Body' status over yoga in 1993.¹¹ This certification signified a kind of privatization of yoga teaching as physical culture outside of the adult education framework. While within adult education there were debates whether

yoga should be held in physical education departments or philosophy departments, the educational context itself revealed the multi-faceted nature of yoga. In any placement, there was at least a tacit acknowledgement that there were other ways in which the subject can be approached.

In 1991, when the Sports Council decided to begin procedures towards recognize yoga as a ‘sports activity’ it actively sought an organisation to act as a ‘governing body’. At this time, the British Wheel was the largest membership-based organisations that both produced its own yoga teacher-training programmes as well as being willing to accredit a variety of other training programmes. Sports England’s focus on these two numerically significant organisations did attempt to acknowledge the wider diversity of yoga practices by encouraging the inclusivity and eclecticism of the Wheel’s approach.

But perhaps it did not fully appreciate the ideological differences that many of the smaller groups teaching and exploring things called yoga had with both the Wheel and Iyengar approaches to the subject. An Iyengar representative at the discussions explained a central ideological impasse that halted negotiations:

In our submission we challenged the assumption made by the Sports Council that Yoga was a single activity, on which basis discussions had proceeded... it would have been helpful to have raised the questions as to whether Yoga is one or more activities prior to the series of discussions.¹²

The idea of yoga being certified as a ‘sport’ has always been a controversial association for those deeply invested in yoga. There has always been a close relationship between Keep-Fit, Physical Culture and yoga practices in Britain. But the idea that any one organisation could be responsible for ‘governing’ or certifying yoga instructors based upon the criteria of physical exercise alone was not widely accepted and has attracted criticism from a number of yoga enthusiasts.¹³ The Sports Council, like local authorities before it, hoped to find a way to ensure minimum standards of safety and some kind of standard expectation of what one might experience in a yoga class – at least particular contexts such as Fitness Centres, Sports Clubs, or Adult Education Physical Education classes.

This diversity of understandings of yoga soon led to more diversity in self-accrediting organisations for yoga teachers. The Independent Yoga Network (IYN) was set up 2004 in response to fears that yoga in Britain would become overly defined and regulated by the fitness industry.¹⁴ The IYN was established after several years of anxiety that the more diverse and spiritual aims of yoga might be lost or minimized through these affiliations by the BWY. Yoga Alliance was established in 2006 as a more commercially-minded accreditation body for minimum standards in yoga teacher-training. Although somewhat modelled after the US-based yoga accreditation organisation, the two organisations were not affiliated, and the UK organisation re-launched as Yoga Alliance Professionals in 2016.¹⁵ Other organisations also offer their own forms of qualification and insurance coverage. Fears that yoga will become too much defined by the fitness industry periodically re-occur whenever there is a new initiative towards standardisation or regulation of yoga teaching.¹⁶

Another important motivation for these various accreditation bodies in the post-1990s period has been an increasing need to have liability insurance against injury in order to teach yoga in either a privately owned commercial ‘yoga centre’, a gym or sports studio, or a charitable educational venue of various kinds. The accreditation groups serve as public standards of training and brokers for group discounts on appropriate insurance policies. Although yoga continues to have a reputation as a ‘safe’ form of exercise, like any other physical activity, people occasionally get injured.¹⁷

From the 1990s onwards, a new ‘style’ of yoga gained increasing popularity and visibility in Britain, Astanga Vinyasa Yoga. In contrast to the majority of middle aged women in 1960s and 70s yoga classes, Astanga Vinyasa classes attracted younger, more ambitious students and more men. In fact, Astanga Vinyasa classes were not ‘new’, but based on what B.K.S. Iyengar’s guru Krishnamacharya had been teaching to young men in the 1930s. The practice of Astanga Vinyasa involves long series of increasingly complex asana, framed through a flowing sun salutation sequence. These sequences had been taught by Krishnamacharya’s student Pattabi

Jois in Mysore from 1937 onwards. A Belgian yoga enthusiast André Van Lysebeth found Jois' Mysore classes in the 1960s; Van Lysebeth mentions the 'Astanga Yoga Nilayam de Mysore' in his *J'apprends le Yoga* (1968) along with the ashram of Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh, Vishwayatan Yogashram in Delhi, the teachings of Dharendra Bramachari and the Kaivalayadhama Samhiti of Lonvala as places where he studied yoga during his previous five years in India.¹⁸ However, the English edition of this work, *Yoga Self Taught* (1971) does more to promote Van Lysbeth's synchronistic, Brussels-based Yoga Institute than any Indian source.¹⁹ However, Van Lysbeth ended his *Yoga Self-Taught* with a quote from Swami Sivananda: 'An ounce of practice is worth several tons of theory' and a variation of this mantra would help define a more physical-practice focused yoga of Jois' Astanga Vinyasa sequences.²⁰

The American David Williams also discovered Pattabi Jois' yoga around the same time, first encountering Jois' son K. P. Manju demonstrating the 'primary series sequence' while undertaking a yoga teacher-training programme at Swami Gitananda's ashram in Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu during 1972. Inspired by Manju, Williams travelled to Mysore the following year and studied intensely with Pattabi Jois and became certified by Jois to teach others. In 1975, he helped facilitate Manju and Pattabhi Jois teaching in Encinitas, California before moving to the island of Maui, Hawaii. The temperate climate of Hawaii made it a focus of countercultural activity during the 1970s, and many people learned yoga from Williams.

A particularly influential student of William's was Danny Paradise, who discovered this system of yoga accidentally while on a layover in Hawaii during the 1970s. Paradise travelled to Britain during the 1980s, teaching yoga as well as playing guitar in clubs.²¹ On one of his visits to Britain in the early 1980s, Paradise became acquainted with Dominic Miller, a British guitarist and taught him yoga. This connection introduced Paradise to the British pop-musician Sting who began learning yoga from Danny Paradise around 1990.²² In 1993, a feature article in *Esquire* magazine entitled 'Yoga with Sting at the Ritz' together with various comments Sting made in the media about yoga improving his sexual stamina hugely increased attention to Jois' Astanga Vinyasa yoga system.²³ Danny Paradise attracted

quite a few more celebrity followers and his class attendance grew as he travelled around the world. Another influential celebrity promoting yoga at the turn of the twenty-first century was the American pop-singer Madonna who announced her conversion to yoga on the very popular television show ‘Oprah’ in 1988.

Much of the global popularity of Jois’ sequence came via American enthusiasts, but in Britain the Brighton-born Derek Ireland (1949–1988) was an important, charismatic populariser of these teachings. Ireland came to yoga after a background in sports and music; he promoted punk bands on the south coast of Britain in the mid-1970s. At the end of his rock-and-roll career, Ireland and his partner Radha Warrell travelled to India, first study studying Sivananda yoga, then being introduced to Jois’ sequences. After studying with Jois in Mysore during the early 1980s, Ireland and Warrell taught the sequences in New York City’s central park as well as in Britain, eventually opening a yoga retreat centre on Crete in 1991.²⁴ The Mediterranean was a popular holiday destination for the British, Ireland’s charismatic athleticism inspired many to try the practice. As a 1997 article in the *Independent* described the experience of yoga with Ireland at the Practice Place with a modified version of the quote often used to describe Jois’ yoga:

It's a yoga without dogmas or meditation - 99 per cent practice, 1 per cent theory, 100 per cent sweat.²⁵

The intensity of the practice suited the lifestyle of those who were more affluent, and career focused but sought both fitness and a sense of inner calm in their lives. Before founding his own centre, Ireland had taught yoga at the Skyros Centre, founded by British people interested in personal development and the human potential movement, which was opened its doors on the Greek island of Skyros in 1979.

It was here, in the successful counter-culture holiday for those who had joined in enough to afford it, that John Scott encountered Ireland teaching Astanga Vinyasa Yoga in 1987. Ireland told Scott to learn from Jois directly in Mysore, and Scott further popularised this form of intensive practice in Britain. Although a native to New Zealand, Scott taught Astanga Vinyasa Yoga workshops throughout Britain from the 1990s onwards, running early morning sessions in London which were

popular with young working professionals. Scott produced a number of successful practice manuals for Jois' sequences and he eventually settled in Penzance, Cornwall where he continues to work intensively with small groups of practitioners.²⁶

The community of practitioners inspired by Jois' Astanga Vinyasa yoga enjoy committing to an intense physical practice, usually done first thing in the morning. But often these practitioners are also very interested in psychological transformations, personal ethics and in reading and developing the spiritual aspects of their understanding of yoga.²⁷ Variants of the Astanga Vinyasa practice where the sequences are broken down into teaching points, are sometimes described as 'Power Yoga' or 'Dynamic Yoga' on the 'drop-in' class lists of commercial yoga studios which became more prevalent in cities during the second half of the 1990s.²⁸

The model of multiple class in a 'yoga studio' premises model was also continuity of older trends. The drop-in model of various yoga classes in Britain perhaps began in the 1960s, with Centre House and Gandalf's Garden. However, these early initiatives also recalled the eclecticism of the Theosophical Society and the Society for Psychical Research in the early years of the twentieth century. There was also overlap with yoga being offered as one of many activities in counter-cultural venues during the 1960s and 70s. Centre House was listed in the *Aquarian Guide to Occult, Mystical, Religious, Magical London & Around* (1970) as offering:

'HOMEOPATHY STUDY GROUP – SANSKRIT and JNANA YOGA
GROUP – HATHA YOGA – EXPLORATIONS IN MEDITATION AND
AWARENESS – MANTRA YOGA – DHYANA YOGA – GUNA YOGA –
ZAZEN – RADIAESTHESIA – NATURAL HEALING.'²⁹

Multiple approaches to personal development were very much a part of the human potential movement and 'cultic milieu' of the 1970s, which Colin Campbell defined by fluid networks of seekers rather than adherence to any particular group.³⁰ This later developed into the New Age movement and into various 'wholistic' milieus in the 21st century.³¹ While some yoga practitioners have overlapped with these networks of personal development and human potential, yoga milieus also existed in different social networks to these trends.

In many ways, the development of a multi-‘style’, drop-in, commercial yoga centre in the 1990s was a relatively new development. The one of the first attempts at this model was the Life Centre in Notting Hill, London which opened its doors in 1993.³² However, it was difficult to make it financially viable; it only really turned a profit after a change of ownership in the early twenty-first century.³³ Just before the turn of the century, two other London-based centres working on the model of providing studio space for teachers of many different, often ‘branded’ yoga techniques opened; triyoga in Primrose Hill opened in 1999 and The Yoga Place in Bethnal Green in 2001.³⁴ Over time this business model has proved sustainable, and several of the more successful centres have expanded into multiple premises.

To some extent many yoga teachers have always been entrepreneurs. However, from the mid-1990s onwards ‘brands’ and ‘styles’ of yoga began to vie for market shares, particularly in the new venues of yoga studios where you could try everything on offer. The inauguration of the exhibition hall “Yoga Show” as an annual event from 2005 onwards – a fair of yoga styles, products and teachers – exemplifies this trend.³⁵ However many of the most successful ‘brands’ of yoga had connections to earlier models of propagating yoga teaching, either through a continuity of student-teacher exchanges or through the adult education context.

In this environment of commerciality and multiple ‘branding’, some of the hundreds of thousands of contemporary British yoga practitioners of the early twenty-first century have anxieties and confusions about the authenticity of their practice. A evening symposium at triyoga Camden in London on the subject of ‘Authenticity in Yoga’ aimed at yoga teachers and serious practitioners attracted an audience of 175 in November 2016.³⁶ Some in the Indian diaspora have also voiced concern about a lack of respect to the fact that yoga as experienced as the ‘heart’ of Indian spirituality for many Indians. The commercialisation, secularisation and sexualisation of contemporary yoga practices, is sometimes experienced as disrespectful and morally repugnant to some Indians and committed yoga practitioners from other ethnic backgrounds alike.³⁷ Although an ongoing discussion, this narrative in Britain has not been as influential, or received as much

media coverage, as the Take Back Yoga campaign run by the Hindu American Foundation from 2008-2014.³⁸ However with Narendra Modi's ascension to Prime Minister of India, yoga has become closely associated with more political expressions of Indian nationalism. The extent to which yoga should be associated with political Hinduism, who could 'own' yoga, and the extent to which contemporary practitioners might be complicit in advancing Hindutva agendas is also subject to debate.³⁹

Adding a layer of complexity to the development of yoga in Britain is the slow establishment of a community of academics studying yoga from within European intellectual traditions. Some of the first work in this area included Joseph Alter's anthropological exploration of the development of yoga in India, alongside his other longstanding interests in Mahatmas Gandhi and Indian wrestling traditions. In 2004, Alter's monograph *Yoga in Modern India* and Elizabeth de Michelis' *A History of Modern Yoga* appeared; this marked a seminal moment in the establishment of a subject area of 'yoga studies.'

The Dharam Hinduja Institute of Indic Research (in existence from 1995 to 2004) had a major role in initiating the study of modern yoga from an academic perspective. This Institute, based at the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, was an early leader in yoga studies and hosted an international conference on 'Yoga: The Indian Tradition' in 1988. Under the Directorship of Elizabeth De Michelis (between 2000-2004), Cambridge became a focus for the establishment of a new subject of study.⁴⁰ The initial stages of the research for this book was undertaken in this research environment, as a doctoral study in the Faculty of History at Cambridge (2003–2007). Mark Singleton, who undertook his PhD under De Michelis' supervision at Cambridge during this period, published *Yoga Body* (2008) which explored the extent to which the contemporary postural practice of asana was influenced by European forms of physical culture in early 20th century India. Singleton's book has caused quite a lot of discussion amongst yoga practitioners who feel both challenged and intrigued by the suggestion that some elements contemporary postural-based 'yoga practice' might have very recent,

European influences.⁴¹ With its increasing visibility and more mainstream popularity, yoga has also been increasingly explored by scholars of other disciplines including history, sociology, psychology, sports studies and religious studies.

A second intellectual tradition of yoga studies in Britain has focused on the discipline of philology and the translation of Sanskrit texts. Exemplifying this discipline in Britain are James Mallinson (2010) and Jason Birch (2011) who have been translating Sanskrit texts of the haṭha texts, expanding the breadth of understanding of the Indian traditions of postural yoga. Based at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Mallinson has headed a larger team under The Haṭha Yoga Project (HYP), a five-year European Research Council-funded project (2015-2020). This project will build on Singleton and Mallinson's collaboration *Roots of Yoga* (2017) which has brought excerpts of many new historical yogic texts into the hands of contemporary practitioners. The Haṭha Yoga Project (2015–2020) will combine research on the history of postural yoga practices in Sanskrit texts with artistic and architectural evidence, as well as an element of contemporary ethnography to better chart the history of physical yoga practices.⁴² Related to this initiative was the establishment of the Master of Arts in Traditions of Yoga and Meditation and the founding of a Centre of Yoga Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (SOAS) in May 2018; both of these initiatives draw on a large population of committed yoga practitioners interested in learning more about the history and context of their contemporary practices.

A second European Research Council funded project, Entangled Histories of Yoga, Ayurveda and Alchemy in South Asia (AYURYOG) seeks to explore historical traditions of yoga in a different framework, by exploring overlaps and entanglements of yoga with the Indian medical and alchemical traditions (ayurveda and *rasaśāstra*) from the tenth century to the present, focussing on the disciplines' health, rejuvenation and longevity practices (2015–2020).⁴³ The later part of the research on this book was supported by my employment on this research project, which was primarily based at the University of Vienna. The growth of academic study and the integration of this knowledge into the communities of yoga

practitioners is likely to have a profoundly transformative effect on the self-understandings of yoga practitioners in the twenty-first century.

Some have criticised modern forms of yoga for plastering over the uncertainties of modern life, allowing people to tolerate insecure working environments and growing income inequality, rather than aiming for deep personal transformation or radical social change.⁴⁴ Others, however, have emphasized overlaps with various charitable and environmental projects, and the space yoga practice gives for non-normative bodies and minds to find peace and become more self-established.⁴⁵ It is clear that yoga has been a useful tool for many people in forms of chronic pain; even where it cannot cure conditions on the biomedical model, it can offer some people a new relationship with their body that enables them to transform their experience in positive ways.⁴⁶

The practice of yoga is not risk-free or without harm for everyone. But people continue to practice yoga because it works for them on many different levels. For most yoga practitioners, it is the embodied, personal experience and not an ideology or dogma that attracts them to yoga. The experience of practicing yoga in Britain sits ambiguously between apparent dichotomies of secular and religions, physical and spiritual. Some contemporary practitioners find meaning and new understandings of themselves in relation to others from the most physical of practices; while others prefer to focus on yoga as a philosophy or mental discipline. Yoga is not one thing to all these people – and even for one individual, it often defies any kind of simple categorization or intellectual explanation.

Can the vignettes on the popularisation of yoga in Britain in this book offer any insights into the authority or legitimacy of the yoga tradition in Britain today? I hope that the fundamental contribution of this book is to point out the complicated and multi-layered phenomena of yoga. Authority for teaching these practices can come from a variety of sources, from teaching lineages, from personal experience, or from being able to place the practices of yoga into a historical and sociological context. Understanding and appreciating of the variety of meanings and approaches

to yoga there has been in Britain is one way of being respectful to both yoga's roots in the Indian subcontinent and the complexity of its current forms.

Acknowledgements

The central question that started this research, was ‘How can this thing called ‘yoga’ that is apparently Indian now be such an unremarkable activity in Britain?’ The more I researched the subject, the more layers I uncovered to the history and contemporary practice of the variety of things called ‘yoga.’ I am very aware that the story could be told many different ways. Many of those I interviewed or who have read drafts of this work have corrected various misunderstandings; any remaining errors are my own responsibility; I continue to be open to corrections where necessary.

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Some of the chapters of this book draw on material previously published. This material has been re-used with permission of the publishers. Much of the material used in Chapter Three first appeared as: 'The Institutionalization of the Yoga Tradition – "Gurus" B.K.S. Iyengar and Yogini Sunita in Britain' in *Gurus of Modern Yoga*, Mark Singleton and Ellen Goldberg (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2014: 147-167 used with permission from Oxford University Press. Some of the material in Chapter Two first appeared in 'Magic and Yoga: The Role of Subcultures in Transcultural Exchange'. In B. Hauser (Ed.) *Yoga Traveling: Bodily Practice in Transcultural Perspective*. Springer, London, 2013: 57-79, reproduced with permission from Springer. Finally, subjects covered in Chapter Four were first covered in (2007) 'Stretching for Health and Well-Being: Yoga and Women in Britain, 1960-1980' *Asian Medicine* 3(1): 37-63, reproduced here courtesy of Brill.

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NOTES

PROLOGUE

¹ Tangali (2016).

² Yoga Alliance (2016).

³ Whitney (1997), p. 132.

⁴ Banerji (1995), p. 44.

⁵ White (2012), p. 2.

⁶ Dhyansky (1987). For an example of a British claim see *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga*. 1972. 'Means Better Than The End?', 11, p. 12: 'The Yoga of bodily posture and breath-control, even in its classical form is but a particular specialized technique within a wider discipline that goes back . . . nearly a thousand years before Christ.'

⁷ Bronkhorst (1981 and 1998), Eliade (1954 and 1963), and Sarbacker (2005 and 2008).

⁸ Woods (1914) and White (2014).

