

Yoga and Indian Thought

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This two-day course is aimed at providing an introduction to and basic understanding of Yoga in the context of Indian thought. In the first class we shall look at some the fundamental ideas and concepts that provided the basis for the Indian mode of thinking. We shall go back to the Vedas and extract the most important elements that help us to understand the system of Yoga in India. Topics to be discussed include: myths of creation, origin of the systems of caste and stations of life, ancient Indian ideas of wind and breath.

In the second class, we shall focus on fundamental themes and concepts of the Yoga system of thought. Topics to be discussed include: six systems of Indian philosophy with an emphasis on Sāṃkhya and Yoga, Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* and the eight limbs of Yoga.

Background Reading

A.L. Basham and K.G. Zysk, *The origins and development of classical Hinduism*, Oxford, 1991.

K.G. Zysk, "The science of respiration and the doctrine of the bodily winds in India, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 113.2 (1993), 198-213. Given as pdf file.

K.G. Zysk, "The bodily winds in ancient India revisited," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)*, 2007, S105-S115. Given as pdf file.