JACK MARSH: Welcome today's discussion Part 4 of our wonderful thought -- event with our wonderful presenter all the way from California. We are on Pack 4 on modern yoga and how it evolved and welcome me today first, myself, Jack with Yoga Alliance moderating and we have a colleague of our vice president of standards here and she will do her discussion on the history that went into the authenticity in modern yoga so please join me in welcoming our guests. Anya Foxen and she is Professor of religious and women gender studies at San Luisa and Southern California is a great place to be not so much during Covid-19 maybe, but…ANYA: are we good to go? Thanks, Jack. To kind of frame things for us we will pick up on the history and some analogous practices we see coming out of the Western world worst of that involved around the ancient Mediterranean if you want to slap that label on it and so today what I am going to try to do is trace a little of the other side of history for us and we could maybe actually have a little more time for Q&A and discussion because I know a lot have very specific questions what do we do with this stuff, so I'm going to actually kind of come back to the flies -- slides I showed last time which is an argument the markingâ€¦sorry it's a little rough sharing the screen for the first time.

JACK MARSH: We are all here with you in this moment

An English is also challenging today if you have not noticed.

SPEAKER: This is what Singleton says that postural modern yoga displaced â€“ or was a cultural successor of â€“ the preestablished methods and he causes stretching and relaxing I argue is a little more than that that had already become by the time Indian yoga traditions make their way in Estes is commonplace in the West and the way he argues this happened was to her mono gymnastics on the one hand and I will call it harmonic gymnastics to make it a little bit easier and female physical culture so we will see a lot of overlap between these two things.

They are not necessarily the same meaning there is a lot of harmonic gymnastics stuff and especially in his earliest forms practiced by women and physical culture in general was not something for women until the 19th century or so but this is kind of how we see it in the early modern period so this is kind of where we are getting on ground.

So what I am arguing for in my research is that it is really sort of worth looking and thinking deeply about this harmonic gymnastic stuff because it is just as ancient and just as traditional as Indian yoga systems. It is just that it is not yoga, at least not the original story and so part of what I would like us to think together about is whether the two systems sort of have blended in a productive way in such a way we are justified in calling this child at this point and I think that's an open question we are struggling with.

As y'all might recall from last what I sort of implied if we wanted to find an actual analog in the
West not just a way to translate the word but analogous set of practices and ideas, is this idea of harmony I think is a really good candidate and so I think one of the questions last time somebody asked why harmony and equanimity or something like that, so there are all sorts of dirty academic reasons why the term harmonium was not I use in my work, but actually, I'm not a huge fan of making of academic jargon for things and I think we should use the words practitioners themselves use.

The reason I talk about harmony as this is a Greek term comes from the Greek harm only and from that time onwards you really see text back to this idea and so if we can find some kind of tradition, it is really I think clustered to a large extent around this work on this idea of sort of harmony.

Achieving harmony at the methods, the particular practices which we might achieve that.

JACK MARSH: Seems to be a wonderful parallel between that and the coaches and hardly related to different layers of the self and synthesizing how it creates the orchestra of the self which I think is a great parallel to draw.

SPEAKER: Absolutely and writing off of that let us look at the couple of images I presented last time that really sort of bring up these parallels of what the body looks like and we spent some time talking about chakra and things like that in the Indian context is so pretty and of last week's session I kind of got into this idea that when we first see chakras popping up in Western sources people who see these images immediately make these parallels.

They understand them through a certain lens so we have somebody in 1927 leading this image from an old German text and there are chakras in Germany also and, of course, he is onto something because these images are talking about similar things at the same time they are not the same even though they are similar.

The image on the right which is showing us how the literal solar system, the cosmos, is not really the same kind of framework as we see on the left with circles of deity which is how chakras first started out and the images that I show that were a little older than this particular German astrological image and I can think exposed to an analogous copula audio to what we have, Jack as he said with the coach â€“

And it becomes a yoga context and this idea that not only is there some kind of analogy to be made between the human body and the world outside of it the human is a universe in miniature but this idea of harmony only comes in in the sense that first of all, we seek to create harmony and balance between ourselves and the universe.

