

Streams to Healthy Living Yoga: Freeing the Source of the Ancient Bauddha

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Note on Methodology: This paper highlights recent scientific research shaped by a cultural-archaeological approach designed to identify ancient yoga elements preserved in contemporary South, Southeast, and Far-East Asian ascetic-arts traditions, and to determine the values of their formative bearing with regard to reemerging Bauddha narratology. We wish to convey three heuristic points: (i) *yoga* is assuredly a Pāli term abundantly attested throughout the canon, (ii) the word *theravāda* is also confirmed but its sightings are extremely rarely in the texts, and (iii), the canonical Buddha articulates these words in ways more remarkable than ever imagined. In view of the procedural framework of this text and its art-film-literary-critical vetting of the chief protagonist of the broad, diverse, and heterogeneous texts here examined, we regard the “Buddha” as a purely fictive figure, essentially a “code word” that represents a yet decrypted bulk of asceto-shamano-philosophical lore that might be traceable back to Old Iranian. Yet furthermore aware that the mere insinuation of diverse opinion risks personal peril, we stop short to pressing these postulations and present an array contiguous dots, the type of which the mind delights in connecting, while taking to our side the “Gombrich

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Buddha” as a shorthand for the authors of the early texts with diverse opinions and attitudes.¹ Finally, in accordance with our scientific tilt, the authorial voice ascribed to this paper is designatedly non-Buddhistic.

HEALTHY LIVING YOGA AND IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

This paper postulates Healthy Living Yoga as the conceptual wellspring and interim vector of an ancient oral tradition of “Bauddha”—that endogenous, vernacular, and self-ascribing term displaced by the modern term “Buddhism” in the early part of 19th century.² Yoga as the overarching theme of this paper is presented to provide conventional “Buddhism” its needed rationale as it dithers at a loss to affect any role in enhancing healthy living on a global scale. In accordance with the United Nation Millennium Development Goals enshrined in the text of the Millennium Declaration (2000), we honor the theme of this 2014 United Nations Day of Vesak Conference by proclaiming a conceptual “Healthy Living Yoga” as concurrently the source and the activating principal of an ancient postmodern Bauddha legacy. We furthermore challenge conventional “Buddhism” to bravely re-evaluate and come to real terms with the blaring inconsistency of its piecemeal identity; to stop obsessing on essentialized creeds and avail itself to “local realities”³; to cultivate the field of its long-suppressed heritage and see that it is through and through nothing but Yoga.

But it is also true that Healthy Living Yoga—beyond its ability to render people fit—has for more than two millennia recognized mankind’s most essential needs: sustainable nutrition, health, and education, and a means to gain happiness *in this world*. And while enjoyment of material prosperity is upheld, the developmental goal of Healthy Living Yoga is the transfiguration of human perception. So why is “Buddhism” so

1. Richard F. Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*, 1996: 78-9.

2. We are well aware that unmediated use of the term “Buddhism” without mitigation or variant term would achieve little more than to preserve the immutable, dull, and pointless tradition of its recall. But there is much more to it than that.

3. Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Between Universalism and Relativism: A critique of the UNESCO concepts of culture,” in *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*, Cambridge, 2001: 127–48.

utterly out of touch with humanity”’s longing to appreciate health in solid, quantifiable, and straightforward terms? Having staked its claim on a middle kingdom vantage of rarefied abstraction and indifference to the body: could its clerics ever rise to the epitomes of fitness, expert guides to the healthy life? Could they ever find solace in Buddha”’s affirmation that “Spiritual yoga leads to light”?⁴ We cite an oral adage of the ancient Bauddha—”If you to want cure others, first learn to cure yourself.”

But does conventional Buddhism have “NOTHING” to offer? Are its present-day specialists –its spiritual authorities – “COMPLETELY” – incapable of directing civilization along the path of healthy living? Recent studies show that almost half of Thailand”’s clerics are clinically obese and suffer from a range of lifestyle disorders such as high blood pressure, type-II diabetes, allergies, and ulcers.⁵ Anecdotal data draws a similar pattern among the Sinhalese clergy.⁶ These findings are alarming. Medical researchers note three combining elements that lead to obesity. Insufficient exercise and gorging are apparent, but environmental factors may also contribute up to eighty percent.⁷ Idleness and junk food are other indications, along with exposure to “media,” which conjures a picture of overweight people struggling to reduce but constantly assailed by slender celebrities compelling them to eat unhealthy food.⁸ Obesity furthermore raises risks of contracting associated life-style disorders such as hypertension, arteriosclerosis, and chronic kidney and heart dysfunction. Prevention is the best defense. The key is proper exercise.

Yoga enjoys immense popularity with health-conscious people around the globe. This is mainly due to the positive impressions of its exercise systems that loosely pivot on the notion of *asana*, “bodily poses” or

4. Dhammapada (282): *yoga ve jayati bhuri, ayoga bhuri sankhaya*.

5. “Rub my belly: Why half of Thailand”’s Buddhist monks are now obese,” Mail Online news story, accessed Saturday, Feb 01, 2014, <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2182070/Thailands-Buddhist-monks-obese.html>>.

6. “Sri Lanka draws up healthy menu for monks,” BBC online news story, 27 November 2012, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-20512718>>.

7. Melinda S. Sothorn; Gordon, Stewart T. “Prevention of Obesity in Young Children,” 2003, 42(2): 101-111.

8. “The role of media in childhood obesity,” Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004: 1 <<http://kff.org/other/issue-brief/the-role-of-media-in-childhood-obesity/>>.

“exercises,” that are typified by various bending, twists and turns, and inverted postures like standing on your head. These promote vitality, composure, strength, and command far ranging therapeutic value. But in Patañjali’s well known circa third century BCE *Yoga Sūtras*, āsana ranks a humble third in its gradated eight-rung *Aṣṭāṅga* course that is also described as *Rāja-yoga*. The fourth-rung training, *prāṇāyāma*, marks the actual window to yoga.

Commenting on Yoga with due respect to the procedural framework set for this paper, we endorse no pre-historic “proto-modality,” no classic or baroque pre-modern school, or any kind of trending industrial label. We prefer to articulate a Healthy Living Yoga that builds on existing popular perceptions embossed on the minds of contemporary clients by a corporate-driven multi-billion dollar yoga industry. Still, maintaining its compendium of ascetic-arts elements tenderly imbued with a timeless spirituality, Healthy Living Yoga holds the promise of the future and delights in its stature as the ultimate embodiment of global healthy living. And despite its unfortunate industrial adaptations such as turning postural yoga into a branding orgy of kitsch esotericism and physical violence, this gargantuan enterprise nonetheless continues to maintain its position as the Global Gold Standard of Healthy Living Indices. And here modern “Buddhism” needs to plug in. It after all it holds a proprietary stake. Yet do be aware of the peril it attracts midst a hostile leverage buyout environment.

What’s the difference? Compared in a simple clear-cut manner, the basic aim of “Healthy Living Yoga” is developing of a strong and healthy body. The basic aim of “Yoga” as such (that is, yoga as descending through oral tradition) is developing a strong and healthy mind. Developing a strong and healthy body is like going to high school. Developing a strong and healthy mind is like going to university. It is easier to develop a strong and healthy mind if you first develop a strong and healthy body.

THERAVĀDA AND THE EARLY PURGE OF YOGA

We are ushered to a tier of inferential terms: *yoga*, *theravāda*, and *buddhavaṇṇa*, a Pandora’s box of heuristic pacts as the curtain raises on ancestral gurus Ālāra Kālāma and Udraka Ramaputra, the only attested

theras in the canon, set in the springtime fields of query. Did the Yoga have a role in the growth of the Bauddha? Was the Bauddha's founder or its founding actors aware of any part that may have played? Was occasion ever scripted in the emendated texts to elicit a definitive disclosure on Yoga? Are assertions ascribed to the Buddha-himself in direct regard to the subject of yoga?

In the days of far-lesser digital absorption, students the Pāli were often amazed by the apparent absence of “yoga” in the scriptures and hastily suspected the ancient Pāli editors of purging the word from the whole corpus scriptus. They were especially suspicious in light of the fact that the far older Vedic and Sanskrit languages – of which the Pāli is largely derived – held forty-two meanings for the single term *yoga*.⁹ So it seemed as if ancient editorial boards had embarked on a painstaking hunt for “yoga” and every time that four-letter word popped up delete, delete, delete. Rash mistrust only heightened suspicion. “*What was the underpinning thought complex that drove this deceitful anti-Yoga pogrom? Had the editors achieved the perfect yoga-ectomy?*” Talented students dared to ask.

Today, however, with superior tools, these questions are allayed with a few light finger taps calling up more than thirty varied meanings, sixty implications,¹⁰ and one hundred different senses of yoga. As a single word, as inflected, or a compound, yoga is attested around two hundred times in the Pāli. It was even uttered by the Buddha himself. One could hardly imagine a more positive statement. *Yoga ve jayati bhuri, ayoga bhurisankhaya*—Spiritual yoga leads to light, lack of yoga leads to darkness (*Dhammapada*, 282).¹¹ According to these words ascribed to Gautama, *yoga* is something that leads to light, while the “absents of yoga” (Pāli *ayoga*) leads to darkness. But there is one small hitch. Very few scholars would accept *Dhammapada* as “the word of Buddha” (*buddhavacana*). Yet at some indeterminable point in time, the Buddha-word “yoga” turned into anathema for certain Bauddha factions and the anti-yoga sentiment persists till today.

9. Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 1899.

