

RE 320: Yoga – History, Theory, Practice

Dr. Eliza Kent Fall 2021

Office: Ladd 209 M 12:20-1:15 pm &

Office phone: 580-5405 WF12:20-1:40 pm

Office hours: Mondays 1:30—3:30 pm Ladd 106

and by appt. ekent@skidmore.edu

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An exploration of yoga from its roots in Indian religious philosophy to its current status as a globally popular form of physical culture. Understood as a set of physical, mental and meditative techniques, yoga has been employed by Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Buddhists and others to attain magical powers, heightened states of consciousness, and spiritual liberation. But it has also been used more recently as a form of exercise consisting of stretches, muscle-building poses and breathing techniques. This seminar examines the social, religious, political and historical issues surrounding the practice of yoga, as we investigate its development in various socio-historical contexts. Note: Given its investigation into richly embodied forms of spiritual practice, this seminar will involve, periodically, the frank discussion of all manner of things that are rarely discussed or even named in polite conversation – menstrual blood, death, sex, semen, violence, corpses, etc.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. to gain familiarity with the variety of practices known as “yoga,” as that term has been employed by people in diverse social contexts (particularly ancient, medieval and modern India, and modern and contemporary United States)
2. to understand how yoga practices have been used and understood (by both insiders and outsiders) in a variety of socio-historical contexts
3. to develop the skills necessary to write a research paper, including the ability to construct a paper topic around a compelling question and design and carry out a plan for answering it
4. to develop a richly nuanced conception of religion that recognizes both the social, political and the personal dimensions of religious belief and practice
5. to examine, challenge and clarify one’s own self-understanding, worldview and fundamental values

**III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

A. Attendance and participation

B. Reading

C. Writing

D. Events

**A. Attendance and Class Participation:** Regular attendance and active participation are essential to your learning experience and success in this course. Having said that, our primary concern at this time is your health and well-being. In this difficult climate, I ask that you only miss class when absolutely necessary. If you do need to miss class, please let me know in advance, or as soon as possible, so that I can work with you to help you keep up. Such absences will not be counted against you. **More than five unexcused absences, however, will be grounds for failing the course.**

We will be meeting in-person for the vast majority of our class meetings. However, on occasional Mondays, and as needed in response to weather or public-health conditions, we will also meet on Zoom. The goal of all of our meetings is to foster positive, respectful intellectual community during the limited time we have together. Therefore, whether we are meeting on-line, or in-person please note:

* Plan to arrive on time and to stay in class the entire time.
* Provided the class agrees, collectively, to do this, we will begin each in-person day with a 5-minute mindfulness exercise.
* Please be sure to keep your mask on, covering your nose and mouth, at all times.
* No eating or drinking in class (because you have to keep your mask on).
* Be sure your cell phone is off and stowed out of your sight and mine the whole class period (p.s. I have x-ray vision and can detect texting under a desktop).
* While in class, please refrain from using your laptop to shop, message with friends and family, check weather forecasts, etc. Whether meeting in-person or online we will regularly need to use our laptops, tablets, etc. to communicate or look at materials together, so the temptation to veer away from our work together will be ever-present. Taking notes as you listen is one way to stay anchored.
* Please print out and bring your readings or books each and every class.
* Zoom etiquette: keep your mic muted and plug in your device to save operating system power for the app. I would prefer you to keep your video on during our synchronous Zoom sessions.

Beyond these, your regular, active participation is expected. Please come to class having read the assignments so that you are prepared to offer your thoughtful questions, comments, comparisons and suggestions for further areas of exploration. This kind of participation benefits the class enormously, as does your attentive listening to the comments and questions of others. Your class participation grade will depend not only on the consistency of attendance and basic classroom etiquette (which is the bare minimum expected), but also on how well you contribute positively to the overall class dynamic through your comments, questions, attentive listening, prompt arrival, leadership and cooperation in small group work, etc. Generally speaking, when an imbalance occurs in terms of who is speaking and how frequently, those who are shy need to exercise the virtue of courage and those who are loquacious need to exercise the virtue of restraint. I reserve the prerogative to call on students in order to even out the dynamic. Class participation may take other forms than questions or responses to in-class discussions. You are encouraged to reach out over email, attend office hours, or meet with me over Zoom to continue conversations begun in class. **Class participation counts for 15% of the overall grade.**

**B. Reading:** Nothing is more central to a course in the humanities than the careful, thorough, critical reading of texts, and that will certainly be the case here. I encourage you to take notes in the margins of your books or in a notebook designated for that purpose. To enhance your vocabulary, maintain word lists of new words or concepts and look up their definitions. Such active engagement with the reading will enhance your retention of the material and help you to think through the issues and questions raised by the texts.