⁹ See Diamond (2013) for material culture evidence of yoga practices.

¹⁰ Mallinson and Singleton (2017), pp. xx- xxi.

¹¹ Mallinson and Singleton (2017), pp. 48-49.

¹² Mallinson and Singleton (2017) and Mallinson (2017).

¹³ Burger (2013) and Jain (2015), pp. xiv-xvii.

¹⁴ Alter (2004), De Michelis (2004), Goldberg (2016) and Singleton (2010).

¹⁵ Baier (2009, 2016 and 2018) and Djurdjevic (2014).

¹⁶ Some relevant recent works include Beaman and Sikka (2016), Hauser (2013), Horton and Harvey (2012) Jain (2015), Schnäbele (2010), and Singleton and Byrne (2008).

¹⁷ Bakur (2016).

¹⁸ De Michelis (2004) but also see Beckerlegge (2000 and 2004).

¹⁹ But for the European context see Baier (2009, 2016 and 2018).

CHAPTER ONE

¹ I was not able to find any concise source for numbers of books bought, published or printed in Britain on a particular subject. However, a copy of all books printed in Britain is required to be deposited within the Consortium of Research Libraries (CORL). By searching their online catalogue, I found an efficient way of estimating numbers of books published on yoga in a given year. Although multiple holdings of the same book in different libraries were excluded, reprints and second editions of previously published books were included when they appeared in a new year.

² Personal interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2015).

³ Gilbert (2004). For Theosophical history see also Campbell (1980), Dixon (2001) and Godwin (1994).

⁴ Gilbert (2004). In New York City the major source for esoteric books was Weiser's Bookstore, established in 1926 on Fourth Avenue.

⁵ For more on this context see Gilbert (2009).

⁶ Gilbert (2004).

⁷ Watts (1972), p. 107.

⁸ Raine (1982).

⁹ Personal interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2015). For example in *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga* 20 (Summer 1974), p. 24 there is an advertisement for 'Watkins Bookshop. The Mystical Bookshop, for all books on Yoga, Mysticism, Comparative Religion, Healing and allied subjects.'

¹⁰ Personal interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2015).

¹¹ Gilbert (2004).

¹² Personal interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2015).

¹³ Lane (1966) and 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107 / 02.0448 2, Penguin Archives. In a letter dated 8 November 1956 from Nigel Watkins to A.S.B. Glover of Penguin Books: 'Many thanks for your letter concerning the publication of a Penguin book on Yoga. Of course I shall be delighted to see you and give you any help I can. In the meantime I will continue to peruse another line, which I started when Christmas Humphreys first approached me in the matter...'

¹⁴ Lewis (2005), p. 237.

¹⁵ For early history of Penguin publishing see Penguin (1960 and 1985) and Baines (2005).

¹⁶ 'Buckmaster & Moore, Penguin Publishing Company Ltd. Stock Report' 1968, DM 1819/11/6, Penguin Archives.

¹⁷ From RAD to ASBG 'Memo' in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107 / 02.0448 2. Penguin Archives.

¹⁸ "'Yoga Asanas Simplified": New Popular edition will make sales history! By Sri Yoganendra' in *The Book Lover Everyman's Literary Guide*, 3(22) June 1956, back cover in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107/02.0448 2, Penguin Archives.

¹⁹ From RAD to ASBG 'Memo' in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107/02.0448 2, Penguin Archives.

²⁰ Letter from Penguin to Humphreys, 27 September 1956 in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107/02.0448 2, Penguin Archives. The personal and networking connections between Buddhism and yoga studies in pre-war London would be a fruitful area for more research.

²¹ Glover to Humphreys, 3 March 1948 in 'Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys' DM 02.0228 5, Penguin Archives.

²² Glover to Humphreys, 30 September 1948 in 'Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys' DM 02.0228 5, Penguin Archives.

²³ Humphreys to Glover, 9 March 1948, in 'Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys' DM 02.0228 5, Penguin Archives. According to Humphreys' the leaflet: 'has sold steadily for twenty years and we are now selling rather faster than we did twenty years ago.'

²⁴ Glover to Humphreys, 9 April and 15 May 1951 in 'Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys' DM 02.0228 5, Penguin Archives. The latter letter reports that 3,000 of these copies were shipped to the U.S.A. and 2,500 to Australia.

²⁵ Humphreys to Glover, 16 October 1956 in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107 / 02.0448 2, Penguin Archives.

²⁶ Autobiographical sources on Ernest Wood include Wood (1959 and 1936). Louis Gainsborough, a devotee of Aurobindo founded the American Academy of Asian Studies in 1951, its current successor is the California Institute of Integral Studies. As far as I am aware, a history of this interesting organisation has yet to be written but see Kripal (2007) and Goldman (2012).

²⁷ Wood to Penguin Editorial Department, 11 Jan 1958, 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107 / 02.0448 2, Penguin Archives: 'As regards illustrations, I am not in favour of these being very prominent as they must of necessity refer to the inferior and more physical aspects of the subject. I am enclosing some small sketches made under my direction by an artist here, and also some copies of poses by Swami Vishnu-devananda, whom I know personally, and

from whom I have permission to use and reproduce them, with due acknowledgement in the introductory notes, if they are used.’ Swami Vishnu-devananda was one of the most popular exponents of Swami Sivananda’s teachings in Canada. The file also noted that original prints (which were not provided by Wood) would have been needed to reproduce images and that it would increase the cost of production considerably.

²⁸ ‘Yoga: Ernest Wood’ DM 1107 / 02.0448 2, Penguin Archives.

²⁹ For instance, these translations are specifically mentioned in Chris Steven’s ‘Bookstall’ in the back cover of *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga* 4, (Summer 1970).

³⁰ Juan Mascaró was born in Majorca and became interested in the occult as a teenager. Wanting to understand the original sources of what he read, he was inspired to study Sanskrit. Mascaró read modern and oriental languages at Downing College, Cambridge and was for some time a Professor of English at the University of Barcelona. Returning to Cambridge after the Spanish Civil War, Mascaró worked on his translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, as well as supervising and occasionally lecturing on languages and religion at Cambridge. ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ DM 1107 / 044 121 2, Penguin Archives. See also autobiographical material in Mascaró (1999).

³¹ John Murray began the ‘Wisdom of the East’ series from 1905 and published a wide range of titles including: *The Sayings of Lao Tzu* (1905), *The Teachings of Zoroaster and the Philosophy of the Parsi Religion* (1905), *Brahmana Knowledge: An Outline of the Philosophy of Vedanta* (1907), *A Feast of Lanterns: An Anthology of Chinese Poetry* (1916), *The Secret Rose Garden of Sa’d ud din Mahmud Shabistari* (1920), *Anthology of Ancient Egyptian Poems* (1925) and many more titles, including selections from the R̥g Veda, the *Panchatantra*, and the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Archives relating to John Murray publications up to 1920 are held at the National Library of Scotland and some materials are still held privately by the John Murray family.

³² Mr. A to D L Duguid Esq, Penguin Books dated 29 April 1961, writes: ‘The current interest in Eastern philosophy and ‘religion’ seems waxing rather than waning; and in light of the degree of success that has attended Penguin’s Buddhist efforts, I should imagine there need be little fear of not finding an adequate market for a selection of the Upanishads.’ In ‘The Upanishads’ DM 1107 / 044 163 8, Penguin Archives.

³³ Additionally, the Theosophical Society produced translations of the *Upaniṣads* in 1896, 1894, 1918 and 1920.

³⁴ The single anonymous reviewer for Penguin commented: ‘I think it is fair to say that he is the only translator I have come across who has managed to present the Upaniṣads, or a part of them, in decent, readable, literary English; and as far as I am able to judge – which can only be by comparison to other translations, since I have no Sanskrit, to do so without distortion of their context or meaning...’ ‘The Upanishads’ DM 1107 / 044 163 8, Penguin Archives.

³⁵ Memo from RH to JV dated 18 March 1969 in ‘The Upanishads’ DM 1107 / 044 163 8, Penguin Archives.

³⁶ ‘The Upanishads’ DM 1107 / 044 163 8, and ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ DM 1107 / 044 121 2, Penguin Archives.

³⁷ ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ DM 1107 / 044 121 2, Penguin Archives.

³⁸ ‘The Bhagavad Gita’ DM 1107 / 044 121 2, Penguin Archives.

³⁹ For example, see: ‘Chris Stephens’ Book Stall’ *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga* 3 (Spring 1970) and *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga* 11 (Spring 1972), back cover.

⁴⁰ Humphreys to Glover, 23 October 1948 in ‘Buddhism by Christmas Humphreys’ DM 02.0228 5, Penguin Archives.

⁴¹ Penguin to A. Basu, 20 September 1954: 'We have had for some time a book on Hinduism written several years ago, more or less at our suggestion but which on receiving we did not feel was all together quite suitable for its purpose. At the same time its existence has rather restricted us from making enquiries in other quarters. 'After approaching several academics, Penguin finally settled on a manuscript written by K.M. Sen (the grandfather of the Nobel Prize economist Amartya Kumar Sen who had recently completed his PhD at Trinity College, Cambridge). In 'Hinduism by K.M. Sen' 02.0515, Penguin Archives.

⁴² Personal interview with Dr. A. M. Halliday, President of the Shanti Sadan (13 September 2006).

⁴³ For examples see the *Shanti-Sadan Bulletin* (1935-1941) and *Shanti Sevak : a quarterly magazine* (1942-1949). For a while there were study groups outside of London, but these faded and London has always been the only continuous location for group meetings.

⁴⁴ Classified Adds, 1938. *The Times* 3 March, p. 1, col. B and 14 January 1944, p. 6.

⁴⁵ Shastri was appointed as Professor of Philosophy at Nankwan College and also served as Dean of the Foreign Department of Hardoon University at Shanghai.

⁴⁶ Shastri (1948), p. 268.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴⁸ Shastri (n.d.) and Rinehart (1999), pp. 34-35.

⁴⁹ For example, there is a photograph of Shastri in the Shanti Sadan with Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the first Spalding Professor of Comparative Religions at Oxford who later became a President of India. The Shanti Sadan's emphasis on great ideas may have alienated those who were not confident of their intellectual abilities.

⁵⁰ Shastri (1948), pp. 262-3.

⁵¹ Shastri's interpretation and translation of Śankara is at variance with contemporary scholarly understandings, for example Potter (1981) . For a more contemporary assessment published from the Shanti Sadan publishing house see Alston (1980-1989).

⁵² Shastri (1957), p. 21.

⁵³ Shastri (1957), p. 41 and 45.

⁵⁴ Shastri (1957), pp. 59-60.

⁵⁵ 1943. 'Painting of Hindu Deity'. *The Times* 18 January 1943, p. 6, col. C. The article notes that 'Hindu, Moselm, and Christians' were in attendance as well as the Nepalese minister.

⁵⁶ *Shanti Sevak : A Quarterly Magazine* (1942)

⁵⁷ 1956. 'Dr. H. P. Shastri: Obituary', *The Times* 6 February, p. 12.

⁵⁸ In 2006, Halliday gave numbers that are regularly attending the centre in the region of fifty (Personal Interview, 13 September 2006). He notes that the Sadan's journal has a circulation of about 500 and that the internet has vastly increased those interested in purchasing literature from the society. The Centre in London and a small centre in Australia remain the only centres directly affiliated to Shastri.

⁵⁹ The Atlantis bookshop had established its own small publishing company, The Neptune Press, in 1935 to release esoteric and occult titles. After Brunton's departure, the Neptune Press made the turn towards Western esotericism more apparent when it published Aleister Crowley's works and also put out pagan revivalist Gerald Gardner's practical book *High Magic's Aid* in 1949 before the repeal of the Witchcraft Act in 1951. Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).

⁶⁰ Hurst (1989), pp. 44-48. For esoteric circles in interwar London also see Owen (2004 and 2006).

⁶¹ The only information Brunton published about origins was that he was born in London during 1898. However, the 1901 *Census of England and Wales* records the existence of a

three-year old Ralph Hurst, the name by which Brunton's first wife knew him, and Hurst (1989), p. 128.

⁶² Hurst (1989), p. 148.

⁶³ See Hurst (1989), pp. 44-48.

⁶⁴ Founded by Crowley and associate George Cecil Jones in around 1907, the Initiatory Order of the A∴A∴ also was based on a fusion of ceremonial magick and ideas drawn from yoga. Crowley himself learned some meditation and knowledge of Indian religions while travelling in India during 1901 from Ponnambalam Ramanathan, The Solicitor General of Ceylon who had a previous association with Allan Bennett (1872-1933), who knew Crowley as both were members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

⁶⁵ In 1925, an associate of Crowley, J.F.C. Fuller published *Yoga: A Study of the Mystical Philosophy of the Brahmins and Buddhists* with William Rider & Son subtly influencing understandings of yoga.

⁶⁶ *International Psychic Gazette*, May 1913, p. 308.

⁶⁷ *International Psychic Gazette*, March 1913, p. 243

⁶⁸ It is likely that these ideas of sexual magic and tantra were introduced by Carl Kellner (1850-1905) and Franz Hartmann (1838-1912), for more detail on the origins and nature of their understandings see Baier (2018), Bogden (2013), and Djurdjevic (2012).

⁶⁹ Crowley (1939), p. 9-10: "The principles of Yoga, and the spiritual results of Yoga, are demonstrated in every conscious and unconscious happening. This is that which is written in The Book of the Law – Love is the law, love under will – for Love is the instinct to unite, and the act of uniting. But this cannot be done indiscriminately, it must be done "under will," that is, in accordance with the nature of the particular units concerned..." and for the definition of magick, Crowley (1939), p. 76.

⁷⁰ In particular, the Atlantis bookstore was a site where western magic and various ideas of yoga mingled. The journal *Gandalf's Garden* No. 3, 1969/70, pp. 27-29 had an article on 'Alistair Crowley Revisited' (See Chapter 5 of this volume for more on Gandalf's Garden). See also Urban (2006), Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

⁷¹ Chris Josiffe is researching Rollo Amhed's biography; from conversations with him it seems likely that Amhed could have picked up the knowledge of yoga from Yogi Ramacharka's books although research is ongoing. Amhed fits well into the American travelling yoga salesman 'type' described by Deslippe (2017) and is likely to have originated from this milieu. Josiffe, C. (2017) 'Rollo Ahmed: London's Black Magician' a public lecture at Treadwell's Bookstore, London. 10 August 2017. Many of Dennis Wheatley's pulp-fiction novels had occult themes, e.g. *The Devil Rides Out* (book 1934, film 1968) and during the 1970s, oversaw "The Dennis Wheatley Library of the Occult" series with Sphere publishers.

⁷² Wilfred Clark "History of Yoga in Britain" Solihull: The Wheel of British Yoga, n.d. and (1971) 'The long-standing import' *Yoga & Health* No. 8, p. 54. However, I was able to find no mention of yoga in the local paper, The Hampstead and Highgate Express during the year of 1939; a teacher by this name definitely appears to have been in Hampstead in the early 1960s.

⁷³ Swami Avyaktananda who founded the centre diverged from central directives. In 1948 Swami Ghananda re-founded the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre from a flat in Belsize Park and Swami Avyaktananda moved to Bath where he continued teaching independently. Personal interview with Swami Tripurananda (1 August 2006).

⁷⁴ This parting was reported to be about Brunton refusing to publish some of Houghton's poetry in his book. Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).

⁷⁵ Around 1962, Wally Collins, a friend Houghton's assumed ownership of the bookshop and Michael Houghton died not long after. The Collins family reinvigorated the stock and set the shop on a firmer financial footing, according to Collins' daughter Geraldine Beskin who took over management of the shop after her father died. Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).

⁷⁶ It was re-issued in 1955, 1957, 1964, 1965, 1970 and 1983.

⁷⁷ 1971. *Yoga & Health* 6, p. 46.

⁷⁸ For more on the Ramana Maharshi see Forsthoefel (2005), pp. 37-53. For example, British Wheel of Yoga founder Wilfred Clark started a correspondence with Jim Pym based on their mutual interest in this figure, personal Interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2005). B.K.S. Iyengar lists him along with Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Ramdas of Maharashtra, Jnanesvar and Kabir as a sage who 'evolved straight into kaivalya (freedom) without experiencing all the intermediate states of life or the various stages of yoga.' B.K.S. Iyengar (1993a), p. 4.

⁷⁹ There are two published sources about the life of Paul Brunton, one by his son Kenneth Hurst (1989) and another within the autobiography of Jeffery Moussaieff Masson (2003 [1993]). Hurst's biography is reverential and respectful and full of gratitude towards his father. In direct challenge to this account, Masson described the painful disillusionment he experienced having grown up with Paul Brunton as his family's guru. Masson is better known for his anti-psychiatric bestseller *Against Therapy* (1989).

⁸⁰ De Michelis (2004), p. 211.

⁸¹ Sponsored by Menuhin to teach him during this festival, Iyengar also taught the Italian musician and future yoga teacher Vanda Scaravelli and Jiddu Krishnamurthi for several summers. Personal interview with Angela Marris, former secretary of Menuhin's Asian Music Circle in London (30 June 2005).

⁸² Personal interview with Angela Marris (30 June 2005).

⁸³ For more on Gerald Joseph Yorke (1901-1983) and his overlaps with occult networks see Newcombe (2013), Richmond (2011) and Verter (1997), pp. 175-198. That Beatrice Hartham felt the serendipity of this encounter was reiterated in letters found in Gerald Yorke's correspondence on *Light on Yoga*.

⁸⁴ Bernard (1939 and 1950) and Harthan (1975). For more on Bernard's life and influence see Hackett (2012) and Love (2010).

⁸⁵ 30 August 1964 Letter from Mr Gerald J. Yorke to Mrs Eileen Pearcey: 'Your 22 August. Please forgive delay in replying as I have been at the Buddhist summer school...' and 25 Feb 64 Letter from Mr Gerald J. Yorke to Philip Unwin: 'I come up to London from Forthampton normally once a month for a meeting of the Council of the Buddhist Society...' 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20 in the Allen & Unwin Archives. Rider, now an imprint of Random House, has not kept any archival material relating to relevant titles on yoga for the pre-war period. Personal correspondence with Jean Rose, Library Manager, Random House Group Archive & Library.

⁸⁶ Taraporewala (1978), p. 197 and Harthan (n.d.): 'In 1962 I made contact with the late Gerald York [sic] who was the reader at various publishers, including Allen & Unwin and Ryder. The result was that he strongly recommended 'Light on Yoga' to Allan & Unwin [sic] as a much needed masterpiece on the philosophy and practice of Yoga.' Also see letter from Harthan to Yorke dated 31 July 1964 at Forthampton Court.

⁸⁷ 20 April 64 Letter from Yorke to Unwin in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Articles.

⁸⁸ Taraporewala (1978), pp. 195-96.

⁸⁹ 29 July 64 Letter from Yorke to Unwin: 'I am so glad that you are going to make an offer for *Light on Yoga*. I have written to Iyengar urging him to accept the 50 advance, which will disappoint him as apparently he spent 200 on getting all the 600 odd photographs taken...' in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

⁹⁰ The title that caught Penguin's attention was "'Yoga Asanas Simplified": New Popular edition will make sales history! By Sri Yoganendra' in The Book Lover Everyman's Literary Guide, June 1956 Vol. III No. 22, back cover in 'Yoga: Ernest Wood' DM 1107 / 02.0448 2, Penguin Archives. For more on Yoganendra see, Goldberg (2016), pp. 2-74, Rodrigues (1982), and Singleton (2010).

