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INTERTEXTUALITY OF PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRA PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

This research starts from the view that the existence of a philosophical thought cannot stand alone. Yoga is a school of philosophy (darsana) that cannot be separated from the influence of other knowledge or systems of thought. Furthermore, this research seeks to explore the influence of yoga texts on the existence of the Yoga Sutra text by Rsi Patanjali. This research is classified as qualitative research with data collection methods: library study, document study and online data search. Data were analyzed using hermeneutic techniques with an intertextual approach. The results of the research show that the Vedic civilization has had an influence on the emergence of yoga philosophical thought. Likewise, the influence of the Upanisad texts and the Bhagavad Gita also had an influence on the existence of the Yoga Sutra book by Rsi Patanjali. Rsi Kapila's Samkya darsana also had an important influence on the emergence of Patanjali's philosophical views of yoga sutra.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Philosophy Yoga

I. INTRODUCTION

The Veda, as the sacred scripture of Hinduism, is employed by Hindus as the fundamental guide and orientation for life, directing all aspects of daily activity. The Veda contains a highly complex body of teachings that encompass both *parā vidyā* and *aparā vidyā*, namely spiritual (transcendent) knowledge and worldly (empirical) knowledge. Through spiritual knowledge, the Veda provides guidance for Hindus to live in accordance with the principles of spiritual truth in order to attain the highest goal of life, namely liberation from the bondage of *māyā*, known as *mokṣa*. Likewise, through worldly knowledge (*aparā vidyā*), Hindus are directed to live in accordance with the principle of *dharma* (truth and righteousness) so as to achieve well-being and prosperity in worldly life. *Parā vidyā* and *aparā vidyā* are complementary forms of knowledge contained in the Veda; together, they guide Hindus toward the ultimate aim of life total liberation at the end of the life cycle (*mokṣa*) while simultaneously enabling them, when embodied in the world, to attain welfare and happiness, referred to as *jagadhita*. Among the various scriptures and teachings that explicate and elaborate the principles of truth contained in the Veda, Yoga constitutes one of the central doctrines that articulates the relationship between human beings and God and explains how this relationship may be realized. Yoga represents a path toward recognizing and understanding the self in its totality, which subsequently extends to the recognition, understanding, and integration with the cosmos. This yogic process does not end at this level; rather, it progresses toward a higher stage of evolution namely, the realization and experiential awareness of the presence of God underlying the manifested universe. Thus, yoga is a holistic and comprehensive process encompassing physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of knowledge. *Karma Yoga* (the path of action), *Bhakti Yoga* (the path of devotion), *Jñāna Yoga* (the path of knowledge), and *Rāja Yoga* (the path of yogic practice and meditation) are the principal forms of yoga as expounded in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The totality of yogic knowledge accommodates the development of human logical reasoning as

well as practical capabilities in the disciplined practice of self-cultivation (*sādhana*). Such practice is carried out through the principles of continuous effort and habituation (*abhyāsa*) and non-attachment or sincere detachment (*vairāgya*), which together constitute the key to attaining self-realization or spiritual awareness. Various yogic textual sources that remain relevant for both practitioners and scholars in cultivating logical and practical understanding include the *Vedānta*, *Bhagavad Gītā*, *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra*, *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*, *Goraḥṣaṣataka*, *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā*, *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Darśanas*, as well as diverse forms of Balinese local wisdom preserved in Śaiva oriented *lontar* manuscripts, such as *Bhuana Kosa*, *Tattwa Jñāna*, *Gaṇapati Tattwa*, and *Wrhaspati Tattwa*. These textual sources demonstrate that yoga cannot be understood solely through its practical dimension; rather, philosophical inquiry into the implicit meanings contained within these texts enables both scholars and practitioners to deepen their knowledge and comprehension of the broader scope of yogic teachings.

The *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali is one of the foundational canonical texts (*kitab babon*) of yogic literature and has exerted a profound influence on the development of yogic thought and practice throughout the world. Tracing the historical emergence of yoga and examining the influence of Vedic teachings and philosophical traditions on the formation of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali constitute the primary focus of this study. Several considerations underlie the selection of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali as the central object of analysis rather than other yogic texts. First, this study seeks to investigate the textual origins of the *Yoga Sūtra*. Second, despite its prominence, relatively few contemporary yoga practitioners and scholars fully understand the rich symbolic meanings embedded within the text. Third, the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali offers a more comprehensive body of knowledge than many other yogic texts, encompassing not only yogic concepts but also yogic philosophy, including the ultimate nature of the self, insights into the workings of the mind, and the path toward self-realization and spiritual

consciousness. Fourth, the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali positions Śiva (Īśvara) as the highest reality within yogic devotion and practice, a perspective that closely aligns with the religious life of Balinese Hindus, who adhere to the framework of Śaiva Siddhānta as a form of devotion to the same supreme reality.