10. The Pali-English Dictionary, T.W. Rhys Davids, W. Stede, Pali Text Society, Chipstead, 1921-1925.

11. *Dhammapada*: 282. Cf. Juan Mascaro, trans. Penguin, 1973: 75.

“Yoga is a Hindu practice,” we have heard from (mostly) Theravādin anti-yoga clerics. At its best, from the view of this standard control group, yoga is deemed a trifling pursuit that is good for health and attracting new members—while at worst, it’s derided as a sensual indulgence, something heretical, indecent, and depraved. Such reproaches, in fact, mirror an anti-yoga bias that runs throughout the history of Bauddha institutions. Wherein lies the temperament behind such consternation? Is it xenophobia, racism, neo-Nazism?¹² Why do these chapters merit so little discourse? What is in character?

On the positive side, there are noted exceptions to this keyhole view of religious history that clarify the legacy of ancient yoga. Such is the case of Buddhadasa (1906-1993) through whom we could glimpse the extraordinary vantage of an ascetic artist who practiced, preached, and promoted yoga. The son of a Hokkien speaking father from the southern region of the Kingdom Siam, Buddhadasa became a world-renowned philosopher, writer, and interpreter of popular quasi-Buddhist folklore. He submitted to state controlled “ordination” rites and began early research in comparative religions with the aim of learning how to explicate the Bauddha through the language and concepts of other faiths, philosophical systems, and natural science. However, due to Buddhadasa’s unequivocal rejection of systemized religious identification, there exists no reference to his granting primacy to any sort of notional theravāda sub-cult. Nor may we even label him “Buddhist,” per se.¹³ In *No Religion* (1993) he presents his rationale:

...those who have arrived to the highest understanding will feel that this thing called “religion” does not exist. There is no Buddhism; there is no Christianity; there is no Islam. How can they possibly be the same or in conflict when they do not even exist?¹⁴

12. “The Face of Buddhist Terror,” Colombo Telegraph, online news story, accessed July 03, 2013, <<https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/full-text-of-the-banned-time-story-the-face-of-buddhist-terror/>>.

13. Though he was branded once a “communist” and nearly forced to abandon his robes.

14. Buddhadasa, *No Religion*, my translation after Punno, Dhamma Foundation, Chaiya, First electronic edition, 1996.

We lived with Buddhadasa in the mid to late-80s. One cool morning, sitting near his feet among the verdant foliage and towering trees, he said, “Anyone who understands the essence of his own religion understands the essence of all religions.” Our frequent discussions consistently centred on India, Vedanta, and Rāja-Yoga. He spoke in a declarative, straightforward manner. “Monks should practice yoga – *but in private*,” he said.¹⁵

THE RISE OF ANTI-YOGA SENTIMENT

Why are there so many biased views against yoga within the configuration of “Buddhism”? Wherein lay the cause for this emotional duress and interior self-loathing that affects so strongly cenobitical communities; those who would foist the “*Theravāda*” banner and speak as if their attitudes were certified doctrine, and outrival all the others with their blinkered drive to suppress Yoga’s archetypal role in the Bauddha? How might we excavate these bitterest roots and grind them in the mortar of their own best medicine?

Do these falsifications have historical foundation?¹⁶ Might we trace a quasi-history from the mythic cycle – through the given narratologies and image-systems – and thereby ask where, why, how, and when the purge of yoga actually commenced? Did these fallouts issue from the days of the Buddha, or perhaps even centuries before his birth? What documents and texts might we possibly consult in our wish to identify the obfuscations that threaten this monumental cultural sanctum, this unprotected heritage site where the Yoga gave birth to the Bauddhamata?

Might the vilifications possibly stem from early-fourth-century BCE anti-Brāhmin views in regard to certain Bauddha “Personalist” sub-sects who focused their research on the *pudgala*? We allude to an early philosophical period around one hundred and thirty-seven years postdating

15. Curious to note that while the early Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya holds a narrowed but not at all depreciative view of “yoga” as “contemplation on the generally unsavoury aspects of the body,” on the “fasting days” this form of yoga was “shielded from public view” [apparent out of deference to yoga] (see Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 2011: 165).

16. In the present paper we set aside questions of precise historical, chronology, and geographical extent.

a quasi-consensual point in time that attempts to date the Buddha's death. A serious doctrinal dispute arose around a highly innovative interpretation of the central but elusive concept of *pudgala* ("individual, person"). At issue in this vigorous clash of dogmas was the stunning appearance of a *pudgalavāda* ("personalist theory") that advanced the existence of a person *in principle* to offset the hyper-rationalization of *anātman* ("insubstantiality") and the hollowness of the *skandha* theory ("mental elements") by way of explaining the concatenation of ideas, experience, memory, and perception, etc."¹⁷ And against this anti-Brāhmin orthodoxy railed. But the Pudgalavāda was no mere oddity. Early sources specify five separate sub-sects that emerged from an early Vātsīputrīya "mother school" (ca. third-century BCE),¹⁸ which, according to Przyluski, flourished in the western region of India among communities influenced by Brāhminical norms.¹⁹

However, eight centuries later a Personalist school called Sāmmitīya had become so strong in eastern India that it accounted for a quarter of all Bauddha cenobites, surpassing the Sarvāstivāda School in Sarnath.²⁰ The Sāmmitīyas prospered for nearly a millennium. Historically sketchy as their data²¹ may appear, East Asian pilgrim-priests Hsüan-tsang and I-ching affirmed the prevalence of Sāmmitīya activity. Hsüan-tsang arrived to India through Gandhara in 630 and estimated more than 1,351 Sammitiya monasteries scattered throughout the subcontinent, housing 66,500 ascetics.²² In 673, I-ching arrived to

17. Thich Thien Chau, *The Literature of the Personalists (Pudgalavadins) of Early Buddhism*, 1996: 137. See John Locke letter to Edward Stillingfleet, "Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity" (1696), in *The Philosophy of Edward Stillingfleet; Including His Replies to John Locke*, ed. Rogers, University of Keele, 6 Volumes (Vol. 4), 1999.

18. Chau, 1996: 5.

19. J. Przyluski, *Le Concile de Rajagraha*, 1926-29: 309-10.

20. André Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule*, Paris, 1955: 121; cited in Chau: 12.

21. Peter Skilling, "The Advent of Theravāda Buddhism in Mainland Southeast Asia," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, Vol 20, No.1, 1997: (93-107): 93.

22. Hsüan-tsang, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, trans. S. Beal, 1981 [1884]; cited in Chau: 14-14.

India's east coast by ship from the far-off Sunda where he noted the presences of Sammitiyas. He cited a large group in Champa as well, where they dominated.²³ The Vātsīputrīya School and a branch of the Sāmmītiya survived in India to at least the beginning of the tenth century when the *pudgalavāda* was eventually decoupled from orthodox strains of development.²⁴ Would this same clash of doctrines later be reenacted by the architects of the Sinhala state for fomenting ethnic tensions between themselves and hegemonic rivals across the Palk Strait? What socio-political objectives are advanced through continued concealment and feigned disregard for the observations that make this study stand out as unique in the panorama of Yoga-Bauddha Studies? Are such mindsets testable? For Stcherbatsky, writing in 1927, the Personalist advance pre-figured Mahāyāna.²⁵

WHO ARE THE THERAS AND WHAT IS THEIR VĀDA?

There is nearly an inborn “oral” stamp on every South Asian ascetic-arts tradition that founds itself on *vāc (or vāk, *veda*, or *vāda*), or on any genealogy – conventional or bloodline – that traces its heritage from ancient times. But orality when linked to subalternity evokes strong impressions of landless nomads, of transgressive migrations (as observed by I-ching), especially as they draw upon the fringes of a realm. So our centering task is to transliterate these dicta in accordance with the figure of transgressive sacrality.

Writing technologies came relatively late to the Indian subcontinent, which nonetheless excelled in mnemonic arts. The roughly fifth century BCE Buddha seemingly wrote nothing. We don't even know what languages he spoke. And yet the *buddhavacana* as “verbatim dicta” got passed on for centuries *via voca* through traditions of *bhanikas*, “cleric reciters.” Their “specialized quarters” called *vihāras* were devoted to

23. Chau: 15, citing Bareu: 121, citing I-ching, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago* (AD 671-695), trans. J. Takakusu, 1896: 14, 20.

24. Leonard Priestley. 2005. “Pudgalavada Buddhist Philosophy.” Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <<http://www.iep.utm.edu/pudgalav/>>.

25. Theodor Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, 1927.

specific portions of amalgamating canons, and through royal patronage and choice “lord donors” (*dānapatis*) these institutes proliferated. Adjacent villages were dedicated to their maintenance. A century after the founder’s alleged passing there were twenty or more diverse Bauddha schools with alternate doctrinal and philosophical trajectories. Each had its own *vinaya* text, the essential declaration of independence as a split off *nikāya* or *ācariyavāda*, an autonomous offshoot, sect or branch that followed a guru and his personal lineage. Still, signature distinctions between these variants were not always clear. Their *vinayas* stood mainly as revised editions with often little more than unexceptional inclusions or exclusions from a common fund of revised materials. But the languages varied: Sanskrit, Apabhraṃśa, Indo-Iranian, and Paisācī along with numerous intermediate vernaculars,²⁶ dialects, “prakrits,” and patois, we suppose.