This is pre-modern medicine from a medical textbook and help is a state of harmony -- health is a state of harmony and also a state of harmony and we mean that in sort of a technical way, meaning everything is functioning according to these very specific proportions it is made to function according to and it is happening within the body, we can think about the body is sort of an instrument almost and they will talk about it the body is an instrument playing the language of the soul.
The soul is the instrument playing the language of the cosmos and the divine so I could go on and on about this but there are interesting and very deep history to the stuff, bread, which is interesting to consider when you kind of only see the modern elements of how much we are missing.

JACK MARSH: Yes I think so many modern practitioners will see in this model the similarities between yoga, and to others that work in a similar fashion where you have the microcosm of archaic medicine, the vessel resolved in the moment of now with yoga and macrocosm with (unknown term) and how they are related and independent and reflects one another at different levels

SPEAKER: yes I think that is absolutely a wonderful point to bring up and it is important to point out parallels especially on larger macro scale and the idea that the cosmos is something to do with the rope down here is a really basic human idea and we have a astrology in India, Europe and China and they are not all the same astrology and there is this idea that there is medicine, the way we treat the human body is correspondence to the world around us and we have that all of the place but when you look at particulars it all functions a little differently and that's the stuff I'm interested in the similarities and differences and how is a culture or as a group of cultures, how do we dialogue through that and how do we get this stuff together.

One question that I always kind of comes up and that I will never resist answering, their social questions like the Buddha straight up refused to answer ultimately because he said they aren't that useful, these are my questions I refuse to answer your questions of actual origins like who started it all. Is there something original out of which this stuff close and the Indians borrow from the Greeks and did they all get it from Mesopotamia or things like that.

I think these are really fascinating and interesting questions but I think they don't necessarily help us do all that much with what is going on today and I think ultimate actually are not capable of answering that and there's some speculative scholarship on this stuff but is just speculative because we are talking about really, really ancient history.

JACK MARSH: Sure. Is also important to remember the people using these tools and systems were very active participants in his usage and not just the need for academic learning for the most part, they were doing it for the sake of using it in terms of growing crops will happen to the king or those in power, how will this impact our lives in the ways we live, experience so it is very much working with the systems and studying of the system.

SPEAKER: Yes, and I think there is this kind of sense in the practical stuff you are talking about the stuff that often transfers, but it is framed in different ways. So we are almost working with different layers. Sort of these larger ideological layers of microcosm and macrocosm and are just general ideas and then were talking about mechanisms in which that happens and then were taught about the practical uses like I have a stomach ache. What do I do about that? That then the mechanics are applied you and I think you can see an exchange or cross pollination happening on all of those levels.

So let me talk a little bit about how the Western systems since we talked about ancient Indian
yoga, how those Western systems end up looking and how they evolve through 2000 years of history. And then we can talk about this kind of more modern postural stuff so kind of a quick summary of some relevant similarities and I think Jack when you pointed to is his common logic of mapping the human body, the macrocosm and this idea that somehow we can bridge that gap so there's another interesting commonality and that we have this common trope of a setting. Remember I made a big deal about the cherry analogy for yoga and some of the last sessions and often when we ascend in the ancient world it is on a chariot because as the mode of conveyance and you have the Neoplatonists ended up talking about the soul's ascent and by one they mean something that is sort of specific You see this interesting split within that cohort of philosophers. There are some we focus more on to say well, the way you do this is intellectually. But really it's about kind of rational thought. It is philosophizing your way out. Then there are the other guys who says actually you have to do something about this. And here is where you get into these really interesting ideas of, you know, maybe there is a literal ascent somehow in the way the soul ascends is in a subtle body that is composed of life force essentially, of breath. The pneumatic vehicle, literally. Again it is imagined as a chariot. These guys, astral body or at the body. I think often we think about these as wishy-washy New Age words that someone made up hundred years ago but they go back to the thousand years at list.

JACK MARSH: Even the chakra system connects to astrology as well. Seven visible planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, the sun and the moon. That is a parallel in the West as well. You have these interesting places of grounding and physical nature that all the cultures have as a root shared experiences.