**Books for purchase:**

**REQUIRED**

* *The Bhagavad Gita,* translation by Barbara Stoler Miller
* *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom – The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali,* trans. By Barbara Stoler

Miller

* *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, by Mark Singleton
* *White Utopias: The Religious Exocitism of Transformational Festivals,* by Amanda J. Lucia

Additional readings will be distributed via theSpring or Perusall (Perusall, in syllabus).

**C. Writing**

Formal essays (midterm essay, final essay and research paper)

Daily/weekly responses to the reading

Two quizzes with some short-answer questions

1. **Formal essays:** These are called “formal” because they will be evaluated for style--grammar, spelling, punctuation--as well as content. Even the most accomplished writer may benefit from having a second pair of eyes look over their paper. I encourage you to make the most of the support provided by the Writing Center. <https://www.skidmore.edu/writingcenter/>

See Appendix B for the citation guidelines for this class.

See Appendix C for the working guidelines for the research paper (subject to revision)

2. **Daily/weekly responses to the reading.** Studies have shown that any written reflection on an assigned reading aids in comprehension. Digital technology now allows us to super-charge that technique by enabling us to pool our annotations, and thus complexify our knowledge and insight. I will ask you to create a free account for one such platforms, Perusall.com, where you will socially annotate and respond to several of our readings on a daily or weekly basis.

3. Late paper policy, borrowed from IGR: I allow a 24-hour “grace” period after the deadline during which you may turn in a paper with no penalty, because…stuff happens.   After that, though, I will deduct 1/3 of a grade for each day a paper is not turned in (e.g. a B+ would become a B, then a B-, then a C+, for each 24 hour interval it is turned in late).

4. **Short-answer or multiple-choice question-based quizzes:** Learning the words that people use to describe their beliefs and practices is a crucial component of learning about diverse cultures and religions. Periodically we will conduct in-class quizzes to test your comprehension of key-terms introduced throughout the semester. Quizzes will not be rescheduled unless you are able to provide a documented reason AHEAD OF TIME for why you cannot be present for the quiz.

**IV. EVALUATION**

1. **Grading Summary**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Percentage** |
| Midterm Paper (10/13) | 17% |
| Quizzes (2) | 12% |
| Social annotation self-reflections | 15% |
| Final paper (take home final exam) (12/17) | 18% |
| Research paper and presentation | 23% |
| Attendance and Participation | 15% |

**B. Grading Standards:** The following is designed to help you think about the level of participation you’re prepared to give to this course, and the final grade you would like to shoot for. (Obviously, there are finer gradations for each of the grades discussed below, e.g. A-, B+, C+)

1. “A” signifies outstanding. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and demonstrate excellence in seminar discussion; (b) keep up with your reading notes and Perusall annotations, demonstrating consistent care and thoughtfulness in your reflections on the issues and questions raised by the class; (c) demonstrate in the quizzes a thorough understanding of the key terms, historical background and basic structural features of the religious traditions we are examining; (d) do a thorough, analytically acute job on the midterm, final paper, and research paper and get them in on time.

In addition, to merit an “A” your writing in the formal essays must reflect the following: a statement in the first paragraph of what you intend to accomplish; correct grammar and accurate spelling; depth and complexity in your engagement with the materials (readings, lectures, films, etc.); and an exceptionally creative original contribution--a new idea, a different way of thinking about the issue(s) you’re discussing--that takes you beyond the accurate presentation of someone else’s ideas.

2. “B” signifies good; it is a solid, good grade. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and participation in discussion; (b) keep up with your reading notes and annotations on Perusall, demonstrating care and thoughtfulness in your reflections on the issues and questions raised by the class, though you may skip a day or so, or be less consistently excellent in your entries; (c) demonstrate in the quizzes a firm grasp of the key terms, historical background and basic structural features of the religions we are examining; (d) do a thorough job on the midterm essay and research paper and get them in on time.

In addition, a “B” grade essay typically contains: a statement in the first paragraph of what you intend to accomplish; correct grammar and accurate spelling; solid engagement with the materials (readings, lectures, films, etc.); and an original contribution that takes you beyond the accurate presentation of someone else’s ideas.

3. “C” stands for satisfactory. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and participation in discussion; (b) mostly keep up with your reading notes and annotations on Perusall, but miss several days (c) demonstrate in the quizzes an adequate grasp of the key terms, historical background and basic structural features of the religions we are examining; (d) do a satisfactory job on the essays that meets the requirements of the assignment, and get them in on time.

In addition, “C” level essays contain no statement of intent, or a confused one; occasionally lapse into bad grammar or incorrect spelling; replace full sentences with fragments; misconstrue or distort key ideas; display no clear development leading to a supportable conclusion.

1. To fall below satisfactory (i.e. C-, D), you could fall way behind in your annotations, skip one of the quizzes, turn in one of the formal papers several days past the deadline, and/or be very irregular in attendance and discussion.