But modernity arrived strangely early to South Asia. Congealed by Asoka’s nearly fifty-year reign (starting 269 BCE) from his Peacock throne at Pāṭaliputra, the predator emperor superintended the lion’s share of the geographic realm. Dissenting and marginal voices were silenced as others were raised. Less remained of the early Bauddha. The Imperial insignia of the Dharma Chakra became a steamrolling metaphor of Juggernaut dimensions. Leveling off the cultural landscape, denting diversity, and stamping uniformity, the Grand Inquisitor waged his legacy a hideous field day of decapitation in the name cleansing the state sponsored faith of *tīrthakas*, ascetic exponents of un-Buddhistic thought. Mass emigration was roundly promoted to the fringes of the realm—Himavanta, Kashmir, the Punjab, the Northwest cultural areas of Uḍḍiyāṇa and Gandhara, and the Hellenic-infused Bactria. Dynamic trade networks played the major role in extending transregional patterns of mobility beyond the northwestern borderlands to the Central Asian transit zones of the upper Indus and Tarim Basin by forging paths of commercial contact and cross-cultural exchange. Zürcher describes this as “contact expansion,”²⁷ an

26. Skilling, 1997.

27. Erik Zürcher, “Buddhism Across the Boundaries: The Foreign Input,” in E. Zürcher, Lore Sander, et al., Collection of Essays 1993, Buddhism Across Boundaries: Chinese Buddhism and the Western Regions, Sanchung, Taiwan: Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist & Cultural Education, 1999: 1-60.

economically speaking “parasitic” diffusion along commercial trade routes that linked as far as China via Silk Road trade. This brought a revolution in text preparation. The three Sukhavāti or “State of Bliss” texts devoted to Amitābha’s Western Haven would all originate in Central Asia, probably in migrant Sarvāstivāda circles where the unifying aim was a metempsychotic sort of transmigration to Sukhavāti, depicted as a rapturous caravanserai of provisional existence (*antarābhava*) for making short work of personal soteriological tasks. But in fact, they believed in countless *buddha-loka*, -spheres, -planets, -realms, -dimensions.

Returning to the eastern Gangetic plain and the seat of Asoka’s Mayuran imperium, a new stamp of “*thera*” (whatever that meant) became the vested standard-bearer and indisputable manifestation of what the Buddha meant the *saṃgha* to be. Its kit of teachings and cultural imperatives shadowed these expanding commerce routes paved with tribute and trade accords, and that rendered apt the *mārga*-type metaphor and epithet of Buddha as a “caravan leader” (*sāṛthavāha*).²⁸ Southern links were forged as well, by land and sea. In Ceylon, coastal entrepôts appeared around the island while, back in the capital, Pāṭaliputra, a blue-blood scion approached the Venerable Mahādeva²⁹ and received induction as a *bhikkhu* named Mahinda. He headed a small delegation of ascetics that sailed to Ceylon to proselytize the doctrine among the Sinhalese. An entire canon was brought to the island in the heads of Mahinda and his austere comrades; and there the teachings would solidify. His sister soon joined him – a *bhikkhuni* herself – and a family affair it has been ever since. In modern-day parlance it is called “*theravāda*,” but we do not know what school these early campaigners may have represented, or what collection of texts they may have carried with them (if only in their heads), and which would not be written down till two centuries later. “There may have been such an official recording,” Thomas wrote

28. Jason Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks* (Mobility and Exchange within and beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia), Brill, 2010: 2-4.

29. Jonathan Silk, “Kern and the Study of Indian Buddhism (with a speculative note on the Ceylonese Dhammarucikas),” [revised version], *The Journal of the Pali Text Society*, Vol. XXXI (2012), 125-154: 142.

in 1933, “but what we possess are not the Scriptures as introduced in the 3rd century BCE.”³⁰

Based on this tentative historical data, it is quite uncanny that we never stop to ask from whom these *theras* claim their *paramparā*, who represents their *mūla theras*, and when did the Sinhalese people convert en masse to so-called “Theravāda” Buddhism? It is fruitful to shape empirical questions. Answers may be startling but also quite revealing. For example, that the word *theravāda* is attested only twice in the Pāli canon (*Majjhima-nikāya* 26.15 and 16), and that there is no prime canonical citing to the term outside these *buddhavacana* attestations. However, centuries following these first and only two *theravāda* citings, assuming parties employed *theravāda* in a manner that diverged from its original sense in attempt to purloin its prestige, though no such attached “prestige” is evidenced in legend, oral or epigraphic. Fourteen or fifteen centuries later, Christendom accorded the semantic corruption tremendous importance. They concretized its meaning and passed that off as the original face of “Buddhism.” The East followed suit in prime demonstration of Mensings’ valuable “reverse-cargo cult.”³¹ Yet we never stopped to ponder what this word really means – let alone ascertain its precise etymology. Why? Out of fear to admit what could very well amount to the suppression of an early Bauddha tradition? Might the utter unwillingness of modern Theravāda to acknowledge the staggering etymology of its namesake betray the sheer fault line of its identity fiasco? The degree of incongruity between these “theravādas” invites two critical questions to the foreground; the most heuristic questions in the history of the Bauddha. Who are the *theras* and what is their *vāda*?

THE SEMANTIC RE-EXOTICIZATION OF *BAUDDHA*

But first let us take a close look *bauddha*, linguistically, grammatically, and semantically speaking. We applaud Donald Lopez (*The Story of Buddhism*, 2001): the only Buddological researcher we have seen to alluded to the near annihilation of *bauddha* following the 1816 arrival

30. Edward J. Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought*. London, 1933.

31. John Mensing, personal correspondence, ca. 2008.

of the modernist mongrel “Buddhism.” But in line with his intention to historically validate the semantic corruption and orthographic misfit, Lopez distorts and misappropriates *bauddha* as a one-off single-use stepping-stone, “a word that can be accurately rendered as *Buddhist*.”³² This is very inadequate.

We stand with those who believe that certain words and concepts should remain intact, retain their original morphology and preserve their reconstituted phonology. Then how to reinvest the original “*bauddha*” over and against its modern deposer—is it nothing but a neologistic obfuscation? How to deconstruct this mere hundred-year-old youngster? What source-language term would “buddhism” claim to render? Ostensibly “*buddha*,” but how could that be?

Colonial period scholarship was actually quite kind in its taxonomic budge through the Indian sciences, displaying good faith with endogenous forms and resisting the modern suffixation “ism.” Scholars left intact prime technical terms such as Yoga, Vedānta, Veda, and Sāṃkhya, Jaina, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Nyāya; Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, Cārvāka, Ājīvika, *et al* – such formations, indeed, that we easily see to share alike that nominalizing *taddhita*-suffixation “a.” Are we justified to ask, then, why this enthrallment with the highly inorganic Buddh(a)ism when a healthy and fit endogenous term is readily at hand? Why are we engaging the synthetic “Buddh-ism” when the handsome original never went away? Would we wish to see Vedant(a)ism and Yog(a)ism too, and phonomorphological maiming more? We would not.

Regarding the etymology of modern “Buddhism,” it first appeared in 1801, spelt initially “Boudhism” as an entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Fifteen years later its orthography firmed as “Buddhism” (*Asiatic Journal*, 1815).³³ But what source-language term does “Buddhism” render: *bauddha* or *buddha*? The concealed duplicity of the modern philologically divested “Buddhism” resides in the

32. Donald S. Lopez, *The Story of Buddhism: A Concise Guide to Its History & Teachings*, 2001: 12.

33. Mythologus, “On the Religion of Buddha - Letter 1,” *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies*, Vol. 1. From January to June 1816, London), <<http://bit.ly/1krfnZN>>.

misassumption that it descends from “Buddha” (a proper noun), rather than “Bauddha” (an “adjective possessing noun-value”). Further confusion and conflation arise from the fact that both words derive from the Sanskrit verbal root **budh*. It holds two meanings: “know” and “waken”; the first is transitive, the second intransitive. Taken as “Buddhism,” then, what does it denote: the scientific study of Buddha “the person” or of the traditional terrain of the ancient celebrants of a highly Vedacized soteriological cultus? But that “buddha” would uniquely or exclusively pertain to a single historical or mythical figure would be tantamount to stating that (i) the figure and its signifier appeared coextensively, (ii) the term is unattestable before the figure’s advent, or (iii) the term was invented only after the advent *for the figure’s sole and exclusive application*. Are any of these three postulations verifiable? Regarding the philological grounds on which this etymological analysis best would proceed, it is not semantics or modern cultus; neither comparative mythology: it is rudimentary grammar. We cannot accept the sense of “*buddha*” constrictively ascribed to a mythological personality cult of the ninth *avatāra* of the deity Viṣṇu, nor any other principally literary figure.

An important grammatological imperative obtrudes in our bid for the semantic re-exoticization of *bauddha*. Buddha as a cultus appellation is very different from the grammatically stripped down appearance of *buddha* as formed from the Sanskrit verbal root **budh* (“rouse, wake”). To this is applied the nominalizing suffix “-a” that is typical of secondary *taddhita* nouns. The redoubled “d” is furthermore applied to signify the past participle. Hence the morphology **budh* > *budha* > *buddha* (“the roused, wakened”). Additional change occurs when the “u” receives *vrddhi*-expansion and modifies to “au” thus forming *bauddha*, an “adjective that possesses noun-value,” denoting thus the sense of “relating or belonging to”, “maintaining a relation or connection *with* whatever the word before

it implies.”³⁴ Hence the morphology **budh> budha> buddha>bauddha*, “of the aroused.”

For people from countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, North India, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, and more, where *bauddha* is a local-language term find the word “Buddhism” strangely unnatural till they’re finally forced to swallow it: tenacious Orientalism. The contemporary use of this pointless construction is fraught with philological constraint and absurdity, especially in light of the widely distributed South and Southeast Asian *bauddha* of massive ascetic-arts legacy.