The *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali is a classical yogic text composed by the great sage Patañjali, which, according to various scholarly accounts, is estimated to have originated between the second century BCE and the fourth century CE. This text has served as the principal foundation of Yoga Darśana, systematically articulating an understanding of the nature of human consciousness, the root causes of suffering (*kleśa*), and the path toward spiritual liberation (*kaivalya*). As a classical philosophical work, the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali is strongly influenced by Sāṃkhya philosophy, particularly its dualistic framework of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Moreover, the *Yoga Sūtra* has exerted a significant influence on the emergence of later yogic texts and continues to function as a primary reference for contemporary yoga thinkers and practitioners in their efforts to explore and comprehend the discipline of yoga. The interconnectedness (*intertextuality*) among yogic texts forms a coherent and dynamic corpus of yogic knowledge that evolves in accordance with the historical and cultural contexts of its time.

According to Suminto, intertextuality refers to the reciprocal relationships among texts, whereby a given text cannot be detached from earlier or contemporaneous texts. The principal tenets of intertextuality, as he argues, include the understanding that a text does not exist in isolation; that a new text represents a transformation of earlier texts; that antecedent texts function as references or sources of inspiration for subsequent works; that texts are linked through relational networks; and that textual meaning is not singular but dynamic in nature.

The purpose of this study is to explore the textual relationships between the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali and Indian philosophical texts (*Darśanas*), the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, as well as texts originating from the Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago). Based on the foregoing

background, this research is of considerable importance for uncovering yogic knowledge both philosophical and practical as contained in the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali. It seeks to contribute to the scholarly and practitioner communities by facilitating a deeper inquiry into, analysis of, understanding of, and engagement with yogic teachings derived directly from this foundational yogic scripture. Through a comprehensive understanding of yoga and the cultivation of disciplined *sādhana*, this study ultimately aspires to support the realization of a harmonious and prosperous life.

II. METHOD

This research was designed as qualitative research which contains descriptions related to concepts and values. The type of data in this research is qualitative data which contains descriptions of yoga philosophy from various books containing yoga teachings, and describes how these texts are related or influenced by Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. Data was collected through library study methods, document study and online data search. Data were analyzed using hermeneutic techniques with an intertextual approach to several texts which were seen as having influence and relevance to the research topic. Data analysis was carried out throughout the research stages. This research uses descriptive data analysis presentation techniques which aim to create a description, general overview, presentation systematically using words in Indonesian, adapted to Enhanced Spelling (EYD).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Yoga is an ancient discipline that emphasizes a highly complex system of self-regulation, encompassing moral discipline, the cultivation of bodily movement, the regulation of vital energy through breath control, and the mastery of the mind and mental processes. The totality of these disciplines is directed toward knowing and realizing the presence of God within the self (Brahman, 2024). The core components of yoga consist of breath regulation and postural practice (a sequence of movements designed to enhance strength and flexibility), together with deep meditation. Yoga comprises a constellation of physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines. These

practices are understood to have originated thousands of years ago in India and have since been adapted in diverse cultural contexts, giving rise to various practical methodologies.

Vasavaraddi, as cited in Surpi (2022), outlines the historical development of yoga into several major periods: (1) yoga during the era of ancient Indian civilization; (2) the Classical Period, spanning approximately 500 BCE to 800 CE; (3) the Post-Classical Period, from approximately 800 CE to 1700 CE; and (4) the Modern Period, from 1700 to 1900 CE. The philosophy of yoga constitutes a comprehensive teaching that encompasses foundational metaphysical principles, an epistemological framework, and an axiological dimension concerned with the values and practical significance of yogic practice. Together, these elements form the intellectual architecture of yogic philosophy. According to the sage Pāṇini, the term *yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *yuj*, which carries three principal meanings: absorption or meditative concentration (*samādhi*, *yujyate*), union or connection (*vinakti*), and regulation or control (*vojayanti*) (Brahman, 2021). Meanwhile, according to the great sage Patañjali, as articulated in the *Yoga Sūtra*, yoga is defined as *yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*, meaning “yoga is the cessation or restraint of the fluctuations of the mind (*citta*)” (Saraswati, 2005), or the regulation of the seeds of thought and feeling (*citta*) from their modifications (*vṛtti*) (Krishna, 2015).