ANYA FOXEN: I'm glad you bring that up because the interesting thing about the chakra's is there is not seven of them.

JACK MARSH: Nine?
ANYA FOXEN: By the 18th century, actually that image I showed you before, we will come back to in a minute the most common number is six and that was because there was this particular tantric system that became popularized. And they do not have the rainbow colors that we associate the chakras with today. So again they are similar, but they are little bit different. This is one of my favorite soapbox is actually. I think the chakras are interesting to look at. The reason we have seven now and the reason they correspond to the planetary spheres in a painted and that rainbow colors is because of the Western astrological stuff. The reason for that is the seven rainbow colors are the seven rainbow colors. We know there is really six. Indigo is really just blew. He may have codified his spectrum of spectrum energy and he codified it to these harmonic musical proportions so there were seven intervals on the dietetic octave and that mentor had to be seven intervals on the electromagnetic spectrum because everything within them microcosm and macrocosm corresponds. So we see this interesting blending of these, again, similar but different ideas.

JACK MARSH: Definitely. There is a really quick question that's coming through and I want to address it because we are talking about the blending and we are talking about how do we synthesize these ideas in these -- this big question coming in says how do we address claims of cultural appropriation raised against teaching of yoga in our modern Western framework?

ANYA FOXEN: I think that's such a good question. Can we actually hold onto that?

JACK MARSH: We can get back to that later.

ANYA FOXEN: That's exactly where I'm going with all the stuff. I think recognizing these ideas
of similarity and difference are really important. Actually I spotted a quick question that drifted out of my view. Chakra with the CH it really is a CH. That is definitely the Sanskrit pronunciation.

Just to give us a little bit more, you know, maybe 90 second cliff notes on all this sort of her more nihilism stuff. We see this pop-up in the Neoplatonists... The innovate to build on a lot of Greek philosophy. You see this in Christian mysticism to. There they are not necessarily talking about union with God essentially because you want to maintain that difference within Christianity often but not always but they do still talk about this idea of the souls ascend. This idea of somehow through kind of the force of spirit coming as close to God's kingdom as possible. So you really do kind of, once you look for this you see it evolving through European culture.

The thing that actually becomes much more prominent is maybe less theological. So there's not as much room for those really bad heretical errors that you can make. It's a little safer to talk about spirit in medicine essentially. Spirit as something that, you know, maybe isn't trying to raise you to God's level but spirit is something that makes your body better, healthier, stronger. So this idea of kind of literally drawing on the power of cosmic spirit becomes really, really prominent. This idea because there is harmony we can essentially create a kind of resonancne. We can create almost an amplification of this different manifestations of spirit within our bodies. So using the correspondences between the human bodies and celestial bodies it's hard to focus on. Another fun factor is the reason the solar plexus is called the solar plexus. By doing this we maximize assorted influx of spiritual energies. We create balance and especially balance in that sense of harmony.

So music continues to be really important here actually. We are talking about music and yoga classes there is a logic to that it's not necessarily Indian yogic logic. You have all the Renaissance text saying music is the closest thing to spirit itself because these cosmic proportions are essentially based on the musical scale. So when you move this is how you should move. We should move according to the spiritual mathematical principles of music, the origins of ballet are here for example. We should move in harmony with the celestial bodies. There is one quote that I really like actually. You know, when I went looking for physical type practices in premodern European culture I found this guy, he's a famous guy. He's the one that sort of lunch the Platonic Academy in Italy.

And a lot of what he did was sort of translate but he also wrote quite a bit of his own stuff. This is Marcial Pacino who wrote a number of books on essentially kind of astrology. One of the last books he wrote in a series, he called it on obtaining life from the heavens. It's about this idea of drawing down spirit. What he says is, how do you do this. Well, among other things so he talks about music and he talks about pleasant aromas, nice stones and wine actually. He also says you have to move in the way that you move it to exercise by keeping constantly in motion and make various circular movements like those of the heavenly bodies. You can imagine him spinning around. Since by their movings and circlings you are engendered by making similar motions you will be preserved. So there is this idea of concentric movement that we see that receipt echoed here that becomes popular in these Western systems of physical culture.

