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Meditation in Buddhism and Hinduism - Classical and Modern Dhyāna and Yoga

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**Meditation in Buddhism and Hinduism -
Classical and Modern Dhyāna and Yoga**

RELG 399 variable credit 1-3

Instructor: Dr. Ronald Green Office: AOC 332 Phone: 349-2782
Office hours in EHFA 279: Tuesday and Thursdays 8:30-9:20 a.m. and 10:45-12:10
or by appointment
Class website: <http://ww2.coastal.edu/rgreen/meditation.pdf>

Catalog description

RELG 399 Special Topics in Religious Studies (1-3) For more information, see the Non-Traditional Coursework in the Academic Regulations section in this catalog. May be repeated for credit under different topics.

Course description

This course is an academic study of contemplative practices in two major Indian traditions: Buddhism and Hinduism. It surveys some of the modern developments of these practices inside and outside of India. Students will evaluate modern meditative practices in terms of correspondence with classical sources. Classical sources for meditative practices covered in the course include the *Upaniṣads* and early Buddhist sūtras, texts of the period of classical Yoga, and those of later Indian Tantrism.

The course defines major categories of contemplative practices including meditation on syllables/sounds considered sacred (*mantras*) and visualization (*dhyāna*) practices. Similarities and differences between the methods and goals of various Buddhist and Hindu contemplative practices will come into focus. The course also raises issues concerning the impact of Indian contemplative practices on Euro-American culture. It will help students to appreciate different contemplative traditions and - should they themselves be practitioners of Asian forms of meditation - understand these traditions better within cultural contexts.

Course Objectives

By isolating types and characteristic elements of contemplative practices in Indian traditions, students will become aware of their historical developments, social significance, and variety as well as common misconceptions about them. They will know the classical theories and practices and be able to evaluate modern meditative practices in terms of descriptions in canonical Buddhist and Hindu sources.

Toward this goal, students will have the opportunity to observe the activities of the CCU student Meditation Club.

Student Learning Outcomes. On completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. explain the principles of contemplative practices of religious and cultural traditions other than their own,
2. recognize different Indian contemplative practices in their cultural and historical settings,
3. identify Indian contemplative practices in the modern world and their impact on Euro-American culture,
4. describe the claims, practices, and research on popular modern meditation practices,
5. use the methods of writing a good research paper, in which clarity of expression and argumentation, logical structure and mastery of the technical aspects of academic writing are reflected.

Readings: We will come to understand contemplative practices mainly through studying original texts (in English translations) in their historical context. The assigned readings will also include historical surveys and interpretive studies. Many of these are available online. The instructor will provide other readings indicated in the weekly schedule. See the reading list at the end of this syllabus.

Course Requirements: In addition to weekly meetings with the instructor (to be arranged), students are required to write one research paper of 10-20 pages in length (including bibliography) on a course-related theme. The required length of this paper will depend on the variable credit for the course. The extent of reading assignments will also depend on the number of credit hours.

This paper will be presented to the instructor and preferably at an academic conference. Topics will be chosen in consultation with the instructor in the first two weeks of the semester. Topics may be selected according to personal interest as long as they fall within the scope of the course and rely on available materials. Papers will be graded based on philosophical content, as well as structure, clarity, technical aspects (bibliography, citations, correct spelling, grammar, etc.). A grading rubric will be provided for this. Students are required to discuss their work with the instructor each week. An annotated bibliography is to be prepared and submitted by the fifth week of classes.

As much as possible, papers should rely on existing translations of primary sources. They must include personal analysis and evaluation via reasoning that is both sound and valid. They must focus on a clearly defined topic. Papers must also include a discussion of the historical context of the source

materials.

Grading Criteria:

1. Preparation, attendance, and discussion during weekly meetings: 20%
2. Preliminary bibliography: 20%
3. Weekly progress on and presentation of the research paper: 20%
4. Final Paper: 40%

Based on this, the student will earn a letter grade for the term according to the following system:

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| A = 91 - 100% | C = 71 - 77% |
| B+ = 88 - 90% | D+ = 68 - 70% |
| B = 81 - 87% | D = 61 - 67% |
| C+ = 78 - 80% | F = below 61% |

Attendance policy:

Attendance is not formally part of the course grade. However, our individual meetings are obviously immensely important for your success in the course. I doubt we'll have any trouble here.

