



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

DIVISIÓN DE CIENCIAS POLÍTICAS Y HUMANIDADES

English-Spanish translation of the article: “*Meditation, social change and Undergraduate Education*”, with a detailed analysis of the strategies used by the translator according to Vinay and Darbelnet’s categorization (1958) in “*Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*”.

MONOGRAFIA
en la modalidad de traducción

para obtener el grado de
Licenciado en Lengua Inglesa

PRESENTA
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Chetumal, Quintana Roo, 2016.



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PRESENTATION

“Meditation, Social Change, and Undergraduate Education” is an article written by Steven C. Rockefeller which states that meditation and psychotherapy can have a positive influence in the contemporary American society; as well as in American educational institutions. It explains how American undergraduate students can be provided with different opportunities to learn and experience different forms of meditation and the role that teachers, counselors and health care professionals should play when introducing meditation to undergraduate students according to their needs and abilities. It argues that using the meditative and contemplative disciplines developed by different cultures and religions can even force progressive social change.

Contemplative meditation is a new field in education, that is why it deserves the time and space for students and teachers to be used as a tool for learning and teaching languages. It has been well said that when students are relaxed and have a good atmosphere learning might become better and faster, when students feel in a good mood and comfortable then learning is more likely to succeed. Then, meditation has become a priority especially in the US where its impact has been positive for teachers and researchers.

This work presents the translation of an article about meditation in the field of education. It presents the advantages and difficulties that the writer has had applying this method. It is also a contribution to the society by a student who uses her knowledge and skills as a translator and educator.

JUSTIFICATION

What is meditation? According to Goleman (1988) and Walsh (1999), meditation is an essential element in all of the world's major contemplative spiritual and philosophical traditions. In other words, meditation refers to a variety of disciplines and techniques that may differ but share one common goal which is to train an individual's attention and awareness so that consciousness develops a perception of events and experiences in the present.

Steven C. Rockefeller is a Professor Emeritus of Religion at Middlebury College in Vermont; he has served as a Dean of the college as well. Based on his experience with meditation workshops, he proposed to Middlebury College, in 1982, the creation of a permanent meditation center and a director to develop an appropriate program for it, even though it was never implemented. He writes about the best way to introduce meditation on college campuses for them to be successful. Professor Rockefeller suggests that meditation can have a positive impact on academic performance, psychological well-being, and interpersonal experience for students in college under the guidance of competent teachers.

Nowadays, students might be exposed to different stress levels through their college school years: problems at home, with teachers, during exams, and with other students are just few examples of different situations that could cause stress in them; however, those stress levels can differ according to the students' personality and the way they respond to situations: for those who do not worry too much, stress could be just an insignificant part of their lives but for others the situation can be very different.

"Stress is definitely on the rise at college campuses," said Sanford I. Nidich (2009), the lead author of the study and a professor at Maharishi University of Management in Iowa, which was founded by the yogi who popularized Transcendental Meditation. "It's a major problem, and it's getting worse. . . . More and more we are seeing students with elevated blood pressure." It is necessary to expose college to some techniques so they can release or lower their stress levels. Adding these contemplative disciplines to the college curricula could help students to increase their attention and decrease stress levels as well as to give a deeper meaning to self-knowledge, and foster community and cooperation in order to offset the competitive atmosphere of the academy.

Meditation in undergraduate education might play an important role when it comes to students dealing with stress, as long as students are under the guidance of competent teachers. Research has shown that the practice of meditation and psychotherapy can have many benefits in addition to reducing stress: some of them include better concentration, positive mood, good sleep, and immune functions' improvement. Clifford Saron (2010), associate research scientist at the UC Davis Center for Mind and Brain, said: "We have found that meditation promotes positive psychological changes, and that meditators showing the greatest improvement on various psychological measures had the highest levels of telomerase¹."

This article publicizes the advantages and the changes that could be seen when integrating various forms of meditation as well as some directions to follow in order to get a positive

¹ *An enzyme, active chiefly in tumors and reproductive cells, that causes telomeres to lengthen: facilitates cell division and may account for the immortality of cancer cells.* © 2016 Dictionary.com, LLC

influence in the American educational institutes along with the American society. Even though meditation can be used to help people to overcome a number of issues (e.g. release stress), it is a useful tool when it comes to understand and experience different contemplative disciplines developed by different cultures and religions. To know that this is another option that college students have in order to learn about and be part of various forms of meditation might be beneficial not only for them but for all teachers, chaplains, counselors and other the specialists in the area of undergraduate education.

Anyone can benefit from meditation, no matter what their physical or spiritual background is. However, if college students practice meditation regularly, they might gradually find themselves becoming more calm and mindful. They might also respond more skillfully to themselves, to others, and to situations in their life. This, from my own point of view, may lead to less stress in their lives and overall better wellbeing.

The translated article might be useful to any person working in the educational area and who would like to provide their students with new techniques to learn and practice meditation on campus beyond introductory workshops. Health care professionals and psychological counselors might find this article useful as well, since they are always looking for new techniques and resources to deal with stress and anxiety. The translation of this article was required by the psychologist Yukio Medina from the Alternative Criminal Justice Unit from the Procuraduria General de Justicia (PGJ) since they deal with people whose stress and anxiety levels are high because of the situation they are involved in. The mission of the psychologist Medina is to assist the judge by supplying psychological techniques within a frame which is different from the clinical one. In this environment, the

role of the psychologist is to diagnose and evaluate the psychological harm a person may have suffered as a consequence of a harmful event; for example an accident where the victim may receive the corresponding compensation. A psychologist also acts in case of minor guardianship, divorce and mala praxis², among others.

During this period of time, people who are involved in some of the situations mentioned before might experience a high level of stress and anxiety, due to all the process they are going through, starting from being part of an event they did not think about until the final judge decision which might not be beneficial for them involves a great degree of stress and pressure for the victim and for the people involved.

This article may help the psychologist, the therapist, and people involved. It could even be used to inform the college population that there are different meditative and contemplative disciplines developed by different cultures and religions that can have a positive influence in their lives if those techniques are guided by a well-trained teacher or instructor. If we as a society have well-trained teachers or instructors in this field, more and more college students could have the opportunity to experience different ways to deal with stress or to lower their stress levels.

²*A Latin expression, to signify bad or unskillful practice in a physician or other professional person, as a midwife, whereby the health of the patient is injured.* THELAW.COM LAW DICTIONARY & BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY 2ND ED.

OBJECTIVES

- Translate an article about Meditation in Education.
- Identify the terminology applied in the areas of Meditation, Contemplative Meditation, Education, Psychology and Religion.
- Analyze and explain the translation methods used for the translation of the article.
- Emphasize the importance of the article and its translation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

At first the different strategies or procedures for translation seem to be countless, but they can be condensed to just seven, according to Vinay and Darbelnet's categorization (1958) in "*Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*". Each one corresponds to a higher degree of complexity. In practice, they may be used either on their own or combined with one or more of the others. There are other authors that were taken into account when writing the following translation techniques: authors such as Chesterman (1997) who had given a list of some general characteristics of translation strategies; Baker (1992) who presented a model of translation techniques, and Venuti (2001) who states, from Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) point of view, that translators can select two main methods of translating which are called: *direct/literal translation* and *oblique translation*. The different techniques applied are described below.

1. BORROWING (DIRECT/LITERAL TRANSLATION)

Borrowing is the simplest of all translation methods. In order to introduce the flavor of the source language (SL) culture into a translation, foreign terms may be used, e.g. "dollars" and "party" from American English, Mexican Spanish food names "tequila" and "tortillas", and so on. Some well-established, mainly older borrowings are so widely used that they are no longer considered as such and have become part of the respective target language (TL) lexicon. In English, such words as "*menu*", "*carburettor*", "*hangar*", and "*chic*" and other French words, are not considered to be borrowings. It must be remembered that many borrowings enter a language through translation, just like semantic borrowings or *faux amis*,

whose pitfalls translators must carefully avoid. The decision to borrow a SL word or expression for introducing an element of local colour is a matter of style and consequently deals with the rendering of the message. Examples: *Hot dog, Pizza, Tortillas, Menu*, etc.

2. CALQUE (DIRECT/LITERAL TRANSLATION)

A calque is a special kind of borrowing whereby a language borrows an expression from another, but then translates literally each of its elements. The result is either a) a lexical calque which respects the syntactic structure of the TL, whilst introducing a new mode of expression; or b) a structural calque which introduces a new construction to the language.

As with borrowings, there are many fixed calques which, after a period of time, become an integral part of the language. These too, may have undergone a semantic change, turning them into *faux amis*. Translators are more interested in new calques which can serve to fill a void, without having to use an actual borrowing. Examples: *Hombre rana (Frogman), Lavaplatos (Dishwasher), Luna de miel (Honeymoon), Salvaje oeste (Wild West)*, etc.

3. LITERAL TRANSLATION (DIRECT/LITERAL TRANSLATION)

Literal or word for word translation is the direct transfer of a SL text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL text in which the translators' task is limited to observing the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the TL. In principle, a literal translation is a unique solution which is reversible and complete in itself. It is most common when translating between two languages of the same family (e.g. between French and Italian), and even more so when they also share the same culture. Since the positioning of a word within an utterance has an effect on its meaning, it may well arise that the solution results in

a grouping of words that is so far from the original starting point that no dictionary could give it. Only translators can be aware of the totality of the message, which determines their decisions. In the final analysis, it is the message alone, a reflection of the situation that allows us to judge whether two texts are adequate alternatives. Examples: *I left my glasses on the table* (*Dejé mis lentes sobre la mesa*), *Where are you?* (*¿Dónde estás?*), *The train arrives at the station at ten* (*El tren llega a la estación a las diez*), etc.

4. TRANSPOSITION (OBLIQUE TRANSLATION)

The technique called transposition involves replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message. Besides being a special translation procedure, transposition can also be applied within a language. In translation there are two different types of transpositions: a) obligatory transposition, and b) optional transposition. From a stylistic point of view, the original and the transposed expression do not necessarily have the same value. Translators must, therefore, choose to carry out a transposition if the translation thus obtained fits better into the utterance, or allows a particular nuance of style to be retained. Indeed, the transposed form is generally more literary in character.

A special and frequently used case of transposition is that of interchange. Examples: *She likes swimming* (*Le gusta nadar*), *Hand knitted* (*Tejido a mano*), *The blue house* (*La casa azul*), etc.

