OCCASIONAL PAPER

History and Society

New Series

Dara Shukoh's Persian translation of *Yogavasistha* in comparison with other translations of the Mughal era

Mohsin Ali

Senior Fellow, PMML

Prime Ministers Museum and Library

2025

Published by

Prime Ministers Museum and Library

Teen Murti House

New Delhi- 110011

E-mail: director.nmml@gov.in

ISBN: 978-93-84793-55-5

Dara Shukoh's Persian translation of *Yogavasistha* in comparison with other translations of the Mughal era[1]

Abstract

The allure of Indian religious and philosophical thoughts enthralled Muslim scholars due to the profound depth and enigmatic nature, particularly as the Sanskrit language serves as the repository for many of the important works on Indian philosophy, religion, and culture. Al-Beruni, in his work "India", documented the splendid richness of Indian culture and philosophy. In the exchange of thoughts between cultures, translation plays a pivotal and influential role. Akbar established the *Maktab Khana* for the translation of texts from various languages, where Sanskrit texts were translated into Persian in three phases. There are 2517 recorded versions of the Persian translations of the Indian texts on different subjects. The philosophical work *Yogavasistha* along with other texts were translated into Persian during the Mughal era by Nizam Panipati, Qutb-i Jahani, Abu al-Qasim Findiriski, and Dara Shukoh. The distinctive translation of *Yogavasistha* by Dara Shukoh was influenced by *Vedantic* philosophy and aligned with *Sufi* philosophical ideas.

Keywords: *Yogavasistha*, Mughal, Persian, Sanskrit, translation, Dara Shukoh.

[1] This paper is a revised version of the public lecture delivered at PMML, New Delhi on 04 July 2024.

Introduction

The extensive literatures of ancient Islamic, Persian and Sanskrit, which are closely related to one another known as the Indo-European languages, have not been given much attention and thought in terms of comparative analysis. The richness and mystique of Indian religious and philosophical thoughts drew Muslim thinkers, for their magnetic appeal. As most of the significant works on Indian philosophy, religion, and culture are conserved in the Sanskrit language, the Muslims stepped forth to learn the Sanskrit language with the support of learned Indian scholars, who enhanced their own understanding of Persian and, by extension, Muslim culture. Persian writings on Indian culture and translations from Sanskrit were made possible by the relationship between these cultures. The greatest illustration of this intellectual exchange is provided by Persian polymath Al-Beruni (11th century C.E.), who discovered the glorious richness of Indian culture and philosophy and immortalized it in the enduring work known as 'Alberuni's India'[2].

In practically all instances of interactions between cultures, linguistic translation was crucial and played a significant role. In the translated language, certain translations gained recognition as classics due to their high quality. It was an essential instrument for concept transmission and conservation. The Muslim rulers in India also encouraged the dissemination of Sanskrit knowledge and promoting translation projects. In order to maintain their political authority, the Mughals promoted and shaped culture, gave narratives of their own ascent to power, and cultivated political identities. It is widely recognized that the power-orientation of the Mughals was closely associated with a broad range of literary, artistic, and intellectual pursuits in Sanskrit traditions. During the Mughal Empire, there was a phenomenal exchange of thoughts and narratives between the intellectual and philosophical thought lineages of Sanskrit and Persian. Sanskrit scholars were not only instrumental in helping the Mughals rule the empire by providing them with details on the traditional Indian system of knowledge, but they also wrote on their literary and religious communities in the context of Mughal rule. Sanskrit scholars at the royal court were largely mediated by Mughal rulers and Persianate scholars. The amalgamation of Mughal political identity and Sanskrit language identity exemplifies the socio-economic status of these two communities. Additionally, the Mughals promoted a court culture with a multilingual and cosmopolitan environment along with Persian literature and art,

[2] 'Alberuni's India' is the popular and shortened name of his famous book on India known as,
تحقيقماللهندمنمقولةمقبولةفيالعقلأومرذولة - A Critical Study of Indian Doctrines, Whether Rationally Acceptable or Not

often referred to as Persianate. The Mughal court was delved into a different form of Sanskrit discourse through the promotion of bilingual language studies.

Akbar continued up the Sassanid emperor Anushiravan's pattern of seeking out and valuing Indian texts, sending his minister Burzui to India to get the Sanskrit *Panchtantra* and adapt it into Middle Persian. Even though the translation did not endure, it established the *Panchtantra* as a principal Persianate forum for discussing Indian concepts. The text underwent multiple revisions after its original Sassanian treatment, including one at the request of a prominent advisor to a Timurid prince in Herat in the latter half of the fifteenth century. It was first translated into Arabic, then into modern Persian. *Panchtantra* had been adapted and illustrated by the pre-Mughal dynasty like the Lodhis, and translated as *Kalilawa Dimna*.[3] The depth of Indian literature in Persian can be viewed through the detailed catalogue of Persian translations of Indian texts, documenting a total of 2,517 manuscripts and printed versions.[4]

In the Mughal court, Jain and Brahman scholars saw opportunities to engage in the imperial mission through Sanskrit and Persian exchanges, and they attempted to provide impetus to Mughal efforts at blending cultures to conform to the frameworks pertaining to their own literary, social, and religious affiliations. This is indicative of the many Sanskrit-speaking communities that existed in Mughal India. The Jain communities expressed numerous interpretations of Jain-Mughal interactions within the Sanskrit realm. Conversely, Brahmins adopted a scholarly approach to the rising impact of Indo-Persian culture during the Mughal era through the creation of Sanskrit grammatical works on Persian and bilingual lexicons. The Mughals also employed multilingual titling policy for Sanskrit and other scholars.

In order to improve the interactions with Hindus, Akbar wanted the Muslim intellectuals to get acquainted with the classic and traditional works of Hindu beliefs and thoughts. To achieve this objective, he founded the *Maktab Khana*, also known as the bureau of translation. Two of the main participants, Abul Fazl and Abdul Qadir Badayuni, describe the translation process in their *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Muntakhabut-Tawarikh*, respectively. The translations at Mughal court were not carried out by lone experts who were fluent in the source language in this particular instance—Sanskrit and the target language Persian. Instead, a number of scholars, some fluent in Persian and others in Sanskrit, completed the work. They completed the task in three phases. The Sanskrit text to be translated was first paraphrased in

[3] Truschke, A. 2016. *Culture of Encounter: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court*. New York: Columbia University Press. Introduction. p.10. The *Shahnamah* contains the Burzui narrative (7:361–73) and in the preface to the Arabic *Kalilawa Dimna* (Marroum, *Kalilawa Dimna*, pp. 524–27).

