

11 Manilal Dvivedi, the Forgotten “Expert” on “Hinduism”

Manilal Dvivedi (see Figure 6) has not received a great deal of attention from “Western” scholars, and more often than not appears as no more than a footnote in publications on Theosophy.¹³⁶ The only author who hints at Dvivedi’s importance for the Theosophical Society is Emmet Coleman in his article, *The Sources of Madame Blavatsky’s Writings* (see Chapter 9). Dvivedi’s involvement in the Theosophical Society is only briefly considered by Thaker and is avoided entirely by Suhrud, his major biographers. Suhrud does not include a single article published by Dvivedi in *The Theosophist* or any other Theosophical journal in his survey of his subject’s works. Thaker mentions some of Dvivedi’s writings that were published in Theosophical journals but does not analyze them in any detail. It is surprising that Dvivedi has received so little attention since he was doubtless an influential figure in the Gujarati elite, a driving force in India’s independence movement, played an important role in the development of Gujarati education, was an influential poet and litterateur, and was also, among many other things, a notable politician. For the discussion in the present chapter, however, what matters is that Dvivedi joined the Theosophical Society in 1882 and remained an active member until his death. I argue that his writings played a pivotal role in the uptake of “Hinduism” in the Theosophical Society and that his *Rāja-Yoga* should be considered as one of the most important books for Adyar Theosophy.

It is striking that Dvivedi is not mentioned by Olcott in his *Old Diary Leaves* nor by Ransom in her *A Short History of the Theosophical Society*. Olcott evidently knew Dvivedi and was convinced that Dvivedi was a respectable scholar. Not only did Olcott ask Dvivedi to publish and translate the *Maṇḍukyopaniṣad*,¹³⁷ but he also corresponded with him, as was documented in *The Theosophist* (see below). In addition, at the “Fifteenth Convention and Anniversary of the Theosophical Society,” a letter by Dvivedi was read to the public. Olcott officiated

136 Dvivedi is absent in Joscelyn Godwin’s *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, as well as in Isaac Lubelsky’s *Celestial India* and all other publications on the Theosophical Society consulted for this book. He is only mentioned by Michael Bergunder in connection with the *Bhagavadgītā* edition of Wilkin’s translation by Tatya (Bergunder, “Die Bhagavadgita im 19. Jahrhundert,” 201) and in a comment by Gandhi. There we read that Gandhi read Dvivedi alongside Vivekananda with friends in South Africa. Bergunder, “Experiments with Theosophical Truth,” 408.

137 See Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, *The Māndūkyaopaniṣad: With Gaudapāda’s Kārikās and the Bhāṣya of S’ankara* (Bombay: The Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund, 1894), Translated into English by Manilal N. Dvivedi, Preface.



Figure 6: Manilal Dvivedi (1858–1898). (Photograph by an unknown photographer. Not dated. Wikimedia Commons accessed February 13, 2021. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manilal_Nabhubhai_Dwivedi.jpg).

over the convention.¹³⁸ Whether Olcott regarded Dvivedi as a friend, as Dvivedi claims in the preface to the *Maṇḍukyopaniṣad*, cannot be determined, but Olcott certainly knew Dvivedi. Beyond this, the fact that Olcott trusted him with the translation and publication of the afore-mentioned *Upaniṣad* shows that Olcott respected Dvivedi as scholar. His works were well known in the Theosophical Society and beyond, as is shown by the positive reviews in the pages of theosophical journals of all of Dvivedi’s major publications.¹³⁹

138 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Fifteenth Convention and Anniversary of the Theosophical Society: At the Head-Quarters, Adyar, Madras, December 27th, 28th, and 29th, 1890,” *Lucifer* VII, no. 42 (1891); “Letter from the Learned Indian Sankrit Author, Professor Dvivedi”.

139 Anon, “Raja-Yoga,” *Lucifer* VII, no. 41 (1891); Anon, “The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali,” *Lucifer* VII, no. 42 (1891): 509–12; Anon, “Monism or Advaitism?,” *Lucifer* VIII, no. 43 (1891); Anon, “The Ma’ndu’kyopanishad with Gaudapa’da’s Ka’rika’s and the Bha’shya of S’ankara,” *The Theosophist* XVI, no. 2 (1894).

Dvivedi’s major monograph in English, *Monism or Advaitism?*, was supposedly written in just a few days. Two years after the publication of the first edition, it was reviewed in *Lucifer*. The reviewer applauded the publication and wrote, “Professor Dvivedi’s books should be referred to by our Western theosophical writers and lecturers for the learned support they give to the system we are so busily engaged in constructing in the West.”¹⁴⁰ Dvivedi was treated as an expert on Indian thought. The reviewer added:

our brother Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, in publishing his excellent text book of the Advaita philosophy and science, is doing yeoman service for that ‘Reformation’ which is needed not only in the West but also in the East itself. The difference is that whereas the West has to learn the lesson for the first time, the East has to ‘regain the memory it has lost’.¹⁴¹

The message of *Monism or Advaitism?* was well-received in the Theosophical Society. Besant, as the co-editor of *Lucifer*, most likely knew the book and it seems that she read Dvivedi’s publications frequently in 1891. In addition to the two reviews just mentioned, this is suggested by a third on Dvivedi’s *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali* and by an article by Dvivedi, all of which appeared in *Lucifer* in 1891.

In 1895, *The Imitation of Śaṅkara* was published (Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, *The Imitation of Śaṅkara: Being a Collection of Several Texts Bearing on the Advaita* (Bombay, London: Pandit Jyestaram Mukundji; George Redway, 1895)). It is composed of two parts: an introduction and a rather lengthy section with translations, as the subtitle of the work leads the reader to expect (“Being a Collection of Several Texts Bearing on the Advaita”). This work was reviewed by G. R. S. Mead in *The Theosophist*. The tone of the review is less positive than those in *Lucifer*. Mead wrote that Dvivedi included many translations, “[. . .] but no reference is added beyond the general title of the work from which the text is selected. This is a grave fault” (George R. S. Mead, “The Imitation of Śaṅkara,” *Lucifer* XVIII, no. 103 (1896): 83). He also criticized the title of the book, on the grounds that using a title similar to “Thomas à Kempis[’]” (Mead, “The Imitation of Śaṅkara,” 83) *Imitation of Jesus* would suggest that Śaṅkara had the same qualities as Jesus had, which he did not, in Mead’s view. “Śaṅkara, no doubt, was a saintly man and a religious teacher, but he was mainly a commentator. His work was mainly commentary and philosophical exposition, and his distinct teaching does not come under the head of Shruti or revelation” (Mead, “The Imitation of Śaṅkara,” 83). Dvivedi most likely did not appreciate this comment. Mead concluded, “the whole is completed by useful indexes and a glossary, and prefaced by an introduction in praise of Advaita-vāda, called by the author the ‘Absolute Philosophy’” (Mead, “The Imitation of Śaṅkara,” 83). Mead surely did not approve the praise of the “Advaita-vāda,” as he tended rather towards a “Western” oriented Theosophy than to an “Eastern” version, for which he also criticized Annie Besant in later years. George R. S. Mead, “Reviews and Notices: Mrs. Besant’s ‘Gītā’ Lectures,” *The Theosophical Review* Vol. XXXIX, no. 230 (1906): 188.

¹⁴⁰ Anon, “Monism or Advaitism?,” 76.

¹⁴¹ Anon, “Monism or Advaitism?,” 76.

In the following, Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga* will be the main topic of discussion. I argue that this work was key to the formation of the concept of the stages of initiation discussed in connection with Besant's *The Path of Discipleship* (Chapter 8) and Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence* (Chapter 9). As Dvivedi's writings have not yet been considered in depth in the scholarship on Theosophy, several of his early articles in *The Theosophist* will also be discussed, together with a selection of his other works in English. It will be seen that his writings were deeply rooted in Theosophical thought. I argue that he translated his understanding of Advaita Vedānta and his ideas on *rājayoga* into Theosophy and that he also recontextualized "Hinduism" in the light of his Theosophical learning. A range of discourses spanning European academia, the Indian independence movement, especially in its the Gujarati context, and Theosophy were connected in Dvivedi's writings. As an Indian "expert" on "Hinduism," he presented a particular understanding of "Hinduism" as Advaita Vedāntic *rājayoga* and elaborated this in relation to Theosophy, as will be discussed below. First, though, it will be useful to provide a biographical sketch of Dvivedi's life, as these events provide a background against which some of his writings become more intelligible.

11.1 A Biography In Between Mesmerism, Theosophy, Sexual Abuse, Academic Success, and Constant Illness

The biographical information on Manilal Dvivedi (1858–1898) in this section is drawn from the two major publications on him: Dhirubhai Thaker's biography and a chapter in Tridip Suhrud's PhD thesis, *Narrations of a Nation*. These two biographies are the most important sources for Dvivedi's Gujarati writings because they include English translations, and provide overviews and summaries, of Dvivedi's writings in Gujarati. Both of his biographers describe Dvivedi's youth as a constant oscillation between strict learning and sexual exploration.¹⁴² Thaker even speaks of "a sort of obsession for sex."¹⁴³ The two writers base their accounts on Dvivedi's autobiography. While Dvivedi had intended his autobiography to be published immediately following his death, it did not in fact appear until 1979, as the friend to whom he entrusted the responsibility

¹⁴² Dhirubhai Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, Makers of Indian Literature (New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay: Sahitya Akademi, 1983), 14–20; Tridip Suhrud, "Narrations of a Nation: Explorations Through Intellectual Biographies" (PhD. Diss, Gujarat University, 1999), 104–7.

¹⁴³ Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 17.

chose to hold it back.¹⁴⁴ While the complete text is only available in Gujarati, partial translations into English are given by Suhrud. The reasons for the late publishing are various, but it seems that the sexual escapades Dvivedi describes, and especially the homoerotic episodes of his youth, were not thought to be appropriate for public consumption. Dvivedi’s life was full of turbulence, and he seems to have frequently regretted his sexual adventures, which caused him to suffer psychologically as he perceived them as tokens of his failure to live up to his own ideals. His visits to prostitutes during his time in Bombay left him with a case of syphilis, from which he suffered until his death.¹⁴⁵ The struggle between desire, ideal, illness, and constant work appears as an ever-present feature of Dvivedi’s life. Read through a “Theosophical filter,” Dvivedi’s autobiography can be interpreted as the life of a chela who is approaching liberation, and it may be that he had a Theosophical audience in mind when he wrote it. However, any such suggestion must remain speculative.

Dvivedi was born into a middle-class family. His father never acquired a formal education and did not place great value on schooling. As a result, he did not support his son’s interest in higher education. Dvivedi was educated first in the vernacular school and then attended the higher classes of the Government Gujarati school. With the support of his teachers, he attempted to pass the matriculation exams in 1876 but failed to score sufficiently high marks in Sanskrit. On his second attempt, however, he not only succeeded but was awarded a scholarship. This led to his father permitting him to go to Bombay in order to attend Elphinstone College (Figure 7). At the age of thirteen, Dvivedi had been married to a four-year-old girl named Mahalaxmi. The marriage was never happy and Dvivedi was often angry with his wife because he thought she was of bad character. After completing his B.A., Dvivedi remained in Bombay from 1881 to 1885, where he lived for some of that time with his wife. However, the household was never a happy one and she repeatedly left to stay at her parents’ home. The descriptions in his autobiography draw a picture of cruel abuse on the part of Dvivedi. Dvivedi himself attributed the failure of his marriage to what he perceived to be his wife’s inability to take responsibility for her actions.¹⁴⁶ Because his father insisted that he should earn a wage, Dvivedi did not study for a higher academic degree. However, he found work in the educational system and continued to study and to write throughout his life.¹⁴⁷

144 Suhrud, “Narrations of a Nation,” 104.

145 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 19.

146 Suhrud, “Narrations of a Nation,” 104–13.

147 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 17.



Figure 7: Elphinstone College in the late 19th century, around the time Dvivedi attended. (Photograph by an unknown photographer. Not dated. Wikimedia Commons accessed February 13, 2021. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Elphinstone_College_and_Sasoon_Library.jpg).

In 1885, Dvivedi was appointed Professor of Sanskrit at the Sanakdas College, Bhavangar (Figure 8).¹⁴⁸ During his lifetime, he repeatedly fell ill and was often unable to attend to his official duties, although he always continued to write and to publish. In 1888, his illness forced him to leave his position and he retired with a full Government pension. During his time in Bhavangar, Dvivedi taught numerous students who were to become influential figures in the Indian independence movement and later in post-independence India, among them M. K. Gandhi.¹⁴⁹ When he died in 1898 he left behind a huge corpus of monographs, articles, poems, and translations.¹⁵⁰ No less than seventeen articles, letters, and translations were published in Theosophical journals, and a number of others seem to have been composed with a Theosophical audience in mind.

