

How Yoga Became “White:” Yoga Mobilities, Race, and the U.S. Settler Nation

(1937-2018)

by

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ABSTRACT

My Critical Yoga Studies investigation maps from the early 20th century to present day how yoga has become white through U.S. law and cultural productions, and has enhanced white privilege at the expense of Indian and people of color bodies. I position Critical Yoga Studies at the intersection of Yoga Studies, Critical Race Theory, Indigenous Studies, Mobilities Studies, and transnational American Studies. Scholars have linked uneven development and racial displacement (Soja, 1989; Harvey, 2006; Gilmore, 2007). How does racist displacement appear in historic and current contexts of development in yoga? In my dissertation, I use yoga mobilities to explain ongoing movements of Indigenous knowledge and wealth from former colonies, and contemporary “Indian” bodies, into the white, U.S. settler nation-state, economy, culture, and body. The mobilities trope provides rich conceptual ground for yoga study, because commodified yoga anchors in corporal movement, sets billions of dollars of global wealth in motion, shapes culture, and fuels complex legal and nation building maneuvers by the U.S. settler state and post-colonial India. Emerging discussions of commodified yoga typically do not consider race and colonialism. I fill these gaps with critical race and Indigenous Studies investigations of yoga mobilities in contested territories, triangulating data through three research sites: (1) U.S. Copyright law (1937-2015): I chart a 14,000% rise in U.S. yoga copyrights over a century of white hoarding through archival study in Copyright Public Records Reading Room, Library of Congress; (2) U.S. popular culture/music (1941-1967): I analyze twentieth-century popular song to illustrate how racist tropes of the Indian yogi joined yoga’s entry into U.S. popular culture, with material consequences; (3) Kerala, India, branded as India’s wellness tourism destination

(2018): I engage participant-observation and interviews with workers in yoga tourism hubs to document patterns of racialized, uneven access to yoga. I find legal regimes facilitate extraction and displacement; cultural productions materially segregate and exclude; and yoga tourism is a node of racist capitalism that privileges white, settler mobility at the expense of Indian people, land, culture.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to Ravi - who saves my life, as I save his - and to all my relations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my committee for seeing me through to this point, and no doubt into the future. Dr. Swadener, thank you for your memorable energy; Dr. Aggarwal, thank you for your precious perspectives; and, Dr. Lomawaima, thank you for teaching me to learn. I am indebted to all the people of Kerala who spoke with me and trusted me with their stories; the women healers who shared wellness with me; and the businesses which allowed me to study on their grounds.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Does Yoga Development and Cultural Appropriation Move Yoga into Exclusionary Uses?

“If you were fortunate enough to be born into a family whose ancestors directly benefited from genocide and/or slavery, maybe you think the more you don’t know, the more innocent you can stay, which is a good incentive not to find out, to not look too deep, to walk carefully around the sleeping tiger.” (Orange, 2018).

Study Motivation

There is a rise of contentious media stories about cultural appropriation and racism in U.S. yoga. In response, leading, white U.S. yoga authors dismiss cultural appropriation as an illusory issue; a trendy, substanceless topic. Leslie Kaminoff (a global yoga leader and teacher, whose book “Yoga Anatomy” is a mandatory textbook in yoga teacher credentialing programs and is a top ranked yoga author) asserts on his book’s public Facebook page, “it’s impossible to ‘steal’ an idea like yoga from anyone. If I steal something from you, it means that you don’t have it any more.” (Kaminoff, 2015). In this post, Kaminoff shared a popular Slate article by another white yoga author, Michelle Goldberg, “No, Westerners Practicing Yoga Are Not Guilty of ‘Cultural Appropriation’.” (Goldberg, 2015). I set out to understand more about if and how cultural appropriation moves yoga, and if yoga mobilities do take yoga possibilities away from some to accumulate in others. I sought an evidentiary base to determine whether U.S. cultural appropriation of yoga affects access. I found yoga development creates exclusionary uses and is characterized by moral ambiguity and ethical concerns.

Figure 1. Study Motivation

Study Motivation

Guiding Questions & Conclusion

- Does cultural appropriation move yoga?
- If so, do these yoga mobilities diminish access?
- Is there an evidentiary base?

Conclusion: I found yoga development creates exclusionary uses and is characterised by moral ambiguity and ethical concerns.

Also, it's impossible to "steal" an idea like yoga from anyone. If I steal something from you, it means that you don't have it any more.

As George Bernard Shaw so wisely observed: "'If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange these apples then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas.'"

http://www.slate.com/.../university_canceled_yoga_class_no_it...



SLATE.COM
No, Westerners Practicing Yoga Are Not Guilty of "Cultural Appropriation"

Study Summary

I use yoga to examine race relations in the U.S. settler state within a global context of power. Yoga is worth \$30 billion in the U.S.; \$100 billion worldwide, largely generated through yoga tourism. Forty million Americans practiced yoga in 2016; the number doubles every three years. U.S. yoga and its productions – such as “Yoga Journal,” and “Decolonizing Yoga” – are overwhelmingly white and disassociated from Indian bodies, history, and culture. Racism and nativism in the U.S. yoga site are rampant; a Santa Barbara “Gangster Yoga” class used blackface, and a California court allowed yoga in schools but banned Sanskrit posture names. Commodified yoga, branded as peaceful and flexible, camouflages the settler nation, White supremacy, and imperial powers.

My Critical Yoga Studies investigation maps from the early 20th century to present day how yoga has become white through U.S. law and cultural productions, and has enhanced white

privilege at the expense of Indian and people of color bodies. I position Critical Yoga Studies at the intersection of Yoga Studies, Critical Race Theory, Indigenous Studies, Mobilities Studies, India/South Asia Studies, and transnational American Studies. Scholars have linked uneven development and racial displacement (Soja, 1989; Harvey, 2006; Gilmore, 2007). How do racist displacements, movements, and stillnesses appear in historic and current contexts of development in yoga?

In my dissertation, I use “yoga mobilities” to explain ongoing movements of Indigenous knowledge and wealth from former colonies, and contemporary “Indian” bodies, into the white, U.S. settler nation-state, economy, culture, and body. The mobilities concept questions static, fixed social science interpretations of “place,” “terrain,” “dwelling,” and scales, such as “local” and “global,” which this framework defines as phenomenon in flux and friction. Mobilities studies examine physical movements (labor, tourism, diaspora); hidden and apparent movements of wealth and culture; and tensions between individual agency and structural constraint which characterize such movements. The mobilities trope provides rich conceptual ground for yoga study, because commodified yoga anchors in corporal movement, sets billions of dollars of global wealth in motion, shapes culture, and fuels complex legal and nation building maneuvers by the U.S. settler state and post-colonial India. *Yoga mobilities* traces how globalized, commodified yoga moves ethically and unethically, along historical oppressive lines; at corporal, cultural, socio-political, and economic levels.

Emerging discussions of commodified yoga typically do not consider race and colonialism. I fill these gaps with critical race and Indigenous Studies investigations of “yoga mobilities” in contested territories, triangulating data through three research sites: (1) U.S. Copyright law (1937-2015): I chart a 14,000% rise in U.S. yoga copyrights over a century of

white hoarding through archival study in Copyright Public Records Reading Room, Library of Congress; (2) U.S. popular culture/music (1941-1967): I analyze twentieth-century popular song to illustrate how racist tropes of the Indian yogi joined yoga's entry into U.S. popular culture, with material consequences; (3) Kerala, India, branded as India's wellness tourism destination (2018): I engage participant-observation and interviews with workers in yoga tourism hubs to document patterns of racialized, uneven access to yoga.

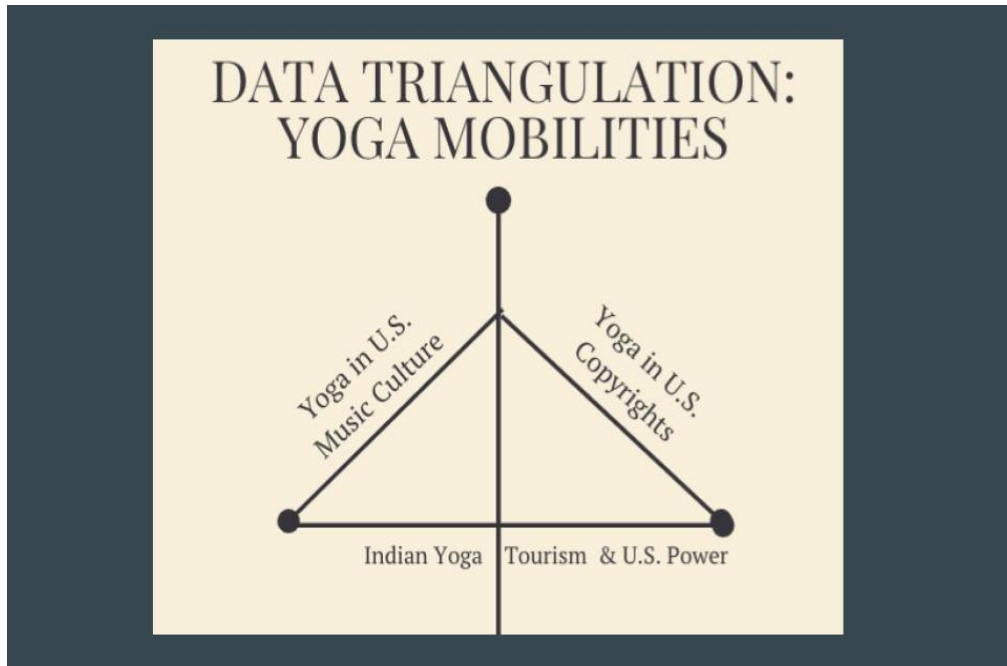
My dissertation shows how commodified yoga works to Other India, "Indian" yoga, and yogis; and domesticates yoga into "safe" categories that affirm the white settler state, at the expense of Indian bodies (Lomawaima, 2006). I draw on four summers of U.S. based fieldwork, plus one academic year of fieldwork in India to track nativist, racist displacements in yoga through settler law, cultural productions, and tourism economies. I find legal regimes facilitate extraction and displacement; cultural productions materially segregate and exclude; and yoga tourism is a node of racist capitalism that privileges white, settler mobility at the expense of Indian people, land, culture. I conclude that yoga development creates paths, uses, and iterations of "yoga" as a brand with varying relations to long-standing yoga values. The values of yoga are increasingly trumped, negated, and encroached upon by values of yoga development as a profitable, powerful node in racist, global capitalism. Yoga values of central importance to this study - such as being present, self-awareness, balance, scholarship, discipline of senses, reactions, and care in relations with others - are unpacked in the following literature review.

Contemporary Ethnographic Methods

I use contemporary ethnographic methods to examine long-term, short-term, and historical ethical concerns raised by mobility and change in the field of yoga development.

Contemporary ethnographers “now consciously address change through including in their ethnography a study of history plus the present, first hand, year long study of a society or culture in action.” (Murchison, 2010). I am a contemporary, transnational feminist ethnographer. In this yoga mobilities study, I uncover hidden, defining characteristics of yoga development through historical, archival study of yoga in U.S. law and culture; and, through field research data gathered during a year of “being there” in yoga tourism sites to unearth ethical considerations embedded in contemporary yoga tourism practices in Kerala, India - a hub of yoga and wellness tourism development.

Figure 2. Data Triangulation: Yoga Mobilities



Research Questions

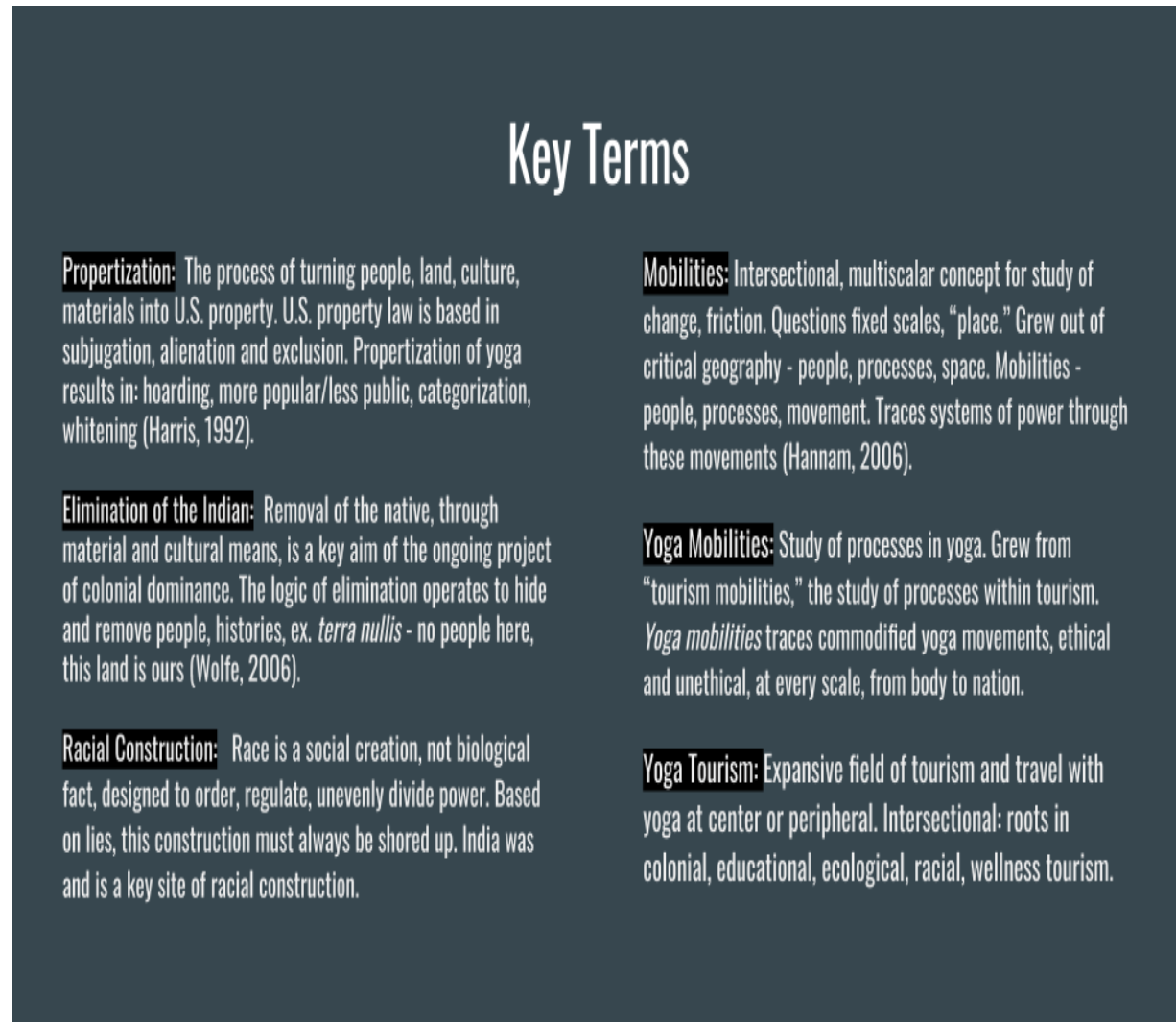
This study maps interactions among a variety of movements and mobilities in yoga to unearth key animating logics in the development of commercialized, “white” yoga. The three case studies presented use archival law and popular culture, as well as contemporary tourism ethnography to build a transnational American Studies, critical race, and indigenous studies story of yoga defined by movement, flux, and friction.

Collectively, the dissertation asks:

- What key terms, questions, disciplines, and methods scaffold Critical Yoga Studies investigations?
 - What are effective definitions of “yoga,” and “yoga tourism?” What do established and already circulating definitions of these key terms reveal about epistemic tensions in yoga studies? What do accepted organizations of research in “yoga tourism studies” reveal about epistemic violence?

- What are effective methods and methodological frameworks to shore up development of this nascent field? How are these used for gathering and sharing liberatory knowledge?
- Does yoga “move?” Is there evidence to support the claim that there are geographic, cultural, legal, and political movements in and/or through yoga?
 - What are defining characteristics of movements in yoga?
- What is “yoga mobilities?” How can this framework be used to gather and share knowledge?
 - What are defining questions and characteristics of the “yoga mobilities” framework?
 - Do empirical examinations of “yoga mobilities” reveal any exclusionary or harmful movements in yoga?
 - Are there material impacts of this movement/these “yoga mobilities?” How are these impacts distributed? Who bears the burden of these impacts? Who bears the benefit?
- What are important relationships between mobility, race, indigeneity, and imperialism in industrialized yoga?
 - What does use of data triangulation in Critical Yoga Studies verify about these relations?
 - What are the moral ambiguities and ethical concerns that define development of industrialized yoga and its enmeshed relations with neoliberal global capitalism?

Figure 3. Key Terms



Chapter Outlines

My interdisciplinary, triangulated approach involves three studies - of law, culture, and tourism commerce - discussed in three chapters, which each provide key supportive evidence. This multi-case study method of presenting evidence - as opposed to a traditional dissertation which is built around one central investigation - enables me to build strong, interdisciplinary connections, and introduce several new, data based interventions into yoga, race, capitalism, and cultural studies scholarly conversations.

Summary of Chapter 2: Yoga As Property: Mapping U.S. Yoga Copyrights (1937-2015)

This study traces how U.S. intellectual property regimes propertize (make severable and exclusive) and accumulate yoga for the racialized settler state. A map of all yoga related copyrights from 1937 through 2015 indicates a sharp shift in the yoga space from India into the realm of U.S. intellectual property over a century. The rise in yoga related copyrights is disproportionately high compared to the overall rise of U.S. copyright claims over the same period. This map contributes to growing conversations on race, decolonization, and intellectual property.

Indigenous studies and critical race studies theories help contextualize the rise of U.S. private property ownership of yoga within an ongoing extractive relationship between circulations of imperial power and land based, traditional knowledge (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016). Decolonizing deductions from the yoga copyright map disrupt powerful discourses; they reframe yoga as becoming property; name yoga as less public and more privately owned; locate connections between copyright regimes turning yoga into property and severing yoga into sellable categories; trace how copyright regimes enable a de-Indianizing of yoga. A central conclusion to be drawn from this study is that the movement of yoga into commodity and property is, in part, a tool of war against Othered bodies and land.

Summary of Chapter 3: Racialized Sights and Sounds of Yogis in American Popular Music (1941-1967)

This study examines histories of racist stereotypes accompanying Indians, yoga, and yogis' entry and life in American popular music from 1941 to 1967. I interrogate hidden musical histories of racism in the yoga site to provide clues to how contemporary yoga becomes

dis/possessed by Whiteness (Lipsitz, 2007). I engage critical musicology methods to analyze layers of three widely circulating songs for traces of Orientalising, racist stereotypes. My study is guided by the question: What racial stereotypes accompanied yoga's entry into American social discourse? Every song features minstrel stereotypes that have long operated to affirm White, colonial dominance. I argue the evidence supports two primary findings: (1) Yoga in American popular music and media is an abiding space of racial, colonial tensions that have long historical fetch; (2) Widely circulating stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music include classic racist tropes, such as the grinning Sambo, the magic man, the savage monkey, the lustful miscegenator, and the emasculated man-child. I conclude that racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music are materially damaging.

Summary of Chapter 4: Critical Yoga Tourism Mobilities Study of Kerala, South India (2018-2019)

My ethnographic data reveals patterns of racialized, gendered, uneven access to yoga in tourism sites. Kerala, India, is branded as India's go-to wellness tourism destination. I have concluded field research in Kerala, where I have completed fifty semi-structured interviews and five sites of extended participant observation with Indian women in yoga tourism (workers, teachers, and students). I chose three top yoga retreat centers in Kerala based on travel user reviews on "Trip Advisor," the largest travel review site in the world, these include: Malabar House (Ft. Kochi), Niraamaya Surya Samundar Retreat (Kovalam), Kayal Island Retreat (Alleppey District). I use grounded theory and thematic coding methods to analyze interview transcripts. I document patterns of uneven access to yoga and wellness in Indian yoga tourism sites; such as grave challenges to the wellness of wellness tourism workers. My research fills a tourism studies gap in yoga tourism data.

Conclusion: Yoga Development, Yoga Values; Creates Exclusionary Uses, Affirms Global Capital

With this Critical Yoga Studies research, I add to scholarly conversations: 1) on race, intellectual property law, and nation by creating the first comprehensive map of yoga related copyrights; 2) on race and American popular music; and on African American and Indian connections, by unearthing hidden histories of harmful racist tropes that accompanied yoga's entry into the U.S. public imagination with material exclusionary impacts; and 3) on critical tourism by publishing the first critical yoga tourism study.

Literature Review

Guided by contemporary trajectories in “mobilities studies” scholarship, I conduct a legal, cultural, and ethnographic investigation of industrialized yoga to “evoke and critically reflect on the characteristics of such environments” (Gottschalk, et al., 2015). Based on my evidentiary findings, I contribute to the scholarship of mobilities studies and “critical yoga studies” by: (1) answering a growing call from transnational American Studies and Indigenous Studies scholars for interdisciplinary research bridging critical race theory, indigenous studies, settler colonial, and post-colonial studies (Moreton-Robinson, 2016); (2) providing an evidentiary base, and articulating a “yoga mobilities” framework, to help propel “mobility studies” towards emerging critical race, indigenous studies, and settler colonial and post-colonial mobilities research agendas (Carpio et al., 2019); (3) arguing for the nascent critical yoga studies field to utilize the “data triangulation” method (Oppermann, 2000), thereby creating a strong, data-based “interdisciplinarity” that is not simply comprised of parts of other wholes, but a whole onto itself (Clifford et al., 1986); and (4) defining “yoga” as fundamentally aligned with contemporary political and social values of liberation and integration, and as a system of arts and

sciences and historic codes designed to guide all relations - a system in which asana, or postural stretches and movements, is but one element.

1. A Call for New Research at the Intersection of Indigenous Studies and Critical Race Studies

Indigenous studies and critical race studies frameworks contextualize my law, popular culture, and commerce study on the “whitening” of yoga within an ongoing extractive relationship between circulations of imperial power, colonialism, whiteness as property vis-à-vis yoga, the Global South, and India (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016). Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2016), Indigenous studies scholar, calls for research deploying an intersectional methodology that interlaces Indigenous Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Foucauldian biopower. Her call goes to the heart of an ongoing conversation in Indigenous Studies about racializing settler colonial studies. Moreton-Robinson poses key questions to guide this research agenda, inspiring a central question of my study: “In what sense do [property, representation, and wellness] rights function as tactics and strategies of race war?” Critical race legal scholar Cheryl Harris (1993) states that property as it is understood now was born out of and also helped birth a legal system of subordination, which relegated and continues to relegate Black people to property. The systems known as “whiteness as property” and the “white possessive” involve accumulation of power by whiteness to maintain violent and false racial constructions which place highest value in whiteness at the expense of Other races and indigenous peoples (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016). In my critical yoga study, I respond to the call for research that bridges race and indigeneity concerns through examining yoga as a historic and contemporary site used to shore up the fallacy of white supremacy through powerful legal, cultural, and

commercial codifications that are part of structural colonial, settler-colonial, and white supremacist movements.

The landscape of this study includes scholarship in mobilities, yoga, coloniality, indigenous studies, critical race, law and intellectual property, American popular culture, intersectional feminism, and critical tourism. I center conversations on projections of the colonizers on the colonized, silenced, orientalist Other (Said, 1978; Nandy, 1988, Spivak, 1988). I engage discussions on law, the white possessive, the critical space of yoga, race, and on environmental limitations raised by rapid accumulation of yoga (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016; Berila et al., 2016; Shiva, 2016). Within intersectional feminisms, I focus on the way different bodies are ascribed with multiple scales of oppression (Crenshaw, 2018). In culture, cinema, and music history studies, I engage the project of unearthing hidden racial histories through archival study of music culture (Lipsitz, 2007). In critical tourism, I enter debates on the impact of tourism development, particularly in the Global South and formerly colonized nations, help to contextualize the yoga tourism arm of this study (Ateljevic et al., 2010; Haseena et al., 2014; Kempadoo, 2014; Ren et al., 2010; Vats, 2013).

(2) “Mobilities,” “Yoga Mobilities,” and the Emerging “Settler Mobilities” Research Agenda

“Mobilities” is an intersectional, multiscale concept for study of global change and friction. The mobilities framework questions fixed scales, and any fixed notions, especially of “place.” Mobilities studies grew out of critical geography studies - which is primarily concerned with people, processes, and *space*. Mobilities studies centers people, processes, and *movement*. Importantly, mobilities studies traces systems of power through these movements and stillnesses

(Hannam, 2006). “Mobility studies” describes research trajectories in the social sciences that investigate movements and stillnesses at the micro-scale of the body, up to mid-level scales of public transit, to macro-scales of transnational political friction and environmental flux set in motion by global capitalism (Cresswell, 2010; Merrimen et al., 2008; Uteng et al., 2008).

The mobilities concept is interdisciplinary and accommodates the scope and purpose of my study - to show movement, propertization, and accumulation of yoga over time. Mobilities scholars examine “diverse, interacting systems of mobility and the related governance and policy concerns around the world” (Hannam et al., 2006). A “‘mobility turn’ is spreading into and transforming the social sciences, not only placing new issues on the table, but also transcending disciplinary boundaries and putting into question the fundamental ‘territorial’ and ‘sedentary’ precepts of twentieth-century social science” (Hannam et al., 2006). A key contribution of the mobilities framework is how it highlights and studies spaces, sites, and modes of movement that were previously seen as mere containers for social processes. Mobilities is an interdisciplinary concept that traces movements and stillnesses, regenerations and stagnancies, frictions and surrenders - and maps the power dynamics of these phenomena (Ahmed, 2004; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Skeggs, 2004). Scholars of governance use mobilities to better understand the social and political impact of law and surveillance on youth (Van Blerk, 2013); national borders (Amoore et al., 2008); and tourism (Dredge et al., 2013). Music scholars engage mobilities to understand change in how people listen (Bull, 2005; Gopinath et al., 2014); perform (Nóvoa, 2012); and negotiate music culture (Laing, 1997). Tourism mobilities are a traditional and well established sector of mobilities studies (Birtchnell, 2013; Hannam et al., 2014; Kannisto, 2016; Sheller et al.,

2004) , and yoga tourism mobilities are a newly emerging part of tourism mobilities studies (Nichter, 2013; Strauss, 2013).

While there has been recent work on mobility with regards to “the micro scale of the body” (Cresswell, 2012) in relation to slavery “the historical curtailment of black mobilities in the United States undermining their citizenship” (Hague, 2010), and in relation to borders and the “enforced stillness of undocumented migrants who are locked into” the vehicles of human trafficking (Martin, 2011), “mobilities studies” is not widely associated with critical race theory, settler colonial studies, and indigenous studies. “Questions of movement are central to [colonial and racial] processes, yet engagement between mobility studies, settler colonial studies, ethnic studies, and indigenous studies has been limited” (Carpio et al., 2019). However, “scholars have continued to insist on the role of power in the production of mobilities and role of mobilities in the constitution of power” (Cresswell, 2012).

My dissertation joins emerging calls from within “mobilities studies” towards scholarship that “examines and theorizes the significance of movement and mobility in the production and contestation of settler colonial geographies” (Carpio et al., 2019). I introduce “yoga mobilities” as a versatile framework which can effectively reveal, map, and define processes of imperial power in and through yoga. “Yoga mobilities” traces commodified yoga movements, ethical and unethical, at every scale, from body to nation. “Settler mobilities” scholarship is centered around the following questions: “What are the relationships between mobility, race, and indigeneity, in settler colonial societies? How are the movements of people, animals, commodities, ideas, and practices related to the ongoing making and unmaking of settler societies? How are these various movements narrated and contested in the cultural products and practices of settler states, of those

implicated by settlement? What possibilities for decolonization and the full exercise of sovereignty, cultural revitalization, and racial justice might exist if we take past, present, and future mobilities as our starting point?” (Carpio et al., 2019). In yoga mobilities, I pose questions of similar nature and focus on the relationship of global power, multi-scalar movement or stillnesses, and *yoga*.

(3) “Critical Yoga Studies” Method: Data Triangulation

While the term “Critical Yoga Studies,” has circulated a handful of times within published scholarship (Berila et al., 2016; Mintz, 2018; Strings et al., 2016; Vats, 2016), the dissertation study presented here is the first “Critical Yoga Studies” dissertation, as well as the first study to develop a critical yoga studies methodological framework using the “mobilities” concept and use the “data triangulation” method. Critical yoga studies is a rising interdisciplinary field that brings critical race studies, ethnic studies, indigenous studies, settler colonial studies, critical geography studies, globalization studies, sustainability studies, critical tourism studies, and mobility studies into conversation through empirical examinations that consider historic and contemporary developments in yoga. Critical Yoga Studies arises in part as a response to powerful, contemporary yoga studies discourses that do not address, or deny, the role of power in industrialized or historic yoga (Kaminoff et al., 2007). While certain feminist frameworks (embodiment (Berila et al., 2016)) are utilized in critical yoga studies scholarship, with “yoga mobilities” this dissertation contributes the first articulation of a critical yoga studies methodological framework. In this study, I contribute empirical analyses of yoga and power to flesh out the nascent critical yoga studies field. I argue for future critical yoga studies to utilize “yoga mobilities,” and triangulated data.

Figure 4. Yoga Values: Comparison

Yoga Values: Philosophical, Branded, and Industrialised	
Philosophical Yoga Values - Balance	Branded Yoga Values - Poster Child for Globalization
• Balance, being present, part of whole • Ahimsa (non-violence, non-harming) • Satya (truthfulness) • Asteya (non-stealing) • Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) • Tapas (discipline or austerity) • Svadhyaya (scholarship, study of self) • <i>Asana</i>, postures, are a fraction of the yogic path.	• Wellness, health, fitness • Moral purity • Innocence - Sexy • Peace, Love, Luxury
	Industrialised Yoga Values - Extremes
	• Propertization • Displacement • Extremes • Racial constructions • Elimination of the Indian - exceptionalism

In this study, I triangulate legal, popular culture, and ethnographic tourism data to test validity across a curated convergence of yoga information. Because historic yoga and industrialized yoga developments involve and impact numerous systems of power, it is necessary to analyze different perspectives and conduct deeply interdisciplinary investigations using a variety of research methods to gain accurate understanding of any yoga phenomenon.

“Triangulation is a technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from

two or more sources. In particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon” (Bryman, 2016; Decrop, 1999). Triangulation requires deep interdisciplinarity - is not simply about “getting another opinion,” and is not primarily a process of cross-checking findings with other scholarly data. “It’s more to increase the level of knowledge about something and to strengthen the researcher’s standpoint from various aspects” (Bryman, 2016). Triangulation is “the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999).” It is especially important to utilize data triangulation “when setting and following the methodological framework of a research project” (Bryman, 2016). This dissertation contributes to emerging Critical Yoga Studies scholarship by setting out the “yoga mobilities” methodological framework, and following the data triangulation method.

(4) Defining Yoga, Yoga Values

In mainstream, White dominant yoga sites, “yoga” is commonly, literally translated as “to yoke,” and “union.” A lesser utilized, more politicized translation of “yoga,” is “integration,” and “liberation” - as in liberated into a whole or oneness. Given the norm in yoga sites of defining yoga literally, as one word, it is important to offer “yoga as integration” as an alternative or supplemental translation which evokes power negotiations, such as those that define relations between nation-states, global capital, and the oppressed self/body. Yoga is a warrior art, not unrelated to martial arts practices, and was nurtured in what is now known as South Asia, India, and the Global South thousands of years before trending in western popular culture. Yoga is a spiritual refuge for those who seeks it, and while it draws from texts currently considered “religious,” it cannot be ascribed with contemporary, binary, fascist, and colonial

definitions of “religious” and “non-religious, ” no matter the violence or power that accompanies such definitions. From historic texts discussed below, we learn that yoga teaches the art of being present, engaged, yet un-attached to success or failure. Fundamentally, the yogic path is aimed at carving a middle path of balance between extremes - and the industrialized yoga boom aligns with rising extremes that increasingly define the landscape and lived experiences under global capitalism. To define yoga, one must discuss fundamental, historic yoga values.

“Yoga is stilling the fluctuations of the mind. Then one abides in their own true nature.” (Patanjali, -400 CE) Yoga has been practiced as a full wellness science in what is now known as India for “well over 4000 years.” (Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2019) Evidence of the science of yoga in India dates back to 3000 B.C.E; among several foundational texts in yogic sciences (Vedas, Upanishads), in the Mahābhārata (900 B.C.E) there are more than 900 references to yoga, but only two mentions of yoga asana or postures. While physical yoga, now known as “hatha yoga” may assist with stilling the mind, it is a fraction of the yogic path. Eight limbs of yoga are described in the saint Patanjali’s text, Yoga Sutras. These limbs include: (1) *Yamas*, which are often described as “attitude toward our environment,” but this does not fully describe this set of moral codes which includes, ahimsa (non-violence or non-harming), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), bramacharya (sexual restraint), and aparigraha (non-possessiveness); (2) *Niyamas* govern codes personal behavior including saucha (purity), santosha (contentment), tapas (discipline or austerity), svadhyaya (scholarship, study of self, knowledge of self as an aspect of a whole, rise of awareness), and ishvara pranidhana (constant devotion to God); (3) *Asana*, now understood as yoga postures, long referred to disciplining the body to stillness for meditation, then eight centuries after Patanjali’s writings (which came thousands of years after the practice and philosophy of yogic sciences began), asana began to be used in forms

relatable to contemporary yoga practice, but this too was limited to preparing disciples bodies for meditation; (4) *Pranayama*, yoga breathing techniques designed to control prana, in China known as ch'i, or vital life force; (5) *Pratyahara*, balance and focus while navigating and engaging the five natural elements (earth, wind, fire, water, air), the five subtle senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste), and relations with intimate others who bring harmony, distraction, or inertia; (6) *Dharana*, concentration and collection of the mind, certainty, steadfastness; (7) *Dhyana*, meditation, equanimity, discipline over reaction; (8) *Samadhi*, integration of the individual aspect of self with the infinite whole (Chopra, 2019; Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2019; Frawley, 2015; Sovik, 2014).

These eight limbs of yoga, known as *ashtanga*, consists of steps that builds upon each other, neither step is a separate entity, but a part of an interdependent whole. *Svadhyaya*, one of the Niyamas, is of particular importance to this study, because it is the study of self, the process of becoming aware of the self as an individual wave of an ocean, of a whole. *Svadhyaya* manifests as reflexivity, embodied research methods, and positionality in feminist social science literature (Davis, 1997; Finlay, 2002; Rose, 1997). Non-violence, *ahimsa*; truthfulness, *satya*; contentment, *santosha*; austerity, *tapas* - these are all essential yoga values that inform this study, and my analysis of yoga development. I do not claim these yoga values have ever existed in perfection, or that they were birthed completely holistically by the lineage summarized here. Yoga is a site that has and continues to be used to oppress and exclude others. I liken yoga to the democratic project; no iteration resonates as complete, perfect, or wholly ethical. Still, these values hold weight and merit as moral codes and guiding lights.

CHAPTER 2

Yoga As Property: Mapping U.S. Yoga Copyrights (1937-2015)

Abstract

This study traces how U.S. intellectual property regimes propertize (make severable and exclusive) and accumulate yoga. A map of all yoga related copyrights from 1937 through 2015 indicates a sharp shift in the yoga space from India into the realm of U.S. intellectual property over a century. The rise in yoga related copyrights is disproportionately high compared to the overall rise of U.S. copyright claims over the same period. This map contributes to growing conversations on traditional knowledges and intellectual property. Indigenous studies and critical race theories help contextualize the rise of U.S. private property ownership of yoga within an ongoing extractive relationship between circulations of imperial power and land based, traditional knowledges (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016). Decolonizing deductions from the yoga copyright map disrupt powerful discourses; they reframe yoga as becoming property; name yoga as less public and more privately owned; locate connections between copyright regimes turning yoga into property and severing yoga into sellable categories; trace how copyright regimes enable a de-Indianizing of yoga towards white accumulation over time. A central conclusion to be drawn from this study is that propertization of yoga is, in part, a tool of colonial war.

Key Concepts: Race, yoga, U.S. copyright law, mapping, sovereignty, property, intellectual property, truth discourse, biopower, colonization, decolonizing methodologies, traditional knowledge.

Introduction

This study traces how U.S. intellectual property regimes propertize (make severable and exclusive) and accumulate yoga for the racialized settler state. Studying ways and means of ownership in yoga maps yoga as a shifting space of power, for some and over Others. To better understand ownership in the yoga space, I trace yoga related copyright claims over a century, from the first yoga titled copyrights found in 1937 through 2015. I chart a 14,000% rise in U.S. copyright claims in yoga from the first decade measured (1937-1947; 25 copyrights) to the last (2005-2015; 3483 copyrights). Total growth in all U.S. copyrights for the same time span is just under 300%. Zooming in on recent growth, in the year 1990 there were 93 yoga-related copyright claims; in the year 2000 this number doubled to 180; by 2010 claims nearly double again to 259. These numbers indicate steady momentum in copyright ownership in yoga over nearly a century. In this study I focus on sharp escalation in yoga copyrights, but I have also identified similarly breathtaking developments in yoga related patents and trademarks.