That brings us to the physical gymnastics that Mark Singleton has identified as a major contributor to modern yoga. I think when we think about these claims of maybe cultural appropriation and in proper blending and stuff like that, this is the claim of his that were often
sort of stuck on. So he is talking about Swedish gymnastics there. When we are talking about British military calisthenics. We are talking about the military division of the system. Let me tell you about Ling. He was a Swedish position. He was also a poet. He lived from 1776-1839. We are talking about late 18th, early 19th century. He did not invent European physical culture of the idea of exercise with therapeutic exercise or whatever. You can find that kind of stuff the therapeutic stuff as far back as European medicine. It never really goes away. There is this idea in the Renaissance is a revival of classical culture. People talk about revival and it's the stuff we have not paid attention to for a while and you say a look at popular again. It's always there, it's not necessarily anything new. The same in his time, what he is doing is not necessarily bringing up something that was new or forgotten but he is systematizing and innovating on this stuff in a way that really specifically fits his time period. Because is located culturally of course he is embedded in all these kinds of hormonal ideas about body and spirit. He is into the idea of the three layers especially. This idea of the body, spirit, mind and then the soul. So he talks about, for instance, he kind of splits the human organism into three fundamental functions.

He talks about the dynamic phenomena of your mental and moral faculties so essentially your soul. The chemical phenomena of the body's internal processes which I mean here we are talking about maybe hormones and neurons and things like that. But in ling's time this is the word spirit. The spirit were the things that flowed through your body. And then he talks about the mechanical phenomena of the bodies kind of internal external processes so the physical anatomical stuff that happens.

So here you have this updating of the basic triad of body, spirit and mind which then parallels this distinction you find in Greek philosophy of the vegetative or nutritive and then the sensitive and then the rational aspects of the soul. So according to Ling it is the unified army of these three principles of being that we have to achieve in order to produce this very holistic state of health and well-being. It is physical culture.

This is where I take issue with Singleton a little bit. It's kind of secular and so far as again it's medical maybe. But Ling is constantly talking about how in gymnastics it is the soul that is acting on the body and is the body that's acting on the soul. I don't know that we go all the way to calling it religious necessarily but it is at least again and spiritual insofar as it is kind of pointing at these metaphysical aspects of what it means to be human. Jack, how are we doing with questions? I sort of lost track where we are at?

JACK MARSH: Thank you very much for that. We have one that is relevant coming in. It's just mentioning exactly that the physical culture and how it relates to practice and how the monastics were using the same postures for the more aesthetic practices. And how those may have come from the more Himalayan regions.

ANYA FOXEN: Absolutely. That's a fantastic question. That was where I was planning to end but we can touch on that now, I think. What happens, if you all recall from I believe last time, I talked about this proliferation of Asana's in the Indian manuscripts. That is happening around the same time period. Maybe earlier so 17th-century we begin to see, there's a few standard Asanas notes. A lot are seated but more dynamic once. Those have been around for some time and they are usually based in these various sorts of aesthetic practice. As we get closer to the modern period with any kind of Indian lineages of these yoga practices and where they are being developed you absolutely see this kind of proliferation of things Is little geographical so when we talk about a lineage we are talking about northeastern India. When we are talking
about macharia located towards the south and a couple scholars have tried to track it on a lineage and figure out the different physical practices by which they are being influenced because usually it is not just the Asanas named in Indian text and it is something that wrestlers would have done an indigenous military training and a lot of aesthetic orders of yogis were militarized so there's a lot of different places you could be potentially getting these physical practices.

Texts are one of those sources so when we get to the stuff that others are doing one way to look at it as we have all these Indian yogis innovating in late 19 or early 20th century and this is where we get Christian majority and others and is amazing how they are of the same generation and they are drawing on this Western stuff because they reference and quote the Western sources and CUC book titles attributed but that is of course not the only thing they are drawing on.

And they are building on and gauche was not involved is yoga not a was and they have that sort of more traditional yoga kind of background. They are bringing that in as well and as a kind of spiritual backbone to what they are doing but they are really sort of they are making a modern system that has the source of modern holistic, I think a kind of physical goals.

Of which are held in a modern medical sense is one, and that kind of makes sense.