THERAVĀDA AND THE DICTA OF THE BUDDHA

Why have we ignored the dicta of the Buddha with regard to the bedrock sense of *theravāda*? A brief etymological excursion should follow in attempt to make sense of this highly essentialized substantive compound that religious and academic tradition alike pronounce as if the meaning were crystal clear “when it is anything but.”³⁵ We have never heard of anyone seriously attempt to archeologize the basic philological sequencing of the highly impervious formation *theravāda*, which appears to defy etymologization. Pāli etymologies rely in large on determining the very often Vedic>Sanskrit root. But this is not the case always. Skilling (2009) seems to feel as if *theravāda* were not derivable, as typically considered, from Sanskrit *sthaviravāda* (*sthaviravādin*) the typically assumed hypos-tatizations, which he labels “ghost terms, neologistic back-formations.”³⁶

But is Pāli *thera* Vedic-Sanskrit-derived or Old Iranian-Avestan derived? If derived from Sanskrit the root would be Indo-European **sthā* with cognates all over the Indo-European family tree including, of course,

34. “But they are also freely used substantively; the masculine and feminine as appellatives, the neuter, especially and frequently, as abstract. Often they have a patronymic or gentile value” (William Dwight Whitney, *A Sanskrit Grammar*, Including both the classical language and the older dialects, of Veda and Brahmana, Leipzig, 1879: 405).

35. Peter Skilling, “Modern use of “Theravada,”” online post, H-Buddhism Discussion, 22 Dec 2006, <<http://bit.ly/18oHALg>>.

36. Peter Skilling, “Theravāda in History,” in *Pacific World*, III, 11, Fall 2009: 61-93: 65.

English “stand.”³⁷ There is no other option. But unlike the compound *theravāda*, the term “thera,” very well attested in Pāli, seems to have drifted away from its Indo-European roots, but it is still, unambiguously Indo-European.

Michael Witzel (1999) discusses cognates and possible cognates from Old Indo-Iranian *sthūna*, *stūnā*, *stunā*; Old Persian *stūnā*, “pillar”—unless, that is, it belongs to Vedic **sthūra* “tall, thick”; Avestan *stura*; Khotanese *stura*, and notes “Central Asia as the apparent source of Proto-Indo-Iranian words that are found in Indo-Aryan and Old Iranian but which do not have Indo-European etymologies.”³⁸ Witzel’s etymology of **sthūra* is confusing. Phonologically and semantically it neither sounds like nor does it have the same semantic range as the root **stha-*. This gives a lot of room for semi-convincing speculation. *Stha-vira* is a viable form in Sanskrit if we accept that *sthura* is a derivative of *stha-*. But given *sthura*, we could analyze *sthavira* not as *stha-vira*, but rather as *sthav-ira*, the *-ira* here being an adjectival suffixation that additionally grants noun-value to the base. It then becomes morphologically regular and acceptable.³⁹ As for the semantics: *sthavira*, literally “standing upright,” thus “strong, respectable, experienced, wise,” hence *thera* as “established, solid, firm, old, elder.” As for *vāda*, derived from **vāc*, suggests such meanings as “voice, word, outlook, articulation, chronicle, saga, extended allegory, discussion, discourse.”

As for hermeneutics, we return to our mainstay *theravāda* in the specified framework of *buddhavacana*. Contemporary tradents might present the enigma as “venerated ancient oral tradition” and gently detach

37. Itself derived from the Indo-European root(s) **sta* (or **stehen*), cognate to the English words stain and stone (things that endure). The Indo-European suffix *-stan* is also related, a widely dispersed toponymical reference vis-à-vis Afghanistan, Tajikistan, etc.

38. Hence Mayrhofer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoirischen* (1986–2001, II: 768),” cited in Witzel, “Substrate Languages in Old Indo-Aryan,” in *Mother Tongue*, Special Issue, Oct. 1999: 54.

39. We note great reliance on Avestan scholar George Thompson and his highly instructive personal correspondence, January 2014. See also analysis of *sthavira* in Jacob Wackernagel and Albrecht Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik*, Band II, 2, Die Nominalsuffixe, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1954: 361.

the orphaned *thera-* to signify a “non-aligned ascetic-arts tradition” that would stretch back even further than oft recounted lineage *gurus* Udraka and Ālāra, to Rājaka the son of Trimaṇḍika, to Raivata the Brahmin sage, to the Brahmin women sages Padmā and Śākī where heralded by apparent *mūla* guru Bhaggava. This has little in common with a cenobitic wall chart of notional post-Śākan genealogical descent, neither much at all to do with wanton cliques that formed ambitious steering committees, that convened unauthorized Plenary Councils and turned free thought into codified dictum as a cover for a coup. But where, we need to ask, does this modernist usage “Theravāda” purport to derive its historical endorsement? It is not, we have said, *Majjima-nikāya* (ca. 5th century BCE), but *Dīpavaṃsa* a millennium later. The *theravāda* of the principle canon (we repeat) appears only twice in a single text (MN 26.15-16) where the Buddha is made to utter the phrase, *theravādaṇca jānāmi passāmī*”ti. It is spoken twice (the words are identical), one time each in respect to his *theras*, his attested *gurus* Ālāra and Udraka. The purport of this original *budhavacana* is totally different and indeed opposed to the *theravāda* drawn in the *Dīpavaṃsa* or “Chronicle of the Island,” the earliest and least artistically composed of the three early-Sinhalese quasi-histories as textual repositories of cultural heritage. It represents a royal sponsored project devoted to state and sect-formation⁴⁰ and to forging a Sinhalese identity-imperative that links the Buddha’s two fabled visits to the island with the later importations of his organized religion, and the manifest destiny of the Sinhala people. These two *theravādas* are totally divergent.

The defining passage is simply as follows: “the council of the *theras* is the *theravāda*”—*therehi katasamgaho theravādi* “*ti vuccati* (4:8). It “effectively” and even tautologically lays claim to an “Ur-sthavira who never split off and never changed, which is what *Dīpavaṃsa* and the living lineage claim” (Skilling 2006). In other words, the Sinhala tradition rests solely on this single short passage composed about a millennium after Buddha essentially coined the term *theravāda* with apparently exclusive application to his first attested *theras*, Ālāra and Udraka and their ancient sound-stream ascetic-arts heritage. As for the statement ascribed to Buddha, “*theravādanca janami passami*,”

40. Skilling, “Theravāda in History,” 2009: 63.

where *theravāda* makes its only appearance in the (principle) canon: the term “*theravāda*” is customarily rendered as “steady firm knowledge,” while the phrase is given a kind of stock translation, “I speak of knowledge and certainty.” And though tentatively pregnant by its Indo-European roots – **stā*, *sthā*, *stehen* (“stay, stand, stasis”), or otherwise **sthūra* (as discussed above) – one wonders why attention has been so seduced by completely divergent post-canonical content? There is no occurrence of the term *theravāda* aside from *Majjima-nikāya* (26.15 and 16), both of these sighting being *buddhavaṇṇa*. What more essential data might we wish to explore than the milieu in which the speaker spoke, or more specifically, to whom or what his *theravāda* is referent? Why have we rejected Buddha’s *ipsissima verba*? We speak, of course, in terms of literary criticism. Why have we completely blinded ourselves to Gautama’s *yoga-pratyākṣa-pramāṇa*, that “numinous in-your-face verification” of his venerable gurus Ālāra and Udraka? Has sclerotic narratology, perplexingly contrived and shackled to the trope of *ayogic* flag-waving, drained all reserves of academic valor? Why is the Bauddha so stanchly divorced from its primogenital obligation?

Many start to recognize the cumbersome presence of this essentially late-nineteenth century misnomer that was widely used among Bauddha academics as an expedient taxonomic designation.⁴¹ But in 1950 the name “Theravāda” was inserted at the founding conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhism in Colombo to tactically supplant the contemptuous *Hinayāna* “so labeled by the versatile northerners”⁴² (the ancient Mahayanists) and had long held sway. The well-planned campaign proved so successful that within thirty years a universally conceded “Theravāda” was taken as the original form of Buddhism.

We are not at all enticed by the corps of late-”Theravadin” commentarial marionettes entangled in their strands sterile of dogma. Uncritical acceptance of the term *theravāda* as a totemistic-tribal-cum-guild-monastic lineage may well be construed as highly misconceived. It

41. See Anil Sakaya, “Contextualizing Thai Buddhism,” draft of unpublished paper for Korea-Thai Buddhist Cultural Forum 2010, Gyeongju Hilton Hotel, Korea, April 1-2, 2010.

42. D.D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, India: Popular Prakashan, 1975: 261.

was announced as out of nowhere by *Dīpavaṃsa* to have sprung from the standing Order of monks “that could not have surpassed a total of 500” (Kosambi, 1976).⁴³ They rehearsed and recited, revised and confirmed the entire compendium of oral traditions at Rājagriha within about a year of the Buddha’s passing.