What are the characteristics of meteoric growth in U.S. intellectual property ownership of yoga? First is propertization, a process which changes yoga from a living, whole space connected to people, place, and history into a *terra nullis* space of severed, exclusive, ahistoric parts; second, accumulation of yoga space by U.S. and western whiteness to sustain power for the racialized settler state; and third, categorization of yoga into a space marked by increasing numbers of dislocated product types and disorienting parts. Ultimately, yoga is not a severed thing, but a holistic medicinal arts practice bent towards liberation from suffering for all life, including land.

There is no yoga if there is no land. The sciences of yoga are inextricably linked to nature, including but not limited to prescribed medicinal foods that grow in healthy land, with enough potable water, clean air, and sunlight. When these natural elements are threatened and hoarded, so too is the natural resource of yoga. Naming links between land and yoga can be done through investigations like the one engaged here, into how yoga is coded into property by legal regimes. Studies in how yogic medicinal arts originate in, and draw from land, also connect yoga to land. As a final example, examinations of how India based yoga tourism and eco-tourism are subsets of one another ties yoga to land. Settler colonialism is a “land-centered” project but as land becomes completely encroached, it is important to help theorize “intellectual property” as the new land for the purposes of settlement; a hotly contested site of occupation (Shiva, 2016). When the idea of yoga as property is both pushed forward and pulled away from, it reveals more ways, means, and targets of decolonization within existing intellectual property regimes. Understanding yoga as property while allowing for the fact that it can never be fully reduced to property is strategic because as property it can be linked to land. Operating with the truth that yoga is land helps make other truths clear, for example; yoga is being propertized, exclusively owned, and as property it can be hoarded like antiques are. Yoga as land is a framework that enables an understanding that yoga can be extracted from; yoga is finite in ways, and yoga is being mined in a racist market where Othered, living entities are bought and sold. Profits from these strange transactions are not distributed smoothly across the globe. Instead, globalized yoga is increasingly spatialized as U.S. property, and this contemporary formation sustains western, white, settler supremacy. While the focus of this article is on U.S. propertization and accumulation of yoga, there is also much to be explored with regards to how yoga is used to affirm patriarchal, fundamentalist nationalisms in India.

A guiding question of this study is: What does a clearer understanding of U.S. copyright ownership trajectories in the contemporary yoga space illuminate about the current shape of racialized colonization? To address this inquiry, I engage conversations on the white possessive, the critical space of yoga, race and intellectual property, and on environmental limitations raised by rapid accumulation of yoga (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016; Berila et al., 2016; Shiva, 2016). Next, I explain archival search methods to gather data on long term rising trends in U.S. copyrights in yoga from 1937 to 2015. Then, I discuss the data, present graphs that illustrate urgency, and contextualize the extreme yoga copyright trends within a parallel U.S. political history of anti-immigrant, and specifically anti-Indian policy. Further, I argue that the evidence supports the primary finding that; (1) yoga is being propertized, and this process enables; (2) hoarding of yoga, which makes it less public; (3) categorization of yoga, which divides once holistic medicinal arts practices into alienated parts, and; (4) whitening of the yoga space, meaning all aspects of the site, from yoga creation stories to the aim of wellness in land and bodies, are shifting away from Indian spaces toward white, western sites. Finally, I indicate the conclusions to be drawn from this study; namely, that the propertization of yoga is a tool of war against Othered bodies and land.

Literature Review

Mobilities, Law, and Governance

Scholars of governance have used the mobilities concept to highlight social and political impacts of law and surveillance on youth (Van Blerk, 2013) and national borders (Amoore et al., 2008). In this study of law, yoga, and mobilities, I explain the role of U.S. governance, through copyright law, in designing transnational movements of yoga from India to U.S. private property.

This creates destabilizing frictions between nations similar to biopiracy clashes. Under U.S. copyright law definition, yoga has been in the public domain in India for thousands of years. But, due to U.S. copyright law mistranslations or misunderstandings of yoga, endless yoga products may be propertized, converted into private and exclusionary U.S. property.

Answering a Call for New Indigenous Research

Indigenous studies and critical race studies frameworks contextualize this macro level perspective on the rise of U.S. private ownership of yoga within an ongoing extractive relationship between circulations of racist imperial power and property (Harris, 1993; Moreton-Robinson, 2016). Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2016), Indigenous studies scholar, calls for research deploying an intersectional methodology that interlaces Indigenous Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Foucauldian biopower. Her call goes to the heart of a continuing conversation in Indigenous Studies about racializing settler colonial studies. Moreton-Robinson poses key questions to guide this research agenda, inspiring a central question of my study: “In what sense do [property] rights function as tactics and strategies of race war?” India and yoga are fruitful sites to carry out Moreton-Robinson’s call for new research. When India was occupied by the British yoga was criminalized; and the country was a key site for the creation of racial hierarchies. In the contemporary context of globalized, commodified yoga, yoga has become a powerful, embodied property in whiteness’ hoards of property. It follows that the social discourse on yoga circulates truths that support status quo power dynamics. Foucault argues that every society has regimes of truth, which are not absolute, but are powerful. A Foucauldian biopower analysis examines how knowledge and power land within the body. Within biopower, I centralize embodied intersectional feminist perspectives on how different bodies are inscribed

with oppression in varying ways. Recent work on yoga and intersectional feminism recognizes that we hold trauma in our bodies and contends that since oppression creates trauma, it requires embodied processes (as well as intellectual and political work) to disrupt oppression and heal.

Becoming Property: Land, Intellectual Property, and Yoga

Land, like yoga, is a whole, living entity; it was brought under property regimes led by values of alienation, severability, exclusion. Alienation is the jewel of U.S. property law, which is intimately connected to British property law. Alienation is the capacity for a piece of property, or a right to a property, to be sold. Circulations of imperial power alienate land into property for purposes of occupation and settlement. Indigenous lands are deemed abandoned and empty, *terra nullis*, in order to justify these wars. (Moreton-Robinson; 2016) Under property regimes, land can be severed into pieces or rights, and these can be transferred to an owner. The property owner has the right to exclude others and sell. Land is not naturally property and neither is intellectual property, or yoga. Intellectual property is the legal regime that governs the realm of ideas, culture, and creativity. Intellectual property itself is propertized over time. (Carrier; 2004) When yoga is absorbed into U.S. intellectual property, it is defined by alienation and exclusion. Alienation and exclusion mark the propertization of contemporary, western, White yoga spaces. Cheryl Harris (1993) states that property as it is understood now was born out of and also helped birth a legal system of subordination, which relegated/relegates Black people to property. Similarly, the occupation and colonial rule over “Indians,” supported white privilege through property rights in land, over bodies, and in cultural terrain. A primary function of creating Others and colonies is that through subjugation these become efficient sites for the lifting of “commodities from point of origin to the imperial center.” The extraction never

stopped, though it exists in constant metamorphoses. Limitless extraction raises questions about sustainability.

Emerging Conversations on Race and Intellectual Property

The U.S. Constitution codifies the right to copyright protection of expression to encourage "progress in the Arts." But, copyright provisions do not exist in a neutral vacuum; copyright territory is a particularly ripe ground for revealing how culture, law, and power operate to nation build. Private property is central to Eurocolonial projects; this is true for land, and this is also true for the "intellectual property" terrain of ideas, traditional knowledge, and culture. *Decolonizing Methodologies* provides key research tools to understand the contested site where intellectual property regimes work to commodify indigenous knowledge. This study joins the growing field of Critical Intellectual Property, and is in conversation with Critical IP scholars who centralize the body. I operationalize Critical IP in this study to unearth legacies of white supremacy in intellectual property law and examine the contradictions of copyright, which both consolidates and disrupts racialized and indigenous power in yoga. Critical Intellectual Property studies ("Critical IP") emerge from critical legal studies and critical race theory. Guiding questions include: What do legal tropes of colorblindness and neutrality obscure about how law is created and operates to uphold race and racism? Copyright law in yoga, while ostensibly neutral, acts as a "powerful tool for the regulation, control, and manipulation of meaning." (Tehrani, 2012) Critical IP scholars assert that copyright regimes are contradictory, and are used in various ways by people with many different relationships to power.

Critical Geography: The Changing Yoga Space

Critical geography studies focus on representations, or values and beliefs, of space that can sustain or challenge power. Truths about the yoga space are shifting; such as where yoga is from, where it lives now, if yoga can be owned, and how and if yoga should be developed. This study presents graphs that form a critical map of yoga related copyrights to trace the “how,” “when,” and “why” of yoga movement into the U.S. and into Whiteness. The spatialization of yoga is changing as the spatialization of the world shifts under globalization. Spatialization describes how truths associated with spaces feed into broader social formations, such as racial constructs, which in turn have economic impact. For example, the changing spatialization of yoga means that yoga tourism spaces are often located in ecotourism hotspots; and these hot spots are increasingly found outside of India. This study demonstrates how U.S. intellectual property regimes influence the changing spacialization of yoga through shifting yoga into sellable, U.S. property.

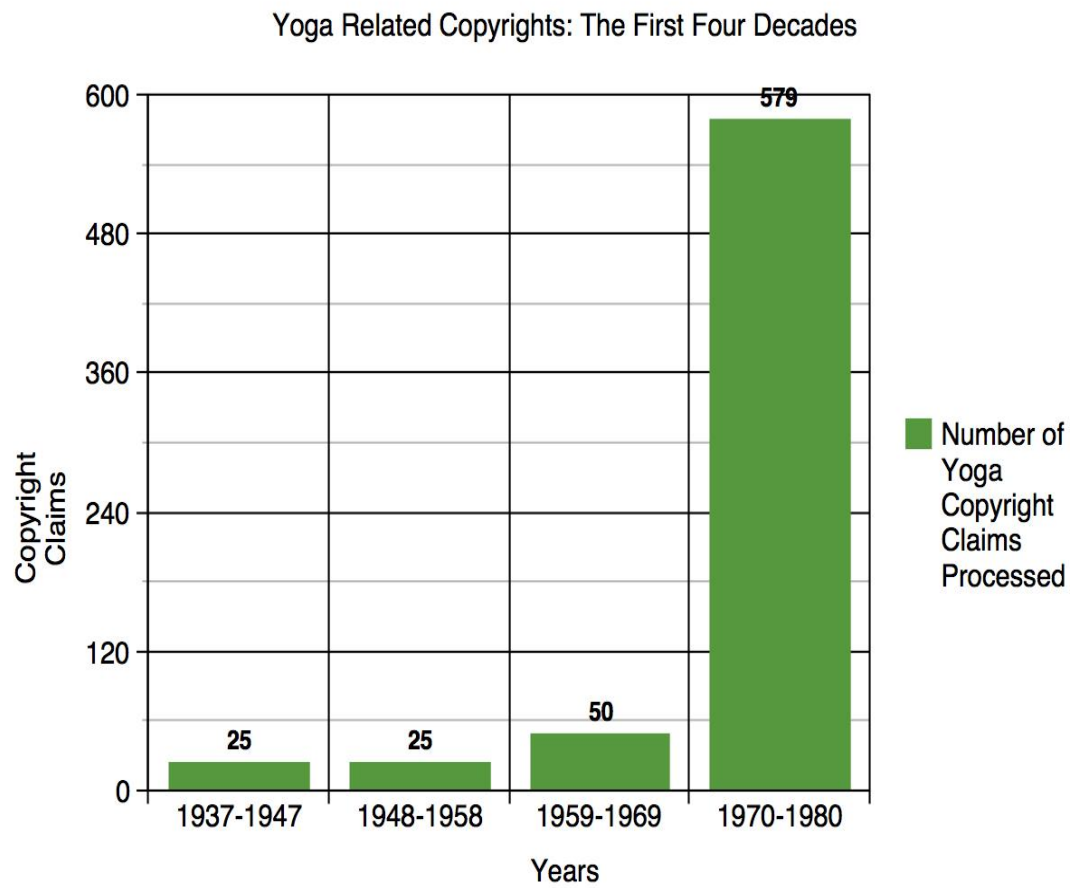
Methods and Data:

Extreme Growth, Tracing Yoga Through U.S. Copyright History

I draw upon archival and contemporary copyright data to create a comprehensive map of yoga related copyrights from 1937 through 2015; and to map total numbers of all copyright claims during the same period. Within this period, I group seven representative decades: 1937-1947; 1948-1958; 1959-1969; 1970-1980; 1981-1991; 1992-2002; 2005-2015. I found that a decade time span is sensitive to fluctuations between individual years and enables interpretation of macro level shifts in yoga copyright claims. I group the decades this way, with a three year gap between 2002 and 2005, toward ease of organizing and interpreting data from the very first

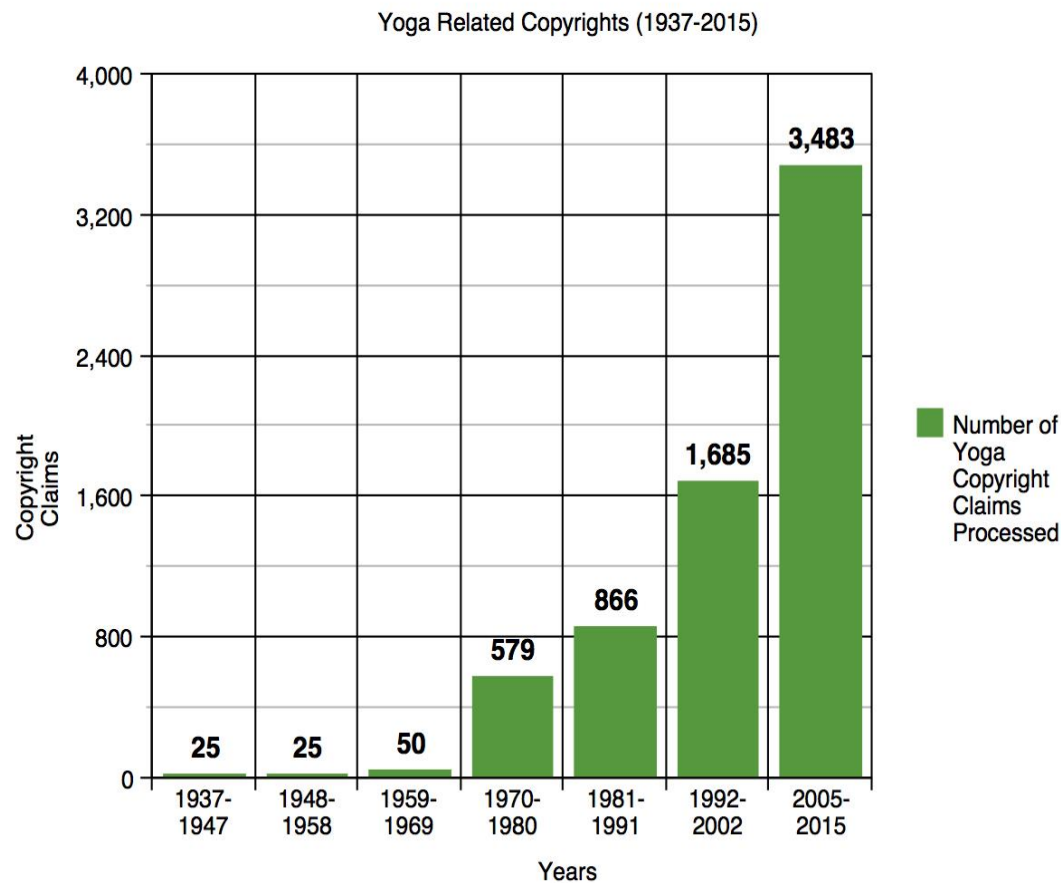
yoga copyright found up to the contemporary moment. The graphs presented show that the rise in yoga related copyrights over these specific decades is striking, and this rise is disproportionately high compared to the overall increase of U.S. copyright claims over the same period.

Figure 5. Yoga Related Copyrights: The First Four Decades



U.S. Copyright Office, Public Records Reading Room, Library of Congress

Figure 6. Yoga Related Copyrights (1937-2015)



I designed this study to capture as many yoga related copyrights as possible within the limitations of the archives. I began my search for yoga related copyrights in the copyright card catalog at the Copyright Public Records Reading Room located in the Library of Congress. This archive is the only source of documentation of copyrights from 1870 to 1977; it holds approximately 45 million cards, and there is currently no index or digitized search tools to assist with data gathering. I began searching under “Y” for any yoga titled claims, starting with 1870, and found the first “Yoga” titled copyright in 1937. A yoga titled copyright means that the

copyright had the word “yoga” either as a first or second main word, excluding connectors such as “the,” “to,” “a.” In my search, I noticed two back to back yoga related content cards for the first few decades; one for “Yoga” and, beginning in 1938, another section for “Yogananda,” an Indian yogi with early operations in the U.S. I continued to search and record all “yoga” and “Yogananda” titled copyrights within the card catalog up to 1978. Due to the lack of search tools in the archives, this title search method is the best possible for gathering yoga related copyrights at this point in time. From 1978 I could use the online searchable copyright catalog. Within the online copyright catalog, I widened my search to record data on all copyrights with “yoga” as a keyword from 1978 through 2015. I expanded from a title search to a keyword search because the goal was to create an accurate map of all yoga related copyrights, and the digitized keyword search afforded a better net for gathering the desired data. The expanded search does result in a jump in the numbers of yoga related copyrights gathered for the decade 1970-1980. To give a sense, prior to 1978, I found ten or less yoga titled copyrights per year, whereas in 1978 I found 110. I blended the archival data with contemporary data to draw a map of a steep, steady rise in copyright based ownership in yoga over an 80 year period.

In yoga related copyrights, I chart a steady flow between the first two decades of yoga claims (25 in 1937-47; 25 in 1948-58); then, between the second and third decade, the number of yoga claims doubles (50 in 1959-69); next, between the third and fourth decade the number of yoga claims increases over tenfold (579 in 1970-1980); then, yoga related copyrights essentially double every decade that follows (866 in 1981-1991; 1685 in 1992-2002; 3483 in 2005-2015). From the first decade to the last, the number of yoga related copyrights rose by 13,932% . Comparatively, from the first decade to the last, there is only a 273% rise overall in the growth of U.S. copyrights. The growth of total U.S. copyright claims is quite steady; with an average

increase of 120% every decade. The average growth of yoga related copyright claims hovers over 200% every decade.

Historical Context (1937-2015)

The rapid, seemingly neutral, legal accumulation of U.S. ownership in yoga is in fact a powerful, strategic move for the racialized settler regime. For perspective, the 80 year period of yoga copyrights begins immediately after racist mob violence against Indians in the northwest U.S.; is on the heels of policies stripping Indians of the right to own land in the U.S.; covers a decades long nationwide ban on Indian immigration to the U.S.; and includes a period when Indians were denied U.S. citizenship. This 80 year timeline of accelerating U.S. copyright ownership in yoga includes the years when: India was occupied under colonization; India gained independence; India was partitioned, one of the bloodiest forced migrations in human history, and India began capitulating to globalization. During this period of new nationalism in India and anti-Indian sentiment in the U.S., yoga becomes a poster child for globalization, and key tool for nation states to try to re-establish global footing (India) or to affirm global superiority (United States). This 80 year period also includes a reopening of U.S. borders to certain, vetted Indians to play a role in assisting the U.S. maintain Cold War competitiveness in science and medicine. This was all accompanied by a strong resurgence of anti-immigrant violence and policies. The yoga copyright map reveals a speedy acceleration of legalized U.S. based copyright ownership in yoga during a tumultuous, largely anti-Indian 80 year period. In this political context, the U.S. accumulation of copyright ownership in yoga represents a fascination for, but not solidarity, with India/ns.

Findings: Owning Yoga, Changing Yoga

The numbers indicate that yoga is being propertized at ever increasing rates. A closer investigation of the content of these copyrights shows that the point of contact between U.S. intellectual property regimes and yoga contains an arsenal of tools of colonial war; such as propertization, which consists of severing a living entity (like land, culture, yoga) into exclusionary, sellable parcels of things; categorization, which severs yoga from a geographic home and history; and the rapid transfer of these newly propertized titles to white ownership, thereby continuing to fulfill the quest for occupation. Occupation occurs via legalized discovery narratives over a *terra nullis* yoga space subject to the designation that “there are no people here” on this “property,” so white settler occupation and private ownership is logical, legal, and long lasting. (Moreton-Robinson, 2016) It would be a mistake to imagine these archival yoga copyrights are confined to history. Every single yoga copyright mapped in this study still is exclusive property owned by the author-claimant in the present. Those original yoga copyright claims in 1937 do not return to the public domain until 2032, because copyrights claimed between 1922 and 1978 are protected for 95 years from date of publication. Later, from 1978, copyright claims are protected for the life of the author plus 70 years. The shelf life of these property titles in yoga spans over lifetimes and generations. What is being “protected” where copyright regimes meet yoga? Charting a map of yoga copyrights helps to answer this question. I interpret the data to find that (1) yoga is being propertized, and this process enables; (2) exclusive accumulation of yoga, which makes it less public; (3) categorization of yoga, a process which dislocates yoga into seemingly innumerable, ahistoric parts, and; (4) whitening of the

yoga space, which consists of every layer of the yoga space shifting away from South Asian and Indian living histories and geographies to White, western spaces.

Turning Yoga Into Property

Private ownership in yoga increases as aspects of yoga, and India, become more safe, or assimilated to affirm the settler nation state, and en vogue. Data shows that copyright ownership in yoga doubles every decade, at minimum, for the better part of a century. The first two decades of yoga related copyrights, from 1937-1958, show moderate propertization of yoga, in the amount of a steady 25 copyrights per decade. Importantly, in these decades the number of yoga-titled copyrights remains constant. But between 1959-1969, the number of yoga-related copyrights at least doubles as selected elements of India and yoga become more popular, even iconic, in American popular culture. Peak indicators of this American popularity include great attention to the Beatles going to India in 1968, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi opening ceremonies at Woodstock. These events and others, indicate a pendulum swing towards safety for certain aspects of yoga, and India. As the yoga space is assimilated, it becomes safe, or affirming of the settler nation state, rather than a threat to it, such as when uncooperative Indian yogis were banned by the British occupying forces. In the late 1960's, the U.S. yoga space shifted towards being safe and affirming of the settler nation state through mistranslations with lasting impact. The safe, dislocated yoga space has a sheen of new age mysticism mistakenly associated with Hindu spirituality; it privileges asana or postures over other aspects of yoga sciences; and it inserts White bodies into nearly all visible layers of the space. In 1968, America was violently oppressing at home and colonizing abroad, and the world was lit by liberation struggles; we can

see the American turn to India and yoga as a strategy to continue waging these wars while projecting wellness and harmony inside and out. Beneath the seemingly objective, neutral surface of copyright law, yoga begins to be propertized at an accelerated rate, and these yoga properties are increasingly located in the U.S.

Yoga Becomes More Popular and More Private

The map puts accelerating numbers of Western owners in yoga into high relief. The yoga copyright map traces a steady propertization of yoga through copyrights, and an accumulation of yoga as property in the U.S. that parallels a rise in popularity. Every copyright mapped in this study still grants the original claimant an exclusive right, including the very first one granted in 1937. These yoga related copyrights are not only part of history, they are living titles that enclose the yoga space. Currently, the copyright grants exclusive, private ownership for the life of the “author” plus 70 years. Yoga copyright owners have the right to exclude others from their yoga property for a century or more. The greater in popularity a property becomes, the higher value it has both on the market and to Whiteness, and thus the more likely it will be owned. (Harris, 1993) Not neutrally owned, if there is such a thing, but owned according to the logics of racialized settler regimes. These regimes make property out of the living, and siphon valuable, powerful parts of the living cosmos (such as yoga, traditional knowledge, land) toward white settler possession. (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013; Nandy, 1988) Copyrights in yoga follow a similar trajectory. The more lucrative yoga property becomes, the more owned and less public or accessible it will be.

Rising yoga copyrights carve out greater chunks of yoga from the public domain, challenging powerful truth discourses around globalized yoga being increasingly public and accessible. Popular does not equal public. Images circulate widely of multitudes doing asana in New York City's Times Square and in India's capital New Delhi on International Yoga Day. Media accounts of skyrocketing profits in commodified yoga boast of a thriving yoga market, which seems to affirm heightening public buy-in to yoga. Yoga is a \$17 billion dollar-plus industry in America, and worldwide yoga generates upwards of \$80 billion in revenue. (Yoga Journal, 2016; Fortune, 2016) These hefty profits and access to yoga are generally exclusive to a few. Only around 5% of Americans actually practice yoga. (Yoga Journal, 2016) Despite glossy magazine covers announcing America's constant discovery of yoga and mindfulness, suffering due to environmental and political crises is rising. Much of this suffering is rooted in the excesses of the U.S., and is located in the bodies of people of color, Indigenous people, and people in the global south.

Steep profits in yoga trigger exponential interest in yoga claim staking, or biopiracy in the yoga space. The yoga copyright map presented in this study disrupts assumptions underlying the pairing of popular with public, because in this case, yoga comes into steeply increased private ownership as it gains popularity in the West. This trend is one of the clearest stories told by this archival study. Prior to being appropriated into U.S. intellectual property regimes, yoga was not owned. Yoga terrain is similar to land in the U.S. prior to European conquest, it was turned into property in order to make room for White settlement. Copyright regimes in yoga are layered, and there is space within the regime for marginalized bodies to challenge power. However, deductions from the data indicate that propertization of yoga enclose the yoga space, and privileges copyright owners over the public domain, which is where yoga has lived for

centuries. Some might question whether there are any other options for those looking to protect their yoga related creations besides copyright title. I believe that yoga has been open source for most of human history and should remain that way, even in with regards to so-called new yoga works. When yoga entrepreneurs want to put their own spin on abiding doctrines, that triggers questions with regards to appropriation of Others; but when these same, largely unoriginal works privatize yoga, they negatively impact access, which seems to negate the wellness directive that shapes yogic arts and sciences.

Yoga may be more popular, and increasingly globalized, but it is not more public or accessible. Globalization is not a smooth process of upliftment for all. (Cheah, 2006) It is illustrative to note that the racist violence of the neoliberal market represents globalizations third phase, after the Atlantic slave trade and colonization. (Tharoor, 2017) For India, capitulating to globalization narrows its choices. (Nandy, 1988) Globalization makes property out of these practices, and in doing so, compresses both property and practices into things that can be sold, and exclusively owned. Public spectacles of “yoga,” best-selling books and magazines, and wide circulations of iconic images of thousands engaged in simultaneous movement against a backdrop of defining locations of national and regional identity, all these truths make it seem as though yoga is everywhere. However, the more ubiquitous yoga has become, the harder it can be to find and access. (Singh, 2016) Simultaneous public movement – such as large scale spectacles of people doing coordinated yoga in public squares – mistranslates yoga. Yoga centers a noticing of breath, and allows the breath to guide pace of movements and thoughts, which means that yoga is not part of a unified group movement. A synchronized body movement practice indicates a centering of another priority altogether, which may be powerful to witness or experience, but which does not entail the same noticing and service to the breath that

yoga does; it is arguably not yoga. Other interesting questions raised by these large scale spectacles include who is present, who shows up to be surveilled and to move so publicly. Such public events are not similarly accessible for all; for example, violently surveilled immigrant, Muslim, and Black bodies in the U.S. will not experience yoga as a more safe space by virtue of a massive, coordinated, outdoor event. What do these images of mass yoga events justify? In what ways do these spectacles circulate truth discourses as strategies of war? These powerful yoga discourses convey unity at a time of ever ripening division; they convey public safety at a time of deepening public danger; they indicate public wellness at a time of a sickening abandoned populace; all of these communiqués point to a nation state that is powerfully at peace, at a time when the decay and rising chaos of the U.S. state is terrifyingly real.

Categorization: Severing Yoga Into Sellable Parts

Increased categorization of yoga is evident in the yoga copyright map, and this upward trend in classification tends to create stories of authorship that obstruct the way classification is a strategy of war that intentionally disorients yoga from place, space, and time, so it can be infinitely mined as *terra nullis*, ahistoric, raw material. Though copyrights in yoga seem to be innocent protections of creative works, in fact, categorization is enabled in yoga copyrights, which breaks up the history, knowledge, and family that yoga had as a medicinal arts practice connected to a place now called India. The copyright title only requires a minimal showing of creative spin on yoga. This means that yoga related copyrights need hardly any justification to obtain. The result are a growing slew of works that are disorienting in their similarity and dislocation.

In the first decade (1937-47) the types of the 25 copyrighted works in yoga are generally limited to the science of yoga, the systems of health addressed by yoga, and interpretations of sources of yoga philosophy and knowledge in Indian texts such as the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita. This first decade is the most restrained in classification. Copyrights tend to affirm a wholeness in the stories they tell of the medicinal arts practice that is yoga, and these copyrights maintain connection between India and yoga. In the second decade (1948-1958), the 25 copyrighted works in yoga include “east meets west” stories of yoga, and include copyrights in yoga content in conference proceedings in France, as well as grant property title to yoga copyright owners in London and Germany. In the second decade copyright stories begin to split off from connection to India, and project a smooth globalization of yoga. They affirm colonial discourses on yoga being an imperial gift to India and the world. The third decade (1959-1969) features a deepened classification evident in 50 yoga titled copyrights, including copyrights in both “ancient” and “new” yoga that play into colonial stories of dichotomies of time.

Indian colonialism scholars help decipher the colonial use of time to sever India and yoga into old and new. Subaltern scholar Ashis Nandy pays special attention to this binary construction, and names colonial plays with time that divide India, and perpetual practices like yoga, into “ancient,” and “modern.” (Nandy; 1988) Constructed binaries of time are tactics of war used justify British social and economic degradation of India. Colonization is framed as a gift to the occupied. For instance, the British called the visceral ruin of once thriving, cosmopolitan, Indian textile and agrarian industries a gift. The gift myth was made possible by categorizing the “ancient” industries as outdated, savage, already ruined, and in desperate need of “modern” British led industrial practices (that failed). Colonial truths stated that the British

saved India by gifting the country modernity, a formation that was justified by an “out with the old, in with the new” storyline. Time binaries helped gloss over degradation as a self inflicted state, an inherent quality of “ancient India” that only the British could heal. India and yoga are both abiding entities, neither can be severed into binary constructions. Yoga is an example of a living and breathing medicinal arts practice, an unceasing part of the human experience that transcends narrow binaries such as “ancient” or “modern.” The use of these binaries in the yoga space implies that at some point yoga was severed into two, but this is a myth that is defied by a wide spread, continual practice of yoga sciences and arts in the everyday lives of South Asian diasporic people. When I challenge the binary of time in these categorizations of yoga, I aim to disrupt dominant truths that “modern” postural yoga is a European or American gift to “ancient” Indian yoga. In fact, the violent surveillance and binary formations that accompany colonialism are no gift.

The third decade of yoga copyrights (1959-1969) features 50 works, double the number of the previous two decades, including: “Christian yoga,” “yoga for Americans,” cookbooks, yoga “for business executives and professional people,” works on yoga for youth, yoga for people over forty, and yoga for fitness and diet, with such title words as “slimnastics.” White yoga celebrities and yoga profiteers begin to appear, along with a several Indian pseudonyms. Indra Devi, a white female yoga teacher “to the stars,” authors *Yoga for Americans*. Mr. Hittleman builds a small yoga empire with multiple copyrighted works in yoga that he assures “ten million Americans believe,” including yoga for “figures,” yoga for “facial beauty,” and a yoga “28 day plan.” In this decade almost no references exist to India, or to the texts and philosophies of India that nurtured and birthed yoga outside of a few (at most) copyrights that go to Indians. Steady accumulation of yoga by whiteness requires control over yoga’s Indian

geographies, creation stories, philosophies, and instructions. The yoga space quickly pivots away from maintaining connection to the yoga diaspora, because propertization requires the *terra nullis*, dislocation of yoga.

In the fourth decade (1970-1980), the number of yoga-related copyrights scales up to 579. The sheer number of copyrights necessitates a deepening categorization in yoga, since each copyrighted work is held to minimal standards of authorship that require a basic showing of creative spin on yoga. In this decade, the types of copyrights include works in forms of flashcards, course readings, illustrated poses, theater, radio, lecture, newsletters, and in the magazine *Yoga Journal*, which has five copyrights this decade. Within these types there are categories of yoga works for various age groups (“young people,” “people over 50,” “children”); for varying stages of life and exposure (“for beginners,” “for everyone,” “new parents,” “for all,” “for westerners,” “for executives,” “for the new age”); and yoga for marriage, love, and sex; as well as yoga recipe books, cookbooks, and food books. Overwhelmingly, these yoga-related copyrights are applied for and issued to White westerners.

Copyright law requires only a minimal showing of creativity to assert authorship. This low bar requirement for ownership is an element of the copyright regime that arguably supports dominant bodies to author and protect their stories, which in turn underwrites the accumulation of U.S. and white ownership in yoga. Under racist colonial power dynamics, the Othered colonized body experiences a silencing of stories under layers of defensive stiffening. In contrast, intellectual property regimes aid in the infinite storytelling of the dominant. Nandy contends that modern oppression is not an encounter between self and enemy; instead it is between the “pseudo-rulers and their fearsome other selves projected onto their ‘subjects.’” (Nandy, 1988) The oppressor must project at all times, and copyright regimes

facilitate this projection through affirming dominant authoring, storytelling, and copying. In *Postmodern Geographies*, Edward Soja (1989) speaks to the restless proliferation of simulacra, or copies of the oppressive that sever, classify, and are hyper projected so “all that is seen is so fragmented and filled with whimsy and pastiche, the hard edges of the capitalist, racist, patriarchal landscape seem to disappear, melt into air.” (Soja, 1989) The map of yoga related copyrights clearly shows that increased classification accompanies propertization. These increasingly severed parts of “yoga” bear more resemblance to the projections of power than to the medicinal arts practice of yoga. Growth in categorization affirms myths about discovery and creation that serve to hide how classification is a tool of war designed to support the settler truth that yoga was without space or people, and in this abandoned, savage state, it is a gift of creation to modernize yoga for the West and the world.

Conclusions: Yoga Becomes a Valuable Part of Whiteness

Increased categorization in the first four decades of yoga related copyrights is accompanied by a whitening in the geography of where these property rights in yoga are accumulated, compared to the Indianness/brownness of where they come from. For this analysis, it is fruitful to look at the time period between the first found yoga related copyrights in 1937 up to 1953. I found a total of 35 yoga-titled copyrights during this 17 year period. Nineteen of these first 35 yoga titled copyrights went to discernibly Indian authors; 15 of which were copyrights in Yogananda’s name.

Nearly half of all yoga titled copyrights went to India/ns, and in particular, Yogananda, for the first two decades of the study. Yogananda was one of a small handful of Indian spiritual practitioners who visited and toured America in the early 20th century. These pre-Indian

Independence visits were generally catalyzed by the first Parliament of World's Religions, which took place in 1893 in Chicago. Yogananda is one of the swamis, or saints, credited with bringing Indian yoga and meditation practices to America. Names with the root "Yog" were/are common in India, and not necessarily linked to yoga, though Yogananda's name was earned along his yogic path. In 1935, Yogananda's Los Angeles based retreat center and group, the Self Realization Fellowship, was legally incorporated into a non-profit religious organization. Shortly thereafter, his staff began to pursue copyright claims in his name over his written materials, talks, and music recordings. The earliest American copyright claim in yoga that goes to an Indian person went to Swami Yogananda in March, 1938. 1953 represents a tipping point in the balance of Indian and white yoga copyright owners, perhaps because Swami Yogananda's team stopped filing for extensive copyrights over his lectures, meditations, chants, and writings. Also, because the whiteness that encroaches does so abruptly, with absoluteness.