[4] Qasemi, Sharif Husain. 2014. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Translations of Indian Works*. New Delhi. Preface. p. i.

Hindi by Hindu scholars. One of the many Muslim courtiers translated this paraphrasing into Persian in the second stage. Eventually, one of the more competent scholars refined and converted the Persian translation into exquisite prose and verse; frequently, the emperor himself provided the felicitous phrase. Like when Akbar commissioned the translation of *Mahabharata* into Persian titled *Razmnama*, the meaning of the text was explained by Hindu scholars, then on its basis a first Persian draft was made by the Muslim theologian Naqib Khan into Persian and this was then refined into elegant prose or verse by Abu Fazl. The paraphrase was created by Hindu interpreters known as "*asma'baran*" and translated into Persian by Muslim translators known as "*motarajjiman*" . Initially, the process that emerged was more of a Persian paraphrase than a literal translation with frequent insertions of explanatory sentences and clarifying words of the interpreter. Abdul Qadir-i-Badauni, under Akbar's orders, translated a greater number of Sanskrit texts into Persian than any other scholar, acknowledging that Pandits were engaged as interpreters for the translation of Sanskrit works. Findiriski supports this and remarked that in such instances, Pandits generally read the texts and orally interpreted these in Hindi or Persian for Muslim scholars, who then transcribed the oral interpretations in Persian.[5]

The Indo-Sanskrit literary interactions and translations under the aegis of Mughal continued its journey in the reign of different Mughal Emperors and reached pinnacle during the time of Prince Dara Shukoh, who showed an immense interest in the Quran and Sufi mysticism. He made a substantial contribution to the study of Islamic mystical traditions and ancient Indian spirituality by highlighting the parallels between Islamic Sufi teachings and conventional Hindu spirituality. As a result, he became a part of a significant literary movement that aimed at adapting Islam to conform to Indian spiritual traditions. Dara Shukoh was the latest inheritor to this tradition, although the movement itself had its origins in the many Muslim rulers who had previously supported the translation of several Sanskrit texts into Persian in an effort to broaden Muslim comprehension of Hinduism. The translations of the *Yogavashistha*, *Ramayana*, and *Mahabharata* were made under Emperor Akbar's *Maktab Khana*, primarily with the political motive of maintaining harmony in governance. Whereas, Dara Shukoh has been depicted as a saintly person who was closely associated with prominent Qadiri Sufis of that time, produced two dictionaries (*tazkiras*) of Sufis, composed three important treatises on complex mystical doctrines, studied religious scriptures and Indian philosophy, and, by taking on the task of translation of multiple Hindu texts from Sanskrit into

[5] Ibid., Preface. p. xiv.

Persian, he commenced a dialogue on the profound relationships that link Islamic and Hindu traditions.[6]

This paper focuses on the different translations of *Yogavasistha* during the Mughal period and a discussion on an academic endeavour of Dara Shukoh, which is his translation of the *Yogavasistha*.[7]

In order to shed additional light on Dara Shukoh's relation with *Yogavasistha* for the research of the interaction between the Mughals and Sufis, as well as on a larger Indian ethos of religious and philosophical dialogue, there emerges the questions, why did the prince request a revised translation of the *Yogavasistha* subsequent to Nizam Panipati's translation that was deemed very "exact" and "true to the original"? Was there something Dara missed from the Persian renditions of *Yogavasistha*? Why did he decide to write or commission a new translation in 1655?

The initiatives undertaken by Dara in 1653 CE, particularly his connection with the Hindu mendicant referred to as Baba Lal Dayal, were not without precedence in previous Mughal courts, obviously; he went one step ahead of those who came before him by identifying a core truth present in Indian literature.[8] He had insightful conversations with Baba Lal Dayal on subjects such as asceticism, Hindu mythology, and soul transmigration. These conversations reveal Dara Shukoh's developing interest in comparative religion, especially in an effort to understand Indian spirituality in relation to Sufism. His deep interest in the *Qadiriashghal* prompted him to research yogic meditation techniques,[9] and hence in 1656 CE, he translated the *Yogavasistha* into Persian after discovering that the meditation techniques of some of these were similar to one another.

In light of these concerns, it is important to look afresh at the Mughal *Yogavasistha*. To start with, there is a brief glance at the motivations for the selection of this work by Mughal scholars and their patrons, as well as how they attempted to convey their interpretations of it in Persian.

---

[6] See, Hasrat, Bikrama Jit. 1953. *Dara Shikuh: Life and Works.* Calcutta. For Sufi works- Chapter II to VIII and for Hindu traditions works Chapter IX to XII.

[7] Dara Shukoh, *Jugbashist*.

[8] Kinra, R. 2009. 'Infantilizing Baba Dara: The Cultural Memory of Dara Shukoh and the Mughal Public Sphere.' *Journal of Persianate Societies* 2 (2). 165-93.

[9] Hasrat. *Dara Shikuh.* It is stated that 'The mediation on the three centres of the heart, usher the neophyte the Plane of Counterparts (*Alam-i-Mithal*) which forms a gateway to the Astro-mental Plane (*Alam-i-Malakut*) which is known as the World of Dreams.' pp. 72-74.

The *Yogavasistha*

A popular colossal work on par with the *Mahabharata, Upanisads* and *Bhagavad Gita,* the *Yogavasistha* is an integrative philosophical discourse characteristic of Hinduism. The author of *Ramayana*, sage Valmiki, is attributed and recognised with writing the work. According to legend, he explained the entirety of *Yogavasistha* to sage Bharadvaja as a discourse between Rama and the sage Vasistha. It is also known as the *Maha Ramayana, Arsa Ramayaṇa, Jnanavasistha* or *Vasistha Ramayana* and is one of the many Sanskrit texts that have been translated.[10]

It is credited to Valmiki and composed during 6-7 AD, but at present, there is no critical edition of *Yogavasistha*, hence, its exact date is still unknown. The views of the *Yogavasistha* are also similar to those of the idealistic school of Buddhism and the text appears to be a Brahmanic adaptation of idealistic Buddhism. Another significant instance of this inclination towards adapting Buddhist idealism along Brahmanic lines is found in the writings of Gaudapada and Sankara. It is therefore possible that the author of the *Yogavasistha* was either a contemporary of Gaudapada or Sankara, writing around 800 AD or a century before them.[11]

Yogavasistha serves as a source book for many schools of thought and seekers of self-knowledge and liberation. This work is highly regarded for its literary beauty and lyricism, as well as for its philosophy and hint of practical mysticism. Its distinctive style also stems from the use of storytelling by the author to make the high ideals of philosophy approachable and comfortable. The text asserts that the ultimate reality and the human self are fundamentally the same. It rejects dualism maintaining that all beings are one. This has similarities with the teachings of Muslim mystics because the *Sufi* doctrine of *Wahadatul al Wujud* (Unity of being) and the *Vedanic* principle of *Ekam Brahma dvitiya nasti* (the reality is one without second) are identical, and the Sufi concept of *Anal Haq* (I am the truth) is precisely the same as the famous Vedic aphorism "*Aham Brahmasmi*" which is a core philosophy of *Adavita Vedanta*.

