



Meditation a therapy between tradition and innovation

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Abstract:

Meditation practice is an asian traditional technique and its origins are lost in the midst of time. The oldest written documents are from the legendary Patanjali who lived in 500 BC in India or from Mawangdhui archaeological site (200 BC) in China. The oldest origins of oral tradition can be found around 2000 BC in the indian culture. Probably in the Indus dravidian civilisation or in the legendary Kumari Kanda kingdom of the Tamil Nadu culture or in the great classic of Indian literature, the Mahabaratha.

During the first millennium AC, meditation was developed in India in three religions: Vedism, Jainism and Buddhism. In China it was developed by the masters of the Taoist tradition.

In the second millennium AC, meditation was practiced in India by both Hinduist (Vedism), Jainism and Muslim traditions (Sikhism and soufism). During this period, the Buddhist religion spread in all Asia, China, Japan, Tibet, Viet-Nam, Korea... And mixed Indian meditation technics with concepts originating in local religions and traditions (Bonpo, Shinto, Taoism...).

During the second millennium AC, number of travellers from Europe discovered meditation practice in Asia. But it was something marginal reserved for a selected group of people. Meditation was considered as an art for the development of wellness and performance of competitive people, managers, artists, sport champions...

In the early eighties scientifics began researches on “mantra meditation” and “mindfulness meditation”. Herbert Benson of Harvard University (USA) lead the first research on medical effects and therapeutic applications of mantra meditation. Jon Kabat Zinn (USA) realised the first clinical trials on mindfulness meditation, applied to stress or other medical concerns. Segal, Williams and



Teasdale (UK) did clinical trials on the effects of mindfulness meditation in the prevention of depression. In 2019, a strong metaanalysis of Goldberg showed that meditation is a part of evidence based medicine which has proved its effects on four medical indications which are: depression, pain management, addictions and tabagism. A lot of other studies also showed interesting effects of mindfulness meditation on many other medical indications.

During the two first decades of the second millennium, neurosciences progressed very quickly. Researchers worked a lot on the effects of long term meditation practice. They proved some important changes and developments of grey and white matter in the brain. Nevertheless, these changes were not specific of meditation and remained close to other mind training programs one's.

Biography:

Jean Sixou MD PhD, psychiatrist, medical manager (head of the adult psychiatry pôle in his hospital), behavior cognitive therapist, MBCT instructor, founder of the “Diplôme d’Université Mindfulness” in Paris Sud University. Practice meditation since he is 15 years old. Master degree in medical management of EHESP (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Santé Publique)

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2. Sixou, Jean. (2019). Le projet Mindfulness à l’EPS Barthélemy Durand (91), une expérience innovante.

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