

RLG368H1: Yoga and Āyurveda from pre-Modernity to post-Modernity
Department of Religion, University of Toronto

Instructor:

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Undergraduate Seminar in South Asian Religions

Location: UC 244

Class Hours: Tuesdays 10-12

Course Description:

Tired after a hard semester or seminar and you want a relaxing week-end? Today the remedy is to visit a spa where you can undergo a de-stressing regimen of Āyurvedic massage, food which is prepared, one is told, on Āyurvedic principles and, as part of the wellness programme, an exercise plan which includes meditation and Yoga. Such packages proliferate on the web and are offered by institutions and individuals neither of which have necessarily anything to do with any Indian religion or India. Thus, we have both the phenomenon of the “secularization” of these, once originally, religiously suffused Indic practices as well as their proliferation in the global market. How are we to understand this development? Commonsense seems to indicate that vigorous physical exercise was what Yoga was always about and massages and wellness means Āyurveda. This course will show that such commonsense, which is based upon the assumption of an unbroken continuity of tradition between Yoga and Āyurveda in antiquity and now is highly deceptive. What was meant then and what is meant now is bridged only by a process of radical transformation. In this course we will chart this transformation.

Course Structure

The course will begin at 10.10am and I will partially lecture on the topic of the day, usually also attempting to do a close reading of the assigned materials, in order to generate a discussion on the topic and have you give oral presentations on a day of your choice.

Requirements:

Reading: A careful and critical reading of the assignments before class is crucial. You will not be able to participate in class discussions without a thorough understanding of the assigned readings. I recommend that you underline important arguments, mark passages that confuse you, and think about where (and why) you agree or disagree with the author. Please always bring your **Assigned Readings** to class so you can refer to the texts in our discussions.

Discussion: Participation is essential in this course. You will be expected to raise questions, to share your knowledge with the other members of the class, and to actively participate in the class discussion.

Attendance: Students who miss class without my permission should expect to have their grade lowered. Absences may be excused for medical, religious, or other compelling reasons. If you must miss class e-mail me in advance, and, in case of illness, bring a doctor's note to our next meeting. Also repeated lateness will affect your grade.

Evaluation:

1 Critical Reading Response (400-600 words)	10% (due on October 6th)
1 Class Presentation (5-10 minutes)	10% (starting with Session 3 onwards)
1 Paper Proposal (3-5 pages double spaced, excluding Bibliography)	15% (due on November 3rd)
1 Final paper (10-15 pages double spaced, excluding Bibliography)	50% (due on December 1st)
<i>Participation</i>	15%

Critical Reading Response:

Write a short summary of some of the topics raised in the assigned readings, discuss why they interested you, what you have understood from the course thus far, what you are additionally interested in finding out and questions you might have.

Class Presentation:

The Class Presentation is an event where you will talk or read out for between 5-10 minutes your response to one or more of the Assigned Readings in one particular session of your choice. This being the case please make a quick choice of the particular session in which you wish to speak and have me put down your name for it. If the numbers for a session exceed 5 I will have to ask you to choose another session to talk in. Features of the Presentation you might want to incorporate include the following:

- A concise explanation of the main argument (in your own words) of the Assigned Reading/s
- A discussion of the evidence that the author uses in making the argument
- An evaluation of the argument
- An evaluation of writing style and organization

Paper Proposal:

The *Paper Proposal* should anticipate, in a shortened form, the topic you intend to focus on for your term paper. Therefore it should engage with **at least 1** if not more of the assigned readings. In addition it should have the following features:

- The question/questions which interest you in the readings and which, therefore, becomes the focus of your topic
- What are the sources you are going to be looking at to answer the question/questions and why (here you would need to include a bibliography)
- What you hope to find out which will also address larger issues raised within the course and the discussions.

Final paper:

The final paper should be seen as a research paper. This option gives you the opportunity to investigate in more depth a topic that interests you, and it allows you to demonstrate your research skills. If you have trouble coming up with a topic or developing your argument, please come and see me!

Additional guidelines for the final paper will be handed out later in the semester. The final paper is due on **December 1st**.

