

Worldview types amongst yoga practitioners in Finland

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There are many studies of yoga practice and philosophy, but less of the yogins themselves. Our study, part of a larger, four-year project on yoga in Finland, investigates the worldviews of yoga practitioners in Sweden using Q-methodology. The study constitutes the pilot phase of a larger study to be conducted in Finland. The theoretical assumption behind Q-methodology is that there is only a limited number of predominant viewpoints in any subjective discourse. A well-designed Q-instrument should reveal those viewpoints – and do so beyond the often so reductive and even meaningless categories of “secular”, “religious” or “spiritual”. Designing an instrument that is specifically attuned to the discourse of modern yoga, we expect to uncover some of the major outlook types amongst the practitioners.

In our presentation, we will discuss the process in arriving at the Q-statements we have used, as well as some preliminary findings of the project. While the sample is from one country, we expect the results to tell us something more general about the expected outlook orientations in modern yoga. Despite local peculiarities of Nordic forms of yoga, most of the Nordic commercial as well as idealistic yoga domain consists of easily recognisable global brands.

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