There are presently two known works under the name *Yogavasistha*: the larger one, known as *Brhad Yogavasistha,* which is said to contain 32,000 poems attributed as a long discourse between Prince Rama (esteemed as Sri Ramachandra, or "Ram Chand" in Persian versions) and the sage Vasistha (transliterated as "Basisht" in Persian versions). The smaller one, *Laghu Yogavasistha* contains about 6,000 verses (*Granthas*). The detailed information is simplified while maintaining the substance of the longer text in the shortened version. It

[10] Dasgupta, S. 1923. *A History of Indian Philosophy*. Vol. 2, p. 231.
[11] Ibid.

appears that Gauda Abhinanda wrote a shorter one in Kashmir during the ninth century CE. An even shorter form, the *Yogavasisthasara-sangraha* (the compilation of the essence of *Yogavasistha*), was created in the fourteenth century by Vidyaranya (Madhvacarya). In addition, there is a 225-stanza abridgement known as *Yogavasistha Sara*, which is the essence of *Yogavasistha*. It is evident that this classic text on Indian philosophy was chosen for translation several times and it is widely believed that all the Persian versions are derived from the translation of *Laghu Yogavasistha*.

Even during the brief period between its first appearance as the *Yogavasistha* and its original appearance as *Moksopaya* ('the means to liberation'), a literary book was published in Kashmir in the tenth century; the book went through multiple incarnated versions. These included modifications to the framing stories that introduced it and, shifts in the philosophical lexicon. The changes that were introduced were to accommodate this work within a framework more appropriate for a Brahmanical theo-philosophical tradition and supporting common *Vedantic* terminology, which replaced a large portion of the unique vocabulary of the text.[12] A 5000-verse version of the *Laghu Yogavasistha*, emerged in between the comprehensive (*brhad*) texts. This version was formerly known as *Moksopayasara*, a text that is thought to have been written by Abhinanda of Kashmir, though it is unclear when it was written or by whom. However, some of the structural improvements made by the *Laghu Yogavasistha* have had an impact on subsequent versions of the *Yogavasistha*. One such modification is the two different ways the chapters are arranged in the two translations into Persian separately by Dara Shukoh and Nizam Panipati. The fundamental philosophical ideas of these texts were diverted or misrepresented in a number of subsequent versions.[13]

The first significant similarity between these works is the placing of the philosophical discourses between Rama and Vasistha Muni within the larger context of *Ramayana*. The second aspect involves the incorporation of philosophical narratives, many of which are unique to these writings and distinctly convey the philosophical objectives of the text. The philosophy presented in this work posits that a non-ascetic freedom in action is not merely a potentiality but is also a desirable state, grounded in thoughtful consideration and rational research. This perspective emphasises the essence of authenticity and the vision of liberation in life, known as *jivanmukti*. The advocacy of freedom is not found in spiritual praxis, ritual, or even meditation, but rather in thought, which is theoretically accessible to all people, regardless of

[12] Slaje, W. 1994. *Vom Moksopaya-Sastrazum Yogavasistha-Maharamayana*.
[13] For the number of 'short' versions of the *Yogavasistha*, see the discussion and references cited in Jurgen, Hanneder. 2006. *Studies on the Moksopaya*, pp. 10-13.

social standing, eligibility, or entitlement to Brahmanical norms. According to the *Laghu*, the only criteria that determines whether a person is eligible (*adhikara*) to learn from the text, is their desire to acquire information, which is contingent upon their not being someone who has either full capability of learning or who already possesses knowledge. Eligibility is not determined by social status, ritual purity concerns, or community membership but this is a key aspect of the overall philosophical perspective of the book.[14]

It is crucial to highlight that this work represented the zenith of its purpose as a paradigm for knowledge-seeking leaders who faced conflict between the pressures of disenchantment and disengagement (*vairagya*) from the principles of power and pleasure, while simultaneously needing to project an image of endorsing these values in their external engagements.[15] Notably, the book portrays the predicament of rulers split between opposing values as the product of reasoned deliberation (*vicara*) that is an accomplishment rather than a sign of pessimism or simple emotional confusion. Therefore, the remedy to the problem must also be logical and must bring rulers back into the world via effective, graceful and thoughtful action.

Dara Shukoh as a scholar recognized the intriguing perspective of the *Yogavasistha*—that the philosophical discussions between Rama and Vasistha is a model for awakening and shaping the thought processes for a king, and were so effective that the king became enlightened simply by overhearing the conversations.[16] Prior to examining the reading and translation methods that the prince promoted, it is necessary to provide some background information on the Persian *Yogavasistha*, which were prevalent both inside and outside the Mughal court.

The Persian *Yogavasistha*

The greatest translation of *Yogavasistha* into Persian is attributed to Dara Shukoh, who oversaw its completion in 1656 CE. Before the translation of *Yogavasistha* by Dara Shukoh, there were three expediently Persian translations of the text. One translation originates from the era of Akbar, who reigned from 1556 to 1605. It was composed in 1597 with the support of his son and successor, Prince Salim, later known as Jahangir, who ruled from 1605 to 1628. The work was authored by Nizam Panipati, an associate (*kamtarin-ibandagan-idargah*) of the prince.[17] Panipati translated *Laghu Yogavasistha* of Abhinanda Kashmiri verbatim. The additional

[14] Aiyar, K.N. *Laghu Yogavasishtha*. Ist edition, 42.
[15] Hanneder underscores this aspect of the text.
[16] For the narrative, see Swami Venkatesananda. 1993. *Vasistha's Yoga*. p. 169.
[17] Panipati, *Jug Basisht*.

two versions date from Jahangir's reign: one is attributed to Sufi Qutb-i Jahani, well known as Shaikh Sufi Sharif, and the other to the visiting Iranian philosopher Abu al-Qasim Findiriski (1562-1640 AD). Findiriski authored his work with the pen name 'Fani' and also created a glossary of difficult terms and words titled "*Kashful-Lughat-i-Kulliayat-i-jog Basist*." The *Yogavasistha* by Findiriski is explicitly a selection (*muntakhab*) rather than a continuous translation of a Sanskrit text. Qutb-i Jahani's *Atwardar Hall-i Asrar*, which was dedicated to Emperor Jahangir, appears to have been based on the *Yogavasistha-sara*.