¹⁴⁸ Suhrud, “Narrations of a Nation,” 110.

¹⁴⁹ Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 24–25.

¹⁵⁰ For a bibliography of Dvivedi’s works, see Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 87–91.



Figure 8: Sanakdas College at the end of the 19th century. This is the college where Dvivedi was appointed professor and where he taught M. K. Gandhi. (Photograph by an unknown photographer. Not dated. Wikimedia Commons accessed February 13, 2021. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Shamaldas_College_Bhavnagar.jpg).

His voluminous writings led to Dvivedi being recognized in the “West” as a distinguished scholar. The publication of *Rāja-Yoga* in 1885 was received positively. It was hailed by Edwin Arnold, in particular, who was close to the Theosophical society, as well as receiving the applause of one “Dr. Buhler,”¹⁵¹ most likely Georg Bühler (1837–1898).¹⁵² Bühler invited Dvivedi to the Oriental Congress in 1886 in Vienna. Although Dvivedi did not attend, the invitation itself shows how well received *Rāja-Yoga* was in “Western” indological circles. Dvivedi’s other major monograph, *Monism or Advaitism?*, was the enlarged version of an earlier article, *The Advaita philosophy of Śaṅkara*, which had been published in 1888 in the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*. When the monograph was published the following year, it was applauded by some notable figures in the “West.” Thaker writes: “His English books made him well-known among European

¹⁵¹ Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 20.

¹⁵² For more information on Bühler, see Moriz Winternitz, “Bühler, Johann Georg,” in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, ed. Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 47 (1903), 339–48.

scholars. Dr. Roast, Dr. Buhler, Herbert Spencer, William Hunter and several other scholars wrote letters of compliments to him.”¹⁵³

Dvivedi's translations were also well received, as can be seen from a review by the well-known German scholar Hermann Jacobi (1850–1937)¹⁵⁴ of a translation of the *Tarakakaumudī* published in 1886. Jacobi expressed therein his appreciation for the work of Dvivedi and acknowledged him as a scholar who was well versed in both Sanskrit literature and European thought.¹⁵⁵ To this he added that Dvivedi's publication was an important aid and that he would recommend it to students of Sanskrit.¹⁵⁶ Jacobi's great esteem for Dvivedi's work is clear, and he even expressed his hopes that more such works would be published in the future.¹⁵⁷ Nor was the high regard for Dvivedi a fleeting matter. As late as 1920, Windisch was still mentioning Dvivedi's translation of the *Tarakakaumudī* as the standard translation of the work.¹⁵⁸

In 1882, Manilal Dvivedi joined the Gujarati Social Union, a club for graduate students in Bombay. There he met trained mesmerist Karsandas Narottamdas Bhagodia. At the time, there was a vibrant mesmerist scene in India,¹⁵⁹ of which Bhagodia was part, and from him Dvivedi learned the key techniques and began to practice as a mesmerist himself.¹⁶⁰ Dvivedi's interest in mesmerism was long

153 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 29. Thaker often does not include references in his biography of Dvivedi, as is the case here. It is thus often impossible to verify his claims. Nonetheless, it seems that Dvivedi's writings were – although perhaps not to the extent Thaker would have us believe – well known in the academy, as the review by Hermann Jacobi suggests (see below).

154 For more information on Jacobi, see Helmuth von Glasenapp, “Hermann Jacobi,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 92 (1938): 1–14.

155 “Durch die gute und gewissenhafte Herausgabe derselben [der *Tarakakaumudī*] hat M. N. Dvivedi vollen Anspruch auf unsern Dank. Grösser aber noch ist das Verdienst, welches er sich durch seine erklärenden Anmerkungen (48 Seiten Noten zu 22 Seiten Text) erworben hat. Selbst tief eingedrungen in das System und wohlbelesen in der einschlägigen Litteratur, sowie nicht unbekannt mit der abendländischen Logik, sind seine Erläuterungen stets äusserst willkommen” Hermann Jacobi, Laugākshi Bhāskara, and Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Review: The *Tarakakaumudī*, Being an Introduction to the Principles of the Vaiśeṣhika and the Nyāya Philosophies,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 1 (1887): 77.

156 “Ein vorzügliches Hilfsmittel zur gründlichen Einführung in das Studium der Nyāya-Vaiśeṣhika-Philosophie, das ich angelegentlichst jungen Sanskritisten [. . .] empfehle.” Jacobi, Bhāskara and Dvivedi, “Review,” 78.

157 Jacobi, Bhāskara and Dvivedi, “Review,” 77–78.

158 Ernst Windisch, *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und indischen Altertumskunde*, Grundschrift der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde 1. Band, 1. Heft B. (Berlin, Leipzig: Vereinigung Wissenschaftlicher Verleger, 1920), Zweiter Teil, 303.

159 Baier, *Meditation und Moderne*, 321.

160 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 19.

lasting and he wrote a well-received book on the topic in Gujarati.¹⁶¹ After encountering some difficulties in his early attempts to practice mesmerism, Dvivedi wrote a letter to Olcott asking for advice, and this was published in *The Theosophist* in 1883.¹⁶² Dvivedi described the great success he had had in mesmerizing his subject, “a male friend of mine,” an experience that led him to become “a firm devotee of spiritualism and mesmerism.” However, he claimed that after some time he had lost control over his subject during the mesmeric trance and his subject had experienced certain horrifying episodes. He thus wrote to Olcott to ask for help in this “very essential scientific matter.”¹⁶³

Dvivedi viewed Olcott as an expert in mesmerism, a perception that is unsurprising given that Olcott had promoted mesmerism in India and Ceylon, and had actively practiced mesmeric healing in Ceylon.¹⁶⁴ Olcott’s response pointed to the dangers of mesmerism and indicated that inexperienced mesmerists should be very careful in employing the technique. However, it did not include any practical advice. He wrote:

The best advice to give under the circumstances, and to all beginners, is that they do not attempt to throw their subjects into the clairvoyant condition before being thoroughly confident that they have such self-command, coolness, and available resources of knowledge of mesmeric science as to be prepared for every possible emergency. The true mesmerist is one whose self-control never deserts him during an experiment, even though the ceiling falls upon his head!¹⁶⁵

Dvivedi was not disillusioned by this response but wrote another letter, this time to Blavatsky, in which he requested a meeting with the Himalayan masters in order to become their disciple.¹⁶⁶ The letter was partially printed in *The Theosophist*, this time including Dvivedi’s name. Dvivedi wrote that the purpose of his letter is “of no small importance, no insignificant spiritual merit – the saving of a soul.”¹⁶⁷ He wrote that a “short history of my *religion* (as I would call the philosophical development of my intelligence) will form a fit prelude to

161 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 22.

162 Thaker does not tell us why he thinks that the letter was written by Dvivedi (Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 22). The letter as printed in *The Theosophist* is attributed to “A.B.C.” but the descriptions therein fit the vita of Dvivedi, making it plausible that he was the author. A.B.C. and Henry S. Olcott, “The Perils of Dabbling in Mesmerism,” *The Theosophist* 4, no. 47 (1883): 280.

163 A.B.C. and Olcott, “The Perils of Dabbling in Mesmerism,” 280.

164 Baier, *Meditation und Moderne*, 321; Prothero, *The White Buddhist*, 23–24.

165 A.B.C. and Olcott, “The Perils of Dabbling in Mesmerism,” 281.

166 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 24.

167 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” *The Theosophist* 5, no. 49 (1883): 25.

what follows.”¹⁶⁸ This history went from the daily worship of his house deva during his childhood to an understanding of religion as “a moral code of laws, waving all belief in anything beyond morality and matter.”¹⁶⁹ He explained that, when he came to Bombay, this belief had been contested by some his colleagues, who thought that all religion was superstition. Dvivedi, however, did not agree. As he explained:

My mind soon grew disappointed with the speculations of the West not unoften diametrically opposed to the teachings of my Shastras. Failing to solve as Prof. Tyndall acknowledges ‘the ultimate mystery,’¹⁷⁰ I turned to the study of my Shastras. Thanks to my Sanskrit knowledge, I was able in a brief space of time to master the principles of the six principal schools of Sanskrit Philosophy (the two Nyayas, the two Sankhyas, the two Mimnansas.) The teachings of Shankara Charya went home to my mind, and I adopted the Vedanta as my future religion. I was then able to understand to some extent the teachings of Plato and especially the Alexandrian Neoplatonists.¹⁷¹

In the quotation above, Dvivedi relates “Hinduism,” especially Śaṅkara, to the Neoplatonist tradition, a common topos in the Theosophical Society. This kind of equalizing relationizing can be identified in several of Dvivedi’s works (see below). When he came into contact with mesmerism during that time, he was convinced of “the existence of *spirit*; and of the *ākās* of the Brahma Sutras and the Upanishads.”¹⁷² He thus carried out “a review of *Yoga*, *Sankhya* and *Vedanta*, and became thoroughly reconciled to the teachings of the first and the last chiefly by the help of several articles in the Nos. of the ‘*Theosophist*,’ the whole

168 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 25.

169 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 25.

170 Dvivedi refers here to John Tyndall (1820–1893). The quotation given by Dvivedi can be found in Tyndall’s *The Scientific Use of the Imagination*. John Tyndall, *The Scientific Use of the Imagination: A Discourse Delivered Before the British Association at Liverpool on Friday Evening, 16th September 1870* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1870), 40. Tyndall reacts therein to an ongoing tendency in the Victorian scientific community to accept “imagination” as a legitimate method of scientific investigation. For a further discussion of this point, and of Tyndall’s position in particular, see Daniel Brown, “John Tyndall and ‘The Scientific Use of the Imagination’,” in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, ed. Daniel Brown, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture 83 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Tyndall was well received in the Theosophical Society. Already in *Isis Unveiled*, Blavatsky quoted the same passage to point out the shortcomings of modern science. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, 419. It is likely that Dvivedi was familiar with this passage from *Isis Unveiled*.

171 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 26.

172 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 26.

of which I now made a subject of constant study.”¹⁷³ In consequence, he had “come to sympathise fully with the Theosophical movement and its work.”¹⁷⁴

Dvivedi’s vita serves as an instructive example in which the Theosophical Society provided a structure through which Dvivedi encountered not only Theosophy but also “Hinduism.” He learned about “*Yoga, Sankhya* and *Vedanta*” in the pages of *The Theosophist*. Dvivedi as “Indian scholar” relied on *The Theosophist* as a source of information on “Hinduism,” and in turn became an expert on “Hinduism” in the Theosophical Society and beyond. Multifaceted processes of translation, de- and recontextualization, and relationalization were triggered through these encounters. These processes will be sketched and analyzed in the following.

In the next section, Dvivedi’s translation of the *Vākya suddhā* will be analyzed. The resemblance of his translation to certain Theosophical ideas is instructive. It will be argued that Dvivedi used language which was part of the Theosophical tradition for his translation, which is to say that the *Vākya suddhā* was translated and recontextualized at the same time. In turn, this translation could be read by Theosophists as a proof of the Theosophical idea that the ancient knowledge was preserved in India.

11.2 Dvivedi’s Translation of the *Vākya Suddhā*

The small text called *Vākya Suddhā*, often also known as the *Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka*, was the first of Manilal Dvivedi’s translations to appear in *The Theosophist*. The authorship of the text is unclear, with the work commonly being ascribed to one of three writers: Bhārati Tirtha, Sankaracharya, or Vidyāranya. Swami Nikhilanda¹⁷⁵ suggests that Bhārati Tirtha wrote the text.¹⁷⁶ In this case it would have been composed some time between 1328 and 1380 A.D. This would place the text in the Advaita tradition, in the direct lineage of Śaṅkara, as Bhārati Tirtha was the Jagadguru of Sringeri math, one of the original monasteries founded by Śaṅkara, according to the tradition. Nikhilanda mentions “Telugu, Malayalam, English, Sanskrit and

173 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 26.

174 Dvivedi, “The ‘saving of Another Hindu Soul’,” 26.

175 Swami Nikhilananda was a member of the Ramakrishna Order and a direct disciple of Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi. He founded the New York City branch of the order in 1933. Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York, “Swami Nikhilananda,” accessed July 19, 2019, <https://www.ramakrishna.org/sn.htm>.

176 Swami Nikhilananda, *Dṛg-Dṛśya Viveka: An Inquiry into the Nature of the ‘seer’ and the ‘seen’* (Mysore: Sri Ramakrishna Asrama, 1931), Text, with English Translation and Notes, xiv.