If missing meetings and appointments becomes a habit, I'll have to institute an attendance policy mirroring the CCU Catalog's standard: The grade may be lowered to the point of failure upon missing 25% or more of the meetings.

Special needs / disabilities statement:

If you have a physical or documented mental disability and need accommodations, see me to make the appropriate arrangements. Note that in order to receive such compensation, you need to register with the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services, phone 349-2503, URL <http://www.coastal.edu/disabilityservices/>. The office is in 106 Kearns Hall.

Course Outline:

Part I: Classical Meditation Systems. Primary Sources

Week One

Course format, goals, procedures, resources, requirements and readings. Suggestions for research topics, Introduction. Historical Background

Early textual sources of Brahmanism: Contemplation in earlier Upaniṣads – meditation on om syllable, dhyāna.

Readings: Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad and Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad; Olivelle: *The Early Upaniṣads*, introduction: 3-37.

Week Two-Three

Early strata of Buddhist contemplative practices as reflected in the Pāli canon: Observance of the breath; contemplation of the Four Immeasurables (*brahmavihāra*); *kaṣiṇa* meditation; absorption stages (Skt. *dhyāna*, Pāli *jhāna*); *vipaśyanā* (Pāli *vipassanā*) and *śamatha* (Pāli *samatha*).

Readings: *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta* (*Majjhima nikāya*, no. 10; cf. also *Dīgha nikāya*, no 22); *Ānāpānasati sutta* (*Majjhima nikāya*, no. 118); Metta sutta (*Sutta nipāta* 1.18; Khuddakapāṭha no. 9 – with excerpts from commentaries); Gethin 1992: 29-68, 344-350; Gethin 1998: 174-201 [and notes, 291-294]; Griffiths 1981; 1983: 92-134.

Recording: Discussion of the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta* (provided by the instructor).

Reading and discussion of the *Ānāpānasati sutta* : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIGZcoKeeWI>

Classification of 40 contemplation objects and the brahmavihāras in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*.

Readings: *Visuddhimagga*, section 3.10 and section 9.

Week Four

Early sources on Yoga and meditation in the Mahābhārata: Mokṣadharmā section in book 12 (Śāntiparvan).

Readings: the Mahābhārata: Mokṣadharmā section, chapter 240 (pp. 362-365); chapters 330-331 (pp. 523-527); Frauwallner 1973: 106-114 (Yoga in the Epics).

Week Five – annotated bibliography due

Meditation (*dhyāna*) and *samādhi* in the Classical Yoga system: Yoga and Sāṃkhya.

Readings:

Yoga sūtras of Patañjali: “Analytical Summary of the Yoga-Sūtras” (pp. xxiv-xxix) and “Translation of the Yoga-Sutras without the Comment or the Explanation” (pp. xxx-xli) in Woods 1914; translation of the Yoga sūtras by Barbara Stoler Miller, pp. 29-83; Frauwallner 1973: 217-354 (pp. 376-392)

notes), especially 321-354 (the Sāṃkhya and the Classical Yoga System).

Week Six

Similarities and differences in Buddhist and Brahmanical meditative practices.

Readings: Bronkhorst 1993 and 1998.

Week Seven

Meditation practices in Hindu Tantric traditions: *mantra yoga* and *kuṇḍalinī yoga*.

Readings: Śāradātilakatantra, yoga chapter (chapter 25), in Bühnemann 2001: 354-366; Sanderson 1988; Gupta 1979; Bühnemann 1991.

Week Eight

Meditation practices in Buddhist Tantric traditions: The structure of the sādḥna, mantra repetition and visualization procedures (dhyāna).

Readings: Kloppenborg/Poelmeyer 1987: 83-95; Gomex 1995: 318-327; Sanderson 1994: 88-101; Kūkai “Mediation of the Stages of a Decaying Corpse” (handout).