JACK MARSH: That makes perfect sense and what is the word for the pneumatic vehicle and is there a classification in the literal sense side or are they contained in the new place?

ANYA FOXEN: I offer feedback and this question in a more elaborate form and the word and is the pneumatic chariot or pneumatic field and is a specific group you see talking about it and generally it is the guys interested in the argy and means this process of raising the soul and I like to think about links because there’s interesting parallels and there is a main philosopher who is pretty well documented but also a little outside of the mainstream that you might look at there and he is a couple of generations.

There is this fascinating body of material. Let me talk just kind of build towards this question of appropriation angle. And to answer how it is the women came to be at the center of these practices is another question I came up over and over in previous sessions and this is fascinating kind of 19th century history and when I do history I mostly do 19th century history so I may be a little bit biased but I like to tell my students most of that help us make sense today happened in the 1900s and if you want to understand the crazy stuff people were doing in the 19th century so here is what we see happening because actually when we look at Ling these are physical practice, physical, cultural principles that are mostly applied to male bodies.

Some of you may have noticed the images I showed you for the metal textbook is very clear it is a male body are dealing with the male body is historically the standard human body and women's bodies are deviations and that is how it was historically understood and when we see the history of gymnastics in Europe, a history that goes way, way back but these are systems are.

It's not even that women are actively discouraged developing their bodies, is not even a consideration and it is an exercise are very much a modern thing so there is kind of a temporal
element here so in a major way this is because they are kind of class dependent and so historically it would have really been only the upper-class people who would've been in the situation with a kid -- could but need to move on purpose and in a preindustrial society if you were a serpent or peasant on a farm or a tradesman you were pretty much move your body every moment that you were awake. Why would you need to exercise.

When we see gymnastics in premodern Europe we see medical gymnastics so think physical therapy and this goes back to Greek medicine. Then we see military gymnastics, this group of people who would needed to train their bodies in a specific way and there is one group which I will bracket for a second term

We are ready -- already in military so this is pretty standard and he is following up on things that would've been the case for a long time but Elaine is also late 18th and early 19th century so what's important is by then we would've had industrialization beginning to feel, we would've had middle-class is engaging in more strenuous -- less strenuous labor and by the 19th century we have this kind of panic about the kinds of ill health specifically emerging from a modern, sedentary lifestyle which we would not have had prior to that period of

We would've had aristocracy that were sedentary that they would ride horses and shoot arrows and you did not have people sitting at a desk for 10 hours a day so this is a big deal for men, of Isaac, and the US especially is tied into concerns about who the laboring classes are so there is classism but also a racism dragging masking of physical culture that I think is important to pay attention to, but importantly, because of what happens with gender roles during the 18th and 19th centuries there's a way women factor into this.

Traditionally women may have been considered in medical genetics but that help would've been the only place and if the bodies waking down -- breaking down list look at ways to move it but there would not have been a reason for women to develop their bodies intentionally and this changes in the 19th century partially because of how confined middle-class women come to their homes and this is called the separation of yours and is a pretty modern thing because when people were working on the homestead there was women's work and men's work the people were pretty much the same place, but the idea that the domestic sphere is a feminine sphere and well-to-do women would have been servants who took care of everything for them so they were supposed to be wives and mothers and that was sort of at.

So there's a sort of pushback emerging in the 19th century specifically how weak it makes middle-class women and here is where we might talk about first wave feminism. There were two other branches to Links system, military and medical, but pedagogical gymnastics which is baselined training implemented for children so very modern thing and idea of a public school system where we shape our children.

And then there were aesthetic gymnastics. This would've been really the place in premodern physical culture retraining the body purposely would've popped up in the way it translates into woman's physical culture and a premodern since will be talking about performers that would have needed to train their bodies so we are talking actors, dancers and stuff like that.

This is incidentally the most spiritual brand for Kathleen because of aesthetics and Art are very connected to the idea of conveying higher truth and music is a closing to spirit here and when
we first saw ballet developed dance Masters described it as an influx of spirit born into the body and communicated out through a very specific regimented, harmonic movement.