In addition, below “C” level essays do not adequately meet the requirements of the assignment. They typically also contain no statement of intent, or a confused one; frequently lapse into bad grammar or incorrect spelling; replace full sentences with fragments; misconstrue or distort key ideas; display no clear development leading to a supportable conclusion.

**C. Students with documented disabilities**: I strive to create an inclusive classroom that respects the fact that our eyes, ears, brains and bodies all work a little bit differently. If you have, or think you may have a learning disability, please work with the Office of Student Academic Services to determine what strategies and accommodations are appropriate for your situation, and then speak with me early on so that we may arrange appropriate accommodation.

[**http://cmsauthor.skidmore.edu/academic\_services/accessibility/**](http://cmsauthor.skidmore.edu/academic_services/accessibility/)

**D. Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Information and Resources.** According to both NY State Law and Skidmore Policy, I am, like all faculty and staff at Skidmore, a mandated reporter of any sexual or gender-based misconduct. What this means is that if in the unlikely event that you share with me information that indicates that you or someone else has been the victim of sexual assault or misconduct, I’m compelled to pass on that information (i.e. your names) to the Title IX officer.

**E. Academic Honesty:** Making references to the work of others strengthens your own work by granting you greater authority and by showing that you are part of a discussion located within a community. When you make references (by quotation or paraphrase) to the work of others, it is essential to provide proper attribution and citation. Failing to do so is considered academically dishonest, as is copying or paraphrasing someone else’s work. Please consult Appendix A for the citation format I recommend for your work in this class.

**Any confirmed instances of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication or facilitating academic dishonesty) in this course will result in the work in question receiving a zero. Assignments that receive a zero for this reason may not be rewritten or redone. As per the Skidmore College Honor Code, documentation of the infraction will be kept on file with Dean’s office and may impair eligibility for honor societies, study abroad, etc.**

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**Yogini, India, Uttar Pradesh, Sandstone, c. 1050 CE**

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**SUBJECT TO REVISION AS WE GO**

## Week One - Course Introduction

**W 9/8 – Introduction to the Course**

**Take survey:** list the first three words you think of when you think of “yoga”

**F 9/10 –Decolonising Yoga (and the Study of Yoga)**

**Read:** Jane Naomi Iwamura, “On Asian Religions without the Asians,” <https://hyphenmagazine.com/blog/2011/03/jane-iwamura-asian-religions-without-asians>

**Read:** Shameen Black, “Decolonising Yoga,” *Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation Studies* (2020), pp. 13-21 (PERUSALL)

**MODULE ONE – YOGA AND RELIGION IN ANCIENT INDIA**

***Week Two –The Historical Context of Yoga: Sources of Asceticism in Ancient India***

**M 9/13 – Greater Magadha – flipped**

**Read:** Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* (2008), 41-60

**Maps:** historical maps of the two cultures

**Watch:** Recorded lecture on ancient Greater Magadha as the cradle of Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism

**W 9/15 – Ascetic Withdrawal vs. Social Engagement**

**Read:** Patrick Olivelle, “Ascetic Withdrawal or Social Engagement,” in *Religions of India in Practice*, ed. by Donald S. Lopez, Jr., pp. 533-546. (Perusall)

**F 9/17 -** **Jain, Buddhist and Ajivika Asceticism**

**Read:** Johannes Bronkhorst, *Karma,* chs. 2 & 3, pp. 7-43.

**Questions to know in preparation for a debate!** What distinguishes Jain, Buddhist, Ajivika, and Brahmanical ideas about karma, and thus the methods (yoga, Dhyana) for freeing oneself from it?

**Key terms:** second urbanization, Brahmanical Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Kuru-Pañcāla, Greater Magadha, Arya, śramana, Veda, karma, dharma, samsāra, moksha/mukti/nirvāṇa, soteriology, asceticism

***Week Three – The Brahmanical Synthesis***

**M 9/20 – The Brahmanical Synthesis – in person**

**Read:** *The Bhagavad Gita*, trans. by Barbara Stoler Miller, introduction, ch 1-3

**Watch:** “The Bhagavad Gita,” produced by The Annenberg Foundation (2016), especially from 3:35 – 12:40 (for a firmer appreciation of how the BhG functions within the larger storyline of the Mahabharata).

**https://www.learner.org/series/invitation-to-world-literature/the-bhagavad-gita/**

**W 9/22 – The Brahmanical Synthesis**

**Read:** *The Bhagavad Gita*, trans. by Barbara Stoler Miller, ch. 1-8 (re-read 1-3, then 4-8)

**F 9/24 – The Brahmanical Synthesis – The Three Yogas**

**Read:** *The Bhagavad Gita*, trans. by Barbara Stoler Miller, ch. 9-13

**Key terms:** bhakti, jñana, karma, samsara, dharma, atman, brahman, varna, bhaktiyoga, karmayoga, jñānayoga

## Week Four – The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali

**M 9/27 – The Philosophical Foundations of Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra - flipped**

**Read:** *Yoga: The Discipline of Freedom* [Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra], trans. Barbara Stoler Miller, translator’s introduction