Bengali editions”¹⁷⁷ of the text, which he consulted for his translation, although he does not supply any further references to these editions.¹⁷⁸ However, it is likely that the English edition he mentions was that of Manilal Dvivedi.¹⁷⁹

Dvivedi's rendering was published in *The Theosophist* in 1885 and later in an anthology edited by Tookaram Tatya. The two editions do not differ much. The most striking divergence is that the subtitle *The Eternal Atman (Spirit)* is omitted in the later edition.¹⁸⁰ The translation of the *Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka* was also included in Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga* as one of the two translations which he claimed were sufficient to explain the Advaita system. However, the translation that appears in the second edition of *Rāja-Yoga*, published in 1890, differs significantly from that in the 1885 edition. This later edition will be discussed and briefly compared to the earlier version below.

The following presentation will be based on the edition published in *The Theosophist*. The text treats the nature of *ātman* and its relation to the world, and takes as its starting point the differentiation between “*objects* of perception (दृश्य [dṛśya])”¹⁸¹ and the “*subjects* of perception (दृष्ट [dṛṣṭa]).”¹⁸² The main gist is that the subjects of perception remain unaltered by the objects of perception and that only the objects are subject to change. The ultimate subject of perception is *ātman* and therefore changeless. “The *Atman* cannot be assumed to be the *object* of any further perception; for such; a theory would involve us in confusion *ad infinitum*. [. . .] The *Atman* therefore shines by its own lustre and illumines all other objects of perception.”¹⁸³ Therefore “that, which does not

177 Nikhilananda, *Drg-Drsya Viveka*, xvi.

178 Nikhilananda, *Drg-Drsya Viveka*, xiv–xvi.

179 My thanks to Peter Thomi for his kind advice and his permission to make use of his library, which contains a first edition of Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga*. He also suggested that Dvivedi's translation of the *Drg Dṛśya Viveka* was most likely the first translation into English. No other earlier English translation is known to either Thomi or I. It thus seems plausible that Dvivedi's text was the (or at least one of the) blueprint(s) for Nikhilananda's translation.

180 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Shrī-Vakyasudhā,” in Tatya, *A Compendium of the Raja Yoga Philosophy*, 69.

181 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha: The Eternal Atman (Spirit),” *The Theosophist* 6, no. 64 (1885): 79; Translated, with Notes, by Manilal N. Dvivedi, F.T.S.

182 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79.

183 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79.

shine by its own light, is subject to transformation, as *Ahankāra*¹⁸⁴(egoism).¹⁸⁵ This means that there is a difference between *Ahankāra*, which is illusory, and *Atman*, which is real. As *Atman* is the supreme subject, it is “thus proved to be *Paramatman*. It is the one implied by त्वम् [tvam] in the *Sruti* तत्त्वमसिः [tattvamasih] and is one with the परब्रह्म [parabrahma] implied by in the same.”¹⁸⁶ If *Atman* is *brahman*, then the question would arise as to why there is *Ahankāra* which believes itself to be the subject. This comes about because a “reflection of the *Atman* in *Buddhi* enkindles it (makes the substantially *material Buddhi* believe itself to be entire *spirit*). This *Buddhi* is of two sorts: *Ahankāra* and *Antaskarana*. (The *doer*, the *subject* of all action is *Ahankāra*; and the *Antaskarana* or *Manas* is its instrument.)”¹⁸⁷ The explanation here fits well with the Theosophical idea of the human constitution and was also recontextualized therein by Dvivedi, who included an editor’s note from an earlier issue of *The Theosophist* as a footnote in his own translation. “‘Antaskarana,’ the footnote reads ‘is the path of communion between soul and body, entirely disconnected with the former; existing with, belonging to, and dying with the body.’ – Editor’s note, *Theosophist*, Vol.IV, No.11, p. 268.”¹⁸⁸ The connection of *ātman* to *Buddhi*-*Manas* and the *Ahankāra* is further elaborated and explained.

When *Ahankāra* merges into original ignorance, sleep is induced, and the physical body (स्थूलदेह [sthūladeha]), which appeared with spirit by its identification with *Ahankāra* in the waking state, becomes as it were lifeless. When *Ahankāra* is half awake, the state produced in the astral body (लिङ्गदेह [liṅgadeha]¹⁸⁹) is the one called dream; and when it is wide awake, the state produced is sleeplessness or waking. (Thus all कर्मा is dependent on *Ahankāra* which, when quite absent as in sleep, gives rise to none.)¹⁹⁰

The footnote that followed this paragraph can be read as an instance of relationalization. There one reads:

184 *Ahankāra* is translated by Monier-Williams as “conception of one’s individuality, self-consciousness,” Monier-Williams and Leumann, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 124. Rambachan renders it as “I-thought” or “I-notion” and gives it as a synonym for *ahamvṛtti*. Rambachan, *The Advaita Worldview*, 60–61.

185 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79.

186 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79.

187 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79.

188 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79. The article Dvivedi refers to was written anonymously. See Anon, “The Real and the Unreal,” *The Theosophist* 4, no. 47 (1883).

189 If strictly followed, the Sanskrit text would be transliterated as liṅgadeha. However, while in nineteenth-century publications the *Anusvāra* was often used in a way that was similar to its usage in Hindi nowadays, to substitute nasal letters, it could also sometimes be used to substitute any letter, which makes it hard to decipher it correctly from time to time.

190 Dvivedi, “Shri Vakya Sudha,” 79–80.

'The Vedantic philosophy teaches as much as Occult philosophy that our *Monad*, during its life on earth as a triad (7th, 6th, and 5th principles), has, besides the condition of pure intelligence, three conditions; viz. waking, dreaming and *sushupti* – a state of dreamless sleep – from the stand-point of terrestrial conception; of real actual soul-life from the occult stand-point. While man is either dreamlessly, profoundly asleep or in a trance-state, the triad (spirit, soul and the mind) enters into perfect union with the Paramatman – the Supreme Universal soul': – *Editor's Note, Theosophist*, Vol. IV., No.11 p. 267.¹⁹¹

Blavatsky who was most likely the author¹⁹² deployed a strategy of harmonizing relationizing: "the Vedantic philosophy teaches as much as Occult philosophy" of the structure while equalizing "the elements, the triad (spirit, soul and the mind) enters into perfect union with the Paramatman – the Supreme Universal soul." This is an instructive example of how an actor, Blavatsky, translated the connection between the discursive fields into relations while claiming a hegemonic position. Although she did not speak for "Hinduism," she nevertheless integrated it in "occultism."

The translation continues by explaining that there are five attributes: "existence (सत् [sat]); intelligence (चित् [cit]); love (आनंद [ānanda]); form (रूप [rūpa]); and name (नाम [nāma]). The first three of these represent the all-pervading *Brahma*, and the last two the unreal *Jagat* (world, creation)."¹⁹³ Therefore, that which changes, form and name, is illusionary and that which does not is "real." For this reason, "one (desirous of final absolution) should meditate on the *Satchidanand Brahma*, and should ever practise mental as well as physical concentration." In verses 23–30, several states of "mental concentration"¹⁹⁴ are described by which "the egoism in the physical body" is "annihilated [. . .] and the *Universal Atman* being thoroughly realised, wherever the mind of the ascetic is directed, there it *naturally* loses itself into one *or* other of these *Samadhis*."¹⁹⁵

This translation provides a striking example of several hybridization processes meshing with each other. We see here that Dvivedi translated the *Vākya Suddhā* while using already hybrid terms that were repeated in the Theosophical Society. In the following, this idea of meshing hybridization processes is taken up as it seems to describe Dvivedi's work well.

¹⁹¹ Dvivedi, "Shri Vakya Sudha," 79–80.

¹⁹² In several instances, "editor notes" were added to texts in Theosophical journals, as we see in several articles from *The Theosophist* below. The note here was most likely written by Blavatsky, as she was the editor of *The Theosophist* at the time.

¹⁹³ Dvivedi, "Shri Vakya Sudha," 80.

¹⁹⁴ Dvivedi, "Shri Vakya Sudha," 80.

¹⁹⁵ Dvivedi, "Shri Vakya Sudha," 81.

11.3 The Uptake of Yoga in the Theosophical Society: A Story With(out) Manilal Dvivedi?

The long introduction to *Rāja-Yoga*, 55 pages compared to the 45-page-long translation, is composed of “a paper I read in the middle of 1884 before the Bombay Branch of the Theosophical Society”¹⁹⁶ and a reprint of “an introduction I was asked to prepare early in the beginning of this year, for an edition of the Bhadvad-Gitā by my friend Mr. Tookārāma Tātyā of Bombay.”¹⁹⁷ Dvivedi frequently referred to the *Bhagavadgītā* in his introduction and this probably provided the initial impulse for the wide-spread and influential engagement with the *Bhagavadgītā* within the Theosophical Society. I argue that Dvivedi thus laid the cornerstone for the subsequent interpretation of the *Bhagavadgītā* as a practical guide for *rājayoga*.¹⁹⁸ Dvivedi describes the purpose of the book in the following words:

An attempt is here made to demonstrate the possibility of a universal science of ontology from the stand-point of modern physical science, and to present subsequently a brief sketch of all that A’ryan philosophy has to say on the subject. The two translations that follow complete the series by demonstrating some of the leading and important positions of the *Vedānta*, and finally by prescribing certain practical rules for the guidance, and exhaltation of the beginner.¹⁹⁹

It is interesting to note that *Rāja-Yoga* is meant to include practical advice for “beginners.” This practical advice was attributed to Vedānta, which is primarily a Vedānta that Dvivedi identifies with Śaṅkara and bases on an interpretation of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The subtitle of the book, *Being a Translation of the Vakyasudha or Dṛg Dṛśyaviveka of Bhāratitirtha and the Aparokśānubhūti of Śrī Sankarāchārya*, shows that Dvivedi had a very specific tradition in mind when he wrote about *rājayoga*. The first translation of the *Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka*, initially published in *The Theosophist*, has been discussed above.²⁰⁰ The translation of the *Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka* found in *Rāja-Yoga* will be discussed briefly below, as it deviates from that which appeared in *The Theosophist* in some noteworthy details. The second translation included in *Rāja-Yoga* is a rendering of the *Aparokśānubhūti*. This is a

¹⁹⁶ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

¹⁹⁷ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

¹⁹⁸ Symptomatically, neither Bergunder nor Sharpe discuss Dvivedi’s commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* in more detail. They both seem to overlook Dvivedi’s importance for the uptake of the *Bhagavadgītā* – and, as will be seen for several other texts – within the Theosophical Society.

¹⁹⁹ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

²⁰⁰ See Chapter 11.2 for further information.

small treatise that represents a medieval tradition of Vedānta reception. Although it is traditionally attributed to Ādiśaṅkarācārya, it was most likely composed later, between the 12th and the 14th centuries B.C. The yoga described therein, especially the fifteen auxiliaries, deviates considerably from Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* and its mediaeval reception.²⁰¹ The *Aparokṣānubhūti* is probably the earliest text to use the term *rājayoga*, and it also makes a distinction between *rājayoga* and *haṭhayoga*.²⁰² This work is thus rooted in an Advaita Vedānta tradition which presupposes this distinction, which is also characteristic of the Advaita Vedānta uptake connected to *rājayoga* in the Theosophical Society.

In 1998, Karl Baier pondered on the provenance of Blavatsky's differentiation between *haṭha*- and *rājayoga*, maintaining that she could not have adopted it from Vivekānanda but not giving any conclusive answer as to an alternative source.²⁰³ In his much more comprehensive publication, *Meditation und Moderne*, which was published in 2009, Baier discusses at length the uptake of yoga practices in the Theosophical Society, identifying several distinct phases. In a very early phase, Blavatsky and Olcott attempted to find Indian yogis who were willing to teach them yoga practices. This search proved to be in vain and their connection with the Arya Samaj was not able to provide such instruction. This search was then partly satisfied through several articles written by Indian Theosophists from Bengal, who advocated tantric-oriented yoga practices. After the break with the Arya Samaj, the second phase of this uptake was marked by a critical survey of yoga practices. As Baier explains, this phase was marked by the publication of *The Elixir of Life*, an article written by Godolphin Mitford and published in *The Theosophist* in 1882. The publication of Damodar K. Mavalankar's article *Contemplation* in 1884 belongs to the same phase. Both articles rely on practices which transfer the idea of yoga into an inner sphere and emphasize the continuation of a working in the world instead of any notion of renunciation. These ideas were taken up by Blavatsky, who developed a more practical approach, connected to

201 Jason Birch, "The Meaning of Haṭha in Early Haṭhayoga," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131, no. 4 (2011): 540.