This is where something really interesting happens. In the 19th century there’s a push to find the type of gymnastics appropriate for women because even the women's rights activists are kind of mired in these gender norms so women need to exercise and need to be strong, but we don't want them to be too strong. Exercise still needs to be of appropriate feminine and graceful, cultivate the proper kind of body for women, so some are actually very practical and literally say if the exercise does not look pretty enough women just won't do it so this is where we land aesthetics gymnastics and during this time because religion is becoming more privatized it increasingly happens in the home and during this time you get this rising notion that women are more spiritually attuned than men because there is passivity and sensitivity there that we read as very feminine traits.

This is why you see so many new spiritual movements pop up in the 19th century that are led by women so it's kind of a perfect loop where we have a spiritual type of gymnastics that is graceful love and called place right kind of beauty you want women to have. And it is also kind of inhabitants to be this sort of perfecting their plans holistically and all of the different aspects of the human being so we are right for the appropriation of yoga at this point.

JACK MARSH: I just love the third aspect of the three-part Western system of what Catholics call the father, Holy Spirit AND MASCULINE ELEMENTS THAT ARE THE MIND AND PHYSICAL ASPECT AND (SPEAKS French)
and that is very masculine

ANYA FOXEN: That's fantastic point and I will share my screen again and this is what we get by the end of the 19th century and this is published in 1892 and everything is they lose with yoga. Genevieve has a very fascinating lineage if you want to call it that is so she knows a lot about Lane but she is first representative of a very specific aesthetic system but ultimately she strikes out on her own and by 1892 this is her system and she publishes Dynamic Breathing in Harmonic Gymnastics and puts forth psychophysical culture. Psycho not like psychology and modern sense but where the word comes from and is a great word for soul and she defines it as the perfect unison of Harmonic gymnastics and dynamic breathing during the formulation of noble ideals in the mind. Harmonic done gymnastics and dynamic breathing formulation of noble ideas in the mind. Now if we wanted to point our fingers and shout yoga you would be very easy to do that because what can we say this is? We have also not we have pranayama and we have meditation. But that is not what Stebbins is teaching. It gets tricky and its 1892. Stebbins is an educated woman. She has heard the word yoga before. It gets especially tricky because we are entering into this time with there’s a fully modern commercial fascination with the Orient.

So increasingly you have white ladies dressing up in their living rooms putting down their oriental rugs, wearing kimonos and doing bellydancing parties. All of this stuff is already happening. It is happening again because there is this kind of fantasy. Out there there is this other world and we can appropriate, we can use that world especially for more well-to-do women to play out these very liberatory roles. Often these are women who are trying to be the ideal of the new woman. They are specifically doing this stuff to break the conventions of their time.
But the thing is if you look at Stebbins and she does have a couple places and her manuals were she will talk about how she was inspired by the idea of oriental prayer and things like that. You might say maybe she was influenced by yoga or something along those lines but the thing is if you dig below the surface and you look at what she is actually teaching and this is especially important if you compare it to some of the men who are simultaneously developing modern yoga in India and what they are teaching because we have their manuals as well. This is the nice thing about the 19th century, you have books. It becomes very clear that Stebbins is not teaching the same thing they are. She is not teaching what is quickly becoming modern yoga. What she is teaching really ought to be called harmonic gymnastics and psychophysical culture. I think we shouldn't necessarily try to read yoga into her work. We should take her at her word.

But the other thing is, if you look at what Stebbins is teaching just in terms of what it physically looks like and you follow her instructions and do the exercises you can teach one of her drills in a modern yoga studio and nobody would raise an eyebrow. How did this happen? How did this stuff become called yoga? This is actually where I will stop and wrap it up.

There is also stuff you do in a postural yoga class that you would not find in Stebbin's book and this is especially true if you go to a lineage affiliated studio.

During the 17th century you have this flowering of the particularly physical side of the system. That is there, that is in India and that is evolving just as this Western stuff is evolving in Europe and the US. So to some extent there is kind of the both if we look at what modern postural practice looks like. There is some stuff that is very clearly related to these poses we would have seen in the Indian text. But some of it is stuff that you find at Stebbins which we can trace back to Ling and even further than that in those functions in these types of principles.