⁹¹ Taraporewala (1978), p. 196 and 3 Nov 64 Letter from Gerald Yorke to Philip Unwin, 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives: 'Moreover it [*Light on Yoga*] is the first book to illustrate in photographs how to get into the final position, instead of merely illustration the final position, for all asanas etc. dealt with. Since the more complicated postures nearly always start from the final posture of a simpler exercise, there are, through the cross-referencing, up to ten illustrations for any given posture – a unique feature.' However, S. Sundaram published a book in 1928 entitled *Yogic Physical Culture or The Secret of Happiness* which also contains intermediate stages of yoga asana and a similar format to *Light on Yoga*.

⁹² Taraporewala (1978), p. 196.

⁹³ Taraporewala (1978), pp. 196-7.

⁹⁴ Taraporewala (1978), p. 196. It is not clear whose idea it was to include explanations of the names and legends of yoga postures. However, it is likely that Taraporewala did the research and Iyengar and Yorke were responsible for the final form. Iyengar had wanted to include a bibliography of these books in *Light on Yoga*, however, Yorke felt that the bibliography presented was inadequate and unnecessary. 16 Nov 64 Yorke to Unwin 'P.S. I have turned down Iyengar's bibliography for the *Light on Yoga* as not being adequate' in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

⁹⁵ 29 July 64 Letter Yorke to Unwin *Light on Yoga by Iyengar*. He [Iyengar] wants 7½% of his 10% royalty himself and the balance of 2½% to be paid to Mr B I Taraporewala of Bombay... This is to pay Taraporewala for re-Englishing the book... I have about a week's work in finely polishing the English and inking in my pencilings' and 12 August 64 Yorke to Unwin: 'I have had a minor flood of letters from Mrs Harthan and Iyengar and a Photostat of the suggested contract. ... the point is that Iyengar insists 25% of *all* royalties, but excluding *any* advance royalties, should go to Taraporewala until the latter has received 250.' in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

⁹⁶ B.K.S. Iyengar (1993a), p. xx.

⁹⁷ B.K.S. Iyengar (1993a), p. xx-xxi.

⁹⁸ Taraporewala (1978), p. 197.

⁹⁹ For example, Tuft (1971): 'BKS Iyengar being the author of what is virtually the Yoga Bible, "*Light on Yoga*" as well as being Yoga teacher to Yehudi Menuhin.'

¹⁰⁰ Yorke to Unwin dated 8 June 66 in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹⁰¹ Wendy Harthan [sic] to Gerald Yorke dated 11 May 66 in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹⁰² Unwin to Yorke dated 23 May 66 in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, , Allen & Unwin Archives: 'Light on Yoga has made an excellent start and our own sales are approaching 2000 apart from the 1500 to Schocken Books New York. The Indian position is most tantalizing and we continually prod our agents there to agitate for the issue of further import licenses. Much

seems to depend upon the local position of the author concerned and his relationship with official circles.'

¹⁰³ Wendy Harthan [sic] to Gerald Yorke dated 11 May 66 in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives: 'I have directed many many people to Watkins, from where we get new 'starters' on Yoga!!'

¹⁰⁴ 30 November 66 Yorke to Iyengar cc. Philip Unwin, Mrs Harthan, RE: Light on Yoga 'Sales seem to have passed the 4000 mark, so many congratulations.' in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹⁰⁵ 3 Nov 64 Yorke to Unwin in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

According to the archivist for the Random House Group which currently owns the Rider imprint, 'There is very little surviving from the early days of Rider' and has confirmed that there are no surviving records for its yoga titles except for 'confidential contracts.' Personal correspondence with Jean Rose, Library Manager, Random House Group.

¹⁰⁶ There was a lot of correspondence about the price of the book; I have taken the final price from the book jacket of the first edition.

¹⁰⁷ 9 August 1952 Unwin to Yorke: 'Thank you very much for letting us see the copy of your report on *Sport & Yoga* which is returned herewith. We imagine that the MS has been considerably revised since you saw it last year – in fact, it is a fresh translation from the German made by an Englishman – and we shall therefore be most grateful if you will be good enough to read it again in its present form in Allen & Unwin AVC/577/2, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹⁰⁸ 10 June 1958 Unwin to Yesudian 'Our own sales of books are as follows *Yoga and Health* approximately 9,500 and the sales continue steadily.' in 'X-Z 1958' AUC 820/17 Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹⁰⁹ 5 November 1964 Unwin to Yorke: 'After our experience with Yesudian that we are perfectly happy to proceed with Iyengar on the basis of 4,000 first printing to be published at 50s. It would appear that an absolute minimum of 3,000 is certain and it would be surprising if we did not succeed in selling at least 1,000 in the States. I had not troubled Geoffrey Watkins on this one – he is very obliging and I don't like to worry him too often. It is usually difficult for one bookseller to advise one seriously as between 3,000 and 4,000.' In 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹¹⁰ The correspondence between Crowley and Yorke is held at the Warburg Institute, Yorke 84/116, Yorke D2– 5, and Yorke 84/115. In the summer of 1927 Yorke was reading Aleister Crowley's Book Four, the first half of which is a rendering of Patañjali's Yoga Sutras with techniques on asana and pranayama; the second half is an introduction to magical rituals from a more 'western' esoteric perspective. By reading Yorke's esoteric exercise book kept at the request of Crowley, Verter found that Yorke had begun study of the books on this reading list in August 1927. The recommended reading list for a 'Student,' the first grade in Crowley's system, included Vivekananda's *Rajah Yoga*, the *Śiva Samhitā*, the *Hatha Yoga Pradīpikā*, Taoist teachings by Kwang Tze, as well as Crowley's works to date. See Crowley (1913) and Verter (1997), p. 181.

¹¹¹ Verter (1997), p. 181.

¹¹² Verter (1997), p. 192 based on correspondence at the Warburg Institute.

¹¹³ See 'British Correspondent Arrested' (1933), Fleming (1934), Verter (1997), p. 192 and York (1935).

¹¹⁴ Fleming (1934), p. 163: 'I knew that he [Gerald] had lately been living in a Buddhist monastery outside Hangchow, and R and I set out to comb these establishments for traces of an old Etonian... At once it was admitted that there had been an Englishman staying there,

who claimed that in his native country he was a member of Parliament. (This was new if rather apocryphal light on Gerald.) At another he was known, but had recently departed, leaving no clue as to his whereabouts save the address of a Buddhist organization in Shanghai.' Peter Fleming and Gerald Yorke did eventually meet in China and traveled together for some time.

¹¹⁵ When he returned to Britain in 1936, Yorke settled down to work in the family firm, married the daughter of a Major-General and developed hobbies in family genealogy and Gloucestershire topography. Verter (1997), p. 195.

¹¹⁶ He was already in contact with Rider when Theos Bernard's manuscript was presented in around 1943. 3 Nov 64 Yorke to Unwin in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin.

¹¹⁷ 25 Feb 64 Yorke to Unwin: 'I want to remain free to choose the Rider List at a fixed salary in the event of Lusty selling Rider as a going concern to a reputable publisher. Having chosen the Rider list since 1957, I have an obligation to and affection for the imprint.' in Yorke, G AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Yorke to Unwin dated 29 January 64 'Lusty has informed me that Hutchinsons will either sell Rider as a going concern (has already approached you in the matter) or allow the Rider List to run down. I am not therefore allowed to accept fresh material for publication by Rider. Books on Buddhism and Hinduism are slow selling in the main and do not fit in with the rest of the Group's activities. ... [I would like to discuss] the possibility of my transferring my position as a 'literary adviser' to your firm and syphoning your way good quality Hindu and Buddhist books, as I have been doing for Rider' in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin.

¹¹⁹ For example Alain (1957), p. x. Author's real name was Max Alain Schwendiman. Reader's Report on 'Yoga for You' AURR 1/4/14, Allen & Unwin.

¹²⁰ For more of Sivananda's influence on Mircea Eliade as well Eliade's reception in Europe see Bordas (2011 and 2016).

¹²¹ Krishna (1995).

¹²² But evidence of its limited influence is provided by the school's absence from Stephen Annett's 1976 guide to 'Spiritual Groups and Growth Centres in Britain' under its 'Eastern Oriented Groups. Yoga groups associated with Sivananda's disciplines Swami Satyananda (the Bihar School of Yoga) were also influential in Britain from the 1970s onwards.

¹²³ Strauss (1995), p. 40, referring to Anderson (1983).

¹²⁴ 12 March 64 Yorke to Unwin in 'Yorke, G' AUC 856/20, Allen & Unwin Archives.

¹²⁵ Thorsons is now an imprint of HarperCollins and I have not been able to locate an archive or receive a reply from HarperCollins itself as to the status of any relevant materials.

¹²⁶ For more on British esoteric networks before 1939 see Owen (2004 and 2006) and Farnell (2005).

CHAPTER TWO

¹ Personal estimate of Wilfred Clark in a letter to Ken Thompson dated 16 March 1967, Collection of Ken Thompson.

² (1932) *Heath & Strength*, 2 January, p. 5.

³ Rasool (1932) *Heath & Strength*, 15 June, p. 740.

⁴ Singleton (2010), p. 155.

⁵ For more on Iyer and Balsekar see Goldberg (2016), Singleton (2010) and Newcombe (2017).

⁶ (1902) 'The Health and Strength School,' *Vim: A Magazine of Health and Beauty*, Vol. 1, No. 1 15 December, p. 12.

⁷ FitzRoy, Almaric (1905) *Report of the Inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration*, p. 6-7.

⁸ Mendes (1954) 'We're Proud of Wally and Hazel', *Health & Strength*, 17 March, pp. 11-12.

⁹ *Health & Strength*, 25 October 1956, p. 18.

¹⁰ *Health & Strength*, 10 July 1952, p. 48.

¹¹ *Health & Strength*, 25 October 1956.

¹² Alter (2000), p. 94.

¹³ Morgan in Goldberg (2016), p. 284.

¹⁴ See Goldberg (2016), pp. 285-319.

¹⁵ Dunne (1951), p. 15: Dunne includes a chapter on 'traditional yoga' asana that he says is lifted from the Geranda Samhita [sic]. is given with the warning: 'Many of the historic poses are quite unsuited to Western use. The list below is given solely for its historic interest.' Dunne mentions a translation by Vasu (i.e. Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu) published in Madras in 1933. In fact, this translation was first published in 1896 possibly at the behest of the Theosophical Society which would have ensured circulation amongst its western followers. This book is a Vaishnava text focusing on Hatha Yoga conventionally dated 1675 but the first extant manuscript is actually dated to 1805; according to Mallinson (2004).

¹⁶ A Mass Observation archivist was unable to find any record of this research in the MO Archive at the University of Sussex noting that they only have incomplete records dating after 1949 when the organization began taking private commissions.

¹⁷ Dunne (1951), p. 18.

¹⁸ Dunne (1951), p. 19.

¹⁹ Dunne (1951), p. 106.

²⁰ (1956) *Mystic Magazine*, vol. 3. This reference was courtesy of Philip Deslippe.

²¹ It is not yet clear where Desmond Dunne physically was located in 1958, or when and where he died. I have in my possession postal course sent from the Insight School of Yoga from Surrey to Hay-on-Wye in 1958, but a K. Mears signs for Dunne, and it's not clear from where Dunne was signing his pre-typed standard letters.

²² In author's collection.

²³ Bernard (1950) *Hatha Yoga* was particularly widely circulating.

²⁴ Author's own collection.

²⁵ Dunne was very interested in William Braid's inspiration in developing hypnosis based on his interest in the 'human hibernation' and burial of Indian yogis, including Hari Das in 1837. See Bair (2009 and 2016).

²⁶ For an exploration on the 'salvation through relaxation' and twentieth century yoga see Singleton (2005) and for a detailed exploration of New Thought see Satter (1999) and James (1993 [1899]). Yogi Ramacharaka was one of several pseudonyms used by the American William Walker Atkinson (1862-1932) who was a prolific writer during the early twentieth century. He was associated with 'New Psychology' 'The Arcane Teaching' and the New Thought movement. He probably picked up his knowledge of yoga largely from Premananda Baba Bharati, an early Hindu missionary to the United states who was in Los Angeles in the early twentieth century. Not only did Atkinson's pseudonymous books circulate widely in the USA and Europe, they are also often found on Indian reading lists of yoga titles in the mid-twentieth century. For more on Atkinson and his influence see Deslippe (2011).

²⁷ Dunne, (1951), p. 101

²⁸ For examples of the later see, Hall (1903 and 1908) and Aldrich (1904); Hall was a vicar who also wrote on biology and reincarnation.

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- ²⁹ See (1958) Lesson 6, copy of Miss Alice M. Spencer of Ross-on-Wye. Collection of Author. On Gandhi's interest in Naturopathy see Alter (2000).
- ³⁰ Dunne (1951), p. 24.
- ³¹ Dunne (1951), 22-23.
- ³² Sutherland (1990), pp. 119-169.
- ³³ For example, see Ingestre (1853).
- ³⁴ Maclure (1990), p. 68.
- ³⁵ Rose (2001), pp. 58-91 and 237-20.
- ³⁶ Rose (2001), p. 256. Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) is one of the thinkers strongly identified with this ideology, see Arnold (1964).
- ³⁷ Rose (2001), pp. 256-57.
- ³⁸ Lowe (1970), p. 275.
- ³⁹ Lowe (1970) p. 263 and see County Borough of Burton Upon Trent Education Committee 'Creative Leisure – a Summary of Organizations Catering for Adult Interests' 1950 in the William Salt Local Studies Library, Stafford.
- ⁴⁰ Chitty (2004) and Workers Educational Association (WEA) Working Party (1960).
- ⁴¹ WEA Working Party (1960), p. 2. Attendance at the evening institutes compares to the 1949 government social survey with social classes I-VII as follows: I-II 1949 government social survey 7.4%, WEA students 7.9%; III-V 63.7% vs. 59.4%; VI and VII 28.9% vs. 32.7%, WEA Working Party (1960), p. 69.
- ⁴² The Open University (1969). William Salt Local History Library, Stafford.
- ⁴³ H.M. Inspectors, 'Report on a survey of the teaching of dress in the Birmingham institutes of Further education conducted during 1965–1966' found in the City of Birmingham Further Education Committee Minutes Vol. 5, 9 June 1967 – 3 May 1968, Birmingham Central Library Archives Department, BCC/BH 21/1/1/5, Birmingham Central Library.
- ⁴⁴ Pendrell Hall 'Prospectus Spring-Summer 1964', pbox C/6, William Salt Local Studies Library.
- ⁴⁵ Benson (2005), Kynaston (2007) and Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2000).
- ⁴⁶ WEA Working Party (1960), p. 17: 'We live in a society where many people find it increasingly difficult to focus social purpose and where domestic social abuses are certainly less obvious than they were in the past.'
- ⁴⁷ Munrow (1966).
- ⁴⁸ WEA Working Party (1960), pp. 8 and 17.
- ⁴⁹ WEA Working Party (1960), pp. 2 and 69.
- ⁵⁰ WEA Working Party (1960), p. 2.
- ⁵¹ WEA Working Party (1960), p. 4.
- ⁵² W. J. Wegg 'Middle-class bingo substitutes' *Adult Education* 46 (3) September 1973, 185.
- ⁵³ Lowe (1988 and 1997), Clark (2004), pp. 283-285.
- ⁵⁴ Chitty, *Education Policy in Britain* and WEA Working Party 1960.
- ⁵⁵ Manchester Education Committee Minutes 1960–1979, Manchester Central Library Archives. For a particular instance see Manchester Education Committee Minutes 1960-61 26A, 429.
- ⁵⁶ This was the case for Birmingham as well as Manchester. Manchester Education Committee Minutes 1960-1979 and City of Birmingham Education Committee, Further Education Sub-Committee Minutes, 1956-1972.
- ⁵⁷ Provision for adult education a lot of local variation, Birmingham City Council assumed authority for the Birmingham Athletic Institute, solely dedicated to physical education, which opened in 1892 while Manchester only acquired a single dedicated institute for general adult

education rather than Further Education in 1948. Waterman (1992) and College of Adult Education, Manchester 1944-1990 M698/1/12003/35 Manchester Central Library Archives.

⁵⁸ For example, in the academic year 1965–66, a H.M. Inspectors Report for Birmingham Adult Education summarised that ‘Report by H.M. Inspectors on ‘a survey of the teaching of dress in the Birmingham institutes of Further Education conducted during 1965–1966 fee charged 16/- per term under 18 5/6. Any number of classes could be attended by them and some attended more than one dress class. Principals are allowed remission of fees where they think necessary, e.g. OAP.’ City of Birmingham Further Education Committee Minutes Vol. 5, 9 June 1967 – 3 May 1968.

⁵⁹ BAI Women’s section, *Annual Report 1970-71* MS 1468/3/1, 2 in Birmingham Central Library Archives.

⁶⁰ For titles see *Wheel of British Yoga Bulletin* 25 (November 1967). *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 7 (Spring 1971), p. 3. I have not been able to ascertain much about Margaret Ward from either written sources or interviewees. She was an associate of Wilfred Clark in south Birmingham during the 1960s; When Wilfred Clark left the Wheel to found the Friends of Yoga (FRYOG) in the mid-1970s Margaret Ward joined him and by the late 1970s had become more interested in Western Esotericism and kabbala. She then appears to have dropped out of yoga networks. Personal interview with Ken Thompson (28 November 2004).

⁶¹ There is some discussion in De Michelis (2004), pp. 190-191. Upon enquiry, the Sports Council did not have any records relating to this decision.

⁶² National Archives, 1901 Census Online RG13, Series 2278, Piece 72, Folio 41, 259 and General Registrar’s Office, Certified Copy of an Entry of Marriage for Wilfred Arthur Clark and Winifred Ada Farr, Poole, Vol. 5a, September 1921, p. 746.

⁶³ Clark (1987), p. 22.

⁶⁴ Clark (1987). During his time in military service, Clark also dabbled with stage production and devised an act with a friend who was an illusionist: ‘I developed in this business and became an escapologist in conjunction with my illusionist friend and also devised an act of mental telepathy.’ Clark (1987), p. 24. Although Wilfred Clark made no association between yoga and this work, there is a traditional association between illusionists and yogis and it could not but have made his later ‘pranic healing’ performances of his later career more impressive. For more on the association between magic and yoga, see Siegel (1991) and Shah (1998).

⁶⁵ ‘Altogether 138,608 Indian soldiers, comprising two infantry divisions, two cavalry divisions and four field artillery brigades, saw action on the Western Front.’ The two cavalry divisions remained in the war until 1917 fighting as cavalry. Visram (2002), p. 171.

⁶⁶ Clark (1987), p. 23.

⁶⁷ Also a Jain symbol, the *dharmacakra* is found on the modern Indian national flag. It is often described as symbolising the passage of time and the impermanence of all phenomena (one of the Noble Truths taught by the Buddha), additionally the different ways in which Buddhism has been taught in different contexts, often described as ‘turnings of the wheel.’

⁶⁸ Clark (1987), p. 25.

⁶⁹ From letterhead used by Wilfred Clark 1968-1969 in the personal collection of Ken Thompson.