Part II: Modern Meditation Traditions. Research / Secondary Sources

Week Nine

Modern developments: Contemporary forms of *vipassanā* meditation.

Readings: King 1980: 116-144; Sharf 1995: 228-270; Cousins 1996: 35-58; excerpts from Kornfield’s *Living Dharma*.

Films: Instructions for *Vipassanā*; Jack Kornfield: “The Inner Art of Meditation” (100 minutes): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=th0RfcjDFO0>; Thich Nhat Hanh: A Guide to Walking Meditation (30 minutes).

Week Ten

Maharishi Maheṣṭh Yoga and Transcendental Meditation (TM)

Week Eleven

Zen Buddhist meditation

Reading: How to Practice Zen (brochure, handout); Chih-I: 1-106.

Week Thirteen

Ajikan meditation (handout and powerpoint)

Reading: *Ajikan yoshi kuke* (Instructions from Kūkai on Contemplation of the syllable ‘A’); Yamasaki 1988: 106-122, 190-215.

Week Fourteen

Brain Imaging; Research Centers for Meditation.

Reading: UNC School of Medicine Mindfulness Training Program:

<https://www.med.unc.edu/phyrehab/pim/mindfulness-program>

Film: Matthieu Ricard, Google Tech Talk: *Change your Mind Change your Brain: The Inner Condition*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_30JzRGDHI (1 hour)

Week Fifteen Presentation of research paper

Course Materials:

Primary Sources:

Upaniṣads

P. Olivelle: *The Early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and Translation*. New York: Oxford University Press 1998.

Majjhima Nikāya

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya. Translated from the Pali. Original Translation by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli. Translation edited and revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston: Wisdom Publications (*Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, no. 10, pp. 145-155, notes: pp. 1187-1194; *Ānāpānasati sutta*, no. 118, 94 1-958, notes: 1324-1326). Also see *Ānāpānasati sutta, The Discourse on the Mindfulness of Breathing*: <http://www.insightmeditationcenter.org/articles/AnapanasatiSutta.pdf>

Dīgha Nikāya

Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha. Dīgha Nikāya. Translated from the Pali by Maurice Walshe. London: Wisdom Publications (*Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta*, no. 22, pp. 335-350, notes: 588-596).

Suttanipāta

The Group of Discourses (Sutta-Nipāta) Volume II. Revised Translation with Introduction and Notes by K.R. Norman. Oxford: The Pali Text Society 1992 (*Metta sutta*, pp. 16-17).

Khuddakapāṭha

The Minor Readings (Khuddakapāṭha). The First Book of the Minor Collection (Khuddakapāṭha). Translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli. London: Luzac & Company 1960 (*Metta sutta*, pp. 265-294).

Visuddhimagga

The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) by Bhadantācariya Buddhghosa. Translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli. Colombo: A. Semage 1964 (second edition). [Available in the library.]

Mokṣadharmā section in the *Śāntiparvan* and *Mahābhārata*

A Prose English Translation of the Mahabharata. Translated literally from the original Sanskrit Text.

Yoga Sūtras

James Haughton Woods: The Yoga-System of Patañjali Or the Ancient Hindu Doctrine of Concentration of Mind. Translated from the original Sanskrit. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard university Press 1914 (reprint by Motilal Banarsidass). [handout]

Translation by Barbara Stoler Miller in: Yoga; Discipline of Freedom. The Yoga Sūtra Attributed to Patañjali. A translation of the text with commentary, introduction, and glossary of keywords. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, pp. 29-83. [handout]

Zen śāstra

Chih-i (Zhiyi). *Stopping and Seeing. A Comprehensive Course in Buddhist Meditation*. Translated from the original Chinese by Thomas Cleary. Boston: Shambhala, 1997.

Secondary Sources

Bader, Jonathan 1990. *Meditation in Śāṅkara Vedānta*. New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan.

Bronkhorst, Johannes 1985. Patañjali and the Yoga Sūtras. *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10: 191-212.