The first 17 years of yoga copyrights are essentially half Indian and half white. The next 13 years reveal hardly any Indian copyright owners at all, a trend that continues to present day. Between 1953 and 1967, a few copyrights are filed pseudonymously under Indian names, also a continuing trend. It is not till 1967 that I encounter the next discernibly Indian copyright author, and that is a copyright of a monologue by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, of Beatles and Woodstock fame. White copyright owners in yoga who filed under Indian names understood the value of Indian authenticity in yoga. Elements of Indianness are claimed and made valuable to whiteness, even while Indians themselves have been ejected from the U.S., cannot attain citizenship in America, and are still enduring British occupation in India. Fascination with things Indian in the yoga world does not coincide with solidarity with India/ns; this strange

intimacy means that yoga fanatics are especially not in solidarity with the India that is consistently one of the largest Muslim nations in the world. (Rose; 2008)

The first yoga related U.S. copyrights to go to Indians include: six copyright claims secured in Yogananda's name, including a 1946 one for his seminal text, "Autobiography of a Yogi;" two claims to written works by "British Indian" citizen Deva Ram Sri Sukul (1943, 1947); one claim to "Indian" citizen author Yogi Vithaldas (1939); and another copyright claim to author Rishi Krishnananda (1941). Between 1948-1958, five more copyrights go to the works of Yogananda; one goes to Swami Sivananda (1954); one goes to Sri Krishna Prem (1948); one goes to Yogi Vithaldas; and one goes to Yogi Gupta, also known as Swami Kailashananda (1958). It is hard to discern if these last two authors filed copyrights under Indian pseudonyms, but this is likely the case. Between 1959-1969, a maximum of ten yoga copyrights are claimed by Indians, with five of those claimed by Yogananda's camp (up until 1953). The remaining five include a Hari Prasad Shastri (1960); Kailash Nath Gupta or Yogi Gupta (1961); one to Father Subramuniya (1964); one to Sachindra Kumar Majumdar (1968); and one to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1967). Of these five, at least two are likely filed under Indian pseudonyms. This means that within a relatively short period of time, yoga copyrights go from being half Indian owned and half white owned, to being 15% or less owned by Indians. It would be interesting to investigate what that percentage looks like now. Based on this data, it is likely that contemporary copyright attempts and titles secured by Bikram Choudhury represent some of the only yoga related copyrights to be awarded to Indians. Whether Bikram is claimed or loved by Indians across the diaspora is a separate matter, here I am simply proposing that Bikram is one of the last Indians in American yoga who had a viable yoga business practice, including accompanying intellectual property titles in his empire.

Yogananda, the first Indian yoga copyright holder, has copyright claims numerous enough that they receive their own content title card in the index archives. Over the earliest four decades of yoga related copyright history, “Yogananda” and his associated copyright claims follow just behind the index title card indicating the section for copyrights in “Yoga.” This means that copyright claims in yoga began as largely protecting the work of an Indian yogi. But not just one Indian yogi, in the first decade of yoga copyrights, half of the claims awarded protected the yoga work of Indian authors on the yogic path. When Yogananda’s works are factored in, it is safe to say the majority of U.S. copyright claims in yoga were taken out by Indians for the first two decades. The nexus between U.S. copyrights in yoga and India/ns changed dramatically over time, and whiten particularly at the juncture where popularity, profits, and power in yoga skyrocket.

Considerations of Agency and Complexity

The yoga copyright map shows that the popularity of yoga is accompanied by rising exclusion and alienation, which are defining characteristics of U.S. intellectual/property rights. Increased categorization in yoga via sharply rising numbers of dislocated yoga copyrights indicates the steady operation of tried and true colonial tools of domination. In the 1930’s to the early 1950’s, yoga copyright owners were as likely to be Indian from India as they were to be non-Indian, American, and presumably white. Copyright claims are Whiten as yoga gains popularity and profit through the 1950’s and into the present day. This reveals an imperial diasporic geography of traditional knowledge turned commodity; and de-Indianized, even disoriented in the process.

The complex relationships discussed in this data analysis segment on categorization and race in yoga copyrights include deeply layered consolidations of power and contradictions that can merely be pointed toward in article format. The deductions offered here do not support a view that India/ns are solely victims of U.S. copyright regimes, or for that matter, colonization, or racist neoliberal violence either. Indians have agency, though yoga itself may not. Nevertheless, the decolonial framework I deploy here includes valuing agency of the oppressed. In a moment of rising human suffering and displacement linked to environmental unwellness, propertized yoga in America projects a discourse of grounded white wellness. But this is simply one version of truth. My analysis points to other truths; that yoga becomes more privatized and categorized even as it gains popularity; and that yoga properties are hoarded by whiteness in the west. In this power play, infinite projections of dominant selves onto Others indicate an inventory of the costs to wellness the dominant have paid. Certainly, the colonizers do not live happily or healthily ever after. (Nandy; 1988)

Sustainability in Yoga As Property

The propertization of yoga is, in part, a tool of war against Othered bodies and land. Rapid propertization, or exclusive ownership, in yoga is operationalized through racialized tools of war such as research, authorship, and intellectual property regimes. Yoga copyrights, patents, and trademarks are equivalent to the fences, deeds, and covenants of yoga. Yoga is not simply connected to the land; yoga is also land. Foundational yoga texts and practices unceasingly specify that land teaches us yoga. The land is an ultimate yoga guru, or mother, at whose feet we learn of balance, strength, freedom. Yogic methods persistently center earth

based methods of achieving equanimity, such as rising with the sun, eating to live, and breathing with natural rhythms. In yoga, human beings are provided means to aim for harmony simultaneously within the self and within the oneness of being. Names of asana sequences such as *surya namaskar*, or “sun salutation,” are not merely metaphors to the land. Yoga is present in the sun shining with nurturing yet formidable power; the mountain still but alive with change, and the tree that roots and rises. U.S. based property ownership in yoga streams in from many angles, including but not limited to; copyrights, trademarks, patents, science and medicine “discoveries” about the effects of yoga, and yoga governance structures.

In this study, I trace a critical map of the changing space of yoga from commons with relations to particular geographies and peoples, into U.S. copyrights that are seemingly ahistoric and newly “modernized.” Intellectual property law broadly underwrites this change in the spatialization of yoga. To explore this phenomenon, I gathered together as many yoga related copyright titles as possible, from the first yoga copyright found in 1937 up to 2015. I netted data which I organized to identify sharply rising ownership trends over the century up to the contemporary moment. I presented a parallel political timeline to contextualize the data in a century of anti-immigrant, anti-Indian U.S. policy and public sentiment. The data reveals that yoga is rapidly turning into U.S. private property. This propertization is accompanied by accumulation and exclusion; categorization and dislocation; and whitening.

The discourse of whiteness as property suggests that property is an expectation of whiteness. Whiteness benefits from developments which reimagine the world as disposable. In the realm of yoga, that means that a vastly pluralistic science is subject to narrow property regime led by two core values: alienation, or the right to sever and sell; and exclusivity. If yoga is a disposable, ahistoric, raw material which may be infinitely copied and owned, then these

ensuing properties are not only of yoga. These properties may have hints of yoga, but they are also something else entirely, a product that has not been named, but profits from associations with the “yoga” that include wellness, flexibility, strength, positive moral character, and balance. In sustainability studies, a related phenomenon is called “greening,” whereby the very industrial entities that create toxic imbalances in the environment appropriate the language of “green” environmentalism to earn both monetary and social capital. (Shiva; 2016) In creating an absolute right to use yoga, and constructing within yoga a potentially infinite well of appropriability, the process of propertization continues extraction practices that funnel power towards Whiteness and the U.S. settler nation state.

Yoga can be practiced anywhere, in prison, in hospital beds; this is a resonant aspect of yoga in contemporary times of heightened surveillance and violence against the bodies of Others. People without land can still do asana, but the ability to engage one aspect of yoga is not equivalent to being able to practice the full medicinal arts practice. For example, an incarcerated body may find it possible to focus on the breath, and move through a near daily set of warrior postures. When this same body is forced to ingest poisonous foods, experience routine sexual violence, and traumatic surveillance the ability to practice yoga is adversely affected. Global capital development and resulting environmental toxicity results in upheaval, disease, and exposure to violence. Yoga can help bodies heal from these symptoms, but it too is challenged by these things. When there is no longer access to land so as to grow medicinal foods, and when mental health is burdened by displacement from homes into constant transition, the ability to practice the full medicinal practice of yoga is curbed. Due to air pollution in Delhi, air quality is now generally unfit for human existence. I know members of my own family in Delhi to engage a lifelong practices of regular regiments of Ayurveda and yoga through medicinal foods, asana,

meditation, expertise in Indian classical music, and Sanskrit scholarship. One such aunt, who has lived in the heart of Delhi for 50 years, is on her second battle with cancer, and wishes to leave town but cannot due to her chemotherapy regime. One cousin brother and three generations of his family have fled his suburban Delhi home to go back to his hometown Jaipur, because his children were missing too much school due to poisonous air exposure. The aim of the liberatory science of yoga is an abolishment of suffering. When suffering of all beings, animate and inanimate, increases due to environmental toxicity and epidemic violence, there is more need for yoga, but arguably less access to the practice and tools that comprise yoga.

Intellectual property regimes are complex; they can make space for the resistance they aim to exclude. Embracing propertization, which is a key tool used to build the master's house, does have potential to connect yoga to the land in ways that can fuel decolonial projects in yoga. Further studies on yoga related copyrights would benefit from envisioning how to steer decolonizing yoga projects from metaphor to substantive decolonial methodologies that engage strategies of repatriation and reparations. A key step in decolonizing yoga as property will be to find space in the unsettledness of copyright regimes to use propertization toward linking land and yoga, and more broadly, intellectual property to real property. Yoga is interpreted to exist in the ephemeral realm of ideas, traditional knowledges, and medicine. It will be strategic to extend the propertization of yoga toward retranslating yoga as being of the realm of land. I posit that yoga, as a part of the natural environment, is not an infinite resource that can be propertized, severed, and alienated forever. When situated on a spectrum of "real" property, yoga is more visible as a foundational terrain to settler colonialism. Understanding intellectual property on a spectrum of real property, and then yoga as land, helps clarify that greater attention to sustainability in yoga

development is a valuable aim. Hopefully, this map can fuel these ongoing discussions, and contribute to yoga continuing to exist and give of wellness to more, for longer into the future.

CHAPTER 3

Racialized Sights and Sounds of Yogis in American Popular Music (1941-1967)

Abstract

This study examines histories of racist stereotypes accompanying Indians, yoga, and yogis' entry and life in American popular music from 1941 to 1967. I interrogate hidden musical histories of racism in the yoga site to provide clues to how contemporary yoga becomes dis/possessed by Whiteness. I engage critical musicology methods to analyze layers of three widely circulating songs for traces of Orientalising, racist stereotypes. My study is guided by the question: What racial stereotypes accompanied yoga's entry into American social discourse? I closely evaluate the rich historical site of a 1941 song, "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power," by the popular Orrin Tucker's Big Band; and broadly analyze lyrics, moving images, and historical import of both a 1960 chart topper, "Yogi," that catapulted The Ivy Three to one hit wonder status; and a 1967 film song by Elvis Presley called, "Yoga Is As Yoga Does." Every song features minstrel stereotypes that have long operated to affirm White, colonial dominance. I argue the evidence supports two primary findings: (1) Yoga in American popular music and media is an abiding space of racial, colonial tensions that have long historical fetch; (2) Widely circulating stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music include classic racist tropes, such as the grinning Sambo, the magic man, the savage monkey, the lustful miscegenator, and the emasculated man-child; and (3) The logic of elimination operates to hide and remove these histories of racialization of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music. I conclude that racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music are an abiding, embedded tool of White, settler, culture war.

Key Concepts: Race, yoga, American popular music, critical musicology, musical geography, American popular culture, music history, cinema studies, film and television studies, media studies, culture studies, decolonization studies, post-colonial studies, discourse analysis, critical yoga studies.

Introduction

This study explores racist stereotypes of Indian yogis in American popular music from 1941-1967. I excavate hidden histories of racism in the yoga site to provide clues to how contemporary yoga becomes possessed by Whiteness and commodified. I examine three songs and their connected moving images that all circulated widely across the U.S., guided by the question: What racial stereotypes accompanied yoga's entry into American social discourse? The songs analyzed in this study include: a close study of a 1941 hit by Orrin Tucker's Big Band, "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power," written by a young Johnny Mercer, now recognized as a pillar of American popular music; and two broader analyses of a 1960 number one hit called, "Yogi," that catapulted The Ivy Three, an all white doo wop group out of Staten Island, to one hit wonder status; and a 1967 film song sung and performed by Elvis Presley called, "Yoga Is As Yoga Does." Every yogi oriented song and moving image studied here prominently features well recognized minstrel stereotypes that have long operated to affirm White supremacy and Euro-colonial dominance. In order to better understand these songs as carriers of racist social controls, I examine multiple layers of each song, including: musical score (when available); lyrics; moving images of songs featured in film and popular television; the historical impact of major contributors; and political context. I use this data to argue that reading popular music as history affirms that the U.S. yoga space has long been a site of racial and colonial strategy.

Intersectional scholars and activists are working to name and counter racism and specifically, the overwhelming lack of Black and brown representation in the yoga site. Yoga did not begin as White industry, but this is largely what it is projected to be now. Unearthing historical racism in the U.S. yoga site helps trace the dis/possession of yoga by Whiteness. Racist stereotypes are forms of social control that naturalize difference and add value to Whiteness (Harris, 1998; Hall, 1997). Well recognized racist stereotypes present in these three songs include: the magic negro/Indian; the coon; the lustful miscegenator; and the emasculated, grinning, childlike-man, known as Sambo. Such minstrel stereotypes were all different aspects of Sambo. Sambo is an emblematic racist stereotype; it lived for centuries and over an immense range of public representations. Sambo's wide reach worked to confirm the trope of a content slave-subject, and imprint this influential data into the senses of many generations of the colonial public. Sambo is recognized as "one of the earliest minority images to be translated into cultural form." (Boskin, 1988). No other stereotype of Black and brown immigrants would ever approach grinning Sambo's power or popularity. Sambo was "an integral part of the colonial family, as worker and entertainer." (Boskin, 1988). A contemporary documentary on the Indian character, "Apu," in the American television show, "The Simpson's," contextualizes Apu as a form of the minstrel Sambo. Apu's decades long presence as the only East Indian character in American popular culture confirms the living bridge between racist stereotypes of Indian and Black people; Sambo is emblematic of that bridge. For example, a widely circulating public form of Sambo was a 1899 children's book, "The Story of Little Black Sambo," about a dark-skinned, "pickaninny," East Indian boy. Harlem Renaissance artist and scholar Langston Hughes critiqued the book for aiding in dehumanizations of Black children worldwide. Hughes took aim at the way "Little Black Sambo" happily experienced and even welcomed white

supremacist violence against him. Sambo was created in order to aid in the oppression of multiple minority groups, in particular the colonized and enslaved of the world. Sambo stereotypes indicate the immense power of imagery to coordinate social behavior and control.

A guiding question of this study is: How do racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in early American popular music operate as tools and strategies of war? To address this inquiry, I engage intersectional conversations on the white possessive in indigenous studies to examine the critical, cultural space of yoga, race, and popular music. Next, I explain archival, critical musicology search methods that direct my study of these three popular American songs about yoga that circulated widely from 1941-1967. I analyze multiple layers of each song, with emphasis on the study of the 1941 song, for traces of Orientalising, Othering, and racist stereotypes. My focus on the 1941 Big Band song, “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power,” allows me to highlight one of the earliest traces of yoga in American popular music available; and this rich evidentiary site includes musical score, a work in progress lyrics sheet, exemplary moving image via staged, film production; and notable historical persons involved in the making of the song. I then include more broad analysis of two 1960’s songs, to trace the long historical fetch of racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music. In the analysis of the 1941 song, “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power,” I begin with examinations of music notes, meter, tone; then I do a textual analysis of lyrics; examine the visual culture and moving images of songs from an archival film clip; discuss the impact of key persons involved in the birth of the song; and contextualize the song within influential political histories and geographies. For “Yogi,” (1961) and “Yoga Is As Yoga Does,” (1967); I focus on lyrical and moving image analysis, with some discussion of historical people involved in the creation of the song. I argue that the evidence supports the primary findings that: (1) Yoga in American popular

music and media is an abiding space of racial, colonial tensions that have long historical fetch; and (2) Widely circulating stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music include classic racist tropes, such as the grinning Sambo, the magic man, the savage monkey, the lustful miscegenator, and the emasculated man-child; and (3) Logic of elimination operates to hide and remove these histories of racialization of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music. Finally, I indicate the conclusions to be drawn from this study; namely, that racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music are an abiding, embedded tool of White, settler, culture war that outlast political liberation.

Literature Review

Mobilities and Music Culture

Music scholars engage mobilities to understand change in how people listen (Bull, 2005; Gopinath et al., 2014); perform (Nóvoa, 2012); and negotiate music culture (Laing, 1997). In this study, I unearth archival U.S. music cultures to examine the movements and stagnations of yoga as it enters U.S. popular culture, and is racialized. Multiple, intersecting mobilities are at play in this case; including ongoing circulations of racist tropes birthed through racial constructions in colonized India and in U.S. chattel slavery; and Othering and displacement of India, and Indians from yoga.

Othering Indians, Yoga, and Yogis: Hidden Histories in American Music

Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2016), Indigenous studies scholar, calls for research deploying an intersectional methodology that interlaces Indigenous Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Foucauldian biopower. Her call goes to the heart of a continuing conversation in Indigenous Studies about racializing settler colonial studies (Lawrence, 2005). Indigenous

studies and Settler Colonial Studies discuss the logic of elimination, a key framework in this study. Removal of the native, through material and cultural means, is a key aim of the ongoing project of colonial dominance. Moreton-Robinson poses key questions to guide this research agenda, inspiring a central question of my study: “In what sense do stereotypes act as tactics and strategies of race war?” India and yoga are fruitful sites to carry out Moreton-Robinson’s call for new research. When India was occupied by the British yoga was criminalized; and the country was a key site for the creation of racial hierarchies. In the contemporary context of globalization, yoga has become a powerful, immensely profitable commodity. The word “yoga” is now attached to every kind of product, from high tech tablets, to clothes, to bread. While “yoga” was once associated with undesirable Others, it now conjures high moral characteristics like balance, wellness, and focus. This study aims to trace steps along yoga’s journey from Other to dominant within U.S. popular music. Social discourse on yoga circulates truths that support status quo power dynamics. Foucault states that every society has regimes of truth, which are not absolute, but are powerful (Foucault, 2012). I engage Moreton-Robinson’s research agenda in the realm of popular music.

George Lipsitz calls for research to explore hidden histories boldly coded into popular music and add these silenced stories to the historical record (Lipsitz, 2007). Popular music codifies the sights, sounds, and stories of society. Music is not innocent terrain that transcends societal ills; instead, it is inscribed with complex histories of social injustice, dislocation, and hybridity (Rose, 2008). When read historically, popular music is always transnational; pop sounds are the product of continual human movements, these sounds are never confined to any one space, nation, or time (Lipsitz, 2007). As code, popular music shapes and is shaped by dominant social constructs and behaviors. While popular music can be a site for dissent, it is

generally a site that reflects and advertises dominant codes designed to distribute power to a few over many. The popular music site includes all of the products of the music industry, including but not limited to songs, moving images, sheet music, posters, and advertisements. Popular music is especially ripe terrain for digging up buried histories that, upon reveal, can decode present experiences of racism in the yoga site; as an example relevant to this study. My study of racialized images of Indians, yogis, and yoga in American popular music from 1941-1967 enters scholarly discussions on the relationship of music to justice, society, culture, and self.

Edward Said's foundational contribution to postcolonial studies identifies the creation of binaries, particularly the invention of the orientalised Other (Said, 1978). The orientalised Other is a dehumanizing cultural representation projected by the colonizer onto the colonized to support ongoing domination (Said, 1978). Said invokes Foucault to support the contention that knowledge is derived from language, and the significance of knowledge is embedded in systems of power. Culture, knowledge, power; control over these allow very few to dominate over very many. While Said warns against essentializing the West, he argues that generally, the West's power is linked to cultural representations it constructs and plants in the minds of the colonizer and colonized (Said, 1993). The creation of the Other supports powerful truths, namely that the inferiority of the Other and the dominance of the West is a natural and inevitable hierarchy. Projecting the Other onto the colonized is a powerful tool of war that lives in a different time and space than material occupation, it is generational and exceeds any retreat of occupiers back to their center from the peripheries. In this study, I dig into popular music history for evidence that reveals how Orientalisation has operated to Other Indians, yoga, and yogis. Some postcolonial theorists argue that western history inevitably furthers hegemony, but others maintain that

history can and must be used to expose and eliminate absolute claims of white supremacist mythology (Nandy, 1988).

Critical musicologist Derek B. Scott looks for and traces musical signs of the Native American/Indian, from the stage of the 19th century, to film of the 20th century (Scott, 2007). In this study I look for tones of difference such as with “Oriental” notes, tempo, or visual representations to show signs of the Other being suggested and prominently described. Scott argues that such signs are not meaningless clichés but instead stereotypes inscribed with dehumanizing meaning. Stuart Hall contends that stereotypes fix and naturalize difference (Hall, 1997). Stereotyping, Hall argues, reduces Others to flattened, inhuman states and tends to exist where there are unjust inequalities of power. Hegemonic power is executed through stereotypes present in and operating through culture, knowledge, imagery and representation. Hall defines hegemony as a method of power waged by the dominant to make oppressive hierarchies be experienced as natural, objective, unquestionable truths. Ultimately, Hall and others assert that racial stereotypes are potent tools of social control that operate by affirming difference and Othering (Bogle, 2001; Boskin, 1988; Hall, 1997; Said, 1993; Scott, 2007; Turner, 1994).

Methods and Data: Finding Yoga In American Popular Music History

In this study, I draw upon American popular music data. Popular music is a vast data site, each song is a data site that spans across time, space, nations, and histories. For the purposes of the three songs examined in this study, I consider a few key elements of this site: archival sheet music, the sound, published lyrics (as well as lyrics I transcribed), film and television clips, popular music charts, social commentary, and biographical accounts of the lives of historic persons involved. I design this study to capture the long historical fetch of racism in the U.S. yoga site, so I refer to a recent documentary film about the racially charged stereotypical

“Indian” animated character “Apu;” and I also refer to archival colonial and missionary photos that were among the first images of India to circulate in the U.S.

I began my investigation into these three yoga related songs after discovering them in an archival search for yoga related copyrights in the copyright card catalog at the Copyright Public Records Reading Room located in the Library of Congress. This archive is the only source of documentation of copyrights from 1870 to 1977; it holds approximately 45 million cards, and there is currently no index or digitized search tools to assist with data gathering. I began searching under “Y” for any yoga titled claims, starting with 1870, and found the first “Yoga” titled copyright in 1937. During this archival copyright search, I noticed several yoga related songs, and realized that yoga related songs constitute some of the first yoga related copyright claims in U.S. history. These songs include: “Yogi-yogi (the fakir man);” Al Goodheart, Mel Waters, Joe Glazer, claim by Lewis Music Publishing Co, Inc. (1939); “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power,” Johnny Mercer, Jimmy McHugh, Paramount Pictures (1941); “Yogi,” Sid Jacobson, Charles Koppelman, Lou Stallman, Saxon Music Corp (1961); “Yoga,” Jack Starling, Pierre Nicot (a French piano arrangement, 1964); “Yoga Is As Yoga Does,” Fred Burch, Gerald Nelson, Elvis Presley Music, Inc. (1967); and, “The Yoga Song,” Thomas C. Reynolds (1972).

I was particularly interested in Elvis Presley’s song, “Yoga Is As Yoga Does,” as I knew it must have circulated broadly, and out of all the songs discovered, traces of this song would be the most likely found. A search revealed a clip of the song performance, which surfaced on the media repository, Youtube. I watched Elvis clownishly contort his body and sing a song designed to stereotype yoga and yogis through lyrics and visual culture. Inspired, I searched for traces of the other yoga related songs I learned of in the copyright card catalog. I viewed a clip of “Yogi,” and another of “The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower,” and noted thick prevalence of

racialized stereotypes in the lyrics, sound, and visual culture of both songs. I narrowed my study to three yoga related popular music songs based on availability of footage and sound. I began to investigate each song by working backward from the copyright catalog to the footage (and comments upon that footage), to historic popular music charts, to fansites, to IMDB (internet movie database), to biographies, to archives of published music. I found and obtained sheet music and a work in progress lyrics sheet with notes by author Johnny Mercer for “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power,” in the Johnny Mercer Song Database, Special Collections Department, Georgia State University’s Johnny Mercer Collection. Given space limitations of the article format, I privilege close study of “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power,” but I also found sheet music for “Yogi,” at the Sheet Music Collection, Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). The UCLA Sheet Music Collection search also revealed at least two additional historic American pop yoga related songs.

Surprisingly, the Elvis song, “Yoga Is As Yoga Does,” that inspired the study has been an impossible musical score to find. After no results from extensive online and database searches, I made inquiries about the Elvis song with the popular music archivist at Georgia State University, who recommended I contact a leading sheet music retailer, Hollywood Sheet Music. A helpful specialist there informed me that there is no information indicating this Elvis song was ever published in the U.S. or overseas. A song is only published when publishers have received enough requests to warrant printing a song, since the ultimate goal is monetary profit. The specialist shared that often, especially with older songs such as this Elvis song, there are songs published (printed) in Europe, most especially England, that aren't published here in the U.S. But, in this case, no printed versions of the song have been detected anywhere. This absence is

one of numerous occasions on my search when I realized that data about these yoga related songs was unexpectedly missing. Another example is that despite being consistently listed as one of Orrin Tucker's greatest hits, "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power" is nowhere to be found on his discographies. Lyrics for this song are not available on go-to lyrics sources where many of his other songs are documented; this is especially interesting because of the fame of Johnny Mercer, a legendary lyricist who wrote this song. Racialization in historic, yoga related American popular songs is hidden history.

Historical Context: Early Visual Cultures of Yogis that Circulated in the U.S.

Prints depicting Indian yogis in postures, meditation, in fasting, in extreme forms of worship, and in nature began to circulate across colonial geographies in the early 1700's. Missionaries in India from American Christian churches were among the first to spread images of Indians and yogis through the U.S. The practice of circulating "exotic" images from India among American congregations was mostly done as a way of raising funds for the ongoing missionary occupation projects. In 1868, *The People of India* series was published, and it included hundreds of anthropological photographs. Officially, it is called, *The People of India: A Series of Photographic Illustrations, with Descriptive Letterpress, of the Races and Tribes of Hindustan*. I studied this immense series while working with an archivist at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. This sweeping ethnographic survey of South Asian populations includes eight volumes of photographs assembled for the purposes of racial categorization and control of Indian people, including populations in what is now Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, and Pakistan. The collection assembles photographs taken in the 1850's and 1860's by British officers to document castes and

cultures of India for the British India Office. Those “Indians” that were compliant were classified as advanced, while those less compliant with colonial hierarchies were generally described as dark, indolent, savage; this undesirable group included yogis. The massive catalogue represents a key moment in the colonial construction of race.

A tourism experience called *India Through The Stereoscope* was published in New York City and London in 1900, as part of the “Underwood Stereoscope Tours.” Stereographs are double images viewed as a three dimensional image through a stereoscope, similar to early 3D glasses. This travel book aimed to give viewer-readers the experience of touring a place they would likely never see in person. Fascination with yogi’s was evident in this book as well. Classic Orientalising tropes are present in the images that constitute the first images of Indians, yoga, and yogis to circulate across the West. These include: the emaciated yogi, the Indian dancing with snakes, yogis in asana or postures, supernatural austere practices such as lying on nails or walking on fire, and fascination with various faiths’ practices around death. All early images of yogi’s refer to yogis as “yogi” and “fakir,” interchangeably. The word “fakir” was used to describe a Muslim, or a Hindu, ascetic who has cast off all material possession and lives off alms. The frequent, interchangeable use of the words “yogi” and “fakir” reflected a pre-Partition period of greater union between Hindus and Muslims. “Yogi-yogi (the fakir man),” published in 1939, is the earliest yoga related U.S. song I have found. Clearly, the images of yogi-fakir’s from India had influence on the title of this song, for there is no Indian source (such as the Upanishads or Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*) I have come across that uses these terms, “yogi” and “fakir,” interchangeably the way colonial and missionary texts and visual cultures do.

Historical Context: Political Experience of Indians in the U.S. (1941-1967)

The 25 year period covered in this study begins immediately some years after racist mob violence against Indians in the northwest U.S; is on the heels of policies stripping Indians of the right to own land in the U.S.; covers a decades long nationwide ban on Indian immigration to the U.S.; and includes a long period when Indians were denied U.S. citizenship. This 25 year timeline of racial stereotypes connected to popular images of Indians, yoga, and yogis includes the years when: India was occupied under colonization; India gained independence; India was partitioned, one of the bloodiest forced migrations in human history; and India experiencing severe famine prior to capitulating to global capitalism. During this period of new nationalism in India and anti-Indian sentiment in the U.S., yoga becomes a poster child for globalization, and key tool for nation states to try to re-establish global footing (India) or to affirm global superiority (United States). This 25 year period also includes a reopening of U.S. borders to certain, vetted Indians to play a role in assisting the U.S. maintain Cold War competitiveness in science and medicine. This was all accompanied by a strong resurgence of anti-immigrant violence and policies. This study reveals how racial stereotypes affirm social order and control regarding Indians vis-a-vis White America. In this political context of a tumultuous, largely anti-Indian 25 year period, American media's accumulation racial stereotypes in the yoga site represents a fascination for, but not solidarity, with India/ns.

Song 1: "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power" (1941): A Rich History of Popular Racial Tropes

"The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower" circulated widely and gained momentum from a lyricist, big band, and female star that all were involved in the making or filming of the song during the prime of their careers. Lyrics for "The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower," were written in 1941 by 32-year-old Johnny Mercer, then a well known Tin Pan Alley lyricist. Mercer

ultimately wrote over a thousand pop songs, including many standards, and became a legendary author and executive who shaped American music. A proud Southern white man who grew up in the context of slavery, Mercer made his big break into the music scene in 1933 with “Lazybones,” a racialized song written in deep Southern, pseudo-black dialect about a loafing slave. As a child Mercer attended minstrel shows; he had notable and lengthy exposure to a range of Black music shared publicly and privately. By the time Mercer penned “The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower,” he had moved to Hollywood, and his popular music career was in rapid ascent. Music for the “The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower,” was composed by Jimmy McHugh. Few traces of this yoga related song still exist, it is present on a compilation of classic big band music released in 2006, and there is an archival vocal recording of the song by Mercer. “The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower” song is most prominently featured in the 1941 Paramount Pictures film, “You’re the One.”

In the film, “You’re the One,” the song is sung and played by Orrin Tucker and His Orchestra, accompanied by an ornately staged, lavish set production. Orrin Tucker and His Orchestra were understood as “symbolizing the musical era and the social climate of America during the late 1930s and early 1940s.” (Orrin Tucker, Oral History, National Association of Music Merchants). In 1941, Orrin Tucker was a big band leader coming off a 1939 best selling recording featuring vocals of Bonnie Baker. Both Orrin Tucker and Bonnie Baker star in the film, “You’re the One.” The film is about a young singer-dancer (Bonnie Baker) who wants to be a star, and encounters kooky challenges along the way. One of those wacky challenges comes in the form of dealing with Dr. Calonna, played by Italian American actor Jerry Calonna, who runs a all-in-one, weight-loss sanitarium, nightclub, and lavish resort for the well-heeled. Calonna was known as Bob Hope’s sidekick in radio and in classic Orientalist films such as Road to

Singapore (1940). In “You’re the One,” Colonna, in brownface, plays the minstrel Indian yogi for the staged production of “The Yogi Who Lost His Willpower.” Blackface and brownface are terms that name minstrel performances of racially charged material, and can also indicate the specific act of donning garish makeup to appear “Black.” (Bogle, 2010.) It is not clear if Colonna used makeup to darken his face to play this minstrel yogi, but he engaged in the accentuated facial and body antics that define classic racial stereotypes.

Music Analysis

The song has a mysterious, almost foreboding sound because it is set in a minor key, much like Irving Berlin’s, Puttin’ on the Ritz. Set in a minor key, this pop song uses notes that are not present in the normal Western scale. In minor key, the second note and sixth note of the scale are both lowered by a half step giving the song an “exotic,” or Oriental feel. The song has a conspiratorial, dramatic, and moody sound; an intimate, palpable sonic environment good for storytelling. The sheet music reflects an arrangement that has a generic ethnic, Oriental feel that could evoke a range of darkness, from the jungles of the Congo or India, for a domestic White audience of the early 1940’s. The score also reveals background melodies that lend the song a more specific Indian or Middle Eastern sound; these moments are carried by the horns and string instruments, specifically violins. Listening to the melody, it would be hard to place the geography of the song, but with the lyrics and visuals added, there is no mistaking this song’s centering of a colonial Indian yogi.

Figure 7. Excerpt of sheet music for “The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power”



Lyric Analysis of “Yogi Who Lost His Will Power”

These lyrics tell a simple story using an easy rhyme scheme and a Disney-like depiction of the crazy, “poor old Yogi.” From the opening lines, the song creates an Other in the Yogi who is a distanced, stranger in the world of the song, and a strange being in the world who feels no pain, needs no sleep, food, or water; a cartoon. The lyrics engage an educational tone; this song’s narrator becomes an all knowing, trusty tour guide of the landscape of the Othered yogi. The opening stanza is a montage of essentializing stereotypes of a yogi:

A yogi is a man who sits and thinks and never has time for forty winks

He seldom eats, rarely drinks, and he’s usually from Rangoon

A yogi is a man who takes a pin and casually sticks it through his skin

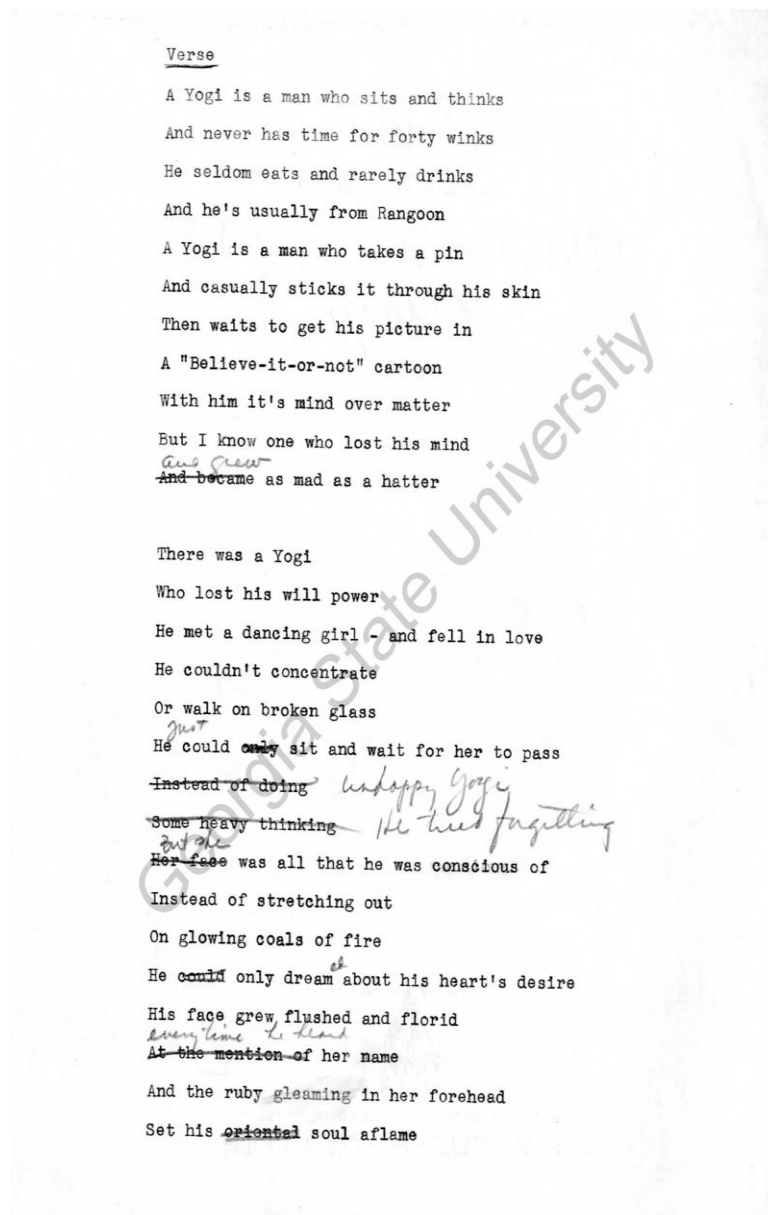
Then waits to get his picture in a “Believe-it-or-not” cartoon

With him its mind over matter; but I know one who lost his mind and grew as mad as a hatter.

The lyrics deploy Rangoon as a way to close the rhyme with “cartoon,” but the song lyrics on whole locate the yogi as Indian with use of the Hindi word “maharaja,” and more. Colonial Rangoon (now Burma) closely bordered colonial India geographically and culturally. When this song entered American popular music culture in 1941, Rangoon was subject to World War II air raids by the Japanese Imperial Army, which resulted in a half million Indians fleeing the area in terror. The montage of the Othered yogi continues throughout the song, including him: lying on broken glass; obsessing over a White dancing girl at the expense of every part of his life practice; sleeping on a bed of nails, or on glowing coals of fire; and disappearing into thin air after realizing he was only a silly, mad, colored, passing fancy in the path of a true, White queen.