⁷⁰ General Register Office, Certified Copy of an Entry of Marriage for Wilfred Arthur Clark and Winifred Ada Farr. Winifred Farr’s father was employed as a gardener (domestic servant).

⁷¹ Clark (1987), p. 24.

⁷² Clark (1987), p. 24.

⁷³ Clark (1987), p. 23.

⁷⁴ They met and wed in Taunton shortly after WWII. Clark (1987), p. 24.

⁷⁵ Clark (1987) is illustrated with a photo of Wilfred Clark as a 'Shakespearean Actor'; Clark died at the Stratford-upon-Avon Hospital. General Register Office, Certified Copy of a Death Entry for Wilfred Arthur Clark, QBDX 692518, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, September 1981, 31, p. 197.

⁷⁶ 'Know Your Neighbour: Yoga – His Guide for Fifty Years' *Solihull News*. 7 July 1968. Newspaper clippings in the possession of Ken Thompson.

⁷⁷ Clark (1987), p. 25. I have not verified these claims with copies of the local papers.

⁷⁸ 'Know Your Neighbour: Yoga – His Guide for Fifty Years' (1968).

⁷⁹ Wilfred Clark 'History of Yoga in Britain,' document in the personal collection of Vi Neale-Smith and Clark (1987), p. 25. In the academic year 1963–64, Clark is recorded as teaching yoga at the Golden Hillcock Centre on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 pm. City of Birmingham Further Education Committee Minutes 1(14) June 1963 – 8 May 1964, BCC/BH 21/1/1/1, Birmingham Central Library Archives.

⁸⁰ *Yoga* 1969.

⁸¹ City of Birmingham Further Education Committee Minutes 12 June 1964 – 7 May 1965, Birmingham Central Library Archives.

⁸² 'He [Wilfred Clark] was known and people would write to him saying "Oh, I'm starting a class somewhere, isn't that lovely," and he'd write back by return of post saying "that's fine, I wish you success. Call on me if you need any help. And then into the newsletter would go – there is a class starting in wherever. So he was the link and the newsletter was the rim of the Wheel.' Interview with Swami Satyar Atnananda Saraswati (14 July 2005).

⁸³ Interviews with Jim Pym (7 July 2005) and Ken Thompson (28 November 2004).

⁸⁴ Letter from Wilfred Clark to Ken Thompson dated 21 February 1967. Personal collection of Ken Thompson.

⁸⁵ The Wheel of British Yoga *Bulletin* No. 20, June 1967. Personal Collection of Ken Thompson.

⁸⁶ 1970. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 2, (Winter), front cover.

⁸⁷ *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga*, 1969–1975. Swami Satyar Atnananda Saraswati wrote that 'Wilfred was the only pranic healer in the UK therefore people would travel many miles to attend his sessions here at Yoga Seekers.' Personal correspondence 6 November 2007.

⁸⁸ 1974. 'Wales Teacher Training' *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 20, p. 17: 'Guest teachers at these seminars over the last year have included Wilfred Clark; Alan Oakman, Westbury; Members of the 3HO Centre, London, led by John Singh Bless; Members of the Chinmoy Centre, London; Joyce Gaines, Accrington; Wilfred Lawler, Preston; Malcom Strutt, Centre House, London.'

⁸⁹ *Spectrum*, Winter 1981.

⁹⁰ Shringy (1977), p. 26. The International Yoga Co-ordination Centre (Yococen) was affiliated with the Yoga Institute of Santa Cruz, Bombay.

⁹¹ Personal interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004) chairperson of FRYOG at the time of the interview.

⁹² 1970. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 3 (Spring), p. 3: 'Wheel Certificates: the demand for the Wheel's certificates of proficiency for teachers has grown so enormously that the document is in danger of losing its value. It has therefore been decided to issue it only where an educational authority specifically demands it. Alternatively we shall always be

pleased to confirm by letter to an authority that an applicant is known to us as a fit and proper person to teach Yoga.'

⁹³ Personal interview with Ken Thompson (28 November 2004).

⁹⁴ Ken Thompson remembers that this programme was developed because the Inner London Educational Authority (ILEA) had developed a teacher-training programme with the exclusive approval of B.K.S. Iyengar. Personal interview with Ken Thompson (28 November 2004).

⁹⁵ Wilfred Clark wrote in 1970/71. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* (Winter), p. 3: 'For some years throughout the country established teachers of long experience have been training others to take classes and this work has been welcome having regard to the ever-increasing interest in Yoga.'

⁹⁶ Wilfred Clark wrote in 1970/71. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* (Winter), p. 3

⁹⁷ Then President of the Wheel, General D.I.M. Robbins wrote in 1977, 'all students of Yoga should try to learn at the feet of as many different teachers as they can. There are so few really good teachers, and the great masters are indeed rare. However, if you are lucky enough, and indeed deserving enough, then you will surely find more than one really good teacher in your lifetime. In this way you can be helped to achieve a balanced understanding in an unbiased awareness of what yoga really means. Then it is up to you to find the methods which best suit your one body and your one mind. This alone, through your endeavors will lead you to the ultimate and only worthwhile goal of that ever desired union between your spirit and the cosmic consciousness.' 'D.I.M. Robbins writes for us of his further Indian experiences' unlabelled article 16-17 and 21. Newspaper Clippings in the files of RIMYI, Vol. 2.

⁹⁸ Swami Gitananda and his wife Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani frequently featured in articles in *Yoga & Health* during the 1970s.

⁹⁹ Wilfred Clark wrote in 1976. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 28 (Summer), p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 9: 'Two "musts" in ancient literature are "The Bhagavad Gita" and "The Upanishads"... many versions... recommended that one go to any reasonably large booksellers and search the Penguin Classics section where both these works will be found.' Yoga Handbook in the possession of Vi Neale-Smith.

¹⁰¹ Titles taken from "Chris Stevens' bookstall" a regular advertisement in *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga*.

¹⁰² 1971. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 9, (Autumn), p. 2: 'Another milestone has been reached in that at last our founder, Wilfred Clark, has been able to hand over the office of hon. national organizer to a younger friend, Chris Stevens, whom we welcome to the Council. The hand over will be at the end of the year and the official ceremony at the 1972 Congress.'

¹⁰³ 1972. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 11 (Spring), p. 2.

¹⁰⁴ 1973. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 16 (Summer), p. 3: 'One outstanding feature of the Congress thus launched in this inspiring message form across the Atlantic was the obvious desire to somehow reintroduce the word "Wheel" into the title of the organization and this is the subject of a members' ballot for which a slip is enclosed in this magazine.' This postal ballot was ratified at a special meeting of the Western Yoga Federation held at Acacia House on 25 August 1975. The minutes and attendance list was obtained with gratitude to Mat Whitts by his Freedom of Information Request to the Charity Commission (Personal Correspondence 13 August 2017).

¹⁰⁵ 1973. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 17 (Autumn), p. 2. Charity Commission

¹⁰⁶ 1973. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 14 (Winter), p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ 1975. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 26 (Winter), p. 8: 'Club Meteranée 450 participants from all over Europe and some from India, Australia and South America. Professional interpreters up from Geneva turned German or French into steady clear English through one's personal headset... Many of the Continentals, attending for the third year and with their larger representation, were a bit surprised to meet our small group of 26 there for the first time from Britain, not that we clung together but mostly speaking only English and finding their ways foreign just made us rather noticeable.'

¹⁰⁸ 1976. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 28 (Summer), p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ 1976. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 28 (Summer), p. 2.

¹¹⁰ Davis (1975), p. 8.

¹¹¹ For example, *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 28 (Summer), p. 5: 'The purpose of Gérard Blitz's visit was to clarify the role of the EU and to discuss their proposals for a minimum programme for Teacher Training in Europe. ... The Wheel's own teacher training programme began in September 1975 and we can therefore expect to be in a good position to advise on the project through our own experience. Our own Teacher Tutors will be required to examine and test the European syllabus so that a working solution can be agreed for 1978.'

¹¹² Personal interview with Vi Neale-Smith (17 September 2004): '[The Wheel has been] Very involved [with the European Union of Yoga]. . . Well, we came out of it at one time, because it seemed to be a waste of time and money. It costs all the federations because they have to support the EU. And they have meetings two or three times a year and decide various things. ... Then after a few years ... they voted to go back in. The main reason was that however well qualified you are, unless you are a member of the European Union of Yoga, if you go to the continent to teach, you can't get a job. ... So that was the main reason for wanting to be involved with them.'

¹¹³ 1977. 'Views: On the Multiplicity of Yoga Organisations,' *Yoga Awareness – Quarterly Journal of Yococen*, (July), p. 27.

¹¹⁴ Clark (1972), p. 12.

¹¹⁵ Letter Wilfred Clark to Ken Thompson dated 16 March 1967 in collection of Ken Thompson.

¹¹⁶ Singleton 'Salvation Through Relaxation.'

¹¹⁷ 1970. 'Yoga Breathing', *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 3 (Spring), p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Letter Wilfred Clark to Ken Thompson 1967 in the possession of Ken Thompson.

Examples of breathing exercises used during this period included inhaling in one count, retaining the breath for four counts, and exhaling the breath for two counts (a 1:4:2 breath) and alternate nostril breath where first one nostril and then the other is blocked by fingers. See also Wood (1959), pp. 85-6.

¹¹⁹ *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 1969-1978.

¹²⁰ Letter Wilfred Clark to Ken Thompson 12 April 1967. The definitions of these categories in the Wheel roughly follow those offered by Vivekananda's well-circulated books by the same titles. See De Michelis (2004), chapters 3, 4 and 5 for Vivekananda; other books focussing on Vivekananda. Also see Vivekananda (1896). *Yoga Philosophy: lectures ... on Raja Yoga, or conquering the internal nature: also Patañjali's Yoga aphorisms, with commentaries, etc.* London, Longmans and Co., 1896).

¹²¹ Interview with Vi Neale-Smith (17 September 2004).

¹²² Smith (1977).

¹²³ For example, in 1970/71. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 6 (Winter), p. 3: Wilfred Clark writes: 'On October 31 he [Wilfred Clark] attended an enthusiastic meeting in Swansea and arising out of this. Invitations are pending to Newport Mon., where Philip Jones

is doing fine work and Cardiff where there is no class as yet.' From 1971. *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 7 (Spring), p. 3: 'Philip Jones is doing excellent work in Newport and his influence promises much extension work – Cardiff and other places; there is certainly much scope in this highly populated industrial area.'

CHAPTER THREE

¹ 1965. 'Birmingham Tries to Size Up All This Yoga: Should Prana Force Teaching Come out of Rates?' *The Times*, 23 February, p. 7, col C.

² Weber (1947), p. 328.

³ Weber (1947), p. 363.

⁴ Weber (1947), p. 364.

⁵ Robins (1961). Newspaper clipping in the possession of Kenneth Cabral. This article is the most complete biography and was done soon after her arrival in Britain.

⁶ Robins (1961). Yogini Sunita's name as Bernadette Cabral and birthday are confirmed by her death certificate Bernadette Cabral OBDX 771214, Entry No. 193, registered 17 April 1970 in the County Borough of Walsall.

⁷ Robins (1961). According to this article, Sunita's parents ran an antique shop in Bombay.

⁸ Robins (1961).

⁹ Robins (1961).

¹⁰ Personal Interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

¹¹ A photograph of Narainswami published in the third edition of her book (1971 [2002]), p. 17 and the fourth edition (2012), p. 17. I have not seen the second edition (1970). In the first edition, Cabral mentions Narainswami but there is no photograph reproduced, see Cabral (1965), p. 51.

¹² Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

¹³ Sunita wrote that her training in Japanese massage was from The Oriental School of Massage 'organised by Dr. R. Thal Wa Ka, the famous Japanese Masseur. His Training Schools for massage existed in Japan and India.' Cabral (1965), p. 65.

¹⁴ Cabral (2002).

¹⁵ Cabral (1965), p. 51.

¹⁶ About Indians in London: 'First ashore were the Anglo-Indians (used here in the sense that it is now used in India, that is, people of mixed English-Indian parentage, not in the sense of Britons born in India), refugees from a country in which they believed that, with the departure of the British, the breadth of their opportunity would rapidly shrink' and 'To the surprise of many Westerners who regard India as a heathen county, Christians make up a large section of London's Indian community. They are perhaps the easiest to identify because they have Western Christian names... followed by a Portuguese or Spanish surname.' Davies (1966), pp. 268-69

¹⁷ Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

¹⁸ *Sunday Mercury* article and personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

¹⁹ Unbilled Extra on Woman's Hour No. 26 Wednesday 27 September 1961, 14.00-15.00 Yogi Sunita interviewed by Christopher Young Venning, British Broadcasting Corporation Written Archives Centre (BBC WAC). It appears that at first, she went by Yogi Sunita and later Yogini Sunita.

²⁰ 'Talk on relaxing in Yogi Style' *Derby Evening Telegraph* 19 April 1963 collection of Kenneth Cabral.

²¹ 'Yogi Sunita Visits Rotarians' *Sutton Coldfield News* Friday 12 January 1967: '....just before Christmas she spoke first to the Vegetarian Society... and then to the members of the Baha'i World Faith.... The Yentonians listed carefully to the little lady in the beautiful sari then at her bidding relaxed and benefited thereby.' 'Art of Relaxing' *Derby Evening Telegraph*, Friday 3 May 1963: 'Talk on relaxing in Yogi style' *Derby Evening Telegraph* Friday 19 April 1963.

²² According to her son, Sunita did not attend mass in Britain but never lost a deep conviction about the existence of God. After mass, the children went to the Co-op social club with their father before returning home for lunch. Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

²³ Business Registration Certificates numbers 1168078, 1168077, and 1038244 in the possession of Kenneth Cabral.

²⁴ 'Yasmin looks at the Western world' *Derby Evening Telegraph*? Unlabelled newspaper clipping in the collection of Kenneth Cabral. Kenneth Cabral detailed Sunita's term-time responsibilities and travel on public transport which he estimated meant that Sunita rose no later than 5.30am and did not retire for sleep until past midnight. Personal interview (13 July 2007).

²⁵ During 1963, Sunita 'Beat the Panel' in the popular BBC television programme 'What's my Line?' in which a panel attempted to guess the profession of a guest. BBC Television diploma certifying that on the night of Sunday 10 March 1963, Sunita Cabral 'Beat the Panel' in 'What's my Line?' at the BBC Television Theatre, London W12. Certificate in the possession of Kenneth Cabral.

²⁶ Unbilled Extra on Woman's Hour Wednesday 27 September 1961, BBC WAC.

²⁷ Unbilled Extra on Woman's Hour Wednesday 27 September 1961, BBC WAC and Cabral (1965).

²⁸ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 51

²⁹ Cabral (2002 [196?]).

³⁰ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 8.

³¹ Birmingham Athletics Institute Annual Report 1969-1970, 2 in Birmingham Central Library Archives.

³² Birmingham Athletics Institute Annual Report 1969-1970, 2 in Birmingham Central Library Archives.

³³ Cabral (1965).

³⁴ Birmingham Athletics Institute Annual Report 1969-1970, 1 in Birmingham Central Library Archives.

³⁵ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 57.

³⁶ Cabral (1965), p. 9.

³⁷ Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).

³⁸ Pendrell Hall was donated by the Gatskill family to Staffordshire County Council for use as an adult education centre in 1955 but opened for classes only in 1961. Although few records relating to the Hall's first seasons remain, it is likely that the Warden of Pendrell Hall was given quite a lot of autonomy in determining his school's schedule. Weekend courses were run in the Spring-Summer of 1964 on subjects such as 'Heraldry,' 'Machines in our Society,' and 'The Buildings of Staffordshire.' There is a record that 'Mrs Cabral' ran a one-day course for women entitled 'Further Steps in Yoga' on 24 September 1964 from 10.30-3.30; Pendrell Hall 'Prospectus Spring-Summer 1964,' 'William Salt Library, Stafford, WSL pbox C/6.

³⁹ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 57.

⁴⁰ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 57.

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- ⁴¹ Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (13 July 2007).
- ⁴² General Register Office, Certificate of Death for Bernadette Cabral OBDX 771214, County Borough of Walsall, 17 April 1970, Entry No. 193.
- ⁴³ 'Despite the death last year of Mrs Cabral who introduced Yoga into the Institute, the classes have continued and flourished under the leadership of teachers originally trained by Mrs Cabral.' BAI Annual report 1970-71, p. 2. Birmingham Central Library Archives.
- ⁴⁴ Kenneth Cabral believes that his mother had been approached for a television programme prior to her death, Personal Interview (17 July 2007).
- ⁴⁵ Personal interview with Kenneth Cabral (17 July 2007).
- ⁴⁶ Butler (2002).
- ⁴⁷ There is a long tradition of the Maharaja of Mysore sponsoring yoga and physical culture. For further context on Krishnamacharya and his influence see Desikachar (1998), Desikachar (2005), Goldberg (2016), pp. 208-248, Singleton and Fraser (2014), Singleton (2010), pp. 175, and Sjoman (1999).
- ⁴⁸ B.K.S. Iyengar. Typewritten autobiographical manuscript. Undated. (Account from birth to 1954, but only written after 1958), p. 3. Archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale, London.
- ⁴⁹ B.K.S. Iyengar 'My Yogic Journey: A Talk given by Gururji on his 70th Birthday, 14 December 1988 at Tilak Smarak Mandir, Pune, 5. Archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale, London.
- ⁵⁰ Iyengar (1988), pp. 8–10.
- ⁵¹ Iyengar (n.d.) pp. 2-3.
- ⁵² Iyengar (n.d.) p. 3.
- ⁵³ Iyengar (1988), p. 13.
- ⁵⁴ Iyengar (1988), p. 16.
- ⁵⁵ Iyengar (1988), pp. 36–41.
- ⁵⁶ Iyengar (1988), pp. 14–15.
- ⁵⁷ Iyengar (1988), p. 16.
- ⁵⁸ Magidoff (1973), pp. 216–222.
- ⁵⁹ Magidoff (1973), pp. 256–7.
- ⁶⁰ Menuhin (1996), p. 259.
- ⁶¹ Iyengar did not return to the United States until 1973 – after his yoga teaching had been established in the LEA in Britain.
- ⁶² Menuhin (1996), p. 259.
- ⁶³ Menuhin was given honorary knighthood in 1965 which he could fully accept when he became a British citizen in 1985; he was further honoured by the British government with a Lordship in 1993. Lister (1999).
- ⁶⁴ Menuhin (1996), p. 436.
- ⁶⁵ 'Obituary: Patricia Angadi' *The Independent* (London) 7 July 2001, p. 7.
- ⁶⁶ 'Aldwych Theatre: Hindu Dances' *The Times* 26 July 1939, p. 12, col. C. In Wilfred Clark's unreferenced pamphlet on the history of yoga in Britain, he reports that Ram Gopal taught yoga during this visit. Ram Gopal is better known for Kathkali dance, a physical discipline that has some similarities to yoga. A Sri Ram Gopal was also listed as 'patron' on the early *Bulletins* of the Wheel of British Yoga, June 1967-September 1969.
- ⁶⁷ 'B.B.C. Programmes For The Weekend' *The Times* 6 Sep 1958, p. 4, col. F. Ayana Angadi played tanpura with Ustad Vilayt Kahn on sitar and Nikhil Ghosh on tabla on the Third Programme.