***Yogavasistha* of Nizamal-Din Panipati**

According to Panipati, Prince Salim valued knowledge and showed a desire to discover the truth. It is believed that during one of the evening gatherings, where Pandits frequented, he was told about the *Yogavasistha.* His penchant for narratives and literary discourses led him to request for a Persian translation of the *Yogavasistha*—considered a collection of outstanding and valuable exhortations and advice derived from authentic works of the Brahmin intellectuals of India—from Sanskrit into Persian Consequently, Panipati assumed responsibility (*mutasaddi*) for translating it. Without any additions or interpolations, Hindu scholars Patahan Misra Jaipuri and Jagannat Misra Banarasi provided the substance and contents (*mazmunwa ma hasal*) of the text. Subsequently, these were rendered into simple Persian.[18]

In the translation of Panipati, it is stated that those with a deep understanding and those who seek the right path are more inclined towards the world of eternity (*'alam-ibaga*) than they are in this world (*alam-ifani*). Their souls traverse the garden of the enigmatic palace, existing independently of the soil, the water, and the material aspects of this world. They are the antithesis of those who seek the brief and mortal pleasures of this world and those who are unaware of reality and engrossed in worldly pleasures.

The depiction of the Prince Salim by Panipati in the Preface of the work challenges the conventional view of Jahangir, who is often characterized as a dipsomaniac and, who upon his ascension to the throne, displayed minimal engagement in the governance of the empire. Panipati's text offers substantial corroboration for numerous writings concerning the emperor.

An extensive Introduction titled "*Muqaddama-ikitab-i Jugbasisht*" follows the Preface by the Translator and which appears to be Gauda Abhinanda's Introduction to his *Laghu Yogavasistha*.[19] As the length of *Yogavasistha* was excessively long, Abhinanda produced a shorter version. He divided his redaction into six chapters (*Prakaranas*), each of which was

[18] Panipati, *Jug Basisht*. pp. 1-3.
[19] Panipati, *Jug Basisht*. pp. 5-10.

then divided into smaller sections. For the first three *Prakaranas* there is a commentary called *Vasistha Candrika* by Atman Suka, and for the last three *Prakaranas,* Mummidi Devaraya wrote the *Samsaratarani* commentary.[20]

The translation, in most of the manuscripts of Panipati, concludes with the sage Vasistha's advice that “The person who remembers Truth while destitute will grow to see everything in the world as nothing more than blades of grass. The world is a manifestation of Absolute Being and the beauty of Truth. The Hidden Beauty is an Absolute Existence that transcends all limitations and is free from any labels, symbols, or associations. One should never look at oneself and should always give oneself over to Him, hiding oneself from one's own eyes. Everything is from Him. The ultimate aim of people who are aware of God is this. Never take credit for an action on your own. Go beyond your own limitations and be liberated from hardship and grief.”[21] And subsequently, the advantages and numerous blessings that result from reading the text are enumerated.

***Yogavasistha* by Qutb-i Jahani**

In addition to being presented in court, Panipati's translation seems to have garnered popularity outside of it as well. Hence, it is significant that Jahani began creating his preferred version of the *Yogavasistha*, based on the *Yogavasistha-sara*, shortly after Panipati's work became available. The Introduction in Jahani’s translation reads as follows: "This treatise entitled *Atwardar Hall-I Asrar*, aims to chronicle the accomplishments of Basisht and Ram Chand, who achieved the search of gnosis and brought it out from behind the veil. It was translated into Persian and given attire."[22]

It can be posited that the quality and arrangement of Jahani's text represent a substantial element of the philosophical content found in the *Yogavasistha*, which Panipati had already rendered into Persian. Nonetheless, the author asserts that he undertook a translation of the work rather than simply distilling it from another version. The division of the text into ten chapters further contradicts the idea that it is merely an excerpt from a previous translation. While it is uncertain if indeed the emperor requested the translation, Jahani did dedicate it to Jahangir.

[20] Aiyer, K.N. 1971. *Laghu-Yoga-Vasistha*. Madras. Preface.
[21] Ibid., p. 483. Ibid., editors' comments; epilogue, pp. 488- 9.
[22] Qasemi, Sharif Husain. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Translations of Indian Works.* p. 120. The text proceeds to give a summary of its contents: "It comprises over ten *taur* (*atwar*), or ways, alluding to various practices on the mystical path. And Sufi Sharif, *Atwar fi hall-il-asrar*, British Library, MS Or. 1883, fol. 272a.

Yogavasistha of Abu al-Qasim Findiriski

During the period Findiriski was in India, there was a general trend of comparative philosophical and Gnostic study and research had been stimulated by the Mughal policy of commissioning translations (or retranslations) of several significant Indian religious and secular texts.[23] It was in this intellectual context that Findiriski developed an interest in and translated the *Yogavasistha*.

It is likely that writings of Findiriski were significantly influenced by the contemporary *Safavid* emphasis on intolerance and fixed commitment to a certain Shi'a tradition, which made finding solutions for settling possible conflict all the more appealing. This appears to be evident even in the way Findiriski frames and delivers the text, treating it as something that falls within the purview of Persian literature and philosophy rather than as a projection of the Indic past or present. His deliberate use of a Persian-Sufi linguistic register and his liberal use of Persian poetry to illustrate certain aspects of his text suggest that he was attempting to create a work that, in the absence of these features, might have been discarded as alien and purely Indic and unfit to be read by the elite Persianate.