Despite these rich and comprehensive definitions, prevailing popular paradigms often reduce yoga to merely a form of physical exercise or bodily movement. However, when examined in light of the foregoing definitions and the more detailed expositions found in classical yogic literature, yoga emerges as a profoundly complex system. It is a teaching that encompasses ethical codes, moral guidelines, internal disciplines, breathing techniques, meditation practices, and methods for approaching the Divine through the unification of individual consciousness with universal Divinity. Historically, yogic practices can be traced at least to ancient Indian civilization, yet yoga has achieved widespread global popularity since the twentieth century. Yoga is also regarded as a science of cultivating the fundamental relationship between mind,

body, and soul. Its foundational teachings provide practices of self-awareness, spiritual knowledge, and philosophical insight drawn from the doctrines of ancient Hindu sacred texts, including the Vedas, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the philosophical systems (*Darśanas*) such as Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and Vedānta.

3.1 Internalization of Vedic Knowledge in Yogic Philosophy

Although the precise origins of yoga are not explicitly documented, ancient Hindu texts comprising poetry, hymns, and philosophical writings collectively known as the Vedas (c. 1500–500 BCE) reveal references to individuals who experienced states of ecstasy in Divine consciousness. These individuals are widely regarded as the precursors of later yoga practitioners, known as yogis. The origins of yoga can be traced to northern India more than 5,000 years ago. The term *yoga* itself first appears in the ancient sacred text known as the Ṛg Veda. The Vedas constitute a corpus of four ancient sacred texts composed in Sanskrit. The Ṛg Veda, the earliest of the Vedic texts, consists of more than one thousand hymns and mantras arranged into ten books, or *maṇḍalas*, which were employed by priests during the Vedic period. Yoga was subsequently refined and developed by the Ṛṣis (sages), who documented their practices and beliefs in the Upaniṣads, a major body of literature comprising more than two hundred sacred texts.

Yogic teachings are also prominently articulated in the Upaniṣads, a collection of texts revealed to ancient Indian mystic sages between approximately 700 and 500 BCE, containing teachings of a personal, introspective, and practical nature. As interpretative extensions of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads expound the concept of Ātman as the inner soul of the human being, which is inseparably united with Brahman, the supreme reality and the source of the universe. The *mahāvākya* “*Ayam Ātmā Brahma*,” as articulated in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, and “*Tat Tvam Asi*,” as expounded in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, convey the fundamental truth of the essential unity between the individual self (*Ātman*) and the universal soul (*Brahman*) (Radhakrishnan, 2008; Macaro, 2010). Although

Ātman is eternal, under the influence of māyā, or the veil of ignorance (*avidyā*), it undergoes repeated cycles of birth, death, and rebirth known as saṃsāra. A soul that attains the highest level of enlightenment through righteous action is liberated from this endless cycle of rebirth and attains mokṣa. This liberation constitutes the central philosophical aim of yoga.

With regard to the conceptualization of yoga, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* states: *tam yogam iti manyante sthiram indriya-dhāraṇam* (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.5.4), which signifies that yoga is a state of steadfast control over the senses and the mind (Radhakrishnan, 2008). Yoga, therefore, is understood as the complete mastery or regulation of the sensory faculties and mental processes. The senses and the mind function fundamentally as instruments through which the soul (*Ātman*) engages with the external, material world. The full mastery of these instruments is of paramount importance, as the true sovereign of the physical body is the soul (*Ātman*), rather than the soul being subjugated by the body. The body itself is regarded as an instrument *śarīraṃ sādhanam* for attaining the highest goal, namely the realization of the soul's true nature. The influence of the false self, known as ahaṃkāra (ego), which mistakenly identifies the physical body as ultimate reality, constitutes the root cause of various forms of human suffering and existential distress experienced by those who remain unaware of the true essence of the self as *Ātman*. Through the disciplined practice of yoga, the Upaniṣads provide practical guidance enabling human beings to transcend suffering and realize their essential unity with the sole ultimate reality of existence, namely Brahman. The *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (VI.18) states: *tathā tat-prayoga-kalpaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ pratyāhāro dhyānaṃ dhāraṇā tarkaḥ samādhiḥ*, which conveys that this is the prescribed method for attaining union: breath regulation, withdrawal of the senses, meditation, concentration, contemplation, and absorption (Radhakrishnan, 2008). The Upaniṣads further teach that meditation, mantra recitation (the chanting of Sanskrit syllables), the cultivation of prāṇa (vital life energy), and discernment of the mind constitute pathways to enlightenment. Mantra recitation generates vibrational resonance within the body and is

believed to assist in the purification and refinement of the body, mind, and soul.