⁶⁸ 'Obituary: Patricia Angadi,' 'Garden Parties: Asian Music Circle' Court and Social, *The Times* 7 July 1962, p. 10, col. C; 'Dance Recital: Asian Music Circle,' Court and Social, *The Times* 1 Jun 1963, p. 10, col. B.; also Patricia Angadi 'Iyengar Yoga in the UK' *EuroYoga* 93 in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale, London.

⁶⁹ From an article in *Poona Herald* (1964) 'Yoga exponent BKS Iyengar to tour England' 1964: 'Asian Music Circle has provided Londoners with such top artists as Pandit Ravi Shankar, Indrani Rehman, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Vilayat Kahn, Shant Rao and Shinchi Yuize, the famous Koto player from Japan. The circle has staged performances of visiting Asian artists and Mr Angadi hopes to enlarge the scope of the ... friends... the Countess Harewood, Miss Beryl Grey and Mr Benjamin Britten who are the vice presidents devote considerable time in doing something for the Asian Music Circle. In England alone there are 13 major branches and they all enjoy full support of the Art Council of Great Britain.' Newspaper clippings in the collections at RIMYI, Pune.

⁷⁰ Personal interview with Angela Marris (30 Jun 2005).

⁷¹ *Daily Mail* 13 June 1960, newspaper clippings in the collections at RIMYI, Pune. *Daily Mail*, 16 June 1961 (clipping in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale) and 'Working for Health' *Hampstead and Highgate Express and Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green News*, 7 July 1961, p. 4.

⁷² *Daily Mail*, 16 June 1961 clipping in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale and 'Working for Health' *Hampstead and Highgate Express and Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green News*, 7 July 1961, p. 4 and personal interview with Angela Marris (30 June 2005).

⁷³ Letter from B.K.S. Iyengar to Diana Clifton dated 13 February 1962 in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).

⁷⁴ While some further correspondence may be kept by those involved, at least some has been destroyed at Iyengar's request. Letter from Angela Marris to Lorna Walker dated 12 January 2001 in the archives of the Maida Vale Institute: 'When we moved to this flat we were very short of storage space and so we asked Mr Iyengar what we should do with all his letters etc. He told us to destroy all the letters and to give everything else to Silva Metha. We did both...'.
⁷⁵ Maimaris (2006), pp. 6-11.

⁷⁶ See Devi (1955) and also Devi (1963). Indra Devi (1899-2002) (born Zhenechka Peterson) was taught yoga by B.K.S. Iyengar's teacher Krishnamacharya. She taught yoga in southern California from 1947 and her student, Elizabeth Arden, incorporated yoga into health spas in the USA. She also taught the actors Jennifer Jones, Greta Garbo, Gloria Swanson, Ramón Novarro, Linda Christian and Robert Ryan. From 1984 she lived and taught yoga in Argentina. For more on her legacy see Goldberg (2015) and Goldberg (2016), pp. 338-363.

⁷⁷ Diana Clifton 'The Beginning of Iyengar Yoga in London in 1961' manuscript in the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale.

⁷⁸ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Jan-Feb 1967, ILEA/CL/PRE/16/09, London Metropolitan Archive.

⁷⁹ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Jan-Feb 1967, ILEA/CL/PRE/16/09, London Metropolitan Archive. The City of Birmingham Further Education Committee Minutes, June 1963 – 1970, BCC/BH 21/1/1/1-7, Archives Department, Birmingham Central Library, has no record of any discussion about yoga in the Birmingham LEA.

⁸⁰ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Jan-Feb 1967, London Metropolitan Archive ILEA/CL/PRE/16/09.

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- ⁸¹ See McIntosh (1969 [1957] and 1972 [1952]).
- ⁸² McIntosh (1968), p. 114 and Fisher (2000).
- ⁸³ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Jan–Feb 1967, London Metropolitan Archive ILEA/CL/PRE/16/09 and Huggins (2001)
- ⁸⁴ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Oct-Dec 1969, Report No. 11 Presented 3 December 1969, ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁸⁵ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers May/June 1968, report 2.9.68 by the Education Officer., ILEA/CL/PRE/16/17, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁸⁶ According to the ILEA files, during 1968 and 1969, ‘investigations have been made into the teaching of yoga in London and elsewhere. The Senior Inspector of Physical Education has visited a number of classes.’ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Oct-Dec 1969 report 25.11.69 by Education Officer. ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁸⁷ Personal interview with Angela Marris (30 June 2005).
- ⁸⁸ Beatrice Harthan ‘The Beginning of the Iyengar Movement in England’ documents held at the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).
- ⁸⁹ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Oct-Dec 1969, Report No. 11, presented 3 December 1969, ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁹⁰ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Oct-Dec 1969, Report No. 11, presented 3 December 1969, ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁹¹ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee Papers Oct-Dec 1969, ILEA Education Committee –report 25.11.69 by Education Officer – presented to the ILEA 3 December 1969 (11), ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24, London Metropolitan Archive.
- ⁹² (1971) ‘Iyengar Teaches’ *Yoga & Health* vol, 1, no. 7: 22-29
- ⁹³ Mehta (1987), p. 25.
- ⁹⁴ Recorded in an undated letter from B.K.S. Iyengar to Diana Clifton specifically discussing ILEA classes. Held in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale.
- ⁹⁵ Silva Mehta ‘A Brief History of Iyengar Yoga in England and The South East England Iyengar Yoga Institute’ 19 March 1983. Archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).
- ⁹⁶ Personal interview with John Claxton (5 December 2004).
- ⁹⁷ Ailsa Herremans. ‘Notes Taken at Classes Held by Mr. Iyengar in London in May 1974 and in Poona in January 1975.’ Typewritten manuscript in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).
- ⁹⁸ Sally Finesilver, letter to Lorna Walker dated 26 November 1999 in response to a request for memories of ‘Iyengar’s early days in the UK’. Held in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale, London. Personal interview with John Claxton (5 December 2004).
- ⁹⁹ Julie Dale ‘B.K.S. Iyengar: An introduction by one of his students’ Manuscript in the library of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India.
- ¹⁰⁰ Anonymous, ‘The Sutras of Iyengar’ typewritten manuscript in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale), p. 11.
- ¹⁰¹ Here Iyengar is referring to Patañjali’s well-circulated definition of yoga. Iyengar (1993a), p. 46.
- ¹⁰² See also Busia (2007), pp. xviii-xxii and Tobias (2007), pp. 285–291. Kofi Busia was an important populariser of Iyengar yoga in London and Oxford during the 1970s and 80s and Maxine Tobias became an influential Iyengar teacher in London during the 80s and 90s.
- ¹⁰³ Interviews with Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005), Lorna Walker (31 June 2005) and John and Ros Claxton (5 December 2004).

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- ¹⁰⁴ Hoare, S. and Stewart, M. 1989. 'Obituary: Penny Nield-Smith' *The Independent* 26 July. Personal interviews with Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005), Lorna Walker (31 June 2005) and John and Ros Claxton (5 December 2004). See also *BKS Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association News Magazine* Winter 1989, pp. 17–18.
- ¹⁰⁵ 1972. *The Manchester and District Institute of Iyengar Yoga* 1 (March), Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹⁰⁶ Maslen (1997).
- ¹⁰⁷ Greer (1988).
- ¹⁰⁸ Maslen (1997)
- ¹⁰⁹ 1972. *The Manchester and District Institute of Yoga Bulletin* 1 (March), p. 6. Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹⁰ 1972. *The Manchester and District Institute of Yoga Bulletin* No. 1 (March), p. 1. Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹¹ 1972. *The Manchester and District Institute of Yoga Bulletin* No. 1 (March), p. 6. Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹² Manchester Further Education Committee Minutes 1960–1970; Manchester Evening Institute Prospectuses Boxes MSC 378 and MSC 370/E and the archives of the Manchester College of Adult Education, Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹³ Manchester Further Education Committee Minutes 1968–69, vol. 34A, 2530 – in the East area of Manchester, due to 'reduced expenditure imposed by the council in November 1967...' and 'to avert possible serious overspending on the estimates' the principal reported that 'some classes had been closed and others combined. Initially 108 out of 450 had been affected but after review only 45 classes now finally closed with 19 others combined.' Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹⁴ The Committee clearly considered that it had more important issues to discuss. For example, In 1968, students at the Manchester College of Commerce staged a 'sit-in' due to inadequate accommodation, staffing and book stock at the Manchester College of Commerce. The Education Committee considered that hiring two extra library staff might address the immediate crisis. Manchester Further Education Sub-Committee Minutes for 1968-69, vol. 34A, 1595. Manchester Archives and Local Studies, Manchester Central Library.
- ¹¹⁵ 1978. *B.K.S. Iyengar Teacher's Association Newsletter* (June), p. 1. In the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale), London.
- ¹¹⁶ Assessments for Teaching Certificates November 1979 and March 1980 in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale), London.
- ¹¹⁷ Iyengar's travels are well documented in the press cutting volumes at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, Pune, India.
- ¹¹⁸ Newspaper clipping files held at the RIMYI Archives, Pune, India.
- ¹¹⁹ Vernon (2007), p. 5.
- ¹²⁰ For example, for a British person to study at the RIMYI in Pune, it currently requires seven years of study with an Iyengar certified teacher in one's own country. Training to become an Introductory-level Iyengar teacher in Britain could be completed after five years of study with British Iyengar certified teachers. Therefore, the case that many new teachers are qualified without having had any personal contact with Iyengar or his children.
- ¹²¹ *Iyengar Yoga News* No. 10 (Spring 2007), 44.
- ¹²² From the guidelines of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK) published on <https://iyengaryoga.org.uk/iyengar-yoga/pune-institute/> last accessed 29 August 2017.
- ¹²³ Cabral (1971 [2002]), p. 57.

CHAPTER FOUR

¹ Interviews with Ros Claxton (5 December 2004), Sophy Hoare (5 January 2004), and Lorna Walker (31 June 2005). Sophy Hoare also emphasised that she was struck at the ‘very varied mix of people attending’ in terms of social and age-range mix compared to the dance classes she had been attending previously. Personal correspondence with Sophy Hoare. It is interesting that these same ratios characterized what Philip Dislippe calls ‘early American yoga’ which was much less physical in its practice, see Dislippe (2017).

² Porter (1994).

³ Porter (2000), p. 204.

⁴ For an overview see Szreter (2005), pp. 23–45 and Hamlin (1994), pp. 132–164.

⁵ E.P. Hennock *British Social Reform and German Precedents: The Case of Social Insurance 1880-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

⁶ Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2006 and 2007). Singleton (2007) has shown how these eugenic ideals influenced the development of yoga in early twentieth-century India.

⁷ Porter (2000), pp. 203–7.

⁸ Szreter (2005), pp. 352–3.

⁹ Offer (2006 and 2001).

¹⁰ WEA Working Party (1960), p. 31

¹¹ See Wilson (1980), Ingham (1981) and Akhtar and Humphries (2001).

¹² Hobsbawm (1994), p. 318 and Humphries (2000), pp. 85–106.

¹³ Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2001), p. 153.

¹⁴ Sandbrook (2006), pp. 648–64.

¹⁵ For descriptions of other influential ideas and books see Bruley (1999), p. 145 and Rowbottom (2001).

¹⁶ De Vilar (1976), p. 7.

¹⁷ De Vilar (1976), p. 7.

¹⁸ Burgess (1968), p. 94.

¹⁹ Hughes (1973), p. 167.

²⁰ Hughes (1973), p. 167.

²¹ Samuel (1998a), p. 161 provides evidence for this claim in the difficulty that the Labour Party has had in promoting all-women short-lists of parliamentary candidates in Northern areas. Also McKibbin (1998), p. 91 and pp. 101–105 has argued that between 1918–1951, ‘Northern’ middle-classes were identified with non-conformist beliefs and manufacturing interests while the ‘Southern’ middle-classes were generally Anglicans with commercial interests; he concludes that these regional differences were stronger than a common middle-class culture.

²² Manchester Further Education Sub-Committee Minutes 1970–71, vol. 36A, p. 214, Manchester Central Library Archives.

²³ Withington Further Education Centre, *Prospectus Session 1976/77*, pp. 11–12, Manchester Central Library Archives.

²⁴ Mary Ward Centre, *Prospectus 1976/77*, p. 13.

²⁵ Interview with Vi Neale-Smith (17 September 2004).

²⁶ Personal interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004) and Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

²⁷ The British Wheel of Yoga itself claimed 1,500 members and 500 teachers in 1975; *Yoga* No. 24 (Summer), p. 14.

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- ²⁸ Gillespie (1975), p. 23.
- ²⁹ *Manchester and District Institute of Yoga Bulletin*, p. 1.
- ³⁰ 'List of B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Certification Holders' October 1978 in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale.
- ³¹ Benson (1997), p. 80.
- ³² Angela Marris recalled: 'When we started teaching for the ILEA, he [Iyengar] authorised Beatrice [Harthan] to teach but she was already too old – they wouldn't employ her as she was over 60 at the time. And she did go on practising by herself...' Personal Interview (30 June 2005).
- ³³ Clara Buck 'The Choice is Yours,' *Overseas* 1982, p. 4. Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.
- ³⁴ Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2005) and (2001), pp. 183–197.
- ³⁵ Sandow (1919).
- ³⁶ Fletcher (1984) and Hargreaves (1993).
- ³⁷ McIntosh (1972 [1952]) and also McKibbin (1998), pp. 367–371.
- ³⁸ Fletcher (1984), p. 90.
- ³⁹ Posse (1908).
- ⁴⁰ Singleton (2010), pp. 84–88.
- ⁴¹ Stack (1931), Atkinson (1985), McCrone (1988) as well as Mangan and Walvin (1987).
- ⁴² See also Singleton (2010), pp. 150–52.
- ⁴³ Prunella Stack *Zest for Life: Mary Bagot Stack and the League of Health and Beauty* (London: Peter Owen, 1998), p. 69.
- ⁴⁴ Medau Society (2007).
- ⁴⁵ For Indian clubs in European and American sports see Alter (2004b)
- ⁴⁶ Personal correspondence with Lynda Bridges, Administrative Officer, The Medau Society (15 January 2007).
- ⁴⁷ Harris (1961).
- ⁴⁸ Anderson (2004).
- ⁴⁹ Clark (1970/71).
- ⁵⁰ 1970. 'Yoga Preferred Over Keep Fit' *Yoga: Journal of the Wheel of British Yoga* 4 (Summer), p. 9.
- ⁵¹ Johnson (1966).
- ⁵² Stack (1988), pp. 136–143.
- ⁵³ The images of women used to model yoga have tended to change with the ideal body image projected by society; which has become noticeably thinner, especially in comparison to the average body size of women in the general population, since the 1960s. Offer (2006 and 2001).
- ⁵⁴ For the cult of youth and the influence of Quant on fashion in the context of the sixties, see Sandbrook (2006), p. 220.
- ⁵⁵ Benson (1997), p. 82.
- ⁵⁶ See also Matthews (1987).
- ⁵⁷ Gold (1969), p. 3.
- ⁵⁸ Gold (1969), p. 3.
- ⁵⁹ Phelan and Volin (1963), p. 16.
- ⁶⁰ Sarasvati (1970), p. i.
- ⁶¹ Nancy Phelan was well-known author of 'numerous bestselling books on yoga, unusual travel memoirs, novels and cookbooks, a delightful account of an eccentric, sunlit Sydney upbringing and a biography, in 1987, of her cousin, conductor Sir Charles Mackerras' Christopher Hawtree. 2008. 'Nancy Phelan: Obituary' *The Guardian*. 19 February. Michael

Volin (Volodchenko), also known as Swami Karmananda, was born in Russia and lived in China during the 1920s-30s, travelling widely and learning meditation, yoga and Chi-gong techniques from Buddhist monks. He opened an early yoga centre in Shanghai with Indra Devi in Shanghai before becoming displaced during World War II. After the war he relocated to Australia, opening a popular yoga school in Sydney in the 1950s. Daphne Volin. 'Michael Volin (Swami Karmananda)' Available at:

<http://www.agelessyoga.com.au/volinstory.html>. Swami Sarasvati became a national figure promoting yoga in Australia from 1968 established a yoga retreat centre north west of Sydney in 1983. See: swami.com.au and 2003. 'It's surreal – the Swami is back.' *The Age Online*. 15 September. Available at:

<https://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/09/14/1063478062266.html>.

⁶² Marshall (1975, 1976, 1978 and 1982).

⁶³ Yvonne Thomas 'No more rows and wrinkles...Ah, Mr Iyengar, you're my guru' *Evening Standard* Wednesday July 22 1970. Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.

⁶⁴ Clara Buck 'The Choice is Yours' *Overseas* 1982, 4. Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.

⁶⁵ Clara Buck 'The Choice is Yours' *Overseas* 1982, 4. Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.

⁶⁶ Offer (2006 and 2001).

⁶⁷ 1972. 'Iyengar Teaches' *Yoga & Health* 7, p. 23.

⁶⁸ 'He says goodbye to tension: you don't know whether you're on your head or your heels when you have a guru for a guest' *The Advertiser* Stockport, Manchester, July 27, 1972, p. 17. Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.

⁶⁹ Personal interview with Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005).

⁷⁰ Susan Vankuren 'YOGA: The ultimate discipline of mind, body' *The Windsor Star* March 25, 1977 Newspaper clipping in RIMYI archives.

⁷¹ Offer (2001), p. 92–100 and particularly Table 2, p. 93.

⁷² Maslen (1997).

⁷³ 'Whilst Mothers Study...' *Gordon Reporter* 22 September 1967 in 'Newspaper clippings 'Education Colleges' 158, (Local Studies), Manchester Central Library Archives.

⁷⁴ Personal interview with Vi Neale-Smith (17 September 2004).

⁷⁵ Personal interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).

⁷⁶ Brook (1976), p. 9.

⁷⁷ Interviews with Ros Claxton (5 December 2004) and Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005) as well as Brook (1967).

⁷⁸ Stack (1988), p. 39.

⁷⁹ Lock (1997), pp. 137–8.

⁸⁰ Particularly influential was Sheila Kitzinger (1967 [1962] and 1972).

⁸¹ For example the National Childbirth Trust produced in 1972 a series of A5 booklets under the titles of 'Breathing during labour,' 'Breathing control in labour,' and 'Keeping fit for pregnancy' found in National Childbirth Trust. 'Miscellaneous publications not catalogued separately' 1964. British Library. Also see Balaskas and Balaskas (1979).

⁸² Interviews with Ros Claxton (5 December 2004) and Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005).

⁸³ Personal interview with Ros Claxton (5 December 2004). Also influential in this movement were Dick-Read (1960) and Odent (1976) published in English in 1983.

⁸⁴ Personal interview with Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005).

⁸⁵ Balaskas and Balaskas (1979).

⁸⁶ Leboyer (1975) was reprinted in 1977, 1979, 1991 and 1995.

⁸⁷ Leboyer (2002[1975]), p. 3.

⁸⁸ Birthlight (2006).

⁸⁹ Leboyer (1978) and English translation in 1979.

⁹⁰ For a sensitive positive description of this relationship see Tourniere (2002) which reflects on her experience with B.K.S. Iyengar in the mid-1970s.

⁹¹ Other books include Weller (1978), Berg (1981) and Hoare (1985). Marshall (1975) contains a section for pregnant women, although this is not the focus of the book.