Penalty for late papers: 1% for each day the paper is late. Please note: If you hand in your paper after class on the day it is due, it will count as being one day late. **Papers more than one week late will not be accepted.**

Participation:

This is graded on a two-fold basis:

1. Your actual presence will get you half the percentage of the grading – i.e., 7%.
2. From Session 3 onwards you are expected to send me an e-mail – at the latest by noon Mondays– which contains a minimum of 2 questions on the Assigned Readings, which I shall discuss as much as possible in the class the next day. You will be excused from this exercise if you have a Class Presentation the following day. The regularity and quality of your questions will determine the remaining 7% of the participation grading.

A note on plagiarism: Plagiarism (i.e., the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another) will not be tolerated. Please bear in mind that the following is plagiarism and will be treated as such: material taken without citation from the web; material taken from any book or other publication without citation; any ideas that I can trace to another source that you are not citing. These are all forms of cheating and will subject you to serious consequences. Trust your own ability to think and write, and take this course as an opportunity to refine your research and writing skills. If you need help, come see me or visit www.utoronto.ca/writing. If you have any questions or doubts concerning citations and references, please talk to me before handing in your paper.

Course Readings (may be subject to change):

September 15th: The Yoga King and the Healing Doctor

The state of Yoga and Āyurveda in Contemporary Life and Discussion of Course Syllabus

September 22nd: The Yoga Sūtras

Assigned Readings:

Readings on Yoga usually suffer from some kind of romanticism and a conscious attempt to simplify a highly technical, even esoteric vocabulary. For this reason I am giving you 2-3 versions of an introduction to classical Yoga and would recommend that you read more than one of the assigned reading.

Stoler Miller, Barbara.1996. *Yoga. Discipline of Freedom. The Yoga Sutra Attributed to Patanjali*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1-25.

Chapple, Christopher Key.2008. *Yoga and the Luminous. Patañjali's Spritual Path to Freedom*. New York: SUNY Press. 19-29.

Whicher, Ian.1998. *The Integrity of the Yoga Darśana*. New York: SUNY Press.41-87.

Further Recommended Reading:

Eliade, Mircea.1958. [1954]1969. *Yoga. Immortality and Freedom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.3-100.

Hopkins, Thomas and Alf Hildebeitel.2005. Indus Valley Religion. In Lindsay Jones (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion*.7.4468-4475.

Whicher, Ian.1998. *The Integrity of the Yoga Darśana*. New York: SUNY Press.5-39.

September 29th: Tantra and “The Serpent Power”

Assigned Readings:

Feuerstein, Georg. 1989. *Yoga. The Technology of Ecstasy*. Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc. 250-276.

Hayes, Glen A. 2001. The Necklace of Immortality: A Seventeenth-Century Vaiṣṇava Sahajīya Text. In David Gordon White (ed.). *Tantra in Practice*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. 308-325.

Further Recommended Reading:

Vasudeva, Somadeva. 2004. *The Yoga of the Mālinīvijayottaratantra*. Pondicherry: École Française D'Extrême-Orient.367-436.

Woodroffe, Sir John.1964. *The Serpent Power*. Madras: Ganesh and Company.181-256.

October 6th: Now Modern Yoga

Assigned Readings:

de Michelis, Elizabeth.2008. Modern Yoga: History and Forms. In Mark Singleton and Jean Byrne (eds.), *Yoga in the Modern World. Contemporary Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.17-35.

Singleton, Mark. The Classical Reveries of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Constructive Orientalism. In Mark Singleton and Jean Byrne (eds.), *Yoga in the Modern World. Contemporary Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.77-99.

Further Recommended Readings:

Alter, Joseph S. 2004. *Yoga in Modern India. The Body Between Science and Philosophy*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.3-69.

de Michelis, Elizabeth. 2004. *A History of Modern Yoga: Patanjali and Western Esotericism*. London and New York: Continuum.19-50, 149-180.

October 13th: Yoga, Science and Indian Nationalism

Assigned Readings:

Richard Smith, Benjamin. "With Heat Even Iron Will Bend" Discipline and Authority in Ashtanga Yoga. In Mark Singleton and Jean Byrne (eds.), *Yoga in the Modern World. Contemporary Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.140-160.