I examined an archival, work-in-progress lyrics sheet with handwritten notes by author Johnny Mercer. His notes indicate that he may have wanted to tone down racist stereotypes in his lyrics, not a unique response to changing times and social sentiments about race. In one line that originally reads, “Set his oriental soul aflame,” Mercer crosses out “oriental” with two pencil lines. However, the original “oriental soul aflame” is what is featured in the film version of the song.

Figure 8. Lyrics Sheet with Hand Written Notes by Johnny Mercer



Visual Analysis of Film Production of "Yogi Who Lost His Will Power" in "You're The One"

"The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power" is a song that tells a story by Whiteness to Whiteness, about White projections of an Othered Indian yogi, for the amusement and

affirmation of Whiteness. Overall, there is an Oriental, eastern mis-en-scene approximated through costumes, props, lyrics, and sound. The opening scenes of the song number begin with a wide camera sweep over a posh, all White crowd streaming into a glamorous venue and finding seats around a lavish nightclub stage. It is an elite affair, the audience is clad in tuxedos, gowns, and gloves. The curtain falls to reveal the tuxedoed band leader standing in front of the band and surrounded in front by seated White women dressed in white veils and bras, evoking a Othered genie aesthetic. There is a brief close shot of the outlandish Yogi who is staged far left, and lighted individually, so he appears to exist in his own space and time though he shares the stage with all. The Yogi sits on the floor in simple kurta and dhoti, iconic Gandhi-like garb, and a turban. He sports an outsized mustache (a signature aesthetic of the actor), stares bug eyed into a crystal ball, and seems to burp or hiccup into a startled state, evoked by ferociously working eyebrows. In this opening sequence, the camera ultimately hones in on handsome, turban clad, clearly white band leader and narrator Orrin Tucker. Tucker begins the conspiratorial story with a wink and debonair smile. The men dancing and fanning the air with outsized staffs immediately behind him are more evocatively dressed like genies, in shiny black billowing outfits and vests, turbans, with curved swords, and gaudy black mustaches and beards. These background dancers begin to bob up and down. The camera pulls out to reveal closer takes on the bevy of seated white women dressed in a version of belly dancing attire; scantily but opulently clad in cloud-like brassieres, billowing pant-skirts, and veils. Violinists in the big band background are seated cross legged on raised platforms, made to look like musicians in an Indian music ensemble for whom it is customary to sit on the floor.

All the while, the charismatic band leader sings with an abiding conspiratorial tone and manner to the white audience, about this sad, delusional, deranged brown man Yogi. The second

flash shot of the Yogi shows him obsessed upon the crystal ball, exclaiming in madness, lifting his turban and contorting his face. After this brief, second confirmation of the Yogi's oddity, the camera stays trained on Orrin Tucker, who sings convincingly, disarmingly to his audience of the crazy Yogi. Finally, Tucker indicates the audience should join him for a closer look at the strange, zoo-like attraction of the Yogi. The Yogi is still seated on the floor staring into the crystal ball, the male dancers form his immediate backdrop. As Tucker approaches, we see the Yogi desperately mopping at the sweat on his face as he examines the crystal ball for signs of arrival of the queen; his pouring sweat is a clear break from the posh composure of all else in the production. The women dancers changed costume color from white to black genie/belly dancing outfits to provide contrast to the White queen who is rolled onto stage seated on a fake elephant prop. The Yogi clamors over to her, reaching up to her from below, begging to kiss her hand; she waves him away dismissively. The queen (Bonny) is lifted off the elephant by several attendants, steps on a small brown man as her stepping stool down, and comes close to the Yogi out of curiosity. The Yogi loses his mind in ecstasy, begins gyrating and bouncing up and down like a child; eventually he breaks into a grinning, dancing jig. A tall king, dressed to evoke some exotic brownness like the rest of the cast, sweeps away his queen from the groveling, Sambo Yogi. The Yogi begins to devolve into increasing madness. He goes back to his bed of nails, but cannot bring himself to lie down upon it. He spends several moments rolling his bug eyes into the crystal ball, which a close up reveals to be comes full of echoing images of queen Bonny. The Yogi gets it into his head to pursue her again, and beguile her with magic tricks. Classic tropes position the Yogi as a magician, including him: pulling flowers out of a sleeve, manifesting a white bird out from under a turban, hypnotizing the band leader (or trying to), and making a white rabbit appear from behind Tucker's back. Queen Bonny remains curious about

the Yogi's odd magic, but she only gazes upon him with fascination, not friendliness. The Yogi is ushered up center stage for a fantasy laden conclusion. He is positioned front and center for the first time, the camera closes in on his whole body, his white robe, draped much like iconic shots of Gandhi. The Yogi pulls out a huge rope, makes it levitate in mid-air, climbs it easily, and floats. Orrin Tucker band leader whips out a magic wand and makes him disappear in a flash of light and cloud of smoke. Then Tucker turns to the audience with a flourish, indicating his story time with them is over, and they begin to leave the grand space.

Understanding this Yogi as a Racialized Minstrel Character

Minstrel antics are comprised of caricatures and racial stereotypes which fuel racial politics, racial construction, and other forms of social control. "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power" song and film production create a widely circulating sonic, textual, and visual world in which Indians and yogis are Sambo-like; grinning in frenzy, emasculated, mad, eternally childlike, other worldly, and are willing to cease existing over obsession with White women. The Yogi's lustful miscegenation goal of getting the White woman motivates the entire song and staged production. Centering a white female object of desire affirms that Whiteness is the only goal, and that coming into union with Whiteness accompanies social and political acceptance. In American film and television, Indian men have been cast in miscegenation roles opposite a White female love interest from 1922 silent film, *The Young Rajah* to "modern examples like Raj in *The Big Bang Theory*, Gogol in *The Namesake*, Ravi in *Meet the Patels*, Tom Haverford in *Parks and Recreation*, and Dev Shah in *Master of None*, [and Kumail in *The Big Sick*]." (Kini, 2017) Kini argues that overwhelming miscegenation is not historically accurate, as Indians were not even allowed to immigrate into the U.S. for decades, much less marry White. Such racial stereotypes are also used to counter abolitionist and liberation

movements. At the time of this song and film release, India was an occupied territory embroiled in liberation struggles to transition through hundreds of years of colonization. The minstrel, magic, masculinity foil Yogi comes to define the meaning of being Indian, and being an Indian yogi for the majority of Americans who had no contact with Indians and India due to geography and exclusionary politics.

Song 2: “Yogi” (1961), A One Hit Wonder That Never Was

Just one year after The Ivy Three formed (1959) and signed to Shell Records, their 1960 song “Yogi” hit #22 on Billboard’s Black Singles/R&B chart, and hit #8 on Billboard Hot 100. Like so much of American popular music (such as rock, country music), urban doo wop groups flowered in Black and brown communities before being adopted by Whiteness, and the form has subsequently been projected and popularized as a White art. This one hit wonder doo wop group out of Long Island disbanded only one year after their splash entry into American popular music history. The Ivy Three consisted of three undergraduates who met at Adelphi University in Long Island: Artie Kaye (Artie Berkowitz); Charlie Cane (Charles Koppelman); and Don Rubin. “Yogi” was penned in 1960 by Shell Label executives Lou Stallman and Sid Jacobson, along with band member Charles Koppelman. For several key members of this song creation team, “Yogi” became a vehicle for deep music industry mobility. In particular, band member Charles Koppelman became a leading music industry influencer in the 1970’s, he is currently one of the world’s most powerful media executives. There are several traces of the song in popular music ephemera. “Yogi” appears on numerous “Golden Oldies” compilations of “America’s Greatest Hits.” I found a television performance of “Yogi” by the Ivy Three on Dick Clark’s Saturday Night Beechnut Show, also known as The Dick Clark Show. This American

musical variety show broadcast weekly in the United States on the ABC television network, from 1958 through 1960.

Elimination of the Yogi

As a chart topping hit, “Yogi” is frequently discussed online in public knowledge sites about American popular music that propel the production of music history knowledge. Music biographies of the Ivy Three, the Youtube page of the performance of the song, publicity images for The Ivy Three; all of these describe the song as solely connected to Yogi Bear. In Youtube comments on the video of The Dick Clark Show performance of “Yogi,” public voices vehemently assert that this song has nothing to do with yoga, that it is only, innocently a narrative on Yogi Bear. However, the lyrics disprove this immediately, and the moving image of a performance of the song also indicates this song was not a homage to Yogi Bear. This strange phenomenon, of ignoring the entire content of the song, relates to Whitenesses’ inability and unwillingness to see itself creating, enforcing, and benefiting from the construction of race (Lopez, 1997). Politically, Indians were effectively still eliminated from the U.S. at this time, because immigration from India was banned until 1965. These hidden histories make a compelling case for excavation, so as to understand more about how race and colonization continue to work.

Lyric Analysis of “Yogi”

What is perhaps most interesting about this song as history, is that the lyrics explicitly refer to a “Kook” Indian yogi throughout the song, but this fact is erased from public knowledge and social commentary. Instead, descriptions of the song narrowly define it as a playful, innocent song about Yogi Bear. This requires an exclusive focus on the chorus, which adopts a

signature refrain from the Yogi Bear animated cartoon, “Hey boo boo!” Yet, from the first line of the opening stanza, the song describes a strange, Othered man who stands on his head:

I saw a Kook who was standing on his head
He flipped his lid like he should have been in bed
I said, what gives man
He looked at me and said
I'm a Yogi, I'm a Yogi, baby

The lyrics report the yogi “strutting on hot coals,” and position him as clownishly impoverished, wearing shoes “so full of holes, he sang right out from the bottom of his soles.” The yogi is described as engaging in outlandish practices, and as being completely out of context, a perennial stranger to the White world. When the yogi attempts to explain his practice, the lyrics paint him as a shallow, slick, ridiculous figure who gives pointless advice:

Listen here, baby, the Yogi man said
It's all a matter of the mind
Just commune with your innermost being
Baby, you'll be just fine
He was hip, alright, wasn't he
Though I tried my best to dig my inner me
I walked on coals, my head below my knee

Note on Names: A Yogi Inspired the Names “Yogi Berra” and “Yogi Bear”

It is of some interest that the name Yogi Bear derives from the famous Yankees baseball player Lawrence Peter "Yogi" Berra (1925-2015). The baseball player's nickname was a household name at the time of the creation of the cartoon. Yogi Berra received his nickname Yogi as a teenager from a friend Jack Maguire who had seen a movie that included a short newsreel on India. This 1940's newsreel must have offered an au courant, “Believe-it-or-not” gaze on India, because Maguire was struck by images of Hindu yogis in novel body postures and deep meditation. Maguire said Berra moved like a yogi when he sat cross legged waiting to bat, or when Berra appeared sad. The nickname stuck, and now Yogi Berra, and Yogi Bear, represent the most visible, well known “Yogi's” in American popular culture.

Visual Analysis of Television Production of “Yogi” in “The Dick Clark Show”

The Dick Clark Show television spot with The Ivy Three is the only approximate music video for “Yogi.” In black and white footage, the song opens with the trio positioned on and around a tree. Much to the delight of the screaming audience, the lead singer jiggles debonairly to emphasize each line. At the end of the first stanza, a human wearing a large, menacing black monkey suit begins to peak out from behind the tree. This animal is not designed to evoke Yogi Bear; it is closer to a human scale, gangster rendition of King Kong. The monkey suit is very black in comparison with the glistening white trio; the monkey has bulging, big white eyes and a white mischievous smile. This character exists on a spectrum of Blackface, and of racial stereotyping of a Black and brown people as animalistic, savage, and as monkeys. In the middle of the second stanza of the song, the monkey comes right up behind the lead singer, and makes moves to choke him, eventually covering the singer's mouth and immobilizing him. A few lines later, the monkey runs off stage. Finally, at the tail end of the song, the camera pans the

audience to reveal the black monkey figure nestled up next to a woman in the all White audience. There are piercing screams from female fans around the monkey as the song comes to a close with “I’m a yogi,” and “Hey boo boo!” The staging of the song centers a menacing large black gorilla with signature, minstrel, bugged white eyes and toothy white grin. No people of color are shown in the audience or on stage; the only colored presence is this monkey. The use of a monkey who moves like a thug to evoke the song “Yogi,” indicates that the song has racial motivations and concerns. If the song was simply an innocent play on the children’s cartoon “Yogi Bear,” this television spot represents a striking missed opportunity to evoke any hints of Yogi Bear’s image or fun emotional environment. Widely circulating knowledge regarding “Yogi” place this song as exclusively a song about Yogi Bear, but this reflects a decay of settler psychological states, since the body of lyrics undeniably tells a story of a “Kook” yogi. (Nandy, 1988) Both the song and associated moving images are explicitly racialised and employ stereotypical racist tropes, but the production of knowledge does not allow for this. The truths that circulate about “Yogi,” are bent on preserving this moment of American popular music history in a pristine, romantic vacuum. However, popular music is not separate from politics, it carries traces of hidden histories of oppression of Others.

Song 3: “Yoga Is As Yoga Does” (1967), Elvis Presley Scapegoats Yoga On His Way Down

Writing credits on “Yoga Is As Yoga Does,” go to Fred Burch, Gerald Nelson, and Elvis Presley Music, Inc. Burch and Nelson each penned several songs for Elvis. Elvis Presley Music, Inc is one of several Elvis owned publishing companies; these legal entities allowed him to own (in this case) a third of the publishing rights to his songs. The song is featured in the motion picture, “Easy Come, Easy Go.” This film was released in 1967, just two years prior to Elvis’s last feature film. Elvis plays a Navy officer nearly done with service who discovers coveted

buried treasure on his last dive. The film was one in a series of Elvis works that received only lukewarm reception at best, and meager box office returns. Elvis was bound by contract to perform in a series of mediocre films, a stagnant condition widely thought to result from profiteering off Elvis by his long time manager, Thomas Andrew "Colonel Tom" Parker. Fan site commentary reports Elvis was studying eastern spirituality at this time, and did this song reluctantly; nevertheless, he does sing and perform "Yoga Is As Yoga Does" into American music and film history. When "Yoga Is As Yoga Does" begins to circulate, Elvis's career is at a turning point; after 1966 his earnings from music and film are severely reduced till the end of his life. While Elvis remains "The King of Rock and Roll" to many, critical historic and contemporary music commentary places him as a racist who appropriated all aspects of Black Rock and Roll culture for his own gain. The phenomenon of Elvis fed off of hiding musical histories of great African American artists who created Rock and Roll to no limited fanfare and no financial gain. Embodying racial tropes in the song, "Yoga Is As Yoga Does" is not a stretch for Elvis, who had documented experience with cultural essentializing for show.

Lyric and Visual Analysis of "Yoga Is As Yoga Does," from "Easy Come, Easy Go"

The lyrics frame a conversation between a bumbling yoga student (Elvis) and a kooky yoga teacher, "Madame Neherina," played by Elsa Lanchester. Madame Neherina begins the song by chastising Elvis for not finding peace; she declares, "you and yoga will never do." Elvis replies, "How can I even move, twistin' like a pretzel?" Elvis sings for the rest of the song. Exasperated with yoga, he asks, "You tell me just how I can take this yoga serious, when all it ever gives to me is a pain in my posteriors?" In the final verse, he outlines steps to become a clownish yogi:

Stand upside down on your head, feet against the wall

A simple yoga exercise done by one and all
Now cross your eyes and hold your breath, look just like a clown
Yoga's sure to catch you if you come falling down

The song performance is set in a home based yoga class. The class takes place in a living room, full to the brim with White bodies on the deep purple carpet and even on top of end tables. The walls are packed with vaguely eastern statues and a mounted sitar. Madame Neherina is coded as spiritual through her name and costume of a long, rowdily colored caftan and several thickly beaded necklaces. She is garish, has a shrill singing voice, and is referred to as clownish by Elvis during the song. She does act the part of a yoga buffoon; she is a cooky, new-agey, judgmental elder. The class is mixed gender, but all participants are white, and slender. Elvis and his romantic accomplice, a yoga aficionado, played by Dodie Marshall, spark the ire of their yoga teacher when they keep chattering in whispers in the session. The yoga teacher angrily orders them to shush; and Elvis pleads with Dodie to leave so they can talk. Dodie agrees, and makes a quick move to leave, but alas, Elvis struggles against himself so that he is unable to unwind from a seemingly easy sitting posture. He tosses and turns in a cross legged pose; two ladies come to his aid and essentially roll him side to side. They come to help him escape from his own body, which he apparently has no control over, even though his legs are free and he is clearly trying hard to cling onto himself with arms in a self-hug. The clownish instructor shakes her head in derision, wags a long, judgmental finger toward Elvis, and declares “you and yoga will never do.” The song and accompanying “yoga” choreography take liberty with yoga asana, extending the look, feel, and effect of postures, at yoga’s expense.

At the apex of the song performance, Elvis sings, “Now cross your eyes and hold your breath, look just like a clown, yoga's sure to catch you if you come falling down.” In this visual

moment, Elvis stands face to face with Madame Neherina, only inches apart. She crosses and clownishly widens her eyes, takes an audibly sharp inhale, blows her cheeks out exaggeratedly, and begins a hypnotic style of hand and arm motion, swaying side to side, hair flopping to and fro. She ends her sway with a sudden pounce, flashing her hands towards Elvis's face with a loud hiss. It is as though she is casting a spell upon him, which he is impervious to. This is the most overtly racialized moment in the song, the one where the Othered, magic Indian is most assuredly evoked, and absent. The song ends with Elvis making a getaway out of the room, and waving away the sham of the whole yoga experience with a finite, dismissive arm, like a conductor, resolutely ending a mediocre performance.

Elimination of the Indian

The song and moving image sequence is, in part, a satire of the emerging hippie scene in California. However, racial tropes are present whenever this yogi is portrayed as mad, magical, delusional, and bug eyed. Race is powerfully present here in the removal of the brown body, and placement of racial tropes in the body of a White woman yoga teacher. In this song and film, Indian bodies, histories, and culture are silently hinted at as fixed objects of gods and sitars. India's worth is narrowly objectified to give an Oriental flare to the mise-en-scene of the yoga class room, and mistranslated to lend a new-age, spiritual, holier-than-thou tone to the yoga teacher. Madame Neherina sings how in yoga there is no in-between, you either get it or you don't. But the actual path of yoga is all about the middle ground. The lifelong practice of yoga is always engaged in hopes of "getting it," with the "it" being liberation from all suffering. Madame Neherina is an object of ridicule in this film, and Elvis seems to be poking fun at himself in this comedic number. Mainly, the primary object of ridicule in this song is yoga, which here is not a person, but an absence of a person, a clouded allusion to a people.

Conclusions: Popular Music Reveals Racism Colors Yoga's Entry and Life In America

In this study, I read popular music as history, and examine history through popular music. Hidden histories of power reside in the residue of music history (Lipsitz, 2007). Excavating yoga related songs reveals that racial stereotypes accompany the entry and life of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music. All three of the songs studied here engage in racial tropes of Indians and yogis during the decades long period when Indian immigration to the U.S. was banned. When opportunities for self-representation are erased, ongoing settler and racial formations narrow, essentialize, and minstrelize the Indian, yogi, and yoga in American popular music culture. The "The Yogi Who Lost His Will Power," (1941) features a rich range of Sambo, minstrel, magic, miscegenist tropes in lyrics and moving image production. The musical composition of this song is set in a minor key, giving it an ethnic, Othered feel. Narrative analysis of this song reveals an exclusive conversation within Whiteness, about White projections of an Othered Indian yogi, designed to add value and pleasure to Whiteness. In "Yogi," (1961), a White doo wop group catapults to center stage with a chart topping hit that ridicules Indians, yoga, and yogis through classic tropes of a mad, "Kook," yogi who seeks out suffering. The strange historical imprint of this song as being an innocent take on Yogi Bear reveals how hidden histories of racism in the yoga site in American popular music are. Elvis' song, "Yoga Is As Yoga Does," (1967) engages bug eyed, mad yogi tropes in the body of an crazy, new age, White woman yogi. In this production, Indians are evoked in tropes and hinted at in objects that lend the set an Oriental flare. These racial stereotypes are, in part, a tool of war against Othered bodies and lands. Othering stereotypes of the yoga site accompany the first colonial and missionary images of India and yogis to circulate in the U.S. Modern manifestations of these stereotypes still exist, and the impact of racial stereotypes has an

unlimited shelf life (Melamedoff, 2017). This indicates that the life of yoga in America is clouded by racialization that has a long historical fetch. Such a conclusion contextualizes the contemporary and future U.S. yoga site in an abiding river of racialization.

Widely circulating stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music include classic racist tropes, such as the grinning Sambo, the magic man, the savage monkey, the lustful miscegenator, and the emasculated man-child. Sambo is arguably the most iconic and multi-public cultural stereotype. The Sambo site includes heavily circulating images of Black and Indian people. Sambo was known for his grinning, childlike contentment in the face of cruelties that accompanied slavery and colonization. Sambo was an extraordinary type of social control, an “the ultimate objective for whites was to affect mastery, to render the black male powerless as a warrior, sexual competitor, as an economic adversary.” (Boskin, 1988). The Sambo family of racial stereotypes discussed in this study make Indians, yogis, and yoga the object of laughter, while requiring these sources to conceive laughter, a traumatic emasculation technique (Boskin, 1988).

The logic of elimination operates to hide and remove these histories of racialization of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music. The logic of elimination is a framework that enables better understanding of the ongoing elimination of the native. Colonization is not just about material occupation, and not only concerned with genocide; it is a process bent on spatial removal of the native through material and cultural dominance (Kēhaulani, 2016). Cultural dominance outlasts physical occupation, it inscribes the Other with a fixed and seemingly natural inferiority from birth and through generations. Racist tropes easily, strategically cross over thresholds of homes via radio, television, and print media, and public

discourse. Racist stereotypes of Indians, yoga, and yogis in American popular music are an abiding, embedded tool of White, settler, culture war that outlast political liberation.

CHAPTER 4

Critical Yoga Tourism Mobilities Study of Kerala, South India (2018-2019)

Introduction: Defining Yoga Tourism Flexibly

It is important to define yoga tourism expansively - as a site of flux and friction, where yoga is centered and peripheral - in order to understand its place in tourism and globalization; its relation to power, colonialism and imperialism; and more accurately consider best practices for global yoga governance and yoga tourism industry strategy. Defining yoga tourism is an intersectional project that is strengthened by the yoga mobilities framework because the “mobilities” trope is an established lens through which to understand tourism in the context of movement and power. The concept of “mobilities” is an interdisciplinary social science framework that examines multi-scalar physical, cultural, material, economic, and political movements and stillnesses; traces systems of power and change through these phenomenon; and calls into question static notions of place and space, such as fixed uses of “terrain,” “nation,” “local,” and “global” (Hannam et al., 2006) I define yoga tourism at a nexus of other recognized forms of tourism, less understood forms of tourism, and occupation. Yoga tourism involves recognized forms of tourism, such as: colonial tourism, plantation tourism, wellness tourism, health or medical tourism, spiritual tourism, eco-tourism, racial and ethnic tourism, edu-tourism, dark tourism. Yoga tourism also involves less recognized forms of tourism: heartbreak tourism, loss tourism, happiness tourism (Ahmed, 2010).

In emergent yoga tourism scholarship, yoga tourism is defined in close association with spiritual tourism - with a qualifier that indicates this relationship is “areligious” (Lehto et al., 2006). A complex relationship exists between yoga and spirituality. Yoga is inseparable from

practices associated with spirituality - such as building compassion, enhancing consciousness of self, a path towards the embodied experience of oneness of all existence across time and space. But, a key selling point of industrialized yoga lies in how it is increasingly compartmentalized into a physical practice, explicitly disassociated from spiritual paths - exclusively focused on aesthetic, fitness, and competitive body based goals.

On one hand, the dereligionization and despiritualization of yoga fuels extreme and divisive aims (Gallab, 2016). This severing of yoga from spirituality (and accompanied supplement of commerce and competition into core elements of contemporary, industrialized yoga) and “religion” echoes long-standing U.S. federal and settler colonial nation-state domestication efforts bent on civilizing the Indian savage through resolute removal of practices and signs of indigenous spiritual and “religious” practices. On the other hand, powerful forces religionize and spiritualize yoga towards extremist goals. Orientalism works to Other Indian, Indians, and yoga through categorizing these entities as being fundamentally “religious” in nature. The religionization of yoga, Indians, and India operates on a definition of “religious” that reduces and flattens Others into mystical, magical, diety-crazed beings; and exotifies such world religions as Hinduism - a philosophical canon of stories, moral codes, arts and sciences foundational to yoga and as old as humanity itself.

Yoga tourism consists of home-seeking and occupation by those seeking refuge from the ravages of white supremacy and racial capitalism which take grave toll on intimate relations within white and privileged family and childhood homes (Fanon, 1963). The definition of yoga tourism must be flexible, spacious. It cannot be fully distinguished from wellness tourism, and not from Ayurveda tourism which is thoroughly grounded in yoga studies and practice. While yoga may have distinct aspects, it is inextricably linked to both of these arenas, and in fact, all

life and death, animate and inanimate. I draw from indigenous scholars who define “research as ceremony,” (Wilson, 2008; Topkok, 2015) and extend this to affirm “yoga as scholarship.”

Oneness and the elimination of dichotomy are fundamental values of critical yoga studies methodology. I use yoga tourism mobilities to track elements of this oneness ever flung into parts and reproducible categorizations that circulate as products around the globe, bolstering increasingly violent nation states (India) and settler states (U.S.) and their occupying yoga organizations (Yoga Alliance, U.S.) - the impact of which lives within our bodies.

Research Site: Kerala, India

India is widely understood to be the birthplace of yoga, so India is a telling site for the study of yoga tourism. Yoga tourism in India is a powerful nexus of commerce which operates in relation to postcolonial nation rebuilding, capitalism and globalized yoga industrial development, and contested gender and racial constructions. I chose the South Indian coastal state of Kerala for my study because Kerala has long been branded as the premier Indian wellness destination.

For much of the 20th century, the South Indian state of Kerala did not encourage tourism. “Realizing its economic potential, the Government of Kerala declared tourism as an industry in 1986” (Haseena et al., 2014), and when it did so, it quickly became a global beacon for linking governance and sustainable tourism goals. Fast forward to 2018; the Kerala state Department of Tourism in association with the Association of Tourism Trade Organisation, India, launched the “Kerala Yoga Ambassadors Tour,” a highly publicized, subsidized tour for primarily white yoga professionals from around the western world designed to reimage popular Kerala destinations into yoga tourism hotspots. The tour hit a misstep when “ambassadors” took photos in yoga asana postures on top of a historic site of a precious collection of dolmens, ancient structural remains of clan leaders’ burial sites covered by the national Monumental Protection Act. One

dolmen protection agency official remarked, “This is at a time when we are seriously working for the protection of dolmen. How can one stand on it and practise yoga in the name of promoting tourism. They are monumental treasures throwing light on our past. Instead of protecting them, they were made as objects for enjoyment.” (Raman, 2018). Yoga tourism is widely associated with “transformation,” and “self improvement,” but it is also about “white” bodies posing on Indian graves, or yoga accumulation at the expense of Indians.

Yoga tourism in India political, perpetuating layered impacts of colonial power on balance and wellness. While yoga practice in India reaches deep and wide among the domestic populace and yoga tourists who travel to India benefit from the physical and mindful benefits of yoga, yoga tourism is morally ambiguous. Yoga ways created by and reinforced through Indian yoga tourism commerce exacerbate labor, gender, and race relations that unevenly distribute life chances along historically oppressive lines. This study adds a year-long, feminist ethnographic investigation of India based yoga tourism to robust critical tourism conversations and the nascent field of yoga tourism studies.

Critical tourism considers global tourism’s impact on endangered lands, oppressed peoples, and marginalized cultures. Yoga tourism is a ripe site to investigate justice and sustainability tensions in yoga development, because yoga tourism sells health to tourists. Yoga tourism is part of wellness tourism, and wellness tourism generates a steeply rising portion of global tourism revenue. Wellness, health, or detox tourism is defined as any tourism associated with the goal of sustaining and supporting personal well-being. Wellness tourism now represents 14% of all tourism spending, comprising around \$450 billion of the \$3.2 trillion global tourism industry. India is known as the “World’s Fastest-Growing Wellness Tourism Destination,” with a projected 22% annual growth rate due to skyrocketing yoga and Ayurveda-related travel. In

comparison, the United States, the leading country for domestic wellness travel, has an average annual growth rate of 5.8%. In 2016, India issued a new “Yoga Visa” category designed to net more western visitors interested in yoga tourism.

From the beginning of the transatlantic Spice Route in the 15th century, Kerala’s medicinal spices and herbs, verdant, fertile fields, and deep well of Ayurvedic knowledge have long attracted European visitors seeking wellness [new sentence] including the first colonial settlement in India, that took root in Kerala in Fort Kochi, an intimate, cosmopolitan island part of the mainland, metropolitan city of Kochi. Kerala is a particularly interesting site for the study of contemporary yoga tourism because this state is struggling to rebrand itself as a premier Indian yoga tourism destination.

While Kerala is the go-to site for Ayurveda tourism, it is lesser known for yoga tourism than well-known Indian yoga tourism sites like Rishikesh, Mysore, and nearby Goa. Yet, Kerala is a primary yoga tourism destination, though it may not be named as such, because Ayurveda and yoga are inextricably bound, more than sister sciences, each does not fully exist without the other. For example, Kerala is brimming with Ayurveda doctors who attend a minimum four years of Ayurveda college, which routinely includes one full year of yoga study. Typically the year of yoga study includes one semester of science and philosophy, and another semester of *asana* or study of embodied postural movement. The hours involved in this mandatory yoga curriculum far exceed the international, 200-hour standard (set by U.S.-based Yoga Alliance) for yoga teacher certification. none of the Ayurveda doctors interviewed referred to themselves as yoga instructors, or even yoga experts. Yoga tourism is Ayurveda tourism, and Ayurveda tourism is yoga tourism. These sciences are inseparable. But, this aspect of yoga is not trending in the global yoga marketplace, instead “asana,” or physical postural yoga, also known as “hatha

yoga,” is what defines “yoga” now. So Kerala has some rebranding to do in order to catch hold of the yoga tourism goldmine in India.

Beyond weathering the normal volatility associated with being a Global South tourism hub, Kerala Ayurveda yoga tourism has to play catch up to grab hold of the momentum of contemporary, *asana* based yoga tourism. Studying this flux is fruitful, because Kerala’s aspirational reach reveals complexities how Indian yoga tourism is re-defining yoga towards standards, understandings of yoga set by the free market of globalized, commodified yoga. I conclude the Kerala yoga tourism is defined by extremes, which oppose traditional yoga values of healing dichotomies. I identify core yoga values as including balance, sanity, liberation, being present, rigorous scholarship or “yoga as research,” always being a student on the path, being breath led, and focused.

Figure 9. Ethnographic Interviews: Emergent Themes



Ethnographic Study

Three research questions guided this study: (1) What mobilities (with emphasis on mobilities of power and the body) shape yoga tourism sites?; (2) What defines yoga tourism? What ethical considerations define yoga tourism?; (3) What are the layered experiences of Indian women yoga tourism laborers in guest services, food services, yoga and Ayurveda therapy, and yoga hospitality management? This study spanned one year, from September to October of 2018, and from June 2018 to March 2019. I visited go-to popular tourism hotspots across Kerala to examine yoga tourism retreats as a participant-observer; including Kovalam, Varkala, Amritapuri, Ft. Kochi, Munnar, and Wayanad. I immersed myself in everyday city life of Kochi, which was my home base during the study. I interviewed seventy-three people. I completed

eleven site observations at yoga and wellness retreats and hotels in Kerala, where I participated in yoga offerings. I chose these sites based on top ranking Kerala yoga tourism sites in Tripadvisor, the largest user driven tourism review site in the world. I also chose study sites based on the personal connections of interviewees I met during the course of the study. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus my analysis on three observation sites (Malabar House, Ft. Kochi; Niraamaya, Kovalam; and Kayal Island Retreat, Alleppey).

Road Map

In the following segments, I discuss: (1) Literature focusing on mobilities, yoga tourism studies, transnational feminist theories, and postcolonial perspectives on India, women, and work; (2) Methods in the context of critical ethnography practices, including segments on positionality, bias, “studying up,” sampling, memoing, and what brought me to this research design; (3) Data, with detailed explanations of study design and resulting data sets; (4) Case Studies that center the bodies and stories of Indian women yoga tourism workers; (5) Findings which focus on the morally ambiguous impact of yoga tourism on workers bodies and lives, as well as host communities’ land, culture, and sovereignty; and (5) Conclusions on ethical considerations that define yoga tourism, and future directions for yoga tourism business, as well as yoga tourism studies.

Literature Review: Critical Yoga Studies, Yoga Tourism, and Mobilities

Introduction: Tourism, “Tourism Mobilities,” and “Yoga Tourism Studies”

Guided by a critical race and indigenous studies vision for critical yoga studies, I conduct a mobilities ethnography of Kerala yoga tourism to describe and question characteristics of yoga tourism environments. Yoga tourism is a cornerstone of transnational tourism in Kerala, in India,

and increasingly across the globe. Informed by my findings, I contribute to the scholarship of “yoga tourism studies” by: (1) expanding the definition of yoga tourism, which is narrow and utopic, to describe its complexities and advocate for more robust critique and analysis of enmeshment of “yoga tourism” with neoliberalism and coloniality; (2) attending to unexplored attributes of yoga tourism environments, such as experience and wellness of host country yoga tourism workers, in particular the bodies of Indian women yoga tourism workers. This study describes, for the first time, morally ambiguous and neoliberal characteristics of yoga tourism from the perspective of host communities and women yoga tourism workers. (Lehto et al., 2006).

I begin this literature review with an explanation of the “mobilities” concept in relation to “tourism studies,” “travel,” and the subfield of “tourism mobilities.” Next, I offer an account of nascent “yoga tourism studies,” distinguish this Kerala yoga tourism study from trends in the emerging “yoga tourism studies” field, and discuss this study’s contributions to that field. Then, I explain historic and contemporary political and labor dynamics of Kerala, the research site. Finally, I discuss transnational feminist ethnography.

Tourism Studies

Historically “tourism studies” grew out of industry focused market research, consumer studies, and data geared towards enhancing profitability, analysis, and growth of commercial tourism industries. A “critical turn in tourism studies” inserted social, political, historical, and cultural research into tourism studies. Critical tourism studies began to provide layered examinations of power - sustainable and unsustainable impacts, and colonial trajectories of dominance - in tourism through studies of host communities, peoples, cultures, and lands. Critical tourism scholars argue that the “divide” or “dichotomy” in tourism research should not be viewed as a fixed binary between industry research and critical studies. Instead, critical

tourism scholars advocate for the future of tourism research to be an increasingly interdisciplinary blend between these two, seemingly disparate angles of the field. “Tourism mobilities” is an example of such a blend - this sub-field of “mobilities studies” offers a rich, interdisciplinary trajectory of tourism research that walks the line between the nuts and bolts of tourism as a site of commerce and the politics of tourism as a site of power.

Tourism Mobilities

“Mobilities” is an interdisciplinary framework that encompasses political, geographic, social, economic, and historical studies of transit, motion, mobility, and movement which range from stillness to “hyper-mobility” (Cresswell, 2012). The mobilities framework is used to examine every scale of movements and stillnesses, from “large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life” (Hannam, et al., 2006). Traditional sites of mobilities study interdependent movements and “immobilities,” or non-movements, in travel and tourism, airports, cities, natural disasters, war, climate change, multinational manufacturing processes, and labor migrations (Hannam et al., 2006; Lury, 1997). The body is an essential node of study in mobilities. (Hannam, et al., 2006)

“Tourism mobilities studies” is a rich sub-field of “mobilities studies” which is devoted to tourism, transit, and travel research. Tourism mobilities studies have: explored “non-place” transit spaces such as airports and transportation waiting areas; questioned assumed and easy associations between travel, movement, and elitism; and, unpacked and defined interconnected systems of travel, security, surveillance, and war. Elite, popular Kerala yoga tourism sites are ripe for tourism mobilities analyses, because these environments are comprised of complex,

interconnected systems of labor, migration, travel, environmental, economic, and cultural movements. Fundamentally, these elite yoga tourism sites offer stillness to global tourists moving around the world in search for the opportunity to slow down, focus solely on the self and the body, and for respite from the rush and rampage of life under global capitalism.

There are, as yet, only three studies that use the “mobilities” and “tourism mobilities” framework to examine yoga tourism. All three studies are included in one anthology on travel and mobilities. This dissertation study joins an emerging group of mobilities scholars who nudge mobilities studies in the direction of settler-colonial studies, indigenous studies, and critical race theory. I engage mobilities to illuminate sources and impacts of powerful truths that circulate about yoga tourism in Kerala, India, and the world.