Bronkhorst, Johannes 1993. *The Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (second revised edition). [available at https://ahandfulofleaves.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/two-traditions-of-meditation-in-ancient-india_bronkhorst_1993.pdf]

Bucknell, Rodenick and Chris Kang 1997. *The Meditation Way : Readings in the Theory and Practice of Buddhist Meditation*. London: Curzon Press.

Bühnemann, Gudrun 1991. Selecting and Perfecting Mantras in Hindu Tantrism. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 54: 292-306.

Conze, Edward 1956. *Buddhist Meditation*. New York: Harper&Row.

Cousins, L. S. 1973. Buddhist Jhāna: Its nature and attainment according to the Pali sources.

Religion 3: 115-131.

Cousins, Lance 1996. The Origins of Insight Meditation. In *The Buddhist Forum*, Volume IV

Seminar Papers 1994-1 996. Edited by T. Skorupski, London: School of Oriental and African Studies: 35-58.

Dumoulin, Heinrich 1991. Aspects of Buddhist Meditation — Satipatthāna and Zen —. In: *Kalyāṇa Mitta: Professor Hajime Nakamura Felicitation Volume*. Editor V.N. Jiha. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications: 107-116.

Frauwallner, Erich 1973. *History of Indian Philosophy*. Translated from original German into English by V.M. Bedekar. Volume 1: The Philosophy of the Veda-and of the Epic — The Buddha and the Jina – The Sāmkhya and the Classical Yoga-System. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Gethin, R. M. L. 1992. *The Buddhist Path to Awakening: A Study of the Bodhi-Pakkhiyā Dhammā*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Gethin, Rupert 1998. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gimello, Robert M. 1978. Mysticism and Meditation. In: *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*. Edited by S. T. Katz. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press: 170-1 99.

Gimello, Robert M. 1983. Mysticism in Its Context. In: *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*. Edited by S. T. Katz. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 61-88.

Gomez, Luis O. 1995. Two Tantric Meditations: Visualizing the Deity. In: *Buddhism in Practice* Lopez, Jr. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press: 318-327.

Griffiths, Paul 1983. Indian Buddhist Meditation Theory: History, Development and systematization. PhD Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Griffiths, Paul 1986. *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation and the Mind-Body Problem*. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court.

Gupta, Sanjukta 1979. Tantric Sadhana: Yoga. In S. Gupta, D.J. Hoens, T. Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*. Leiden: Brill: 163-85.

King, Winston L. 1980. *Theravāda Meditation: The Buddhist Transformation of Yoga*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

- Kloppenborg, Ria and Ronald Poelmeyer 1987. Visualizations in Buddhist Meditation. In *Effigies Dei: Essays on the History of Religions*. Edited by D. van der Plas. Leiden: Brill: 83-96.
- Kornfield, Jack. 2010. *Living Dharma: Teachings and Meditation Instructions from Twelve Theravada Masters*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Nakamura, Hajime 1979. Meditation in Śaṅkara. *Journal of Religious Studies*. Punjabi University, Patiala. 7: 1-18.
- Ñāṇamoli Thera 1981. Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānasati). Buddhist Texts from the Pali Canon and Extracts from the Pali Commentaries, Translated from the Pali. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society (fourth edition). [available free at <http://www.urbandharma.org/pdf1/MindfulnessBreathing.pdf>]
- Nyanaponika Thera 1969 and 2014. *The Heart of Buddhist meditation: A Handbook of Mental Training based on the Buddha's Way of Mindfulness*. Weiser Books; Revised edition.
- Sanderson, Alexis 1988. Śaivism and the Tantric Tradition. In *The World's Religions*. Edited by S. Sutherland, P. Clarke, and f. Hardy. London: Routledge: 128-72.
- Shapiro, D.H. and R.N. Walsh (ed.) 1984. *Meditation: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives*. NY: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Sharf, Robert H. 1995. Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience. *Numen* 43: 228-83.
- Vetter, Tilman 1988. *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism*. Leiden: Brill.