Muntakhab-i Jug Basasht (Selections from the *Yogavasistha*) by Findiriski is a significant example of the *Yogavasistha's* propagation in Mughal India. The text was translated from the original Sanskrit into simple Persian ("*Azzaban-ihinditarjuma bi farsi-yisada*") according to the initial page of the manuscript that served as the model for Fathullah Mojtabai's edition and translation of Findiriski's *Muntakhab*. Then, in the tribute of the *Yogavasistha,* he composed four verses with the intended connotation that "This book/speech (sukhan) is intended for the world, like water; it is pure and imparts wisdom, similar to the Qur'an. After reading the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions, there is no discourse like this from anyone else. The ignorant person who hears this speech or observes this sensitive secret and expression only perceives its outward manifestation, and thus appears illogical or foolish."[24]

In a way, the text of Findiriski is also a summary. In actuality, unlike Jahani's text, it is not structured into chapters. The text resembles an extensive essay or perhaps a critique focusing on select philosophical themes found in *Yogavasistha*. The first three pages are Preface, wherein God is praised as Brahm (Brahman in Sanskrit), the embodiment of pure reason, ultimate light, and joy, which descended from its ultimate position to create the

[23] For studies of translations in Mughal India, see Carl W. Ernst, "Muslim Studies of Hinduism? A Reconsideration of Arabic and Persian Translations from Indian Languages" and other texts like Truschke, Audrey. 2016. *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court.*
[24] Findiriski. *Muntakhab-i Jug-basasht.* p. 29.

universe of dualism and the concept of plurality. The conversation starts on the fourth page of the revised text as: "Now I tell you about the Oneness of God and the emergence of plurality (*halasukhandarwahdat...mi-kunam*), and thereby explain to you the reality of Creation, how that One person (*zat*) with perfect attributes became several persons (*zat-ha*), in what way He expressed himself into so many creatures."[25] There are two or three additional discussions on different sub-themes that come afterwards, each denoted by a different version of the phrase "Now I tell you."[26]

Most significantly, the sage Vasistha is never seen addressing or guiding Ram Chandra in contrast to the earlier Persian versions. Furthermore, Findiriski's work has key Sanskrit technical phrases in their original form with an elaboration, but Jahani's text contains almost no Sanskrit words. This may perhaps be the one explanation for establishing Findiriski as the commentator (*sharih*) of *Yogavasistha*.

The text focuses on several essential concepts that are repeatedly conveyed through diverse metaphors and exhortations. For instance, it is imperative to acknowledge that Brahm is the fundamental source of all reality and that all other beings originate from it. Furthermore, Brahm, the foundation of everything which is One, will never die and in contrast, these forms or beings will themselves be destroyed. Secondly, one has to acknowledge that existence is just a worldly confinement and that humanity's own belief in an independent existence is an illusion. To break free from imprisonment, the objective should always be to focus the mind on the One from whom existence originates. The text consistently delves into the themes of illusion, deception, and the evaluation of reality, emphasising the importance of these two themes. The Persian verses that are embedded throughout the text to illustrate the aforementioned themes are one of its most unique features.[27] While Findiriski is the author of the majority of these verses, there are also a number of verses by Rumi, Attar, Ni'mat-Allah Wali, and other authors.

Yogavasistha as a Sufi text in Persian translations

Nizam Panipati's first translation during Akbar's reign was more precise and accurate, while the two translations from Jahangir's reign, *Atwardar Hall-i Asrar* by Shaikh Sufi Qutb-I Jahani and *Muntakhab-i Jug Basasht* by Abu al-Qasim Findiriski, are largely interpretive. Putting

[25] Ibid. p. 33.
[26] Ibid. pp. 87 and 90.
[27] On this characteristic of translations of theological works, see Ernst. *Muslim Studies of Hinduism*. pp. 173-95 and 183-84.

these variations aside, it can be seen that the spiritual themes of the *Yogavasistha* are prominently highlighted in all Persian translations of the text.

Findiriski appears to have translated the *Yogavasistha* rather than the *Upanishads* or the *Ramayana* because he was so enamored with Jahani's translation of the text, which had obvious filial ties to the philosophy of Ibn Arabi. He also refined and augmented Jahani's version and skillfully incorporated Persian spiritual poetry into it, producing an elaborate and intensely personal explanation of his Sufi poetic interpretation of the *Yogavasistha* that also reflected his grasp of the Hindu religion. Findiriski's translation of the text, particularly in terms of preparing it as a Sufi text, was an enhanced version of the Jahani's text in certain respects since it focuses particular emphasis to illustrating how the ideas in the original text are consistent with and directly related to those in the Persian Sufi tradition.

Additionally, it seems from the works of Jahani and Findiriski that during the seventeenth century, at least in some spheres, there was an extensive effort to address the apparent parallels between various religious traditions and this trend was also culminated in *Majma' al-Bahrain* and *Sirr-i Akbar* of Dara Shukoh. Even at the level of linguistic register, the *Yogavasistha*'s primarily spiritual concerns are evident in both interpretive versions. The headings of Chapters 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 in Qutb-I Jahani's work are marked by distinct Sufi overtones. The titles of these six chapters are -*Tajrid, Ma'rifat-i Nafs, Ma'rifat-i Haqq, Yaft-I Nafs, Ma'rifat-i Hal-I Khud*, and *Kamal-I Ma'rifat-i Haqq*. Beyond this startling emphasis, the text contains a number of terms that are appropriate for a Sufi text.[28] Perhaps the best way to understand this immersion in Sufi thought and speech styles is through an extensive study of the discourse between Rama and Vasistha in different chapters of text of Jahani.

Findiriski performs a significant role in what could be considered the creation of a Sufi register for the *Yogavasistha's* acceptance. His version of the *Yogavasistha* is mixed with Persian poetry, and it is appropriate to consider it a Sufi commentary on some of the passages of *Yogavasistha*.[29] Findiriski used many stanzas, which are rich in Sufi motifs. These are only a few illustrations from a work rich with Sufi motifs, especially those used to support the idea of the oneness of being (*wahdat al-wujud*). Throughout the text, terms like *sufi, safa* (piety, purity), *fana*, and *baga* appear frequently. And Rama is advised by Vasistha to follow the path of *suluk*.[30]

[28] Qutb-i-Jahani, *Risalah-yi Atwar.* pp. 47, 48, and 49.
[29] Findiriski. *Muntakhab.* p. 33.
[30] Ibid. p. 71.

The translation, its significance and interpretation by Dara Shukoh are influenced and moulded by these works and interpretive aspiration. And it is not simply another Sufi *Yogavasistha* that he brought forth.

Yogavasistha of Dara Shukoh

Dara Shukoh gained popularity among Sufis and Yogis for his translation of Indian intellectual literature and his approach to comparative hermeneutics, as they typically advocated for a universalist perspective on other religions and rejected communal attitudes. Dara Shukoh aspired to study all of the revealed works that were within his reach because he felt that the "utterances of God elucidate and explain one another" and that this would further "the oneness of God" (*Tawhid*). Through his studies, he writes in *Shathiyat*, that the "Truth" is present in all religions and eras and is not the sole possession of any one specific or "chosen" race.