202 Jason Birch, "Rājayoga: The Reincarnations of the King of All Yogas," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 17, no. 3 (2013): 406–7.

203 "Blavatskys Unterscheidung zwischen Hatha- und Rāja-Yoga und die Empfehlung des letzteren sind in ihrer Herkunft unklar. Sie kann sie noch nicht von Vivekānanda übernommen haben, der erst später Rāja-Yoga mit dem Yoga des Patañjali identifizierte. Sie entspricht mit ihrer strikten Trennung auch nicht der in der Hatha-Pradīpikā getroffenen Unterscheidung. Letztere steht aber vielleicht bei Blavatskys Fassung der beiden Yoga-Arten Pate und wird von ihr im Sinne einer dualistischen Weltanschauung umgedeutet." Karl Baier, *Yoga auf dem Weg nach Westen: Beiträge zur Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1998), 127.

the *rājayoga* which formed part of the program of the Esoteric Section.²⁰⁴ Baier’s work is the most comprehensive presentation of the development of the ideas on yoga within the Theosophical Society, yet he does not mention Dvivedi once.

A detailed analysis of Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga* will show that Blavatsky most likely received her understanding of *rājayoga* from Dvivedi’s interpretation of yoga more broadly. She seems to have drawn on the same source for the stages of initiations, which were at least partly derived from Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga* (see Chapter 9, above).

11.4 Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga*

Rāja-Yoga was first published in 1885,²⁰⁵ with the second edition following in 1890. The two editions differ in more than just details. In the following, I will briefly compare the editions and will argue that some of the changes that can be observed were the result of a mutual interaction between Blavatsky and Dvivedi. In doing so, I further develop the argument laid out in Chapter 9, where we saw that there are reasons to think that Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga* was one of Blavatsky’s key blueprints in developing her ideas about the stages of initiation.

When the second edition of the translation was published in 1890, an anonymous reviewer²⁰⁶ wrote in *Lucifer* that: “It is with great pleasure that we take up our pen to notice the second edition of the interesting and lucid work of our learned brother, Professor Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, B.A.”²⁰⁷ The reviewer went on to describe Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga* as the “most valuable exposition of the Vedantic science of Raj Yog,”²⁰⁸ and to “recommend [it] most strongly [. . .] as being the best introduction so far extant to this most difficult and sublime science.”²⁰⁹ It “is clear, concise and interesting.”²¹⁰ He or she concluded,

204 Baier, *Meditation und Moderne*, 315–95.

205 Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga: Or the Practical Metaphysics of the Vedānta* (Bombay: The “Subodha-Prakasha” Printing Press, 1885), Being a Translation of the *Vakya-sudha* or *Dr̥gdṛśyaviveka* of Bhāratitirtha and the *Aparokśānubhūti* of Śrī Sankarāchārya.

206 In many cases, it is not possible to determine who the reviewers were. Nonetheless, it seems likely that either Blavatsky or Besant reviewed the work.

207 Anon, “Raja-Yoga,” 423.

208 Anon, “Raja-Yoga,” 423.

209 Anon, “Raja-Yoga,” 423.

210 Anon, “Raja-Yoga,” 424.

we have every confidence in recommending Professor Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi's *Raja Yoga*, not only to the real students of occultism in the T.S., who alone will fully understand its spirit and application, but also to every member of the T.S. who wishes to make a safe start in the dangerous paths of the Yoga philosophy.²¹¹

This review shows that Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga* was known and positively received in the Theosophical Society. As the article was published in *Lucifer* in 1891, when Annie Besant was already the co-editor of the journal along with Blavatsky, it is evident that she knew Dvivedi's work. It is even possible that Besant wrote the review herself.

Interest in Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga* was not confined to a Theosophical readership. The second edition of the work includes a review by Sir Edwin Arnold on its front page. He wrote: "Mr. Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi; Professor of Sanskrit in the Sâmaladas College here, whose book just published on the Râja-yoga ought to become widely known in Europe, and to converse with whom has been a real privilege."²¹² As we saw above (biographical sketch), Dvivedi's work was positively received in Europe and had numerous supporters.

11.4.1 The First Part of *Rāja-Yoga*

The premises of Dvivedi's enquiry are two-fold. He holds both that our consciousness is the only tool we have to perceive the physical universe and that the perception of this universe is essentially a perception of change. However, these changes only "exist" on the lowest plane of being, as Dvivedi explains.²¹³

When considering the two editions of this text side by side, we can see that several sentences were added to the introduction to the second edition.²¹⁴ His references to the higher planes, added to the introduction of the 1890 edition, can be understood as being related to Theosophical concepts. It could be argued that Dvivedi attempted to assert his own authority by claiming to have insight into the states of being on higher planes. Changes that point towards an

²¹¹ Anon, "Raja-Yoga," 426.

²¹² Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 2. The quote is from Edwin Arnold, *India Revisited* (London: Trübner & Co., 1886), 106.

Arnold's book was originally published in the Daily Telegraph and appeared in several editions in England and the United States in 1886.

²¹³ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 2.

²¹⁴ "As represented to our consciousness they are but a series of changes succeeding one another. Thus we are able to perceive that in fact the very laws of our consciousness necessarily compel us to look upon things constituted of a series of changes." Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 2.

engagement with Theosophy are frequent throughout the introduction. It will not be possible to identify them all here, but major changes will be noted in the footnotes to this section.

The changes made by Dvivedi to his introduction appear to have two different purposes, on the one hand connecting his concepts more closely to Theosophy while, on the other, relating them to European philosophy and science. In both cases, Dvivedi insisted on the superiority of (his) Advaita Vedānta. These changes can thus be read as an example of relationalization.

De- and Recontextualization into Theosophy: The Four “Preliminary Qualifications of a Would-Be Initiate”

In Dvivedi’s view, “change” and the “fact” that it is only perceivable in our consciousness, which is the only “reality,” is the basis for all philosophical speculation.²¹⁵ One of the major “changes” experienced by humans is death: “Yes, it is death, transformation, change, that gives us all our philosophy, all our wisdom, all our morality.”²¹⁶ Death then brings us “upon the threshold of Eternity: Death but brings us face to face with the Infinite, the Invisible and the Absolute.”²¹⁷ These two principles, “change” and the changeless “Absolute,” are the foundation of all intellectual endeavors, on Dvivedi’s view. For him, it was only the changeless that could be the ultimate object of investigation: “Once the idea of the impermanence of this phenomenal world is on a man, he is not able to shake it off: nay, it presses upon him with such force that ultimately it grows with his life and strengthens with his body.”²¹⁸ This is the moment, Dvivedi explains, at which one loses “all taste for the world and its pursuits,”²¹⁹ which is the “first of the four preliminary qualifications of a would-be initiate in the mysteries of the *Vedānta* viz; Non-attachment or *Vairāgya*.”²²⁰ Here, Dvivedi defines the goal of his treatise: initiation. His main topic throughout the book is

215 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 2. This is very close to Masson’s statement on consciousness: “On this ground of Consciousness, then, as the repository, storehouse, or conventicle of all knowledge, all philosophers take their stand – even those who end by explaining Consciousness itself as a temporary result or peculiarly exquisite juncture of the conditions which it employs itself in recalling and unravelling.” (David Masson, *Recent British Philosophy: A Review, with Criticisms*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan & Co, 1867), Including some Comments on Mr. Mill’s Answer to Sir William Hamilton, 24.) Dvivedi frequently consulted Masson’s book, as is indicated by the many references to *Recent British Philosophy* found in *Rāja-Yoga*.

216 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 3.

217 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 3.

218 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 3.

219 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 3.

220 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 3.

the pursuit of happiness, the true form of which is said to be the state of union with *brahman*, which is the aim of initiation.

It is necessary to this end that we must be able to discriminate between that which is eternal and that which is not. Thus we arrive at that preliminary stage through which every candidate for initiation into the higher mysteries of occultism has naturally to pass, viz. discrimination or *viveka* as the venerable S'ankarâchârya describes it. *Discrimination* strengthens *Non-attachment*, which sets one thinking. It naturally follows that the neophyte should devote his mind and soul to the study of the Eternal, subordinating all pursuits to the main inquiry, and putting full faith in the teachings of its science and its interpreters.²²¹

His presentation of these stages is phrased in language that can easily be connected to Theosophy. The “candidate for initiation into the higher mysteries of occultism,” for instance, can be identified with “the chela,” and the use of the term “neophyte” in the next sentence strengthens this association. Using these terms to describe the Advaita Vedānta concept of approaching the guru²²² recontextualizes it within a Theosophical framework.

So far, Dvivedi has presented two preliminary requisites for initiation: 1) *vairāgya* and 2) *viveka*. Following the advice of the “teachings of its science and its interpreters,” the candidate for initiation will reach

the third requisite or qualification of a candidate for occult truth – requisite described as *Sama and the other fire* by the masters of occultism. Having thus lighted upon the right path he ardently desires to realise the Eternal and the permanent, and thus acquires the fourth and last qualification – the desire for absolution (*Mumuk'sutâ*). These considerations are important as indicating to those who make light of initiations and occult secrets, of Adepts and their laws, of the true and real significance of the secret doctrine couched in the words of the *Advaita-jñānins*, *Buddhist Arhats*, the Jewish Kabalists and the Mahomedan Sufis.²²³

Several terms which were well established in Theosophy at the time are employed here to describe these qualifications, the four preliminary stages of initiation, which were attributed to the teachings of Śaṅkara by Dvivedi. Following in the Theosophical tradition, Dvivedi presented the preliminary stages using terminology such as “Adepts” and “occult secrets,” while describing the stages as universal principles. The stages of approaching a teacher in Vedānta are here recontextualized as universal stages of initiation. The harmonizing relationizing on the structural level and

²²¹ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

²²² Rambachan, *The Advaita Worldview*, 19–29.

²²³ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

the absorbing of the elements from Advaita Vedānta can be read as traces of the de- and recontextualization processes.

De- and Recontextualization Into European Philosophy: “A Posteriori Knowledge” and “A Priori Promptings of Internal Consciousness”

Once these stages have been passed through, “all *a posteriori* knowledge is given up as false, and full reliance is placed on the *a priori* promptings of internal consciousness,”²²⁴ Dvivedi explains. Simultaneously, the candidate becomes “conscious of a plane of existence wherein time and space have no existence and where knowledge is of the real and permanent. [. . .] True happiness begins to dawn upon the intelligence only at that stage.”²²⁵ By using the terms “*a priori*” and “*a posteriori*,” Dvivedi recontextualizes European, especially Kantian, philosophy²²⁶ into the framework of his Advaita Vedānta.

Dvivedi’s usage of these terms is closely linked to his reading of one book in particular, David Masson’s *Recent British Philosophy*. He refers to this book in several passages of *Rāja-Yoga*. Masson writes that “All that we know comes to us in what we call Mind or Consciousness.”²²⁷ This statement is almost identical to that of Dvivedi when writing about consciousness being the only “reality.” Similarly, Dvivedi identifies “consciousness” as the only instrument of perception.²²⁸ Meanwhile, in the paragraph that begins with the sentence quoted above, Masson discusses various schools of European philosophy, claiming that there are two main branches of philosophy, each of which has different opinions on “the psychological difference.”²²⁹ The question at issue here is whether there is any “*a priori*” knowledge or whether knowledge is always generated through experience,²³⁰ exactly the same poles as are identified by Dvivedi. Change or death, as explained above, implies “*a posteriori*” experience, while the “changeless” is equated with “*a priori*” knowledge.²³¹ These are, according to Dvivedi, the two poles of every human intellectual

224 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 7.

225 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 7. Here a whole paragraph is missing in the 1885 edition, in particular the references to Kantian terminology. Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 6.

226 D. W. Hamlyn, “A Priori and a Posteriori,” in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Donald M. Borchert, 2nd ed. (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2006), 1:240.

227 Masson, *Recent British Philosophy*, 23.

228 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 2.

229 Masson, *Recent British Philosophy*, 23.

230 Cf. Masson, *Recent British Philosophy*, 23–38.

231 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 7–8.

endeavor: “All philosophy [. . .] begins at Death; all science truly such, is but a search after the immutable and permanent.”²³²

Discussing ancient European, principally Greek, philosophy, Dvivedi attempts to show that philosophy is “the search after *the real and the true*.”²³³ The culmination of this search, Dvivedi claims, can be found in “the experiences of Aryan philosophers.”²³⁴ This view can be understood as an example of relationalization, with Dvivedi employing hierarchical epistemological relationalization to claim the superiority of the “Aryan philosophers.”