In addition to the teachings contained in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā (1st–2nd century CE), a revered Hindu epic text, presents yoga as the secret to inner tranquility, mental equilibrium, and liberation from suffering. The *Gītā* delineates three principal paths through which an individual may attain higher consciousness and deeper understanding of the Divine (God), namely:

1. Karma Yoga, the path of action, which aims to liberate the individual from the bondage of karma through selfless and unattached action;
2. Jñāna Yoga, the path of intellect and wisdom, which seeks the pursuit of knowledge through rational inquiry and the study of sacred texts;
3. Bhakti Yoga, the path of devotion, which emphasizes inner purification, faith, prayer, and loving devotion to a personal conception of God.

3.2 Yoga in the Sindhu River Valley Civilization

According to Feurstein (2012), current research clearly shows the existence of yoga, as a loose structure of ideas and practices (called "Proto-Yoga"), in the Rig-Vedic era, more importantly, the age of the Vedic canon itself has been greatly pushed back. The main body of the Rig-Veda, the most important of the four Vedic hymns, was composed long before 1900 BCE. Generations of Western scholars have adhered to the so-called Aryan invasion model, which has now been refuted by new evidence. According to this outdated model, Sanskrit-speaking Vedic tribes invaded India between 1500 and 1200 BC, causing death and destruction among the native (allegedly Dravidian) population. This hypothesis, espoused primarily by the influential scholar Max Muller, quickly acquired the status of a popular dogma that has proven remarkably resilient even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

The first challenge to the Aryan invasion theory emerged when, in 1921, archaeologists discovered the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro on the banks of the Indus River in Pakistan. However, rather than question their

assumptions about Vedic Aryan origins, most researchers simply adjust the alleged invasion dates by several hundred years to account for the archaeological record. Under the influence of the invasion model, they overinterpreted certain archaeological findings, especially signs of violence visible in some layers of Mohenjodaro.



Figure 1 View of the remains of the city of Mohenjodaro

Source :

<https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohenjo-daro>

Meanwhile, most archaeologists have abandoned this particular explanation, but many Indologists continue to rely on outdated interpretations. The reason is that the alternative, strongly suggested by the facts themselves, requires a total revision of our understanding of the history of early Indian civilization. This means that the invasion of India by the Vedic Aryans never happened. Instead, they have been living in India for a long time. Very strong evidence refuting the Aryan invasion model has been presented and discussed in detail in the book *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization*. Therefore, it is not necessary to review all the facts, and a broad overview should be sufficient. The Vedic Aryans belong to the Indo-European language family, many of whose members undoubtedly also share many ethnic characteristics. The Vedic Aryans were related to the Celts, Persians, Goths, and several other linguistic-cultural groups that no longer exist. They are also distant cousins of us whose native languages are English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, and a number of other languages originating from Eurasia.

Despite over a century of research, we still don't know much about the origins of Yoga. However, we know that yoga originated in India 5,000 years or more ago. Until recently, many Western

scholars thought that Yoga originated much later, perhaps around 500 BC, which was the time of Gautama the Buddha, the famous founder of Buddhism. But then, in the early 1920s, archaeologists shocked the world with the discovery of the so-called Indus civilization—a culture we now know extended over an area of about 300,000 square miles (the size of Texas and Ohio combined). This was actually the greatest civilization in ancient times. In the ruins of the great cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa, excavators found depictions carved on soapstone seals that closely resemble yogi-like figures. Many other discoveries demonstrate the astonishing continuity between that civilization and later Hindu society and culture. (<https://www.embodiedphilosophy.com/a-short-history-of-yoga-2/>).

There was nothing primitive about what are now called the Indus and Sarasvati civilizations, named after two great rivers that once flowed in Northern India; currently only the Indus River flows through Pakistan. The civilization's urban residents enjoyed multi-story buildings, sewage systems unmatched in the ancient world until the Roman empire, large public baths whose walls were watertight with asphalt, geometrically laid out brick streets, and standardized baked bricks for easy construction. The Indus and Sarasvati peoples were major maritime nations that exported a wide variety of goods to Mesopotamia and other parts of the Middle East and Africa. Although only a few works of art survive, some demonstrate extraordinary craftsmanship.

For a long time, scholars thought that this magnificent civilization was suddenly destroyed by invaders from the northwest who called themselves Aryans (*ārya* means "noble" in Sanskrit). Some argue that these warlike nomads invented Yoga, others that the Indus people did. However, there are also those who consider Yoga to be the result of the joint work of the two races.

Now researchers are increasingly favoring a completely different picture of ancient Indian history. They came to the conclusion that there had never been an Aryan invasion and that the decline of the Indus and Sarasvati cities was caused by dramatic climate changes. This in turn appears to have been caused by a major tectonic

disaster that changed the course of the river. In particular, this disaster led to the drying up of India's largest river, the Sarasvati, along whose banks flourished many cities and villages (about 2500 sites have been identified so far). Today the dry river bed flows through the vast Thar Desert. If it weren't for satellite photography, we wouldn't know how many settlements are buried beneath the sand.

