Glossary of Critical Terms

*Abhidharma*: Buddha’s scattered teachings were developed into a particular system of thought and method of exposition called *Abhidharma*. *Abhi* means higher or special or about. *Dharma* means teaching, philosophy, thus *abhidharma* is ‘higher teachings’ or concerning teaching of Buddha.

*ālaya - vijñāna*: This Sanskrit term means ‘store of consciousness’. key concept of the *Vijñānavāda* (Consciousness-affirming) school of the *Mahāyāna* Buddhist tradition.

*Aletheia*: This is an ancient Greek word for truth. Greek philosophers used this term to personify truth. It was known to the Romans as *Veritas*.

Antifoundationalism: It is a term applied to any philosophy which rejects a foundationalist approach. An anti-foundationalist does not believe in fundamental principles which are the basic ground of inquiry and knowledge, instead uses logical or historical/genealogical attacks on foundational concepts (especially Nietzsche and Foucault), often coupled with alternative methods for justifying and forwarding intellectual
inquiry, such as the pragmatic subordination of knowledge to practical action.

**Aporia:** It comes from ancient Greek word meaning impasse or lack of resources or puzzlement or doubt or confusion. It denotes in philosophy, a philosophical puzzle or state of puzzlement, and, in rhetoric, a rhetorically useful expression of doubt.

**Apophatic:** It is a term relating to the belief that God can be known to humans only in terms of what He is not (such as ‘God is unknowable’).

**Apohea:** It denotes Buddhist Theory of Meaning. It is directed primarily against the pluralistic conception of reality according to which universals are considered to be real.

**Arche:** According to Derrida arche-writing refers to a more generalised notion of writing that insists that the breach that the written introduces between what is intended to be conveyed and what is actually conveyed, is typical of an originary breach that afflicts everything one might wish to keep sacrosanct, including the notion of self-presence.
Avidya: It is a Sanskrit word that means ‘ignorance’, ‘delusion’, ‘unlearned’, ‘unwise’ and that which is not, or runs counter to, vidya. It is used extensively in Hindu texts, including the Upanishads and as well in Buddhist thought.

Bodhi: It is both a Pāli and Sanskrit word meaning awakened or enlightenment. In Buddhism it is the knowledge possessed by a Buddha into the nature of things (dharma).

Catuskoti: It is a typical piece of Buddhist dialectical apparatus. It consists of four members in a relation of exclusive disjunction (one of, but not more than one of, a, b, c, d, is true). Buddhist dialecticians have negated each of the alternatives, and thus have negated the entire proposition. As these alternatives were supposedly exhaustive, their exhaustive negation has been termed ‘pure negation’ and has been taken as evidence for the claim that Madhyamika is negativism.

Chiasmus: It is the figure of speech in which two or more clauses are related to each other through a reversal of structures in order to make a larger point; that is, the clauses display inverted parallelism.
Copula: It derives from the Latin noun for a link or tie that connects two different things. In linguistics, it is a word used to link the subject of a sentence with a predicate.

De-negation: This French term is from Latin dēnegāre to deny, refuse, from negāre to deny. This term implies a negation of a negation, a denial then but one that is also an affirmation. It is a negation that denies itself. It de-negates itself.

Dharma: The Sanskrit word Dharma means ‘what is established, law, duty, right’. In Buddhism it has three meanings: 1. The Universal Law of Nature. 2. The teachings of the Buddha. 3. A phenomenon and/or its properties.

Différance: It is a French term coined by Jacques Derrida and homophonous with the word ‘différence’. French word différer means both ‘to defer’ and ‘to differ.’

Dissimulation: It is a form of deception in which one conceals the truth. Dissimulation commonly takes the form of concealing one’s ability in order to gain the element of surprise over an opponent. It consists of concealing the truth, or in the case of half-truths, concealing parts of the truth, like inconvenient or secret
information. Dissimilation differs from simulation, in which one exhibits false information.

Dharmakāya: It means literally ‘truth body’ or ‘reality body’. It is a central idea in Mahayana Buddhism forming part of the Trikaya doctrine. It constitutes the un-manifested, ‘inconceivable’ aspect of a Buddha, out of which dharmas arise, and to which they return after their dissolution.

Discursivity: It means covering a wide field of subjects or rambling. It is the process of proceeding to a conclusion through reason rather than intuition.

Eido: It is a Greek word. It means to see or to perceive with the eyes or any of the senses. It also means to ascertain what must be done about it.

Energeia: It is from Greek word ergon, meaning ‘work’. It is the source of the modern word ‘energy’. The meaning can also be rendered it with the phrase ‘being–at–work’.

Epistemology: It is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. It attempts to answer the basic question: what distinguishes true knowledge from false knowledge?
Hyperessentialism: Essentialism is the philosophic view that, for any specific kind of entity, there is a set of characteristics or properties all of which any entity of that kind must possess. Thus hyperessentialism is over and above the essentialism.

_Jīva:_ The Sanskrit term _jīva_ means a living being, or more specifically, the immortal essence of a living organism (human, animal, fish or plant etc.) which survives physical death.

_Jñāna:_ It is Sanskrit word that means knowledge.

_Karmic:_ It is the adjective of the noun _karma_, the principle of retributive justice determining a person's state of life and the state of his reincarnations as the effect of his past deeds. It also means inevitable consequence or destiny or fate.