In my study of yoga tourism, I build on “tourism mobilities” scholarship, which finds that rights to travel and increases in physical mobility unfold at the expense of deepening immobilities of others due to unequal, global power relations (Timothy, 2001; Verstraete, 2004; Wood & Graham, 2006). This finding, and my study, does not rest on the idea that mobilities and movement are inherently better than stillnesses and immobilities - an association which is called into question by transnational feminist critiques of mobilities (Kaplan, 2006; Tsing, 2002). Instead, I engage “tourism mobilities” to destabilize any static notions of India and Indians in Indian yoga tourism studies and to map power and impacts set in motion by Kerala yoga tourism on labor migration, Indian women’s bodies, culture, places, and lands. I found three yoga tourism studies that reference “mobilities,” all within one book on transcultural yoga travel (Hauser, 2013). One study “considers frictions and mobilities in Indian tourism,” but solely focuses on white, western yoga tourist typologies and experiences (Nichter, 2013). Another yoga tourism mobilities study examines the “transcultural flow of the cultural economics of yoga,” but

focuses exclusively on the motivations of practitioners in Germany, and motivations of yoga tourists and the life of a white, western yoga tourism business owner and “guru” in Thailand (Koch, 2013). The last yoga tourism mobilities study connects global yoga tourism to “Green” environmental movements, concluding that yoga tourism mobilizes and heightens attentiveness to the environment (Strauss et al., 2013).

I build on these yoga tourism studies in that I use mobilities to understand diverse dynamics of Indian yoga tourism. I diverge from their: 1) exclusive focus on yoga tourists; 2) sole study of people which fixes and makes stable places, sites, lands, and nations; and 3) arguments that yoga tourism is connected to moral and social goods having to do with environmental consciousness, because this ignores evidence to the contrary and tends to idealize and fix yoga tourists and tourism - an ever changing, and problematic developmental site in global, racial capitalism. The mobilities framework sets the stage for questions about interdependent movements and stillnesses at multiple scales engendered by yoga tourism; from influx of visitors, to labor migrations, to changing social and cultural dynamics in host regions and communities, to U.S. and Indian governance movements in Kerala yoga tourism.

Global Capitalism and Yoga Tourism

This Kerala yoga tourism study contributes to yoga tourism studies by situating yoga tourism as a participant in, product of, and contributor to forces of global capital. Yoga tourism is a marker and tool of neoliberalism and its attendant, disparate impacts on indigenous people, cultures, and land that range from “inhuman” to socially conscious. This study contributes data to the emerging field of “yoga tourism studies” that provides an evidentiary base for questioning and upending associations of global yoga tourism with absolute “social good,” environmental consciousness, and personal self-conscious growth. In addition, this Kerala yoga tourism study

aims to galvanize yoga tourism scholarship to examine beyond yoga tourist bodies and typologies in yoga tourism sites towards humanizing the bodies of workers - particularly women yoga tourism workers. This study's findings provide an evidentiary base that proves it is crucial to account for critical tourism studies, critical race, indigenous studies, post-colonial studies, and transnational feminist perspectives in yoga tourism scholarship to accurately understand all that is at stake, set in motion, and fixed by this arm of global commerce.

Yoga Tourism

The "Yoga Tourism" entry in the Encyclopedia of Tourism states "research remains thin" in this area of scholarship (Ponder, 2016). It also defines yoga tourism in relation to high moral and social goods of self-study and introspection. Yoga tourism is an emerging field of scholarship. A Google Scholar search of the quoted term "yoga tourism" in June, 2019 revealed 307 results; among these, approximately 100 articles present new data on yoga tourism - the oldest data-based scholarship is dated to 2002. The majority of articles, books, and citations that populate the search results are either studies on related areas (wellness tourism, spiritual tourism) with brief use of the term "yoga tourism," with no attendant data or discussion; or the scholarly work populates the results because it cites to a handful of dominant studies on yoga tourism.

Dominant studies on yoga tourism include: the most circulated study (cited 106 times; June, 2019) on the motivations of yoga tourists, which include "seeking spirituality, enhancing mental wellbeing, enhancing physical condition, and controlling negative emotions," (Lehto et al., 2006); a case study on "experiences of foreign tourists visiting Rishikesh, India," (Aggarwal et al., 2008); a chapter on the transformational power of yoga tourism and tourists who become agents of positive social change (Ponder et al., 2013); and, a case study on yoga tourists' experiences of Mysore, a South Indian yoga tourism hotspot (Maddox, 2014). This is a

representative sample of the nascent field of yoga tourism studies. Yoga tourism studies are entirely focused on the typology or experiences of yoga tourist-practitioners (Hall et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2017; Koch, 2013; Patterson, 2016; Pramod et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2006); how to grow the yoga tourism industry (Patwardhan, 2016; Ravichandran, 2010; Singh, 2018; Swathi et al., 2010); or, how to market to yoga tourists (Falck, 2013; Hannah et al., 2019).

I fill a gap in these studies because my yoga tourism study is first to gather data on the impact of yoga tourism on industry workers and host communities; the first study of Indian and Kerala yoga tourism to highlight the stories and bodies of Indian women yoga tourism workers; and, one of the first studies to critically examine yoga tourism and yoga tourists - unlike previous studies that idealize utopic “transformative powers” of the industry and the tourists, I connect these entities with immoral and morally ambiguous transformative results.

I argue for expansive, mobile explorations of fraught, shifting impacts of commodification of yoga through yoga tourism. I engage previous yoga tourism studies that explore and question the commercialization of yoga (Bowers et al., 2017; Koch, 2013; Liberman, 2004; Nichter, 2013; Trungpa, 2002). I diverge from these studies where their sole focus is how commercialism of yoga in yoga tourism hotspots manifests as cheating Indians who try to sell false cures and thus interfere with the yoga tourist’s ability to consume and accumulate “authenticity” (Nichter, 2013). I find the Koch (2013) study of yoga consumption useful when it fleshes out the various states of yoga commodities, “Yoga consumption is diversified in manifold ways, for instance through sports, mountain climbing, fasting...Yoga is embedded in various other partial markets, depending on what else is available in the way of sport and recreation or spiritual events.” This varied, fluid definition of yoga consumption is aligned with and helps justify my broad definition of yoga tourism. However, I differ from Koch’s and others smooth,

unquestioning perspective on how the genesis of “modern yoga” is found in Europe and the U.S. with only threadbare ties to India (Alter, 2004; Strauss, 2004). Postcolonial scholarship (Bartolovich, 2002; Bhabra, 2007; Camaroff, 1993; Nandy, 1988, Paolini, 1999) documents the colonial use of “modernity” to fragment and categorize colonized nations such as India from a continuous entity, into a primitive, then developing state.

I argue that in yoga studies, and yoga tourism studies, the idea of “modern yoga,” as a new, white entity, needs to be questioned, and not used to displace India by keeping “Indian yoga” static and ancient. I also distinguish my analysis from Koch and most yoga tourism scholars who associate yoga with religion or spirituality (Bowers et al., 2017; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Smith et al., 2006), because mistranslated, western religionization and spiritualization of Kerala and India, and all things Indian, is a documented, historic and present method of fascination, exotification, and Othering (Haseena et al., 2014; Said, 1985).

I find helpful the work of previous yoga tourism scholars on the close relationship between governance in India and the promotion of yoga tourism to foreigners (Bowers et al., 2017; Nichter, 2013; Haseena et al., 2014). For example, Nichter (2013) writes this illuminating passage about the Government of India’s marketing of yoga tourism:

“Health tourism is a burgeoning business in India today, and yoga has increasingly become commodified for foreign and national tourists. Transnational interactions are immediately evident in the marketing of yoga as both a commercial and spiritual product. The Incredible India website, the main portal of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, features a well-known American yoga teacher...For reading on the topic of yoga, the Ministry recommends Western guides to yoga hotspots...It is noteworthy that of four recommended texts on yoga, only one is authored by an Indian.”

In my study of governance and yoga tourism in India, I fill a gap by connecting governance and yoga in Indian yoga tourism to: 1) consider the racial, postcolonial dynamics of the Indian government's specific, catering call for white yoga tourists to come to India; and 2) include the ubiquitous, unrestrained encroachment of U.S. yoga governance in India via Yoga Alliance yoga teacher credentialing standards that dictate change in Indian ways of teaching yoga, for better and for worse. No study of governance, nation state, and yoga tourism in India is complete without including U.S. yoga governance because it is pervasive, even parasitic across Indian yoga tourism hotspots.

Finally, I distinguish my yoga tourism scholarship from the studies that conclude yoga tourism is a better, more "holistic" (Smith, 2003; Smith et al., 2006), "introspective" (Bowers et al., 2017), "Green" and "environmentally conscious" (Strauss et al., 2013), form of tourism than traditional tourism because I find yoga tourism does Other and negatively impact host communities, cultures, environments, and places. The untroubled, upbeat, even utopic link between yoga and the "Green" movement - additionally, the continued unquestioned use of "Green" as wholly environmentally friendly, despite the disastrous impacts of "Green" policies in India in particular - as a sign that yoga tourism is uplifting the earth persists despite evidence to the contrary, such as well publicized studies of environmental destruction in Rishikesh as a result of the rise of yoga tourism there (Farooquee, 2004), and the tumbling avalanche of global capitalism on all things (Cheah, 2006).

Kerala, India: Marxism, Work, and Women

At a time of growing extremism and inequality in India, the Communist-led southern coastal state of Kerala is a compelling site for the study of labor, gender, yoga, and "tourism

mobilities.” “Kerala's vigorous, broad-based Communist party” was established in the late 1930’s as a result of social turmoil stirred by colonialism and casteism (Jefferey, 1978). Since 1957, Kerala’s electoral politics have been ruled by the Marxist party which has focused on and produced vigorous social change. “Instead of being associated with repression or failure, the party of Marx is widely associated with huge investments in education that have produced a 95 percent literacy rate, the highest in India, and a health-care system where citizens earning only a few dollars a day still qualify for free heart surgery.” (Jaffe, et al., 2017).

Kerala is renowned for consistently stellar rankings within the global south, and globally, in nearly all key markers of progress including - in addition to the aforementioned literacy and health care - infant mortality, life expectancy, and distribution of development benefits across historically divisive urban/rural, caste, and gender lines. “An even population distribution, a cosmopolitan trading history, and the development of militant worker and small farmer organizations led by dedicated activists provide the main explanations for Kerala's achievements.” (Franke, et al., 1992). Yet, Kerala also consistently places at the bottom of per capita income within India, and the world. “Serious unemployment threatens the Kerala experiment,” and unprecedented percentages of healthy, educated Kerala workers across gender lines emigrate to the Persian Gulf for living wages and economic opportunity (Franke, et al., 1992). The tensions, flux, and progress that define Kerala also characterize its emblematic yoga, Ayurveda, and ecological tourism economies.

Serious social investment in tourism by the Marxist party in Kerala has set the state apart as a leader in sustainable eco-tourism on the global scale since the early 1990’s, and tourism is a “major contributor” to the state’s GDP (Sebastian, et al., 2009). “It has become a common practice among both politicians and bureaucrats of Kerala to refer to the tourism sector as an

‘engine of growth’” (Sreekumar, et al., 2002). Underexplored characteristics of this “engine of growth” include the phenomenon of Northeastern tribal workers, unexposed to the workers rights movements and practices embedded in Kerala society, funneling into Kerala for tourism and hospitality employment. While young tribal workers cycle into Kerala to work in the care industries, Keralites themselves leave to find care-work in Dubai and elsewhere.

Indian civil rights leader and scholar, Dr. BR Ambedkar, famously said in an address to a convening of Indian women workers, , “I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.” (Singariya, 2014). While yoga has morphed into a symbol of national progress in several nations, including India, evidence suggests that progress associated with Indian yoga tourism uplifts a discrete population of women. That uplift, however, rests upon the shoulders of Indian women consensually and non-consensually bearing the weight of healing and serving others embarked on yoga quests for agelessness, goodness, and wellness. While women’s tourism service work is recognized as grueling and often unsustainable, it is also a field where Indigenous women, women of the Global South, and women of color find agency, power, and freedom through earning, space to create self and craft, and travel outside their traditional locales and domestic homes (Fernandez, 1999; Ladkin, 2011; Raibmon, 2006).

Transnational Feminist Ethnography

Embodied research “considers the role of the lived body [of the researcher] as a way of knowing and being” (Todres, 2007), and contributes “to our understandings of “the body” in and through its ongoing relationship with the research act” (Giardina et al., 2001). Essentially, “embodied research” highlights the researcher body, which is an aspect of “reflexive research,” in which the scholar rigorously seeks to understand themselves as a key research instrument, is a

valued component of critical, transnational feminist ethnography (Skeggs, 2001). Feminist ethnography centers researcher reflexivity, which is self-critical, introspective, and self-conscious (England, 1994). Transnational feminist ethnography places great significance on non-hierarchical, non-rivalrous, and culturally relative research that does not further subjugate, flatten, or Other women of color - particularly Indigenous women, women of the Global South, and Black women. (Kaplan, 2002; Mohanty, 1991) An esteemed body of subaltern scholarship focuses on and emerges from Indian women and asks, “Can the subaltern speak?” (Spivak, 1988).

Transnational feminist research considers all voices present in a study, centers and believes women’s stories, and begins and ends with the researcher themselves. Essential elements of critical feminist ethnography include how the researcher comes to a study, with what positionality, and how this affects their guiding questions, data sets, and interpretations. Critical yoga tourism methodologies and my yoga mobilities conceptual framework necessitates that researchers be present in and to their yoga tourism studies. Being present is a guiding value in yoga and in critical yoga studies. Attention to who the researcher is, and how they are positioned bring essential transparency to inevitable researcher bias.

Design and Methodology

This study explores and describes yoga tourism in Kerala, India in order to expand and destabilize definitions of “yoga tourism,” and map its impacts. Scholarship is a valued, guiding element of yoga practice. In this study, I engaged in “yoga as research,” and through a breath led research practice, tried to honor a long line of yoga scholars too numerous to fully cite who

produced and continue to produce rigorous scholarship (Buddhavacana, Buddha; Ramayana, Valmiki; Upanishads, Aruni, Aitareya, Balaki, Pippalada, Sanatkumara, Shandilya, and Shvetaketu, Uddalaka, Yajnavalkya; Vedas, Vyasa; Yoga Sutras, Patanjali). Guiding research questions were: 1) What mobilities (with emphasis on mobilities of power and the body) shape yoga tourism sites?; 2) What defines yoga tourism? What ethical considerations define yoga tourism?; 3) What are the layered experiences of Indian women yoga tourism laborers in guest services, food services, yoga and Ayurveda therapy, and yoga hospitality management? I addressed these research questions through one year of fieldwork in Kerala where I gathered three types of ethnographic data: interviews with a broad range of yoga tourism workers, embodied participant-observations in yoga tourism sites, and extended observation of daily life and activities of yoga tourism workers. I begin by explaining my data collection process. Next, I discuss participants and observation sites, followed by a reflexive account of my researcher positionality. Finally, I clarify theoretical frameworks that guide data interpretation.

Data Collection

To gather data; 1) I “studied up” and into exclusive, closed-door realms of luxury yoga tourism beyond my graduate student budget with the assistance of a research grant; 2) I engaged in indigenous “research as ceremony,” and transnational feminist methods of sharing stories with other Indian women to build accountable relations with interviewees and to aim for accountability with all relations on site; and, 3) to learn more about the daily lives and social relations of yoga tourism workers, I designed a five-month long, extended participant observation opportunity by joining a hotel gym and regularly dining at Grand Hyatt Kochi, India’s largest luxury hotel and convention center complex, which happened to be less than a mile from our Kochi homebase.

Data Collection: Studying Up

I used critical and feminist ethnographic methods to gather data. I “studied up,” to collect data as a embodied participant-observer in exclusive, luxury yoga tourism sites. “Studying up,” “repatriates” the common study of anthropology to include examination of the powerful as well as the powerless in order to better understand processes of domination (Nader, 1972). Although studying up was originally designed to extend research in the U.S. context to strengthen American democratic processes, it is a method ideally suited to gain knowledge about yoga tourism because yoga tourism often occurs in sites geared towards enhancing the wellness of rich and powerful bodies (Hugh, 1997). Power is exercised at the level of the body (Foucault, 1990). To understand accumulations of yoga and wellness within powerful, global tourist bodies, I needed to gain access to spaces “up” above my economic reach. To facilitate my access, I received a dissertation research grant from the Graduate Research Support Program at Arizona State University. This \$2000 grant paid for half of my three-week stay and yoga immersion at Niraamaya, a luxury wellness and yoga retreat in Kovalam, a district branded as Kerala’s elite coastal wellness experience. The research grant - plus a currency conversion rate that greatly favors anyone earning in U.S. dollars and spending in Indian Rupee’s (INR) - allowed me to stay at several yoga tourism sites, the equivalent of which in the U.S. would be out of reach for me financially.

Data Collection: Indigenous Research Practices and Transnational Feminist

Methods

Accountability to relationships, and to all our relations, is a cornerstone of indigenous research practices and a foundational element of transnational feminist methodologies (Bhopal, 2010; Wilson, 2008). My methods were shaped by frameworks of indigenous “research as

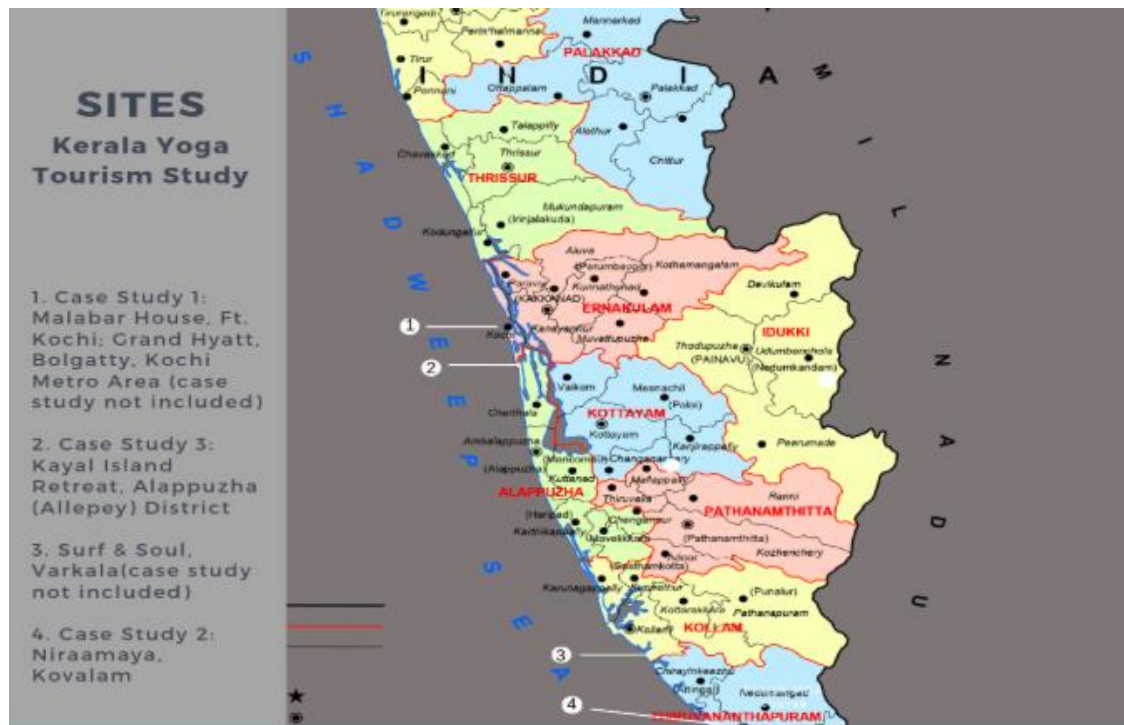
ceremony,” by “yoga as research,” and by fostering accountable relationships with fellow Indian women through “mutual disclosure,” where I occasionally shared stories of my own as a means of relating and building trust (Bhopal, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Building trust beyond mandatory hospitality industry friendliness was important, especially because of the vast financial, mobility, and other power disparities between my research subjects and I. Through “careful choices in [my] selection of topics, methods of data collection, forms of analysis and finally in the way [I] present information,” I built relationships with women workers at various levels of skill and economic sustainability which resulted in powerful data on the contemporary yoga tourism experience within frameworks of gender, and worker mobility and sustainability. (Wilson, 2008) I chose to focus on the lives of Indian women in yoga tourism, because yoga tourism is largely about women; women tourists and the women workers who service them. Dominance over Indian women, gender constructions, and experiences of gender were key to colonial rule (Nandy, 1983). These forms of dominance are ongoing, albeit with new iterations in contemporary yoga tourism. During the course of my year-long study, I built over fifty relationships with Indian women working in yoga tourism who trusted me with their stories.

Data Collection: Extended Observation of Daily Life at Grand Hyatt Kochi

In addition to medium observation stints (three weeks) and short stints (five days) as a participant observer in elite yoga tourism sites, I designed extended participant observation research opportunities (five months) near our homebase in Kochi to gather data on the complex daily life and social activities of yoga tourism industry workers. Several important sites and people were located within close distance of our home; primarily, the enormous, new Grand Hyatt Kochi complex, less than a mile away and always within sight across the water. My extended participant observer ethnographic approach enabled me to gain layered insights into

shapes and impacts of yoga tourism on lives, lands, gender, and culture (Jorgensen, 2015). Over nearly half a year, I observed hotel culture during peak and low periods, I built relations with upper and mid-level staff, I observed labor mobilities, and I had many conversations with a small group of women over time which taught me a great deal about the effects of nearly endless labor on these women's family relations, self esteem, health, and co-worker relations.

Figure 10. Map of Research Sites, Kerala Yoga Tourism Study



Participants and Sites

My Kerala yoga tourism study spanned one year, from September to October of 2018, and from June 2018 to March 2019. I visited popular tourism hotspots across Kerala to examine yoga tourism retreats as a participant-observer; including Kovalam, Varkala, Alleppey backwaters, Amritapuri, Ft. Kochi, Munnar, and Wayanad. I immersed myself in everyday city life of Kochi, which was my homebase during the study. I interviewed seventy-three people, and I engaged in relevant, revealing, often serial casual conversations with thirty-five additional people. Interviewee and casual participant categories included: yoga students, yoga teachers, Ayurveda doctors, Ayurveda massage therapists, wellness and Ayurveda chefs, one bartender-mixologist, food servers, yoga tourism business owners, yoga tourism managerial staff, yoga tourism administrative staff, business owners who host yoga events within their business sites,

yoga and Ayurveda tourism low-level staff (cleaning, custodial, maintenance). Several interviewees fit into more than one category, because those working in yoga tourism tend to want to practice yoga more, and see themselves as yoga students or aspiring yoga students. The line between yoga teacher and yoga student is a blurry one, as both roles are inexorably linked every step along the way of a traditional yoga path. Here, I use yoga teacher to indicate those whose primary profession is in teaching yoga to students who come to attend their classes and retreats.

With both interviewees and casual participants I began my lines of inquiry with a statement of transparency about my purpose and position. I always shared that I was engaged in a critical study of yoga tourism towards the completion of my PhD, and eventually, towards a further trade or academic publication in the form of a book. I also told participants that I was not investigating for a journalism piece or popular exposé, and neither was I there to fuel negative site reviews. I tried to engage in pre-visit interview clearance at a couple sites via email but found this ineffective because such a formal request raised a red flag to retreat sites about a potential public exposé. For example, I sent Soul & Surf an email requesting permission to interview on site, but received an ambiguous response, and then no response at all. However, when I booked my stay, and showed up as a week-long guest, I found staff willing to speak with me, especially after a few days of establishing respectful relations. This caution on the part of yoga hotels and retreats can be attributed to a tense climate of influential user reviews and social media review sites. In the Indian yoga tourism context, the user review culture tilts ever more power towards guests, especially white and western guest opinions. One bad review can negatively impact an entire tourism operation, or end a worker's employment at the targeted site. Once I realized that pre-approval and even formality over email was going to trigger caution rather than a sense of respectful transparency, I focused on booking my stays and being

consistently transparent and upfront about my purpose with potential interviewees and casual participants. Only one interviewee (Pooja) expressed caution about speaking with me, because she wanted to ensure she was not going to be interpreted as speaking for the organization (Soul & Surf), since she was only a visiting yoga instructor, and not a staff member. Overall, I found people willing to engage, generous with time and trust, and voluntarily sharing insights with me even outside of structured interview time.

Snowball Sampling, Theoretical Sampling, and Sites

I completed eleven site observations at yoga and wellness retreats and hotels in Kerala, where I participated in yoga offerings. I chose these sites based on top-ranked Kerala yoga tourism sites in Tripadvisor, the largest user driven tourism review site in the world. I also chose to study sites and interviewees by snowball method, based on personal connections and advice of interviewees I met during the course of the study (Noy, 2008). I also engaged in theoretical sampling, whereby I used field notes and emerging themes processed in analytic memos to guide my decisions on where and who to study (Kirby, 1989).

I began fieldwork in Kerala in September 2017, with a one month reconnaissance tour wherein I met several yoga teachers, led a seminar talk on my research with academics who study yoga and spirituality, and attended a group meeting of queer rights scholars who focus on embodied studies of LGBTQ life in Kerala and India. On June 1, 2018, I flew back to Kerala for a ten-month stay. At the time, I anticipated living in Varkala for my entire research stay. But I quickly, I learned that low season in Varkala truly results in a ghost town in the region of yoga tourism, when gates are drawn and doors are sealed shut on yoga activities and yoga commerce. On the advice of an aspiring yoga student, and fellow mother I met in Varkala, I traveled to Ft. Kochi/Kochi metropolitan area to document International Yoga Day festivities, and to observe

public programming around the Yoga Ambassador's tour of Kerala. In the first few days of staying in Ft. Kochi, I began to meet future interviewees, and I made several connections with local restaurateurs, drivers, a photographer of yoga retreats, and other tourism industry workers - some of whom would eventually connect me with potential interviewees. Within one week of staying in Ft. Kochi, I arranged to rent an apartment in Kochi. Within two weeks, I found an English medium preschool for my child which enabled me to work. Once I was settled in Kochi, I began planning site visits. I led my site visit itinerary with the grant funded visit to a luxury yoga tourism site, since this funding had to be utilized immediately. After that, I followed the advice of people I had begun building connections with.

By August 2018, I had completed a first round of interviews with approximately thirty people; four of these people would continue to second and third rounds of interviews. Site choices were not always successful. For example, with the grant-funded luxury yoga tourism site, I initially chose a top-ranked retreat, Ayurveda Yoga Villa in the mountains of Wayanad. Unfortunately, the purveyors at that site misled me about the suitability of the space for young children. It was a long journey to this remote retreat, but we left the poorly maintained site within twenty four hours of arrival. As a result, we traveled a grueling thirty hours through winding, rain logged terrain over two-and-a-half days. It was an expensive mistake in terms of time, energy, and money. However, this mistake clued me into less scrupulous elements of yoga tourism; I managed to engage with several yoga and Ayurveda staff members during our one day and one night stay at Ayurveda Yoga Villa. These were striking, memorable conversations about work and exploitation of young people and mothers working on site. This mistake also led me to study Niraamaya in Kovalam with the grant funds - a more family friendly, fruitful site for my study of yoga tourism's effect on local families, fishermen, and local industry.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus my analysis on three observation sites: (1) Malabar House, Ft. Kochi; (2) Kayal Island Retreat, Alleppey/Alappuzha district; and, (3) Niraamaya Retreats Surya Samudra, Kovalam. To accommodate the confines of the chapter, I edited out two additional case studies on Soul & Surf, Varkala; and Grand Hyatt Kochi, Bolgatty Island, Kochi Metropolitan Area. I interviewed both men and women, but I focused on data gathered with women for the purposes of the dissertation as I learned how much the wellness tourism industry relies on the labor of women, often at the expense of these women's health and economic mobility. I group representative interviewees into five thematic areas; (1) women owners of yoga and wellness tourism sites and projects; (2) women managerial staff at luxury yoga, wellness, and colonial tourism sites; (3) women Ayurveda therapists with expertise in yoga; (4) young women luxury yoga tourism workers in food service; and, (5) women yoga teachers in yoga tourism sites and projects. These themes emerge from the analysis representative of the range of the kinds of labor women do.

I include both representative sites and interviewees, as well as outlier sites and interviewees. For example, I include Maneesha's story, a cosmopolitan yoga aficionado and prodigal daughter of Kerala returned home to develop a boutique luxury wellness retreat on a small island. The Kayal Island Retreat case complicates the overall finding of Indian women being physically and economically dominated by confining, oppressive roles in yoga tourism. Maneesha is an Indian woman of privilege and power who capitulates in capitalist development. Her case adds layers to considerations of actors' placement within hierarchies of power, the role of Indian women in yoga tourism, and the source of impact of yoga tourism in Indian women's lives as being intersectional and not simply about white or western dominance.

Positionality: Insider-Outsider in Flux

There are calls for greater reflexivity from within the field of tourism research to politicize “tourism’s architecture of knowledge.” (Ateljevic, Morgan, & Pritchard, 2007, p.6). “Who I am in this research” determined how and why my yoga tourism study was carried out (Flick, 2004; Creswell, 2012). My position as an insider-outsider (Indian American yoga teacher-scholar, and Hindi-speaking single mother of a mixed-race child, with most family still in India) shaped every aspect of my research design and - in the field - influenced relationships, understandings, and interpretations of data.

Yoga/wellness hotel experiences turn insider-outsider categories inside-out because they offer a calm pace, personalized care, and affirmative gestures of friendliness and service at every turn - an inverse of my day-to-day experiences of racial-capitalism, which includes being overwhelmed, alone, busy, treated with indifference, and moving through life anonymously. Tourism sites privilege the western consumer-traveler but are fully comprised of workers who are Indian and substantially female. In the topsy-turvy environment of the field (yoga and wellness hotel), I was an insider and outsider in flux - what made me an insider as a paying guest (such as speaking English with a fluent “American” accent), defined me as an outsider in Indian society just beyond the gates of the hotels.

What defined me as an outsider at a retreat yoga class (such as not being white or skinny), made me an insider able to build relations with Indian women hotel workers and move through Kochi daily life as an Indian woman living under the tourist or visitor radar. In the field I was a U.S. citizen, and also an overseas citizen of India, an Indian woman, a Indian worker who partially grew up in India, with most of my family living in India, and I was not just passing through Kerala, but living in Kochi for one year - with a child in the school system there. While

being a single-mother was viewed as being deviant and “broken,” (as one Kochi neighbor pityingly described my family), having an adorable child immediately ingratiate us with tourism workers deeply hungry for a dose of innocent cuteness or distraction from their grueling lives. Several times, both my child, Ravi, and I were overwhelmed by the amount of attention he received from primarily female workers who would cluster around him, teasing, calling, even flirting, and resoundly ignoring me. I came to understand the context of these extreme interactions - these women’s labor experiences are dysfunctional and lacking in labor rights. They spend a vast majority of their lives on the job, with eighty to ninety-hour workweeks the norm, and days off rare. These workers spend nearly their entire lives either in the walls of the hotels or in hotel dormitories designed to warehouse workers in close proximity to the hotel. They live two to a room, a small space meant for sleep because meals are usually had in a staff kitchen. Workers I spoke with reported having no real life outside of the overwhelming demands of the job; no vacation time, no weekends off, only a chance of having one or two days off a month with no meaningful notice as to what those days might be, rarely being able to visit family and children, once or twice a year, if lucky. Therefore they jumped, at times too hard, at the chance to interact with my child - a novelty because of his mixed race appearance and playful innocence.

Though I occupied multiple positions in environments of deep flux, my many markers of Indian-ness did invoke trust - markers including the ritual introductory act of checking in and handing over our Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Indian government passbooks instead of U.S. passports. As an Indian woman insider, I was able to connect quickly and deeply with Indian women and men working in the yoga tourism industry (wherein guest relations are kind but shallow), other Indian tourists, and Indians living in or passing through Kochi. As a North Indian

and Indian American outsider, I had to listen carefully, practice mindful humility and gratitude with relation to being served by interviewees, and acquire basic local knowledge to help establish rapport within these populations.

Bias

I endeavored to be aware of my biases towards the sovereignty and balanced health of Indians, particularly Indian women, the Indian working class, Indian industries, and the Indian nation. This means I am biased against many tourist practices, including the entire idea of coming to India to extract wellness and pay homage to colonial rule. To mitigate these biases, I created a large body of data sources, and in a handful of cases, reviewed findings with subjects to discuss explanations, interpretations, and potential new directions. I tried to uphold values that intervene in bias, such as transparency, accountability, and balance. With regard to bias and navigating ethical relations with others, I did my best to meet the high standards expected. I am not sure I always succeeded; for example, toward the end of my study I circulated a help wanted advertisement for a transcriber to help me convert my audio interviews. I was surprised when, within moments, two interviewees responded affirmatively, and were willing to begin immediately. I shared the ad expecting them to spread the post to their circles. I had underestimated their financial need, and did not realize I offered a relatively lucrative position (500 INR/hour, or approximately \$8/hr, at a 4/1 ratio of four work hours per one hour of audio). Excited, I told both that they had the short term job. But, after a day of consideration, I realized it was not appropriate to have an interviewee transcribing interviews for me. I immediately initiated delicate conversations with both to rescind the offer. My unfortunate misstep involved money, need, and vulnerability, and was involved with both relationships essentially ending. I

am not sure I always acted ethically, or with minimal bias, but I did my best to uphold these goals through accountable action.

Research Design

I knew I needed to move directly into the context of the field as a participant based on prior experience studying insular yoga communities. As a single mother with a toddler, armed with a lifetime of experience traveling between India and the U.S., I designed this year-long time in the field to be balanced and nurturing for my life as a single parent and for our lives as a family. Kerala was a fitting region to study because of its lush, relatively unpolluted environment (for my child and I to be well in); prevalence of English and Hindi language ability (for me to maneuver within as an insider-outsider, non-Malayalam speaker); relative gender safety (which enabled my everyday ability to live as a single woman/mother); and rich history and density of yoga tourism that was accessible to families (which meant I/we did not have to travel far from our home base in Kochi to study a variety of yoga tourism sites and people). I came to understand the sustainability of a Kerala based study after two wellness tourist tours in Kerala; first I traveled independently for Ayurveda and yoga treatment in Trivandrum - my first experience as a wellness tourist (2009); second, I did a reconnaissance trip to Kerala to establish relationships and scope out the possibility of living long-term in Kochi with a toddler (2018). Kochi was a fitting homebase because it is a cosmopolitan city (with cafes to write in and English medium preschools for my child) and the main transit hub for Kerala tourism hot spots, such as: eclectic Fort Kochi, mountainous Munnar, Alleppey backwaters, and accessible Kovalam beaches.

I researched the option of conducting this study in other, more established yoga tourism hubs in India, in cities such as Rishikesh (“the yoga capital of the world”) and Mysore (center of

“Ashtanga yoga” and the Pattabhi Jois lineage of a world famous hot, energetic, flow of asana practice). But the yoga ashrams, elite wellness resorts, and yoga teacher trainings that define yoga tourism in these places were inaccessible to me, because of my young child. “Come back in twelve years, once your child is fourteen,” was one response from a world-renowned wellness resort in Rishikesh, and was representative of the essential ban.

“Being There” in The Field

I use the term “field” to indicate a period of time and a set of places where I did my yoga tourism research - with an understanding that the field I examined is not a static site that begins and ends with my research, but a living, breathing, ever-changing element of earth, humanity, space and time. My research field consisted of eleven observation and participant-observation sites (hotels, retreats, classes) - at these sites, I completed seventy-three interviews with workers (service and management), teachers, practitioners, and tourists, and approximately fifty additional, casual conversations with these and other people at the sites. The field sites were chosen based on “Trip Advisor” reviews (Tripadvisor is the most popular, user-review driven travel site in the world) and, once I established key relationships in Kerala, I listened to my subjects’ advice about where to go and who to speak to for my study.

“Being there” as a participant-observer at Indian yoga tourism sites was key because information about these sites is only attainable through firsthand research (Murchison, 2010). Daily Life in the yoga retreat and hospitality communities I studied is protected (ex. gated, guarded by physical security), insular (ex. official policies to deny outsider interviews), exclusive, elite, expensive, and propaganda heavy (ex. shiny “company-line” narratives and/or strident regionalism and nationalism). Hospitality workers are incredibly busy and often heavily surveilled around guest interactions. In general, socially, even in a cosmopolitan city like Kochi,

there is not a culture of meeting strangers in public. People tend to travel in trusted groups, and only engage within those groups (usually family or, especially with younger generations, friends). I learned this from an attempt at arranging a focus group of Indian women yoga teachers in Kochi, at a popular restaurant that also hosts yoga events. Not only was there no response from people I had already interviewed and established relationships from, but just the attempt sparked the ire of one socialite who consults with this popular restaurant who bristled at the prospect of not being lead organizer on such an event. “Detached research” processes like surveys are not likely to be engaged in these settings, and would more likely arouse suspicion.