Why this is important to the history of Yoga, the Sarasvati river happens to be the most famous river in the Rig-Veda, which is the oldest known text in any Indo-European language. This book was compiled in ancient Sanskrit and spread by word of mouth for several generations. Sanskrit is the language used in writing most of the Yoga scriptures. It is related to languages such as Greek, Latin, French, German, Spanish, and most importantly English. We can see this kinship in the example of the word yoga itself, which corresponds to zugas, iugum, joug, Joch, yugo, and yoke in these languages. Sanskrit is like a big brother to other Indo-European languages.

Now, if the Sarasvati River dried up around or before 1900 BCE, the Rig-Veda must be earlier than that reference date. If this is so, then the composers of this collection of hymns must have been contemporaries of the Indus civilization, which flourished between about 3000-1900 BC. In fact, astronomical references in the Rig Veda indicate that at least some of the 1,028 hymns were composed in the third or even fourth millennium BCE.

So, the Sanskrit-speaking Aryans, who created the Rig-Veda, did not come from outside India to destroy the Indus and Sarasvati civilizations. They've been there a long time. So, what was their relationship with the Indus-Sarasvati people? Here opinions still differ, but there is a growing understanding that the Aryans and the Indus-Sarasvati people are one and the same. There is nothing in the Rig-Veda to suggest otherwise. In fact, the Rig-Veda and other ancient Sanskrit texts appear to be the "lost" literature of the Indus civilization. In contrast, archaeological artifacts of the Indus valley and surrounding areas provide us with the "lost" material base of early Sanskrit literature an

elegant solution to a problem that has long puzzled researchers.

This means that Yoga was the product of a mature civilization that was unparalleled in the ancient world. You can imagine that as yoga practitioners, we are part of an ancient and venerable tradition, which makes us part of the descendants of that civilization at least at the heart level. Many of the discoveries attributed to Sumer legitimately date back to what is now known as the Indus-Sarasvati civilization, which developed from cultural traditions that reliably dated back to the seventh millennium BC. In turn, this gave rise to the great religious and cultural traditions of Hinduism, but indirectly also gave rise to Buddhism and Jainism.

Indian civilization can claim to be the oldest long-lasting civilization in the world. His current problems should not blind us to his glorious past and the lessons we can learn from it. Yoga practitioners in particular can benefit from India's protracted experiments with life, especially its exploration of the mysteries of the mind. Indian civilization has produced great philosophical and spiritual geniuses, who between them have found every possible answer to the great questions, which are as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

Traditional Yoga seeks to provide reasonable answers to deep questions such as, "Who am I?", "Where do I come from?", "Where am I going?", and "What should I do?" These are the types of questions that, sooner or later, we all end up asking ourselves. Or at least, we have our own implicit answers to those questions, even though we may not have had time to formulate them consciously. Deep down, we are all philosophers, because we all need to understand our lives. Some of us put off thinking about these questions, but they never go away. We quickly learn this when we lose a loved one or face a serious health crisis.

So, we would do well to ponder these questions while we are in good shape. And don't think you have to feel down to do it. Yoga does not support a gloomy mood, but it definitely supports mindfulness in all its forms, including self-awareness. If we know what makes us who we are, we can function much better in this world. At the very least, our self-knowledge will give us

the opportunity to make conscious and better choices.

Classical Yoga recognizes a strict dualism between spirit (*puruṣa*) and cosmos (*prakṛiti*), which is reminiscent of Gnosticism, an esoteric movement that rivaled Christianity and flourished in the Mediterranean around the same time that Patañjali composed his aphorisms. Based on the power of this uncompromising dualism, Raja Bhoja in the eleventh century AD, writing a commentary on the *Yoga Sūtra*, was able to propose that yoga really means *viyoga*, or "separation": The basic technique of Classical Yoga, according to Raja Bhoja, is the *yogin's* "wisdom" (*viveka*) between the transcendental Self and the "non-self" (an-atman), which is the entirety of the psychophysical personality, belonging to the realm of matter.

3.3 Philosophical Foundations of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali

The yogic teachings systematized by the sage Patañjali constitute a spiritual guide for humanity in its pursuit of the ultimate goal of life, namely liberation (*kaivalya*). Within the Hindu tradition, the liberation of the soul (*Ātman*), or the true Self, from the bondage of material attachments particularly the physical body is regarded as the central purpose of human existence in the world. The path or means through which this liberation may be attained is **yoga**. According to Patañjali, yoga is defined as the cessation of the fluctuations or modifications of the mind (*yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*). Systematically, the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali provides a structured framework for understanding the essence of yoga, which consists of three principal dimensions: (1) the nature of human consciousness (*Puruṣa*), (2) the causes of suffering (*kleśa*), and (3) the path to spiritual liberation (*samādhi*). The totality of its 196 sūtras encapsulates Patañjali's core philosophical vision of yoga, which also serves as a practical guide for yoga practitioners in the disciplined application of yogic practice.