5. MODULATION (OBLIQUE TRANSLATION)

Modulation is a variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view. This change can be justified when, although a literal, or even transposed, translation

results in a grammatically incorrect utterance, it is considered unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward in the TL. We distinguish between free or optional modulations and those that are fixed or obligatory. The type of modulation which turns a negative SL expression into a positive TL expression is more often than not optional, even though this is closely linked with the structure of each language. In the case of fixed modulation, translators with a good knowledge of both languages freely use this method, as they will be aware of the frequency of use, the overall acceptance, and the confirmation provided by a dictionary or grammar of the preferred expression. The results of free modulation should lead to a solution that makes the reader exclaim, “Yes, that’s exactly what I would say”.

Examples: *You can have it (Te lo deajo), It is not difficult to show (Es fácil de demostrar),* etc.

6. EQUIVALENCE (OBLIQUE TRANSLATION)

The classical example of equivalence is given by the reaction of a person who accidentally hits his finger with a hammer: if he were American his cry of pain would be transcribed as “Ouch!” but if he were Mexican this would be interpreted as “¡Ay!” Most equivalences are fixed, and belong to a phraseological repertoire of idioms, clichés, proverbs, nominal or adjectival phrases, etc. In general, proverbs are perfect examples of equivalences.

Examples: American movie title “The Sound of Music” (La novicia rebelde-América Latina) (Sonrisas y lágrimas-España), etc; animal sounds “Cock-a-doodle-do” (English)/Quiquiriqui (Spanish), meow (English)/miau (Spanish), etc.

7. ADAPTATION (OBLIQUE TRANSLATION)

Adaptation is used in those cases where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture. Adaptation can be described as a special kind of equivalence, a situational equivalence. This method is well known amongst simultaneous interpreters. The refusal to make an adaptation is invariably detected within a translation because it affects not only the syntactic structure, but also the development of ideas and how they are represented within the paragraph. Examples: *Kebab* (Pincho), *as white as snow* (Blanco como la nieve), but if people don't know the snow in Africa for example, *blanco como un colmillo de elefante: as white as tusk*.

For the purpose of this research, it was thought also useful to refer to Hurtado's taxonomy, being this more recent and somehow more complete than Vinay and Darbelnet's. In the following part, I will provide a list of translation techniques on the basis of this author's classification.

- **Adaptation:** To replace a ST³ cultural element with one from the target culture.
- **Amplification:** To introduce details that are not formulated in the ST: information, Explicative notes, paraphrasing, etc.
- **Borrowing:** To take a word or expression straight from another language. It can be pure (without any change).

³ Source-language Text

- **Calque:** Literal translation of a foreign word or phrase; it can be lexical or structural.
- **Compensation:** To introduce a ST element of information or stylistic effect in another place in the TT⁴ because it cannot be reflected in the same place as in the ST. This corresponds to SCFA⁵'s conception.
- **Description:** To replace a term or expression with a description of its form or/and function.
- **Discursive creation:** To establish a temporary equivalence that is totally unpredictable out of context.
- **Established equivalent:** To use a term or expression recognized (by dictionaries or languages in use) as an equivalent in the TL.
- **Generalization:** To use a more general or neutral term.
- **Linguistic amplification:** To add linguistic elements. This is often used in consecutive interpreting and dubbing.
- **Linguistic compression:** To synthesize linguistic elements in the TT. This is often used in simultaneous interpreting and in sub-titling.
- **Literal translation:** To translate a word or an expression word for word.
- **Modulation:** To change the point of view, focus or cognitive category in relation to the ST; it can be lexical or structural.
- **Particularization:** To use a more precise or concrete term.

⁴ Target-language Text

⁵ Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais (1958)

- **Reduction:** To suppress a ST information item in the TT,
- **Substitution (linguistic, paralinguistic):** To change linguistic elements for paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) or vice versa.
- **Transposition:** To change a grammatical category.
- **Variation:** To change linguistic or paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) that affect aspects of linguistic variation: changes of textual tone, style, social dialect, geographical dialect, etc.

Bassnett (2002) explains the challenges of defining translation.

Defining translation depends on the author's posture and theory. Translation is a process. It involves several strategies and methods in order to acquire the translated text. "What is generally understood as translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted (p. 12).

Basnett (2002), also establishes that translation is a discipline that involves a systematic study. For the use and purpose of this study, translation shall be understood as a complex activity that undertakes an extensive study. The translator is neutral to any idea expressed by the author: he or she must not convey his or her own words in the translation process or the text will be altered. Many authors may argue that it is impossible to avoid transmitting one's own idea, especially in cases of untranslatability where there's a lacuna or lexical gap. Lexical gaps are influenced by and depend on cultures. If the culture has a need for a word it will exist. Culture, environment, type of government, economy, religion, society in

general, influence and enrich language. Translating is in fact not a simple task, as it may seem to others who are unaware of its procedures. Translating can be seen through many forms “...enacting its own processes of signification which answer to different linguistic and cultural contexts (Venuti, 2000).”

Language is constantly changing. Theories and methodologies of translation are expanding. Each author has his or her own style and preference in translation, which depends on their ideology. Paradigms are constantly emerging due to the growing necessity of translation. Globalization makes our world smaller. Internet and growing social networks cause information to be shared all around the world. Nowadays, language is no longer a barrier, but despite everything there might be some problems arising while translating a document, and some of them are hereunder described.

TYPICAL TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

When we are translating there are some problems that seem to arise: they may be particular, general and sometimes specific. There are some specific problems in the translation process: problems of ambiguity, of structural and lexical differences between languages and “cultural” words such as idioms and collocations. Another problem could be the grammar structure of the language because sometimes sentences can be poorly understood or it is not clear how some of them should be represented or which grammar rules should be used to explain them.

According to Hurtado (1996), the most common words are really hard to translate due to the fact that their meaning depends a lot on the context, and that's why we have to be aware

of the context and the topic. For example poetry is an area which is not easy to translate because you do not have to read it only once, but you have to analyse all the words and their meaning, among other elements like rhythm and rhythmic and other elements related; that is why most poetry translation is not good enough.

Other translation problems may be related to the source text, such as: the text is illegible or difficult to read, the spelling is incorrect or the text has been printed incorrectly, the text is unfinished or badly written. There are also some language problems that could make a text difficult to translate such as: idioms and neologisms, unsolved acronyms and abbreviations, proper names of people, organizations and places, difficult slangs to understand, as well as punctuation rules, among others.

METHODOLOGY

The nature of the article to be translated is related to the meditation techniques that teachers, chaplains, psychological counsellors and health care professionals could use to have a positive social influence and even to strive for progressive social change in American society. These strategies and techniques would give college students a different perspective of life and would help them to deal better with the stress they might face every day during their college years. As was said before, meditation techniques offer many other benefits and studies have shown that some of them include improving physical health.

Important Universities such as Harvard offer a wide variety of programs and workshops designed to improve the well-being not only for students but for all college population. Harvard University Health Services states that practicing meditation would benefit you in many ways such as enjoying physical activity, restoring balance to your life, learning new skills, or better managing stress. The text to be translated will give health care professionals, teachers and others a better understanding about how and when to apply some of the meditation techniques designed by different cultures.

Readers could also know more about these techniques, not only people who work in the health area but psychological counsellors, and even other people in the college area who are looking for help to integrate the spiritual and the practical in order to promote social action. This way, they would understand how important is for them to make a positive social change through meditation techniques according to people's needs.

The instruments to be used will be not only different bilingual dictionaries but monolingual dictionaries, Spanish and English synonyms' dictionaries and online translators. As many online forums will be consulted as possible, so I will have the opportunity to clarify any doubt that could come out while translating this article, as well as sharing my work with professional translators. I will ask my supervisor to check my translation work so he could help me to improve it before I get to the final translated text.

For the translation to be successful I will have to follow certain steps that I have followed previously with other translation works that I have written before. The first step will be to read the text from the beginning to the end, paragraph by paragraph. This way I will write unknown words that are in the text. Then, I will translate sentence by sentence the whole text but being careful of not changing the meaning or the sense of the text. It is important to keep the same register of the text, which is the variation of the language in different situations; it has to be the same of the original text.

Next, the text will be read one more time and paragraph by paragraph will be corrected, taking care of not missing anything that could be an important part of the text.

Once the translated text has been corrected, it will be compared along to its English version to make sure nothing had been omitted or added to the final version; this has to be done sentence by sentence. The text could be corrected again if necessary and changes will include Spanish grammar use, syntax, fluency, clarity and understanding ability for people who are going to read it.

TRANSLATION

Meditación, cambio social y educación superior

STEVEN C. ROCKEFELLER

Universidad Middlebury

El siguiente artículo menciona que la meditación guiada por un instructor capacitado podría influir positivamente en la sociedad estadounidense contemporánea e incluso podría impulsar un cambio social progresivo. Han sido identificados un sinnúmero de aspectos importantes que requieren ser estudiados más profundamente, como la necesidad de una mejor comprensión de la meditación desde la perspectiva de la psicología del desarrollo y la relación entre la meditación y la psicoterapia. Este artículo sugiere que las instituciones estadounidenses pueden beneficiarse de una mejor apreciación de la vida desde una dimensión contemplativa. Se ha puesto especial atención a la manera en que las universidades norteamericanas pueden ofrecer a los estudiantes mejores oportunidades para aprender y experimentar diversos tipos de meditación. Igualmente, se discute el papel que deben desempeñar los maestros, capellanes, psicólogos terapeutas y profesionales del cuidado de la salud, al presentar la meditación a los estudiantes.

En los últimos 30 años ha habido un redescubrimiento sobre el valor de la meditación y la oración contemplativa en la cultura occidental. El propósito de este artículo es analizar la manera en que la educación universitaria estadounidense puede brindar oportunidades a los estudiantes para comprender y experimentar las disciplinas meditativas y contemplativas desarrolladas por diferentes culturas y religiones. Debido a los cuestionamientos que surgen sobre la meditación, se realizó este estudio/análisis en gran medida sobre la creencia de que la meditación puede ser una influencia positiva, e incluso una herramienta para el cambio social progresivo, por lo que es necesario presentar primero una breve introducción sobre la naturaleza del cambio constructivo.

GUÍA PARA EL CAMBIO CREATIVO SOCIAL

Una manera de determinar los movimientos sociales más prometedores hoy en día en Estados Unidos de América es verlos como parte de un triple desarrollo que implica 1) un compromiso cada vez más profundo hacia los valores sociales democráticos, con atención a

los derechos humanos y la paz, 2) una restauración ecológica del estilo de vida de las personas y su forma de pensar, y 3) un reciente despertar espiritual hacia la esencia de lo sagrado en el mundo.