**Read:** David Gordon White, “Yoga, Brief History of an Idea,” *in Yoga in Practice,* pp. 1-12 (PERUSALL) – nice clear text summarizing and consolidating much of what we’ve learned so far

**Watch:** recorded lecture

**W 9/29– Classical Yoga**

**Read:** *Yoga: The Discipline of Freedom,* trans. Barbara Stoler Miller, parts 1&2

**Read:** David Gordon White, *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali: A Biography*, pp. 24-34

**Watch:** scene from Terminator 2 (to get context for White’s analogy) [TW: graphic violence]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXsyn-9VLVA>

**Questions for a debate:** Consider ONE of the eight limbs of yoga (see YS 2:29 for a list) and describe why practicing that "limb" is the most helpful for getting closer to the ideal state of pure equanimity & tranquility attained by seedless contemplation.

**F 10/1 – Classical Yoga**

**Read:** *Yoga: The Discipline of Freedom,* trans. Barbara Stoler Miller, parts 3&4

**DUE: FIRST SOCIAL ANNOTATION (PERUSALL) SELF-REFLECTION (SEE APPENDIX D)**

**Key terms:** Yoga, Sankhya, Purusha, Prakriti, buddhi/mahat, ahamkara, manas, indriyas, mahābhutas, siddhis, samādhi, kaivalya, dualism

**MODULE TWO: POWER AND THE YOGIC BODY IN MEDIEVAL INDIA**

## Week Five – The Yogic Body: Hatha Yoga and Tantra

**M 10/4 – Emergence of Hatha Yoga and Tantra in Medieval India – in person**

**Read:** David Gordon White, “Yoga, Brief History of an Idea,” pp. 12-19 – read the rest of this essay, which provides useful overview of the emergence of tantra and hatha yoga in the 9th and 10th centuries CE

**Read:** Katha Upanishad – 3.3-9

**FIRST KEY TERMS QUIZ TODAY**

**W 10/6 – The Yogic Body in Hatha Yoga and Tantra**

**Read:** Mallinson and Singleton, “The Yogic Body,” from *The Roots of Yoga*, pp. 171-184 (overview, essential), 203-213 (selections from textual descriptions of the chakras)

**Look closely at:** “[Diagram of the Chakras of the Human Body”](http://library.artstor.org.lib-proxy01.skidmore.edu:2048/#/asset/AWSS35953_35953_31710310;requestId=8c84afedcd344e8446c2636d8f397966) (c. 1820)

**F 10/8 – Women in Tantra - Yoginīs**

**Read:** Shaman Hatley, “Sisters and Consorts, Adepts and Goddesses: Representations of Women in the Brahmayala,” [Author’s version of the essay published in *Tantric Communities in Context,* edited by Nina Mirnig, Marion Rastelli, & Vincent Eltschinger, pp. 47–80.

Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2019.] (PERUSALL)

**Key terms:** hatha yoga, nāḍi, sushumna, ida, pingala, chakra, kundalini, Shakti, yogini, dtī, gods, Shiva, theism, bindu, tapas, mudra, dīksha

## Week Six – Tantra in Practice

**M 10/11 – STUDY DAY- NO CLASS**

**W 10/13 - CONTEMPORARY INTERLUDE - Tantra in Late Capitalist American**

**Read:** Hugh Urban, “The Cult of Ecstasy: Tantrism, the New Age and the Spiritual Logic of Late Capitalism,” *History of Religions* 39, 3 (Feb. 2000): 268 – 304.

**Lecture:** On Islam in Medieval and Early Modern India

**MIDTERM PAPER DUE TODAY**

**F 10/15 – Yogis and Muslims in Mughal India**

**Read:** Carl Ernst, “Situating Sufism and Yoga,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 15, 1 (Apr. 2005): 15-43 (very dense, read with study guide questions) (PERUSALL)

**Read:** Ernst, “A Fourteenth Century Persian Account of Breath Control,” in *Yoga in Practice.*

**Look Closely at: “**Maharana Sangram Singh of Mewar visiting the Ashram of Yogi Nilakanthaji,” (c. 1720-30)

<http://library.artstor.org.lib-proxy01.skidmore.edu:2048/asset/AMICO_BOSTON_103833077>

**Key terms:** Sufi, Nath yogis, Mughals, Akbar, Awrangzeb (Aurangzeb), dhikr, amṛit, polythetic

## Week Seven: Yoga in Colonial and Modern India

**M 10/18 – Launching your research - workshop with Johanna Mackay**

**Send:** To Prof. Kent, your potential research topic(s), phrased in the form of a question by 5 pm on Sunday night.

**(Re-)read:** Research Project Assignment Guidelines

**W 10/20 – Warrior Ascetics**

**Skim:** Mallinson, “Militant Ascetic Body”, *Yoga: The Art of Transformation, p.* 1-2

**Look carefully at:** Basawan, Tara the Elder, “Battle at Thaneshwar,” bifolio from the Akbarnama (c. 1590-1595) (the Zoom viewer allows for close-up examination)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akbarnama\_-\_Battle\_at\_Thaneshwar\_-\_double\_page.jpg

**Read:** William R. Pinch, *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* (2012), 12-17

**Read:** J.Z. Smith, “Fences and Neighbors: Some Contours of Early Judaism,” *Imagining Religion*, pp. 1-18 (on monothetic vs. polythetic definitions).