His relationship with Sufi masters, Mulla Shah and Miyan Mir, Hadrat Bari, the Sikh Guru Har Gobind, and the Saint Baba Lal Das were just a few of the many factors that helped him in grooming his philosophical thought. His conversations with Lal Das, referred to as the *Mukalama*, reveal his profound interest in the cosmogony, metaphysics, and mystic symbolism of the Hindu religion. It should not be assumed that Dara Shukoh's theosophist outlook and his learning towards Hinduism were motivated by a desire for political gain or to become a more well-liked monarch in the eyes of both Muslims and Hindus. This was undoubtedly the case with Akbar, who attempted to combine India's varied ethnic and religious traditions into one political synthesis. Dara Shukoh approached things as a truth-seeker, with an insatiable desire to learn and, regardless of where it came from, a willingness to seek it out anywhere he could.[31]

Dara Shukoh's philosophical beliefs and search for truth were evident through his choice of Sanskrit texts to translate, such as the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Yogavasistha*, and *Probodha Chandrodaya*. He was not fully happy with the literary interpretation of the *Yogavasistha* in earlier translations. Therefore in the Preface of *Yogavasistha*, he recounts a dream[32] that heightened his inclination to retranslate *Yogavasistha* in Persian. He narrates how in his dreams the principal saintly characters—*Yogavasistha*, Vasistha and Rama— appeared; he was also present during the discourse between Rama and Vasistha in this dream. He got his motivation through dreams, even though it seems he lives much beyond the time period that the text depicts

[31] Hasrat. *Dara Shikuh.* pp. 6-7.

[32] See Hasrat. *Dara Shikuh.* p. 42. For the text related to the dream. Dara Shukoh believed in what he himself calls; “the somewhat mysterious significance of dreams.” About a dozen of his dreams are to be found in his works. p. 41.

as he imagined himself living in the period not of the text but of the events described in the text, and draws inspiration from it.

His translation work began in 1655–6 AD and his scholarly engagement with the text has several aspects that merit an honest assessment. These include his creation of a textual basis for the translation and the interpretive modalities he employed in an attempt to understand the work. Accordingly, before he even started translating, he established new standards for himself and directed a new source text to be produced.[33]

The translation of Dara Shukoh adheres to Abhinanda's *Laghu Yogavasistha*. Nevertheless, Dara Shukoh omits numerous verses, shortens others, and incorporates explanatory notes from other pertinent texts, such as certain medieval commentaries on *Yogavasistha*.[34] Chand and Abidi highlight that the Persian version by Dara is influenced by Vedantic philosophy and its alignment with Sufi philosophical ideas.[35]

It appears that other scholars contributed to the preparation of the text that served as the foundation for the translation, including many pandits who dictated the text to others who documented it. The name of the translator designated by Dara Shukoh remains unknown; nevertheless, based on the translation, it seems likely that Wali Ram served as the translator or one of the translators, given that Wali Ram penned some of the Persian and Hindi verses included in the Persian text. One Habib-allah was identified as the real translator by the India Office catalogue's author. Therefore, the translation may not necessarily be Dara Shukoh's own accomplishment.[36] It is important to note that, although the prince is addressed in the third person in this context—that is, as the one who orders or requests that the translation be prepared "under his auspices"—he takes care to emphasise that the research conducted by the scholars working under his direction will be verified by him.[37] But what was the nature of his supervision? Does this mean that he made enough of a contribution to be able to proclaim himself to be the translator of the *Yogavasistha*? This is a gray area because there is evidence of his own research and interpretation in addition to his stated authority for the preparation of the text.

The Preface clearly shows that Dara Shukoh's goal was to offer clear and succinct interpretations of the Sanskrit terms in Persian for this novel translation as, in the Preface, he writes, " Gratitude, adoration and submission are offered to One, the Sun of whose glory shines

[33] Dara Shukoh, *Jugbashist*. p. 5.
[34] See Chand, Tara and Hasan, Amir Abidi. "Introduction" in Dara Shukoh, *Jugbashist*, 5 and 13.
[35] Cf. Chand and Abidi's comments in their "Introduction", in Dara Shukoh, *Jugbashist*.
[36] See Chand and Abidi, "Introduction", in Dara Shukoh, *Jugbasisht*.
[37] Dara Shukoh, *Jugbashist*. p. 3.

in every atom of the cosmos and where grandeur is manifested in the universe, although, He is hidden from all eye and is behind the veil; boundless benedictions in all sincerity and faith free from error, omission or sanctimoniousness to that choicest product of His creation, to that personification of all that is best i.e. Muhammad the Prophet, and the same to ‘Ali the object of his love. Let it be known to the noble souls that the scholars who have before this translated *Jog-Basisht* into Persian and omitted some of the Sanskrit terms, have not been able to convey the subtitles and full sense of the text. It was for this reason … since the translations of this sacred book which are extant, have not proved of much use to the seekers of truth, it is my desire that a retranslation should be undertaken in conference with learned men of all sects who are conversant with the text.”[38]

In order to prevent misinterpretation, he suggests that a term be translated or understood in Persian the first time it appears. However, if the term recurs throughout the text, he would like this interpretation to be repeated or even the original Sanskrit term used, so that readers are familiar with it in both languages. The vocabulary choices in the text are even more astonishing. For instance, Rama addresses Visvamitra as *ustad* (master), *dana-yibuzurg* (the wise elder), *brahman-ihama-dan* (the all-knowing Brahmin), and *buzurg-ihama-dan* (the all-knowing elder), rather than *rikshir* or *rikshir-ikamil*, a peculiar derivation found in the text of Panipati.[39] It is obvious that Dara Shukoh used vocabulary and phrases that were more suited to the Persian listening.