Entre los esfuerzos para renovar y fortalecer la democracia estadounidense se encuentran la lucha para lograr la igualdad de género y la protección a los derechos de las minorías, promover la tolerancia y celebrar la diversidad, hacer que la gente participe en la toma de decisiones sobre temas que les atañen, la difusión de la democracia industrial, un nuevo énfasis en la importancia de la vida comunitaria y la relación Tú-Yo, la promoción a la cooperación internacional para erradicar la pobreza, el desarrollo de los derechos humanos, oportunidad económica igualitaria, conservación ambiental y la paz.

La revolución ecológica se basa en nuevos descubrimientos científicos en astronomía, biología, cosmología, ecología, física y psicología. Ésta enfatiza los pensamientos holísticos y globales a largo plazo, y es guiada por una nueva conciencia moral expresada de una manera imperativa: cuida y respeta todas las formas de vida. Esto significa restaurar los ecosistemas, proteger la biodiversidad, desarrollar una nueva eco-economía, tener un estilo de vida sustentable y acatar el principio de soberanía nacional de preocuparse por el bien común de la humanidad.

El despertar espiritual actual, ya antes mencionado, implica asombrarse con el misterio y la belleza del mundo natural y con el redescubrimiento de lo sagrado. Conlleva una comprensión de lo sagrado en nuestra propia vida y en la vida como tal. Implica una integración de lo sagrado y lo secular, la vida espiritual y la vida diaria. Se reconoce que el principal significado es encontrar en conjunto y desarrollar un yo compasivo, democrático y ecológico que sea abierto, que se extienda para acoger toda la vida.

Los valores asociados con la democracia, ecología y espiritualidad pueden ser entendidos como dimensiones interrelacionadas de una nueva y emergente conciencia social. Por una parte, unir e integrar el ejercicio del poder y buscar el progreso material por un lado, y por el otro, la búsqueda de la sabiduría ética y espiritual. Los objetivos generales son construir una comunidad en medio de la diversidad, sanar el mundo y mejorar la calidad de vida para todos.

Existen dos maneras fundamentales de promover el cambio social, Una incluye la reconstrucción de instituciones y el medio ambiente social que da forma a la manera en la que la gente piensa, como se comporta e interactúa; y la otra implica enfocarse en los individuos y trabajar para transformar su conciencia, actitudes y valores. Ambas son necesarias. Las dos maneras pueden y deben complementarse y reforzarse la una a la otra.

MEDITACIÓN Y CAMBIO SOCIAL

¿Puede la meditación transformar la conciencia de los individuos de acuerdo con los cambios en valores, hábitos sociales e instituciones inspiradas por la democracia creativa y el movimiento en pro del medio ambiente? ¿Puede la meditación ayudar a la gente a comprender al ser ecológico-democrático? ¿Puede la meditación expandir y profundizar la preocupación ética y la conciencia de lo sagrado? ¿Podría la meditación añadir una calidad única y profunda hacia la vida ecológica-democrática? En pocas palabras, ¿Deberían los estadounidenses incluir la meditación y las disciplinas contemplativas en su visión sobre el camino hacia la libertad individual, la comunidad auténtica y la plenitud? La respuesta podría ser un sí.

Primero que nada es importante tomar en cuenta que el experimento estadounidense con la meditación, está apenas comenzando y aún hay mucho más, que los estadounidenses tienen que aprender acerca de la naturaleza de la meditación y su potencial como un instrumento de crecimiento y transformación en un contexto ecológico-democrático-. La experiencia de los estadounidenses al día de hoy indica que tienen claro que la meditación no es un sustituto para el aprendizaje y el desarrollo psicosocial que experimentamos viviendo y trabajando con otros. No es un sustituto en la búsqueda de la investigación racional y de la reflexión crítica. Por lo general, es un error pensar que la meditación puede o debe ser usada por los occidentales para abordar los problemas en el desarrollo de la personalidad para lo cual la psicoterapia se ha desarrollado. Sin embargo, existe gran cantidad de evidencia que sugiere que bajo la guía de un instructor bien capacitado, experimentado y responsable, la meditación puede ser benéfica para muchas personas con predisposición para ella, ya que puede ayudarles a crecer de una manera única y promover el cambio social creativo.

Existen desde luego, muchas disciplinas meditativas y contemplativas diferentes y la práctica apropiada para cada individuo dependerá de la etapa de vida en la que se encuentre y en sus necesidades específicas y habilidades. Las formas más básicas de meditación involucran técnicas de concentración que brindan calma y claridad al cuerpo y a la mente. Muchas de las formas más avanzadas están diseñadas para ayudar a una persona a ir más allá del sentido estricto del yo fragmentado, a desarrollar un sentido de identificación hacia otros y pertenecer a la gran comunidad del ser. Además, en varias religiones la meditación y la oración contemplativa se practican como una disciplina espiritual transformativa que puede preparar a una persona para la experiencia de la iluminación o la unión con Dios.

Se ha documentado a nivel experimental que ciertas técnicas de meditación pueden mejorar la salud física, y existen prácticas meditativas que pueden ser usadas para mejorar el

desempeño atlético y artístico. Las disciplinas contemplativas podrían ayudar a la gente a ser menos frenéticos y ser más centrados, más conscientes de su propia bondad y belleza, a apreciar más el valor intrínseco de otros, a ser más receptivos al sufrimiento, más atentos, conscientes y más abiertos a la relación y el significado del Tú-Yo. Cuando la meditación produce un efecto de trascendencia del conocimiento egocéntrico se profundiza la conciencia de lo sagrado.

Si la meditación es vista únicamente como una técnica, se pierde su pleno significado, esto es, considerarla como un medio exclusivo para un fin más allá de sí misma, como mejorar la salud, lograr un cambio social o incluso la iluminación espiritual. La contemplación es una forma de actividad humana que posee su propio valor intrínsecamente y puede ser una experiencia agradable y completa en sí misma. En este sentido, ella misma es un final. Si la sociedad estadounidense comprendiera y aceptara esta idea, podría causar un cambio de actitud positivo sin importar la cultura. Además, todos los beneficios de la meditación sólo se consiguen luego de un sincero compromiso con la disciplina y esto requiere que el practicante lo vea como un fin y no sólo como un medio para llegar a esos beneficios.

También se limita su valor al pensar que la meditación es una práctica aislada. La manera en la que la gente entiende y se acerca a la meditación y al efecto que ésta tiene, influye si el ambiente en donde se practica es más intelectual, moral y espiritual. En algunas culturas, por ejemplo, la meditación ha sido usada para reforzar e implementar filosofías de contemplación o la negación del mundo y el ascetismo. Sin embargo, también hay muchos ejemplos de meditación que son asociados con concepciones afirmativas del mundo del misticismo ético e incluso con un cambio social revolucionario. Además, el lugar donde se practica la meditación es importante, especialmente para los principiantes pues podría propiciar una mayor concentración y podría fomentar ciertos valores y actitudes. El reto en la cultura actual es poner en práctica la meditación en el contexto de una visión del mundo que confirme un balance saludable entre aspectos como la interiorización y el activismo, la concentración e ir más allá de la relación entre las cosas, y la contemplación en silencio y la responsabilidad social.

EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR Y MEDITACIÓN

La universidad secular actual se ocupa centralmente de la investigación científica y el arte de la reflexión crítica racional. La universidad prepara a los maestros quienes forman parte de las facultades de las instituciones de educación superior y la influencia de la enseñanza universitaria es la fuerza predominante en cuanto a la educación superior. La misión principal de las instituciones de educación superior es entrenar y promover el desarrollo de la mente humana, en especial las facultades de la razón crítica.

Existen, desde luego, muchas dimensiones variadas dentro de la educación artística y liberal. Hay cursos que enfatizan la imaginación humana, exploran el arte de la apreciación y promueven la autoexpresión creativa por medio de las artes. Las escuelas de educación superior tienen programas deportivos y una gran variedad de actividades extracurriculares que reflejan los intereses cambiantes de los estudiantes. También se ofrecen numerosas oportunidades para estudiar fuera del campus y en el extranjero. Durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial la mayoría de las universidades tenían como requisito asistir a la capilla, mostrando así una preocupación por moldear la sensibilidad moral y religiosa de los estudiantes, sin embargo la capilla ya no es un requisito en la gran mayoría de las universidades. Hoy en día, la educación moral ocurre principalmente en y a través de normas de convivencia, dentro del campus que enfatizan el respeto por las personas y la diversidad y a no copiar en los exámenes. Para identificar los factores estresantes y sus necesidades emocionales, muchas escuelas han ofrecido asesoramiento psicológico a los estudiantes universitarios.

Aunque existen diversas ofertas que reflejan al menos una preocupación con toda persona y con la diversidad de intereses y talento humano, el principal énfasis se encuentra en la razón crítica y especialmente en métodos de conocimientos que tienen relevancia práctica. La razón crítica es como una delicada flor en el jardín de la civilización occidental. Su cultivo y crecimiento son esenciales para el desarrollo independiente del pensamiento y de una sociedad democrática saludable, y para la práctica del cuidado de la tierra. La educación universitaria debe enfatizar el método experimental del conocimiento, y el arte de la reflexión crítica no debe ponerse en tela de juicio.

Puede surgir la pregunta sobre si la educación en las universidades en los Estados Unidos, de hoy en día no logran poner a la ciencia y la razón discursiva en una perspectiva adecuada, y de si tienden a fomentar una orientación del carácter que está centrada en la mente (a diferencia de estar centrada en el corazón), más interesada en la información que en la apreciación, preocupada por el poder, más que por la sabiduría y los valores éticos, orientada hacia el Yo-ello que en el Tú-Yo; más hábiles para buscar objetivos futuros que en vivir de forma grata el presente. Todo es cuestión de balance.