**F 10/22 - Colonial Politics and the Kumbh Mela**

**Read:** Kama Maclean, “Making the Colonial State Work for You: The Modern Beginnings of the Ancient Kumbh Mela in Allahabad,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 62, 3 (August 2003): 873-905. (PERUSALL)

**Key terms**: sadhu, naga, sannyasi, gosain, akhara, Dasnami, prayagwal, mela, Ganga River, Yamuna River, kumbh, amrita, British East India Company

## Week Eight – The Kumbh Mela – Colonial Power and the Enduring Power of Yogis

**M 10/ 25 – The Power of Looking**

**Read:** Kama Maclean, “Seeing, Being Seen, Not Being Seen: Pilgrimage, Tourism and Layers of Looking at the Kumbh Mela,” *Crosscurrents* (Sept. 2009): 319-341.

**Read:** Diana Eck, *Darshan: Seeing the Divine Image in India,* selections, pp. 3-16.

**W 10/27 – Scholar Yogis – Insider/Outsider Issues in the Study of Yoga**

**Watch:** *Mystic Journey: The Kumbh Mela* (BBC4 Documentary on the Kumbh Mela with James Mallinson and Dominic West)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iX-F9-SXBc>

**Read:** Mallinson, “The Making of a Mahant,” in *The Financial Times* 3/9/13

**F 10/29 – Masculinity, Nation-Making, and Yoga**

**Read:** Chandrima Chakrabarti, “The Hindu Ascetic As Fitness Instructor: Reviving Faith in Yoga,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport,* 24, 9 (2007): 1172-1186. (PERUSALL)

**DUE: SOCIAL ANNOTATION (PERUSALL) SELF-REFLECTION FOR MODULE TWO (not including Chakrabarti)**

Key term: darśan, mela, Mahant, Baba Ramdev, Hindutva, Hindu Nationalism, *shivir*s

**MODULE THREE: TRANSNATIONAL POSTURAL YOGA**

## Week Nine - Transnational Postural Yoga

**M 11/1 – Transcultural Dialogicity and the Emergence of Modern Postural Yoga**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body,* Introduction, pp. 1-23

**SECOND QUIZ TODAY**

**W 11/3 – The Bed of Nails: Colonial Representations of the Depraved Yogi**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body,* ch. 2 & 3, pp. 35-80

**F 11/5 – Yoga Practicum with Jennifer Schmid-Fareed**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body,* ch. 4, pp, 81-111

**Due:** Focus Essay and Bibliography

## Week Ten – Transnational Postural Yoga

**M 11/8 – The Body of the Nation: Strength and Vigor**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body,* chs. 5&6, pp. 95-141

**DUE: RESPONSE PAPER ON YOGA PRACTICUM**

**W 11/10 - Harmonial Gymnastics: Grace and Beauty**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body*, ch. 7, pp. 143-162

**Read:** Selections from Sri Yogendra, *Yoga Asanas Simplified* (PERUSALL)

**F 11/12 – The Mysore Revival**

**Read:** Singleton, *Yoga Body*, ch. 9, pp. 175-210

**Read:** Sri Krishnamacarya, “Yoga Makaranda,” in *Yoga in Practice* (PERUSALL)

**Keywords:** physical culture, eugenics, modernization, laicization

**MODULE FOUR: WHITE UTOPIAS –**

**YOGA AND TRANSFORMATIONAL FESTIVALS**

## Week Eleven – Yoga in America – Cross-cultural and counter-cultural

**M 11/15 – Physical Culture in the US – Commercialization and Commoditization**

**Read:** Devon Powers and DM Greenwell, “Exercise and Promotional Culture,” Journal of Consumer Culture 17, 3 (2017): 523-541

**W 11/17 – Postural Yoga as a Body of Religious Practice**

**Read: A**ndrea R. Jain, “Postural Yoga as a Body of Religious Practice,” ch. 5 from *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture* (Oxford, 2015) (PERUSALL)

**Read:** BKS Iyengar, Selections from L*ight on Yoga*

**F 11/19 – White Utopias – Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNR) folk and Transformational Festivals**