Dvivedi's reception of Masson's *Recent British Philosophy* is an instructive example. It illustrates that “hybridity” in the sense of “already hybrids” is both the start and the end point for meshing processes of hybridization. Masson's book, for example, comprised an overview of numerous philosophers and brought together many different traditions of thought. The book itself is a product of a scholarly tradition. When Dvivedi based his notions about Kantian philosophy on this book, he on the one hand relied on an already hybrid while at the same time hybridizing it through a relationalization. In the following, this strategy of relationizing is traced through a multitude of passages in Dvivedi's writing.

Relationizing Advaita Vedānta to Ancient Greek and “Modern” European Philosophy

In his overview of European philosophy, Dvivedi follows, and often directly refers to, James Frederick Ferrier's *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*.²³⁵ For Ferrier, the “historian of philosophy”²³⁶ must have certain qualities if he is to successfully understand historical philosophical views. On the one hand, “he must be able to place himself in the mental circumstances in which they arose, and must observe them springing up in his own mind, just as they sprang up in the minds of those who originally propounded them.”²³⁷ On the other hand, he must understand what philosophy is. “The aim of philosophy is to raise us into the region of universal, or, as I may call it, unindividual, thinking”,²³⁸ Ferrier declares. In simple terms, “*philosophy is the pursuit of*

²³² Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 7.

²³³ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 8.

²³⁴ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 7.

²³⁵ Dvivedi frequently referred directly to Ferrier's work; cf. Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 5, 8–12, 32.

²³⁶ James Frederick Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 2 vols. Vol. I (Edinburgh, London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1866), 5.

²³⁷ Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 3.

²³⁸ Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 1.

truth.”²³⁹ “Truth” was a central concept in Theosophy: not only was the Theosophical motto connected to the idea of “truth,” but so too were claims to higher knowledge. Ferrier went on to discuss what truth is and established a distinction between relative and absolute truth. “Relative truth is what exists only for some, but not necessarily for all minds; while absolute truth is that which exists necessarily for all minds.”²⁴⁰ This is, again, compatible with the opposition between conventional “truth” and “occult truth,” which latter can only be understood fully after the initiation at which Dvivedi’s explanations aim. Ferrier goes on to say that, “in all intelligence there is, by the terms of its conception, a universal that is, an essential unity of kind, however small the point of unity may be.”²⁴¹ This excursus into Ferrier’s thinking illustrates how *Lectures on Greek Philosophy* fitted into Dvivedi’s world view and that of the Theosophical Society. The claim that universal knowledge is possible and the idea of a human constitution which contains in itself a universal part fit well with concepts of a higher knowledge and with the Theosophical idea of *ātman* as a universal principle in men. The claim of universality led Dvivedi to understand European philosophy and “A’dwaitism” to be interconnected.

It is necessary to remark, at this stage of our inquiry, that all the modern notions of European metaphysics from the materialism of Locke and Condillac, and the nihilism of Hume, to the Idealism of Berkley, and the Absolute Identity of Schelling and Hegel, which I am inclined to believe is a pure rational exposition of Aryan A’dwaitism, all will be found fore-shadowed, though but dimly, in the writings of these and other ancient philosophers. Even the *Sāṅkhya* of Kapila and the speculations of Jina and Buddha will find their parallel in the workings of the mind of ancient Greece.²⁴²

Although Dvivedi framed his description in a narrative which ran along the lines of a chronological hierarchization of ideas, he also employed genealogical hierarchization in his claim that “A’dwaitism” was “the solid and unique, yet the oldest progenitor of all philosophy and religion.”²⁴³ He explained that the most important advances of European philosophy and science were mediated by the East,²⁴⁴ concluding his historical survey with a summary.

(1.) That the search for the truth is as old as the world or at least as the mind of men; [. . .] even the sublime speculations of Greece had their origin in the far north-east. And that therefore the religion which adopts for its maxim ‘there is no religion higher than truth’ is

239 Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 7.

240 Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 9.

241 Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy, and Other Philosophical Remains*, 13.

242 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 9–10.

243 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 16.

244 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 9–16.

nothing new, but only another form of the eternal contest. (2.) That the great intellectual cataclysms which have followed one another in rapid succession might have led to the disappearance of a few brilliant stars of genius – the custodians of the higher methods of inquiry – the masters or Mahâtmas of today [. . .] these might have formed, from time immemorial, the nucleus of an occult brotherhood of teachers and philosophers. (3.) That modern philosophy guided by modern physical science is breaking upon ground trod, more than once, by ancient investigators and philosophers. (4.) That the march of civilization and philosophy has steadily been from East to West – a fact corroborated by History [. . .] Sufficient argument exists for us to hope for the return of this lost child of science and philosophy to its motherland – India – an event of the possible realization of which the modern religious stir may fitly be described as the rosy forerunner.²⁴⁵

Several points are noteworthy here. First, the “East” is understood by Dvivedi to be the cradle of the highest, most ancient knowledge. Secondly, there were in all periods and all regions of the world “masters or Mahâtmas” who were initiated into “occult” knowledge. Thirdly, science is now simply rediscovering ancient truths which had long been understood in the “East.” These are all standard motifs of the Theosophical discourse. The passages quoted above are illustrations of relationalization. Dvivedi’s claim to hegemony in his *Rāja-Yoga* is underlined by a recontextualization of his statements against the framework of European philosophy and a relationizing of 1) “the modern notions,” by equalizing them with “a pure rational exposition of Aryan *A’dwaitism*,” and 2) “Aryan *A’dwaitism*,” in a genealogical/epistemological hierarchization as “fore-shadowed, though but dimly” in the “mind of ancient Greece.” His strategy of relationalization is elaborated by a chronological and genealogical hierarchization in which even “the religion which adopts for its maxim ‘there is no religion higher than truth’ is nothing new, but only another form of the eternal contest.” Simultaneously, Dvivedi also claims that it was from the “East” that all civilization came and that one might hope for “the return of this lost child of science and philosophy to its motherland.” He thus positions his Advaita Vedānta at the top of the hierarchy. These statements can be read as attempts to inscribe his ideas about the superiority of Advaita Vedānta into the center of the European and Theosophical discourses. These numerous relationizings can be read as traces of multifaceted processes of hybridization. Given that *Rāja-Yoga* was so positively received by the “Western” academy, this is a striking example of colonial agency.

245 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 17.

Relationizing Advaita Vedānta to “Modern” Science

Turning from philosophy to science, Dvivedi discusses the “conclusions of modern science”²⁴⁶ and its supposed opposition to religion. His view, which he had already made clear in his chapter on Greek philosophy, is that there is no fundamental difference between science and religion, and that the science of the time was gradually rediscovering what Eastern religion, meaning “Advaita,” had long ago uncovered. Discussing theories drawn from “modern science,” for which he largely relies on *The Unseen Universe* by Stewart and Tait,²⁴⁷ Dvivedi declares that, “we see that recent investigations in Science tend to prove the existence of but one Element, one material cause, capable in itself of evolving the whole physical universe from it.”²⁴⁸ Once again claiming that there is nothing beyond consciousness, Dvivedi argues that science will never be able to explain consciousness itself and, in consequence, nor will it be able to explain anything outside consciousness. Dvivedi develops a system which understands thought to be the only and absolute reality, at least in the sense that it is the only source of perception. Some passages suggest that he assumed a “thing-in-itself” behind “perception,” which is synonymous with “thought” in Dvivedi’s parlance.²⁴⁹ Dvivedi explains that the principle that enables “thought” and “perception” is consciousness, which he associates with *brahman*. And given that *brahman* is the cause of consciousness, it follows, according to Dvivedi, that it must also be the only reality. With this observation he concludes his survey of “modern science” and turns back to the question of consciousness and its relation to *brahman*.

Discussing Herbert Spencer’s philosophy, mainly based on his *First Principles*, Dvivedi explains that, “he [Herbert Spencer] argues that the phenomenon of our consciousness, though it renders us alive to the existence of a ‘something beyond’ all matter and time and space, leaves us in utter ignorance as to the *nature* of this Absolute which he appropriately describes as the Unknowable.”²⁵⁰ Dvivedi goes on to cite a long paragraph of Spencer’s *First Principles* in which Spencer discusses the nature of the “Unknowable.” Dvivedi observes that “the above confession of faith sounds almost like the *neti neti* not-this, not-that of the *Upani’sads*, trying to annalyse [!] *Brahma*, and we might almost hail these words of the philosopher [Herbert Spencer] as a true interpretation of the *Advaita*.”²⁵¹ He again connects his

²⁴⁶ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 17.

²⁴⁷ In two instances, Dvivedi refers directly to *The Unseen Universe*. Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 20, 27–28.

²⁴⁸ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 22.

²⁴⁹ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 21–25.

²⁵⁰ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 25.

²⁵¹ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 26.

Advaita to European philosophy in a way that makes it appear to dovetail with Indian thought (equalizing relationizing). Nonetheless, he makes clear that there is a difference in quality between the two. “The Unknowable is more negative in its character than *Brahma*, [. . .] The Unknowable has no life, no soul in it; whereas the *Brahma* A’ryan philosophy, is all life, all *spirit*.”²⁵² He thus concludes that “European speculation has no doubt arrived at glimpses of the truth taught by A’ryan occultism, but it has failed to grasp the spirit of the latter. [. . .] the Unknowable, the *Brahma* of European science, is but a mass without life, a body without soul.”²⁵³

Dvivedi locates the fundamental difference between “the Unknowable” and “*Brahma*” in *sat*, claiming that “matter is the thing really unknowable, being cognised [!] only through its manifestations.”²⁵⁴ That “which cognises itself [he continued] and the unknowable is not at all unknown or even unknowable. It is the very essence of consciousness and is ever unique and one. It is the real and ever-present all-pervading Absolute.”²⁵⁵ It can be argued that Dvivedi follows a similar relationizing strategy here as was observed in the previous section. He firstly recontextualizes his ideas in the European context and then hierarchizes them epistemologically: “European speculation has no doubt arrived at glimpses of the truth taught by A’ryan occultism.”²⁵⁶ This establishes the superiority of his Advaita Vedānta and identifies it not only with philosophy (see above), but also with science and occultism, being in each case both the source and summit of these systems of thought.

Merging One’s Own Consciousness into the Consciousness of the Absolute: A Way to Ultimate Happiness and Liberation

Dvivedi upheld the possibility of rising up through several stages of one’s own consciousness to the absolute consciousness. Since one of the main attributes of *Brahma* is *sat*, Dvivedi argues, this “implies real conscious existence, a reality entirely wanting in the Unknowable of European philosophy. The unknowable is an indefinite negation; the Absolute is a finite position.”²⁵⁷ By claiming that the absolute exists in everything because *brahman* is everything, Dvivedi argues that what we can see are the “knowable effects” of the “Unknowable,”

²⁵² Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 26.

²⁵³ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 26–27.

²⁵⁴ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 27.

²⁵⁵ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 27.

²⁵⁶ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 26.

²⁵⁷ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 27.

and that these “potentialities” must therefore hint at the “positive existence” of the “Unknowable.”²⁵⁸ This provides the basis for his further investigations. “How do we explain mesmeric clairvoyance, *Samàdhi*, and the so-called spirit manifestations?” he asks. The answer is “by assuming that the whole universe is one life,”²⁵⁹ from which it follows that “the Absolute which does exist as *Brahma* [. . .] is all life or thought, pervading everything and the being of all. It is the reality in the ever changing unreality of the unknowable i.e. matter and its forms.”²⁶⁰

Against this background, Dvivedi raises the question of happiness. He explains that “happiness and misery exist only in our own mind; [. . .] when it is known that the reality of realities is nothing beside *Brahma*.”²⁶¹ He goes on to explain that “forms,” by which he means change through “space” and “time,” are only valid on the “material” plane of existence. “The plane next to the material,” he holds,

is the subtile [!] or *Suks'ma*, of which we are conscious in dreams. Time and space do not exist there, though *forms* do. But even *forms* donot [!] exist on the plane next to it viz the causal or *Kâraṇa*-plane; [. . .] The last plane is the plane of the Absolute, where the sense of being also is not present. [. . .] This plane is called the Fourth or *turya*. It is within the experience of *yogins*, ecstasies, and trance-mediums.²⁶²

In consequence, “true happiness must necessarily lie on and in the fourth plane of consciousness and existence. It is the same as being one with *Brahma*.”²⁶³

Turning to the human constitution and question of the place of human beings in evolution, Dvivedi maintains that, man stands above the rest of nature but remains connected to it by perception. It is not that the *Jiva* is more evolved in men, but that humans “descended more from Gods (*pitṛs*) than from brutes. [. . .] *Advaitism* emphatically declares that man is a copy of the eternal being, nature, and is as such above brutes and gods and everything.”²⁶⁴ In Chapter 6, we considered the debate in evolutionism concerning whether men are different to animals only in the degree of their evolution or in its quality. This statement by Dvivedi takes the side of a difference in quality and goes hand in hand with what Besant wrote on the subject. For Besant, however, men

258 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 27.