Éste es un asunto complejo para el que no hay una respuesta sencilla y las instituciones de educación superior no pueden resolver este problema por sí solos. Sin embargo, una apreciación fresca de la experiencia contemplativa puede ser parte de una estrategia más amplia para lidiar con este asunto. Hace doscientos años, Friedrich Schleiermacher, el fundador de la moderna teología liberal, envió un juicio crítico que aborda esta pregunta. Destacó que cada persona nace con la capacidad de experimentar directamente lo misterioso, lo maravilloso y lo bello del mundo, lo cual es esencial para el bienestar humano, la alegría y el significado de la vida. Pero, él lamentaba que esta capacidad fuese “aplastada” en los niños durante el transcurso de su educación por el moderno furor de

“calcular y explicar” liderado por “los hombres discretos y prácticos”, que dominan la sociedad. “En todo lo que hacemos debe haber un diseño y un objetivo; siempre algo debe de ser ejecutado, y si el espíritu ya no es útil, el cuerpo debe de ser ejercitado. Hay que trabajar y jugar, pero no en silencio, ni en sumisa contemplación”, escribió Schleiermacher (1958, 124-30).

En general, las escuelas norteamericanas reflejan en todos los niveles la inclinación que Schleiermacher critica. En los primeros años, la mejor manera de afrontar este desequilibrio es poniendo un nuevo énfasis en las artes y un interés del personal docente por respetar y educar el sentido de asombro en los niños como parte esencial de su bienestar. Además de los programas fortalecidos, reforzados en las artes y sus ámbitos afines, en los institutos norteamericanos, los estudiantes se pueden beneficiar de las oportunidades para estudiar y experimentar las disciplinas meditativas y contemplativas.

ESTRATEGIAS PARA FAMILIARIZAR A LOS ESTUDIANTES CON LA NATURALEZA Y PRÁCTICA DE LA MEDITACIÓN

NECESIDAD DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN Y DE LA ENSEÑANZA

En primer lugar, es necesario desmitificar la meditación en el pensamiento de la sociedad estadounidense, para que la gente comprenda completamente lo que es la meditación y lo que puede o no puede hacer por ellos. Por una parte, la mayoría de los norteamericanos siguen viendo a la meditación como una especie rara de práctica occidental que es fundamentalmente pasiva, egocéntrica y sobrenatural. Por otra parte, hay quienes piensan en la meditación como una cura para todos los males o como un atajo hacia la iluminación y hacia la felicidad que permite a una persona brincar etapas completas del desarrollo. La verdad acerca de la meditación deberá ser investigada y estudiada en las universidades para que la sociedad estadounidense pueda comprender perfectamente su historia, variedad, uso adecuado y valor social. ¿Hasta qué punto es posible que la sociedad laica actual se beneficie de aquellas disciplinas contemplativas que han sido desarrolladas por hombres y mujeres enclaustrados en monasterios y conventos? ¿Qué aspectos de la práctica contemplativa deben comprenderse para promover la democracia moral, el desarrollo sustentable, la cooperación internacional y la paz?

LA MEDITACIÓN Y LA PSICOLOGÍA EVOLUTIVA

Es necesario trabajar más en las relaciones entre la psicología y la ciencia contemplativa. ¿Cómo se relaciona la idea occidental de las etapas del desarrollo con aquellas previstas por las psicologías y las filosofías contemplativas? ¿El entendimiento contemplativo del desarrollo espiritual modifica o expande la visión de la psicología occidental?, y si así fuera, ¿de qué manera? ¿Es posible construir una idea que se conforme de etapas de desarrollo humano universales que integre la ciencia occidental y la ciencia contemplativa?

Se requieren más investigaciones sobre los efectos que la meditación tiene en el crecimiento humano y en la salud mental dentro de cada una de las etapas en el ciclo de la vida. Por ejemplo, ¿Qué técnicas de meditación podrían beneficiar a los adolescentes? ¿Cuáles son los peligros y los riesgos a los que los estudiantes universitarios se exponen al practicar diferentes formas de meditación? Un estudio reciente ha advertido que una persona que no ha desarrollado el sentido del “Yo” no puede comprometerse en las disciplinas contemplativas, las cuales fueron diseñadas para ayudar al practicante a entender la realidad del “No-ser”, y que si la persona sigue estas disciplinas, podría traer consigo consecuencias patológicas (Véase Engler, 1986). Esta advertencia no debe ser tomada a la ligera. ¿En qué situaciones la psicoterapia es el método de sanación y crecimiento más apropiado que la meditación? ¿En qué situaciones la disciplina meditativa puede ser usada como complemento en la psicoterapia? ¿En qué situaciones una persona debería considerar las disciplinas meditativas para crecer y transformarse más que a la psicoterapia?

EL PAPEL DE LA RELIGIÓN Y LOS DEPARTAMENTOS DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES

Los departamentos de religión, psicología y sociología desempeñan un papel especial al llevar a cabo actividades de investigación y enseñanza sobre la historia, métodos e importancia social de la meditación y la oración contemplativa.

El interés estadounidense sobre la meditación en las últimas décadas se ha visto íntimamente relacionado al enorme interés en las religiones orientales, surgidas en la década de 1960 y 1970. La fascinación por estas religiones se vio impulsada por el afán en gran medida de experiencias transformadoras entre la nueva generación de jóvenes a los que el cristianismo y el judaísmo les parecieron demasiado centrados en la doctrina y la ley; y perdieron contacto con la verdad viviente. Tradiciones como el budismo, el hinduismo y el taoísmo parecen ofrecer a la sociedad estadounidense disciplinas espirituales en forma de prácticas meditativas que al parecer abren puertas a nuevas experiencias liberadoras y a la iluminación.

Antes de los años sesenta muy pocos estadounidenses habían practicado realmente la meditación, aunque el interés por las religiones orientales se desarrolló paulatinamente, en Chicago desde 1893, en el Parlamento de las Religiones del Mundo. Sin embargo, esto cambió durante los sesentas. Pequeños grupos en toda América, en su mayoría formados por jóvenes, comenzaron a entrenar con maestros provenientes de India, Japón, el Tíbet y otras partes de Asia. Muy pocos de esos maestros eran estadounidenses que habían viajado al extranjero para ser entrenados. Por primera vez, fue posible para el ciudadano norteamericano promedio recibir entrenamiento formal de diversas disciplinas meditativas orientales en los Estados Unidos. Entre los que se convirtieron a alguna religión oriental algunos hombres y mujeres escogieron una carrera académica. Como resultado, se ha generado un nuevo y extenso material literario sobre la práctica de la meditación en Asia.

La fascinación por la meditación oriental despertó interés en las tradiciones de la oración contemplativa, la meditación y en el misticismo del cristianismo y el judaísmo. Se han efectuado grandes esfuerzos por parte de estudiantes cristianos y judíos para poder recuperar las tradiciones perdidas de la práctica contemplativa; durante los últimos 25 años se ha trabajado mucho en este sentido. En la década de los sesenta era casi imposible para la población general encontrar un ministro, sacerdote o rabino que pudiera o quisiera instruir a la población en la práctica de la oración contemplativa. Ésta, cuando menos, fue una de mis experiencias cuando me gradué del Seminario Teológico Unido de Nueva York, y es una de las razones por las que me uní al Centro Zen de Philip Kaple en Rochester, Nueva York. Sin embargo, actualmente esta situación ha cambiado de una manera considerable. Los libros sobre la práctica contemplativa cristiana y judía son de fácil acceso, y si una persona quisiera instruirse en alguna de estas disciplinas espirituales, podría encontrar un maestro dentro de la comunidad cristiana o judía. La Asamblea de las Tradiciones Religiosas Orientales y Occidentales llevada a cabo a finales del siglo XX tuvo un gran impacto en el desarrollo de la vida espiritual norteamericana.

Como resultado de estos cambios, varios departamentos de religión ofrecen cursos que incluyen la exploración de distintos aspectos sobre la historia de la meditación y las disciplinas contemplativas. El estudio de la meditación se concentra a menudo dentro del marco de la psicología de la religión, que se especializa en el estudio de las experiencias religiosas y el misticismo. En los departamentos de psicología, los cuales son comúnmente denominados por una facultad profesional en psicología fisiológica, a diferencia del desarrollo de la personalidad, se le da poca o ninguna atención a la meditación. Los departamentos de psicología podrían hacer mucho más en este campo, incluyendo un estudio más serio de la psicología interpersonal y en la psicología de la religión. En general, las ciencias sociales han hecho muy poca investigación sobre la meditación y esto es algo que necesita promoverse.

LA PRÁCTICA DE LA MEDITACIÓN EN LOS CURSOS ACADÉMICOS

El debate sobre los cursos académicos y su relación con la meditación plantea una importante pregunta: ¿Debería permitírsele a un instructor del departamento de religión practicar con sus estudiantes algún tipo de meditación relacionada con una o varias tradiciones de estudio?

Varios profesores lo están llevando a cabo, por ejemplo, algunos aprovechan una clase para ir a un centro Zen o a un monasterio cristiano. Éste es un asunto delicado para una universidad o colegio secular por miedo a que el profesor de religión cruce la línea y se meta en el adoctrinamiento religioso o pretenda ser un gurú para los estudiantes. Sin embargo, mientras la persona que enseñe la práctica meditativa sea profesional y haya sido instruido para ello, que los ejercicios de meditación sean de carácter introductorio y el estudio académico substancial sea el centro del curso, probablemente sea aceptada la introducción a las prácticas de la meditación. Dichas prácticas deberían ser vistas apropiadamente por la simple razón de que es muy difícil entender y apreciar el carácter de alguna actividad que no se haya experimentado directamente.

¿Debería permitírsele a un instructor ofrecer un curso, cuyo principal objetivo sea instruir estudiantes en el arte y la práctica de alguna disciplina meditativa? ¿Deberían los estudiantes obtener créditos académicos al recibir un curso de formación en meditación en un centro fuera del campus? Por lo general, la respuesta a estas preguntas es “no” pero podría haber algunas excepciones. Por ejemplo, podría ser apropiado dar créditos académicos durante el periodo de formación en un centro de meditación, durante el periodo de invierno, o en un curso de educación externa al campo de la facultad, en el cual se requiera esfuerzo práctico. Si se otorgan créditos académicos por acudir a un centro de meditación debe solicitarse un documento oficial. Siguiendo el mismo criterio, la universidad puede elaborar un plan de estudios en el cual le permita a cada estudiante tomar algunos cursos para obtener créditos en la licenciatura que se enfoquen al aprendizaje práctico, siendo la meditación una opción. Desde luego, se debe establecer una herramienta de evaluación para poder evaluar las aptitudes psicológicas de los estudiantes durante los cursos.

La educación en las universidades estadounidenses comúnmente sufre de una deficiencia para conectar información y experiencia, teoría y práctica e ideas y soluciones a problemas reales. Mucho de lo que ocurre en el aula es abstracto y no se relaciona con la experiencia de vida de los estudiantes; por consiguiente, éstos no retienen información más allá del periodo de exámenes, ya que no se asimila ni se integra al conocimiento real del estudiante como para estimular el crecimiento y obtener sabiduría. Una posible solución sería encontrar métodos novedosos y originales para que los estudiantes pongan en práctica lo aprendido.