With regard to human consciousness, Patañjali maintains that when a yogin enters a state of deep meditation, he realizes himself as pure, unchanging consciousness, unaffected by material phenomena. This insight is articulated in *Yoga Sūtra* I.3: *tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'vasthānam*, meaning "then the seer (*Puruṣa*) abides in its

own true nature." Similarly, *Yoga Sūtra* I.24 states: *kleśa-karma-vipākāśayair aparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣa-viśeṣa īśvaraḥ*, which explains that Īśvara (God) is a special form of *Puruṣa*, untouched by afflictions, actions, their fruits, or the latent impressions arising from them. The manifestation or symbol of this supreme reality (*Puruṣa*) is the sacred syllable Om (AUM), as expressed in *Yoga Sūtra* I.27: *tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ*.

The obscuration of *Puruṣa* consciousness by ignorance (*avidyā*) constitutes the fundamental cause of the weakening or loss of awareness of *Puruṣa* within human beings, and it is for this reason that human beings experience suffering in the world. In *Yoga Sūtra* II.3, Patañjali states: *avidyā-asmitā-rāga-dveṣa-abhiniveśāḥ kleśāḥ*, which may be translated as: "Ignorance of reality, egoism or the sense of 'I-ness,' attachment to pleasurable objects, aversion or hatred, and the clinging to life or fear of death are the afflictions that constitute the primary causes of suffering in human existence" (Saraswati, 2006). *Avidyā* (ignorance), *asmitā* (egoism), *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (aversion), and *abhiniveśa* (the instinctive fear of death or strong desire to preserve life) are identified by Patañjali as the five fundamental causes of human suffering. These afflictions must be eliminated through *sādhana*, namely rigorous spiritual discipline along the yogic path. The complete eradication of these *kleśas* may be achieved through the practice of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, or the Eightfold Path of Yoga. According to Patañjali, *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* consists of: *yama* (ethical restraints), *niyama* (observances), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of breath), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses), *dhāraṇā* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation), and *samādhi* (absorption). All of these constitute integral components of yogic self-discipline (Saraswati, 2006). When all *kleśas* are removed through the rigorous application of yogic discipline, *Puruṣa* reestablishes itself in its true nature as the supreme soul, untouched by sorrow and suffering. This state is experienced by a yogin who becomes fully absorbed in *Puruṣa* consciousness upon entering *samādhi*, a state of transcendent unity with the ultimate reality.

3.4 Intertextuality of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali with Classical Hindu Texts

The existence of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali as a classical yogic text cannot be separated from the earlier classical Hindu scriptures that preceded it. Within the Upaniṣadic tradition, which is generally dated between the eighth and fifth centuries BCE, yogic teachings are already expressed metaphorically. Yoga as self-discipline or ascetic restraint (*tapas*) and as union with the Absolute (*samādhi*) can be found in the Upaniṣads as essential elements of yogic practice. The exposition of yoga in the Upaniṣads is predominantly metaphorical, as illustrated in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, where the allegory of a chariot drawn by unruly horses symbolizes the human body and its untamed senses. Although the yogic teachings in the Upaniṣads are not as systematically structured as those codified by Patañjali, the foundational seeds of yogic doctrine are clearly present within these classical texts.

Radhakrishnan affirms that the yogic teachings of Patañjali are fundamentally embedded in the Upaniṣads, stating: “*The yoga of Patañjali is an attempt to translate the metaphysical insight of the Upaniṣads into a practical discipline of self-realization*” (Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II). The control of the mind as a means of attaining the ultimate purpose of birth is articulated in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I.3.8: *yas tu vijñānavān bhavati samanaskaḥ sadā śuciḥ, sa tu tat padam āpnoti yasmād bhūyo na jāyate*, which means, “Therefore, one who possesses knowledge, who controls the mind and remains ever pure, attains that goal from which one is not born again” (Radhakrishnan, 2008). A similar principle is expressed in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* II.9, which teaches the disciplined control of breath, senses, and mind, comparing the regulation of the mind to a charioteer forcefully restraining wild horses (Radhakrishnan, 2008). The regulation of the senses, breath (*prāṇa*), and mind constitutes the central methodology of yogic practice, a principle consistently articulated within the Upaniṣadic tradition.