Dissenting oral tradents might articulate the matter differently—an ontic emergence of Vaiśālīn gurus of the ancient sound-stream oral heritage whose attentions dwell rather on process than goal, and on the methods of philology over philosophy, let alone ideology, cultus, and creed. Still, the fundamental ground zero data that eludes us, from a strictly philological point of view, is the evidence that Buddha said anything at all or existed in the body (discussed below). One could argue, as Correia, on the case of Socrates where a single authoritative protégé is believed to have rendered and transmitted everything we know. But in the case of the Śākan, the entire panorama is immensely more diffuse and uncertain from the start, as the fallible Anānda so amply attests, and where beyond the trustworthiness of philological thresholds we are left with little more than fabulous accounts. Picking ones favourites can never create a sound philological underpinning.⁴⁴

“The prominence given to an essentialized and ahistorical *theravāda* inhibits the study of the history of ideas and the history of social expressions of South and Southeast Asian Buddhism,” wrote Skilling (2009).⁴⁵ We would go a few further. The distinction conferred on modern “Buddhism” over and against an ancient endogenous self-designating “Bauddha,” distorts good sense and embeds in its stead an iron-clad component of hypostatization for no apparent reason but establishing a contra-distinctive self-identity, vis-à-vis its countervailing modern bogey “Hinduism”—tout court. We may also see how *hypostatized* notions as “Buddhism” and “Theravada,” while remaining undefined and wholly misconstrued, become enshrined in the guise of “noble terms” that reify unproductive lines of debate and overwhelm and derail constructive discourse. Is the

43. D.D. Kosambi. *The Culture & Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, Delhi, 1976: 154, 169.

44. Jesualdo Correia, private correspondence, 2013.

45. Skilling, “Theravāda in History,” 2009: 72.

sheer exceptionality of their corporate domains, their debasements of history, and other indices, not characterized better as industrialization, banalisation, or massification-cum-imbecilization? Hypostatization too noble a term for what these neologisms have truly achieved.

Have clues lighted close enough to call into question the historical veracity *Dīpavaṃsa* and thereby infer that a modern Theravada is conducting business on a fanciful franchise? Having drilled down hard on recalcitrant “*thera*, as *sui generis* as *le Bouddha sans précédent*, we must not recoil from the murkiness of *vāda*, but aim for etymologies of apodictic certainty as we turn our attention to *Ṛgvedic* Vāk (from IE **vāc*), her earliest appearance as Prajāpati’s consort, then Mother of the Vedas, “the personification of articulation” that speaks to antiquity and *paramparā* so massively vested with preliterate “orality” for which our orphaned *thera* cries, and then her late “ancient saga-cycle” same-sex blend with *purāṇic* Sarasvatī of the “stream hermeneutic” and the freely given data” that denies archaeology its unimpeded penchant to fashion the findings of its own excavations via *tachiste* integration of aesthetics and critique that targets an entirely new demographic. We hold to the trope of the charnel ground where crucial findings remain half-interred.

For an earlier generation of colonial period commentators, tools were better shaped for the ethnographic-cum-taxonomic point of locating and extracting far-off resources. And imperilling from this, the mass-subalternation of archaic orality with haunting images of landless nomads jostled to the margins of literate society. So maybe it’s our duty to subculturalize the dicta as if nature were unable to express herself whilst defending our elitist list of indiscretions by a threadbare trope of transgressive sacrality. Has anything changed since Globalistan’s rise,⁴⁶ its “new (prosaically) liberalized forces with exceedingly persuasive hegemonic schemes pre-set to the engines of the entertainment industry (Frankfurter School) for the hypostatization of casual spheres in the guise of noble terms of culture, travel, fashion, its correlates paraded as “mini-epistemic Mahābhāratas” that are going on inside and outside of

46. See Pepe Escobar, *Globalistan: How the Globalized World is Dissolving into Liquid War*, Nimble Books, 2007.

ourselves, and what is going on inside and outside of the polis?”⁴⁷ Is there any methodological coup d’état or epistemological rupture in sight? Yet we stand here before you as Ascetic-arts curators, and not geo-political historians.

THE WELLSPRING TRADITION

Great similarities between the Yoga the Bauddha had led many scholars to assume their common pre-historical source. The present paper goes one step further and identifies the theoretic source as Yoga. According to legends, we know for a fact that the fledgling Samāna steeped himself thoroughly in the oral recension of his sixth ascetic guru Ālāra Kālāma. Ālāra was the “Kosalan Ksatriya *thera* who instructed Gautama in seven steps of *samādhi* (intense concentration)”⁴⁸ while living near Vaiśālī midst the forests and grottos of the Vindhya Range. It was from Ālāra and a second *thera-guru*, Udraka Rama-putra, that Gautama learned the principles of yoga. Based on such reading the Senart (1900) made his landmark statement: “It was from the terrain of Yoga that the Buddha arose; whatever innovations he was able to introduce to it, the mold of Yoga was that in which his thought was formed.”⁴⁹ This is oral tradition is a paedeia whose spirit screams for urgent release.

Let us then advance an allegorical Bauddha as the wellspring tradition of a figurative stream as watercourse lineage frequently read as *upasampadā*. Does the term have any establish derivation? Here we have the oral “pre-Bauddhik” source of which the Samāna partook through his upstream gurus—the tradents of tradition as *sampradāya-vada* that we naturally interpret as the seal of yoga. It is important, however, that we grant a little leeway and consider that yoga may have held different meanings in ancient times. But from a modern or, of course, postmodern point of view are we justified that the Buddha’s life, though legend it may be, completely revolved around the polestar of yoga. Would yoga have shaped his protective metaphysic and led him to entrust himself to two *yoga-theras* with whom he engaged in ascetic-

47. Jesualdo Correia, “Oral Tradition,” Facebook discussion thread, redacted, August, 2012, <<http://on.fb.me/1cSoP9Q>>.

48. Kosambi, 1975: 164.

49. Émile Senart, «Bouddhisme et Yoga,» *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 43 (2), 1900, 345–364.

arts paedia. Curious as well, would the narratives affirm that these only two *theras* attested in the canon were among the first people Angirasa recalled just after the ordeal in Uruvelā? What was the heartfelt connection between them, the learner Śākyamuni and his *yogācariyas*? The sensitive reader might naturally ponder. But the compilers abruptly veer away in service to the oft-employed device of “diminishing the efforts of the Buddha’s forbearers.” That the Buddha was prepared to go and *save them* but clairvoyantly assessed that they had both passed away. How inapt this condescending attitude emerges, this stripping the hero of any shared heritage, particularly as set within an Indic milieu where the filial son always honors the father, and the upright pupil ever venerates the *thera*. What would be the object of this unrefined insert, this fateful tear in the social fabric?

Legends have inclined to conflate the Buddha’s *siddhis* into history’s seminal proto-tantric thaumaturge—a divinatory shaman flaunting paranormal aptitudes and miraculous accomplishments. Some of these look like Pātañjala *siddhiḥ* or “mystical powers” attained by birth, drugs, *mantra*, asceticism, or *samādhi*—*janma auśadhi mantra tapaḥ samādhijāḥ* (*Yoga Sūtras*, IV). Concordant cases are the capabilities to enter another person’s body, walking across water, travelling long distances in an instant, foreknowledge of one’s death, and clairauidence. Other yogic practices may also be identified. *Mahāsaccaka Sutta* (MN 36) caricatures the Samāna’s *prāṇāyāma* training as “restraining respiration at the mouth, nose, and ears, feeling violent winds tearing at the belly, the feeling of the stomach being stabbed with a butcher’s knife; a violent burning inside the body as though one were rolling in a ditch of burning coals.” There were miracles galore. Thousands were performed in Uruvelā at the onset of Gautama’s ministry. Episodes depicting the Buddha’s blazing body may substantiate shamanic and proto-tantric traits, while thaumaturgic spectacles played themselves out by Gautama cutting his body into pieces and then restoring them, all before the awestruck eyes of his kinsmen—to win them over.⁵⁰

Semiotic treatments of obtruding symbolism shroud the appearance of Buddha’s (credible) third instructress in a curtain more opaque than a vile rag

50. See Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, 1964: 311-41; and E.H. Brewster, *The Life of Gotama the Buddha*, London:, 1926: 79.

robe. We would focus on a cloth that Gautama appropriates in Uruvelā just around the time that he gained association with the village chief's daughter—Sujātā. His sixth and final teacher? (Plausible). Citing *Lālitavīstara Sutra* (194-95), John Strong (*Relics of the Buddha*, 2004)⁵¹ releases a superbly filmic sequence directly antecedent to Gautama's complying to Sujātā's bidding and enters her house where she feeds him. Regarding the robe that he ostensibly dons in those crucial years of morose austerity, the Samāna combed a charnel ground and discover and removed an unburnt shroud (*pāmsukūla*) "that had wrapped the corpse of a servant girl who had died in the household of the nearby village chief" (Strong, 2004: 216). Going on to cite a variation of this story as described in the late Pāli *Pāmsukūlānisamsam* (*An Account of the Advantages of the Garbage Rag Robe*), Strong unfurls a amazing exposé of cogent hermeneutical ramification. For the text discloses that the girl whom the unburnt cloth once enshrouded had died "in the advanced stages of pregnancy" and when Gautama lifts the filthy cloth a seven-day "decaying fetus and placenta fall to the ground" (Strong, 2004: 221) and the earth shakes accordingly.⁵² How astonishingly silent this tragic camera rolls. Are we meant to infer through these patched-up traditions of highly unconvincing Pāli emendation, affected gullibility, and copious contiguity stunts that the Buddha was robed on Vesak in a cremation shroud that he had sifted from Sujātā's pregnant-dead servant girl?⁵³

Wonders what befell those fragrant traces of primordial-stratum prophetesses; colliding paedias bracketed-out, blue-pencilled and suppressed by a latter-day misogyny declaiming its canon holy writ, redacted and etched by men for men. Or an arbitrary outcome of the Jaina Moral Wars perhaps, defections to its side adding vile abrogation of the feminine form in its disembodied quest to at last be heard and never seen?