This does not, however, suggest that Dara's text is more Arabicized or Persianized. On the other hand, the text of Panipati often contains deeply Persianized and Arabicized expressions like "*barak-Allah*" and "*ahsanta, ahsanta*" that are not present in Dara Shukoh's translation. [40] Dara Shukoh likewise tried to avoid unnecessary parenthetical interpolations, as demonstrated by Panipati's counterparts for the months of *Kunwar* and *Kartik* with Persian *Mihr* or *Aban*. He also steered clear of out-of-date expressions such as "according to Hindu belief" (*dari'tiqad-ihunud*) and "as it is written in the reliable texts of the people of Hind" (*darkutub-imu'tabariahl-i hind*). [41]

The manuscript of Dara Shukoh does not include the Preface of Abhinanda from Panipati's version and replaces it with the "*Bairag Prakaran*" (chapter of disenchantment, or *vairagya-prakarana* in Sanskrit). This omission demonstrates Dara Shukoh's access to a larger

[38] Hasrat. *Dara Shikuh*. p. 235.
[39] Panipati. *Jug Basisht*, pp. 27 and 38; Dara Shukoh. *Jugbashist*. pp. 18,20, 21, 22, and 28.
[40] Panipati. *Jug Basisht*. p. 55.
[41] Ibid. pp. 29, 35, 41, and 42.

range of Indian texts and his comparatively lesser reliance on Abhinanda's recension. However, by omitting this Introduction, certain details regarding the "Hindu dharma" mentioned within, such as the explanations of the terms "*avatara*" and "*yuga*", have been eliminated; it appears that Dara Shukoh viewed these as insignificant diversions from the main focus of the text. Dara Shukoh's careful avoidance of ideas like soul transmigration, which seem to be accurately described in Panipati's version, lends credibility to this notion.[42] He seems to be judging these ideas overly carefully, which would only serve to further detach Persian Muslim readers from the text as a subsidiary to the primary idea. His significant claim that earlier translators were unsuccessful in uncovering the intricate thoughts hidden within the text may be better understood through these illustrations. Dara Shukoh substantially and deliberately simplified the text to unveil these thoughts.

An analysis of narratives and discourses found in different available versions of *Yogavasistha* reveals that Panipati's translation, which closely follows Abhinanda's original text, is significantly lengthier than Dara Shukoh's text. This analysis provides valuable insights for the brief comparison of Dara Shukoh's text with earlier texts. Despite the fact that Dara Shukoh included insightful interpolations from other Indian philosophical writings, his text is considerably shorter. It is found that Dara Shukoh, in contrast to Qutb-i Jahani and Findiriski, selectively and albeit in a shortened form, reproduces the stories themselves, giving them significance. He was therefore discontented with Findiriski's as well as Qutb-i Jahani's translation techniques since these ignored the important philosophical lessons of the text in favour of an exclusive focus on philosophy. Nevertheless, the writing of Dara Shukoh is clear and accurate. Instead of translating the stories verbatim, he stays away from the Sanskrit text's ancillary aspects and instead presents them in a clear, concise, and concentrated manner. He accomplishes this because, when translating this text into Persian, he was concerned in maintaining the work's content—including the use of stories—while making it legible and approachable for a Persianate readership.

Following the brief comparison of the translation of Dara Shukoh with other earlier translations, there is a need to evaluate if Dara Shukoh's translation meets the standards of translation based on the methods employed for translating from Sanskrit to Persian. A translation can solely undergo a metamorphic transformation, rather than being interpreted literally. Also, the translational problems and techniques are related to one another and there

[42] Ibid. pp. 13, 29, and 53.

are four primary characteristics that are necessary for an effective and qualitative translation. These characteristics are:

(i) Faithfulness to the original text

(ii) Readability of the text translated

(iii) Clarity of the text translated

(iv) Achievement of purpose i.e. whether the reader of the translation understands the original, then the purpose is achieved.

The translator has a challenging and important task of staying true to the original source when translating a particular text. It is a general belief that poetry is untranslatable, particularly because of the original rhyme and rhythm of the language. When translating poetry, there is always a high probability of loss of emotional impact because the translator does not have the same feelings or sense of mood as the original poet. Translators frequently add words to the original in order to make it clearer. Occasionally, annotations are added to provide clarification on the mythological references. In translating philosophical works, the translator must be proficient in the source language, the target language and the philosophy. The translation of verses poses a challenging endevaour. Thus, in order to improve readability and clarity, poetry is frequently rendered in prose, like in the Persian translation of *Rajatarangini* and *Yogavasistha*, while the original texts are in verse.

If an excessive number of unfamiliar words and phrases from the original are kept in the translated text, it may occasionally break off the flow of the narrative. There is a probability that a literal translation will not be able to accurately convey the intended meaning. Many deviations from the original texts are observed in translations of those days, particularly in Persian translations of Sanskrit works. This is because the translations may have been done by a collective of scholars, they may not have been taken directly from the original texts, or, they may have been translated based on information that was heard through oral tradition. The time-period of translation frequently influences the terms chosen, as evidenced in the translation of Sanskrit texts into Persian.

Any literary work, regardless of language, originates and exists only inside the specific locale or linguistic boundaries of that language. Only translators make it possible for literary works to flourish from one region to others and from a particular country to the other countries. Therefore, a work of the translator in the literary arts is not only incredibly valuable but also vital.

Translation might be the most effective way to preserve and enhance the cultural repositories of the world in modern times because communication is essential to the

dissemination of information. The original literatures are strengthened and gain gravitas by these translation. And when viewed from these perspectives, the Persian translation of the Sanskrit text *Yogavasistha* by Dara Shukoh is distinguished as a classic. The Persian version adhered solely to the spirit of the original text rather than its format when presenting Indian philosophy to a Persian readership. Dara Shukoh translated the *slokas* in an appealing yet simple manner, leaving the text unchanged. There are two reasons why language can be (deemed) simple. The target reader may not have studied Sanskrit, so the language may have been simpler for them. Alternatively, it may have been translated relatively late, and modern periods are known for their direct and simple descriptions, while earlier periods were known for their elaborate styles. However, the original six-chapter *Prakarana* arrangement of *Yogavasistha* is maintained and these six chapters are:

1. *Birag Prakaran* or *Vairagya Prakarana* (Chapter on Detachment)- it begins with Rama feeling distressed at human suffering, the nature of existence, and the state of the world.
2. *Mumukshubivahar Prakaran* or *Mumuksu Vyavahara Prakarana* (Chapter on Discipline for aspirant longing for liberation)- this chapter illustrates the need for self-effort in all spiritual endeavours, the nature of individuals who seek such release, and the yearning for emancipation through the character of Rama.
3. *Utpatti Prakaran* or *Utpattiprakarana* (Chapter on arising and birth) –the chapter details the origin of all creation and also the emergence of the spiritual aspect of Rama.
4. *Istitprakaran* or *Sthitiprakarana* (Chapter on preservation)-the chapter delves into the essence of the world and explores various non-dualistic concepts through a number of narratives. It underscores the significance of free will and the creative capabilities inherent in humanity.
5. *Upasamprakran* or *Upasamaprakarana* (Chapter on quiescence of mind)- the chapter looks deep into the practice of meditation as a means to overcome false dualism, experience a sense of oneness, and harness its transformative potential for the individual.
6. *Nirban Prakaran* or *Nirvanaprakarana* (Chapter on Liberation)- the chapter depicts the state of an enlightened and blissful Rama.