259 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 28–29.

260 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 30.

261 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 34.

262 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 34.

263 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 35.

264 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 35.

are not above the Gods but are rather on their way to becoming divine and finally transcending the world of perception.²⁶⁵

Dvivedi understood men to be the highest life form in the cosmos. However, man has one main defect in Dvivedi's view: the individualizing principle or *antahkaraṇa*.²⁶⁶ This is identified by Dvivedi as the locus of individuality and thus the main obstacle to true happiness. "*Rājayoga*" provided a means by which to overcome *antahkaraṇa* through a merging with the consciousness of the absolute: "It would appear impossible to get rid of it without destroying individuality and egoism. But this is the real end of all *yoga*; nor is it at all impossible. [. . .] *Rājayoga* consists in the permanent merging of the mind in the great All."²⁶⁷ Here we find the ultimate goal of Dvivedi's "Rāja-Yoga." This is the suppression of the *antahkaraṇa*, a feat that "will suppress the cause of pain and make experience full of that harmony and bliss which is the inevitable result of unity with nature. This is real *yoga*. This is real happiness."²⁶⁸ When this "real *yoga*" is attained, man "will live of the world and yet above it. He will be of matter and yet beyond it. He will be with change and yet without it. He will be one with the

265 There are numerous passages in which Besant speaks about becoming divine (see, e.g., Besant, "General Presentation of Theosophy to the Parliament," 158; Besant, *In the Outer Court*, 34; Besant, *The Path of Discipleship*, 11). This is closely linked in her writings to the idea of merging with the divine consciousness while maintaining individuality, as I discuss elsewhere (Mühlematter, "Some will be ready to expand ere long into the consciousness of God"). The idea of transcending divinity was discussed by Besant in connection with the stages of initiation. See Besant, *The Path of Discipleship*, 115–16.

266 The *antahkaraṇa* is often defined in that way. It consists of the four *vyrttis*: *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṁkāra*. "*Manas* is the function of deliberation or the weighing of pros and cons, *buddhi* is the function of determination and decision making, *citta* is the function of memory or recollection, and *ahaṁkāra* is the ego or 'I' thought. It is not uncommon for the terms *manas*, *buddhi*, or *citta* to be used for the entire internal organ" (Rambachan, *The Advaita Worldview*, 36). Dvivedi's description of the *antahkaraṇa* is not unlike that of Rambachan: "Those that are concerned with mere perception, and those that relate to reflection and volition. The former are called *manas*, and the latter *buddhi*. But perception also works in a two-fold manner. We perceive an object or receive a sensation, and the first act of the mind consists in giving some individuality to that object or that sensation. This process is called *chitta*. The next step lies in connecting that individuality with our personal ego. This is called *ahankāra*. Upon these follow reflection and volition i.e. *buddhi*. These four make up the whole of the *antahkaraṇa*" (Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 36). As argued above, the question is not whether or not Dvivedi explains Advaita Vedānta correctly, but in what "relations" he places his explanations. The same is true for Rambachan. Both stand in a tradition and translate and de- and recontextualize "Advaita Vedānta."

267 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 37.

268 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 37.

Cosmos, with supreme *Brahma*.”²⁶⁹ Only “in the mind and its abnormal indulgence begins all our misery; in its annihilation and proper spiritual guidance commences true knowledge which leads to eternal universal bliss.”²⁷⁰

Several of the elements in Dvivedi’s presentation of his views in the first part of his *Rāja-Yoga* are close to the Theosophical explanations given by Blavatsky, Besant, and others. Terms such as “Jiva,” “*pitrīs*,” and the “Mahātmās” were well established and part of the tradition of the Theosophical Society. Dvivedi also includes several structures that are familiar from Theosophical thought, such as the correspondences between the above and the below,²⁷¹ and recontextualizes them in his Advaita Vedānta. He simultaneously relationizes his position to “science,” “philosophy,” and “Theosophy” in order to establish the superiority of his Advaita Vedānta. In the discussion of the second part of his *Rāja-Yoga* that follows, we will see that Dvivedi also discusses the stages of initiation in accordance with this strategy of relationalization.

11.4.2 The Second Part of Dvivedi’s *Rāja-Yoga*

The second part of the introduction to *Rāja-Yoga* was originally the foreword to Wilkins’ translation of the *Bhagavadgītā*, which had been republished by Tatya. Consequently, Dvivedi frequently discusses Indian religion and repeatedly bases his arguments on the *Bhagavadgītā*. However, he also thoroughly discusses a number of other Indian texts here, one of which was the *Pañcadaśī*. The *Pañcadaśī* is a concise treatise elaborating some of the key concepts of Advaita Vedānta, usually attributed to the fourteenth-century writer, Vidyāraṇya.²⁷²

If one were to base one’s views on the current state of research on the Theosophical Society – and on the work of Bergunder, Sharpe, and Neufeldt on the

269 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 37.

270 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 38.

271 It is no coincidence that Faivre identifies “correspondences” as a key element of Esotericism (Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism*, 12–13). Rambachan explains that Advaita Vedānta also knows the differentiation between the five bodies from which *ātman* is distinct. They are formed in a complex processes of “evolution” (Rambachan’s term) in which they become interwoven through the interspersions of their material (Rambachan, *The Advaita Worldview*, 38, 122). This is a process which was also described by Besant with reference to the *koṣas* (bodies) (Besant, *Evolution of Life and Form*, 145–46; Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom*, 218). Besant relationized these ideas to several other concepts from physics and Theosophy. I will come back to this later when I discuss Subba Row in detail. An in-depth analysis of ideas about the human constitution in the Theosophical Society remains a research desideratum.

272 Deutsch and Dalvi, *The Essential Vedānta*, 353.

role of the *Bhagavadgītā*, in particular – one would assume that the *Bhagavadgītā* was received in the Society as the central scripture of “Hinduism.” However, the example of the *Pañcadaśī* provides an instance in which the reception of Hindu scripture also embraced other texts. The *Pañcadaśī* was well known within the Theosophical Society prior to the publication of *Rāja-Yoga*. For example, in 1884 *The Theosophist* reviewed a series of booklets containing English translations of parts of the *Pañcadaśī*,²⁷³ which were published together in book form two years later in 1886.²⁷⁴ Another translation of the *Pañcadaśī*, published in 1912 by Tookaram Tatya's publishing house, illustrates the enduring interest in the text.²⁷⁵ It is likely that Dvivedi was familiar with the earliest of these publications and he may well have used it as a model for his own interpretation, and for his cosmological explanations in particular.

Brahma as All-Consciousness: *Sat*, *Chit*, and *Ānanda*; Practical Advice for Initiation

I will now offer a close reading of the second part of the introduction to Dvivedi's *Rāja-Yoga*. His point of departure is the same premise that we saw underlies the argument of the first part of the text, the claim that “All real philosophy begins [. . .] with death, we might say, *disappearance* or *change*.”²⁷⁶ Starting from this premise, Dvivedi argues that there is “a something” which enables consciousness.

This something, call it *Brahma* or anything, being the only one enlightening all phenomena must be all consciousness (*chit*) and bliss. [. . .] We may state by the way, that inasmuch as through this something we derive knowledge, and knowledge is *pleasure* (*ānanda*), this all-intelligence is all-pleasure as well. The universe then reduces itself according to this analysis into five parts *sat*, *chit*, *ānanda*; *nāma* (name), *rūpa* (form).²⁷⁷

From this division follows a dichotomous ontology, with one part being imperishable and the other ever-perishable. Having established the idea of *Brahma* as the imperishable principle in the cosmos, in contrast to the perishable universe,

²⁷³ Anon, “The Panchadasi,” *The Theosophist* 5, no. 11 (1884): 277–78.

²⁷⁴ Nandalal Dhole, *A Hand Book of Hindu Pantheism: The Panchadasi* (Calcutta: Heeralal Dhole, 1886).

²⁷⁵ A humble devotee of S'rī Gopāla Krishna, *The Panchadasi* (Bombay: The Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund, 1912).

²⁷⁶ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 38.

²⁷⁷ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 41.

which is only cognized by the human consciousness, Dvivedi attempts to examine the “relation of evolved sentient life to the universal substance.”²⁷⁸

Dvivedi was primarily concerned with providing practical advice for aspirants on the path of initiation. He thus states: “The question [!] that immediately concerns us most is the obvious one of the usefulness of all this intricate metaphysical discussion; and to it we must therefore address ourselves.”²⁷⁹ The usefulness lies in the pursuit of happiness, but “the *Vedāntin* maintains that we raise idle distinctions between happiness and misery and the like only so long as that *ignorance* which is the cause of this dream of the world, has not been suppressed.”²⁸⁰ What Dvivedi means here is that there is happiness beyond the happiness. “That absolute happiness, that complete bliss, in which not a single particle of any contrary feeling could find place is impossible, unless we *realise*, and live the life of, universal *Brahma*.”²⁸¹ Evil, or pain, is therefore illusionary and can be removed. This state of being is further described as “*Brahma-Samādhi* (unity with *Brahma*) [which] is something similar to, or beyond, dreamless sleep – viz. a kind of conscious sleep (*Turyā-Avasthā* = fourth state) a trance full of the ever-lasting consciousness of *sat*, *chit* and *ānanda*.”²⁸²

The Possibility of Unity with *brahman* and its consequences for Human Conduct: *Bhakti*, *jñāna*, and *Rāja-Yoga* as Practical Paths to Liberation

Having explained the possibility of achieving unity with the imperishable, and therefore of overcoming the illusionary state, something that would, in Dvivedi’s parlance, equate with “ultimate happiness,” he goes on to examine “the bearing of this and other A’ryan theories of happiness on human conduct.”²⁸³ Dvivedi writes: “Look upon your neighbour as your brother is the loud cry of the monotheist or deist; but the *Vedānta* rationally teaches to look upon *all* as *self*. (*ātmavat sarva*).”²⁸⁴ In Dvivedi’s view, the idea of unity was, then, the remedy to the problem of the human condition and the one principle which should guide human conduct. “The *Vedāntic* doctrine we thus see is prolific of good results in every department of human knowledge and leads to right conduct, right action, right understanding, and right everything.”²⁸⁵ This statement is another

278 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 43.

279 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 44.

280 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 44.

281 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 45.

282 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 46.

283 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 46.

284 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 47.

285 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 48.

interesting instance of relationalization, with Dvivedi positioning his Advaita Vedānta as the highest expression of morality. As Dvivedi was concerned with the practical side of his enquiry, he focused on two possible ways of pursuing ultimate happiness. “This [Sāṅkhya Philosophy], no doubt, is an advance upon the theory of a personal God listening to our prayers and dealing out the fruits of our actions accordingly. Patanjali advances a step further and prescribes a number of rules for the guidance of the mind and the body with the same end as the *Sāṅkhyas* in view.”²⁸⁶ Here we can see a distinction between a *bhakti*²⁸⁷ approach, “the theory of a personal God listening to our prayers,” and a yogic approach, understood as *haṭhayoga* by Dvivedi. The yogic approach “culminates in *Samādhi*.”²⁸⁸ Considering *bhakti* and *jñāna*,²⁸⁹ which Dvivedi also calls “*Pariṇāmavāda*” and “*Vivartavāda*,” he claims that “One tries to reach this end by extending the mind through *devotion*, the other by dispelling *illusion* through rational analysis. [. . .] We however are inclined to look upon this distinction as rather verbal than real in its character.”²⁹⁰ *Bhakti* was, thus, seen as another legitimate way of reaching unity with the absolute.

Dvivedi then goes on to argue that “the Jñāna of the Vedānta is a combination of reason and emotion; for knowledge here is synonymons [!] with belief and *vice versa*. It is impossible to devote ourselves to what we do not *know*, as it is equally impossible to *know* without being *devoted* to what we know.”²⁹¹ Considering the different ways to “true happiness,” Dvivedi postulates that Vedānta is superior to the alternatives.

