



Yoga Origins, Lineages And Cultural Appropriation

4 part 90 minute series hosted on Yoga Philosophy

Your Course Directors: Anusha Wijeyakumar, MA, CPC, E-RYT, Dip Mentoring (she/her/hers) & Dr. Shyam Ranganathan, MA, MA, PhD, E-RYT, DE&I Advisor (he/him/his)

For more information, email: kriya@yogaphilosophy.com

To signup: yogaphilosophy.com/courses

Dates: Mondays and Wednesdays May 17, 22, 24 and 31 Times: 6:30-8:00 pm EDT/

3:30-5:00 pm PDT

Cost:

Community Pricing \$179 *For students who need financial support.*

Sustainer Pricing \$249 *For students who can afford to pay for their own enrollment.*

Supporter Pricing \$295 *For attendees who would like to contribute to another student's enrollment.*

Outline

1. How we learn about Yoga: ancient South Asian philosophy.

In this session, we will learn about the origins of Yoga as a South Asian criticism of earlier Indo European ideas of the natural world. We will also gain familiarity with the logical skills necessary for studying this history, and the contrary anti-logical skills (interpretation) that undermine this task. The contrast between the two is already set out in the *Yoga Sutra*, I.2-4. Various sources will be explored, including the *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Yoga Sūtra*, as well as Buddhist



and Jain Sources. Questions that will be addressed: Why is something Yoga? Why are Buddhism and Jainism different schools from Yoga? How could we identify Yoga in other cultural traditions.

2. Colonization and the rebranding of Yoga as a technique for further ends.

In this session, we learn about the mechanisms of colonialism (interpretation) the origins of this approach in the Linguistic Account of thought from the West and it's creation of religious identities as part of its colonial marginalization. Yoga is gradually re-understood in this process of colonialism from a basic option of philosophy (one of four basic ethical/dharma theories) to techniques of wellness and spirituality. Knowledge that is based on research and logic is replaced by opinion. Learn how the history of Western imperialism leads to the blog and YouTube theory of knowledge. We contrast this with guidance from the the Yoga tradition, to work on yourself and your own dharma as opposed to appropriating the dharma of another.

3. Lineages and the colonial experience.

In the third session we explore the contrast between the early Yoga tradition and the later tradition that reveals one stark difference: an emphasis on lineages, which correlates with Western encroachment on South Asia. Participants will learn how the idea of a lineage and its importance has roots Western philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, but no grounding in the ancient philosophies of meditation. We will review later applied Yoga works, such as the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā and note ways in which it, and similar texts, continue precolonial yoga, but represent a departure from precolonial yoga.

4. Cultural Appropriation and Yoga.

With the colonial methodology of interpretation, Yoga can be interpreted for any number of non-yogic ends, for the explanation by way of interpretation relies on the beliefs of the interpreter (and their cultural agenda), and not the logic based method for inquiry and research. Several changes in the history of how yoga is talked about, including its reduction to āsana, can be explained by this interpretive approach. Participants will learn how to identify and resist agendas of appropriation, found in Yoga Studies publications and the wider yoga community.