⁹² Crisp (1975), p. 26.

⁹³ Crisp (1975), pp. 26-36.

⁹⁴ See the very popular Spock (1974).

⁹⁵ Willard (1895) and Herlihy (2004).

⁹⁶ For the concept of technology, habits and the body, see Mauss (1979 [1950]) and Martin, Gutman and Hutton (1988).

⁹⁷ Personal interviews with Ros Claxton (5 December 2004) and Sophy Hoare (5 January 2005).

⁹⁸ Personal interview with Kathleen and Roy Pepper (12 July 2005).

⁹⁹ Women's Health London (1993). For more about treatment 'female complaints' see Jones (2001) and for physicians attitudes towards women see Cook (2005), p. 273.

¹⁰⁰ Women's Health London (1993), p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Women's Health London (1993), p. 2.

CHAPTER FIVE

¹ Humes (2005), p. 64 and Oliver (2014).

² See Prashad (2000), pp. 38–39 and Porter (1998), p. 95. Porter notes that the bebop Jazz musicians were likely to turn to mainstream Asian Islam for spiritual orientation; he also notes that some restaurants and venues in the United States would serve a 'Muslim' but not a black man.

³ Porter (1998), p. 96.

⁴ Porter (1998), p. 96 for more on Yogananda see Deslippe (2017) and Foxen (2017).

⁵ Cole (1976), p. 14.

⁶ Fraim (1996), p. 35.

⁷ Fraim (1996), p. 183.

⁸ Porter (1998), p. 262.

⁹ Kofsky (1970), p. 221.

¹⁰ Cy Laurie: The vanishing Jazzman' *Gandalf's Garden* 3, pp. 5–6.

¹¹ 'The Third Ear Band' *Gandalf's Garden* 4, pp. 9–11. The UFO club was in operation at Tottenham Court Road from December 1966 – June 1967 and was founded by John Hopkins and Joe Boyd. After a few months at the Roundhouse in Camden, the venture folded completely in October 1967. It established an important legacy as an early venue for influential bands, e.g. Pink Floyd. See Boyd (2005), Miles (2002) and Green (1988). Also correspondence with Muz Murray 10 July 2017.

¹² Sandbrook (2006), p. 201.

¹³ Beatles (2000), p. 196; within the next few years Indiacraft opened several shops.

¹⁴ See Macdonald (2005), pp. 162–165.

¹⁵ Robertson (2004), p. 164.

¹⁶ Lester (1965).

¹⁷ Lester (1965).

¹⁸ Robertson (2004), pp. 160–167 and Turner (2006), p. 135.

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- ¹⁹ Clayson (2001), pp. 190–1.
- ²⁰ Shankar and Menuhin 1999 [1966].
- ²¹ Faithfull, M. (1995), p. 124 and Newman (2006), p. 22
- ²² Newman (2006), p. 17.
- ²³ Macdonald (2005), p. 165 and Clayson (2001), p. 192.
- ²⁴ Clayson (2001), p. 191.
- ²⁵ Harrison (2002 [1980]), p. 55 and Newman (2006), p. 23.
- ²⁶ Macdonald (2005), p. 194.
- ²⁷ Newman (2006), p. 25.
- ²⁸ Newman (2006), p. 31: ‘Shankara Angadi: ‘My father was a difficult character, in some ways. He was chaotic, and never really pulled anything off he set out to do. He probably asked George for money, and that was the end of that relationship. We saw lots of him for six months, but then nothing. When I bumped into him at around the time of the concert for Bangladesh in 1972, he recognised me, and asked someone who I was. When they told him, I heard him say: “Well, he’s not as bad as his father.”’
- ²⁹ Newman (2006), p. 31.
- ³⁰ Shapiro (2002), p. 80 and Green (2005), pp. 68–71.
- ³¹ See Foxen (2017) for more on the influence of Yogananda on yoga in the United States.
- ³² Charity Commission for England and Wales registered charity no. 800412 and Saunders (1972), p. 175.
- ³³ For authorship of the *Autobiography of a Yogi* see and Deslippe (2017) and for style and impact Foxen (2017) pp. 178–190.
- ³⁴ Giuliano (1989), pp. 115–6.
- ³⁵ Ian Macdonald quote in Partridge (2005a), p. 152.
- ³⁶ Reck (1985), p. 108.
- ³⁷ Macdonald (2005), p. 249.
- ³⁸ Cleave (2006 [1966]).
- ³⁹ Sandbrook (2005), p. 551.
- ⁴⁰ Brown (2001).
- ⁴¹ Cleave (2006 [1966]).
- ⁴² Clayson (2001), p. 222; Newman (2006), pp. 42–43 and Miles (2004), p. 238.
- ⁴³ Green (1988), p. 160.
- ⁴⁴ Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007). See also Green (1988), pp. 224–233 and Marnham (2005) for an account of travelling from Turkey to Nepal via Iran, Afghanistan and India in 1968.
- ⁴⁵ Michael Houghton died in 1962 and his friend and Geraldine’s father, Wally Collins, bought the shop. The Collins family reinvigorated the stock and set the shop on firmer financial footing, according to Collins’ daughter, Geraldine Beskin. She began working occasionally in the shop after her father died in 1965 and she took over management of the shop completely at the age of nineteen in 1971. She sold The Atlantis Bookshop in 1990 but bought it back in 2002. Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).
- ⁴⁶ Other major cities in Britain no doubt had bookstores which served as hubs for local information about alternative ideas of all sorts, particularly between the mid-1950s to mid-1980s.
- ⁴⁷ Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).
- ⁴⁸ The Atlantis continued its focus on ‘western’ magical traditions such as Wicca, Paganism and Crowley-influenced publications and organisations.
- ⁴⁹ Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).

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- ⁵⁰ Dwyer and Cole (2007), p. 31.
- ⁵¹ Personal interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).
- ⁵² Chance (1992), Colebatch (1990) and Curry (1997).
- ⁵³ Ellwood (2002).
- ⁵⁴ Ellwood (2002), p. 131 and p. 133.
- ⁵⁵ Leslie (1973), p. 44.
- ⁵⁶ For example 1973. *Yoga: Journal of the British Wheel of Yoga* 16 (Summer), p. 14: ‘Yoga Tour of India’ There is room for just 30 enthusiasts to go on a Yoga tour of India from November 2 for £259. The tour is being organised by Yoga for Health Clubs in association with the magazine ‘Yoga for Health’ and details can be obtained from Intercapital Travellers Ltd., 9 Old Bond Street, London W1X3TA.’
- ⁵⁷ *Yoga & Health*, March 1973, 3, p. 29. The band Quintessence were also reviewed in *Gandalf’s Garden* 6, p. 9 and 1973. *Yoga & Health* 3 (April), p. 25.
- ⁵⁸ Macdonald (2005), p. xiii and Spencer (2004), 230–5.
- ⁵⁹ Badman (2000), pp. 244–5.
- ⁶⁰ Peter D. Ouspensky (1878–1947) was born in Moscow as Pyotr Demianovich Ouspenskii and became a pupil of the Armenian mystic G.I. Gurdjieff (c.1866–1949) in Moscow between 1915–1918. After moving to London in 1921, Ouspensky taught his own understanding of Gurdjieff’s teachings and founded The Society for the Study of Normal Man (later known as the Study Society) and later made his home at Lyne Place near Virginia Water, Surrey. For more on Gurdjieff see (Cusack and Sutcliffe 2017).
- ⁶¹ The School of Economic Science (SES) was founded in 1937 by Andrew MacLaren (1884–1975) a Labour MP between 1922 and 1945 who believed that land should be taxed rather than income and encouraged a group of like-minded people to meet and discuss positive social reform. Over time, his son ‘Leon’ MacLaren (1910–1994) took over the running of the school and believed that a deeper understanding of human nature was needed in order to enact positive social change. Towards this end, Leon McLaren encouraged the explorations of Plato, Christian religiosity and ‘great literature’ such as Shakespeare.
- ⁶² This was primarily Śāntānanda Saraswatī (d. 1997) the Śāṅkarācārya of Jyotirmath and official successor to the Maharishi’s guru Guru Dev Swami Brahmānanda Saraswatī (1870–1953) who held this title, roughly analogous to archbishop of the Anglican Church in England, for the last 12 years of his life.
- ⁶³ Humes (2005), p. 77. Meher Baba (1894–1969) was born in Pune, India as Merwan Sheriar Irani and claimed to have been awakened to ‘God consciousness’ at the age of nineteen. From 1925 to his death, Meher Baba maintained silence, but communicated by pointing to an alphabet board. He travelled to Britain in 1931 and 1936 and gathered a small but loyal British following. He taught that the goal of human life is the conscious realisation of the non-dual nature of God. Pete Townshend (b. 1945) the lead singer of the band The Who was heavily influenced by Meher Baba from 1967 onwards.
- ⁶⁴ Lapham (2005), p. 50.
- ⁶⁵ ‘The Beatles Follow an Old Pilgrim’s Road’ *The Times*, 14 Oct 1967, p. 9, col. F.
- ⁶⁶ ‘The Beatles Get a Thought Each’ *The Times* 28 Aug 1967, 2, col. D.
- ⁶⁷ Green (1999), p. 231.
- ⁶⁸ Faithfull (1995), pp. 187–88.
- ⁶⁹ Faithfull (1995), p. 188. It has been suggested that the Maharishi’s reported comment is not so offensive if considered within an Indian, renunciate-focused cultural context.
- ⁷⁰ ‘Brian Epstein is found dead. News brings the Beatles back to London’ *The Times* 28 Aug 1967, 1, col. F.

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- ⁷¹ 'Beatles "believe in rebirth"' *The Times* 30 Sep 1967, 7, col. E.
- ⁷² Reck (1985), p. 108 and Macdonald (2005), p. 274. According to both these accounts Juan Mascaró, author of the Penguin translation of the Bhagavad Gīta was in the audience for the second show and in a letter dated 16 November 1967, Mascaró sent Harrison a copy of his earlier book *Lamps of Fire*, an anthology of religious scriptures. Harrison (2002 [1980]), p. 118.
- ⁷³ Laphan (2005), p. 139.
- ⁷⁴ One article implied that Alexis Mardas, the new electronics head for Apple Inc. fed the rumours and scepticism as he did not want to be at the ashram anyway, see Paytress (2004), p. 303. But other sexual indiscretions on the part of the Maharishi are better documented, e.g. Bourque (2010).
- ⁷⁵ 'Picture Gallery: Paul McCartney, of the Beatles and his friend Jane Asher' *The Times* 27 Mar 1968, p. 2, col E.
- ⁷⁶ Information on the Beatles from Hill and Clayton (2000), pp. 229–244.
- ⁷⁷ Green (1999), p. 232.
- ⁷⁸ Badman (2004), pp. 210–238.
- ⁷⁹ This is the case in Birmingham and Manchester Central Libraries, personal observation of catalogues and bookshelves during 2005.
- ⁸⁰ Wilfred Clark. 1967. *Bulletin of the British Wheel of Yoga* 25 (November).
- ⁸¹ Worldwide initiations into TM rapidly increased from 1960 to a peak of 292,517 in 1975 alone. However, the numbers of new initiations decreased sharply after this year. Bainbridge (1997), pp. 188–9.
- ⁸² 1976. 'Meditation – what's in it for me?,' *Yoga Today* 2 (May), p. 12.
- ⁸³ Lee Jancogey, 'Breaches of the Peace' *She* February 1978, 40–41.
- ⁸⁴ 'Beatles "believe in rebirth"' *The Times* (London) 30 Sep 1967, p. 7, col E.
- ⁸⁵ Greene (2005), p. 103.
- ⁸⁶ Giuliano (1989), p. 101.
- ⁸⁷ See Dwyer and Cole (2007), 28–9.
- ⁸⁸ Faithfull (1995), p. 191 and Hopkins (2000).
- ⁸⁹ International Society for Krishna Consciousness (1982), p. 48.
- ⁹⁰ For information on ISKCON see Rochford (2007) and more specifically for Britain see Dwyer and Cole (2007).
- ⁹¹ 'Krishna Commune' *Gandalf's Garden* 6, p. 25.
- ⁹² Giuliano (1989), p. 104.
- ⁹³ 'Top of the Pops: programme as broadcast' T12/1,278/1 and R126/270/1 in BBC WAC. The Radha Krishna Temple performed 'Govinda' on 19 March 1970 and 9 April 1970. On the second date 11 members are noted as in attendance for filming and on both occasions the song was about four and a half minutes in length.
- ⁹⁴ Greene (2005), pp. 158–60.
- ⁹⁵ Clayson (2001), p. 308 and Greene (2005), pp. 186–94.
- ⁹⁶ Greene (2005), p. 183 and pp. 213–20.
- ⁹⁷ Strachan (1970), p. 10.
- ⁹⁸ Green (1988).
- ⁹⁹ Strutt (1976a, 1976b, 1977a, 1977b).
- ¹⁰⁰ Strutt (1976a) 'Personal Note'.
- ¹⁰¹ Strutt (1976a)

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- ¹⁰² Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016) and see Muz Murray's website and publications, at the time of the interview he was writing an autobiography for publication.
- ¹⁰³ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016). See Bucke (1901).
- ¹⁰⁴ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016).
- ¹⁰⁵ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016).
- ¹⁰⁶ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016); Mishra wrote *The Textbook of Yoga Psychology* (1972 [1963]) and *Fundamentals of Yoga* (1972 [1959]). Mishra founded the Yoga Society of New York, Inc. in 1958 and the Ananda Ashram in New York in 1964; in 1972, Mishra established the Yoga Society of San Francisco, Inc.
- ¹⁰⁷ Personal interview with Chris Tobler (12 October 2017).
- ¹⁰⁸ The *International Times* was published also in 1974, continuously between 1975-1982 and again in 1986. Personal correspondence with 'Chis' at <<http://www.international-times.org.uk>> last accessed 10 September 2007. The British Library holds the original print run and a few of the later issues.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Gandalf's Garden* 2, p. 10.
- ¹¹⁰ *Gandalf's Garden* 1, p. 1.
- ¹¹¹ *Gandalf's Garden* 6, p. 15.
- ¹¹² *Yoga & Health*, November 1971, No. 11, p. 15.
- ¹¹³ Clark, W. 1969. *The Wheel Bulletin* 41 (March).
- ¹¹⁴ *Gandalf's Garden* 4, p. 32.
- ¹¹⁵ Typewritten A4 advert stamped in by the British Library acquisitions November 1969 in *Gandalf's Garden* collection.
- ¹¹⁶ *Gandalf's Garden* 4, p. 17.
- ¹¹⁷ *Gandalf's Garden* 2, p. 9. The Perfumed Garden went on air in May 1967 and Radio London was taken off the air in August 1967. After this Peel wrote a column for the *International Times* also entitled 'The Perfumed Garden.'
- ¹¹⁸ Personal Interview with Chris Tobler (12 October 2017).
- ¹¹⁹ Roberts (2012).
- ¹²⁰ For a more comprehensive exploration of the overlap between psychedelics and spiritual experiences see Partridge (2018) and Clark (2017).
- ¹²¹ 1971 *Yoga & Health* 6, p. 20.
- ¹²² Deslippe (2012)
- ¹²³ See Deslippe (2012) and Jacobs (2008) for the history of 3HO/Kundalini yoga as a religious movement as well as the other articles in *Sikh Formations* vol. 8.
- ¹²⁴ Saunders (1972), p. 176.
- ¹²⁵ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016).
- ¹²⁶ Personal Interview with Muz Murray (14 December 2016).
- ¹²⁷ 1971. *Yoga and Health* 3, p. 29. In 1973, Doshia Dupre directed a television programme with Dr. R. S. Mishra/Shri Ramamurti (later known as Shri Brahmananda Sarasvati) entitled 'Yoga for the Body, Mind & Spirit' which was produced by Public Access Cable Television (NYC).
- ¹²⁸ Personal interview with Judy Tobler (29 September 2017).
- ¹²⁹ Personal interview with Judy Tobler (29 September 2017).
- ¹³⁰ 1971. *Yoga & Health* 3, p. 27.
- ¹³¹ 1971. *Yoga and Health* 3, p. 29. For more general background on Sivananda's global movements see Strauss (2005, 2002a and 2002b).
- ¹³² 1971. *Yoga and Health* 3, p. 29.

¹³³ 1971. *Yoga and Health* 3, p. 30.

¹³⁴ Personal interview with Hector Guthrie (8 October 2009).

¹³⁵ Personal interview with Hector Guthrie (8 October 2009).

¹³⁶ Personal interview with Hector Guthrie (8 October 2009).

¹³⁷ Personal interview with Chris Tobler (12 October 2017).

¹³⁸ Personal interview with Hector Guthrie (8 October 2009) and Saunders (1972 and n.d.). the first edition of Saunders' *Alternative London* is usually found in card catalogues with a 1970 or a 1971 date, however the first edition clearly says 'This is the first edition published 12.5.72 by Nicholas Saunders, Alternative London, 65 Edith Grove, London SW10'; there is no date on the 2nd edition, although it is clearly labelled as a second edition. The Sivananda Yoga Centre is not listed in Strachan (1970).

¹³⁹ Biographies of Krishnamurti include the authorized one, M. Lutyens (1990) *The Life and Death of Krishnamurti*. John Murray, London, and a critical personal memoir, R. R. Sloss (1991) *Lives in the Shadow with J. Krishnamurti*. Bloomsbury, London.

¹⁴⁰ For Annie Bessant see Taylor (1992) and also see Bessant's *Introduction to Yoga* (1908).

¹⁴¹ Krishnamurti (1929).

¹⁴² Zohar, D. 1980. 'What happened to the boy god?' *Sunday Times* (London).

¹⁴³ See Desponds (2007).

¹⁴⁴ Personal interview with Chris Tobler (12 October 2017).

¹⁴⁵ Saunders (1972), p. 173.

¹⁴⁶ Young 'Burdwan in my life,' 3. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan opened in London in 1972. Young (b. 1950) currently teaches postcolonial theory from his position of Julius Silver Professor of English and Comparative Literature at New York University.

¹⁴⁷ Davies (1966), p. 76.

¹⁴⁸ Davies (1966), p. 270.

¹⁴⁹ Davies (1966), p. 269: 'Unlike in India, London's Indians have not grouped together on a communal basis and are sprinkled throughout many suburbs – Swiss Cottage, Bayswater and Kilburn [being] the more popular.'

CHAPTER SIX

¹ 'Howard Kent: Obituary' *The Daily Telegraphy* (London), 21 March 2005, 23 from Lexis-Nexis Professional <<http://web.lexis-nexis.com/xchange-international>>, Kent 'How the Hittleman TV series was born.'

² From the number of students reported to have voluntarily completed a questionnaire for Desmond Dunne's School of Yogism in London in Desmond Dunne *Yoga for everyman: how to have long life and happiness* (London, Duckworth, 1951).

³ Personal estimate of Wilfred Clark in a letter to Ken Thompson dated 16 March 1967.

⁴ Kent 'How the Hittleman TV series was born,' 20-21. The figure is based on an estimate of over 2,000 yoga classes in evening institutes in Britain with an average of 26 students per class. Kent also estimates in this article that over four million viewed the *Yoga and Health* television serial.