The *Vedāntic* process then of attaining this state of *Brahma* generally described as *Rajayoga* is purely mental, and deals entirely with rules for restraining the mind. S’ankarāchārya, the advocate of the *Vivartavāda*, while accepting the cosmogony of the *Sāṅkhyas* and the Yoga of Patanjali, considerably improved upon either.²⁹²

286 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 49.

287 *Bhakti* is generally understood as “devotion.” In most cases this “devotion” takes the form of rituals, singing, and dance dedicated to and directed towards deities. Vasudha Narayanan, “Bhakti,” in Jacobsen et al., *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism Online*.

288 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 49.

289 *Jñāna* can be translated as knowledge and is often interpreted as *vidyā* in opposition to *avidyā*, in parallel with the opposition between *brahman* (the real, *vidyā*) and *māyā* (illusion, *avidyā*). (Fort, *Jivanmukti in Transformation*, 5). It is also understood as a form of yoga. *Bhakti*, *jñāna*, and most importantly *karmayoga* are all discussed and compared to each other in connection with sacrifice, *yajna*, in the *Bhagavadgītā*. Malinar, *The Bhagavadgītā*, 79–84.

290 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 51.

291 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 51.

292 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 51–52.

The practice advocated by Dvivedi is thus a mental practice, *rājayoga*. Relationizing his “Vedāntic” process to other systems of “Hindu” religions, Dvivedi claims a superior position for his own.

The Stages of Initiation as Propounded by Dvivedi

Following the relationizing of his Advaita Vedānta, the practical dimensions of which he describes in terms of *rājayoga*, Dvivedi discusses the “stages of initiation” in detail.

Thus perceiving the necessity of determining the elements of happiness, we naturally arrive at that stage of Rājayoga which is called *Viveka* (discrimination). Inasmuch as happiness does not exist outside the ego or *A'tmā*, and as a further analysis of ones self leads one to see everything in and of it, a distinction more imaginary than real is drawn at the beginning for the practical guidance of the neophyte, between things which are *A'tmā*, and those that are not *A'tmā*. When the beginner thus goes on dissecting the nature of things and studying the various phases of his own *ego*, he naturally becomes saturated with a sense of universal change which pervades everything, so much so, that even the desire for the permanence of any particular state, never enters his heart. This is the second stage generally known as *Virāga* (non-attachment).²⁹³ Then follow six other subordinate steps first among which is *S'ama*. When the student is convinced of the futility of all desire, he applies himself naturally to the study of the higher psychological aspects of his changeful consciousness. As a result of this constant application he becomes estranged from the objects of sense, both subjective and objective, and directs his whole attention to a contemplation of the one uniform essence within, which he is intent upon understanding in its proper aspect (*Dama*). It follows then that if the student clearly realises the progress he is expected to have made by this time, his mind disengages itself from everything but the object he has in view. This state (*Uparati*) is followed as a corollary by the fifth called *Titiks'ā* or putting up with the so-called pleasures and pains the world with patience and without excitement. When this stage is reached, *Ahankāra* or the personality of the student begins to lose itself completely in the universal intelligence he is contemplating, and it is faith (*Sraddhā*) in his own convictions as well as in the words of advanced interpreters of science that leads to a strong and unchanging immersion (*Samādhāna*) of his faculties in *Brahma*, the principle and essence of the Cosmos. When these stages are passed, he is said to be a *mumuk's'u*, one desirous of knowing the real nature of the phenomena around him.²⁹⁴ This course of training leads to the fixity of his mind which then 'stands like the jet of a lamp that burns steadily in a place protected from the slightest breeze.' While thus studying his 'ego' he reaches a stage in which his senses both objective and subjective, see nothing else but the Divine Intelligence – *Brahma* – wherever they are directed. [In footnote: *Vākyasudhā*]²⁹⁵

293 “Disgust” in the 1885 edition. Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 46.

294 “The phenomena of duality or non-Brahma, viz. *Ahankāra*, and the physical bonds; consequent [!] upon its hold” in the 1885 edition. Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 47.

295 Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 53–54.

These stages were, however, only the preliminary steps. Having taken them, it was then possible to make further progress.

The student should always and at every moment practice that intuitive habit of analysis which will reveal to him the real nature of everything he sees. The beginning is made with study, study of the books explaining these things, or of the words of teachers who initiate in these things. This is called *s'ravana*. Well digested study will lead to the habit of constantly chewing, so to speak, the conclusions arrived at, and produce the intuitive analysis just described. This is called *manana*. [. . .] These two stages correspond respectively to the *Dhâraṇâ* and *Dhyâna* of Patanjali. I have already explained that all knowledge is but a modification of the mind (*vṛtti*). In *s'ravana* the *vṛtti* tries to become the thing in consideration, but in *manana* it does actually become it. But this modification of the mind is only temporary. To make it permanent, to, in fact, preclude the possibility of its being ever disturbed is the real end in view. This is called *vṛttinirodha* or *samâdhi* in *yoga*; and the same result is brought about by what is called *nididhyâsa* in *vedântic-rājayoga*.²⁹⁶

In these higher stages of *rājayoga*, the student may attain further qualities that will ultimately lead to the union with *Brahma*.

Nididhyâsa is the becoming the thing thought of, for all time, without any disturbance from other thoughts. But *nididhyâsa* too ought to ripen into that which is called *Nirvikalpa* or that state of the mind wherein there is no distracting thought; that state of perfect communion with nature wherein the All is realised in all.²⁹⁷

Dvivedi concludes his introduction by assuring his reader that the Vedānta practice of *rājayoga* is the best way to achieve union with *brahman* and therefore *mokṣa*. “It will be evident from this rough outline of the elements of *Rajayoga* [. . .] that the object which *Hathayoga* wants to accomplish is here placed within easy reach of every willing student without renunciation of the world and its responsibilities.”²⁹⁸

As we can see, the main objection against *haṭhayoga* is the renunciation of worldly duties. In opposing this supposed requirement, Dvivedi suggests instead that one should follow the path of *rājayoga*, which places the “control of mind” at its center by enabling it to simultaneously function in both the world of common perception and that of higher “truth.” Pivotal to this conception is a differentiation between the conventional self and the real self, and therefore between the physical world and the planes above. The physical world and the conventional self are bound to a *karma*-induced evolution which is the basis for the duties which must be fulfilled. On the other hand, the aim of Dvivedi's system of *rājayoga* is unity with *brahman* in such a way that, when this unity is

²⁹⁶ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 54.

²⁹⁷ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 54–55.

²⁹⁸ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 55.

established, every notion of separateness, including even the memory of a merging into *brahman*, is annihilated. With the exception of the loss of memory, the scheme Dvivedi associates with *rājayoga* bears a striking resemblance to Annie Besant’s approach to initiation (see Chapter 8.2).

11.5 Connecting the Discursive Fields: Translating *Cit* as Consciousness

As Dvivedi notes, the system of *rājayoga* “will be found described at full length in the *Bhagavad-Geetâ* as well as in the two small works which follow.”²⁹⁹ These translations of the *Aparokṣānubhūti* and the *Vākya Suddhā*, which were later republished in a compendium edited by Tookaram Tatya,³⁰⁰ are not only interesting for their Theosophical context, but also as being among the first translations of these two texts into English. In this section, I will focus on the translation of the *Vākya Suddhā* as it appears in the second edition of *Rāja-Yoga*.

The translation of the *Vākya Suddhā* presented in *Rāja-Yoga* deviated in important ways from the translation found in *The Theosophist* (see Chapter 11.2 and Table 7). To begin with, the Sanskrit text in Devanagari script is completely absent from the later version. In the version published in *The Theosophist* there were also additional references in Sanskrit to further passages from the *Pañchadaśī* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Pañchadaśī* was quoted considerably more frequently than was the *Bhagavadgītā*. As the main focus of my book lies on the reception of Indian thought in the Theosophical Society, and especially in Annie Besant’s early works on initiation, a detailed discussion of Dvivedi’s translations must remain a research desideratum. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the changes to the *Vākya Suddhā* extended beyond presentational issues and included significant changes in the translation itself. These are of interest because they illustrate a two-step process of 1) translation and 2) de- and recontextualization in Dvivedi’s work. For example, in the first verse we find the term “*Atman*.” In the edition from 1885, this is written as “*Atman* (spirit),”³⁰¹ whereas in the 1890 edition the brackets are omitted. More importantly, in the 1890 edition, commentaries were provided for each chapter, with the main line of exposition in

²⁹⁹ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, 55.

³⁰⁰ Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Direct Cognition of the Unity of Jīva and Brahma: By S’rimat S’ankar-āchārya with Notes,” in Tatya, *A Compendium of the Raja Yoga Philosophy*, 1–33; and Dvivedi, “Shrī-Vakyasudhā,” 69–82.

³⁰¹ Dvivedi, “Shrī Vakya Sudha,” 79. The same is true for the version in the compendium by Tatya from 1888.

the commentaries following the concepts given in the introduction to *Rāja-Yoga* (discussed above). But it is not just the commentaries that reflect Dvivedi's concept of *brahman* as the absolute consciousness. So too does the translation itself. This can be seen by examining a sample verse.

Table 7: Comparison of the first and second edition of *Rāja-Yoga*. By the author.

<i>The Theosophist</i> , 1885	2 nd ed. <i>Rāja-Yoga</i> , 1890
"All intercourse implies five attributes and no more: existence (सत्); intelligence (चित्); love (आनन्द); form (रूप); and name (नाम). The first three of these represent the all-pervading <i>Brahma</i> , and the last two the unreal <i>Jagat</i> (world, creation)." ³⁰²	"All intercourse implies five attributes and no more: existence (<i>sat</i>); consciousness (<i>chit</i>); pleasure (<i>ānanda</i>); form (<i>rupa</i>); and name (<i>nāma</i>). The first three represent the all-pervading <i>Brahma</i> , the last two the unreal <i>jagat</i> (world, evolution)." ³⁰³

Three changes can be observed. 1) *Cit* was translated as "intelligence" in the earlier version and as "consciousness" in the later. 2) *Jagat* was translated as "world, creation" in the 1885 edition and as "world, evolution" in the 1890 edition. 3) In the version, the Sanskrit terms were only given in Devanagari whereas they were given in Roman script in the 1890 edition. The first two changes are of vital importance. If we look at Monier-Williams' Sanskrit dictionary from 1872 – possibly the one Dvivedi used – we find that it suggests translating *cit* as "thought, intelligence, intellect, understanding, mind; the soul, heart."³⁰⁴ Its absence from this list implies that the rendering of *cit* as "consciousness" was not yet an established option. Yet it was precisely this rendering that allowed Dvivedi to connect his Advaita Vedānta to 19th century philosophy and that therefore enabled him to recontextualize his "Advaitism" in the European discourse. The choice of this term can therefore be read as a discursive strategy through which Dvivedi sought to claim the universality of his philosophical position in order to establish its superiority over European philosophy. "Consciousness" was also a key term in Theosophy. As we saw above, in Besant's writings in particular, but also in Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*, the "expansion of consciousness" is presented as both the result of initiation and the goal of evolution. In the same manner, *jagat* was redefined as "evolution" in

³⁰² Dvivedi, "Shri Vakya Sudha," 80. The version in the compendium by Tatya from 1888 is identical. It seems that this was a mere reprint.

³⁰³ Dvivedi, *Rāja-Yoga*, (translations) 6.

³⁰⁴ Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 323.

the later translation, which demarcated it from the theological discourse on creation and recontextualized it into the scientific discourse of evolutionism. This closeness to science is also a prominent feature of Theosophical thought.³⁰⁵ In the following section, a number of Dvivedi’s later writings will briefly be discussed. Consideration of these later texts will illustrate the way in which Dvivedi claimed a hegemonic position for his interpretation of “Advaitism” and will also show that the idea of *cit* as “consciousness” was pivotal for making this claim.

11.6 Relationalization to European Orientalism

The next two of Dvivedi’s papers to be discussed were published in a European academic context. *The Advaita philosophy of Śaṅkara* was published in the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* in 1888. Dvivedi also published another version of this article in *The Theosophist* in the same year. The two versions are almost identical, although they differ in some formalistic details. Most prominently, the Indian terminology and names as they appear in the version in the *Wiener Zeitschrift* include more diacritics than they do in the version in *The Theosophist*. In addition, several direct quotations, including translations, are given in the European academic publication.³⁰⁶ These features can probably be accounted for by assuming that Dvivedi adapted his text to conform to the scholarly standards of the academic journal in which he was publishing.

