



Religion 231

Subduing the Body, Waking the Spirit: South Asian Techniques

Fall 2022

Dr. Timothy Lubin, 204 Tucker Hall

The Central Questions

Indian yogis, monks, ascetics, and mystics pursue extraordinary paths that invert the normal aims and values of society. This course surveys the teachings on spiritual training and self-cultivation developed in India, their conceptual basis, the range of techniques used, and their philosophical development in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. What was their purpose? How are they supposed to work? For whom were they designed? What roles do yogis and ascetics play in religious life? What is their ethical status in the world? What role have women had in such pursuits, and how does gender figure in these thought systems? What do these traditions imply about the nature of the human being and the highest Good? How is divinity conceived in contrast with the merely human? The course further provides a framework for comparison with other, non-Indian religious traditions. The class will visit Shantiniketan Hindu Temple in Roanoke and the Bodhi Path Buddhist Center and/or Forest Dhamma Buddhist Monastery in Rockbridge County.

Requirements

Students' grades will be based on:

- (i) Participation in class, including weekly questions and comments on the readings (25%);
- (ii) a midterm on Sakai (25%);
- (iii) a circa-3500-word research paper and presentation (50%).

Books for Purchase

Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Upaniṣads*

Barbara Stoler Miller, trans., *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom*

John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India*, 2nd ed.

Schedule of Topics and Readings (tentative)

- 9/8 Introduction: The Human Predicament and Therapies for Desire
in class: the hymn of the *muni*: *R̥gveda* 10.136.

Week 1: The Search for Reality and Self in the Early Upanishads

- 9/13 Olivelle, *Upaniṣads*: Introduction, pp. xxiii–xxxvii (skip “Geography”) and xli–lvi;
Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad: pp. 7–9, 13–17 (from 4), and pp. 23–68.

- 9/15 *Upaniṣads*: pp. 128–156 and 167–176 (chs. 4, 5, 6, and 8 from the Chāndogya Upaniṣad);

Week 2: Meditation as a Means to Self-Knowledge: Early Modes

- 9/20 *Upaniṣads*: pp. 128–156 and 167–176 (chs. 4, 5, 6, and 8 from the Chāndogya Upaniṣad);
and pp. 278–290 (the Praśna [‘Questions’] and Māṇḍūkya [‘Frog’] Upaniṣads).

- 9/22 Scenes from the life of the Buddha, excerpted from the Pali scriptures of the Theravada
Buddhist tradition: <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/ptf/buddha.html>;
T. Lubin, “Aśoka’s Disparagement of Domestic Ritual and Its Validation by the
Brahmins,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 41:29–41 (2013);
Excerpts on philosophers of India, from Megasthenes’ *Indika*.

Week 3: Buddhist Discipline: The Monk’s Code as Spiritual Training

- 9/27 Charles Prebish, “The Prātimokṣa Sūtra of the Mūlasarvāstivādins,” *Buddhist Monastic
Discipline* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), pp. 43–113 (odd pp.):
<https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=fulltext&view=fulltext&vid=236&cid=327592&mid=474651&level=1>

- 9/29 Selections from the Pali canon on meditation techniques.

Week 4: Jaina Monkhood: The Attainment of “Isolation” / Can Women Be Liberated?

- 10/4 Alan Babb, *Absent Lord*, Introduction and chapters 1 and 3:
<https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft8v19p2qd>

- 10/6 Jaini, *Gender and Salvation*, Introduction and selections from the translations.
<https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft138nb0wk>

Week 5: Pāśupata: Salvation Through Degradation

- 10/11 D. H. H. Ingalls, “Cynics and Pāśupatas: The Seeking of Dishonor”;
Minoru Hara, trans., “Nakulīśa-Pāśupata-Darśanam,” a chapter of Mādhava’s
“Encyclopedia of All Doctrines” (*Sarva-Darśana-Saṃgraha*).

10/13 Reading Days (no class meeting)

STATEMENT OF PAPER TOPIC & INITIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week 6: Patañjali's Classical Yoga

10/18 Patañjali's "Rules of Yoga" (*Yoga-Sūtra*).