Se deben establecer reglas en caso de que exista la posibilidad de un abuso de autoridad y manejo de influencias al guiar a los estudiantes en la práctica, así como también identificar los tipos de meditación que sean apropiados para los estudiantes universitarios dentro del curso académico. La existencia de estas normas iría más allá de evitar problemas y de generar desconfianza y críticas. Éste podría ser un tema para una conferencia o puede ser el tema central en la Reunión Anual de la Academia Americana de Religión.

EL PAPEL DE LOS PROFESIONALES DE LA SALUD, ASESORES PSICOLÓGICOS Y CAPELLANES.

La meditación puede también ser presentada a los estudiantes a través de profesionales en el cuidado de la salud y asesores psicológicos dentro del campus, o bien, dentro del programa de actividades extracurriculares. Ya que la meditación es parte de la medicina preventiva y uno de los recursos para lidiar con el estrés y la ansiedad, lo normal sería que los centros de salud escolar proporcionaran información e incluso instruyeran en la meditación. Los capellanes en la universidad también están en condiciones de ofrecer o llevar a cabo talleres de meditación, pero muy pocos de ellos se han instruido en este campo, ya que no es una prioridad para los seminarios teológicos.

Otra propuesta sería que el departamento académico o la oficina parroquial establecieran un programa para invitar a conferencistas e instructores en el campo de la meditación. Dichos programas requerirían financiamiento especial que incluya gastos de viaje y el pago de honorarios de los visitantes. No obstante, se puede empezar un programa significativo aún con un presupuesto anual no muy alto, con participación de los estudiantes del programa, pero para que tenga éxito se necesita de un liderazgo sólido.

ORGANIZACIÓN Y LIDERAZGO EN LOS GRUPOS DE MEDITACIÓN

Por experiencia propia, a finales de los años setenta y principios de los años ochenta en la Universidad de Middlebury aprendí que si los estudiantes habían sido instruidos en talleres de meditación y pretendían continuar con la práctica, se requería del liderazgo de una facultad o personal comprometido y de un espacio apropiado. De vez en cuando impartía cursos básicos para la práctica del Zen en la universidad a los cuales asistían de 25 a 50 estudiantes. Para un principiante en la meditación, es particularmente mejor participar con un grupo para empezar. Después de cada taller más estudiantes querían unirse a nuestro grupo, pero encontrar el lugar adecuado era difícil. Las aulas de clase eran limitadas y no siempre estaban disponibles; acondicionar un aula implicaba mover el mobiliario escolar y acomodar cojines de meditación, cosa que no era para nada placentero, finalmente

acondicioné un sótano para el uso exclusivo del grupo de meditación. En su interior había cojines y el guardia del campus lo abría de 6:30 de la mañana a las 11:00 de la noche para impedir el abuso en la utilización de este espacio (lo cual ocurría en algunas ocasiones). Durante el tiempo que mantuve un horario fijo hubo una importante participación por parte de los alumnos quienes llegaban en tiempo y forma. Pero el grupo poco a poco se fue disolviendo a medida que mis responsabilidades administrativas aumentaron, hasta hacer imposible que las clases tuvieran una continuidad. Esta sala de meditación en Middlebury permaneció en funcionamiento durante 3 años.

En pocas palabras, si hubiera estudiantes que pretendieran aprender y practicar la meditación dentro del campus, más allá de talleres introductorios, se debería tomar en cuenta 3 factores: 1) que un profesor o miembro del staff con el entrenamiento apropiado, organizara y guiara al grupo, 2) un espacio permanente y exclusivo para la meditación, y 3) un horario fijo para el grupo. No es realista esperar que un miembro del personal de la facultad estará guiando al grupo de meditación de forma totalmente voluntaria y durante un tiempo indefinido. Es un compromiso demandante y a menudo requiere que se le dediquen horas extras por las tardes. Sería necesario algún tipo de compensación monetaria a cambio, a menos que esta persona, llámese capellán o consejero estudiantil, considerara esta tarea como parte de su trabajo. Lo ideal sería ofrecer a los estudiantes una variedad de disciplinas meditativas a escoger para la práctica de la meditación y un cuarto diseñado específicamente para los grupos que se interesen en tradiciones específicas. Esta área deberá estar disponible para el uso de los miembros de la facultad o universidad.

Tomando en cuenta estas necesidades, en 1982 propuse la creación de un centro interreligioso que incluyera un espacio y un director que desarrollara un programa adecuado en la Universidad Middlebury. La idea de este centro interreligioso se vio influida considerablemente por la Capilla de la Universidad Colgate. Alrededor de 20 profesores y miembros del personal de la universidad apoyaron esta propuesta pero nunca se implementó. Aunque los miembros del área administrativa no tenían experiencia alguna en la práctica de la meditación, no estaban convencidos sobre si los estudiantes darían un uso apropiado o no a las instalaciones de este centro, ya que la meditación no parecía ser una necesidad de primera instancia. Estaba también el problema de conseguir los fondos para construir, mantener y monitorear un centro de este tipo.

La Capilla es un centro de retiro sin denominación puesto a disposición para personas laicas que brinda la oportunidad de vivir una experiencia contemplativa; se encuentra en el campus de la Universidad Colgate y está abierta a estudiantes, profesores y personal, en general, de la universidad. Sin embargo, el personal de la capilla no se esfuerza lo suficiente para involucrar a los estudiantes y su alcance es mínimo. Se hace promoción a través del correo, pero no tiene un programa de talleres y ponencias establecido para los estudiantes. Sus instalaciones incluyen alojamiento nocturno y una amplia biblioteca, pero

fue diseñada para que los estudiantes emplearan las instalaciones y su tiempo de la forma en que mejor les convenga.

El rector, quien da clases de estudios budistas, alienta a los estudiantes a practicar la meditación budista como parte del curso académico, pero considera que durante los 4 años de su carrera sólo un tercio de los estudiantes de la Universidad Colgate visitan la capilla. Muy pocos profesores y personal académico usan sus instalaciones y debido a que los grupos no se promueven lo suficiente, los capellanes rara vez usan la capilla. La mayoría de las personas que la visitan son de fuera y no tienen relación alguna con la universidad. Esta capilla se fundó gracias a las donaciones por parte del Centro para el Estudio de las Religiones del Mundo, en la Escuela de Divinidad de Harvard. A diferencia de la capilla, el Centro Interreligioso propuesto por la Universidad Middlebury tiene como misión principal la difusión del campus y la participación de estudiantes, profesores y personal académico¹.

HORARIO Y ESPACIO PARA LA PRÁCTICA DE LA MEDITACIÓN PARA PROFESORES Y PERSONAL ACADÉMICO

Otra manera de promover la meditación en el campus de alguna universidad es que los profesores y el personal académico la practiquen, con el apoyo de la administración. Este apoyo podría implementar la política de permitir al personal académico tiempo para meditar durante los días de trabajo junto con la creación de uno o varios espacios dentro de las instalaciones donde trabajan. Pero esto ocurriría únicamente si la demanda fuera alta y si hubiera una mejoría en el trabajo y la moral.

En conclusión, la meditación podría mejorar la calidad de vida de aquellos que escogen practicarla bajo la guía de instructores competentes. Cuando se practica seriamente la meditación como una disciplina, puede dar una profundidad única a la convivencia ecológica y democrática; podría ayudar a la gente a sentirse libre y plena. Por sí sola, la meditación no conduce a la acción social y necesita ser compensada a través del interés hacia la relación de la reconstrucción social y personal. No obstante, en una sociedad ecologista-demócrata que afirma la vida en el mundo valorizando la acción social y la comunidad, la práctica de la meditación puede ayudar a desarrollar la dirección hacia la acción social contribuyendo a la integración de lo ético y lo político, lo espiritual y lo práctico. La universidad es uno de los lugares donde deben reflexionarse estos temas.

Nota:

¹ La información de la capilla refiere a la situación durante los ochentas y principios de los noventas.

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ANALYSIS

The translation of this article was based on the techniques implemented by Vinay and Darbelnet in their work on compared stylistic of French and English published in 1958. They described seven fundamental and basic techniques for translating and classified them in two groups: direct or literal translation techniques and oblique translation techniques. In the following analysis the seven techniques will be portrayed through examples applied in the translation of the article “Translation of the article: “Meditation, Social Change, and Undergraduate Education”, written by Steven C. Rockefeller. Each technique will be briefly described followed by their corresponding examples, and page number and paragraph will be cited for further reference.

Direct or Literal Translation Techniques.

BORROWING

Borrowing is a word taken directly from another language (Vinay and Darbelnet, 2008:84). E.g., the English word *editor* has been incorporated directly into other languages. The other example is the English word *geranium* has been incorporated directly into other languages. Vinay and Darbelnet in Venuti (2000:85) stated borrowing technique is focused on the translation itself. According to Grosjean (1982), the borrowing term is used in the lexical level of languages. It has been adapted morphologically and syntactically as well as phonologically to the recipient language. Borrowing technique occurs in a bilingual society. It is to show that the word is borrowed by one or more bilinguals. This is called borrowing in the lexical level. Examples:

Reference: Page 7 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...Chicago.	...Chicago.
...India	...India

...Asia	...Asia
...Tibet	...Tibet

Reference: Page 9 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...Rochester,	...Rochester,

Reference: Page 11 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...Harvard.	...Harvard.

Reference: Page 14 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...Vermont...	...Vermont...

Reference: Page 14 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
He is the <u>author</u> of <i>John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism</i> (<u>Columbia</u> , 1991) and the <u>co-editor</u> of two collections of essays: <i>The Christ and the Bodhisattva</i> ...	Es el <u>autor</u> de <i>John Dewey: La fe religiosa y el humanismo democrático</i> (<u>Columbia</u> , 1991) y el <u>co-editor</u> de dos colecciones de ensayos: <i>The Christ and the Bodhisattva</i> ...

CALQUE

According to Vinay and Dabelnet, a calque or loan translation is a phrase borrowed from another language and translated literally word-for-word. Calque is very similar to borrowing, however it takes a further step, translating the phrase or expression into the TL and it implies the use of literal translation to the equivalence of the term while conserving its syntax. Examples:

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
Meditation, Social change, and undergraduate Education.	Meditación, cambio social y educación superior.