**Read:** Amanda Lucia, *White Utopias,* front matter and introduction (xiii-33)

Week Twelve – Thanksgiving Week

**M 11/22 – In class drafting of research paper session**

**W 11/24 – No class – Thanksgiving Holiday**

**F 11/26 – No class – Thanksgiving Holiday**

## Weeks Thirteen – Yogaphobia and Indian Yogaphilia

**M 11/29 - White Utopias – Religious Exoticism**

**Read:** Amanda Lucia, *White Utopias,* ch. 1, “Romancing the Premodern,” pp. 1-68

**DUE: SOCIAL ANNOTATION SELF-REFLECTION FOR MODULES THREE AND FOUR**

**W 12/1 – White Utopias – Appropriation and Authenticity**

**Read:** Amanda Lucia, *White Utopias,* ch. 2, “Anxieties over Authenticity,” pp. 69-103

**F 12/3 - White Utopias – Beauty, Positivity and Self-Denial**

**Read*:*** Amanda Lucia, *White Utopias,* ch. 3, “Deconstructing the Self,” pp. 104-143.

**Virtual visit from Prof. Lucia today!**

***Week Fourteen –Presentations!***

**M 12/6 – Presentations**

**DUE: COMPLETE DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER (ungraded but required)**

**W 12/8 – Presentations**

**F 12/10 – Presentations**

**FINAL PAPER AND FINAL DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE 12/17**

**Appendix A**

**Citation Format**

For this class, please use the MLA in-text citation system for citing quotations and ideas that you have arrived at from reading other authors. See Purdue University’s OWL guide to citations, for a complete discussion of this system [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/].

Briefly, in this method of citation, one introduces the source in a signal phrase that gives the author’s name (first and last at first mention, last name only thereafter). Parenthetical references following the cited material supply the page number or numbers. No abbreviations like p. or pp. precede the page number, unless the absence of them would cause confusion for the reader. These parenthetical references are keyed to a list of works cited, which is placed at the end of the paper. This list is arranged alphabetically and may bear the title “Works Cited,” or “Bibliography.”

If you want to comment on a citation but do not want to do so in the body of the paper, you may add a footnote, which is easily done with the footnote function of your word processing software.

**Citation Example**

In *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, Sudhir Kakar argues that Indian medical systems depend on a distinctive sense of “freedom.” He writes, “Human freedom in the traditional Indian context, then, seems to imply an increase in the potential to experience different inner states while limiting action in the outer world” (272). This notion of freedom inhering in mental states rather than external conditions is corroborated by the philosophy of Yoga. Barbara Stoler Miller emphasizes this by titling the fourth section of Patanjali’s Yoga-Sutras, “Absolute Freedom” (74). This is not to say that India lacks this-worldly thinkers who have worked hard to win political and social freedom by changing external conditions; rather, it is to emphasize the role that ascetic other-worldly thinkers have had in defining and shaping core Indian values.

[**Note:** It seems odd at first, but the concluding period or other punctuation mark must go outside the final quotation mark, and *after* the closing parenthesis].

**Works Cited**

Black, Shameem. “Decolonising Yoga.” *Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation Studies,* edited by Suzanne Newcomb and Karen O’Brien-Kop, Routledge, 2021.

**"Hinduism."** Encyclopædia Britannica. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010. Web. 25 Aug. 2010. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/266312/Hinduism>>.

Kakar, Sudhir. *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors: A Psychological Inquiry into India and Its Healing Traditions*. The University of Chicago Press, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Psychoanalysis and Religious Healing: Siblings or Strangers?” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol 53, 1985, pp. 841-53.

Miller, Barbara Stoler. *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom.* Bantam Books, 1986.

O’Brien-Kop, Karen. *Rethinking ‘Classical’ Yoga and Buddhism: Meditation, Metaphors and Materiality.* Bloomsbury, 2021.

Smart, Ninian. “Soteriology: An Overview.” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade. McMillan, 1987.

**Appendix B:**

**RE 320: Yoga: History, Theory, Practice**

**Research Paper Project**

As part of the requirements for this course, you will be asked to prepare a 12-15 page long research paper on a question related to some aspect of the many diverse practices, theories and histories related to yoga. The refinement of this question will be an ongoing process, but it is important to begin your research with some kind of question in mind. A good question is one that requires you not only to do research, but more importantly to think about the material. A simplistic, not so good question is one that can be answered quickly, by just looking at websites or a single book. Examples of simplistic questions might be, “What are the different yoga asanas?” A more promising question might be, “What are the historical roots of the different yoga asanas found in yoga classes today, such as Padmasasna, Sivasana, and Proud Warrior? What evidence supports these historical narratives? What desires or designs motivate them?” The first question is not bad, but it is too general. Answering the latter questions would require deeper research, but would definitely deliver more interesting and original insights into the history of yoga, and the claims advanced to support different historical narratives surrounding yoga. Your answer need not be definitive and final; in fact, one indication of a well-chosen question is that it is open to multiple answers, and bears repeated asking. Sometimes the most appropriate ending to a paper is to ask another question that has been raised by your discussion.