51. Strong, John. 2004. *Relics of the Buddha*, Princeton.

52. Strong, John. 1992. *The Legend and Cult of Upagupta*, Princeton: 72.

53. "Did Sākyamuni have a robe in mind?" It is worth here noting the archaeological evidence contained in *Sāratthappakāsinī*, a commentary to the *Samyutta-nikāya*, where Gautama is depicted in a charnel ground picking up a vile rag "teeming with growth" (Pāli, *tumbamatta*). (Pāli Text Society, 1932, trans. Woodward: 199.27-200.9 [XVI.11]). See also Jonathan Silk, "A difficult Pāli word," *Archives of Indology*, 14 Feb 2001, online post <http://list.indology.info/pipermail/indology_list.indology.info/2001-February/025443.html>.

Preliterate priestesses releasing lustre through the movements of their shadows and shades to all directions. How would our Elect, our stark-naked Hierophant have ever stood denied the timbre of The Heresiarchess—his ebony instructress—Śāsani?

PROTO-POSTMODERN ORAL TEXTUALITY

We do not speak of yoga as dogma or ideology, but in general terms of ascetic-arts *technê*. We concede to the intimate *modus operandi* of discipular apprenticeship and later transmissions via utterance-bridges spanning ravines of time in śraddhā—as a paideia imparted to the Buddha by his gurus, maybe eight, in number, and discoverable still through didactic liaison: this the *sine qua non* of oral tradition. Living fossils as excavated specimens, confidence retrieved, disassembled, and smuggled through initiatic śrota as “sound-breath” streams as critical scraps of *loci classici*—*paramparic* pedagogy over many years. And so we rather speak of yoga as a well stream heritage of anyone’s calling inexorably embedded in the classical-*patois* of śrāddhic attendance to the “upstream” souls, the brightest of beacons. Yoga is the principle source of the *theras* who came themselves to similar assumptions

Deeper *ipsissima verba* may be mined from the ethnographic *Mahā-Sīhanāda Sutta* where the authors of the canon’s most ebullient text portray a lush *Kāpālīka* landscape in support of their explicitly savage demonstrations that would likely have preceded the domesticated Bhikkhu. But to penetrate these layers of sacred transgression one needs to raise “Buddha” to a literary ploy, a shorthand allusion to the canon’s chief protagonist, a code word for its authors. Suppressing the compulsion to suspended disbelief, one next becomes privy to a hermeneutic data-field suggesting, for example, that the Buddha partook in the ritual observances known in ancient times as śavavāda (literally “corpse-training”), which typically involved necrophilic practices common to primordial penitential cults. These “yogins” (to employ one of many appellations) were notorious for their scatological predilections, their morbid fascination with death and the dead, and their fondness for living in charnel grounds (*śmaśāna*) and consuming the flesh of decomposing corpses. We do not know precisely when these customs started, but some take *Kāpālīka-vrata* as the model that apparently stemmed from the brāhmacidal

penance prescribed to Brahmins killing fellow high-caste members. The specific penance called *Kāpālīka-vrata* has remained a constant and unchanging feature of Indian legal *Dharmasūtra* literature from ca. 600-400 BCE to present day.⁵⁴ How to comprehend the extreme morbidity of these early South Asian ascetic customs? For Mayer (1990) these bizarre *Kāpālīka* and *śavavāda* customs expressed an extreme intensification of the ancient ascetic's recursive urge to conduct his own symbolical funeral rites originally performed on at the time of his *dīkshā* (initiation) by his guru. Or phrased more glumly, it was the aim of this ghastly Indian ascetic to ritually perform his own homicide.⁵⁵

There are similar practices in *Mahā-Sīhanāda Sutta*⁵⁶ where the Buddha recites his ascetic-arts repertoire practically boasts of self-inflicting more degradations than any of his śramaṇa contemporaries. His living in a śmaśāna or charnel ground and sleeping on human skeletal remains reminds us of the just mentioned śavavāda sacrament. Crawling into cow pens to eat fresh cow dung is a practice called *govrata*, literally "cow-vow."⁵⁷ The text speaks of acts that family values Buddhism has long been absolutely horrified to quote.

54. See Sritantra, "The Savage Buddha: Gautama & the Kāpālīka-vrata," *Ashé Journal*, 5(3): 304-315, 2006.

55. We note reliance on Robert Mayer 1990. "The Origins of the Esoteric Vajrayāna," unpublished seminar paper for The Buddhist Forum, London SOAS, Centre of Religion and Philosophy, October 17 1990.

56. *Majjhima-nikāya*, 12.

57. The Sanskrit word *vrata* may, as in the present context, have originally meant "behaviour like" a particular creature, and later "observance, ritual, vow, austerity, penance." But it certainly held the supplementary meanings of "feeding exclusively on (something)" and "an article of (ritual) diet." It also bore features of totemism, the identification of man with his totem. The Buddha's meeting with Acela Seniya, a follower of the dog-vrata (DN 24, MN 57), may be considered. He imitated a dog in all things as an ascetic practice. After his death, as predicted by the Buddha, he would naturally be reborn as a dog, or in a special zone of the underworld reserved for followers of his vrata. The Buddha's Koliyan friend at the time, named Parma, was a bull-vrata tribesman and made by the Buddha to expect a similar fate—"the fear of which converted him." A bull-vrata layer of the underworld is also mentioned in *Mahabharata* 5.97.13-14. Bat-, goat-, and elephant-vratas were also taken as ascetic practices in imitation of the animal like that of Acela. See D.D. Kosambi, *Combined Methods in Indology and Other Writings*, ed. Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, Oxford, 2002: 173; and *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, Popular Prakashan, India, 1975: 131-32.

In the words of Oxford Professor Richard Gombrich, “the author of the text” appears to be saying, “Anything your *guru* has done, ours has done better.”⁵⁸

CAN ORAL TRADITION SPEAK?⁵⁹

In this concluding portion we intend to survey a diachronic sampling of historical data from the mid-nineteenth century up to fairly recent times that corroborates the placement of yoga theory, practice, and critique in the framework of contemporary Bauddha discourse. We quickly notice that contemporary academia has overlooked much of this valuable research produced before the mid-twentieth century birth of the modernist Theravada movement. In modern Theravada we recognise a mark or label in a globalizing process of “social formation,” a reflection of utopian imaginaire and nostalgia in the minds of principally western educated urd banites serviced by global publishing houses avid to construct, maintain and expand these emerging market dreams and aspirations. This is greatly contrasted to the earlier generations of scientifically and philologically trained scholars whose practice displayed strong skeptical propensities in particular regard to the obtainability of evidence certifying the Buddha’s historicity (*in stricto senso*) and to the contravention of his basic paedeia being anything but Yoga. Their deconstructive tactics style interesting imprints. Completely unabashed in conveying incredulity toward the notion of Buddha’s personal existence; they never doubted Bauddha’s reliance on yoga.⁶⁰ But the problem remained; how to know the Bauddha at its earliest stratum when our extant documents are simply byproducts of later-day creed builders backed by kings that lorded over monks in times when learning served mainly to validate creed?⁶¹ But was early

58. Gombrich, 1996: 78-9.

59. To consciously steal Ms. Spivak’s title. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1988: 271-313.

60. For example, A.B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, Oxford 1923; H. Beckh, „Der ganze Buddhismus ist durch und durch nichts als Yoga—Buddhism is absolutely nothing but Yoga,“ *Buddhismus*, 1916, II: 11; Friedrich Heiler, *Die Buddhistische Bersenkung*, München, 1918: 7, cited in Caroline Rhys-Davids, *Sakya*, 1931.

61. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, 1927: 27

dharmavādik Bauddha NOTHING but Yoga? Indian Yoga? May “tantric” elements also be inferred?

Lots of early European *cognoscenti* thought so—i.e. that the Bauddha’s core rods were compacted in stratum of indigenous, savage sedimentation.⁶² Signifying what?—a mix of rude conjuring and necromantic trance-rave, blathering beggars with natty dreads? Others yanked it out one strand at a time whilst passing through the silent streets of dawn, their bowls likely fashioned from human skulls—ascetic-arts drifters basking in the dawn light of gymnosophist methodology. Is it permissible to postulate a Buddha under-awed by incessant philological and moral speculation? Or as many other founders of religious movements—simply incapable of logical thinking?⁶³ Was his heresiarchess worth her weight in flax? Is the same “hermeneutic of suspicion” now a renegade?

Edward Thomas (1927) examined Pāli *Therīgāthā* commentary as well as the Sanskrit *Lālita-vīstara* to extract five teachers antecedent to Ālāra. The former text threw up Bhaggava, apparently the Śakan’s first attested teacher whose hermitage he visits. The latter text yields more. “After receiving his ascetic robes, the Indian prince is welcomed at the hermitage of the Brahmin woman Śākī, and after that, the Brahmin woman Padmā, then the Brahmin savant Raivata, and then Rājaka the son of Trimaṇḍika, until he reaches Vaiśālī and joins Ālāra.”⁶⁴ But on what historiological basis may we judge these legends aside from the history of the legends themselves?

The Russian orientalist Vasily Vasilyev (1856) declared that after reading all of the scholarship, he “had not learnt to know Buddhism.”⁶⁵ For H.H. Wilson, writing in the same year, the shade of suspicion cast on the stories of the Buddha’s birth, and subsequent narrative, rendered “problematical whether any such person as Sākya Sinha, or Sākya Muni, or Sramana Gautama, ever actually existed,” while “the tribe name Sākya,

62. See especially C. Rhys-Davids, *Sakya*, 1931: 239.

63. Theodor Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, 1923: 5.

64. Edward J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha: as Legend and History*. 3rd (revised) edition. London, 1949 [1927]: 69-70.