I was surprised by the extent to which “being there,” in the context of Kerala yoga tourism sites meant not “being there” in India or Kerala. I expected tourists came to India to be in India, but I found that people come to India for many reasons that have little relationship to “being” in India. I never heard Indian music or saw Indian movies being played in chosen yoga tourism sites, no matter how many movie nights there were, or how pervasive music played. In these sites, the influence of Indian design was often minimal, reduced to mere accent on a Western aesthetic. I did have some delicious Kerala cuisine as a yoga tourist, but this was by careful choice - I could have just as easily eaten non-Indian food every day I spent in the field. I learned that most tourists come to India to experience India in safe, fabricated ways that often flatten India to a backdrop for photos or to experience India as an adventure of the senses, *Heart of Darkness* style - a daring notch on the bragging rights belt of the yoga tourist.

I aimed for the people and the spaces to reveal to me what the categories and questions that are most relevant, instead of a survey where I alone decide such things. I was curious to get a unique understanding of context and behavior in these places. I wanted to understand more about the messiness of these places, practices, and people. I wanted to see how the ways of these

places affirmed or contradicted balanced yoga ways. This was the research design that made the most sense for my research goals and life.

Embodied Challenges

I was surprised at how challenging it was to learn, through embodied practices, about the steep wellness challenges wellness workers face. I had anticipated challenge in dealing with microaggressions on site from people, and these did occur from white and Indian, men and women, impoverished and wealthy, old and young. What I had not anticipated was how difficult it would be to deal with a somatic transfer of trauma when I placed my body in the hands of stressed yoga and Ayurveda workers; and in the beds of hotels that exist in uneasy former colonial sites in heavily trafficked yoga tourism routes and neo-colonial tourism developments in “untouched” indigenous spaces. In several such instances, a hollow haunting filled my dreams with nightmares and my body with stress from a terrible knowledge of dire lives of workers and the ghosts of these violent sites. I lost a few nights of sleep due to the challenges associated with being empathetic to political and personal trauma. Since I do not have the bandwidth to absorb sleeplessness as a single, working parent in school, my remedy in these circumstances was to move on as quickly as possible in order to preserve my and my family’s wellness. These decisions to shorten longer bookings were delicate but necessary to negotiate. It challenged budding relationships with workers and owners at hotel sites when I decided to leave earlier than anticipated, but I never regretted getting back to our Kochi home base, and bed.

Ethics: The Study's Potential Effect on Kerala Yoga Tourism

Tourism research lives as industry data and academic scholarship. Once made public, my data could be ill-used by Indian and non-Indian tourism industry wonks looking to gain competitive advantage, or by western travelers and proprietors who favor subservient colonial tourism over the sovereignty of Kerala and Indian workers. I am conflicted about making my study public, because I do not want to imperil a vulnerable Kerala tourism industry (terribly sensitive to politics, economics, and natural disasters) that many rely on, increasingly so, and that is essential to the continued development and resurrection of India on the global scene. Even my initial foray into writing public reviews of sites on Tripadvisor and Google has been a fraught experience. For example, one yoga tourism site attempted to censor my critical Trip Advisor review. On one hand, hoteliers specifically requested I leave public reviews, on the other hand “user review” culture privileges white and western reviewer voices and because of this, can be especially dominant in (unforgiving of and damaging to) “Third World” destinations. However, I feel strongly that sharing the information I gathered via user reviews and ultimately publishing my findings is essential in order to: 1) encourage more sustainable yoga tourism industry and visitor practices; 2) support burgeoning Kerala yoga tourism efforts; 3) honor the stories people entrusted me with; and 4) empower my voice as a scholar, yoga student, and independent, Indian woman traveler.

Ethics: Relationship Negotiations

I negotiated hundreds of new relationships with others in the course of this study. In these negotiations my research purpose, independence, individuality, and American-ness inspired admiration and interest - but also invoked caution, suspicion, and judgment. My power as an educated woman engaged in research and as an unapologetic single mother living independent of

family, as well as my privilege as a mobile U.S. citizen earning in U.S. dollars impacted my relationships with people and businesses studied in various manners. I earned far more than most everyone I interviewed, even as a graduate student earning poverty wages by U.S. standards. Despite my relative economic privilege, I did not engage in socialite circuits or elitist norms, but at the same time, I maintained transparency about my economic decision-making powers and my position at the head of my household. My individuality, empowerment, and mobility provoked some ire in patriarchal male tourism workers and socialite women yoga practitioners.

In terms of attachments, I maintained transparency about my research purpose and readily shared our arrival and departure timelines. Still, for many subjects, I was the first person to take any interest in their lives and experiences on the job, so some grew attached to my/our presence, despite being seasoned in tourists coming and going. I had to carefully negotiate with two women interviewees who desperately needed more care, through creating space and evolving boundaries in response to clear need for deep support. Our inevitable departure caused a few people to draw nearer with offers of support, some expressed sadness, some showed resentment at our privileged mobility, and others faded away before we could leave. I felt loss when one relationship with an interviewee faded to silence, and grappled with my own loneliness, propensity to attachment, and need for support.

Relationships formed over the course of my study waxed and waned in a natural, fallible, ethical manner. My insider-outsider position in topsy-turvy tourism environments meant my research identities were in constant flux, and relationships were in need of steady, careful negotiation. While I maintained curiosity about the sustainability of Kerala's yoga tourism industry, I also upheld sustainability as a goal for my own life as a researcher, which impacted the evolving shape of my research design.

Data Interpretation

Of the seventy-three interviews, fifty were digitally recorded via smartphone; two were recorded on a digital handheld recorder, and the remainder were recorded via notes taken during the conversation and directly after. My note taking as a participant observer in residence at a yoga retreat consisted of daily journal entries which included a list of keywords. I continued to reflect on site stays for several days after the visit ended. Further, I engaged thematic analysis to process my notes, build upon a growing set of questions, and extract themes from my codings.

Thematic Analysis and Analytic Memos

Thematic analysis is a flexible analysis method which enabled me to draw from literature, interviewees, and site observations to generate themes and hone my study throughout the life of the research project (Braun, 2006). I paid transcribers to convert my interview digital recordings to transcripts. I read the transcripts and listened to key excerpts of interview audio to code emergent themes and key nuances. While I coded, I prioritized asking “what,” as in, “what is the nature of this work?”; “what are the impacts of this work?”; “what are the ethical considerations of this industry from the perspective of Indian women workers?” When I focused on the “what,” I was able to derive meaning from the interviews and participant observations, which was my primary goal; to define yoga tourism from the perspective of women workers (Braun, 2006). As I reviewed all transcripts and field notes, I concurrently created analytic memos, “for there is a reciprocal relationship between the development of a coding system and the evolution of understanding a phenomenon.” (Saldaña, 2015; Weston et al., 2001). In the analytic memos, I explored and clarified “future directions, unanswered questions, frustrations with analysis, insightful connections,” and usually included key word lists (Weston et al., 2001). In addition to

memo writing, I created an annotated table of contents for each field journal; this process required me to review and categorize all journal entries regularly.

After collecting data from approximately seventy interview transcripts, I followed these four stages of thematic analysis:

Firstly, the data should be collected in the form of interview transcripts. Secondly, key direct quotes should be identified, and common ideas should be paraphrased. In the third stage, related patterns should be combined into themes. The fourth stage is making a trustworthy and reliable argument in regards to the selection of the themes for analysis and creating a storyline which would help your readers to realize the process, motivation, and understanding of your research (Aronson, 1995).

Transnational Feminist Methods and Power

Transnational feminist methods include recognizing agency of women, listening to women, and being accountable to women's lives and stories at every stage of research from formulation of research questions, to data collection, and data presentation (Naples, 2013; Ferree, 2006). In my study, I center "what" meanings women derive from their yoga tourism experiences as laborers, students, teachers, and owners. I prioritize these women-created meanings in how I ascribe definition and meaning to yoga tourism. Foucault's perspectives on power and discourse also shaped my data collection and analysis. Power, says Foucault, is experienced at the level of the body; so, to understand more about how power circulates in yoga tourism, I consistently asked women participants about their bodies, and how their bodies experience their working lives. Finally, Foucault's discourse theory states that meanings derived from discourse analysis are inextricably related to the particular set of circumstances (the "how," "when," "where," "who") of the setting and attendant narratives (Foucault, 1984). To interpret my data, I searched

for meanings in Kerala and Indian yoga tourism based on case studies centering women's stories and values that are not universal, but are situated, partial, and exist in relation to time, people, ideology, and place (Foucault, 1980).

Introduction to Case Studies

The three case studies included herein are a representative sample of the data I gathered at eleven yoga tourism sites over one year. In each case, I center Indian women in yoga tourism at varying ranks, including: service workers (Laia, Anju) and an yoga-Ayurveda therapist (Sunitha) at Niraamaya Surya Samundar, a luxury yoga and wellness resort in Kovalam; a high-ranking manager (Latha) at a high-end colonial heritage hotel in Malabar House, with yoga and wellness design and services in Ft. Kochi; and, a owner-operator/founder (Maneesha) of a boutique wellness retreat, Kayal Island Retreat, with yoga-Ayurveda centered design and services in the Alleppey backwaters. I also focus on critical geography assessments of place to contextualize each woman's story, and to expand spatial understandings of yoga tourism. Several threads connect these women's stories, such as a desire for more yoga in their lives that is not met, and even suppressed, by proximity to yoga through work in yoga tourism. I find this ethnographic data set highlights the messiness and ethical considerations of yoga tourism development (Geertz, 1984). I conclude yoga tourism does not exist in a mythical moral high ground, but is inextricably linked to all layers global capital movement (Cheah, 2006). While this sector provides much needed labor opportunities to earn, explore, connect, and grow; it does so in a context of enforced scarcity and brutal social control which takes evident toll on Indian women yoga tourism worker's bodies. (Soja, Foucault, feminist ethnographer) I have been entrusted with these stories, and I aim for these case studies to respect the voices and contexts of these women. I do not claim to offer a perfect retelling in these accounts, only an attempt to

honor what I witnessed, experienced, and listened to. I begin with “Latha’s Story” at Malabar House, move to the “Women of Niraamaya”, and end with “Maneesha’s Story: Kayal, Allepey Backwaters.” Finally, I discuss key findings and evidentiary based conclusions.

Case Study 1: Introduction, “Latha’s Story: Ft. Kochi, Kochi/Ernakulam, Kerala”

Figure 11. Map of Kochi Metropolitan Area, Including Ft. Kochi



I begin with Latha’s story, a single mother in her 40’s, took the leap to work in hospitality twenty years ago, despite family and societal stigma against such work for women. Latha’s husband passed away from alcoholism complications when their child was quite young. Latha’s work in yoga tourism and other forms of tourism has helped her sustain her family, independently for most of her daughter’s life, who is now in college. As of June, 2019, one year after our first encounter, Latha finds her own dreams of becoming and working as a yoga teacher

Malabar House, Ft. Kochi, Kerala (site observations June-Aug, 2018; interviews June 2018-March 2019)

I walked past an open field, full of Indian boys, but no girls, at play; through a formidable gated entryway inscribed with the initials “VOC,” to the indoor-outdoor Malabar House cafe and gallery; and first encountered Latha perched outside, conducting business on her cell. Between calls, Latha, 45, jumped up to pinch my child’s cheek and cheerily encourage me to book a stay at this boutique Fort Kochi hotel. Latha inspired confidence through her cosmopolitan, informed leadership style.

Upon check in to a luxurious bungalow style room, characteristic of the Malabar House, I received flyers for yoga and wellness services, and a Fort Cochin Heritage Walking Tour Map. The fold-out map highlights places of interest in “the first European township in India,” with emphasis on colonial structures and “a bygone era.” The “VOC” on the entryway represents “the once mighty Dutch East India Company,” which, for nearly 150 years, headquartered its offices in what is now the Malabar House. The walking map’s language and imagery centers the “leisurely lifestyle of the colonial era,” and reflects the unabashedly celebratory settler-colonial tourism central to the “charm” of touristed Fort Cochin.

The Malabar House structures represent, in a nutshell, the striking move Fort Cochin has made from being the first settlement of violent colonial occupiers in India to housing primarily white and European tourist bodies - a tourism industry with morally ambiguous impacts on India and Indians. Malabar House is split into two sister-properties.

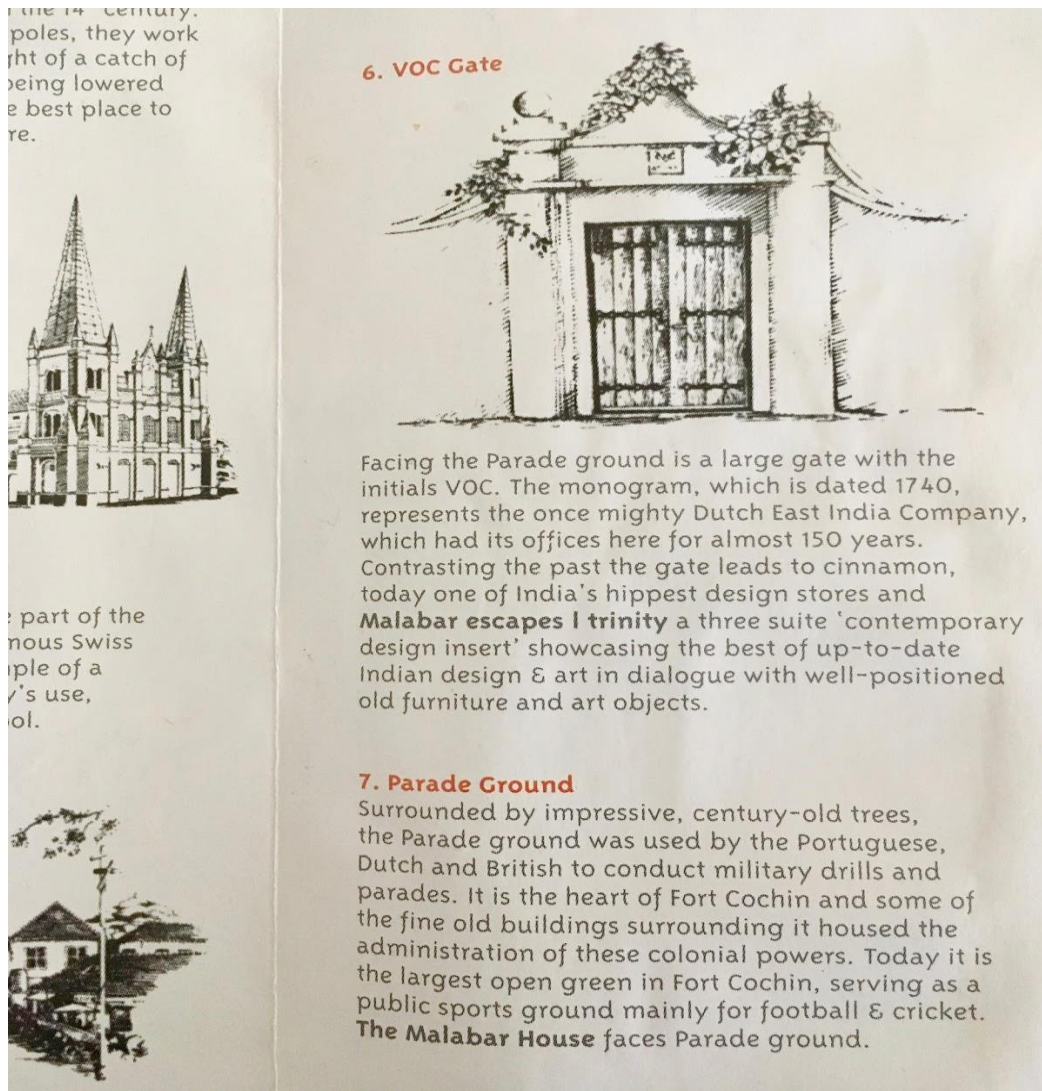


Figure 13. Walking Map Description of the VOC Gate Entrance to Malabar House

Each has around ten guest rooms, both face the Parade Ground; an expansive field used for military drills by Portuguese (1503-1683), Dutch (1683-1795), and British (1795-1947) occupiers. The map states “the fine old buildings surrounding” the Parade Grounds “housed the administration of these colonial powers.” Latha said that a European couple currently owns Malabar; a German man and Spanish woman. The man travelled to India in 1994, and bought the

derelict property in 1997. “The Malabar House was Kerala’s first, most iconic leisure tourism place,” because at that time, “it [wellness tourism] had not really started.”

Latha’s Path in Yoga and Wellness Tourism

There are two ways to access Ft. Kochi, by road or ferry. The road is often an inching along, two lane road that passes along railroad tracks dotted with leftover signs of competing World Cup allegiances, a roadside thick with vendors, you pass the formidable entrance of the local-international navy base, before entering Ft. Kochi and its, eventually, quieter streets, bigger trees, and, in season, clusters and constellations of white people crisscrossing the most touristed parts of town. The KSRTC, or Kerala State Road Transport Corporation public ferries are affordable commuter ferries for workers traveling between Fort Kochi and mainland Kochi. These KSRTC ferries range from small to cavernous, nearly always packed to standing room by streams of Indian workers and, at times, Indians and non-Indians interested in seeing touristy Ft. Kochi for themselves. These ferries etch deep lines into the surface of Lake Vemnabad between Ernakulam Boat Jetty and the heart of touristed Ft. Kochi. Ft. Kochi is divided into Mattancherry, the quaint heart of tourist interests, and greater Ft. Kochi, the metropolitan extension of Kochi, Kerala’s most populated city. Latha, 45, reached Ft. Kochi a year and half ago via hopes of glamour, or at least sustainability, and a false promise of romantic companionship. For Latha, all means of access to Ft. Kochi led to dead ends. She followed a man to Kochi in the Summer of 2017. She worked in the Malabar House management team from then till January 2019, when she was fired, and forced to leave Kochi in search of work.

“A rebellious move”

Latha grew up in a middle class family in India in the 1970’s-80s, which means she was raised in austere but secure economic conditions. Latha was expected to pursue a government

job; a steady position suited to a young lady of her class. Instead, Latha dreamed of a life of luxury. A male friend from high school told Latha about his new, glamorous life in hospitality. Latha decided to pursue a career in hotel management, to get “exposed to this life I could only dream of.” It was a risky decision; “a rebellious move looked upon very negatively, because in India those times, women working in hotel was taboo, you know hotels have rooms and if you work in a place where it has rooms in it, it means someone would drag you into the room and try to get his evil way.” But Latha took the risk of a lifetime of stigma.

“You realize that the glamour and all is for the guest - not for you.”

Latha excelled in her three-year hospitality program. Upon graduation, she received one of India’s highest placements at The Taj, Bombay. “It was the beginning of the dream life I always wanted to, but then you realize that it is not always that rose, you realize that the glamour and all is for the guest, not for you,” said Latha. On one hand, Latha found coming of age camaraderie with other women workers, such as first experiences smoking cigarettes in locker rooms; “you have all these women coming together in a burst of energy and bitching like ‘that bastard, son of a bitch did this - smoke girl,’ and you pass the smoke.” On the other hand, grueling, unpredictable work hours had her serving guests on her feet for 17-20 hours a day, and left her “crawling home, never want[ing] to come back.” In her embattled state, she began to feel small inside. When a dashing, wealthy male guest asked her on a date, she declined per policy, but felt a temporary boost to her beleaguered self-esteem. Latha recalled thinking, “wow, he noticed little me?”

“I practice yoga as much as I possibly can.”

Latha is a self-defined “yoga enthusiast,” who began practicing asana two years ago to address a thyroid imbalance. Since moving to Kerala to work in yoga and wellness tourism

management, grueling hours and emotional labor associated with a toxic work environment have interrupted her life-giving yoga practice. She says, “Unfortunately, since I moved into Kerala, I could not find a right teacher and right levels of motivation *and time*...so I could not pursue it as I used to do; it is affecting me emotionally and physically, as back pain and thyroid again, and it is depressing.” With over 20 years of hotel management under her belt and a wealth of experience in Kerala wellness and yoga tourism, Latha’s initial dreams of glamorous hotel life have morphed into dreams of having enough time and money to do yoga to address serious health concerns. She states, “if even i am a little more financially stable I intend to pursue three or six months diploma in teaching yoga and some point of time independently branching out as a yoga teacher.” Given any financial freedom, Latha would elect to change career course, and become a yoga teacher. Now, Latha’s dream fades as her imbalanced labor conditions rise.

Wellness Challenges for Indian Women Wellness Tourism Workers:

“They treat their employees like colonials.”

When I asked Latha about the impact of the violent colonial history of the space, she said, “you know, a few guests, when they’ve seen the hotel, they were spooked because of the corners and alleys, places with less light and ventilation,” but most love the space. She said, “when I look back the history of all those buildings, what they used to represent, there was a sense of shame, they were rulers and they haven't treated us well while ruling and that is why we got rid of them. Most of my emotions make me feel so small when I look at those buildings.”

Latha’s “small” feeling within the Malabar House was encouraged by the oppressive work culture, where “they expect servitude.” The European woman owner, who primarily oversees the properties, “doesn’t think highly of Indians, Indian women, which is apparent from the way she deals with staff.” Latha feels yoga tourism is changing the nature of the place and

people of Fort Kochi, “because everything revolves around money, human relationships take a back seat.” She shares how reliant the town has become on tourism, a fickle industry; “it is not viable because it is seasonal, because even one unhappy guest could lead to a person losing his or her job, so it makes the people ruthless, emotionless.” I asked Latha if wellness tourism brings more wellness to wellness tourism workers, she replied:

No, it's a cruel industry, especially Kerala, the salaries are pittance, they are pathetic if you compare it with the rest of the country. Even still, I have seen people being paid far below minimum wage and being made to work 17-18 hours [a day], and it used to break my heart seeing these young boys and girls made to work there and expected to smile and be servile despite the fact that sometimes they may not be made to have food.

Latha's perspective was confirmed by two Kochi-based Indian women Ayurveda wellness workers at Malabar House, who spontaneously shared aggrieved labor circumstances with me while administering a Kalari massage treatment. Kalari massage, as described in the Malabar wellness spa flyer, is a “traditional synchronized massage with 2 masseurs done on the floor.” It derives from Kalarippayat, “one of the oldest martial art forms of Asia.” Its “extraordinary effectiveness results from knowledge of physiology;” it can offer “rejuvenation, flexibility, reduction of fat, and treatments for ailments such as rheumatism, arthritis, back pain, and stress related disorders.” By definition, the two “masseurs” then, were deeply skilled therapy workers. Cost for a single, 60 minute massage is ₹500 INR, or \$50 USD.

Before the treatment, I introduced myself to the therapists, telling them generally that I was in India to research yoga tourism; beyond pleasantries, I asked no questions. Around a half hour into the treatment, as I lay on the floor, naked, with one woman on each side of my torso,

the *chechi* more fluent in English began to reveal how hard and underpaid their labor situation truly was. With nods of encouragement from her co-worker, she explained that of the 3500-4000 rupees a guest pays per treatment, the women are only paid ₹200 INR each, or about \$3 USD. I inquired about meeting with them again, perhaps off hotel grounds so I could pay them directly. She said it would not be possible anywhere in Fort Kochi, where her supervisors, a married couple with a local yoga and martial arts studio popular with foreign tourists, keep tight surveillance on all women workers. We never spoke again, but the risk these women took to expose their labor conditions to me opened my eyes to deep sustainability challenges Indian women wellness workers face. These workers are the front line of yoga and wellness tourism in Kerala, they are the primary healers of tourist's bodies. All body-based therapists at the yoga and wellness tourism sites in my study experienced stagnant or oppressive economic and labor conditions.

Yoga at Malabar House and Latha's Yoga Dreams

Latha practiced yoga exactly twice during her 18-months of working at Malabar House. Once, Latha and the European female owner of Malabar House practiced yoga together at an off-site Relais & Châteaux convening of hoteliers. The second time, Latha joined an International Yoga Day class on Malabar House grounds. Initially, yoga created a positive bond between the owner and Latha, which made Latha a target of envy. Latha's Indian male supervisor began feeding the owner lies about Latha. Latha said, "It began right at the top when I was working with insensitive, ruthless people who couldn't accept a woman's opinion, who went out of their way to put her down and rob her of their confidence, because they were insecure." The owner was already predisposed to dislike Indian women and steadily moved from ally to foe.

As this stressful situation heightened, Latha was responsible for connecting tourists to yoga. Many guests Latha interacted with at Malabar House came to India specifically to experience yoga. Latha explains, “in destinations such as Kerala there is a lot of people asking for yoga groups and people specifically asking for yoga teachers and separate yoga pavilion and class timings and all of that, also because of the International Yoga Day.” This avid yoga tourism put Latha in the position to recommend and arrange yoga opportunities for largely white and European people, with diminished access to yoga for herself, despite increasingly grave need.

I ask Latha about Manoj, Malabar House’s go-to yoga teacher for group classes or one-on-one sessions, as advertised in the hotel welcome packet upon check-in. Manoj’s flyer features an image of him in an acrobatic, inverted position, with the bottom of his feet resting on his bald head. Latha shared, “I think he’s best suited to teaching foreigners.” She expressed discomfort with the way he interacted with Indian women, including her own daughter. Latha was one of several interviewees who expressed clear difference between Indian yoga for Indians and yoga for white and European people. She explains;

[Foreigners] they see a guy looking like a sanyasi [ascetic], wearing saffron, who is bald, the first impression is, “Oh! He is a monk or a saint, he is a pious guy which means he will do no wrong.” So therefore it’s easy to convince a foreigner, I mean the first thing, the first impression is here’s a guy I can trust and that’s very important for them, because they are from an alien country. They don’t know who to trust and who to not. So when you see someone looking like this, I mean 70 percent of the people are convinced about the fact that the person is genuine. And then he also says a few things about yoga, then they are 100 percent convinced that this is the guy. Whereas for a local,

who has been practising yoga before, the entire body language is important, they need more to convince.

“You’re left gasping for breath.”

Latha’s dream of becoming a yoga teacher, or having any access to yoga, is becoming more distant. At the end of January, 2019, Latha was fired from Malabar House with only five days notice. She knew it was coming, but this did not soften the blow. Latha is a single mother, with a daughter in college. She was left scrambling for work to avoid catastrophe. Latha describes the experience, “especially when you’re a single parent and the bread winner, the rug is pulled from under your feet and you’re left gasping for breath and wondering how you would survive...and the humiliation, you lose your confidence, ability to take on the world.” In May, 2019 Latha found a tourism job in Bangalore after several months of frantic searching. “No one wants to hire an older woman, my experience works against me,” she reveals. She is relieved to have employment, even hopeful about respectful, not abusive colleagues. But Latha is exhausted by her lack of sovereignty and reluctant to move to the megacity. She loved her comparatively balanced life in greener Kochi and peaceful Ft. Kochi. She said, “I want to make decisions in my life, not have them made for me.” Latha’s work in yoga tourism has both enabled her independence as a single mother and created grave challenges to her and her family’s wellness on many levels.

Conclusion to Latha’s Story

Latha’s story provides evidence of a direct link between colonial occupation and Indian yoga tourism. When she worked in the home of the notorious Dutch East India company, Latha walked under their “VOC” inscription every day on her way into her upstairs office in the hotel.

Day by day, she witnessed and embodied how the European owned hotel offered yoga and wellness to white and western bodies, while showing little mercy to the work-life balance of Indian wellness workers, upon whose bodies the entire yoga tourism industry relies. Latha had dreams of doing a yoga teacher training. Now, she focuses on having basic economic security, with attendant access to mental and physical balance, to have the time, energy, and focus to do yoga by herself to address personal health issues. While Latha still works in Indian tourism, her lifelong profession, she has shifted from the yoga and wellness colonial heritage tourism sector, and in this shift, she may find it easier to access yoga. The next case study, “The Women of Niraamaya,” amplifies the evidentiary thread that identifies yoga tourism work as being an important labor opportunity for Indian women, with deep ethical concerns and brutal impacts on worker bodies, lives, and place.

Case Study 2: Women of Niraamaya, Kovalam (Sunitha, Laia, and Anju)

Site Visit: August 17-September 2, 2018

Niraamaya differs from Malabar House in several ways, though the powerful current of disparity that Latha experienced runs through this case as well. Niraamaya, unlike the urban Malabar House, is a thriving, busy, expansive, green sea side resort. One hundred or more employees work around the clock to provide a simulated atmosphere of uninterrupted beauty, access, entitlement, yoga, and wellness. Unlike Malabar House, where less fortunate workers may go hungry, Niraamaya provides daily meals to all employees in a staff cafeteria. In this case study, I situate Kovalam as a seaside hub of: luxury yoga and wellness tourism development, displacement of fishing communities, and accumulation of access at the expense of local land and people. This case study includes three women, food servers and an Ayurveda-yoga therapist who man the frontlines of guest’s yoga tourism experience at Niraamaya. I introduce Laia, a

food server and a young tribal (Khasi) woman from Assam, which is northeast of Bangladesh - as far away from Kovalam, Kerala as possible within Indian subcontinental borders. Laia is proud to be able to send money back home, since her parents passed away, she is the only one of her siblings without children and thus able to work in yoga tourism, a modest salary (the equivalent of around \$100 U.S. a month) that still exceeds wage opportunities in her village. Next, I introduce Sunitha, a veteran, skilled Ayurveda and yoga therapist uniquely from the local area, who has worked at a couple top Kovalam yoga resorts. Sunitha is a single mother with two college aged daughters she has been raising alone since her husband passed after a long bout of asthma related health complications. Both of her daughters are entering into wellness fields as Ayurveda practitioners. Sunitha came to Niraamaya in search of more wages, wellness, and worker respect. Finally, I introduce Anju, a young food server from Kerala who takes refuge in her Niraamaya job, because it is lifting her out of cycles of violence, poverty, and her father's alcoholism she, her mother, and sibling publically endured. Anju hopes the job is a stepping stone to her dream of becoming a police officer - she wants to be an emblem of power and order. In this case study, I find yoga tourism mobilities are an assemblage of displacements, simulacrum, and disparities marked by opposite extremes of access to: yoga, rights, physical wellness, economic security and basic amenities.

Critical Geography Assessment: Kovalam District

Just minutes away from India's southernmost metropolis, Trivandrum, Kovalam is a beach town saturated with many of Kerala's most profitable luxury yoga resorts. Fishing villages used to nestle against the red cliffs abutting powerful waves. On the outskirts of town, fishing villages exist, but even these remnants are being erased by development. Development in Kovalam sparks a dizzying map of cultural and labor mobility. The luxury yoga and wellness

tourism industry in Kovalam is powerful enough to pull a whole millennial generation of tribal and indigenous laborers from the outermost northern regions of India down to the southern tip of India for hospitality service work. Meanwhile, wages in the region are so low that the numbers of Keralite Indian women nurses and wellness workers emigrating out of Kerala for living wage work is skyrocketing. Development efforts saturate Kovalam, from yoga and wellness tourism to massive, toxic coastal industrial projects. In June, 2019, the Kerala government initiated a Yoga Ambassadors tour of yoga hotspots in the state for western and European yoga practitioners. The heavily publicized tour culminated in Kochi on International Yoga Day. The tour of mainly white women began in Kovalam, documented by iconic photos of uniformly clad people doing asana against the spectacular shoreline. The Kerala state government is intent on branding Kovalam as the new Goa. In Goa, the long celebrated coastal hippie and rave destination just north of the Kerala state border, there is a dark side to the privileged yoga and wellness tourism experience. 248 tourists have been murdered in Goa in the decade of 2008-2018. In Kovalam, a white woman was murdered in 2018 when she wandered off her wellness resort grounds. Ghostly remnants of her missing person signs dot Kovalam roadways as far up as Varkala, another booming yoga tourism coastal town two hours north. A study of the underbelly of luxury yoga tourism reveals a complex, contradictory relationship to yoga values and wellness.

Figure 14. View from Kovalam of Mosque, Industrial Sand Mines, and Fishing Operations



Niraamaya Surya Samundar: A Life of Extreme Access Inside the Gates

Many tourists come to luxury yoga resorts seeking refuge from the hustle of life where they are from and from the fraught layers of life in metropolitan cities in India; often after “doing” the “Golden Triangle,” a popular tourist route in India that hits Delhi, Jaipur, and Agra for the Taj Mahal. I study life *inside the gates* through exploring the lives of women wellness workers. These workers’ lives (and therefore the life of the resort) embody and are in intimate relation with “the hectic life outside the gates.”

Guest Review of Niraamaya, Hotels.com (Jan 28, 2017); “Our yoga sessions took place on a platform above the cliffs, stunning. This place was so tranquil, a long ways from the hectic life outside the gates.”

Evening, August 17, 2018: We arrived at Niraamaya via a long jeep ride (120 miles took us over ten hours), because Kochi International Airport was shut down for an indefinite time, and cars, even trains were risky to operate at the time. Due to disastrous monsoon floods and mishandling of industrial dams many of Kerala’s major arteries of transport were shut down or risky. All along the state, lines at petrol stations were hours long. Along the road to Kovalam

from Kochi, many petrol stations were ribboned off because they had run out of gas with no sense of when the next shipment might be. Gallons of water were hard to find. Hundreds of thousands of people in the greater Kochi were displaced and injured by the floods. It was a time of national disaster, and Kerala was in the international news circuit for all the wrong reasons, in terms of tourism industry viability. Thousands of fisherman from Kovalam and around the state set their boats on a course for Kochi to man the front line of critical flood relief efforts. Just outside Niraamaya gates, women of all ages, girls to senior citizens, dug around a sewer line alongside the dusty road, doing risky underground repair work. Outside of tourism trade, one hardly sees men of working ability on the streets during the day in Kovalam, as most men are out fishing at sea or involved in time consuming cycles of national and international fish trade. I made eye contact with one woman around my age, she was sari clad, and waist high in mud. Inside Niraamaya, there was never even one indication of a flood in the region. No surface evidence of desperation. No shortages of water, food, or electricity. No mud. No errant leaf on the pristine grounds. No environmental stress or worry. It even stopped raining. We had sunny weather for almost every day of our stay. There was no talk of the floods that I ever overheard amongst staff or guests. But the front pages of untouched daily newspapers at the main guest restaurant depicted epic misery in the state, the gravity of which unfolded more every day.

Niraamaya describes itself as a “green” resort, but it is also wasteful, relative to the life outside the walls. One characteristic of luxury yoga tourism and luxury wellness

tourism is the *experience of excess and extremes*. For example, the extreme access available at the resort contrasts with life in the Indian social context; extreme water access; extreme electricity access; extreme care for women tourist bodies while Indian women up the driveway labor too hard for too little. It is extreme to be a guest in a bubble of apolitical, but

powerfully protected wellness despite the clearly political dynamics of being served by people whose wellness matters far less, and in an environment of struggle.

Niraamaya Surya Samundar Retreat was built in 1982 by a European man, and ownership has changed hands to a Indian owned hotel group that manages several luxury properties that cater to western, European, and Middle Eastern wellness tourists. Average nightly rates for standard rooms range from \$142 to \$390. In the resorts own language, guests are invited to “Revel in luxury and elegance as you choose to stay at one of the finest Kovalam beach resorts.” A defining aspect of the Niraamaya is its spacious design, where 31 singular cottages, and only one two-story building spread out over 20 coastal facing acres, creating a peaceful, lush environment in which nature rules the aesthetic. This distinguishes Niraamaya from other, surrounding popular resorts which are built out to the edges of their property, and pile up towards the sky with multiple stories. I studied Niraamaya over nearly three weeks. Most guests came and went within two to five nights. Only one guest I met stayed longer than us, a woman wellness patient from Eritrea who spends one month detoxifying at the property every year.

There are several signs of yoga and wellness branding on site. At turndown service, small wellness infographic “Yoga Cards” are left on the bed depicting silhouettes of hands formed into mudra’s, or hand signs, with an explanation of benefits such as ushering in focus, and other “feel better” chances. Cooking classes offered are grouped under Ayurveda and Wellness menus. an on-site organic garden provides some food used in the kitchen. a free daily morning yoga class, takes place on a sea side platform, so beautiful that several engagement photo shoots and weddings took place there during our stay.

A key selling point at Niraamaya is its architectural recreation and landscape simulation of a traditional coastal Kerala fishing village of yesteryear. But workers on the property are the

displaced and the grandchildren of the displaced from such villages by the onset of development that made Niraamaya and surrounding hotels possible. Therefore, one characteristic of luxury coastal tourism (seaside and lakeside) in Kerala is a zoo quality; entrapped endangered lifestyles are wrangled into display and use for profit, while protected from increasingly hostile environments for the enjoyment of a privileged few passersby. I met a third generation fisherman on the property, a man named Joseph, whose grandfather and past generations lived in an “idyllic fishing village” within a few miles of the land Niraamaya occupies. On any given day during our stay, Joseph could tell me who was out on the waters, what fish were in the ocean, in what quantity, for how long. He had an underwater vein that pulsed with information from the ocean. Joseph succinctly shared the dismal statistics of his family’s life. Joseph is paid \$10 U.S. daily at Niraamaya for a custodial job he was pushed into after his fishing boat motor died. The cost to replace the motor is prohibitive to him, but equivalent to one or two days stay at Niraamaya. He knows his two young daughters have terrible life chances; he shares this as he cleans the infinity pool, taking glances at the sea, of his brethren hard at work, but free in different ways than he is. More free to take a holiday on Sunday, for example, which Niraamaya workers cannot do regardless of religious affiliation, because they work everyday.

