



## EDITORIAL

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Senior Editor

Dear Readers,

welcome to the fifth volume of the *Journal of Yoga Studies*. Our previous volume, no. 4, which was published last year (2023), contains fourteen articles, which comprise a wide variety of studies into yoga and bodily practices in South Asia and beyond, and illustrate the diversity of forms, styles and purposes inherent in the grand sweep of the history of yoga globally.

In this edition there are three articles, which similarly reflect the diversity of current research into yoga, in both the past and the modern era. The three articles examine primary sources in Bengali, Mandarin Chinese and Sanskrit.

The article by Ida Pajunen, “Yoga and *Vyāyāma* in New Bengali Sources,” explores the interface between yoga, health, bodybuilding and spirituality in the first half of the twentieth century in Bengal, and the role of particular women in the transformation of the practices and goals of yoga.

“‘Mother of Yoga’: Zhang Huilan, Chris Butler, and the Popularization of Yoga in the People’s Republic of China” by Marc Lagace is a novel exploration of how yoga practices became popular in China in the 1970s. He highlights the role of two yoga teachers in particular, Zhang Huilan and Chris Butler, in the dissemination of yoga practices in China.

Rocco Cestolo, in his article “Fading into Death through Pātañjalayoga: On the Apparent Dead-like State of the Yoga Practitioner Absorbed into Contentless *Samādhi*,” examines

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a crucial feature of traditional yoga practices, found in some commentaries on Pātañjala yoga and also in other sources: namely, the association between *samādhi* and a dead-like condition, in which the yogin appears to be dead, inert like a lump of wood, with no detectable breath. These insights reflect an important distinction between what might be called “traditional” and “modern” yoga, as practised outside South Asia in the twentieth century, as the goals of yoga practice are very different: either attempting to attain *samādhi*, employing various techniques, as in traditional yoga; or practising yoga for “spiritual” reasons, health or well-being, as in modern yoga.

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