Here is where I want to make a point. Some of it really looks very much like straightforward cultural appropriation. Let me give you an example. You have a very famous yogi at the time, a very famous author. He publishes books where he essentially takes Sanskrit language, he basically steals it from, he slaps it onto the kind of stuff that women like Stebbins are teaching. Appropriately he is not Indian. Is a white guy from Baltimore named Walter Atkinson. His books are popular because they are teaching something people are already comfortable with but he makes it sound new and exotic because now suddenly it's yoga and not this stuff we have been practicing for decades now. This is a huge but invisible sort of hiccup we run into when we try to understand how yoga spread and became popularized. For instance, you have historians like excited and say look there's Constantine who revolutionized Russian theatre and he was influenced by yoga but if you take a closer look at the books that were actually on his shelf, it's all (unknown term). This is an Russia.

Some of this is this very troubling rebranding that I would say is appropriation and the appropriation interestingly is happening on the level of language this kind of again imagine oriental mystique these practices have that are Western practices do not have. We call them by this other name and suddenly it becomes more spiritual and exciting.

But then you get into, as one of the previous questions that we talk today -- talked about today asks, these other Indian innovators. These guys are all reading the Western material but they
are also drawing on these other more Indigenous Indian sources. And they are hugely responsible as far as modern postural yoga even in the most generic studio in the US still has these things we can identify. It's because of them. It's because this blending is happening in both directions. We can talk about appropriation but I think that doesn't give us the full story.

JACK MARSH: Yeah and it's such a great point. The people at that time were very conscious and aware that they were quote appropriating these cultural elements. They called it something else. The call to exoticism. It was the actual celebration of exotics I think that was the unknown and bringing it into the space there was an altered space or had nothing to do are very little to do with the home culture and it was much about the exotic nature of that lived experience as fantasy.

ANYA FOXEN: Fantasy and story are so important. We are discovering something new and we are doing this like, you know, exciting mysterious thing. But this is actually sort of, I think it talked about this in our first session. It is troubling when we project that out and we claim that well India is exotic and India is mystical and India is pretty modern. India is not premodern, it's a modern global power. It is not exempt from modernity. All this stuff that is happening here is happening there just in different ways.

And I think when we look at the two sides and we acknowledge our premodern like traditional mystical roots it's actually much easier to see even the kind of appropriate if the clearly problematic dynamics that are happening because then we see the stuff that is ours that came from Western culture and we see how there really is this blending. We see with the blending is happening in a kind of profound and we could argue right, productive way. We can see with the blending is clearly just superficial and for the sake of marketing and purely appropriated.

JACK MARSH: We are down to the last six or so minutes here and there were three questions I wanted to make sure we address and if there are any parallel questions I will grab those too. What we want to cover fast is what might be a shorter answer about where the origins of the Sanskrit terms for yoga Asana come from? People have been mentioning how they have been unable to find the root nomenclatures for the Sanskrit Asana.

ANYA FOXEN: That's an interesting question. We look at the Asana we see this. Summer animal things and some are named after sages. (unknown term). If you're a modern Indian person and you know some Sanskrit and you want to describe this thing you're doing in your yoga system that is what you might name it because that is what the thing is.

There is a sense in which I think we can talk about some of the names we find in the older sources and some of them like when they are described but the more standard Asanas. What is the limit that to begin with?

An important thing to pay attention to is a lot of the time this is where the scholars on the project that I mentioned last time in that blog that I kind of plug they have identified. Here is what Tonya and Bow pose used to look like if you go by the older texts. It's really not the same of what we are doing now. It's tricky when we kind of try to pin words two things. Because words change time over meaning too.

JACK MARSH: In the culture which your living shapes the language you use which again shapes the culture your living in that dialectical process. We have a few quick questions here.
One is really specific and we will get to that one last. We have one that is about a lot of yogis participate in another form of Japanese form that is maybe more appropriate and synthesized with yoga a lot and that's one example where we can see this melding of cultures that might not be in a way that is not appropriative it feels a bit appropriative and if you have any thoughts about that.