Dvivedi begins by discussing the writings of Śaṅkara. Interestingly, he describes some of Śaṅkara’s writings as “overburdened with the growth of later technicalities” and aims to give an explanation of Śaṅkara’s original teachings in a concise form by focusing on Śaṅkara’s commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Upaniṣads*.³⁰⁷ Dvivedi presents his interpretation of Śaṅkara’s writings as the original teaching, purified by the removal of the “later technicalities.” This approach fits well with Chatterjee’s classicist argument (on which, see Chapter 5), which maintains that Indian writers in the 19th century championed a “Hinduism” that was purified from the degeneration of modern times and restored to its earlier glory.³⁰⁸

305 Egil Asprem, “Theosophical Attitudes Towards Science: Past and Present,” in Hammer; Rothstein, *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*.

306 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “The Advaita Philosophy of Śaṅkara,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 2 (1888): 95–113.

307 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “The Advaita Philosophy of Sankara,” *The Theosophist* X, no. 109 (1888): 7.

308 Chatterjee, “The Subalternity of a Nationalist Elite”. See also Chapter 5.

In the article, Dvivedi propounds a conception of “truth” that was closely connected to the idea of an evolution in which this “truth” will ultimately be unveiled. This “truth” was rooted in the clear distinction between matter, which is the basis for all pain and all illusion, and *brahman* which is the basis for all happiness and knowledge.³⁰⁹ In line with this idea, Dvivedi writes that, “Brahma is all love, which is the highest *bliss*. It is therefore described, not defined, as *sat* (existence), *chit* (knowledge), and *ananda* (bliss).”³¹⁰

As variants of the article were published in both *The Theosophist* and the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, this provides a further example of the connections between a number of discursive fields, in this case including the European academic discourse and the discourse within the Theosophical Society. The *Zeitschrift* provided a structure in which these encounters could happen. These connections illustrate that discourses were not closed but rather complemented and influenced each other in the global colonial discursive continuum in multifaceted fields of encounters. Dvivedi’s writing also serves as an instructive example of the agency of a member of the Indian middle class (lower-case) who took part in these discourses.

Another instance of the realized connections of discourses can be found in a paper by Dvivedi that was written for the Oriental Congress in Stockholm in 1899. Dvivedi was invited to present the paper himself, with the invitation most likely mediated – again – by Georg Bühler. However, as he was unable to attend, he instead wrote a paper to be read on his behalf. It is unclear if the paper was in fact read at the congress or not. Thaker claims that it was read and that “it provoked a good deal of discussion at the Congress which resulted in drawing the attention of Western scholars to certain aspects of Hinduism and the Puranas.”³¹¹ Unfortunately, Thaker does not elaborate on his statement and does not give any further references to support his contention. In *Lucifer*, where the paper was printed in 1891, we find a somewhat different story. There we read that, “After very considerable delay our brother learnt that his paper had been unfortunately ‘misaid’. It is, however, *Lucifer’s* office to bring to light lost and hidden things, and he is rejoiced to give yet another proof of his utility in the service of fair play. – EDS.”³¹² While this might indicate that Dvivedi’s paper was read in Stockholm but that he did not have a copy available for publication due to some mischance, it could also mean that the paper was not read due to

309 Dvivedi, “The Advaita Philosophy of Sankara,” 14–15.

310 Dvivedi, “The Advaita Philosophy of Sankara,” 14.

311 Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 46.

312 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “The Purāṇas: Philology Versus Symbology,” *Lucifer* VIII, no. 44 (1891): 99.

being “mislaidd” in some sense before it could reach its intended audience. If this latter is the case, then this would, of course, change the position of the paper within the global discourse. If the paper was read, then this legitimization of Dvivedi’s thought in a European context serves as an instructive instance of his agency within the academic discourse. Dvivedi’s main aim in the paper was to show that the *Purāṇas* were explanations of universal laws. He used the *Purāṇas* to show that the “Hindu” religion, meaning his Advaita Vedānta, was “scientific.” This approach illustrates well the way in which Dvivedi placed his interpretation of “Hinduism” at the top of a hierarchy of all religions and philosophies and how this view of its superiority fit into the Theosophical narrative concerning the “Ancient Wisdom Religion.”

In his paper, Dvivedi sought to refute the mainstream positions of the time regarding the interpretation of myths, especially that of Friedrich Max Müller, and in doing so advocated the use of the study of symbology over that of philology.³¹³ Rejecting the positions of contemporary scholars who employed the methodology of comparative mythology, Dvivedi writes, “As every myth has some foundation in truth, I venture to hold that underneath the tales of the *Purāṇas*, precious truths lie embedded in strata not yet reached by the delvers in Philology and Comparative Mythology.”³¹⁴

One of the central concerns of Theosophy was to compare various religious traditions in order to identify their shared universal cores. It was believed by Theosophists that the “esoteric” doctrine could be found in ancient manuscripts, especially in India. As Blavatsky put it:

The main body of the doctrines given, however, is found scattered throughout hundreds and thousands of Sanskrit MSS., some already translated-disfigured in their interpretations, as usual-others still waiting their turn Every scholar, therefore, has an opportunity of verifying the statements herein made, and of checking most of the quotations.³¹⁵

Philology was one of the approaches taken to these texts in the Theosophical Society, alongside observations by means of clairvoyance.³¹⁶ Theosophy also provided a third approach that focused on the meaning of symbols, and this approach was taken up by Dvivedi.³¹⁷ Symbology was probably the methodology used in the Theosophical Society to gain access to the “esoteric doctrines”

³¹³ Thaker, *Manilal Dvivedi*, 46.

³¹⁴ Dvivedi, “The *Purāṇas*,” 99.

³¹⁵ Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 6. See also Mühlematter, “Philology as an Epistemological Strategy to Claim Higher Knowledge”.

³¹⁶ See Mühlematter, “Philology as an Epistemological Strategy to Claim Higher Knowledge”.

³¹⁷ Dvivedi, “Preface,” ii.

hidden in texts.³¹⁸ This approach was based on the idea that the real (esoteric) understanding of (foreign) texts would emerge from a consideration and comparison of the symbology they employed. The search for new approaches was structurally similar to the trend in academia that followed in the wake of historicism. This trend can be understood as a response to the vast quantity of manuscripts and translations that became available in the “West” through the expansion of the European empires as they developed into regimes of knowledge production.³¹⁹

In the Theosophical Society (and also beyond), native informants, especially Indians, played key roles in the process of the reception of Hindu thought, not least through the selection of manuscripts. This process of translation and recontextualization had an enormous impact on our “modern” understanding of “Hinduism.” Dvivedi was certainly a key figure in the uptake of Advaita Vedānta within both the Theosophical Society and academia, and he actively employed several strategies of relationalization in his writings. Similar strategies were also deployed toward his fellow Indians, as is illustrated by a debate between Dvivedi and Ramanuja Charya that took place in the pages of *The Theosophist*.³²⁰ He also took a similar stance towards Theosophy, which he understood as a tool for helping to restore the “Ancient Wisdom,” which he equated with his “Advaitism.”³²¹ Reflecting on the European Orientalist, he claimed that Theosophy merely gave the impetus to a real understanding of India’s literary heritage as a spiritual remedy for Europe’s ignorance.

The Orientalists shrug their shoulders at all this, which they probably set down as so much ‘rant’, and dispute every word of Theosophy, imagining themselves already in proud possession of all ancient wisdom and learning. I shall thank any one who can show in the average Orientalist work of twenty-five years’ standing, anything beyond distorted translations, literary quarrels, philological quibbles, childish explanations of myths, and paternal assertions of Christian superiority or supremacy over Heathen

318 See also Charles Johnston, “The Symbolism of the Upanishads,” *The Path* VIII, no. 10 (1894): 310–11 and several other writings by Charles Johnston. For more information on Charles Johnston, see Yves Mühlematter, “Johnston, Charles (1867–1931),” in Mühlematter; Zander, *Occult Roots of Religious Studies*.

319 For the expansion of the empires and the question of colonial knowledge production, see Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt*, 1105–73. For discussions of historicism and the Theosophical reaction to the effects of historicism, see Zander, *Anthroposophie in Deutschland*, 727–81.

320 N. Ramanuja Charya, “The Doctrine of Ma’Ya’ and the Hindu Scriptures,” *The Theosophist* XV, no. 2 (1893); Manilal N. Dvivedi, “The Doctrine of Ma’ya’,” *The Theosophist* XV, no. 4 (1894).

321 Manilal N. Dvivedi, “Theosophy Is an Idea,” *The Theosophist* XVI, no. 9 (1895).

ignorance. To-day, you find even a Max Muller bend the knee to Indian philosophy, you find spiritual culture prized above everything, you find your ancient land pointed out as the storehouse and progenitor of all that the world has learnt to hold in high esteem.³²²

This is a remarkable statement. Dvivedi not only criticizes the European academy, in which he also played a part, but presents Theosophy as little more than the means by which to rediscover the “spiritual culture” of India. On this account, Theosophy merely provides an impulse to India to restore itself to its proper place in world history. It is India that will be the savior of the world, not Theosophy.³²³

11.7 Preliminary Conclusion: Translating *Cit* into Theosophy; Advaitism as the Highest Form of Philosophy

Dvivedi’s writings show a profound knowledge of Hindu scriptures. At the same time, he uses numerous terms that were established in the Theosophical Society as translations for Indian concepts. His overarching idea of the merging into the consciousness of *brahman* serves as an instructive example of a translation process. His translation of *cit* as “consciousness” made his “Advaitism,” and the stages of initiation in *Rāja-Yoga*, compatible with Theosophy. It also allowed Dvivedi to recontextualize his ideas on “Advaitism” into several “Western” discourses. In a second step, he then hierarchized these discourses through several relationizings in what can be read as a strategy of relationalization not only to European philosophy and science but also to Theosophy.

Dvivedi’s life and work provide instructive examples of multifaceted hybridization processes taking place in several fields of the global colonial discursive continuum. Dvivedi was first introduced to “Hinduism” through the pages of *The Theosophist*. He then learned Sanskrit and taught “Hinduism” at various colonial institutions. He became an expert in “Hinduism” not only in the Theosophical Society but also in European academia. As discussed above, he proclaimed “Advaita Vedānta” to be the “true” “Hinduism.” For him, Theosophy provided the impetus to initiate a “Hindu revival” that would lead to a new age. The stages

³²² Dvivedi, “Theosophy Is an Idea,” 561.

³²³ This bears some resemblance to Annie Besant’s later claims about India’s position as the savior of the world (Annie Besant, *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad-Gītā: Four Lectures Delivered at the Thirtieth Anniversary Meeting of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, December, 1905* (Benares, London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1906), 12). In Besant’s view, this was however always connected to a view of a greater history which was strongly linked to the colonial aspirations of the British Empire.

involved in approaching a teacher in Advaita Vedānta, as explained by Dvivedi in his *Rāja-Yoga*, became the blueprint for the stages of initiation that were later recontextualized by Blavatsky and Besant. Dvivedi's influence on the Theosophical Society can thus not be overestimated. Given his significance, the absence of his name in histories of the Society is striking, and may almost appear to be the result of a deliberate deletion. This might have taken place for several reasons. Above all, his active claiming for his Advaita Vedānta of a hegemonic position in the Theosophical doctrine may have led to a counter process by which his position was marginalized by other ("Western") Theosophists. Another explanation might be that the controversial elements in his personal life (which had led to the withholding of his autobiography from publication for many years) resulted in an active distancing on the part of either individual Theosophists or the organization as a whole. While there are no records of any such response, this might explain why his name does not occur in any of the "histories" of the Theosophical Society. However, this is mere speculation, and further research is needed if we are to gain a better understanding of his later (lack of) representation in both Theosophical works and in the scholarly research on Theosophy.

11.8 Dvivedi's Colonial Agency and the Meshing of Processes of Hybridization

The analytical tool developed throughout this book allows us to understand Dvivedi's works as products of colonial agency. This colonial agency manifests in the relationizings described above. His writings are also interesting examples of the connections that link a range of discursive fields. Dvivedi as an actor interacted with several texts (and actors) in contexts (Gujarat, Bombay), mediums (*The Theosophist*, the anthology published by Tatya, Row's monographs, etc.), and structures (the Theosophical Society, the educational system, and European academy), and these interactions triggered multifaceted processes of hybridization. In the case of Dvivedi, the "multifaceted processes" become palpable. We can see that translation and de- and recontextualization mesh with relationalization and tradition. This meshing of hybridization processes can be understood as the "metaprocess" that was discussed in Chapter 4. Keeping this in mind, it is usually not sufficient to identify just one "process of hybridization" if we are to describe this meshing of hybridization processes in the plural. In the example of T. Subba Row, which will be used to further highlight the reception of "Hinduism" in the Theosophical Society, another meshing emerges.