_Kū:_ This Japanese word is most often translated as ‘void’, it also means ‘sky’ or ‘heaven’, representing those things beyond our everyday experience, and particularly those things composed of pure energy. It also represents spirit, thought, and creative energy.
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Logocentric</td>
<td>It refers to the tradition that situates the logos, ‘the word’ or the ‘act of speech’, as epistemologically superior in a system, or structure, in which we may only know, or be present in, the world by way of a logocentric metaphysics. It also denotes a structuralist method of analysis, especially of literary works, that focuses upon words and language to the exclusion of non-linguistic matters, such as an author's individuality or historical context.</td>
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<td>Originary</td>
<td>It is an adjective meaning causing existence; productive, or primitive; primary; original.</td>
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<td>Mahaparinirvana</td>
<td>It is a Theravada Buddhist <em>sutta</em> in the <em>Digha Nikaya</em> of the <em>Tipitaka</em>. It concerns the end of Buddha’s life and is the longest <em>sutta</em> of the Pali Canon. It has been resorted to as the principal source of reference of the Buddha’s passing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magadhi</td>
<td>It is the language spoken by the Buddha, and the language of the ancient kingdom of Magadha.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madhyamika</td>
<td>It is from Sanskrit word meaning Intermediate. It is an important school of Mahayana the Great Vehicle Buddhist tradition. The most renowned <em>Madhyamika</em> thinker was Nagarjuna.</td>
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**Marga:** It is a Sanskrit word meaning path. It is a path toward, or way of reaching, salvation.

**Naiyayikas:** It is the name given to followers of the Nyāya School, a non-Buddhist school of eternalism. The Naiyayika, or Logicians, are followers of the sage Brahmana Akshapada.

**nāma rūpa:** In Sanskrit name is nāma and form is rūpa. In Buddhism both are mutually dependent, and not separable; they designate an individual being.

**Nirvana:** It is the union with the Supreme Being through moksha. The word literally means ‘blowing out’ referring in the Buddhist context, to the blowing out of the fires of greed, hatred, and delusion.

**Nomos:** It is from Greek. It refers, not only to explicit laws, but to all of the normal rules and forms people take for granted in their day to day activities. In sociology, a nomos is a socially constructed ordering of experience.

**Mantra:** It is a sound, syllable, word, or group of words that is considered capable of ‘creating transformation’.
Ousia: It is a Greek noun analogous to the English participle being, and the modern philosophy adjectival ontic. It is often translated to Latin as substantia and essentia, and to English as substance and essence.

Paramartha Satya: This Sanskrit term means absolute truth or absolute reality. The ultimate level of truth or reality denotes direct experience devoid of an overlay of conceptualization, and stands in contrast to ‘relative truth’.

Pharmakon: It is Greek term meaning sacrament, remedy, poison, talisman, cosmetic, perfume or intoxicant.

Phenomenology: It is from Greek phainòmenon meaning ‘that which appears’; and lógos ‘study’. It is a broad philosophical movement emphasizing the study of conscious experience.

pratitya-samutpada: It is the fundamental Buddhist teaching on causation, called the doctrine of Dependent Origination, and the ontological status of phenomena. It teaches that all phenomena arise in dependence on causes and conditions and lack intrinsic being.
**Prajñā:** It is a Sanskrit word meaning wisdom, understanding, discernment or cognitive acuity. Such wisdom is understood to exist in the universal flux of being and can be intuitively experienced through meditation.

**Praxis:** It is the process by which a theory, lesson, or skill is enacted, practised, embodied, or realized. It may also refer to the act of engaging, applying, exercising, realizing, or practising ideas. This has been a recurrent topic in the field of philosophy, discussed in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Immanuel Kant, Søren Kierkegaard, Karl Marx, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, Paulo Freire, and many others. It has meaning in political, educational, and spiritual realms.

**Physis:** It is a Greek term usually translated into English as nature.

**Samsara:** This Sanskrit term can be translated as “continuous movement” or “continuous flowing” and, in Buddhism, it refers to the concept of a cycle of birth (*jāti*), and consequent decay and death (*jarāmaraṇa*), in which all beings in the universe participate, and which can only be
escaped through enlightenment. Saṣāra is continuous suffering (dukkha) and is generally considered the antithesis of Nirvāṇa.

Satori: It is a Japanese term for enlightenment that literally means ‘understanding’.

Semiosis: It is any form of activity, conduct, or process that involves signs, including the production of meaning.

Samvrti: It refers to the conventional, as opposed to absolute, truth or reality.

Soteriology: It is Greek word. It is the study of religious doctrines of salvation, which are a feature of various religions.

Tantric: The Sanskrit word tantra means loom or warp. It als means principle, system, doctrine.

Tathatā: This central concept in Buddhism is variously translated as ‘thusness’ or ‘suchness’.
Telos: It’s a Greek word meaning ‘end’, ‘purpose’, or ‘goal’. It is the root of the term ‘teleology’, roughly the study of purposiveness, or the study of objects with a view to their aims, purposes, or intentions.

Theravada: It means the teaching of the elders or the ancient teaching. It is the oldest surviving Buddhist school, founded in Nepal.

Trace: This Derridean concept is seen as a contingent term for a ‘mark of the absence of a presence, an always-already absent present’. It is also the ‘originary lack’ that seems to be ‘the condition of thought and experience’.

Upanishads: The Upanishads are philosophical texts considered to be an early source of Hindu religion.

Upāya: This Sanskrit word means ‘expedient means’ or ‘pedagogy’.

This term in Mahayana Buddhism refers to a means that goes or brings you up to some goal, often the goal of Enlightenment.

Verneinung: This German word means denial, disputing, or negation.
**Yogācāra:** It is an influential school of Buddhist philosophy and psychology emphasizing phenomenology and ontology, through the interior lens of meditative and yogic practices. This Sanskrit word literally means ‘yoga practice’.

**Yoga:** It is a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline, originating in ancient India, whose goal is the attainment of a state of perfect spiritual insight and tranquility.