65. Vasily Vasilyev, *Buddhism*, preface, 1856; cited in Thomas, *The Life of Buddha*, 1949: xvi.

its distinct existence as a people and a realm, found no corroboration from Indian texts, while the legends given to explain their name and origin are totally absurd.” The most probable affinity was Indo-Iranian, “Sakas, or Scythians,” but “totally ignored by every tradition.” Wilson also focused on the mythic names of the Buddha’s parents, especially his mother, “Máyá, or Máyádeví—illusion, divine delusion”—a manifest “allegorical fiction”—and the city of his birth, “Kapila Vastu,” which had no place in Indian geography, but explained as “the tawny site,” or otherwise rendered as “the substance of Kapila” (Kapilamuni),⁶⁶ whose Sāṅkhya philosophy largely featured as a formalizing structure of the classical Yoga, hence “intimating further that the Sāṅkhya system provided the elements (eternity of matter, the principle of *dharma*s, final extinction, etc.) upon which Buddhism was plainly created.” And though the rise of the doctrine with attendant accounts were in themselves impossible to doubt, “it seems not impossible that Sākya Muni was after all an unreal being, and that all that we know of him is just as much a fiction as all his preceding relocations, and all the miracles attending his birth, his life, and his departure,” Wilson so expressed.⁶⁷

Hendrik Kern’s *A History of Buddhism in India*, Vol. I (1882) and *Manual of Indian Buddhism* (1896) unveiled a far-reaching and radical dismissal of the physical body of the historical Buddha. The life of the Buddha was, according to Kern, the remolding of an ancient solar myth, minutely underpinned by astronomical computations.⁶⁸ Inspired by Senart and listened to by Barth, the linguist Kern was very aware of his minority position on the Buddha as an ahistorical *Purāṇic* culture hero. Otto Franke (1908) was made of a similar scientific mettle: “it is given as yet to no mortal man to demonstrate that any Buddhist sentence [was] spoken

66. Regarding Wilson’s rendering Sanskrit *kapila* as “tawny,” Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (III.4, IV.12, V.2, VI.13), which knows of Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Kapila, identifies the latter with *hiraṇyagarbha*, the “golden germ,” also known as a name of the sun (see Joshi, 1970: 31).

67. Horace Hyman Wilson, “On Buddha and Buddhism,” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XVI (1856): 247-48.

68. J.W. De Jong, *A Brief History of Buddhist Studies in Europe and America*. Tokyo: Kōsei, 1997: 29; and Johannes Bronkhorst, “Hendrik Kern and the body of the Buddha,” in *Asiatische Studien, Etudes Asiatiques*, 63(1), 2009, 7-27: 2.

during the lifetime of the founder.”⁶⁹ Yet very few since have called into question the empirical grounds of the Buddha’s body. Funding is scarce in this area of research.

Scholars who doubted Buddha’s body often showed interest in the early Bauddha Vetulyaka sect. Vetulyaka, also called the Vaitulya sect, maintained that the Buddha remained in heaven and that Anānda actually evoked the teachings.⁷⁰ The suggestion to some would seem mismatched and might only make sense by looking to a stripped-down ontic *buddha* divested of all epistemic valence. But time and space and thematic constraints impinge on our wish to re-invoke the valor of these earlier academics—and simply hint that the anti-Brahman sentiment that rose much later in the Ceylonese chronicles, parallels a list of associate entities as Vajjiputtakās, Devadatta, *pudgalavāda*, Mahādeva *atmavāda*, Vāṇīrīyas, Mahāsāṃghika, Dhammarucikas, Pūrvaśailas, anti-Brahman sentiment, Yoga, each of which (historically) intimate “heresy,” suspension of funding and *dr̥ṣṭi* (Pāli *diṭṭhi*) or “integrity” when it fails to adapt to the ends of the sovereign, the tradition, the committee, the oligarch.⁷¹ Jonathan Silk (2012) offers welcomed exposition of Kern’s ignored interest in propagandistic anti-Brahman sentiment encrypted in the demonized trope of Mahādeva. Writing in the early 1880’s, Kern understood that

Mahādeva and Bhadra are names of Śiva who, in his capacity as the god of Time, may be called the Genie of destruction.... When one considers the diversity of the nature of Śiva, one is not astonished that the southern Mahādeva plays an entirely different role from that of the heretic master.⁷²

And indeed we can read, historiographically speaking, from the hysterical manga-esque reduplication, from the hyperbole and the proliferation of Mahādeva(s) cavorting up and down those vast Imperial trade networks, the personification of transgressive sacrality—who had first

69. Otto Franke, “The Buddhist Councils at Rajagaha and Vesali (as alleged in Cullavagga XI, XII),” trans Caroline Rhys-Davids, *Journal of the Pāli Text Society*, 1908: 20; bracketed emendation [as/was] mine.

70. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism, a historical sketch*, Vol 3, London: 1921: 20.

71. See André Bareau, *Les Sectes Bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule*, 1955.

72. Kern 1881-1883, II: 292-93, quoted in Silk, 2012: 135. [

of all “copulated with the woman who bore him, who had killed his father, and killed a saint, before killing *the incestuous woman who bore him*.”⁷³ Mahādeva was designed to become the most abhorrent preceptor in the early annals of “Buddhism.” Yet enduring, robust, and pervasive in standing, depicted as a hybrid *kāpālika-jihadi*, Mahādeva, the insidious “Other” of incommensurable wickedness, the demonized figure of primordial dissent as dark and suffusing as Chinese ink, even stretched across the sea to the island of Ceylon. Two distinct Mahādeva schools are recorded.⁷⁴

Previously mentioned, it was Émile Senart (1900) who delivered the incisive early dictum on place of Yoga in the pre-Bauddha strata. “The Buddha arose on the terrain of Yoga. Whatever innovations he was able to contribute, his thought was formed through the mold of Yoga.”⁷⁵ Hermann Oldenberg (1908) devoted seven pages to “The relationship between Buddhism and Yoga.”⁷⁶ It was Bechh (1916) who boldly pronounced, *Der ganze Buddhismus ist durch und durch nichts als Yoga*—“Buddhism is nothing but yoga through and through.”⁷⁷

Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1917) loosely supported a pre-Bauddha stratum “that appeared quite distinct from what later would constitute a Pāli Canon.” He construed a core dynamic as essentially “yogic, an exotic art that stood outside of every moral, religious or philosophical attitude”—*une technique étrangère en soi à toute morale comme à toute vue religieuse ou philosophique*. Its thematic thrust was the utilization of ritual dramaturge through “performances that recognized the primitive and Old-Iranian inheritances through the agency of shamans (śramaṇa), magi, and miracle workers”—*pratiqués des sorciers et des thaumaturges*—highly sympathetic to ecstatic trance and the exploration altered states completely devoid of speculative tendency”—*et dont il semble que la recherche des*

73. See Jonathan Silk, *Riven by Lust: Incest and Schism in Indian Buddhist Legend and Historiography*, 2012.

74. Bareau, 1955: 19.

75. Senart, «*Bouddhisme et Yoga*,» 1900.

76. Hermann Oldenberg, *The Doctrine of the Upanishads and the Early Buddhism*, trans. from German by S.B. Shriotri, Delhi, 1997 [1908].

77. “*Der ganze Buddhismus ist durch und durch nichts als Yoga*.” Hermann Bechh, *Buddhismus. Buddha und seine Lehre* (Buddhism: Buddha and his Teaching), 2 volumes, Sammlung Götschen, 1916: 174, 770.

états hypnotiques soit le motif dominant (12). This vāmamārga backdrop of tantric dissention “remained little changed for around seven centuries from *Mahāvagga* to Buddhagosa.”⁷⁸ *In supplying voice to subalternated rudiments raising* dissensus above conventionality, *La Vallée Poussin’s hermeneutic insertions* demonstrate practice that “effect richer meaning when taken not only a cultural products but an interpretative pulses” (after Elkins, 2007).⁷⁹ In the case of “oral primacy” composed of inner rules and then confronted by modernity’s “protective metaphysic” of whooping it up in the politics of slaughter,⁸⁰ a recursive architectural disassembly kicks in and gains its tack from the ebb and flow of a tacit process of aesthetic quandary owing to a genus of bathing light where (for all intents and purposes) the *prima materia* goes through a native sieving process using local apparati and never those arriving by ship. Subalternity identifies and styles a given entity, group, or persona that is socially, politically, or geographically “other” than the dominant structure, and furthermore acts towards the marginalization of traditional orality as rootless species requiring safe haven, or as protean hoards too poor and uncouth to have anything important to say. But come, let us document their plight. It is curious how the notions of oral tradition and subalternity seem to naturally equate, and how the nonsensicality of subaltern discourse in many ways reads like a cruel masquerade. Maybe this is why we have masked ourselves in the war paint and feathers of defamiliarization if only to make things appear a little stranger.

Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism* (1923) presents us with a notional *dharmavāda* as a “pre-Baudhaic” stratum that styles a seemingly naïve, if charming Jaina-esque persuasiveness of what’s truly an absorbing illustration of the body right down to its own sub-atomic particles “entirely covered with a photosynthesized filmic sheen” as if luminosity were the actual glue or underlying substance (*drāvyā*).⁸¹ In

78. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Nirvāṇa*, Paris, 1925: 11-12, 53. See also Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays*. 1941 [1990]: 85-86.

79. James Elkins, “On David Summers” *Real Spaces*,” in Elkins (ed.), *Is Art History Global?*, 2007.

80. See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, Minneapolis, 1993.

81. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, 1923.