⁵ Estimate found in the British Wheel's journal *Yoga* No. 24 (Summer 1975), 14. In this article, the British Wheel of Yoga itself claimed 1,500 members and 500 teachers.

⁶ Personal estimate by Georg Feuerstein 'Introduction' *Bulletin of the Yoga Research Centre* No. 1 (Summer 1979), 3.

⁷ The Kendal Project also looked at how many people were doing yoga in Kendal between 2000-2002 - extrapolating from that small northern town, they found 0.4% of the population

did yoga in any given week. So that would be about 265,000 (very roughly) doing yoga classes weekly in Britain. (Heelas and Woodhead *et al.* (2005) and (Kendall Project (2005)).

⁸ Personal Correspondence with the British Wheel of Yoga, 2002.

⁹ The 2.5 million figure is from a market research firm's estimates as reported in Carter (2004). Also repeated in *Yoga Magazine* (2015). The Integrated Household Survey (IHS) done by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) on "well-being in the UK" in 2010/11. This survey conflates yoga with the category of 'keep fit' which includes 'includes aerobics, yoga and dance exercises'. The authors extrapolate that 7.1% of the population of England (nearly 3.8 million) are regularly doing these 'keep fit' activities, with a similar percentage of the population likely to be participating in 'keep fit' activities in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland (Seddon 2012). The Office of National Statistics' General Household Surveys between 1980 and 1993 also lumped in yoga with Keep Fit (also incorporating Laban, Margaret Morris, Medau, Aerobics, and Dalcroize movement-based activities) as quite constant at about 9% of the total British population from the mid-1980s–1993. With women being up to 17% and men more like 5% in these actives (roughly 5 million of the UK population total).

¹⁰ Raymond Williams suggested in 1974 that television formats Williams (2003 [1974]), pp. 39–76.

¹¹ Samuel (1998b), pp. 172–193.

¹² McLuhan (2006 [1964]), p. 24.

¹³ TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367. BBC Written Archives Centre. This file contains the notes: '28th May 1948 – Mr. Cecil Madden – Yogi Programme: Sir Paul Dukes and Mrs. Verscholye – 9.15–9.30pm approximately and 23.9.49, Saturday 1 October 1949 – Yoga for the Middleaged.' But there is no further information on these first two programmes.

¹⁴ Thumim (2004), p. 13.

¹⁵ In 1951 there were 14.49 million households in Britain, and 764,000 television licenses issued (Office of National Statistics 2002). Between 1947 and 1957 television ownership rose from less than 1% to 48% of British households, see Gershuny and Fisher (2000), p. 640.

¹⁶ Hughes (2004) and 'Mr. Paul Dukes Knighted' *The Times* (London), 3 November 1920, 13, col. D. Dukes also published his memoirs of this period of spying (1938).

¹⁷ There has been an assumption that Prince Ozay was the Armenian mystic Gurdjieff (c.1866–1949). Gurdjieff's 'official' biography takes this identification as a fact (Moore 1991, p. 341) and this is repeated in Washington (1993), pp. 175–6. However, Taylor (2004) gives robust argument that Prince Ozay was not Gurdjieff.

¹⁸ Dukes (1950), p. 121.

¹⁹ On Pierre Bernard see Love (2010) and Urban (2001).

²⁰ 'Sir Paul Dukes Married' 19 October 1922, *The Times* (London), 12, col. E and 'Vanderbilt Estate: Legacy for Lady Dukes' 8 March 1923, *The Times* (London), 10, col. F. In 1959, Dukes married Diana Fitzgerald in 1959.

²¹ Dukes (1940); in 1947 Dukes also published a book in which he attempted to explain the breakdown of British-Russian Relations in World War II.

²² Thumim (2004), p. 1.

²³ 'TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367. BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading. This file contains the notes: 'For SE Reynolds 23.9.49, Saturday 1 October 1949 – Yoga for the Middleaged' and '28th May 1948 – Mr. Cecil Madden – Yogi Programme: Sir Paul Dukes and Mrs. Verscholye – 9.15–9.30pm approximately.'

²⁴ 'View Research Report Week 22', in TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367. For 'flow viewing' see Raymond (2003 [1974]), p. 94.

²⁵ Thumim (2004), pp. 3–5.

²⁶ Yoga (April 22) BBC press schedule in TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archive Centre, Reading.

²⁷ 'Many letters ask for further and more precise breathing exercises of which very few were demonstrated' and 'Comment on the series as a whole further suggested that a number of viewers gave each demonstration a trial, in the hope that eventually some explanation would be given on the doctrinal aspects of Yoga. Hence there was considerable disappointment that little or no reference was made in the programme to the ideology of the Yoga cult, and many viewers were of the opinion that as, in their own words, 'the series consisted mainly of repetitive physical exercises, the whole system could easily have been explained in one demonstration.' TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367.

²⁸ The Legat school during the 1930s was a competitor to the Dame Ninette de Valois' Sadler's Wells Ballet School which moved into the Royal Opera House in 1946 and received a royal charter in 1956.

²⁹ 'Paul Dukes: Analysis of Correspondence Re: Yoga' TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archives Centre.

³⁰ Photograph from Sir Paul Dukes papers, Box 4, Hoover Institution Archives.

³¹ The 'Audience Reaction Index' was an idiosyncratic tool the BBC used to compare audience approval to various programmes. For more on BBC audience research see Thumim (2004), pp. 29–30.

³² 'Paul Dukes: Analysis of Correspondence Re: Yoga' in TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading.

³³ 4 April 1950 Memo, Norman Colins to H. Tel.T, in TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367: 'In particular if Dukes is supported by young ladies please ensure that he does not put his arms around them when talking as this friendly gesture is liable to be misinterpreted by viewers.'

³⁴ Memo from senior producer Mary Adams to series producer S. E. Reynolds: 'These projected programs on Yoga were to be absolutely straight-forward demonstrations with simple explanations from Sir Paul on the theory and practice of Yoga. I was very much disturbed to find that his first program on Saturday did not carry out these instructions. Sir Paul's manner was coy and frequently facetious, and the demonstration became a variety turn.... I feel so strongly on this matter that unless Sir Paul is prepared to revise the presentation entirely, and take the fullest instructions from you, we shall have to consider taking off the last two programmes in the series.' TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading.

³⁵ Memo, 3 April 1950 From S.E. Reynolds to H. Tel. T, in TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948–1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archives Centre, Reading.

³⁶ Personal Interview with Stella Cherfas (17 January 2013).

³⁷ Personal Interview with John Roycroft (17 January 2013).

³⁸ *Alternative London* (Saunders 1972: 184) described the centre as follows: 'Classes are held every day except Monday – mornings, afternoons and evenings. Lessons last for one hour, and must be booked in advanced at 4 for £3.50. They do not involve meditation or chanting – it's exercise for health and relaxation – though the teachers may come from various ashrams.' Cherfas, when interviewed in 2017, maintained that there were not teachers 'from various ashrams' and that the only teachers were herself and her close associate Jack London.

³⁹ Cherfas left London in the late 1970s, teaching yoga in Vienna, Austria before returning to London in the early 1990s. At the time of writing she continues to teach weekly yoga classes in the Covent Garden area.

⁴⁰ This is not to say there were not occasional references to yoga on BBC and ITV programming prior to 1971, e.g. Iyengar appeared on BBC television in a special feature 'Menuhin and his Guru' interviewed by David Attenborough in 1966, BBC Written Archive Centre.

⁴¹ The importation of the Hittleman series can be seen as part of a long and well-established American influence on British fashions and trends see McKibbin (1998) and Marwick (2000), p. xviii.

⁴² Hittleman (1964), pp. 7–9.

⁴³ Mills (1995)

⁴⁴ I have not found an autobiographical explanation as to why Hittleman practised yoga. Yogendra Mastanami (1897-1989) taught yoga in Harrison, New York and Long Island from c. 1920-24. Hittleman's books always focus on a practical, demystified, physical fitness practice and it is likely that Hittleman found he was able to earn a living by teaching yoga in this manner from the mid-1950s.

⁴⁵ 1966. 'Yoga Show Entered in Health Race' *New York Times*, Jan 10, p. 45.

⁴⁶ 1966. 'Yoga Show Entered in Health Race' *New York Times*, Jan 10, p. 45. Christian Science grew out of this movement, although it is now considered distinct. See Mark Singleton 'Suggestive Therapeutics: New Thought's Relationship to Modern Yoga' *Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity* 3 (2007), 64-84; Beryl Satter *Each Mind a Kingdom: American Women, Sexual Purity, and the New Thought Movement, 1875-1920* (London: University of California Press, 1999) and J. Gordon Melton 'New Thought and the New Age' in *Perspectives on the New Age* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1992), 15-29.

⁴⁷ Albanesse (2007), Jackson (1975 and 1981), Melton (1992) and Satter (1999). For the identity of Yogi Ramacharaka see Deslippe (2011).

⁴⁸ For more on New Thought's relationship to the development of a modern yoga, see Singleton (2007b).

⁴⁹ Kent, H. 1971. 'Yoga for Health – A breakthrough television programme' *Yoga & Health* 1, p. 17.

⁵⁰ Kent, H. n.d. 'Elliseva Sayers – Where are you now?' *Unknown Journal* 6, pp. 18-19 in Yoga for Health Foundation newspaper clippings collection.

⁵¹ Kent, H. n.d. 'Elliseva Sayers – Where are you now?' *Unknown Journal* 6, pp. 18-19 in Yoga for Health Foundation newspaper clippings collection.

⁵² Kent, H. 1971. 'Yoga for Health – A breakthrough television programme' *Yoga & Health* 1, p. 17.

⁵³ Still, J. 1992. 'Obituary: Lyn Marshall' *The Independent* (London) 9 May. Lyn Marshall also ran her own yoga centre off Baker Street in London during the 1970s. See Nash, C. (1972) 'Lyn's New Yoga Studio' *Yoga & Health* Vol 2. No. 10, p. 24-25 and 43.

⁵⁴ 2005. 'Howard Kent: Obituary' *The Daily Telegraph* (London), 21 March, p. 23.

⁵⁵ British Universities Film & Video Council, TVTimes Project 1955-1985 listings for April and May 1971 accessed at: <<http://tvtip.buafc.ac.uk>> on 7 May 2007.

⁵⁶ *Yoga & Health* (1972) October, Vol. 2, No. 8, p. 3.

⁵⁷ *Yoga & Health* stopped circulation in 1975 and another national magazine, *Yoga Today*, began in 1976. Howard Kent ran the magazine *Yoga for Health* as part of his Yoga For Health Clubs from 1975-1977. *Yoga Today* was renamed *Yoga and Health* around 1990. The

Library of Congress Catalogue has the national US magazine *Yoga Journal* beginning its run in 1975 and has no serials with 'yoga' in the title before this date.

⁵⁸ Kent, H. 1971. 'Yoga for Health – A breakthrough television programme' *Yoga & Health* 1, p. 17.

⁵⁹ (1973) 'Yoga Holiday – Special Report' *Yoga & Health* Vol. 2. No. 11, p. 7.

⁶⁰ *Yoga & Health* (1972) October, Vol. 2, No. 8, p. 3.

⁶¹ 1971. *Yoga and Health* 1, p. 31. The exact problem was never mentioned.

⁶² 1971. *Yoga and Health* 2, p. 38.

⁶³ 1971. 'Interview with Miriam Karlin' *Yoga & Health* 1, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Lynn Marshall died at the age of 38 of: 'I a. subarachnoid haemorrhage and b. ruptured artery aneurysm (stroke) and was certified dead on arrival at the University Hospital Nottingham. Her maiden name was reported as Wallis, occupation as secretary, wife of Kenneth Michael Marshall, Legal Executive.' GRO Death Certificate for Marshall, Lyn QBDX 803775, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, November 1992, Vol. 8, 958, entry no. 114.

⁶⁵ TVTiP database of London TVTimes 1955-1985, digitalised by Bournemouth University.

⁶⁶ Marshall (1982). This book accompanies the BBC TV series *Lyn Marshall's Everyday Yoga* to be broadcast on BBC1 early in 1983. The series was presented by Lyn Marshall and produced by Peter Ramsden. Episodes of Marshall's 'Keep Up With Yoga' have been preserved by the British Film and Television Archive.

⁶⁷ 'Keep Up With Yoga' No. 1. ITV production 3971, Recorded 5 April 1976, aired 5 September 1977. British Film Institute Archive.

⁶⁸ 'Keep Up with Yoga' ITV production 3973, episode 3, aired on 19 September 1977, recorded 3 May 1976.] British Film Institute Archive.

⁶⁹ Marshall (1982), p. 11.

⁷⁰ Marshall (1982), p. 13.

⁷¹ Marshall (1982), p. 19.

⁷² 'Yoga for All' R43/1,650/2, BBC Written Archive Centre.

⁷³ 'Yoga for All' R43/1,650/2, BBC Written Archive Centre, 16 Jan 1973 Lyn to Hazel – I was surprised to hear from Tony that you have been ill (as I thought yogis never were.) I hope you are fully recovered now though, and that I'll see you for a natter next time you are in London.

⁷⁴ 'Yoga for All' R43/1,650/2, BBC Written Archive Centre. Mrs Hazel Wills lived in Grinshill, nr. Shrewsbury, Salop.

⁷⁵ 'Yoga for All' R43/1,650/2, BBC Written Archive Centre. Memo dated 1 February 1974: 'Further to my memo of 30th November 1973, will you please arrange to reduce the reprint of Yoga for All from 10,000 to 7,500 copies at 65p. This will make the revised total print order to date 17,500 copies. J. M Hore' and 'Replied 28 November 1978 – John Hore – Yoga for All. Now out of print. No more copy available.'

⁷⁶ 'Yoga for All' R43/1,650/2, BBC Written Archive Centre. Memo dated 18 September 1973.

⁷⁷ Wills and Wills (1974), p. 9.

⁷⁸ Wills and Wills (1974). Hazel Wills had a degree in physiology and education and has taught in remedial education for the last seven years. Her husband was a sociologist working for a child guidance clinic, 'Yoga for All,' BBC Written Archive Centre.

⁷⁹ Wills and Wills (1974), p. 63.

⁸⁰ Nesbitt with Parry (1996), p. 2. In a short autobiographical piece in *Wake Up To Yoga*, Marshall reported that she studied yoga with an 'Indian doctor' who had been interested in the subject for fifteen years. It is possible that this referred to Dr. Puri.

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- ⁸¹ Nesbitt and Puri (2013) and Personal Interview with Kailash Puri (25 May 2007). She was editor of the Indian women's magazine *Roopvati*, where she wrote on health, beauty, relationships and cookery. She also advised Marks and Spencer on introducing Indian food in the 1970s.
- ⁸² Puri and Nesbitt (2013), p. 117.
- ⁸³ Personal Interview with Kailash Puri (25 May 2007).
- ⁸⁴ Personal Interview with Kailash Puri (25 May 2007) and Nesbitt and Puri (2013) Puri is also a novelist, 'sexologist' and 'agony aunt' for the Punjabi language community; according to her report, she never undertook any project without her husband's encouragement.
- ⁸⁵ Puri and Nesbitt (2013), p. 116.
- ⁸⁶ Puri and Nesbitt (2013), p. 116.
- ⁸⁷ Puri (1974), p. 1.
- ⁸⁸ Puri (1974), p. 22.
- ⁸⁹ Puri and Nesbitt (2013), p. 117.
- ⁹⁰ David McGowan, BBC Written Archives Manager, personal correspondence, 25 January 2007.
- ⁹¹ 'Programme Content' in 'Everybody knows (keep calm)' 1974–75, Gen Pubs Edit, BBC Written Archives Centre.
- ⁹² 'Everybody knows (keep calm)' 1974–75, Gen Pubs Edit, BBC Written Archives Centre.
- ⁹³ 'Everybody knows 1: help yourself – 13 January 1975' British Film Institute Archive.
- ⁹⁴ 'Everybody knows 1: help yourself – 13 January 1975' British Film Institute Archive.
- ⁹⁵ 'Everybody knows 1: help yourself – 13 January 1975' British Film Institute Archive.
- ⁹⁶ For example, Alan Marcuson talks about bringing a girl on a bad LSD trip to the house of Dr. Laing in order to ride out the trip, in Green (1988), pp. 178–180. See also Clay (1996), p. 80.
- ⁹⁷ Personal interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁹⁸ Semyon (2003).
- ⁹⁹ Personal interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ¹⁰⁰ Clay (1996), p. 158.
- ¹⁰¹ Holliman (2007).
- ¹⁰² Balaskas and Balaskas (1979).
- ¹⁰³ Balaskas (1975), p. 5.
- ¹⁰⁴ Balaskas (1978).
- ¹⁰⁵ 'Programme Content' in 'Everybody knows (keep calm)' 1974–75, Gen Pubs Edit, BBC Written Archive Centre.
- ¹⁰⁶ For more on the Human Potential Movement see Goldman (2012), Heelas (1996), Kripal (2007) and Puttick (2000).
- ¹⁰⁷ Williams (2003 [1974]), p. 34.
- ¹⁰⁸ Williams, (2003 [1974]), p. 134 and see also Rose (2001).
- ¹⁰⁹ See Partridge (2005b) and Campbell (2007 and 1999).

CHAPTER SEVEN

- ¹ Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ² 'The World of Topsy-turvy people,' *Today* 19 August 1961, press clippings at the RIMYI, Pune.
- ³ 1973. *Yoga & Health* May, p. 16.
- ⁴ 1991. *Yoga Biomedical Trust Newsletter* 14 (May), p. 10.

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- ⁵ ‘Yoga for Everybody, Elsie Russell asks Muriel Goodwin about a system she has devised’ Woman’s Hour from Glasgow 23 November 1962, BBC Written Archive Centre.
- ⁶ ‘Standing on my head: Neville Braybrook’ Woman’s Hour 24 July 1964, BBC Written Archive Centre.
- ⁷ ‘Healthy and Happy. Eileen Williams on Yoga’ Woman’s Hour 10 December 1970, BBC Written Archive Centre.
- ⁸ Salmon (1984), p. 1.
- ⁹ Szasz (1997 [1970]) but his criticism dates from Szasz (1956), and see also Laing (1959).
- ¹⁰ McKeown (1976), p. 16.
- ¹¹ Power (1991).
- ¹² Inglis (1964), p. 131.
- ¹³ Eagle (1978), p. 8.
- ¹⁴ Inglis (1979), pp. 189–192. The association of yoga with hypnotism goes back to the birth of the subject of hypnotism, see Baier (2009).
- ¹⁵ Monro and Fulder (1981), p. 2: ‘Psychotherapy, personal Development and Self-Help’ were omitted from the report but ‘most of them are included in our computerized database.’
- ¹⁶ Squires (1985) and Collins (2005).
- ¹⁷ Burrage (1990), pp. 1–23 and see also on professionalisation, Berlant (1975), Brooks (1986), Burnham (1998) and Kirk (1976).
- ¹⁸ Burrage (1990), pp. 1–23.
- ¹⁹ Saks (2003), p. 16 and see also Porter and Porter (1989) and Porter (2000).
- ²⁰ Saks (1986).
- ²¹ Beckman (1990).
- ²² Beckman (1990), p. 121.
- ²³ Beckman (1990), p. 129.
- ²⁴ Beckman (1990), p. 130.
- ²⁵ Adapted from Figure 1: ‘Four Types of Work’ Beckman (1990), p. 120.
- ²⁶ Adapted from Figure 2: ‘Four types of authority,’ Beckman (1990), p. 129.
- ²⁷ Kent (1974), p. 56
- ²⁸ Kent (1974), p. 8
- ²⁹ Kent (1977), p. 10.
- ³⁰ Kent (1977), p. 22. Yoga for Health Foundation Newspaper Clippings.
- ³¹ 1984. *Spectrum* (Spring), p. 37
- ³² Kent (1997), p. 10.
- ³³ Registered Charity No. 271648 statement of aims available on the Charity Commission’s website.
- ³⁴ 1977. ‘The Yoga for Health Foundation’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 26.
- ³⁵ 1977. ‘The Yoga for Health Foundation’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 26.
- ³⁶ 1977. ‘Remedial Yoga: How Yoga Cured an Alcoholic’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 25.
- ³⁷ Véronique Altglas (2005) has suggested that there is an overlap between 12-step programmes like Alcoholics Anonymous and members of other neo-Hindu (particularly Siddha Yoga) groups in France and Britain. The November 1979 B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Teachers Association newsletter contains a collection of ‘I resolve... just for today’ taken from Alcoholics Anonymous.
- ³⁸ 1977. ‘Remedial Yoga: How Yoga Cured an Alcoholic’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 25.
- ³⁹ 1977. *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 24.
- ⁴⁰ 1977. ‘Remedial Yoga: How Yoga Cured an Alcoholic’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 25.
- ⁴¹ 1977. ‘Remedial Yoga: How Yoga Cured an Alcoholic’ *Yoga and Life* (Summer), p. 25.