10/20 Patañjali's "Rules of Yoga" (*Yoga-Sūtra*), continued.
FRIDAY by 5 pm: ONLINE MIDTERM

Feb. 21, 23: Washington Holiday (No Classes)

Week 7: Haṭha Yoga and Its Development

10/25 James Mallinson, "Yoga and Yogis"

https://www.academia.edu/attachments/31233979/download_file?st=MTU1MDg2OTgzMSwxNzQuMjI2LjEzMS4yOCwzMDc2OTc%3D&s=profile

James Mallinson, "Dattātreya's Discourse on Yoga":

https://www.academia.edu/attachments/31439520/download_file?st=MTU1MDg2OTgzNSwxNzQuMjI2LjEzMS4yOCwzMDc2OTc%3D&s=profile

10/27 James Mallinson, "The Original Gorakṣaśataka," in *Yoga in Practice*, ed. David Gordon White. Princeton University Press., 2011:

https://www.academia.edu/3491519/The_Original_Gorak%E1%B9%A3a%C5%9Bataka

James Mallinson, "Yogis in Mughal India":

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/iihcm4u2m5u8ztu/YogisinMughalIndia.pdf?dl=0>

Week 8: The Nath Yogis in Folk Tradition and Householder Life

11/1 Ann Grodzins Gold, *A Carnival of Parting*, Introduction, chapters 2 and 3:

<https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft3g500573&chunk.id=d0e885&oc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e885&brand=ucpress>

<https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft3g500573&chunk.id=d0e1551&toc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e1551&brand=ucpress>

and "The Tale of King Bhartrhari, Part 3, The Guru's Instruction":

<https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft3g500573&chunk.id=d0e5176&toc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e5176&brand=ucpress>

11/3 Daniel Gold and Ann Grodzins Gold, "The Fate of the Householder Nath":

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1062478>

Week 9: Islamic Mystics in Dialogue with Yogis

11/8 Guest: Prof. Kameliya Atanasova, for an overview of Sufism (Islamic mysticism); Carl Ernst, "Sufism," *Encyc. of Islam and the Muslim World*, 2d ed., 1198–1206 (1999); Carl Ernst, "Muslim Interpreters of Yoga," in *Yoga: The Art of Transformation* (2013). Carl Ernst, "Chapter 4 of the *Bahr al-hayat* [*The Ocean of Life*], by Muhammad Ghawth

Gwaliyari, ” in *Yoga: The Art of Transformation* (2013):
<http://archive.asia.si.edu/explore/yoga/chapter-4-bahr-al-hayat.asp#one>

11/10 Shafique Virani, “Symphony of Gnosis.”

Week 10: Sants and Sikhs: Transcending the Old Categories

11/15 Hawley, *Songs of the Saints of India*, intro. and chs. 1–2.

11/17 Hawley, *Songs of the Saints of India*, ch. 3.

Thanksgiving Break

Week 11: A Tantric Yogi, a Baul, and a Sufi Fool

11/29 William Dalrymple, chs. 8–9 of *Nine Lives* (Tantrika, Baul).

12/1 William Dalrymple, ch. 5 of *Nine Lives* (“The Red Fairy”).

Week 12: Yogis, Monks, and Mystics Spoofed in a Drama

12/6 *Matta-Vilāsa* (“The Drunks’ Delights”), a satire on ascetics.

12/8 Student research presentations.

FRIDAY by 7 pm: RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Policy on the Use of Digital Equipment in Class

Students may use a laptop or tablet computer in class *only for course-related purposes*: to take notes, to consult readings or images pertaining to the course, or to research a topic being discussed in class. Under no circumstances may students read or send email, use any form of social medium or messaging, read news, engage in online shopping. During class, no browser window accessing any social media, news feed, or shopping portal should be open, even in minimized form, and email programs should be completely closed. Mobile phones should be silenced and put away. Work for other courses should not be done during class.

Attendance Policy

Except in case of illness, students may not miss more than one class meeting; further absences may be penalized by a reduction of a half-grade on the next graded assignment for each class missed.

Course Learning Objectives

This course aims to convey basic knowledge of practices, ideas, and institutions related to conceptions of divinity, including gender distinctions, in the family of religions known as Hindu,

both in India and beyond. As regards:

- **Conceptual Tools and Landmarks:** Students will be able to identify and comment accurately on major cultural and religious landmark texts and other records, and historical developments. Students will further be able to use correctly the terms and names that are indispensable for understanding or discussing ideas and practices of the religions of India.
- **Methodology and Theory:** Students will become familiar with methodological and theoretical perspectives on historical analysis, asceticism, meditation, charismatic movements, and religious professions, with comparative consideration of how they apply in non-Indian contexts.
- **Analysis and Expression:** Students will be able to formulate an effective analytical argument in essays that synthesize or evaluate material mastered in class or in readings, and to communicate their ideas articulately in class discussions and formal research presentations.

University Disability Accommodation Policy

Washington and Lee University makes reasonable academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. All undergraduate accommodations must be approved through the Title IX Coordinator and Director of Disability Resources, Elrod Commons 212, 458-4055. Students requesting accommodations for this course should present an official accommodation letter within the first two weeks of the term and schedule a meeting outside of class time to discuss accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to present this paperwork in a timely fashion and to follow up about accommodation arrangements. Accommodations for test-taking must be arranged with the professor at least a week before the date of the test or exam, including finals.