The first step of research usually involves arriving at an overall understanding of the phenomenon, issue, person or practice about which you’ve developed a guiding question. This will help you to focus your topic and to refine your guiding research question and hypotheses. Further research will ideally lead up to the second, equally important step, which is gaining a critical perspective on the different sources dealing with your topic. One of the intermediary assignments leading up to the final paper will be a bibliography and focus paper, which asks you to reflect on the research process so far, and what more you need to do. This will lead to the third step, which is to create an outline and begin drafting the paper itself. Through repeated iterations of drafting, editing, rewriting, rethinking the outline, and more drafting, you will create a coherent research paper that presents and defends a particular answer to the question that has guided your research. Finally, during the last two weeks of class you will present your findings in a power point slide presentation using the *PechaKucha* style (http://www.pechakucha.org/)

The key to a successful paper is to understand that writing is a process. The final two weeks of the semester should largely be spent writing, not doing new research. Showing a first draft of the paper to a friend, classmate or writing tutor is an invaluable way to get feedback on how clearly you have presented and discussed your material. Taking advantage of the option to hand in a first draft to me, which will not be graded, is another way to improve the paper. Such feedback will allow you to improve the final paper.

**The Bare Bones**

[1] On **Monday, October 18th,** we will meet in the library for a **hands-on research session**. The point of the research session is to gather a number of different sources related to your topic and order those which our library does not own. One of the research librarians and I will be on hand to help you find materials and for consultation regarding sources.

**Due: Sunday, October 17th, by noon.** Please submit to the assignment dropbox a **brief description of a topic** (or topics), phrased in the form of a question, and how you want to go about investigating it (them) (i.e. what perspectives you hope to look into, what sources you have found already). You are not committed to this topic--in fact, it is likely that it will change in the course of your research. *But you must submit a topic by noon today.*

[2] **On Friday, November 5th, in class** you will hand in a  **3-4 page focus essay** and **bibliography** of your paper. By now you will have narrowed down the scope of your investigation and the basis on which you are evaluating the different sources, although, again, these will shift as you progress with your research. The focus essay will describe and reflect on the research process so far, highlighting what question(s) initially motivated your research, how you found quality sources, what obstacles or challenges you encountered in the course of your research and how you overcome them. The essay will end with a restatement of your guiding research question and a preliminary answer to it (if you are there yet).Your bibliography should contain at least 15 sources. You are expected to use a variety of different types of sources in your research, **so at least five must be scholarly journal articles or chapters from scholarly books**.

[4] **On Monday, November 22nd, in-class drafting session**. By now, you should have completed sufficient research that you could sit down for 45 minutes to an hour and draft a rough version of your paper, articulating your thesis (i.e. the answer to the question you have posed for yourself) and describing or paraphrasing the relevant data to support it. You may bring in an outline, a first paragraph, or any other tools to guide your writing (but not books). This is an opportunity to practice sustained silent writing, without the distractions of the computer or more books or articles to read.

[5] **Dec. 6, 8, 10. In-Class Presentations.** These will be very short power-point based presentations that encourage you to be creative in presenting your research findings in a visually compelling, concise and compelling way. Basically, you organize your presentation around 20 slides, each of which is one screen for only 20 seconds (though we can fiddle with the exact numbers, so long as we agree on a single format for everyone). Please consult the pecchakuccha.org site for suggestions and examples.

[6] **Monday, December 6th: turn in** **first draft of the complete paper**. This draft will not be graded, but will be returned to you as soon as possible with my comments and suggestions. I encourage you also to meet with me to discuss my feedback.

[7] The **final draft** of the paper will be due on **Friday Dec. 17th**, during the final exam period. One of the most challenging aspects of writing a research paper (as opposed to doing the research) is figuring out what you need to tell the reader and in what order so that they understand and are persuaded by your thesis. Dividing your paper into sections can be a very useful way to clearly guide your reader through the “steps” that your argument takes. The effective use of sources is also essential to crafting an excellent research paper. As you read more deeply in the scholarship surrounding your topic and/or delve into primary sources on your own, use the skills you’ve developed in keeping your reading journal this semester. I suggest you keep a special file for your collection of especially good passages from your reading– the best quotes are the ones that illustrate an original point you’ve arrived at with clarity and verve, or that express what you’ve really come to understand in a more elegant way than you ever could.

Throughout the paper-writing process I encourage you to meet with me to discuss the paper. The Religion research librarian, Johanna MacKay, is also incredibly helpful, especially at figuring how to track down relevant and high quality sources. The tutors at the Writing Center are also available for consultation. They are very skilled at helping at every stage of the paper-writing process. <https://www.skidmore.edu/writingcenter/>

**Evaluation:** The grade for the paper will be based on the following factors:

(1) content (factual accuracy, derived from good scholarly sources, imaginative, deep, and synthetic engagement with those sources)

(2) writing style (grammatical accuracy, clarity and fluidity of prose, etc.)