The allure of translation also lies in maintaining the proper names, technical phrases, and the sequence of the narration exactly as they appear in the original Sanskrit. The only natural linguistic change observed in contemporary Indian languages is phonetic, such as *ja* for *ya* and *ba* for *va*. The other changes in the translation were like *abidya* for *avidya, Balmik* for *Valmiki, basna* for *vasana, bedant* for *vedanta, bicar* for *vicara, bilas* for *vilasa, birag* for

vairagya, Bisvamitra for *Visvamitra, Byala* for *Vyala, Curala* for *Cudala, and Jog Bashist* for *Yoga Vasistha.* A few terms are the same such as *cidakasa, jivanmukta, paramatma, prakasvarup, sankalpa, sastra, vedantins* etc. The other significant aspect is that the original terms have been kept and concise explanations have been added as descriptors to further simplify it for the intended Persian readers.

Even though the Persian version closely followed the original Sanskrit text, nevertheless some additional information was included in it. There was an infusion of text with references to local culture that would appeal to the target Persian people. To make the prose seem to be in a more comforting and more welcoming tone, the equivalent Persian phrases are occasionally used instead. *Sheytan*, for instance, represents *Raksasa*; *Guleneeloo* for, a water lily, represents *Kamala*, a lotus; and *derakhtetoba* a tree in Paradise. Occasionally, the words and phrases that are popular during the translation periods are reflected in the texts. Like, Ramcander for Rama, Avadh for Ayodhya, and Mahadey for Siva reflect the widespread influence of *Ramcarit Manas* of Tulsidasa. Similarly, in the first chapter, the Persian version introduces the character of Bharat, as Rama goes on pilgrimage, while the original Sanskrit text only mentions Laksmana. The inclusion of Bharat in the Persian version reflects the devotional period of Tulsidasa.

The stories of the text are composed in the same sequence as they were in the original. Occasionally, some are added to provide background information. For instance, the Persian translation includes an extensive commentary on the animosity between Visvamitra and Vasisthaa, as well as Visvamitra's attainment of the title Bramarsi. The Sanskrit translation excludes this information as Sanskrit readers are already well-acquainted with the stories. Also some stories have been omitted For example, the story of *bilva* (*bel*) fruit, *sila* (granite) and *vetala* (goblin) may be considered overly characteristic of Indian religious beliefs, but intricate and cryptic for the Persian readers.

The exceptional abilities of the poet and use of similes and metaphors in the Sanskrit *Yogavasistha* testifies to his highly developed poetic imagination, profound insight into human nature, and deep observation. The philosophy becomes explicit through the frequent use of similes. However, the Persian translation is clear, concise and written with an array of Persian readers in mind, none of whom is familiar with Sanskrit. Hence, Dara Shukoh doesn't use many poetic similes. Since he was writing for Persian readers, he purposefully avoided literary elaboration and Sanskrit exactness. Even though he wrote in an extremely direct manner, occasional moments of exquisite poetry are visible.

The further noteworthy and captivating aspect is the inclusion of a Persian stanza, known as a *rubai*, in each chapter that corresponds with the theme of the chapter. This provides the translation an aspect of uniqueness. It was crucial for Dara Shukoh to translate the ideas of sacred Sanskrit text using interpretative translation techniques rather than completely adhering to a literal translation method.

Conclusion

The Muslim rulers in India actively promoted the dissemination of Sanskrit knowledge and supported various translation projects as translation played a vital role in nearly all cultural interactions, being essential for transmitting concepts and preserving knowledge. To promote Indo-Persian translation endeavours the Mughal court gave titles to Sanskrit and other scholars with a dedicated view to promote Sanskrit and Persian. This resulted in a distinctive amalgamation of cultural, religious, and imperial influences within the varied multilingual and multicultural tapestry of the Mughal court.

The translation was carried out and completed in three phases by a number of scholars, some fluent in Persian and others in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit text to be translated was first paraphrased in Hindi by Hindu scholars. One of the many Muslim courtiers then translated this paraphrased text from Hindi into Persian in the second stage and finally, one of the more competent scholars refined and converted the Persian translation into exquisite prose and verse. In the Mughal period, the Sanskrit text *Yogavasistha* was translated into Persian by Nizam Panipati, Qutb-i Jahani, Abu al-Qasim Findiriski and Dara Shukoh.

The brief comparative analysis of the four translations reveals that Panipati's version closely follows Abhinanda's original text and is lengthier than Dara Shukoh's rendition. Despite Dara Shukoh incorporating insightful additions from other Indian philosophical works, his translation is notably shorter. It is evident that Dara Shukoh, unlike Qutb-i Jahani and Findiriski, chooses to selectively reproduce the stories themselves, albeit in a condensed form, thereby emphasising their importance. Dara Shukoh expressed dissatisfaction with the translation methods of Findiriski and Qutbi-Jahani as they overlooked the crucial philosophical teachings of the text in favour of a sole focus on the philosophy of *Yogavasistha*. Dara Shukoh's text is characterised by clarity and precision, as he avoids delving into the peripheral aspects of the Sanskrit text and instead presents them in a straightforward, concise, and focused manner. His translation also meets the standards of translation based on the methods employed for translating from Sanskrit to Persian.In the text of Dara Shukoh, the Indian philosophy was

presented to a Persian readership that only followed the spirit of the original work, not its structure.

Dara Shukoh is the epitome of integrating the various beliefs of Sufism and Vedantism. He had delved into the study of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. And with that zest and intellectual knowledge, he managed to translate *Yogavasistha* with great precision and achieved success in this endeavour with his quest to find commonality between Muslim mysticism and Hindu philosophy. While maintaining faithfulness to the original Sanskrit text, the Persian translation of Dara Shukoh at times exudes a unique essence, ultimately establishing it as a classic synthesized philosophical work in the midst of Mughal tryst with Sanskrit texts.

Acknowledgement

The author thanks the anonymous referees for their helpful comments that improved the quality of the research paper and the editorial team comprising Haimanti Dey, and the Editorial Team of the Research and Publications Division for their constructive suggestions.