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
... in contemporary <u>American Society</u> and even a force for progressive <u>social change</u>en la <u>sociedad estadounidense</u> contemporánea e incluso podría impulsar un <u>cambio social</u> progresivo.

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
...by different cultures and religions	...por diferentes culturas y religiones.

Reference: Page 5 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
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Undergraduate Education	educación superior
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Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...the most promising <u>social movements</u> in America...	...los <u>movimientos sociales</u> más prometedores...

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...psychological counselors...	...psicólogos terapeutas...

Reference: Page 13 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...Harvard Divinity School.	...Escuela de Divinidad de Harvard.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

In literal translation each word is translated from the source language into the target language one by one. It permits the exchange of meaning in concrete words without creating subjectivity. It translates the sentence as it is adapting its grammar to be adequate in the TL. Examples:

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
The article proposes that American educational institutions can benefit from a deeper appreciation of the contemplative dimension of life.	Este artículo sugiere que las instituciones estadounidenses pueden beneficiarse de una mejor apreciación de la vida desde una dimensión contemplativa.

Reference: Page 2 Paragraph 4

English:	Spanish:
The two ways can and should complement and reinforce each other.	Las dos maneras pueden y deben complementarse y reforzarse la una a la otra.

Reference: Page 6 Paragraph TITLE

English:	Spanish:
Strategies for acquainting students with <u>the nature and practice of meditation</u> .	Estrategias para familiarizar a los estudiantes con <u>la naturaleza y práctica de la meditación</u> .

Reference: Page 8 Paragraph TITLE

English:	Spanish:
The role of religion and social science departments.	El papel de la religión y los departamentos de ciencias sociales.

Oblique Translation Techniques.

Transposition

It means shifting the word class without altering the meaning in order to fit the grammatical structure. In other terms, the translator takes the word in the source language and changes its word class when converting it into the target language. This technique can be observed in translations where, for instance, an adverb or a gerund is converted into a verb. Examples:

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...can be a positive influence in contemporary American society and <u>even a force</u> for progressive social change.	... podría influir positivamente en la sociedad estadounidense contemporánea e incluso <u>podría impulsar</u> un cambio social progresivo.

Reference: Page 1 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
It is the purpose of this article to explore ways in which the American undergraduate college can provide students with opportunities for understanding and experiencing the meditative and contemplative disciplines developed by different cultures and religions.	El propósito de este artículo es analizar la manera en la que la educación universitaria estadounidense puede brindar oportunidades a los estudiantes para comprender y experimentar las disciplinas meditativas y contemplativas desarrolladas por diferentes culturas y religiones.

English:	Spanish:
<p>...the most promising social movements in America today is to view them as part of a threefold development that involves (1) a deepening commitment to democratic social values, including human rights and peace, (2) an ecological reconstruction of how people think and live, and (3) a fresh spiritual awakening to the immanence of the sacred in the world...</p>	<p>...los movimientos sociales más prometedores hoy en día en América es verlos como parte de un triple desarrollo que implica 1) un compromiso hacia los valores sociales democráticos, incluyendo los derechos humanos y la paz, 2) una restauración ecológica del estilo de vida de las personas y 3) un reciente despertar espiritual hacia la esencia de lo sagrado en el mundo.</p>

English:	Spanish:
<p>First of all, meditation needs to be demythologized in the American mind so that people have a rational understanding of what it is and what it can and cannot do.</p>	<p>En primer lugar, es necesario desmitificar la meditación en la mente de la sociedad estadounidense, para que la gente comprenda completamente lo que es la meditación y lo que puede o no puede hacer por ellos.</p>

Reference: Page 8 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
Religion, psychology, and sociology departments <u>have</u> a special role to play in <u>pursuing research</u> ...	Los departamentos de religión, psicología y sociología <u>desempeñan</u> un papel especial <u>al llevar a cabo actividades de investigación</u> ...

Reference: Page 3 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
...for which psychotherapy <u>has been developed</u>para lo cual la psicoterapia <u>se ha desarrollado</u> .

Reference: Page 7 Paragraph 4

English:	Spanish:
...in Asian religions...	...en las religiones orientales...

Reference: Page 3 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...meditation and contemplative prayer <u>are practiced</u> as...	...la meditación y la oración contemplativa <u>se practican</u> como...

Reference: Page 6 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...is “crused out”...	...fuese “aplastada”...

Reference: Page 7 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
Efforts <u>have been made</u> ...	<u>Se han efectuado</u> ...

MODULATION

Modulation is defined by Gérard Hardin and Gynthia Picot (1990) as "a change in point of view that allows us to express the same phenomenon in a different way." Modulation as a procedure of translation occurs when there is a change of perspective accompanied with a lexical change in the TL. Yet, this procedure should better be avoided unless it is necessary for the naturalness of the translation. Examples:

Reference: Page 12 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
In summary, if students are to learn and practice meditation on campus...	En pocas palabras, si hubiera estudiantes que pretendan aprender y practicar la meditación dentro del campus...

Reference: Page 12 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
With these needs in mind...	Tomando en cuenta estas necesidades...

Reference: Page 3 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
The answer is a qualified yes.	La respuesta podría ser un sí.

Reference: Page 3 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
<u>First of all</u> , it is important...	<u>Primero que nada</u> es importante...

Reference: Page 11 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
Students can also be introduced to meditation by health care professionals and psychological counselors on campus or in and through a college program of extracurricular activities.	La meditación puede también ser presentada a los estudiantes a través de profesionales en el cuidado de la salud y asesores psicológicos dentro del campus o bien, dentro del programa de actividades extracurriculares.

Reference: Page 13 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
...it can add a unique depth to democratic and ecological living. <u>It can help people become free and fully human.</u>	...puede añadir una profundidad única a la convivencia ecológica y democrática; <u>podría ayudar a la gente a sentirse libre y plena.</u>

EQUIVALENCE

Equivalence derives from semantics and allows the translator to find the correspondence of the source language in the target language. Although the lexical structure is altered and different words are used the meaning is conveyed. Equivalence fulfills the functionality of translation when it is impossible to translate word for word. It permits the translator to close the gaps that may lead to confusion and establishes the word's equal value in the target language. Examples:

Reference: Page 2 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
... to which reference has been made,...	... ya antes mencionado,

Reference: Page 3 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
... Westeners...	... occidentales...

Reference: Page 4 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
...I-thou...	...Tú-Yo.

Reference: Page 12 Paragraph 4

English:	Spanish:
Chapel House is...	La Capilla es...

Reference: Page 14 Paragraph 4

English:	Spanish:
... of the Asian Cultural Council.	...del Consejo Cultural Asiático.

ADAPTATION

In this technique society and culture are taken into account, since language is influenced by both society and culture, and there is a tendency to express culture, ways of thinking and acting through language and since every culture has its own way of thinking some actions are different, which creates a vacuum in language due to cultural aspects. Adaptation permits the translator to alter the language in order to convey the meaning. The phrase is expressed in a totally different way but the meaning is shared in both cultures by creating the equivalence of the cultural aspect. Examples:

Reference: Page 2 Paragraph 1

English:	Spanish:
The efforts to renew and strengthen American democracy include the struggle to achieve gender equality and the protection of minority rights...	Entre los esfuerzos para renovar y fortalecer la democracia estadounidense se encuentran la lucha para lograr la igualdad de género y la protección a los derechos de las minorías...

Reference: Page 2 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
... respect and care for the whole community of life.	...cuida y respeta todas las formas de vida.

Reference: Page 2 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
This means restoration of ecosystems, protection of biodiversity, a new eco-economics, sustainable ways of living, and subordinating the principle of national sovereignty to a concern for the global common good.	Esto significa restaurar los ecosistemas, proteger la biodiversidad, desarrollar una nueva eco-economía, tener un estilo de vida sustentable y acatar el principio de soberanía nacional de preocuparse por el bien común de la humanidad.

Reference: Page 4 Paragraph 3

English:	Spanish:
Higher education	Educación superior.

Reference: Page 5 Paragraph 2

English:	Spanish:
...critical reflection is not to be questioned.	...la reflexión crítica no debe ponerse en tela de juicio.

CONCLUSIONS

Translation has existed for a long time. Its origin is not specifically known. Soler Pardo (2013) explains the beginning of translation through the Babel myth in the Bible, which describes the existence of many languages for humankind. That means that translation has been present since ancient times, but languages still keep changing and translation has to be adapted according to the society and culture in order to communicate and skip the language barrier to interact with other individuals.

From my point of view, becoming a translator takes a lot of practice and skills. Even though it is not easy, translation is a field that offers many opportunities to learn new things and to work with different kind of people. Basically, you become the bridge that people need to grow, learn, and communicate with one another. The purpose of language is communication and if it fails, the language is useless. Then, it is necessary to be familiar with different cultures, fields and their history as well as the beliefs of the people you are translating for.

However, when you are translating some difficulties might be encountered because languages are different from one another. Therefore it is important to find the right words for something to be clearly expressed without changing the author's original idea. This is the reason why it is needed to know all the cultural and social aspects involved in the target language thus the words can be contextualized to the idea.

The purpose of this translation is to provide an informational tool for people who are interested in introducing meditation as a college workshop or even as a part of the degree program curricula. It was a challenge since I had to learn about the topic, the field and related areas. As I mentioned

before, the principal objective was to translate the article without altering the author's original idea, which was a big challenge.

The main idea expressed by the author of this article is that meditation techniques sometimes can be perceived as individual practices. Yet, they can be undertaken to promote positive and personal development that could lead to a social change. This article may be useful for people who are interested in introducing meditation to students inside the classroom in a college institution, as well as professionals and people interested in the topic for appreciating life and better understanding education and knowledge. It might help people to be successful, to understand topics in a relaxing atmosphere. Another purpose for the translation of this article is to share the information with other Spanish-speaking people or even countries who are interested in the topic, in order for them to know all the benefits that meditation practices provide when they are introduced by professionals in the area.

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Meditation, Social Change, and Undergraduate Education

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This article argues that meditation, guided by a competent teacher can be a positive influence in contemporary American society and even a force for progressive social change. A number of critical issues requiring further study are identified, including the need for a better understanding of meditation from the perspective of developmental psychology and of the relation between meditation and psychotherapy. The article proposes that American educational institutions can benefit from a deeper appreciation of the contemplative dimension of life. Special attention is given to how the American undergraduate college can provide students with opportunities to learn about and experience various forms of meditation. The role of teachers, chaplains, psychological counselors, and health care professionals in introducing meditation to students is discussed.