Talking to upper level staff (doctors, head chef, general manager, yoga instructor), I encounter a thick layer of propaganda, nearly unpierced about how good and caring the brand is. I hear different stories from lower level staff, the hands on laborers such as servers, therapists, custodians, janitors, and baggage handlers. These workers are the front line of wellness and yoga services at Niraamaya and all wellness resorts. They are the ones who touch tourist bodies, who bring food several times a day, who interact with guests day in and out, who build and rebuild cleanliness around tourists - these are the essential elements of detoxification offered.

Women of Niraamaya: Survival

Laia, 26, Khasi Tribe, Meghalaya, India; Restaurant Server

Laia, our server in the main restaurant, is a tribal woman from Mawlynnong, “Asia’s Cleanest Village.” Laia has been working in tourism for five years. She did a three month training program at Don Bosco technical school, a placement based government hospitality training center, and was sent to Kerala. She has been in Kerala for five years, but, she says, “I’ve been working from one resort to another.” Laia has been at Niraamaya for ten months. Laia is one of many service workers at the resort, and all luxury sites I studied, who migrate great distances from outer edges of North East India for hospitality work. After losing both of her parents before turning 25, Laia now works to support herself, two sisters, and their children. Laia sees her family once a year, if she is lucky. Over the course of the stay, I spoke with Laia at considerable length relative to her buzzing duties as a server (5-10 minutes at a time) at least ten to fifteen times. Every chance she gets, Laia speaks vividly of the three tribes of her region - Khasi (her own tribe), Gharos, Jaintia - of their customs. We generally spoke when Laia came to bring food to our table, or to whisk away plates. There were fewer guests than usual at the hotel because of the floods, so we usually had a bit of time on our side for these intimate exchanges.

One morning, for the hotel breakfast, I watched a large group of young white people from the U.S. treat Laia with carelessness, at best. One young man was particularly demanding of Laia, he spoke to her disrespectfully, as though the meaner he was to her, the more he might establish his power in the group. Later that day, I asked Laia about the emotional labor of her profession. Laia responded, “Yes, it gets difficult for us, it gets very hard because we meet different kinds of people. They have their own thoughts and the way they behave is sometimes very difficult.” Laia used the word, “arrogance,” to describe the approach some guests have to

their servers. She acknowledged that when the emotional labor load is high her body becomes tense. But, she added, “sometimes you meet good people, and it is okay, you feel very relaxed, like it is a nice job you like working in.” Laia began as a housekeeper, but the heavy physical lifting and labor associated with the position affected her physical health. Five months into her food server based tourism work in Kerala, Laia began to send money home to her sisters and mother. Laia recalled, “she was crying, she was very happy, she said, ‘Where did you get so much money?’” Laia makes around \$170 USD a month. Laia was eight years old when her father passed away; in 2016, her mother died.

Laia appreciates her mobility, she likes that she had a chance to leave her village, and find a way to get paid. She said, “Here [at Niraamaya], I like this place. It is a good place.” I asked her if she wants to continue in this job, and quickly she responded, “No, I hope to start doing something else. Now, I have to help my family, I am saving for them. I need some saving for myself, so I can start something for myself. Maybe small but something for myself.” We talked about her dreams of starting her own business several times over the course of our stay. Laia dreams everyday of not having a boss, of being a solo entrepreneur. Laia said, “I want a small shop or something, anything. Just a small one. By my own self. Not for any one else to own. By myself.” Laia wants to go home and live independently.

Laia’s Bread Shop: She Hopes to Find a Place for Herself in the Tide of Development

In one of our deepest conversations, Laia spoke longingly of the kind of small business she hoped to open one day: a bread shop, for *putharo*, a special bread made of fermented rice indigenous to the Khasi of Meghalaya. Very few people are allowed to make this bread, she shared. She has childhood memories of going to purchase fresh *putharo*. It is a dying art, and

now she wants to make *putharo* now for her community, regardless of the stigma associated with her breaking out of tradition to break into the trade. We spoke of the tourist attraction her gluten free, indigenous bread shop could become. We searched for and found photos of the bread online; she combed through photos to show me the true *putharo*.

For now, Laia works nearly every day, and goes back to her village one month a year, if she is lucky. Every time she goes home, Laia notices how development impacts tribal youth and the once pristine land. She said, “It was mostly small farmers before, now companies have come, some government jobs.” These companies, says Laia, “are small companies, they just fire any staff, it doesn’t last long.” Laia assessed, “In one way, it has changed in a good way, but in another way, it’s bad. So many bad and good changes are there.” Along with good changes, Laia shares, “many youngsters, they went onto drugs, they get kidnapped and robbery, lots of drugs cases.” Drugs hardly make a dent on Laia’s memories of growing up in her village. But now, “every day, the news is only about drugs.”

The luxury resort relies on labor from outlying areas of Northern India that are disproportionately vulnerable to development ills such as displacement. The labor structure of the resort relies on almost continuous access to these employees through the creation of a 16-19 hour day which starts at 5 or 6am, includes a “break-shift” of 2-3 hours off in the early afternoon when the employee walks back to the workers dorm accommodation, and returns to work till 10pm and midnight.

Figure 15. Niraamaya Resort, Main Restaurant



Sunitha, 39, Trivandrum, India; Ayurveda Massage Therapist

With twenty years of experience, Sunitha is the most senior therapist in the Ayurveda treatment center, or spa, enough expertise to rival that of Dr. Arun, the head Ayurveda doctor on staff. Sunitha has studied yoga closely for years, including in her training as an Ayurveda therapist. Her yoga training certainly exceeds the 200 hour yoga teacher training that is now the U.S. established international standard for yoga teacher credentials. Sunitha's hands on my head set the tone for my wellness experience at the Ayurveda treatment center; steady, present.

Sunitha was raised by a single mother, and, since her husband passed two years ago from a lifetime of asthma related complications, is now a single and widowed mother herself. Sunitha financially and domestically supports two daughters (a late-teen and twenty year old) and an

elderly mother-in-law. One daughter is in school to become an Ayurveda doctor, the other on a path to studying western medicine. Sunitha was the first in her family to venture into Ayurveda. She entered the field after working in housekeeping at a village Ayurveda hospital. As Sunitha swept around patients and doctors in treatment and consultations, she realized, “I can do this too!” Sunitha is the only local woman on staff, besides the ground sweepers, who occupy the lowest rungs on the resort labor hierarchy.

Before coming to Niraamaya, Sunitha worked eight years at neighboring hotel, Somatheeram, another top ranked Ayurveda and Yoga Resort catering to European guests just up the road. She says her life is better at Niraamaya for two reasons: first, her salary is now fixed as opposed to being commission based; and second, because she encountered a lot of “angry customers,” “more tension,” “more shouting,” “more complaint,” “sometimes you are scared, I may do right, but they complain [about] me [as though] I do wrong.” During those eight years, living alone at home bearing the weight of a diabolical work environment, Sunitha shared that her body experienced, “much stress and many problems.”

Sunitha shared that a European women once requested a genital massage, legs splayed open; Sunitha was compelled to oblige. As Anurag, the general manager of Niraamaya said, “bottom line, hospitality is about not saying ‘no’ to guests.” This extreme experience of power and indulgence contradicts yoga values, such as moderation, mindfulness, transparency, accountability, and balance. Commodified development of yoga results in enabling experiences, tailored to fit and affirm powerful social constructions, like associations between white and right.

Guest Relations at the Expense of Worker Relations

At Niraamaya, and other luxury yoga hotels I studied, guest bodies are valued much more than the workers. That is a problem, according to the workers. It creates a culture of fear and stress. Many customers coming for wellness support are not well, so in seeking treatment, they seek colonial experiences of domination and violence against Indian workers. Colonial relations complicate customer service dynamics in wellness tourism, because white and European guests do not simply seek healing at these sites, they go to experience absolute power over Others.

Several workers expressed that it would be helpful if the culture of their workplace recognized them as well as customers, instead of being so outwardly customer facing. This imbalance, they shared, steers the wellness tourism experience towards being about excess in the face of lack and unchecked guest “arrogance.” These experiences of power at the expense of India and Indians comprise what is unwell about the development of wellness tourism in India.

Once, I stepped out of our cottage and encountered Sunitha on a walk with Ayurveda doctor, Dr. Accamma, and another massage therapist from the spa treatment center. It was the only time I saw them on hotel grounds outside of the treatment rooms. Dr. Accamma remarked, “we are enjoying the scenery, usually it is all in the background for us, now we are using it.” A bold move for these Indian women wellness workers, to walk the full grounds and not just their tight path between the staff cafeteria and the treatment center. The wellness at this wellness resort is not for them; not the scenery, not the wellness treatments, not currency transactions equivalent to U.S. norms, not the profit earned from their labor, not the “wellness menu” food, not the sustainability being pumped into others, not the consideration, not the trust.

The Wellness of Women Wellness Resort Workers: How do these workers heal? What are their ailments?

Laia: Endurance

As Laia passes by carrying a tray of heavy dishes, she says that Soumya from the spa gave her some ointment for debilitating back pain that kept her away from work a couple of days during our stay. In addition to her physically taxing work, she endures racism from all sides. Once, during a “Wellness Cooking Lesson,” the teaching Indian male chef, around 40, conspiratorially shared that he teases Laia about not being Indian because “she looks Chinese.” As the chef taught us, he briskly ordered around an Assam-ese youth helper in the teaching kitchen - the young man was obviously wary of this chef. The chef’s tone deaf, racist brag echoes societal oppression of people with Asiatic features in Indian society. This chef’s racist, brash abuse of power clued me in to the emotional labor Laia carries as an indigenous, tribal woman from Assam. When I asked Laia about it, she brushed it off, saying such exclusionary teasing was the norm. A notable pattern of mobility and labor in the Kovalam tourism sector is of marginalized young people; indigenous and tribal young men and women who are racially, linguistically, culturally oppressed in India.

Sunitha: Coping

When I asked Sunitha about her health, she said she has “problems,” including a past surgery for fibroids and chronic back pain. Sunitha shares that she will not visit the spa for her back pain. She will not get treatment at Niraamaya or even consult any of her peers at work for pain management, but will instead go to a less expensive hospital, also for privacy reasons. It seems unlikely that she will have the time or energy to go to a hospital for her pain. Sunitha shares that she wants to do yoga, but says, “I get home and I am too lazy to do [it]. I just get

home, make the food, clean, and I don't feel like doing anything, just watch movies and sleep.” This experience of being drained makes sense in the context of her heavy workload, at work and home.

Anju: Escape

Anju, a tall, dark brown skinned, svelte woman in her early 20's, is a server in the main restaurant like Laia. After a few days of watching me relate with Laia and other guests, Anju and I began to talk. Anju shared passionately about cycles of abuse she was raised in. Her father was a known drunk, terribly abusive; her household was the laughingstock of her neighborhood. She watched her mother do backbreaking cement and construction work to support her family, with no protective gear to wear. Anju made it out of her town, into this luxury tourism job, and is now with a man, a boyfriend with red flags that include controlling stalker behavior that encourages her to isolate. Anju aspires to be a police officer, and is actively in pursuit of that path. She dreams of being a public emblem of decorum, morality, and safety. Before she figures out if the police path is the real endgame of those goals, she needs to make it out of looming cycles of patriarchal abuse.

Development

Despite brand language that connects Niraamaya to escape from busy and toxic capitalist life, there is no escape from development at Niraamaya. A strange scraping sound fills the air every few minutes. It tremors through the body no matter where you are on the property and locale. A massive industrial dock nearby includes a sand mining operation that dredges the ocean bed. Sand mining puts the coastline at risk of flood, threatens to eliminate local beach tourism, decimates fish stock, and endangered coastal animals; with other documented, disastrous fallouts. The sound of the ocean bed being scraped away is not only a sound, it is a subtle,

reverberating feeling that runs day and night. It is a nightmare in the distance. Sand mining in the area threatens all current industries, fishing and tourism. Relentless capitalist pursuit of short term profit at the expense of long term balanced development is the only justification for such an intrusion. Globally, sand mining is a \$70 billion dollar industry, far more profitable than yoga, for now.

Capitalism drives people to Niraamaya, and to other yoga tourism sites that offer an escape from busy, traffic filled life with no access to nature. Development also drives workers there, from far off places as well. The disastrous impact of capitalism can be seen and felt right outside the walls; these sites take care to protect their guests from any experience of the struggle around them. But, the lives of the workers are not checked like baggage at the door upon entering the hotel grounds. They move through their days and nights of duty with their whole lives within them. The presence of suffering around the perimeter of the walls exists, it cannot be erased, no matter how high or thick the walls.

Conclusion to Case Study 2: Niraamaya

Luxury yoga tourism is defined by an extreme imbalance that privileges white, western, and wealthy bodies at the expense of Indian women worker bodies. The corporate culture of Niraamaya defines positive guest relations as never saying “no,” to guest requests while always affirming guest opinions and perspectives. This extreme dynamic silences constantly laboring worker bodies, which reveal evidence of substantial physical and mental stress. Niraamaya is one of many yoga and Ayurveda resorts to transform Kovalam, which continues to be a fishing town, though the viability of this age old traditional way of life is ever shrinking due to the occupation of development on many fronts - including yoga tourism. At Niraamaya, Indian women workers are responsible for maintaining the frontlines of an elaborate simulacrum of extreme access.

These same women come to their jobs with significant hope and need - for living wages, new and more sovereign work, and healing from structural and domestic violence. These needs are usually cast aside by their constant and low paid, high skilled physical and emotional labor - which accumulates wealth and wellness for white, western, and wealthy bodies. The next case study, “Maneesha’s Story: Kayal, Alleppey Backwaters,” differs from the first two, in that it features a young Indian woman at the helm of yoga tourism development on a small, indigenous fishing island. This adds depth to this study of Indian women workers in yoga tourism, and complicates findings related to yoga tourism development, displacement, and Indian/foreigner categories.

Case Study 3: “Maneesha, Kayal Island Retreat, Alleppey District”

Kakkathuruthu Island, Eramalloor Village, Alappuzha District, Near Kochi (Aug 3-5, 2018)

Figure 16. View from Kayal Island Retreat, My Son and Local Neighbor



In this case study, I introduce Kayal Island Retreat founder and owner-operator Maneesha. This case affirms certain findings from the previous two case studies, including that: wellness and economic disparities are inherent to yoga tourism, are exacerbated by yoga tourism development, and tend to land harshly on Indian women workers bodies in the sector. The study adds a new layer of understanding to yoga tourism development, not explored in the previous studies, which is the perspective of upper class, highly educated, corporate Indian women in yoga and leading Indian yoga tourism as developer-owners. Maneesha, prodigal daughter of a powerful regional politician who faced an untimely death, and daughter of a single mother for much of her life, traveled to the U.S. for graduate school, practiced yoga through a wellness

course at Penn State, and then shot her way up the ranks at corporate headquarters of Estee Lauder in New York and the east coast. While climbing the corporate ladder, Maneesha found solace in urban yoga classes. She wanted more work-life balance, and returned to India to develop a yoga and wellness tourism boutique retreat on a small island in heavily touristed Alleppey backwaters. Interestingly, she found yoga less available in India than in the U.S. Kayal Island Retreat found international fame early on with features in National Geographic and North American celebrity press. Kayal Island Retreat, or “Kayal,” brands itself as living in harmony with the intimate local village. But villagers had no choice in the arrival of Kayal and all attendant intrusions of elite international tourism - including entirely unreachable economic scales of currency trade happening next door. Kayal’s development brings multiple ethical considerations to the forefront of understandings about Indian yoga tourism. This case study unearths ethical concerns regarding how: yoga tourism development occupies indigenous territories with morally ambiguous impact; ultra-mobile Indian women find identity, sovereignty, and seek to maintain high access to yoga as leaders in Indian yoga tourism; wellness of Indian women wellness workers is important, imperiled; there is a tech to tourism labor trend in Kerala, where tech and corporate Indian workers seek positions in Indian yoga tourism to access yoga and wellness via proximity - but proximity and access are not seamlessly linked.

Maneesha's Story: *"I Discovered This Island; This Untouched Land"*



Kayal Island Retreat occupies an indigenous island, Kakkathuruthu (Island of Crows). Kayal bills itself as a seamless addition that beats along to the drum of people and ways of the occupied people and their ways. Evidence from this site reveals arrhythmic qualities of Kayal's presence and power vis a vis the island. On its website, Kayal describes itself as a "luxury boutique resort" in Lake Vembanad, the largest lagoon in India. There are four cottages hosting international guests on this resort which occupies one highly visible corner of this "little island where time stands absolutely still." Guests are invited to come slow down on the island, recharge, and do nothing, because "modernity has kept away from its shores." Guests can book "authentic" island experiences, Ayurveda influenced cooking classes, Ayurveda treatment sessions, transcendental meditation sessions, and yoga asana classes. Kakkathuruthu is a twenty minute boat ride from the nearest jetty in Eramalloor. Eramalloor is an hour's drive from Kochi.

It is a fishing town in the heavily touristed Alleppey district, the main hub for those embarking on Kerala's famous backwater houseboat tours. There are around 300 families on Kakkathuruthu, around 1000 people. Poverty is evident across the island, as are the threatening effects of increasingly extreme monsoon floods. Maneesha, the founder-owner of Kayal, mentioned to me in passing that the way of life on Kayal and surrounding areas was endangered and likely to be largely extinct within a couple generations as a result of capitalist development, or "modernization," and deep environmental change that fisherman are particularly vulnerable to. While there are no cars on the island, time has certainly not stood still for the fishing village of Kakkathuruthu. Modernity and its brutalities are apparent in the corrugated tin roofs, doorless entryways; and in the way Abhishek - the seven year old boy who lives directly on the other side of the white Kayal boundary wall in an open cinder-block shack - changed his too-small, faded clothes again and again each day in sensitive awareness of his relative poverty compared to my son Ravi, who always had perfectly fitting, new clothes, and whom he seemed to adore. Now that Kayal occupies one corner of its small circumference of shoreline, capitalism is even more insistently at Kakkathuruthu's doorsteps.

Maneesha: A Leader

Maneesha, Kayal's founder, is a striking woman in her early-30's, stylish and minimalist, with a sparkle of life in her eyes. Maneesha grew up in Kerala practicing yoga with her father, who was a well-known leader in the Indian Youth Congress - a rising political leader who suffered an untimely death at the age of 44. In her teens, Maneesha stepped back into mindfulness practice, encouraged by her mother, who thought meditation would help Maneesha back off of being a "bit of a problem child." Maneesha went to Penn State for a Masters in engineering. After, she landed a prestigious product design position at Estee Lauder in New York

City. Maneesha excelled in graduate school and her corporate career, she quickly became “the one to poach,” and made her way up in the company. One of her shop floor designs ultimately saved the company millions of dollars. But, she was bored and felt confined by her studies and career. She turned to yoga for relief from a life pace that kept her working “from 7am to 6pm, and never had time to enjoy nature.” Yoga, Maneesha said, “guided me back towards my dreams.”

Maneesha reflected on that transitional moment in her life and observed, “it is easier to find yoga in the west than it is in the east.” Now that she is Kerala based, she does yoga using an app. While she was immersed in yoga asana classes in New York City, she made up her mind to leave corporate and tech life, and had one guiding thought, “Maybe I need to do what I like.” She wanted to find a way to live in New York City and India. She wanted to move her body, be in nature. She realized that she could use her aptitude for design to design tours for U.S. tourists in India. Maneesha decided, “I can design things to add wellness to my own life.” As Maneesha explored a balanced wellness design for her life, she began taking reconnaissance trips back to India, trips to Miami Basel and other art hubs. Her culled data led her to found “Silk Route Escapes,” an India based tourism business, or “experience outfitter.” On one trip back, she visited the island, and decided it was the perfect space for a luxury boutique resort. As a young Indian woman, she struggled to accumulate the capital necessary to build out the space, but acquired the waterfront land with relative ease; a reflection of her relatively privileged class experience.

Figure 17. Interview with Maneesha at Kayal Island Retreat



Maneesha reports that she has acquired more land on the island to launch an open air restaurant to attract daily guests. Hard work and luck combined to put Kayal on the international map. There were western television celebrity visits, and then an epic feature as the 6pm sunset slot in National Geographic Traveller's "Best 24 Hours on Earth." (Oct/Nov, 2016) After the National Geographic piece, Kerala, national, and international media pounced on Maneesha and Kayal. In one 2016, Rediff article, "What's So Magical About This Tiny Island," Maneesha said, ""When we established Kayal, our idea was to have a small space here with minimal impact on

nature and to involve local people in the functioning of our resort." When I interviewed her, Maneesha said the island is "happy" about the development. She offered rosy accounts of how many islanders pitch in to help establish Kayal from the ground up, and are employed by the retreat, and are involved in its curated guest experiences. Evidence indicates that this "happy," "untouched island" mask is a layered and morally ambiguous veneer, maintained for profit, . Maneesha is smart, well traveled, bright. She has the ability to notice and acknowledge such layers. The fact that she does not publicly acknowledge potential layers in the relation between Kayal and the island may be a result of the volatile nature of the industry, and her vulnerability to forces such as fickle guest reviews, environmental and political storms, and any country or tiny island site being reduced to a passing trend. In the Rediff article, the Indian author observed, "Kerala tourism is understandably basking in the glory of the hard work of a young woman entrepreneur. It will do well to *provide some basic amenities to nearly a thousand residents of the island* without spoiling its simple splendor and pristine surroundings." This was the only press acknowledgement I found of the complex ripples set in motion by the arrival, and dominance of Kayal on the island.

The Unwell Wellness Worker

On our second day, an obviously unwell elderly woman stepped off the small boat onto the tiny dock at Kayal Island Retreat grounds. My heart sank with each one of her advancing steps. I had been waiting on the arrival of the wellness worker. In order for me to book an Ayurveda session I had to arrange a day in advance, and I had to arrange child care - an anxious balance involving leaving my child with strangers. This is who I have been waiting for, I thought, this is who they employ to heal the bodies of others who are far healthier than her?

She was well into her senior years, and walked under a cloud of sickness, congestion, sneezes, and ache. Her exhaustion was palpable. I felt a pull of obligation to honor the appointment, and also to meet this experience head on; it did not occur to me to say no to the impending wellness session - though in hindsight that would have been appropriate. I watched Maneesha touch base with the elder briefly on her laborious walk to the wellness treatment area at the far end of the rectangular property.

Later, I asked Maneesha about the decision to engage this sick and unwell wellness worker in active labor that involves touch. Maneesha appeared to think about it, as though it had not crossed her mind much before, and thoughtfully replied, “Yes, perhaps I could have asked her to go home.” “But,” Maneesha reasoned, “I did not make that choice, we employ her because she is a local villager who very much needs the work.” “It is difficult,” said Maneesha, “I know she is the breadwinner for her whole family and I want to support her, local women. I am working on that.” The elder, it turns out, financially and pervasively supports three generations of unemployed or underemployed men and family, while subject to the stress of an abusive and alcoholic husband. Maneesha reasoned, “I want to support her, but there is no easy answer.”

The foreboding I felt only increased as the wellness session commenced. I felt the elder’s grim, surveilling gaze as I undressed. She coughed and sneezed over me as she administered the treatment. She asked probing and bitter questions assessing my relative health and privilege, about work, vacation, and family. More disturbing, she placed her hands on me inappropriately, too aggressively sliding all the way up to my groin. I stopped the session to set a clear boundary with her to not go past my knees. I did not stop the session entirely, but looking back, . I learned from other wellness workers that sometimes European women especially would request labia massage, which the workers I talked to expressed discomfort with. I had requested no such thing.

This elder was oversaturated with toxicity, and it was spilling out onto me. It was dark by the time the treatment ended. After the session, the nature of the space shifted. A menacing shade joined the rosy colors of Kayal Island Retreat. I reunited with my child, and he too seemed a bit unsettled by our separation. We were both glad to be back together.

That night, I had nightmares, flashbacks triggered by the experience of being physically vulnerable to a stressful touch based interaction. I had other dreams typical of the colonized, dreams of running and fear. It was a stressful night, I hardly slept. It was our second, and last night there. The discoloration of the sheen of Kayal Island Retreat only deepened as morning hit. I experienced a heightened awareness of a grim layer beneath the rehearsed, obligatory friendliness on the faces of the team around us. I decided to depart that day itself, though we were booked for another couple of nights. My decision to leave early reverberated across the small team. Saiju, the affable, cosmopolitan manager with reddened eyes, asked me in hushed tones, “Was there something wrong?” I shared about my experience with the (un)wellness worker, and that I needed more sleep. He seemed worried, likely because of the high impact guest reviews have on Kerala hotels and retreats.

It's A Small World After All: Kayal's Role in Turning the Island into a Simulacrum

The cottages and open air dining areas are “inspired by the local architecture and curated with reclaimed and recycled material.” Kayal intentionally provides a simulation of local life, and “if you wish to plunge deeper into the local life, you only need to step out into the village.” This open invitation from Maneesha and team clashed with my observations of Kakkathuruthu's relations to their new role as a backwater village exhibit for a steady stream of far flung tourists.

After our Sunday breakfast, we went on an “island experience,” part of every guests' package, along with a sunset boat ride. A guide escorted us through footpaths crisscrossing the

small, vehicle-less island. Many paths were unnavigable because of excessive rainfall and high water. Our guide led us around patties and fish hatcheries (fabricated, square, mini-lagoons) into the village interior. We stepped down a packed mud path, passed behind corrugated tin homes, chickens wandering. We saw several one room homes, doorless entryways, children with clothes too small, faded. As we trekked past lush foliage and mangroves, we came upon a clearing of fifty to one hundred adults, silently gathered in prayer at the local temple. There was a line of men awaiting darshan or blessing at the head of the temple entryway. Covered stalls lined the perimeter; women awaited with food for after puja/prayer session and service. Save for an occasional bell ringing, it was intensely quiet. This was the largest gathering of people we had seen for days, certainly the largest regular assembly on the island. I stopped at the perimeter of the clearing, and began to by the tented stalls to exit the sacred moment with as little disruption possible. The women eyed our small group warily, they knew the guide, and understood we were guests on a human safari of sorts; a new phenomenon and now regular intrusion in their secluded, struggling fishing village. There were no smiles, none of the practiced welcomes of Kayal Island Retreat. There was a sense of suspicion, an eye rolling at the edge of the gaze upon our awkward presence. In a tone deaf move, our guide exuberantly encouraged us to get in the darshan line, which would have placed us at the center of the service. I demurred, I wanted to keep moving, to diminish our footprints in the open air temple's Sunday service, and on the island.

Kayal Social Media: #theartofdoingnothing

Kayal Island Retreat uses language to juxtapose itself to fast pace and toxic life under capitalism. Come here to slow down, Kayal says, using the hashtag “#theartofdoingnothing;” come to Kakkathuruthu to be with nature, to live better, to look younger, to beat all the draining

elements of capitalism. At the same time, these elements are precisely what the boutique also brings to the front door of the island, and into its intimate quarters, like never before. Kayal's language and guest experience content recreates the village for guests without the risks of village life, such as the poverty of villagers, whose lifestyle and culture is threatened. On one hand, Kayal is an effort to preserve aspects of Kakkathuruthu, like a zoo. On the other hand, Kayal employs the people of the island as an entertaining backdrop to their campaign, #theartofdoingnothing - something the families of Kakkathuruthu cannot do without grave risk to their sustainability.

Conclusion to Case Study 3, Kayal Island Retreat

Boutique and luxury yoga tourism offers Indian women opportunities to lead, travel, and rejuvenate. The blooming yoga tourism sector also relies on the cheap, skilled labor of Indian women, on exclusions of Indian women, and on stillnesses of Indian women - such as Indian women on the island for whom international travel is not a attainable or even desirable option. While Kayal Island Retreat brings visibility, fame, movement of visitors in and out via small boat, a handful of jobs, and proximity to wellness to the island; it also commodifies, flattens, and makes static and still island people, life, and land. The simulacrum in this case is the island itself, rendered into a copy of itself through truths circulated by Kayal to build interest and business. Intentionally or not, this state reduces Indian women on the island to compelling background props for tourist walking tours and Instagram posts. With Kayal, Maneesha builds on a lifelong relationship with yoga to lead an important yoga and wellness tourism project in her home country. Maneesha's efforts are admirable, and she exhibits openness to considering how to address the wellness of wellness workers. But, "power concedes nothing without demand,"

(Douglass, 1857) and, as yet, local demand for a dynamic change in Kayal operations is diluted by ever rising need for dwindling resources.

Conclusions and Discussion

In this ethnographic study, I gathered evidence to better understand and critically define yoga tourism in Kerala, India, a preeminent global yoga tourism hub. In addition, through the perspectives of Indian women yoga tourism workers, I sought to unearth the impact of yoga tourism on the bodies, lives, and lands that comprise the sector. Yoga tourism propels a lucrative, trendy Indian wellness tourism industry. Kerala has always been an important node in Indian yoga tourism because it is the national heart of Ayurveda wellness science; a sister science to yoga that encompasses yoga - for example, Ayurveda practitioners study physical and philosophical yoga substantially beyond the current 200 hour yoga teacher credential standard. Over one year of ethnographic study, I collected data on movements in yoga tourism practices and discourses. I used semi-structured interviews and participant observations to uncover hidden characteristics of yoga tourism. I sought to understand what yoga tourism is beyond dominant discourses, how it relates to yoga values such as balance; the sustainability of yoga tourism; and how it affects the wellness of places and women workers.

Specifically, this study addressed three research questions:

1. What mobilities (with emphasis on mobilities of power and the body) shape yoga tourism sites?
2. What defines yoga tourism? What ethical considerations define yoga tourism?
3. What are the layered experiences of Indian women yoga tourism laborers in guest services, food services, yoga and Ayurveda therapy, and yoga hospitality management?

Interviews and participant-observations reveal two clear themes: 1) Ethical questions regarding Indian women, yoga tourism work, and justice; 2) Moral ambiguities embedded in yoga tourism development impacts on Indian land and the power dynamics of placemaking for U.S. yoga governance and tourists. In the following segments, I unpack findings revealed in the case studies and discuss data in light of literature and theoretical frameworks. Finally, I offer broad conclusions based on the data.

Ethical Questions Regarding Indian Women, Yoga Tourism Work, and Justice

Evidence reveals that Indian women's work is pervasive in Indian yoga tourism. Indian women shoulder the lion's share of guest interactions and care with their skilled, strenuous, service work. I interviewed men at every site (service workers, managers, yoga teachers), but I centered the stories of women, because most yoga tourism guests are women - often white, Western, or wealthy women - and cultural practices in Indian yoga tourism dictate these women tourists be serviced by other women for any embodied wellness experiences. Indian women are primarily the ones who touch, serve, speak to, care for, clean up after, negotiate, and entertain yoga tourists. These are the women who uphold the simulacrum yoga tourists come to experience, and consume. Critical tourism studies positions Global South and Indigenous women tourism workers at the forefront of *why* people travel to the Global South, *what* tourist experiences and expectations are upon arrival, and *whose bodies* bear the empowering, yet disorienting impact of the imbalanced power systems that define global tourism to formerly colonized places like Kerala (Kampadoo, 1999, Raibmon, 2006).

The Indian Women Yoga Tourism Workforce is Largely Comprised of Youth

Many of the women yoga tourism workers I interviewed and observed were young women (18-35). It is important to contextualize the presence of these young Indian women in yoga tourism sectors as people whose options are limited by a stark, stagnant education and job market. India is positioned to be the youngest nation - with the most youth - in the world (Bhagat, 2012). Nearly one million youth reach working age every month in India (Spindle, 2019). They cram into an unbelievably tight job market and terribly bottlenecked educational opportunities, where even scoring in the top two percent of nationwide qualifying exams will not guarantee a college educational placement. While Indian government development policies may have raised the GDP, the job market has remained stagnant for years. Meanwhile, most Indian youth comprise a significant percentage of a rising underclass. The young Indian women serving guests are, in part, coerced to work sixteen hours a day, often without pay for extra hours, six or seven days a week, for nearly all of the entire year. In large and luxury yoga resort sites, I found a distinct absence of mothers, because the demanding, inhuman work culture does not allow for work-family balance. All the mothers I did meet, including the ones centered in this study, were focused on making their lives better by leaving their positions as workers who uphold the flag of Indian yoga tourism.

Indian women yoga tourism workers, including youth, may only ever travel for work; the closest they may ever come to international travel is through proximity to guests from all over the world - guests who likely are ultra-mobile in terms of crisscrossing the globe for work, wellness, adventure. Several of the young Indian people I interviewed expressed “wanderlust;” in fact, this word, “wanderlust,” was everywhere, on walls, in social media captions. There is a clear desire to travel, like the guests they serve day and night, amongst the yoga tourism workers

I interviewed. Due to Kerala yoga tourism wages that are a “pittance,” as Latha described, by Indian and U.S. standards, proximity to travelers is the closest many will get to international mobility. These Indian women and youth are under a spatial or mobile curfew, that does not lift. This is not to blindly privilege or idealize mobility, after all, tourists come from around the world to these workers and their work sites for the chance to slow down and be still. Feminist theorists have argued that “idealization of movement, or transformation of movement into a fetish, depends upon the exclusion of others who are already positioned as *not free in the same way*.” (Ahmed, 2004; Skeggs, 2004).

A Pipeline of Yoga Tourism Workers from Tribal Areas Streams Into Kerala with Material Impacts

Yet, tourism development in Kerala is a beacon of opportunity to local youth, and many youth from tribal sectors clear across the subcontinent in Assam and Nagaland. These tribal affiliated youth leave entire ways of life, land, family, foods - all of their familiar - to fill Kerala yoga tourism jobs. The tribal youth I interviewed send money home, often to families whose elders and parents died too soon, so siblings support one another as best as they can. Tribal youth, such as Laia (Khasi tribe), may go several years without seeing their homeland or family. Laia’s highland facial features mark her as different in Kerala and mainland India; as a tribal, she encounters racial prejudice on the job, and in broader Indian social, political, and economic life. In several of Kerala yoga tourism sites I observed, up to fifty percent of the workforce was young and tribal from Assam and Nagaland. I saw groups of young people speaking their tribal languages with each other, finding spaces of cultural connection far from home - in their new home - their workplace. Indian women tribal tourism workers stream in to care for yoga tourists in Kerala, depleting their homelands of a significant portion of their generation. Simultaneously,

Indian women care workers and nurses from Kerala emigrate out of the state in record numbers to seek living wages working abroad in Middle East Gulf states (Percot, 2007). Indian female emigration out of Kerala is on the rise, which indicates that local, yoga tourism jobs are not desirable given any other option.

Indian Women Yoga Tourism Workers Find Agency, and Negative Impacts on Health, Through Work

Each case study centers the stories of Indian women who are proud of their work. Due to her professional path in yoga and wellness hospitality, Latha raised a child on her own, independent of any financial support from family relations. Sunitha has similarly, single-handedly sustained her multi-generational family's wellness. Laia is able to work overlooking the ocean, in fresh air and far better environmental conditions than were available in the mega-city hotel she worked in before. Through the trend of yoga tourism, Maneesha has fulfilled a dream of returning to her homeland and using her exemplary business skills to build a renowned international tourism destination in Kerala, a place of great importance to her family life and history. Maneesha's wellness worker, the elder Ayurveda massage therapist, benefits from wages earned at Kayal Island Retreat. In the interviews, I asked questions about the women's bodies, and their relationship to yoga. I asked body related questions, such as: "How is your health?"; "Have you ever been hurt on the job?"; "How do you treat your ailments?"; "Do you do yoga?"; "What does yoga mean to you?"; and, "Do you have any yoga hopes or dreams." In response, each woman except for Maneesha described profound health issues and chronic pain that affects their daily mobility. I was not able to interview the elder massage therapist at Kayal, but her body and manner of relating expressed clear physical and mental ailments. Each woman,

including Maneesha, shared a desire to practice yoga more, but found their work in yoga tourism made their goal of incorporating regular, daily yoga into their lives more challenging.