(3) organization (coherence, flow of ideas)

(4) formatting (headings, borders, font, images, and especially bibliography).

At least 10% of your final grade will be based on the quality and timeliness of the intermediary assignments such as the list of possible questions/topics.

**Rough Rubric for grading final project (N.B. I’m not committing myself to these numbers, but this will give you a rough sense of my priorities as I read your paper for both content and form).**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Content (factual accuracy, trenchant analysis, not repetitive, sources are good [representative of available relevant scholarship, not more than one book from course, etc.])** | **Writing style (grammatically accurate, fluent, imaginative, thesis clearly presented in the beginning, defended clearly and precisely throughout)** | **Format**  **(correct formatting for headings, borders, font, and especially of bibliography and citations)** | **Organization (coherence, internal organization clear; at both the paragraph level and paper level, the flow from one idea to the next is logical and/or explicated to the reader)** | **Intermediary assignments** | **total** |
| **35 points** | **35 points** | **10** | **10** | **10** | **100** |
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**Appendix C:**

**Notes on pronunciation and transliteration system for Indian languages**

1) a, ā a bar (macron) over a vowel indicates that it is lengthened,

so that *a* is like the “a” in “woman,” but *ā* is like the “a” in “father,”

*i* is like the “i” in “sit,” and *ī* is like the “ee” in “meet,”

*u* is like the “u” in “put,” and *ū* is like the “u” in “rule.”

Examples: *pūjā* (ritual worship) *saṃsāra* (cycle of death and rebirth)

2) ṣ s with a dot underneath means it is pronounced as

“sh” and is retroflex (farther back in the mouth than palatal s)

Examples: *Viṣṇu* (one of the supreme deities of the Hindu pantheon

3) ś s with a slash above is also pronounced as “sh” and

is palatal (closer to the front of the mouth than retroflex s)

Examples: *śīla* (charitable action, virtuous conduct), *Śiva* (another supreme deity)

4) ṛ a dot under an r indicates a vocalic r, which is

pronounced “ri” with a short i, as in the English “sit”

Examples: *Ṛg Veda* (a Hindu scripture), *smṛti* (“that which is remembered,” a category of Hindu scriptures less authoritative than *śruti*, “that which is heard”)

6) dh, th, bh an “h” directly after a consonant means that it is

aspirated; that is, a small breath is exhaled while it is pronounced. “Th” is never pronounced as in the English “the” or “theory.”

Examples: *dharma* (Hindu usage: religious duty or action in accordance with the order of the world), *bhakti* (devotional worship), Mahābhārata (Hindu epic).

**Appendix D: Guidelines Social Annotation Reflection   
RE 320: Yoga**

**Fall 2021**

After each module in the course, you will have an opportunity to reflect on how you have used social annotation. Here are the steps for compiling these reflections: \

1. Review your annotations from that unit and compare them to the list below.
2. Where you have used one of these modes, cut and paste your comment under that mode (so if you provided a definition, copy that definition under #4, below). **You should employ at least five different modes per course module.**
3. In a separate short paragraph, write two to three sentences on what you think you did well in these annotations and what you could do better on in the next module.

Tip: In Perusall, you can download all your annotations for a given article.

Template: [Engaging in Social Annotation](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uBmE28rhF0BqDRXGMpUIUpTORGZtQhHv/view?usp=sharing)

**Modes of Social Annotation**

1. Ask your classmates a question about the text.
2. Agree with someone and give a few reasons or examples for agreeing.
3. Wait patiently until at least four other people have annotated.  Then synthesize what they’ve said and comment on it.
4. Look up an unfamiliar word, highlight it, and add a definition.
5. Identify who you think the primary / target audience of the text is, and say what difference that makes for the text and for you as a reader.
6. Come up with a possible counterexample to something a text or a classmate says.
7. Disagree with someone and give a few reasons or examples for disagreeing.
8. Explain how the text connects to an earlier text on the syllabus.
9. Explain how the text connects to something happening in current events.
10. Agree with something a classmate says and give another example to support the opinion.
11. Tell the class what you think is the main point of one part of the text and give them reasons for your interpretation.
12. Find a natural way to change the topic of conversation to focus on a different (though related) question about the text.
13. Elaborate or expand on something a classmate says. That is, take their argument and develop it further.
14. Say whether you think the conclusion drawn by a classmate is true or false. Give your reasons for thinking it true or false.
15. After some annotations have been added by peers, identify the general trajectory of the conversation. If you think it should take a different direction, try to change the direction. If not, suggest a way to take the question deeper.

[[1]](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OB36eXDi0o7MJvvBvkeakEkEt1VAIWIIY2_s6QO7Dxs/edit" \l "heading=h.1fob9te) This handout is revised from one developed by Larry M. Jorgensen and L. Caitlin Jorgensen.