The final question is in 2020 many structures instructors are still uncomfortable or dismissive of origins from the Nile Valley region and beyond. I wonder why they find this influence from 10,000+ BC hard to acknowledge. Collaboration on this topic is requested.

ANYA FOXEN: I'm going to actually focus on the latter question with the four minutes we have left. I think it speaks to some of the stuff we were just talking about. What's really interesting is it's not my area so that's why I'm not going to make wild historical claims. It's an interesting parallel example, right? Course you should see chakras and Rechi involved.

I find interesting these potential connections. When you look at the Greek stuff is not only some of the centers in Alexandria for instance but they are actually in a very interesting way that I'm not going to call like a direct parallel to what we are doing now with ancient tradition but they are fascinating. Ancient Egypt, right? In the mystical wisdom of ancient Egypt. This is not something we as modern people do this is something people were doing in 300 CE in the same exact way. The ancients over there knew what was going on and we need to learn from that. I think it is a natural human impulse.

I think to some extent the reason that I as a scholar am sort of very resistant to trying to make specific claims and so this is sort of what I meant about origins and stuff like that. Given how similar the systems are on some level, I think that it is very likely that there was influence, and back and forth and whether or not we would call it yoga at the time, right because that actually again is a comparatively modern world when we are looking about its origins and link to Sanskrit but I think that certainly there is something to be said from the way agent cultures across the Mediterranean and from the coast of Africa into South Asia would have reacted. We know there are trade routes there throughout prehistory.

It seems impossible to me that there was no contact and no influence but at the same time again as a scholar and historian we cannot point to and say that's what was transferred and it was like transferred here and that's exactly who, how and why.

What I like to do is I like to sort of, this is why Gesturing in similarities, get it resistant to pinning it down. I think that we can admit that there are probably influences and certainly even if we can't claim influence we can claim productive comparison. There are analogies but, yeah, it is really fascinating but tricky area.

JACK MARSH: That was the last major question that we had. There was one, I don't know if you've heard the manuscript (unknown term) that has been talked about online recently of a manuscript coming out.

ANYA FOXEN: I'm not exactly sure what that is referring to. If whoever is asking that question was to shoot me an email with reference. I like looking at the stuff but I don't know off the top of my head.
JACK MARSH: This is a great final question. Do you believe every yoga teacher should learn basic in Sanskrit?

ANYA FOXEN: My larger thesis with all the stuff was talking about today is we might want to be honest with what we are teaching and practicing when it does it does not have Indian roots. If I were to make a really strong version of that thesis, for me, it's really certainly not my place to dictate what everybody else does but for me it seems important that if we claim to be teaching a practice that is labeled with a Sanskrit word we should have at least some basic understanding of where that comes from and where that heritage is and what that cultural background is. I mean Sanskrit is really hard. I spent 10 years studying it and I still do not have any idea what's going on have the time.

I think it is our moral obligation to do at least the barest minimum if we are going to make that claim. If we are going to take that word and say that's what I'm teaching, that's when I'm practicing. We should know what that is because that is just responsible human behavior.

JACK MARSH: It sounds like that's directly supportive of the argument these are mantras and meditations were you taking the route Sanskrit word in those basic annual living the vibration or experiencing vibration of its repetition as a means to rise -- arrive at that vibrational essence.

ANYA FOXEN: I think we and yoga culture are so mindful about what we put in our bodies and our place in the world around us. It seems to me that, this isn't like I'm going to eat organic, it's not that literal. But if you're going to engage spiritually especially, not just physically was something but intellectually, it's our responsibility to at least sort of know what that stuff is. Not because we are concerned about maybe it is bad but because we should know. We should be aware of our place in the world.

JACK MARSH: Speaking of mindfulness. Our time is at an end. Thank you so much for joining us in the final part of this four-part webinar series. I hope you enjoyed our journey through the origins and authenticity of modern yoga through ancient to the present day. I hope you tune in again for the upcoming workshops. Again this is Dr. Foxen from California Polytechnic and she is a wonderful writer and author writing her book. My name is Jack Marsh and am a member support representative. With Yoga Alliance. The wonderful rest of your day and stay safe and healthy.

ANYA FOXEN: Thanks so much everyone.