Beyond the Upaniṣads, yogic teachings are elaborated in profound depth within the classical text of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, which, according to certain interpretations, may itself be regarded as a yogic scripture. In alignment with Patañjali, the

Bhagavad Gītā emphasizes that yogic practice must be undertaken through the principles of *abhyāsa* (continuous, sustained practice) and *vairāgya* (detachment or non-attachment), as expressed in *Bhagavad Gītā* VI.35 and *Yoga Sūtra* I.12. The centrality of mental control in Patañjali’s yoga correlates directly with the teachings of *Dhyāna Yoga* in Chapter VI of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. In *Bhagavad Gītā* VI.24 it is stated: *yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram, tatas tato niyamaitad ātmany eva vaśam nayet*, meaning, “Wherever the restless and unsteady mind wanders, one should restrain it and bring it back under the control of the Self (*Ātman*)” (Pudja, 2004). The discipline of controlling the fluctuating mind and directing it toward the true Self constitutes the yogic method in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, a principle that is fully consonant with *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ* as articulated by Patañjali. Likewise, the repetition of the sacred syllable Om (AUM) is presented as a method for realizing and uniting with the Divine.

3.5 Intertextuality Of Patañjali's Yoga Sūtra Philosophy With Buddhist and Jain Traditions

Philological studies of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* reveal significant intertextual connections with early Buddhist traditions, particularly in the terminology and structure of meditation practices. The term *nirodha* in the famous formulation *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ* (*Yoga Sūtra* I.2) has a lexical and conceptual correspondence with *nirodha* in early Buddhist texts, particularly as used in the *Sutta Piṭaka* to denote the cessation of conditioned mental processes (Bronkhorst, 1993; Gethin, 1998). Although technically, yogic meditation practices such as *dhyāna* and *samādhi* show continuity with the Buddhist *jhāna* tradition, Patañjali consistently interprets these meditative experiences within the horizon of *Sāṃkhya* metaphysics, which affirm the existence of *puruṣa* as the transcendent principle of consciousness. This fundamentally differentiates *Yoga's* ultimate goal of *kaivalya*, namely the ontological separation of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*, from the Buddhist concept of *nirvāṇa*, which does not presuppose the reality of an eternal self (*anattā*) and is understood as the

extinction of the causes of suffering (Feuerstein, 2008).

Meanwhile, the intertextual relationship between the Yoga Sūtra and Jainism is most clearly reflected in the ethical structure of *yama* and *niyama*, which philologically and conceptually resonates with the Jain ethical vows (*vrata*), particularly *ahiṃsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, and *aparigraha*. This terminological similarity indicates that Patañjali operates within the established discursive field of *śramaṇa* asceticism, where the ethics of self-control is understood as the foundation of spiritual practice (Dundas, 2002). Nevertheless, interpretative differences remain clear: in *Jainism*, the practice of ethics is ontologically-cosmic because karma is understood as a material substance inherent in the soul, whereas in the *Yoga Sūtra*, ethics functions primarily as a means of purifying the *citta* to support the attainment of *samādhi* (Bronkhorst, 2011). Thus, philologically the *Yoga Sūtra* can be understood as a synthetic text that appropriates Jain and Buddhist ascetic vocabulary and practices, but restructures them within a distinctively *Brahmanical* soteriological framework.

3.6 Traditional Commentaries as Intertextual Engagements

The philosophy of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* cannot be adequately understood without considering the accompanying commentarial tradition (*bhāṣya*), particularly the *Vyāsa Bhāṣya*, widely recognized as the earliest and most authoritative commentary. Philologically, the *Vyāsa Bhāṣya* does not simply expound Patañjali's aphorisms, but actively frames Yoga within a systematic *Sāṃkhya* metaphysics, particularly through its affirmation of the dualism of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and the theory of the three *guṇas* (Bronkhorst, 1985). Many key Yoga concepts, such as *citta*, *kleśa*, and *samādhi*, gain doctrinal clarity precisely through Vyāsa's elaboration, so that in academic practice the *Yoga Sūtra* is often treated as a single textual unit with its commentary. Thus, the *Vyāsa Bhāṣya* can be understood as a form of constitutive intertextual engagement, in which the meaning of the root text is shaped and

stabilized through internal dialogue with the broader philosophical system.

In subsequent developments, the *Yoga Sūtra* continued to be reinterpreted through the lens of various Indian philosophical traditions, including *Vedānta*, *Tantra*, and modern thinkers, each integrating Yoga into their own theological and soteriological horizons. *Vedānta* commentators such as Śaṅkara (through traditional attributions and conceptual influences) tended to interpret Yoga's *samādhi* and liberation in harmony with the realization of *Brahman*, thus shifting Yoga's dualistic orientation toward *Advaita* non-dualism (Fort, 1998). Conversely, in the *Tantric* tradition, the concept of Yoga was reinterpreted cosmologically and ritually, with an emphasis on the subtle body (*sūkṣma-śarīra*) and energy (*śakti*), thereby expanding the scope of Yoga practice beyond classical asceticism (Feuerstein, 2008). In the modern period, figures such as Vivekananda reinterpreted the *Yoga Sūtra* within a universalistic and psychological framework for a global Audience. This dynamic suggests that the *Yoga* commentaries are not merely derivative but constitute intertextual sites where the *Yoga Sūtras* are continually negotiated, reconceptualized, and integrated into diverse systems of thought.