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- ⁴² 1977/1978. *Yoga and Life* (Winter/Spring), p. 20.
- ⁴³ Kent (1977) and 'The Yoga for Health Foundation Residential Centre, Ickwell Bury, Bedfordshire: a national Yoga Centre specialising in remedial, therapeutic and relaxation activities.' The Yoga for Health Foundation, Ickwell Bury, Northill, Bedfordshire 1978. Pamphlet in the British Library.
- ⁴⁴ Kent (1977).
- ⁴⁵ Personal interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).
- ⁴⁶ 1977/1978. *Yoga and Life* (Winter/Spring), p. 20.
- ⁴⁷ Personal Interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).
- ⁴⁸ Personal Interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).
- ⁴⁹ Kent (1985), p. 25.
- ⁵⁰ Promotional video for the Yoga for Health Foundation in the possession of Claire Buckingham and personal interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).
- ⁵¹ 1977/1978. *Yoga and Life* (Winter/Spring), p. 24.
- ⁵² 1978. 'The Yoga for Health Foundation Residential Centre' Pamphlet in the British Library.
- ⁵³ Brosnan. n.d. 'Yoga for the Disabled' *Yoga and Life* 8, p. 13. Yoga for Health Foundation Newspaper clippings.
- ⁵⁴ Personal interview with Claire Buckingham (14 September 2006).
- ⁵⁵ Manos (1987), p. 360.
- ⁵⁶ Iyengar, G. (1990), pp. 3–4.
- ⁵⁷ Iyengar, G. (1978), pp. 183–4.
- ⁵⁸ Iyengar, G. (1978), p. 184.
- ⁵⁹ Fletcher (1984), p. 83.
- ⁶⁰ Garfinkel (1987), pp. 388–393.
- ⁶¹ Garfinkel (1987), pp. 388–393.
- ⁶² Tourniere (2002), p. 48.
- ⁶³ Tourniere (2002), p. 129.
- ⁶⁴ Iyengar (n.d.), p. 3.
- ⁶⁵ Iyengar, 'My Yogic Journey,' 36–41.
- ⁶⁶ Letter from B.K.S. Iyengar to Diana Clifton dated 30 November 1970.
- ⁶⁷ Letter from B.K.S. Iyengar to Diana Clifton dated October 1967 in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute Maida Vale, London.
- ⁶⁸ Letter from B.K.S. Iyengar to Diana Clifton dated 29 October 1971. Iyengar writes: 'I think no pupil should accept complicated cases in the class. It is better that the teachers who are recruited pass the difficult cases to people like you and Silva. Let them not go to teach when they do not know.'
- ⁶⁹ 1985. *Dipika* 12 (Spring), pp. 1–2.
- ⁷⁰ Iyengar, 'My Yogic Journey,' 20–21.
- ⁷¹ Alter (2004), pp. 129–160.
- ⁷² Story repeated in 1985. *Dipika* 12 (Spring), p. 3.
- ⁷³ See Alter (2004) and Newcombe (2017).
- ⁷⁴ ILEA Further and Higher Education Sub-Committee 'Report 25.11.69 by Education Officer' London Metropolitan Archives ILEA/CL/PRE/16/24. The only record of these conditions I have found is a undated letter probably from the 1980s from the Ravensbourne Institute of Adult Education in North Lewisham, London entitled 'YOGA DECLARATION FORM: Attention to all Hatha Yoga Students' which states: 'It is unwise for students to join Hatha Yoga classes if they suffer from any of the following: - 1. Detached retina, 2.

Diabetes, 3. Epilepsy, including petit mal, which may be aggravated by deep breathing or hyperventilation of the lungs in any posture, 4. Hypertension or raised blood pressure, other conditions associated with heart disease, 5. Menier's disease or any similar condition in which there is disturbance of balance control of the body, 6. Severe physical handicaps. N.B. Please inform your tutor before beginning classes if you have had any serious illness, operations or broken bones. Letter in Archive of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).

⁷⁵ Letter to B.K.S. Iyengar from Diana Clifton dated 19 October 1975. Letter in Archive of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale).

⁷⁶ Increasingly, the prevention of injury has been connected to issues of legal liability and insurance. However, this subject belongs to a later time period.

⁷⁷ 1978. *B.K.S. Iyengar Teacher's Association Newsletter* (June), p. 1: 'We consider, however, that teaching of intermediate and advanced work is outside the scope of ordinary adult education classes'

⁷⁸ Mehta (1987), p. 25.

⁷⁹ Personal communication with Mira Mehta (16 March 2007).

⁸⁰ Mehta, Mehta and Mehta (1990), pp. 185-187.

⁸¹ Personal interview with Robin Monro (20 November 2005).

⁸² Munro and Fulder (1981), p. 80.

⁸³ (1984) *Yoga Biomedical Bulletin* Vol. 1, No. 1., p. 2.

⁸⁴ (1984) *Yoga Biomedical Bulletin* Vol. 1, No. 1., p. 4 see also Robin Monro (1985) 'Relax and keep taking the yoga / Focus on research into yoga therapy' *The Guardian* (London), 8 May.

⁸⁵ (1984) *Yoga Biomedical Bulletin* Vol. 1, No. 1., p. 4.

⁸⁶ (1984) *Yoga Biomedical Bulletin* Vol. 1, No. 1., p. 4-5.

⁸⁷ (1986) *Yoga Biomedical Trust Newsletter* and see Catherine Stevens (1991) 'Putting a yoga twist on diabetes - Catherine Steven on the therapy that may be a boon to sufferers of 'maturity onset' diabetes' *The Guardian* (London), 15 March.

⁸⁸ Personal interview with Robin Monro (20 November 2003). For more on the Vivekananda Kendra's yoga teaching see Beckerlegge (2014).

⁸⁹ (1991) *YBT Newsletter* No. 14 (May), pp. 5-6.

⁹⁰ Liz Hodgkinson (1992) 'No gain, just pain' *The Times* (London) 10 April.

⁹¹ (1991) *YBT Newsletter* No. 14 (May), pp. 8-9.

⁹² Judy Jones (1995) 'Yoga Guru Offers to Breathe Life Into Asthmatics' *The Observer* (London), 25 February.

⁹³ Personal interview with Robin Monro (20 November 2005).

⁹⁴ Fulder (1992), p. 181.

CHAPTER EIGHT

¹ For example, see Heelas and Woodhead et al., *The Spiritual Revolution*, Campbell (2007 and 1999) and Partridge (2005a and 2005b).

² The main presenters of more doctrinally defined forms of yoga, what De Michelis terms 'Modern Denominational Yoga' (2005), p. 188 include Yogi Bhajan/3HO see Deslippe (2012) and Jacobsh (2008), Ananda Marga (Voix 2008 and 2010), the Brahma Kumaris (Walliss 2002), the Divine Light Mission/Elan Vital/Prem Rawat (Geaves 2004, 2007 and 2009), ISKCON (See Dwyer and Cole 2007), Osho/Rajneesh (See Goldman 1999 and Palmer and Sharma 1993), Siddha Yoga (Altglas 2014 and Healy 2010), Sahaja Yoga (Conney 1999), the School of Economic Science, Sri Chinmoy, and Transcendental

Meditation (Mason 2015 and 1994); and more recently Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Art of Living Foundation (Jacobs 2015).

³ Personal Interview with Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007) and Djurdjevic (2014).

⁴ Sutcliffe (2000 and 2008).

⁵ Berger (1990 [1967]), McLeod (2007) and Parsons (1974) and Wilson and Barker (2005).

⁶ Campbell (1978); I used Campbell's framework in a sociological analysis of Iyengar yoga practitioners in Hasselle-Newcombe (2005).

⁷ Sutcliffe (1997 and 2000).

⁸ Heelas (1996).

⁹ British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 2.

¹⁰ Clark (1972).

¹¹ Clark (1972).

¹² British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 2.

¹³ British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 2.

¹⁴ British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 2.

¹⁵ 1972. *Yoga* 13, p. 11.

¹⁶ Pym (1969), p. 9.

¹⁷ 1972. 'Working With the Church' *Yoga* 13, p. 11.

¹⁸ British Wheel of Yoga, *Yoga Handbook*, 1973, 13.

¹⁹ 1974. 'Attitudes' *Yoga* 19, p. 7.

²⁰ British Wheel of Yoga (1973), p. 2.

²¹ This phrase ends Dukes (1950), p. 260.

²² Hamel (1982), p. 23.

²³ Hamel (1982), p. 23.

²⁴ See Brunton (1934) and personal interview with Jim Pym (7 July 2005).

²⁵ Brown (1973), p. 11.

²⁶ 1971. 'John Dunne on Universal Oneness' *Yoga* 7, p. 8.

²⁷ 1971. *Yoga* 9, p. 8.

²⁸ 1981. 'Yoga Reveals Real Life' *Yoga* 7, p. 6.

²⁹ For an explanation of the Western Esoteric tradition and a cogent placement of the New Age Movement with this tradition, see Hanegraaff (1998).

³⁰ Personal interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³¹ Nath (2001).

³² The Patañjali Yoga Centre was registered on 5 October 1980 (No. 281312) and personal interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³³ *Yoga, Spectrum* and personal interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³⁴ Personal Interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³⁵ Personal Interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³⁶ Personal Interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005) and for a speaking example see Nath as lecturer at the 'Fifth International Yoga Festival at Crystal Palace' *Spectrum* 1982, special insert.

³⁷ Personal Interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³⁸ Personal Interview with Indra Nath (18 August 2005).

³⁹ Annett (1976), pp. 91-92.

⁴⁰ Annett (1976), p. 92.

⁴¹ Annett (1976), p. 92.

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- ⁴² 1961. *Daily Mail*, 16 June (clipping in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale) and 1961. 'Working for Health' *Hampstead and Highgate Express and Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green News*, 7 July, p. 4.
- ⁴³ Iyengar (1966), pp. 24–5.
- ⁴⁴ Iyengar (1966), p. 24.
- ⁴⁵ Iyengar (1988), pp. 14–15.
- ⁴⁶ For more on Hanuman see Lutgendorf (2007)
- ⁴⁷ B.K.S. Iyengar.com 'Inauguration of the World's First 'Sage Patañjali' Temple at Bellur, Karnataka, India' on <<http://www.bksiyengar.com/modules/Institut/Yogini/temple.htm>> last accessed 17 June 2007.
- ⁴⁸ Iyengar (1993a), p. xx.
- ⁴⁹ Iyengar (1993b), p. xiv.
- ⁵⁰ Perez (1978), p. 129. The verse Iyengar refers to is 1 Corinthians 6:20 'For you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.'
- ⁵¹ Beatrice Harthan 'The Beginning of the Iyengar Movement in England' documents held at the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Maida Vale). Also see B.K.S. Iyengar (1988b), p. 148: 'Through the performance of asanas, I become totally involved and find oneness of body, mind and soul. For me this is active meditation.'
- ⁵² Iyengar (1988b), p. 150.
- ⁵³ Iyengar (1988b), pp. 150–51.
- ⁵⁴ 'The Sutras of Iyengar' untitled document in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale.
- ⁵⁵ 'The Sutras of Iyengar' untitled document in the archives of the Iyengar Yoga Institute, Maida Vale.
- ⁵⁶ Jackson (1978), p. 145.
- ⁵⁷ Iyengar (1988b), p. 162.
- ⁵⁸ Jackson (1978), p. 142.
- ⁵⁹ Iyengar, Evans, and Abrams (2005), p. 260.
- ⁶⁰ Personal interview with John Claxton (5 December 2004).
- ⁶¹ Green (1988), p. 160.
- ⁶² Cabral (1972 [2002]), p. 11.
- ⁶³ Personal interview with Kailash Puri (25 May 2007).
- ⁶⁴ Puri (1974).
- ⁶⁵ Mark Singleton (2005), p. 289 and 290.
- ⁶⁶ Although there are some pieces of the puzzle in De Michelis (2004), Alter (2004) and Singleton (2010).
- ⁶⁷ A phrase Singleton adapts from William James (1983 [1899]).
- ⁶⁸ 1970. *Yoga* 2, p. 1.
- ⁶⁹ Campbell (1972).
- ⁷⁰ Ross (2007), pp. 54–59.
- ⁷¹ Price (1979), p. 281.
- ⁷² Geaves (2009), p. 23.
- ⁷³ Barker (1989), p. 178; for more on the later transformations of Prem Rawat's teaching see Geaves (2009, 2007 and 2004).
- ⁷⁴ Barker (1989), p. 203.
- ⁷⁵ Green (1988), p. 232.
- ⁷⁶ Personal interview Geraldine Beskin (12 January 2007).
- ⁷⁷ Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).

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- ⁷⁸ Caldwell (2001), Altglas (2005) and Jain (2012 and 2014a)
- ⁷⁹ Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ⁸⁰ Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ⁸¹ Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ⁸² Personal Interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ⁸³ Personal interview with Kathleen and Roy Pepper (12 July 2005).
- ⁸⁴ Personal interview with Kathleen and Roy Pepper (12 July 2005).
- ⁸⁵ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006). For more details on Semyon's experience see Semyon (2003 and 2004).
- ⁸⁶ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁸⁷ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁸⁸ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁸⁹ Laing (1994), pp. 150-159.
- ⁹⁰ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁹¹ Personal Interview with Mina Semyon (16 August 2006).
- ⁹² Semyon (2004), p. 24.
- ⁹³ Hanegraaff (1999) and Heelas (1996).
- ⁹⁴ Iyengar, Evans and Abrams (2005), pp. 22–23.
- ⁹⁵ Lodge (1980), p. 7.
- ⁹⁶ Campbell (2007), p. 35 and Hamilton (2001).
- ⁹⁷ Script of Woman's Hour 'Yoga' by Stephen Black, broadcast Thursday 20 November 1958, 2-3pm, BBC Written Archive Centre.
- ⁹⁸ TV Talks 'Yoga' 1948-1950, T32/367, BBC Written Archives Centre.
- ⁹⁹ E.g. Maria Teresa Martinez De Vilar, 'Housewife Syndrome' in *Yoga* No. 27 (Spring 1976), 7.
- ¹⁰⁰ Transcript of Woman's Hour on 10. 12. 70 'Healthy and Happy. Eileen Williams on Yoga, Tuesday from Leeds.' BBC Written Archives Centre.
- ¹⁰¹ Cabral (1972 [2002]), p. 14.
- ¹⁰² E. Lester Burney 'Looking Back' *Ventre* 1980, 11 in the archives of the College of Adult Education, Manchester Central Library, M698/1/12003/35, Box 13.

POSTSCRIPT

- ¹ Djurdjevic (2014) and for Ahmed in 1930s Britain, Chris Josiffe 2017 and personal correspondence with William Breeze 11 August 2017.
- ² Dunne (1952).
- ³ Dwyer and Cole (2007), Knott (1986) and Rochford (2007).
- ⁴ Price (1979) and Geaves (2004).
- ⁵ On Sri Sri Ravi Shankar see Ališauskienė (2009) and Jacobs (2015) for Ramdev see Pathak-Narain (2017).
- ⁶ Thatcher (1987).
- ⁷ 1982. *Adult Education* 55, pp. 114-116.
- ⁸ Anecdotal reports suggest that yoga did not become a feature in most private gyms until the late 1990s.
- ⁹ Fonda (2005), p. 390-91.
- ¹⁰ Fonda (2005), p. 394.
- ¹¹ Tittley (1993), p. 3.
- ¹² Tittley (1993), p. 4.

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- ¹³ E.g. see Witts (2013).
- ¹⁴ Independent Yoga Network (2016) and personal interview with Ernest Coates (19 December 2004).
- ¹⁵ Yoga Alliance Professionals (2017).
- ¹⁶ Curtis (2016) and Saner (2016).
- ¹⁷ Broad (2012) and Remski (2016 and forthcoming).
- ¹⁸ Van Lysbeth (1968), p. 15.
- ¹⁹ Van Lysbeth (1971). An 'adept of Ashtanga Yoga Nilayam of Mysore' is shown in a photograph demonstrating Jalandhara Bandha in Van Lysbeth's *Pranayama* (1979), p. 135.
- ²⁰ Van Lysbeth (1971), p. 261 and Van Lysbeth (1968), p. 321.
- ²¹ One interviewee remembers first encountering Astanga Vinyasa yoga when Danny Paradise taught in Clapham Town Hall in south London in 1984.
- ²² Shattuck, K. (2000) 'Yoga Teacher to Stars Tries Becoming One' *The New York Times*, 24 September, Section 9, p. 1.
- ²³ Stanton, D. (1993) 'Yoga with Sting at the Ritz' *Esquire Magazine*, March.
- ²⁴ Guttridge (1998).
- ²⁵ Guttridge (1997).
- ²⁶ Scott (2001 and 2017).
- ²⁷ Berger (2006), Byrne (2014) and Smith (2007 and 2008).
- ²⁸ For example, the yoga teaching of Godfrey Deveroux (1998, 2001) who was a manager at the Life Centre in the late 1990s, helping pioneer the schedule of all-day yoga classes that eventually led to a successful business model.
- ²⁹ Strachan (1970), p. 25.
- ³⁰ Campbell (1972).
- ³¹ Hanegraaff (1998 and 1999) and Heelas (1996).
- ³² The Life Centre (2017) and Personal Interview with Jonathan Sattin (19 June 2013).
- ³³ The Life Centre Education Limited, Company number 04375834, annual accounts and registration documents at Companies House, <https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/04375834>.
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- ³⁶ Triyoga (2016 and 2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPpZIX3w3II> and personal communication with Genny Wilkinson-Priest on 5 April 2017.
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- ³⁹ See Jain (2014b) and McCartney (2017).
- ⁴⁰ The DHIIR was located at the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge from 1995–2004.
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