The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana (1927) Stcherbatsky devotes more than 20 pages to “Yoga”’s place in Buddhism.” He contends with La Vallée Poussin (1917), remarking that, “yoga is neither vulgar magic or thaumaturgy [but] in essence that concentrated meditation that induces a condition of quiescence.” Crucially, yoga, or “yoga-doctrine” is described as “an inherent and inseparable component of the pluralistic universe of separate *dharma*s (mental elements) that gradually evolve toward dissolution.” He believes that yoga, or at least its “germ,” likely predates an historical Buddha; but in any case states, “there is no historically authenticated Buddhism apart from yoga-theory.”⁸²

Caroline Rhys-Davids (1928) establishes Yoga as a major pre-condition to the “parturition” of early-Bauddha, which she fondly calls “Sakya.” She initially delineates yoga as “devotion” (*śraddhā*), as “strenuous study of a special kind” (35), but also equates it with the sense of *dhyāna* (Pāli *jhāna*), “musing, brooding.” She notes some two hundred and forty references to *jhāna* in the four chief Nikāyas (171), a term that is “often wrongly rendered *meditation*, that denotes active thinking, the reverse of *jhāna*” (65), and affirms and reiterates her disagreement with “much that has lately been written” on *jhāna*, which does not mean *meditation*, “threshing out a matter in concentrated thought” (166). But “if Buddhism is a kind of importation of the very spirit of Indian Yoga, we are forced to think again.” She remarks (173-74), while “*jhāna* in the Far-East tradition of Zen reassumes its well-spring position, *as in yoga* that was blurred and lost in early-Bauddha” (177).⁸³

Edward Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought* (1933) devotes sixteen pages to subject of “Yoga as the early doctrine of Buddhism.” He concurs that yoga-practice predates “Buddhism” and that some sort of “borrowing” must have occurred. “The similarities of their practices and terminologies, and the interest shown in the Pāli texts for the yoga-practices of other schools, is compelling evidence that yoga-features formed a crucial part of the early-Bauddha,” according to Thomas. “It is

82. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, Leningrad, 1927.

83. Caroline Rhys-Davids, *Sakya: Or Buddhist Origins*. London: Kegan Paul, 1931.

not, however, exactly known what actual forms of Yoga were in vogue when Gautama learned it,” he adds, “nor what (if any) changes he may have introduced.” The four “divine abodes” or *Brahma-vihāras* are a case in point. They appear as late borrowings directly from Yoga (80-81) since they also occur in the *Yoga-sūtras* (i, 33), and as the Scriptures themselves regard them as heterodox. But this does not necessarily prove that they were borrowed” (50).⁸⁴

For more than seven decades academics have continued to expound the widely held view that Yoga is an element contained in every religion. Why should the Bauddha Project be any different? Dasgupta (1941), however, interestingly suggests that, “Far from being a branch of *yoga*, it was Buddhism which made *yoga* what it was.”⁸⁵ Edward Conze (1961) starts with the tacit supposition that “Indian science, art, and philosophy, treat (in the broadest sense) yoga-experience as the chief raw material for its contemplations.” It is therefore “unworthy,” according to Conze, “for educated people to deny that Buddhistic ascetic-arts practices produce reflective states of serenity (*śamatha*) and that these practices and states are anything but Yoga.”⁸⁶ Lal Mani Joshi (1970) identifies yoga as an “essential element of Śramaṇic culture...non-Brahmaṇical and non-Aryan in origin.” That the *munis* and *yatis* of the Vedic age practiced yoga or *dhyāna* is “clear from the *Ṛgveda* (X.136.1–3) and the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* [but] the early Yoga was possibly identical with Buddhist Yoga [...] Sāṃkhya belonged to the same tradition to which early Buddhism belonged and the practice of Yoga was a common bond between these two sister traditions of non-Brahmaṇical origin.” Joshi closely juxtaposes Buddha and Kapila and notes Kapila’s *Ṛgveda* appearance as an Āṅgīrasa (X 27.16) and that Buddha is at times called the same.⁸⁷ This harkens back to Wilson’s interest in the Buddha’s birthplace Kapilavastu, the name of which he reads as “the substance of Kapila” (see p. 12 and note 67).

84. Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought*, 1933.

85. Surendranath Dasgupta, *Philosophical Essays*, Motilal Banarsidass, 1941: 92.

86. Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy*, London, 1961:17, 19.

87. Lal Mani Joshi, 1970 [2008], “Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism,” Kandy: 30-31.

Historian Erich Frauwallner (1973) offers by far the most strident affirmation of Yoga's position at the earliest stage of the Bauddha's formation. In the first of Frauwallner's two-volume study, he writes: "With the Buddhistic doctrine the Yoga was connected from the beginning, because it was the way by which the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, found Deliverance."⁸⁸ Kanjutsu Iijima (1975) reassesses standard Buddhist folklore and expresses disbelief that a person of unequalled intelligence as the Buddha could have possibly passed six years in vain. "It is an undeniable historical fact," Iijima writes, "that Yoga played a part in the origin of Buddhism."⁸⁹ Ananda Guruge (1991) effectively agrees, "Though the self-mortification implied in early Indian asceticism was not approved by the Buddha, per se, the yogic element was basic to his teaching."⁹⁰ S.N. Goenka (1990) apparently slipped in equating *samādhi* (emancipation) with *nibbana* as well as the heterodox notion of "*kaivālya*."⁹¹ Johannes Bronkhorst (2011) believes early Bauddha did not regard itself as "yoga practitioners" in any specifically "religious" sense that "was not made explicit in its texts,"⁹² though the author of *Dhammapada* might take exception, "*Yoga ve jayati bhuri* (verse 282)." Bronkhorst further cites *Mahāvastu* and its cautioning voice that urges aspirants to stay away from *yogācāras* (yoga practitioners).⁹³ Gregory Schopen (1997), however, points to *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* where yoga is depicted as a positive training that "should not to be abandoned for material concerns."⁹⁴

88. Erich Frauwallner, *History of Indian Philosophy*, (2 volumes), trans. by V.M. Bedekar, New Delhi, 1973, 1:321.

89. Kanjutsu Iijima, *Buddhist Yoga*, Japan Publications, Inc., USA, 1975: 21.

90. Ananda Guruge, *The Society of the Ramayana*, New Delhi, Abhinav Publications, 1991: 289, brackets mine.

91. "This samadhi is the samadhi of emancipation or nibbana or kaivalya." S.N. Goenka, "Yoga – as seen in the light of Vipassana," Talk at Kaivalyadham Yoga Academy, Bombay, April 30, 1990. <<http://www.vridhamma.org/Yoga-as-seen-in-the-light-of-Vipassana>>.

92. Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, Leiden: Brill, 2011: 165.

93. "The Mahāvastu expressly condemns the teaching of this school, for it makes adherence to it on the part of Bodhisattvas one of the causes which prevent them rising from the fifth bhūmi to the sixth," *The Mahāvastu* (Vol. I), trans, J. Jones, London, 1949: I, 94: (Jones, foreword, xiii).

94. See Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, Hawaii, 1997: 207.

CONCLUSION: THE EXFOLIATION OF A POSTMODERN BAUDDHA

Reimagining the fable of the Buddha's life as the exfoliation of a postmodern narrative, the Buddha devoted six preliminary years to a kind of pre-Classical ascetic-arts practice that we simply call Yoga. But after valediction from the ashram of Udraka, the second canonically attested *thera*, our fledgling ascetic felt the urge to go beyond. Three broad ascetic-arts schema stood before him: (i) the razor-edge path of epistemological discernment, (ii) investigation of the myriad states of consciousness, and (iii) a panoply of body-based observations founded on the dictum that "contemplation of the corporal structure has always been yoga's fundamental focus." This third methodology would best portray the ascetic-arts trajectory of the earliest Bauddha. This is plainly affirmed through *satipaṭṭhāna*, a yogic self-surveillance régime that places awareness on the corporal structure and the psychosomatic functioning that normally occurs autonomically. Ideology and creed are not at all required here; rites and rituals are similarly uncalled for. Everything one needs is contained within the body. The *ipsissima verba* of the Buddha is as follows,

It is within this corporal structure, my friends, with all of its mental streams and perceptions that you will come to the cosmic, the source of the cosmic, the utter and complete dissolution of the cosmic, and the door that leads beyond the perception of the cosmic (*Anguttara-nikāya* 4.45).

"During his period of intense ascetic practice, Gautama experienced such dynamic modes of ecstasy that he started to regard them as dangerous. But then he overcame this inhibiting fear and strengthened his body to prepare the ground for his re-discovered strategy of joy—*ānanda*. He had earlier believed that the aggregated agony of self-mortification was the only valid means. However, now, in contrast, he came to understand that the calming bliss of a concentrated mind was the finer path for him to follow" (after Govinda 1976).⁹⁵ Similarly, Dutt (1980) narrates "the Buddha's preference to keep his yoga free from anything whimsical, harsh, or incongruous to a healthy, strong,

95. Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness*, 1976.

and concentrated mind—a simplified process where elements of yoga sometimes appear with slight modifications.”⁹⁶ It is therefore opportune in our close words to affirm that the Buddha actually attained his ultimate aim while practicing yoga. That is, while seated in *padma-āsana*, or the “lotus pose.” *Padma* means lotus, *āsana* means seat. Nicely performed with ease and comfort, yet firm and stable, it offers the appearance of a lotus flower.

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96. Nalinaksha Dutt, *The Spread of Buddhism and The Buddhist Schools*, 1980: 10, brackets mine.

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