Strauss, Sarah. 2008. "Adapt, Adjust, Accomodate" The Production of Yoga in a Transnational World. In Mark Singleton and Jean Byrne (eds.), *Yoga in the Modern World. Contemporary Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.49-74.

Further Recommended Reading:

Sjoman, N.E. 1999. *The Yoga Tradition of the Mysore Palace*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications. 35-48.

Strauss, Sarah. 2005. *Positioning Yoga. Balancing Acts across Cultures*. Oxford/New York: Berg.

October 20th: Indian Medicine: The Beginnings

Assigned Readings:

I am giving 3 possible readings in this section out of which you are expected to read a minimum of 2.

Larson, Gerald James.1987. Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems. In *Philosophy East and West*.37.3.245-259.

Mazars, Guy.2000. Indian Medicine. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.1-46.

Wujastyk, Dominik. 2001. *The Roots of Ayurveda. Selections from the Ayurvedic Classics*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.1-38.

October 27th: The Caraka-Saṃhitā

Assigned Readings:

Wujastyk, Dominik. 2001. *The Roots of Ayurveda. Selections from the Ayurvedic Classics*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.39-79.

Further Recommended Reading:

Filliozat, Jean.1964. *The classical doctrine of Indian medicine*. New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal.

Zimmermann, Francis.1987. *The jungle and the aroma of meats*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zysk, Kenneth G.1991. *Asceticism and Healing in ancient India: medicine in a Buddhist monastery*. Oxford University Press.

November 3rd: Colonial and Post-Colonial Āyurveda

Assigned Readings:

Berger, Rachel.2005. Ayurveda and the Making of the Urban Middle Class in North India, 1900-1945. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.101-115.

Gupta, Charu.2005. Procreation and Pleasure: The Writings of a Woman Ayurvedic Practitioner in Colonial North India. In *Studies in History*.21.17.17-44.

Further Recommended Reading:

Arnold, David.1993. *Colonising the body: state medicine and epidemic disease in nineteenth century India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

2000. *Science, Technology and medicine in Colonial India*. Cambridge University Press.

Scharfe, Hartmut.1999. The Doctrine of the Three Humours in Traditional Indian Medicine and the Alleged Antiquity of Tamil Siddha Medicine. IN *JAOS*.119.4.609-629.

Weiss, Richard S. 2005. Divorcing Ayurveda. Siddha Medicine and the Quest for Uniqueness. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.77-99.

November 17th: Modern Ayurveda

Assigned Readings:

Cohen, Lawrence.1998. *No Aging in India. Modernity, Senility and the Family*. Oxford University Press.123-319.

Kakar, Suddhir. 1990. *Shamans, mystics and doctors: a psychological inquiry into India and its healing traditions*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.252-297.

Wujastyk, Dagmar and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press. 1-28.

Further Recommended Reading:

Alter, Joseph S. 2005. Ayurveda and Sexuality. Sex Therapy and the “Paradox of Virility”. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.177-200.

Langford, Jean.1995. Ayurvedic Interiors: Person, Space, and Episteme in Three Medical Practices. In *Cultural Anthropology*.10.3.330-366.

November 24th: Global Ayurveda

Assigned Readings:

Jeannotat, Françoise.2005. Maharishi Ayur-Ved. A Controversial Model of Global Ayurveda. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.285-307.

Hume, Cynthia Ann.2005. Maharishi Ayur-Veda™ Perfect Health™ through Enlightened Marketing in America. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.309-331.

Further Recommended Reading:

Baer, Hans A.2003. *The Work of Andrew Weil and Deepak Chopra*. In *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.17.2.233-250.

Chopra, Anand Samir.2005. Practicing Ayurveda in the Western World. A Case Study from Germany. In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.243-255.

Newcombe, Suzanne.2005. Ayurvedic Medicine in Britain and the Epistemology of Practicing Medicine in “Good Faith” In Dagmar Wujastyk and Frederick M. Smith (eds.), 2008. *Modern and Global Ayurveda. Pluralism and Paradigms*. SUNY Press.257-284.

December 1st: Concluding Discussion