My yoga tourism mobilities study accounts for layered labor conditions of Indian women who are the ones who service, interact with, touch, heal, and entertain guests in Indian yoga tourism in visible and invisible ways. Invisible ways include hiding their bodies, sufferings, and layered lives behind company uniforms and company policies that prohibit them from speaking about their lives to guests so as to maintain a perfect bubble or simulacrum of wellness. I describe a range of labor experiences in the lives of Indian women yoga tourism workers I studied because the yoga and wellness industry has a special stake in the wellness of wellness and yoga workers. Namely, the delivery of yoga as a good (a product), depends upon the deliverer in an exceptionally bound way; more than the cleanliness of a person's home affects their ability to clean a hotel room, as one example. The quality of wellness product is going to be affected by the wellness of the provider in a deeply connected manner that is unique to the yoga tourism industry. The wellness of wellness workers matters, not just because the workers matter, but also because worker's wellness production quality is enhanced if they themselves are well because they are imparting wellness through embodied practices. Embodied delivery distinguishes yoga tourism's products from western healthcare, where a doctor who is unwell can diagnose and prescribe with no mandatory impact. There is a cache associated with yoga tourism hospitality work, because it is cosmopolitan, there is proximity to travel, stars, celebrity, power. Importantly, yoga tourism hospitality work offers *proximity* to wellness and yoga. But the distance between proximity and access is formidable. Yoga tourism in India grows in relation to a deep disparity of healthcare and access to wellness for millions of Indians, and Indian women (Sainath, 1996).

For the Indian women, mainly Indian young women, who shoulder the frontline of yoga tourism, the yoga hospitality sector brings singular opportunities to earn and send money home, to move freely in a social work space - albeit bound by labor demands - negotiating public interactions and expressions of care for people of all ages, genders, nationalities, abilities. For many women, the work site also becomes a rare space to relate to other women from all walks and build sisterhood away from domestic isolation and obligations.

In Kerala, and India, work schedules are more demanding than U.S. and European legal labor standards require; there are no maximum work hours and no minimum annual leave or days off and this was evident in nearly constant, underpaid skilled labor of the Indian women yoga tourism workers I observed (Duarte, 2018). Tourism service work, and Indian national labor demands upon the populace are both understood to be terribly demanding, but this does not eliminate the need to unearth and discuss the struggle for work-life balance that Indian women yoga tourism workers face; an issue of particular interest in a field that identifies itself with moral purity and other pillars of holistic wellness. Transnational feminist ethnographies specifically reject flattening visions of Indian women as solely victims with no agency (Grewal, 2002). Yet, this does not negate the possibility of presenting evidence of oppressive labor conditions for Indian women yoga tourism workers that exist, but are hidden behind an elaborate simulacrum or performance for tourists.

Ethical Questions Regarding Impacts of Yoga Tourism Development on Land, Place, and Culture

In yoga tourism, the commodity in demand moves from material and environmental resources, such as gems, spices, and textiles, to include new yoga commodities such as “authenticity,” “detoxification,” “enlightenment,” “yoga career advancement,” and

“transformation.” I argue that these yoga commodities are not only being shared with tourists, they are being extracted - inseparable from ongoing material and environmental resource extraction from India - with significant impact on people, land, place, and culture. India was “one of the world’s stablest and most subtly-managed colonial polities of all times.” (Nandy, 1988). Britain drained India of \$45 trillion dollars over a 200 year period of violent, oppressive rule (Banerjee, 2018). Colonial India provided brutal testing ground for racial constructions and unfettered corporate rule bent on ruination of remarkable, global Indian industries, such as textiles (Tharoor, 2016). The money lost hints at catastrophic, ongoing losses. India’s development of yoga into a tourism product aimed at white, western, “Northern demand for commodities from the South perpetuate[s] and solidifies an imperialist relationship” (Patnaik, 2016). Yoga tourism in India is not magically untouched by exploitative production relations (Patnaik, 2016). Yoga development is accompanied by displacements; because development and displacement are terribly intertwined in India and the world (Sainath, 1996). A yoga mobilities framework encourages radical questions about how Indian yoga tourism circulates capital and wellness amongst whiteness and the global North in extractive relations to Indian youth, jobs, women workers, and wellness.

It is important to raise ethical questions that dive deep into how yoga tourism impacts Kerala. For example, at Niraamaya, Joseph in custodial services is from a fishing family, but, due to developmental impacts on fishing viability and yoga tourism development, he is the first in many generations have to break off from the family tradition and work in the yoga tourism hotels that dominate increasing segments of the Kovalam coastline. He lamented the change, and wished he had more or arguably any sovereign choice in the matter of this major cultural shift in his work and family life. Similarly, Kayal Island Retreat is surrounded by and extracts from the

island of Kakkathuruthu, a long existing indigenous fishing village. Kayal draws upon the land, people, and fishing cultures of Kakkathuruthu, and surrounding lakeside villages, for advertisement and social media images, tourist walking and boating experiences, and bases its entire enterprise on what the island and surrounding lakeside villages can offer to tourists, with or without compensation to the local people. While a handful of local people are employed by Kayal, it is evident that profits from the boutique resort's expanding empire are not spreading even to the families that live directly on the other side of Kayal's bright white separating wall - the only such wall on the small island. While Kayal is story of success in many ways, the presence of Kayal hastens looming developmental change already encroaching upon viability of lives and fishing ways of the village and backwater, lakeside region.

Land, Lives, Cultures Reduced to Accessible, Trouble-Free Versions for Yoga Tourism

Hotspots

I argue that when fishing villages become yoga tourism hotspots, it reduces the lives, land, and cultures of the place to a flat, smooth, three-dimensional image of itself for the consumption of tourists - and this reduction necessarily impacts the original in problematic ways. Use of simulacra as a mode of social control over land, people, and culture in yoga tourism sites is evident. In my study, I found retreats built to mimic pristine, unpolluted Kerala fishing villages where is no suffering and only friendly or averted Indian faces ready to serve or disappear into a perfect Indian background. Meanwhile, plastic trash, grueling economic conditions, and suffering due to environmental interruption of fishing trades and lack of access to basic amenities are evident around the perimeter of every yoga tourism site I studied. Coloniality and ongoing imperialism drain "original" sources "outside the gates," which in turn are preserved for colonial sons and daughters to enjoy, consume, and accumulate for future profit, "inside the gates."

Ethical questions glimmer on the surface - and deep into off-limits yoga tourism worker areas - of any carefully curated performance of a mythical “pristine,” “authentic,” yoga, ancient India within a yoga retreat culture of friendly Indian servitude, acceptance, and adoration of dominant white bodies. Yoga tourism mobilities lines of inquiry explore the relationship of the simulacrum to social control and regulation of Indian and Indian youth bodies. Regulation of Indian bodies, culture, and land underlies any hyperreal performance of yoga, India, and Indians for the benefit of tourists who benefit from unfairly accumulated and exclusive access to spatial mobility as global travelers and freely exercised physical mobility.

U.S. Encroachment and Governance of Indian Yoga, Surveillance of Kerala Yoga Tourism

Kerala yoga tourism, and Indian yoga tourism in general, involves significant placemaking for U.S. visitors, U.S. multinational companies (TripAdvisor), and U.S. yoga governance (Yoga Alliance). The U.S. dominates industries that are not located domestically, which is striking in the context of yoga. Yoga Alliance yoga teacher credential standards now shape how Indians are teaching yoga in India. The Yoga Alliance brand was ubiquitous in every yoga tourism hotspot I studied. Every Indian yoga teacher I interviewed expressed discomfort, exasperation, and anger at the imposition of a U.S., historically white organization telling them how to teach yoga, and what makes a yoga teacher. TripAdvisor holds immense power in Kerala yoga tourism sites - a bad review can get workers fired, or perilously decrease and downsize business. These power imbalances, and non-consensual encroachments creates frictions that add layers to ethical considerations regarding consequences of a global yoga tourism marketplace.

Conclusions

Yoga tourism is defined by extremes more than balance - a core yoga value. Critical geographer, Edward Soja describes simulated environments and experiences this way, “When all that is seen is so fragmented and filled with whimsy and pastiche, the hard edges of the capitalist, racist and patriarchal landscape seem to disappear, melt into air.” (Soja, 1989). In my study, I make the case that it is necessary to push through illusionary yoga tourism utopias to examine the ticking, strained heart of *what* and *who* keeps yoga tourism sites and industry running. To best understand yoga tourism, it must be examined from the inside-out; from *inside* the bodies of workers and inside dynamics of land and culture just “outside the gates,” *out* to guest motivations and experiences. Yoga has to do with being present. In order to be present to yoga tourism, I created a critical, embodied history and account of the present moment of yoga development. A totalizing account of Kerala yoga tourism is not possible within the confines of this dissertation. I provide snapshots into the industry, a sample of notes from the many songs of life and death beyond the simulacrum. Through a year of conversations, interviews, positioning my body to listen to women workers’ bodies, and reflective and interpretive field notes, I aimed to create a critical yoga tourism account of the Kerala region.

In Kerala, yoga tourism provides much needed relief to foreign bodies stressed by the disorienting rush of their urban core homes, or loss, or the inevitable signs of age. The yoga tourism industry in Kerala creates desperately needed work opportunities for people on the precipice of economic chaos and chances for women and young women to travel from across the subcontinent to new jobs, form sisterhoods and brotherhoods, relate to a cosmopolitan array of guests, and be in proximity to yoga and gleaming indoor and outdoor environments. While tourists come from far and wide for the opportunity to be still, the Kerala yoga tourism industry sets complex systems of rush and migration, compensation and servitude, and devastation and

physical suffering in motion. Yoga tourism studies is a nascent field which, as of now, consists of powerful discourses that idealize yoga tourism by linking it with global movements for environmental protection and morally sound quests for self-improvement. Meanwhile, as yoga tourism and the yoga industry grows, the U.S., Europe, India - so much of the world becomes more intolerant, more divisive, more violent, more destructive, less balanced. All of these qualities are antithetical to yoga values of liberation and sanity. Idealised discourses circulate amongst yoga tourism and the yoga industry in general because they sell. Goodness, vitality, a sense of being alive; these are qualities people want to buy. Yoga tourism is an essential node in the industrialization of yoga, a force of global capital because it can be translated into giving people with buying power not only what they *need* what they *want*. Constructions of white supremacy are always scaffolding their fragile myth, and yoga provides a “new” space in which to become “transformed” into something wholly good - a seeming panacea for nagging fallouts of colonial and racist violence, such as feeling bad. In sum, yoga can be used to run away from oneself (Trungpa, 2002). My analysis is not grounded in outdated reliance on fixed notions of nation states or “white” and “Western.” I understand these are not static categories. But in this case, a postcolonial, critical race analysis of India and yoga tourism does shed light on the multiple mobilities that comprise and pull apart yoga tourism.

Using the concept of mobilities, I define yoga tourism expansively. On one end of the spectrum, yoga according to traditional yoga values is a focal point of yoga tourism; on the other end, there is a disorienting scatter of yoga related experiences and materials associated with coloniality and privilege which are packaged for reproducibility, consumption, accumulation. I conclude that the Kerala yoga tourism is perilously vulnerable to forces outside its control, such as climate change, Trip Advisor reviews, Yoga Alliance standards, global travel advisory status

reports on the region, and health epidemics. To gain competitive edge in a fluctuating market, Kerala yoga tourism sites should consider rebranding and restructuring their businesses towards “fair trade” style yoga tourism. A “fair trade” yoga tourism business would share profits and pay workers living wages, give workers balanced work-life schedules, allow and encourage workers to access some of the yoga and wellness products available on site, listen to workers concerns and grievances, and ultimately, believe that the wellness of their wellness workers can result in greater profit and sustainability for the business. Fair trade coffee is popular and profitable, because people want to feel they are contributing to and consuming something that is just. Similarly, with yoga tourism, there is ample room for fair and sustainable tourism development, with balanced relations to people, land, and cultures, because people come to yoga seeking goodness, for better and for worse. Additionally, ripe space exists for new directions in yoga tourism research that builds upon the question: What are key ethical concerns and struggles evident in yoga tourism and according to what rationality do these evolve? (Foucault, 1980).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

“What [yoga] possibilities for decolonization and the full exercise of sovereignty, cultural revitalization, and racial justice might exist if we take past, present, and future mobilities as our starting point?” (Carpio et al., 2019)

This dissertation brings robust analyses and layered definitions of yoga and yoga phenomenon arising across disciplines of law, popular culture, and tourism commerce more fully into conversation with each other - and with established critical scholarship in each arena. This interdisciplinary, Critical Yoga Studies conversation on yoga is engineered and scaffolded by yoga related “empirical examinations that consider movement and mobility as central animating logics in [1] the production and contestation of settler colonialism” (Carpio et al., 2019); [2] the ongoing structural rise of “propertization” and “whiteness as property” in yoga (Harris, 1993); and [3] the frictions that shore up and undermine “balance” - an abiding value of yoga - at all scales, from micro-geographies of the body to transnational, planetary flux.

Critical Yoga Studies

“Critical Yoga Studies” is a nascent and under-researched academic field. There is sparse published scholarship on “Critical Yoga Studies,” and (as of 2019) a lack of any established academic journals, conferences, programs, and projects under the term. Critical Yoga Studies is under-explored and relatively undeveloped within academia despite the fact that industrialized yoga developments are marked by high popular interest worldwide, powerful multi-billion dollar profits, and global political influence. This is curious, contradictory state is telling of high stakes involved with telling stories of yoga through critical race and indigenous studies lenses; there are powerful discourses in yoga and influential uses of yoga that gain value from a lack of critical examination in yoga. At the birthing stage of this emerging Critical Yoga Studies scholarly conversation - characterized by such powerful latent potential - it is crucial to: [1] diligently

define and discuss key terms such as “yoga,” and “yoga tourism,” [2] map key animating logics that catalyze and shape movements in yoga, and [3] set out and follow strategic methods, methodological frameworks, and essential questions to guide and encourage rigor in future developments in the field.

Guiding Research Questions
What key terms, questions, disciplines, and methods scaffold Critical Yoga Studies investigations? • What are effective definitions of “yoga,” and “yoga tourism?” What do established and already circulating definitions of these key terms reveal about epistemic tensions in yoga studies? What do accepted organizations of research in “yoga tourism studies” reveal about epistemic violence? • What are effective methods and methodological frameworks to shore up development of this nascent field? How are these used for gathering and sharing liberatory knowledge? Does yoga “move?” Is there evidence to support the claim that there are geographic, cultural, legal, and political movements in and/or through yoga? • What are defining characteristics of movements in yoga? What is “yoga mobilities?” How can this framework be used to gather and share knowledge? • What are defining questions and characteristics of the “yoga mobilities” framework? • Do empirical examinations of “yoga mobilities” reveal any exclusionary or harmful movements in yoga? • Are there material impacts of this movement/these “yoga mobilities?” How are these impacts distributed? Who bears the burden of these impacts? Who bears the benefit? What are important relationships between mobility, race, indigeneity, and imperialism in industrialized yoga? • What does use of data triangulation in Critical Yoga Studies verify about these relations? • What are the moral ambiguities and ethical concerns that define development of industrialized yoga and its enmeshed relations with neoliberal global capitalism? • “What [yoga] possibilities for decolonization and the full exercise of sovereignty, cultural revitalization, and racial justice might exist if we take past, present, and future mobilities as our starting point?” (Carpio et al., 2019)

Yoga Mobilities

This dissertation offers expansive and politicized definitions of “yoga,” “yoga tourism,” and introduces the “yoga mobilities” framework. “Yoga mobilities” draws from the mobilities concept, which enables “thinking about usually disparate arenas ([such as a study on how homeless people in Long Beach, CA negotiate] daily travel patterns, infrastructures, welfare provision, etc.) together - a characteristic of much of the best work in mobilities research” (Cresswell, 2012, Jocoy et al., 2010). Mobilities has tended to focus on movements of people and material things (such as modes of transport, or products) and the relations between these entities. Innovations in mobilities studies include research in “mobile methodologies” through which ethnographic and market researchers examine subject’s daily movements and uses of products through mobile phones and technologies (Fincham et al., 2009); “settler mobilities” which investigates movements that define creations and contestations in the ongoing structure of colonization (Carpio et al., 2019); and work on the “mobility of ideas” which analyzes policies that travel around the globe (McCann, 2011).

“Yoga mobilities” examines the role of yoga related movements and stillness in the production and organization of social hierarchies. “Yoga mobilities” investigates a spectrum from the micro-geography of the body, to geographies of urban and natural ecologies, to nation states, domestic and global governance, and global capitalism. In “yoga mobilities” it becomes possible to bring seemingly disparate arenas together, in alignment with established and cutting edge mobilities studies.

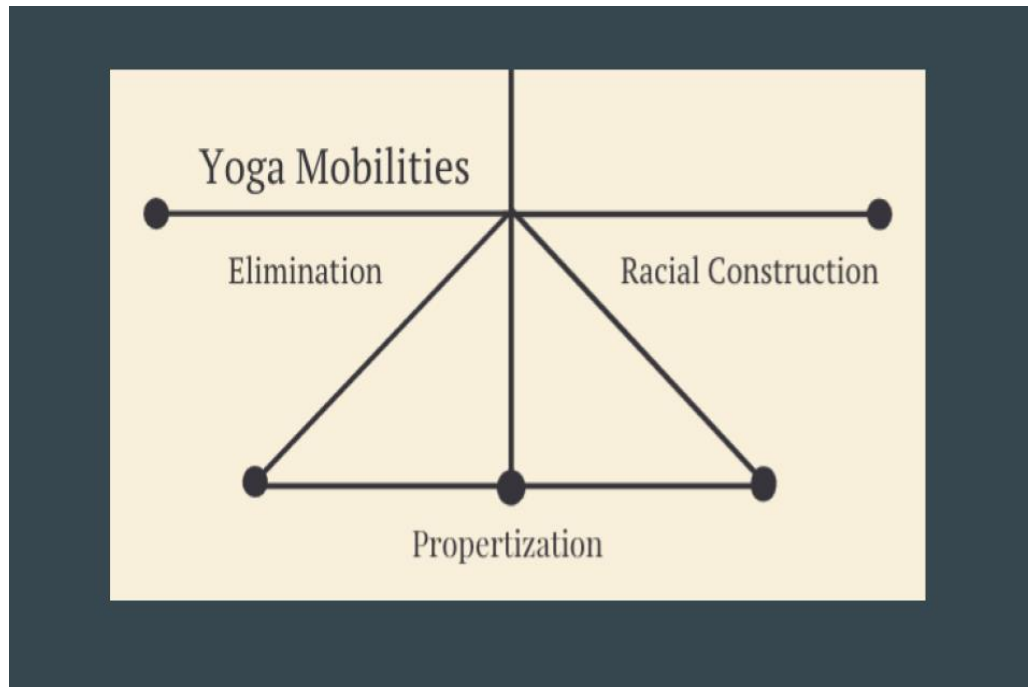
Writing “Yoga Mobilities:” Partiality, Triangulation, and Interdisciplinarity

Partiality

In establishing a “yoga mobilities” framework, and fleshing out “Critical Yoga Studies” with a framework, definitions, and methods, I have necessarily embarked on a project of writing and inventing new truths. This study is a self-conscious contemporary ethnographic project which is “rigorously partial” - distinct from “overly transparent modes of authority” through which an attempt is made to provide a perfect or absolute “representation of cultures” and yoga phenomenon (Clifford, 1986). “Even the best ethnographic texts - serious, true fictions - are systems, or economies, of truth. Power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot control.” (Clifford, 1986).

Through writing “yoga mobilities,” I add building blocks to the emergent field of Critical Yoga Studies, and invariably fan the flames of yoga development and its attendant moral ambiguities. For example, findings of “exclusion,” “exclusionary yoga uses,” and “exclusionary yoga mobilities” yoga are key to this study. Yet, as an ethnographer, I too engaged in exclusion, through curating and silencing voices and experiences of interlocutors, through “speaking for” others, and through creating my own version of truths about people, places, beings, and experiences I related to during the course of this multi-year study. Scholarship herein is a product of “rigorous partiality,” in which I acknowledge the inherent “committed and incomplete” nature of the ethnographic project, and utilize clear standards of verification in order to produce certain knowledges about yoga, race, and mobility (Clifford et al., 1986).

Figure 18. Yoga Mobilities: Triangulation of Findings



Triangulation

Data triangulation is a key method for Critical Yoga Studies scholars, because it creates verifiable evidence and reliable, replicable findings. Till now, yoga studies range from STEM related “discoveries” of how yoga affects certain health aspects of the physical and mental body; to hotly debated Indologist claims about and to Indian epistemic contributions; to yoga studies that attempt to construct origin stories of “modern yoga;” to transnational American studies of Indian and American yogis, their influence on U.S. culture and yoga, and their morally sound or unsound behaviors; to “yoga tourism” studies of yoga tourist typologies. Yet accounts of “cultural appropriation” in yoga primarily take the form of personal narrative, there has been no “proof” exclusionary uses in yoga, and no empirical bases for the visceral claim that yoga is being taken and whitened.

Stories arise in contemporary yoga popular discourse describing cultural appropriation in yoga in multitudinal forms. These stories of cultural appropriation, colonial violence, and racial injustice in yoga sites inspire a chorus of marginalized yoga practitioner voices to come forward with personal affirmations and similar experiences - only to be swatted away like flies by powerful, white, or whitened voices in yoga who resoundingly dismiss such cultural appropriation claims with devastating, but fundamentally erroneous counterclaims, such as: “No one can take yoga away,” “You can still do yoga, so it was not taken from you,” “Yoga was a gift freely given to us in the early 20th century by Indian yogis, we are its rightful stewards and missionaries,” and “Modern yoga is not even from India.” Claims of European yoga origin stories, “modernity,” and yoga are further unpacked below.

Collectively, the data gathered in this triangulated study provides conclusive evidence that yoga movements engendered by the development of yoga (within neoliberal global capitalism and ongoing structural colonialism) can and does produce new racially exclusionary and harmful practices in yoga.

Interdisciplinarity

For further Critical Yoga Studies experiments, it is important to ground the yoga data triangulation in transnational interdisciplinary studies that include settler colonial centers because these are often the production sites of powerful yoga truth discourses, such as “whitened” yoga origin stories, which require scholarly intervention. Moreover, inclusion of transnational examinations allow for mapping multi-scalar movements of yoga.

Yoga studies tend to center the micro-scale of the body, to balance this tendency more macro-level perspectives and studies are required. Interdisciplinarity in Critical Yoga Studies data triangulation may include textual and literary analysis, but the limits of these approaches

require the Critical Yoga scholar to “reach beyond texts [and move] to contexts of power, resistance, institutional constraint, and innovation” through ethnography - an increasingly mobile, “interdisciplinary phenomenon” (Clifford, 1986; Cresswell, 2012). When considering types of data to generate a triangulated yoga study, deciding factors must invoke values such as balance, creativity, rigour, and liberation.

In this dissertation, I chose a transnational U.S. geographic setting inclusive of India based ethnographic study of yoga commerce propelled by U.S. yoga trends and tourists, U.S. intellectual property law, and U.S. popular music culture. These three arenas - law, culture, and commerce - all are conduits for codes which shape, organize, and regulate societies. This study involved textual and literary analyses of archival and contemporary legal codes; social codes embedded in histories of music which circulated wide and deep into the U.S. populace; as well as public facing, contemporary engagements with yoga tourism through relating to people, land, experiences, and popular yoga tourism businesses which are sought after by U.S. yoga tourists, and by those influenced by U.S. cultural trends, amongst others.

Combined, the three case studies presented in this dissertation create empirical soil in which seeds of Critical Yoga Studies, and the “yoga mobilities” framework may be nurtured and grow. “Interdisciplinary work, so much discussed these days, is not about confronting already constituted disciplines...it’s not enough to choose a ‘subject’ (a theme) and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinarity consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one.” (Barthes, 1972). Future Critical Yoga Studies projects would do well to push further into qualitative and quantitative blends - yet a mixture of this nature does not automatically prove or disprove interdisciplinary rigour of the courageous, creative, and liberatory nature discussed by Barthes above.

Yoga Development, Yoga Values: Exclusionary Uses, Enmeshment with Global Capital

“We are at a juncture where Foucault calls for more than the “affirmation, pure and simple, of a ‘struggle’;” we must establish “concretely ...who is engaged in struggle, what the struggle is about, and how, where, by what means and according to what rationality it evolves.” (Foucault, 1980; Lomawaima, 1995).

My mobilities examination of contemporary and historic yoga developments in the U.S. and India provides a multi-pronged evidentiary base to the claim that appropriation of yoga does change yoga; and results in accumulation and exclusion. I unearthed archival law, historic music culture, and contemporary commercial tourism data to describe ethical concerns that shape logics of yoga development. Through archival examination of copyright law, from 1937 - one of the first moments yoga entered the sphere of U.S. governance - to 2015, I found yoga is being propertized into private, exclusionary fragments accumulated by U.S. citizens at steeply increasing rates. My study of U.S. music culture history (1941-1967) examined yoga’s initial entry into U.S. popular culture. These hidden music histories revealed yoga was used as a sight to Other, displace, and racialize Indians in yoga. Through one year of feminist ethnographic study (2018-2019) of Kerala yoga tourism and the bodies of Indian women yoga tourism laborers, I found that impacts of yoga development are morally ambiguous and result in increased suffering for Indian bodies, land, and culture - even as it provides much needed opportunities for income in a tense context of dwindling and increasingly chaotic environmental and economic resources.

I used contemporary, critical ethnography methods to examine yoga as a site of change across space and time. I asked, “according to what logic” does yoga evolve into a fragmented,

packaged, branded, profitable, exclusive entity? I find that essential logics of colonization, imperialism, Orientalism, and racial capitalism fuel yoga development. These rationales include: domestication, civilization, modernization, categorization, and propertization. Populations that have been historically pinned by these rationales are still regulated and controlled by them through yoga development.

For example, “modern yoga” is a widely used term used to circulate new, powerful discourses about how contemporary yoga has little connection to India, and was instead, birthed in Europe and the U.S. (Alter, 2004; De Michelis, 2005, 2008; Newcombe, 2009; Singleton et al., 2008; Singleton, 2010, 2013). The use of “modern” in the yoga tourism context needs to be questioned when it becomes a default, accepted primacy argument about who actually birthed the yoga practiced and consumed now - a “then” and “now” categorization that echoes and affirms colonial categorizations, intentionally or not. Modernity continues to serve a settlement and accumulation purpose in yoga. New, unencumbered by history, people, data, lands - yoga becomes a free market for the taking. Yoga could not remain in the public domain, which it has technically existed in for thousands of years, and still be propertized.

Considering Modernity and “Modern Yoga” Developments

Commodified yoga systems are implicated in colonial and racial projects. It is illustrative to note that the racist violence of the neoliberal market represents globalizations third phase, after the Atlantic slave trade and colonization (Tharoor, 2017). Subaltern scholars of coloniality name how commodification accompanies racialized, colonial subjugation of the Other. Profitable commodification of yoga relies upon stalwart tactics of colonial domination, such as binary constructions. Ashis Nandy helps decipher the colonial use of time to sever India and yoga into old and new; which yoga tourism may capitalize upon by selling “ancient”

experiences which tourists may collect like antiques (Nandy, 1988). This binary construction divides India, and perpetual practices like yoga, into “ancient,” and “modern.” Constructed binaries of time are tactics of war used justify British social and economic degradation of India. Colonization is framed as a gift to the occupied. For instance, the British called the visceral ruin of once thriving, cosmopolitan, Indian textile and agrarian industries a gift. The gift myth was made possible by categorizing the “ancient” industries as outdated, savage, already ruined, and in desperate need of “modern” British led industrial practices (that failed). Colonial truths stated that the British saved India by gifting the country modernity, a formation that was justified by an “out with the old, in with the new” storyline.

Time binaries helped gloss over degradation as a self inflicted state, an inherent quality of “ancient India” that only the British could heal. India and yoga are both abiding entities, neither can be severed into binary constructions. Yoga is an example of a living and breathing medicinal arts and science practice, an unceasing part of the human experience that transcends narrow binaries such as “ancient” or “modern.” The use of these binaries in the yoga space implies that at some point yoga was severed into two, but this is a myth that is defied by a wide spread, continual practice of yoga sciences and arts in the everyday lives of South Asian diasporic people. When I challenge the binary of time in these categorizations of yoga, I aim to disrupt dominant truths that “modern” yoga asana/postural practice is a European or American gift to “ancient” Indian yoga. The violent surveillance and binary formations that accompany colonialism are no gift. In fact, the commodification of yoga generates power and profit that become valued and protected elements of Whiteness.

Yoga Values vs. Values of Racist Global Capitalism

Just as Critical Race Theory and Critical Legal Theory question and dismantle assumptions of neutrality and discourses of fairness in U.S. law, Critical Yoga Studies must question neutrality in capitalism and the “free market” and unpack how these assumptions shape commodified yoga. Industrialised, commodified yoga cannot only be defined and guided by idealized, utopic values of “union,” “freedom,” “goodness,” “social good,” which dominate popular and powerful yoga discourses.

Mobilities scholar “Ana Tsing highlights how cultures are continually co-produced in their interactions, particularly at the point of frictions where uncomfortable or unstable qualities of interconnections become pronounced” (Nichter, 2013; Tsing, 2002). In yoga developments, frictions between yoga values and values of global capitalism are evident and troubling. The near total absence of critical yoga studies in widely circulating yoga related scholarship is also striking. What becomes of *svadhyaya*, the rigorous process of study with the goal of becoming present to the self in relation to the whole, the oneness? Critical race legal theories conclude that whiteness, so bound by racial privilege, is unlikely to ever see itself enough to heal the immense violence caused by racial constructions (Lopez, 1997). Postcolonial scholars affirm this with evidence of terrible violence within colonial homes resulting in deep ruptures of intimacy and generations of unwellness in colonial families (Fanon, 1963). The Kerala yoga tourism ethnographic study validated the premise that capitalist yoga development thrives on values opposite of yoga values such as non-violence. This destabilizes and displaces people, cultures, land, and I argue, yoga.

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Chapter 5: Conclusion

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APPENDIX A
FIELD RESEARCH ITINERARY

Dates (2018-19)	Place
Sept 14-17, 2018	Amritapuri/ Amma Ashram Amrita Center for International Programs Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham (AMRITA University) Amritapuri, Kollam, 690525, Kerala, INDIA (Campus talk, tour, visit)
Late Sept or Oct	Queerala/Rainbow House, Kochi (Visit to LGBTQ group)
June 1-June 8	Theertham Herbals, Trivandrum http://www.theerthamherbals.com
June 8-June 19	Blooming Bay, Varkala http://www.bloomingbay.in/
July 19-July 2	Ft. Kochi Airbnb, four nights Malabar House Hotel
July 2, 2018 - March 31, 2019	Kochi/Enrakulam Home Base Purva Grandbay
Aug 3 - 5, 2019	Kayal Island Retreat Kakkathuruthu Island, Eramallur, village in Alappuzha district
Aug 13 - Aug 14	Ayurveda Yogavilla www.ayurvedayogavilla.com Email: info@ayurvedayogavilla.com
Aug 17 - Sept 2	Niraamaya Surya Samundar; Kovalam, Kerala
Oct 20 - Oct 25, 2018	<i>Windermere</i> Munnar, Kerala
Jan 5-Jan 13, 2019	<i>Soul and Surf</i> Varkala, Kerala https://www.soulandsurf.com/
Oct 3, 2018 - March 22, 2019	Grand Hyatt Kochi (GHK) Gym member, Kidzone Parent
March 22 - March 27, 2019	Tall Trees Munnar

APPENDIX B

FULL LIST OF WOMEN INTERVIEWEES

Women Interviewees
1. Maneesha - Kayal
2. Elder - Kayal Ayurvda Worker
3. Nuthan (Me Met Me)
4. Cuckoo
5. Sunitha - Niraamaya
6. Paroo Sualy
7. Accamma
8. Laia
9. Other server at Niraamaya cafe
10. Pooja
11. YTT sis met at Surf and Soul: Wendy
12. Tara: Admin at S&S
13. Latha
14-15. Ayurveda workers Malabar House: 2
16. Ansu
17. Rongsen (GHK)
18. Yoga Shoba
19. Radhika
20-21. Socialites in same yoga class as Radhika: 2
22. Maya
23. Sangeeta Kaylan
24. Theertham owner: Dr. Maya Gopinath
24-25. Ayurveda workers Theertham: 2
26. Ayurveda worker Blooming Bay: 1

27. Manju - Blooming Bay

APPENDIX C
MASTER INTERVIEW LIST

Master Interview & Conversation List: (Approx 71-90)
1. Ft Kochi Happy Camper Girish 2 aug 11 2018
• Ft Kochi Happy Camper Girish July 5 2018
• Ft Kochi Happy Camper Vishal Aug 11
• Ft Kochi Malabar House Latha Nair July 25 2018
• Ft Kochi Malabar House Latha Nair Part 2 Feb 26 2019
• Kerala Bombay Yoga Teacher Sangeeta Kalyan Nov 8 2018
• Kerala Bombay Yoga Teacher Sangeeta Kalyan Phone Conversation Part 1 Dec 12 2018
• Kerala Bombay Yoga Teacher Sangeeta Kalyan Phone Conversation Part 1 Dec 12 2018
• Kochi Business Operator French Toast Ayaz Feb 9
• Kochi Yoga Student Cuckoo Nov 15 2018 1.27 PM
• Kochi Yoga Student Cuckoo Phone Conversation, February 2019 (see field journal notes)
• Kochi Yoga Student Radhika Interview 1 Nov 5, 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Jose Mathew Interview Part 1 Nov 12, 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Joseph Mathew Part 2 Nov 12, 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Maya 1 Nov 11, 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Maya 2 Nov 11, 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Nuthan Interview 1 Oct 6 2018
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Nuthan Interview Part 2 (Main part) Feb 19 2019
• Kochi Yoga Teacher Nuthan Interview Part 2 (continued) Feb 19 2019
• Kochi Grand Hyatt Sharath Mixologist Feb 28 2019
• Kochi regional area: Maneesha of Kayal Island Retreat (see black field journal for dates)
• Niraamaya Dr Accamma Sept 1 2018

• Niraamaya Dr Arun 8.28.18
• Niraamaya Anurag Batra General manager Aug 25 2018
• Niraamaya Guruji Aug 22 2018
• Niraamaya Laia Interview Aug 30 2018
• Niraamaya Paroo Sualy
• Niraamaya Prakash Nayar Aug 28 2018
• Niraamaya Sunitha Kumari Madhu Sept 2 2018
• Soul & Surf Pooja 2 Jan 13, 2019
• Soul & Surf Pooja Jan 10 2019
• Soul & Surf Rakhul Shamraj Surf Instructor Jan 12 2019
• Soul & Surf Tara Admin Head Guest Services Jan 13 2019
• Soul & Surf Wendy & Alex Yoga Trainees Visiting Jan 10 2019
• Varkala Villa Akasa Nabin Kiddoda June 10 2018: key is his hope to leave, Isreal plan
• Windermere Anoop 1 in Ft Kochi
• Windermere Anoop 2 Follow Up Jan 5 2019
• Windermere Deepak on site Oct 23 2018
Converations Grand Hyatt Kochi: • Triptika about her traveling grandfather, who was so kind to get me that song • Sharath about race, his plans, hopes, and travel plans for a bike food tour to make his name • Ansu about her life, labor, physical and emotional toll • Florine about her life and plans for advancement • Damodaran about wellness and ayurveda • Al Kamar about life, about labor conditions • Former GM Girish, his wife Wendy, the kids and our talks about parenting • Fitness instructors, in particular Alfred who does lead yoga, and has high travel plans • Kirti in the lobby lounge and her time away • The sister from Nagaland who has her Master's in literature in the lobby lounge as well

• Chefs in Malabar Cafe, especially Antisha and the other sister who I talked to about yoga • Chefs in Thai Soul • Workers in Kids Zone • Observations of guests
Conversations at Ayurveda Yoga Villa • Two wellness workers, two women who did the treatment • The main coordinator, and welcome point person • Not the yoga instructor much • Other guests
Conversations at Niraamaya • Imti Shashi, reception • Joseph the pool guy • The darker skinned young sister who opened up to me about her abusive father • Multiple conversations with Laia
Conversations in Social Life in Kochi • Women at that Wow Kids center, with that one woman about yoga, the socialite, and the main woman who runs the center, who I took the class with • With women workers, from business owners like Reshma, to workers like Ajitha at French Toast
Conversations at Malabar House • I spoke to those two women workers who gave me a massage, who told me they only make 200 rupees per client.
Conversations at Kayal Island • Maneesha • Two male employees who handle guest services/excursions • Guests, that couple • The woman grandma type who did my terrible massage sick. Whose husband alchoholic.

APPENDIX D

IRB APPROVAL/EXEMPTION



EXEMPTION GRANTED

K Lomawaima
Social Transformation, School of (SST)
-
K.Tsianina.Lomawaima@asu.edu

Dear K Lomawaima:

On 4/10/2018 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Yogaways: Mapping Propertization In Yoga
Investigator:	K Lomawaima
IRB ID:	STUDY00008093
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• YOGAWAYS Study Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol; • YOGAWAYS Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • YOGAWAYS Consent Form , Category: Consent Form; • YOGAWAYS Confidentiality Form , Category: Other (to reflect anything not captured above); • YOGAWAYS Interview Questions , Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 4/10/2018.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,