Over the past three decades, there has been a rediscovery in Western culture of the value of meditation and contemplative prayer. It is the purpose of this article to explore ways in which the American undergraduate college can provide students with opportunities for understanding and experiencing the meditative and contemplative disciplines developed by different cultures and religions. Because this inquiry is prompted in large measure by the belief that meditation can be a positive social influence and even a force for progressive social change, it is useful at the outset to present briefly an understanding of the nature of constructive change.

DIRECTIONS FOR CREATIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

One way to characterize the most promising social movements in America today is to view them as part of a threefold development that involves (1) a deepening commitment to democratic social values, including human rights and peace, (2) an ecological reconstruction of how people think and live, and (3) a fresh spiritual awakening to the immanence of the sacred in the world.

The efforts to renew and strengthen American democracy include the struggle to achieve gender equality and the protection of minority rights, the promotion of tolerance and celebration of diversity, the empowerment of people to participate in the making of decisions that impact them, the spread of industrial democracy, a new emphasis on the importance of community life and I-thou relationship, and promotion of international cooperation in pursuit of poverty eradication, human rights, economic opportunity, environmental conservation, and peace.

The ecological revolution is founded on new scientific discoveries in astronomy, biology, cosmology, ecology, physics, and psychology. It emphasizes holistic, global, and long-term thinking, and it is guided by a new moral awareness expressed in the imperative: respect and care for the whole community of life. This means restoration of ecosystems, protection of biodiversity, a new eco-economics, sustainable ways of living, and subordinating the principle of national sovereignty to a concern for the global common good.

The contemporary spiritual awakening, to which reference has been made, involves a new sense of wonder in the face of the mystery and beauty of the natural world and a rediscovery of the sacred. It entails a realization of the sacredness of one's own life and of all life. It involves an integration of the sacred and the secular, spiritual life and everyday life. It recognizes that ultimate meaning is found in community and by developing a compassionate, democratic, and ecological self that is inclusive, expanding to embrace all life.

The values associated with democracy, ecology, and spirituality can be understood as interrelated dimensions of a new, emerging social consciousness. The concern is to join and integrate the exercise of power and search for material progress on the one hand with the quest for ethical and spiritual wisdom on the other. The general objectives are to build community in the midst of diversity, heal the Earth, and improve the quality of life for all.

There are two fundamental ways to advance social change. One involves reconstructing institutions and the social environment that shape the way people think, behave, and interact. The other involves focusing on individuals and working to transform their awareness, attitudes, and values. Both are necessary. The two ways can and should complement and reinforce each other.

MEDITATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Can meditation produce transformations of consciousness in individuals consistent with the changes in values, social habits, and institutions inspired by creative democracy and the environmental movement? Can meditation

help people realize the democratic-ecological self? Can meditation expand and deepen ethical concern and awareness of the sacred? Could meditation add a unique quality and depth to democratic-ecological living? In short, should Americans include meditation and contemplative disciplines in their vision of the way to individual freedom, authentic community, and fulfillment? The answer is a qualified yes.

First of all, it is important to keep in mind that the American experiment with meditation is just beginning, and there is much that Americans have yet to learn about the nature of meditation and its potential as an instrument of growth and transformation in a democratic-ecological context. The experience of Americans to date indicates that it is not a substitute for the learning and psychosocial development that comes in and through living and working with others. It is not a substitute for searching rational inquiry and critical reflection. As a general rule, it is a mistake to think that it can or should be used with Westerners to address the problems in personality development for which psychotherapy has been developed. However, there is much evidence that suggests that under the guidance of well-trained, experienced, and responsible teachers, meditation can be of benefit to many people when they are ready for it, helping them to grow in unique ways and to promote creative social change.

There are, of course, many different meditative and contemplative disciplines, and the kind of practice that is appropriate for any one individual will depend on a person's stage in the human life cycle and on his or her special needs and abilities. The most basic forms of meditation involve techniques of concentration that bring calm and clarity to the body-mind. Many of the more advanced forms are designed to help a person to move beyond a narrow atomistic sense of self and to develop a sense of identification with others and belonging to the larger community of being. Moreover, in a number of religions, meditation and contemplative prayer are practiced as a transformative spiritual discipline that can ready a person for the experience of enlightenment or union with God.

It has been experimentally documented that certain forms of meditation may improve physical health. There are meditation practices that can be used to improve athletic and artistic performance. Contemplative disciplines may help some people become less frenetic and more centered, more aware of the goodness and beauty of their own being, more appreciative of the intrinsic value of other beings, more responsive to suffering, more attentive and mindful, and more open to I-thou relationship and meaning. When meditation effects a transcendence of ego-centered awareness, it deepens consciousness of the sacred.

The full significance of meditation is missed if it is viewed just as a technique—that is, solely as a means to ends beyond itself, such as health, social change, or even enlightenment. Contemplation is a form of human activity

that possesses its own inherent value, and it may involve a beautiful experience that is a fulfillment complete in itself. In this sense, it is an end in itself. If American society were to understand and accept this notion, this alone would cause a beneficial change of attitude regarding the place of contemplation in culture. Furthermore, the full benefits of meditation only follow upon wholehearted engagement with the discipline, and this requires that the practitioner view it as an end and not just as a means.

There is also very limited value in thinking about meditation as an isolated practice. The larger intellectual, moral, and spiritual environment in which meditation is done influences the way people understand and approach it and the effect that it has. In some cultures, for example, meditation has been used to reinforce and implement philosophies of quietism or of world denial and extreme asceticism. However, there are also many examples of meditation having been associated with a world-affirming ethical mysticism and even revolutionary social change. In addition, the physical environment in which meditation is practiced is important, especially for beginners, because it may be more or less conducive to concentration and because it may also encourage certain values and attitudes. In American culture, the challenge is to set the practice of meditation in the context of a worldview that affirms a healthy balance between inwardness and activism, concentration and going forth into relationship, and quiet contemplation and social responsibility.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND MEDITATION

The modern secular university is centrally concerned with scientific research and the arts of critical rational reflection. The university trains the teachers who form the faculties of undergraduate institutions, and the influence of the university is the dominant force shaping undergraduate education. The central mission of the undergraduate college is to train and nurture the growth of the human mind, especially the powers of critical reason.

There are, of course, many dimensions to a liberal arts education. There are courses that emphasize the human imagination, explore the art of appreciation, and nurture creative self-expression through the arts. Undergraduate schools have their athletic programs and a great variety of extracurricular activities that evolve to reflect changing student interests. There are numerous opportunities for off-campus and overseas study. Up through the Second World War, most colleges required attendance at chapel, reflecting a concern to shape the moral and religious sensibilities of students, but required chapel has been abandoned in the vast majority of colleges. Today, moral education occurs primarily in and through

enforcement on campus of codes of conduct that emphasize respect for persons and diversity and not cheating on exams and papers. Recognizing the many pressures on undergraduates and their emotional needs, most schools have introduced opportunities for short-term psychological counseling.

Even though are these diverse offerings, which reflect at least some concern with the whole person and with the diversity of human interests and talents, the strong emphasis remains on critical reason, and especially on methods of knowledge that have a practical bearing. Critical reason is one of the finest flowers of Western civilization. Its cultivation and exercise are essential to the development of independence of mind and a healthy democratic society, and to the practice of caring for the Earth. That undergraduate education should emphasize the experimental method of knowledge and the arts of critical reflection is not to be questioned.

A question can be raised about whether the education of the undergraduate college in America today fails to put science and discursive reason in proper perspective and whether it tends to encourage a character orientation that is too head-centered (as distinct from heart-centered), more interested in information than appreciation, more concerned about the knowledge that is power than wisdom and ethical values, more oriented toward I-it than I-thou, more skilled at striving for future ends than living a fulfilling life in the present. It is a question of balance.

This is a complex issue for which there is no simple answer, and the university and college by themselves cannot solve this problem. However, a fresh appreciation for contemplative experience may be one element in a larger strategy for dealing with the issue. Two hundred years ago, Friedrich Schleiermacher, the founder of the modern liberal Christian tradition, leveled a criticism that addresses this question. He noted that every person is born with a capacity to experience directly the mystery, wonder, and beauty of the world, which is essential to human well-being, and a sense of the joy and meaning of life. However, he lamented that this capacity is "crushed out" of children in the course of their education by the modern "rage for calculating and explaining" under the leadership of "the discreet and practical men" who dominate society. "In everything there must be design and aim; something has always to be performed, and if the spirit can no more serve, the body must be exercised. Work and play, but no quiet, submissive contemplation," wrote Schleiermacher (1958, 124-30).

In general, American schools at all levels reflect the bias that Schleiermacher criticizes. In the early grades, the best way to address this imbalance is a new emphasis on the arts, and a concern on the part of teachers to respect and nurture the sense of wonder in children as essential to their well-being. In the American college, along with strengthened programs in the arts and related fields, students can benefit from greater opportunities to study and experience the meditative and contemplative disciplines.

STRATEGIES FOR ACQUAINTING STUDENTS WITH THE NATURE AND PRACTICE OF MEDITATION

NEED FOR RESEARCH AND TEACHING

First of all, meditation needs to be demythologized in the American mind so that people have a rational understanding of what it is and what it can and cannot do. On the one hand, the majority of Americans still view meditation suspiciously as something of a weird Eastern practice that is essentially passive, self-centered, and otherworldly. On the other hand, there are those who think of it as a cure-all or as a shortcut to enlightenment and bliss that enables a person to leapfrog whole developmental stages. The truth about meditation should be carefully researched and studied in the university and college so that Americans can develop an informed understanding of its history, varied nature, proper uses, and social value. To what extent is it possible for contemporary laypeople to take advantage of the contemplative disciplines that have been developed by men and women living cloistered lives in monasteries and nunneries? How are the effects of contemplative practice to be understood in relation to the transformations of consciousness essential to promoting moral democracy, sustainable development, international cooperation, and peace?

MEDITATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

More work is needed on the relations between psychology and contemplative science. How is the Western idea of developmental stages related to the developmental stages envisioned by contemplative psychologies and philosophies? Does the contemplative understanding of spiritual development alter or expand the vision of Western psychology, and, if so, how? Is it possible to construct an idea of universal human developmental stages that integrates Western science and contemplative science?

