

Philosopher in Meditation by Rembrandt

## בריאן סטוק

פרופסור להיסטוריה ולספרות השוואתית  
חוקר בכיר, ויקטוריה קולג', אוניברסיטת טורונטו, קנדה

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Lecture | הרצאה

# TOWARDS A SECULAR SPIRITUALITY: MEDITATION AND THE HUMANITIES

In recent years meditation has become an important technique in the field of mind-body medicine. Experimental research has shown that certain pathological conditions (e.g., high blood pressure) can be effectively treated by means of meditation, or by a combination of meditation and medication. These techniques have generally drawn on eastern traditions of meditation, principally those in Buddhism and Hinduism. In this lecture I discuss Western thinking in this area, specifically in medicine, literature, and philosophy, in an attempt to explain why meditative therapies did and did not take hold in late antiquity, the middle ages, and the early modern period. I argue that there are two principal reasons for the weak response of Western society to the challenge of meditative healing techniques. One of these can be traced to the rationalist and empirical traditions of Greek and Roman medicine; the other has to do with a complex interdependence between meditation and reading practices in the period before the age of the printed book.

The Lecture will be held on Monday,  
11 April 2016, at 12:00,  
Room 496, Gilman Building,  
Tel Aviv University, Ramat-Aviv

ההרצאה תתקיים ביום שני,  
11 באפריל 2016, בשעה 12:00,  
חדר 496, בניין גילמן,  
אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, רמת-אביב