3.7 Intertextuality Yoga Sutra Patanjali in Modern and Global Contexts

In a modern and global context, Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* has undergone extensive intertextualization through the adaptation of its teachings into various modern yoga movements, such as Haṭha Yoga, Rāja Yoga, and contemporary postural Yoga. Although Patañjali's text explicitly de-emphasizes the practice of āsana in the modern physical sense, the concept of aṣṭāṅga-yoga has been reinterpreted and simplified to suit the spiritual, health, and psychological needs of modern society (De Michelis, 2008; Singleton, 2010). Rāja Yoga, particularly through its rereading by Vivekananda, positions the *Yoga Sūtra* as a rational and universal meditation system compatible with modern science and Western

psychology, thus expanding its Audience beyond the Indian religious context (White, 2014). In this process, the Yoga Sūtra no longer functions solely as a classical soteriological text, but rather as a source of philosophical legitimacy for modern, intercultural, and interfaith yoga practices.

Furthermore, the Yoga Sūtra plays a significant role in Western philosophical and spiritual discourse, particularly in consciousness studies, alternative spirituality, and mindfulness practices. From the 20th Century to the early 21st Century, the text has often been read alongside humanistic psychology, phenomenology, and non-dogmatic spirituality, which encourages a reinterpretation of concepts such as *samādhi*, *citta*, and *kleśas* within the framework of modern subjective experience (Flood, 2006; Strauss, 2019). However, some scholars have criticized the Yoga Sūtra's tendency to decontextualize it, stripping it of its *Sāṃkhya* metaphysical foundations, ascetic ethics, and classical Indian historical context, potentially reducing Yoga to a mere Well-being technique (Singleton & Byrne, 2008). Thus, the intertextuality of the Yoga Sūtra in the modern era is ambivalent: on the one hand, it enriches and expands the text's meaning, but on the other hand, it raises hermeneutic challenges regarding the authority, Authenticity, and continuity of the tradition.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study affirms that the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali is a classical text that not only occupies a central position within the tradition of *Yoga Darśana*, but also constitutes a strong intertextual nexus with classical Hindu texts such as the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, as well as various philosophical traditions of India and the Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago). Through an intertextual approach, this research demonstrates that the teachings of yoga in the *Yoga Sūtra* did not emerge in an intellectual vacuum; rather, they are the result of an ongoing intellectual and spiritual dialogue among texts, traditions, and their respective historical contexts. Philosophically, the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali functions as a bridge between the speculative metaphysics of the *Upaniṣadic* tradition and a

systematic spiritual praxis. Key concepts such as *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*, *kleśa*, *samādhi*, and *kaivalya* represent the internalization of Vedic and *Upaniṣadic* knowledge into an applied framework of spiritual discipline. This intertextuality reveals that yoga is not merely a technique for controlling the body and mind, but rather a transformative path of consciousness aimed at liberating *Puruṣa* from the dominance of *Prakṛti* and the illusion of ego (*ahaṃkāra*).

Within modern and global contexts, this study critically examines the reductionist tendency to interpret yoga solely as a physical practice or a lifestyle commodity. In contrast, the intertextual perspective elucidates yoga as an integrated system encompassing ethical, ontological, epistemological, and soteriological dimensions that are inherently inseparable. Consequently, contemporary yoga practice must be re-situated within its philosophical framework in order to preserve its transcendental orientation and its fundamental aim of spiritual liberation. Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali remains highly relevant in addressing the challenges of modern human existence such as identity crises, alienation, existential anxiety, and the fragmentation of consciousness because its teachings offer universal and cross-cultural methods for mental regulation, disciplined self-cultivation, and the integration of consciousness. This relevance is further strengthened when yoga is understood as a practice of awareness rooted in the wisdom of classical texts while remaining open to dialogue with contemporary global contexts. Accordingly, the intertextuality of the *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali not only enriches the academic field of yoga studies but also provides a robust philosophical foundation for the development of authentic, reflective, and meaningful yogic practice in the modern era. This study recommends that future research in yoga studies continue to integrate classical textual analysis, local cultural contexts, and global challenges, thereby ensuring that yoga remains a viable path for holistic human liberation and the transformation of consciousness.

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