New research is needed on the effects of meditation on human growth and mental illness at each stage in the life cycle. For example, what forms of meditation may be helpful to adolescents? What risks and dangers are involved when college-aged students engage in various forms of meditation? A recent study has warned that a person who has failed to develop a strong sense of self is not fit to engage in contemplative disciplines designed to help the practitioner realize the truth of no-self, and that if such a person pursues these disciplines, there is a risk of pathological consequences (see Engler, 1986). This caution should be taken very seriously. In what situations is psychotherapy rather than meditation the most appropriate method of healing and growth? In what situations can a meditative discipline be used to complement psychotherapy? In what situations should a person

turn to meditative disciplines rather than psychotherapy for growth and transformation?

THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENTS

Religion, psychology, and sociology departments have a special role to play in pursuing research and teaching regarding the history, methods, and social significance of meditation and contemplative prayer.

The American interest in meditation in recent decades has been closely related to the explosion of interest in Asian religions that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. This fascination with Asian religions was to a large degree fueled by a hunger for transformative experience among a new generation of young people who found traditional forms of Christianity and Judaism too focused on doctrine and law, and out of touch with the living truth. Traditions like Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism seemed to offer Americans spiritual disciplines in the form of meditative practices that could open the door to liberating experiences and enlightenment.

Prior to the 1960s, very few Americans had ever actually practiced meditation even though an interest in Asian religions had been slowly developing since the 1893 Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago. However, during the 1960s, this changed. All over America, small groups, largely made up of young people, began training with teachers from India, Japan, Tibet, and other parts of Asia. A few of these teachers were Americans who had gone overseas to be trained. For the first time, it was possible for an average American to receive formal training in a variety of Eastern meditative disciplines in the United States. Among those who turned East were a number of men and women who chose academic careers. As a result of all these factors, a vast new literature on meditation practice in Asia has been generated.

The fascination with Eastern meditation stirred fresh interest in traditions of contemplative prayer, meditation, and mysticism in Christianity and Judaism. Efforts have been made by Christian and Jewish scholars to retrieve lost traditions of contemplative practice. Over the last 25 years, much work has been done in this field. In the 1960s, it was almost impossible for a layperson to find a minister, priest, or rabbi who could or would instruct him or her in contemplative prayer. This, at least, was my experience as a graduate student at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and it is one reason why I joined Philip Kapleau's Zen Center in Rochester, New York. Today, however, the situation has changed considerably. Books on Christian and Jewish contemplative practice are readily available, and if a person seeks instruction in this spiritual discipline, he or she can find a teacher within the Christian or Jewish community. The meeting of Eastern and Western religious traditions that occurred toward the end of the 20th

century marks a major moment in the development of American spiritual life.

As a result of these developments, most religion departments offer courses that include some exploration of various aspects of the history of meditation and contemplative disciplines. The most concentrated study of meditation often goes on within the framework of the psychology of religion, which has been especially concerned with the study of religious experience and mysticism. In psychology departments, which are commonly dominated by faculty trained in physiological psychology as distinct from personality development, there is often little, if any, attention given to meditation. Psychology departments could do much more in this field, including a more serious study of transpersonal psychology and psychology of religion. In general, the social sciences have done little research on meditation, and this needs to be encouraged.

THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION IN ACADEMIC COURSES

The discussion of academic coursework related to meditation raises an important question. Should a religion department instructor in an academic course be permitted or even encouraged to offer students opportunities to practice some form of meditation related to a tradition or traditions under study?

A number of professors are doing this today, some by taking a class to visit a Zen center or Christian monastery, for example. This is a delicate issue in a secular university or college, for the fear is always there that a religion department professor may cross the line and get into religious indoctrination or begin to play the role of a guru with students. However, as long as that is not the case and as long as the person teaching a meditative practice has the training to do so, the exercises in meditation are introductory in nature, and substantial academic study forms the core of the course, such practical introductions to meditation will probably be accepted. They should be viewed as quite appropriate for the simple reason that it is very difficult to understand and appreciate the nature of an activity that one has never directly experienced.

Should an instructor be permitted to offer a course, the chief objective of which is to train students in the art and practice of some meditative discipline? Should students get academic credit for undergoing actual training in meditation at a meditation center outside the college? As a general rule, the answer to these two questions should be no, but some exceptions to this rule could be made. For example, it might be appropriate to give course credit for a period of training at a meditation center in the case of a college that has a one-month Winter Term (4-1-4 semester schedule) designed in part to permit off-campus learning in a variety of practical endeavors. If

academic credit is to be awarded for a stay at a meditation center, some appropriate written critical reflection on the experience should be required. Along the same lines, a college might adopt a curriculum in which each student is permitted to take a few courses for credit toward the bachelor of arts degree that are to be centered on practical learning, with meditation practice as one of many options. A mechanism for evaluating the psychological fitness of students for such courses would, of course, have to be established.

Education in American colleges commonly suffers from a failure to connect information and experience, theory and practice, and ideas and solutions to real problems. Much that goes on in the classroom is abstract and unrelated to the living experience of the students. Consequently, much of it is not retained beyond the examination period. It is never digested and integrated into a student's real understanding so as to produce growth and wisdom. One remedy to this problem is to find new imaginative ways for students to learn by doing.

Because there are opportunities for abuse of authority and influence in the case of leading students in the practice of meditation, guidelines for this kind of situation should be developed, including identification of the kinds of meditation that are appropriate for use with undergraduates in an academic course. The existence of such guidelines would go far in avoiding problems and in diffusing apprehension and criticism. This could be the subject for a conference, or it could be made the focus of a session at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion.

THE ROLE OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS, PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELORS, AND CHAPLAINS

Students can also be introduced to meditation by health care professionals and psychological counselors on campus or in and through a college program of extracurricular activities. As the medical and counseling professions integrate meditation into their understanding of preventive medicine and resources to deal with stress and anxiety, it will become natural for college health centers to provide information and even instruction in meditation. College chaplains are also in a position to offer and lead workshops on meditation, but few of them are trained in this field, which is of little interest to most theological seminaries.

Another approach involves an academic department or a chaplain's office establishing a program of visiting speakers and teachers in the field of meditation. Such programs require special funding, including travel expenses and an honorarium for visitors. However, even with an annual budget of a few thousand dollars, a meaningful program can be started.

Strong on-campus leadership is essential if the program is to be successful in involving students.

ORGANIZING AND LEADING ON-CAMPUS MEDITATION GROUPS

My own experience in the late 1970s and early 1980s at Middlebury College taught me that if students who have been introduced to meditation at a workshop are to continue to practice, it requires the leadership of a committed faculty or staff member and an appropriate space. I occasionally offered workshops in basic Zen meditation at the college, and 25 to 50 interested students would attend. Particularly for a beginner, it is very helpful to have a group to sit with. After each workshop, some would want to join such a group. Finding an appropriate space is difficult. Student activity space is always limited, and the competition for it is often intense. Setting up a large public room by moving aside furniture and bringing in cushions for each meditation session is not a very satisfactory arrangement. I finally secured a basement room in a dormitory for the exclusive use of the meditation group. It was set up with cushions and opened by campus security every morning at 6:30 and locked at 11 p.m. to discourage abuse of the space (which occurred on a few occasions). As long as I sat on a regular schedule with the students, participation remained strong, and students would sit on their own from time to time. When my administrative duties at the college made it impossible for me to continue this involvement, the group gradually disbanded. The meditation room at Middlebury lasted for three years.

In summary, if students are to learn and practice meditation on campus beyond introductory workshops, the three essentials are (1) a faculty or staff person with appropriate training who will organize and lead a group; (2) a space that is permanently committed to this purpose; and (3) a regular schedule for group practice. It is not realistic to expect that a faculty or staff person will continue to lead a student meditation group on a purely voluntary basis indefinitely. It is a demanding responsibility and often requires the commitment of evening hours. Some compensation is necessary unless a staff person, such as a college chaplain or a student counselor, understands it to be part of his or her job description. Ideally, students would be offered a variety of appropriate introductory meditative disciplines to choose from, and a college meditation room would be designed so that it can be used by groups pursuing different traditions. Such a space should also be open for faculty and staff use.

With these needs in mind, I proposed to Middlebury College in 1982 creation of an interfaith center that would include a permanent meditation space and a director who would develop an appropriate program. The idea for this Interfaith Center was strongly influenced by Chapel House at

Colgate University. The proposal was supported by about 20 faculty and staff, but it was never implemented. The college administration was not convinced that the facility would be well used by students, and meditation did not seem an important need to the administration, which had had no experience with it. There was also the problem of raising the money to build, maintain, and staff an interfaith center.

Chapel House is a nondenominational retreat center established to make available to laypeople an opportunity for contemplative experience. It sits on the edge of the Colgate University campus and is open to students, faculty, and staff. However, Chapel House does not make a major effort to involve students. Its outreach is minimal. It distributes a mailing to entering students, but it does not have a regular program of workshops and lectures for students. The facility, which includes some overnight accommodations and an extensive library, is set up primarily for use by individuals who are expected to decide for themselves how they wish to use their time at the House.

The Director estimates that about one-third of Colgate students visit Chapel House during their four years. The Director, who teaches Buddhist Studies, does bring his college students to the House to do Buddhist meditation as part of their coursework. Very few faculty and staff use the facility. Because group discussions and meetings are not encouraged, the College chaplains seldom use the House. The majority of visitors to Chapel House are from off-campus and have no connection to the University. The House was founded through the generosity of the same donor who established the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. In contrast to Chapel House, the Interfaith Center proposed for Middlebury College would have as its central mission campus outreach and involvement of students, faculty, and staff.¹

MEDITATION TIME AND SPACE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

Another way that meditation can be introduced on the college campus is by faculty and staff practicing it with administration support. This support could involve a policy of allowing staff time for meditation during the work day and creation of a space or spaces for it in buildings where people are working. A college administration would only do this if convinced of a real demand and that job performance and morale would be enhanced.

In conclusion, meditation can improve the quality of life of those who choose to practice it under the guidance of competent teachers. When pursued seriously as a discipline, it can add a unique depth to democratic and ecological living. It can help people become free and fully human. By itself, meditation does not impel human beings to social action, and it needs to be counterbalanced by a concern with social reconstruction and personal

relationship. However, in a democratic-ecological society that affirms life in the world and values social action and community, the practice of meditation can help to shape the direction of social action, contributing to an integration of the ethical and the political, the spiritual and the practical. The undergraduate college is one place where these issues should be thoughtfully explored.

Note

- 1 The information on Chapel House reflects the situation in the 1980s and early 1990s.

References

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