

Embodied Unity of Body and Mind: A Study of Dynamic Meditation Practices in Tibetan Buddhism with a Focus on "Running Meditation" (Lung-gom-pa)

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Abstract: This essay examines the unique dynamic meditation practice of running meditation (Lung-gom-pa) in Tibetan Buddhism. Drawing on historical records and contemporary interpretations, this essay analyzes the essence of this meditative practice and how Lung-gom-pa enables people to achieve a unity of body and mind while running at high speeds without fatigue, allowing them to continuously progress toward their spiritual goals. This study emphasizes the unity of body and mind achieved by Lung-gom-pa practitioners during their running, and also provides new insights and inspiration for contemporary meditation practices.

Keywords: Lung-gom-pa, running meditation, dynamic meditation

1. Introduction

Many current meditation practices focus on static, immobile methods, such as Samatha, Vipassana, Dzogchen, and Mahamudra (Thepyanmongkol, 2012). These methods are not dynamic. In contrast, Tibetan Buddhism prioritizes meditation methods over static ones, focusing instead on whether they can substantively bring spiritual enlightenment and transcendence, achieving a unity of body and mind. Therefore, its meditation methods emphasize combining transcendental thought with regular physical movement. Lung-gom-pa ("running meditation") is a non-static, running meditation practice in Tibetan Buddhism that offers an important example of redefining meditation.

The term "Lung-gom-pa" is a composite of the Tibetan words "lung" (meaning wind, breath, or life energy) and "gom-pa" (meaning practice or meditation). According to oral tradition and accounts of early travelers, Lung-gom-pa involves the practice of running in a sustained trance-like state (Myskja, 2021). Practitioners appear to glide across vast distances, demonstrating extraordinary speed and endurance. In the early 20th century, Western scholars such as Alexandra David-Néel witnessed and described this phenomenon, describing participants as possessing almost otherworldly qualities (Hozzel, 2023). While some exaggerated accounts tend to mystify Lung-gom-pa, a deeper examination reveals that its foundations are rooted in the concept of energy and channels in Tantric physiology (the "rlung" wind and the "tsa" channels), and echo the more fundamental Buddhist goal of spiritual practice: achieving a state of complete spiritual penetration of the body and a complete fusion of the physical body with meditative awareness (Myskja, 2021).

This essay argues that Lung-gom-pa can be seen as a concrete manifestation of the Tibetan Buddhist concept of "body meditation"—its core emphasis on cultivating awareness not through transcendence or detachment from the body but through dynamic engagement with it. By situating Lung-gom-pa within the doctrinal framework of Tibetan Buddhist practice, phenomenological descriptions, and interreligious comparative perspectives, this essay seeks to illuminate three interrelated propositions. First, dynamic meditation practices such as Lung-gom-pa demonstrate that Tibetan Buddhism understands mindfulness not as a purely mental state but as an embodied practice involving the multidimensional integration of breath, energy, bodily movement, and consciousness. It focuses on organ coordination and harmonious bodily dynamics, rather than defining meditation solely as static or sedentary. Secondly, from a phenomenological perspective, during the practice of "Lung-gom-pa," one can always maintain a highly brisk sense of running or jumping, guided by the mind, seemingly achieving swift movement through space without fatigue, demonstrating a profound unity of body and mind. This is similar to the "running high" experienced by ordinary people, but Lung-gom-pa is more than just a sport; it is fundamentally guided by religion and is not merely for physical exercise or health maintenance, but for achieving spiritual transcendence. Thirdly, insights into "Lung-gom-pa" also challenge traditional assumptions or fantasies about meditation, emphasizing that meditation can be multidimensional, not singular, and countering the West's arrogant assumptions about Orientalism. It prompts a more inclusive redefinition of meditation—understanding it as a continuum of practices ranging from static contemplation to dynamic practice. Despite varying methodological modalities, these practices all share the fundamental goal of Buddhist practice: achieving a state of non-discriminatory awareness and a unified state of mind-body

fusion, thus opening up a broader theoretical and practical scope for the definition of meditation.

This essay consists of six main sections. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 reviews existing literature, situating Lung-gom-pa within the broader context of Tibetan Buddhist meditative practice, particularly highlighting the lack of attention paid to dynamic meditation methods in current scholarship. Chapter 3, focusing on methodology and theoretical framework, systematically expounds on the phenomenological approach and embodiment theory perspective employed in this study, laying the foundation for subsequent analysis. Chapter 4, taking Lung-gom-pa as a central case study, explores its historical origins, specific practice techniques, and the characteristics of the mind-body experience it evokes. Chapter 5 further analyzes how Lung-gom-pa embodies the Tibetan Buddhist philosophical concept of the unity of body and mind, and through cross-cultural comparisons, connects it with other meditative traditions. The subsequent discussion reflects on the theoretical significance of dynamic meditation practices for reimagining the concept of "meditation" in religious studies and more broadly. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the core arguments of the article and proposes several potential directions for future research.

This study, by situating Lung-gom-pa within the dialogue between Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and contemporary theories of embodiment, promotes a reinterpretation of meditation practice itself—namely, as a living, bodily-engaged spiritual practice with inherently transformative power. Beyond its specific cultural and historical significance, Lung-gom-pa further engages with interdisciplinary fields such as cognitive science, movement psychology, and religious phenomenology. Thus, this practice vividly exemplifies how Tibetan Buddhism achieves its theoretical and practical realization of the unity of body and mind through a dynamic, rather than static, approach to practice.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Meditation in Tibetan Buddhism

Meditation constitutes a core component of Buddhist practice, and within Tibetan Buddhism, its forms of meditation are particularly diverse. Currently, scholarly attention has focused on static sitting meditation, particularly samatha and vipashyana (Harvey, 2015). Samatha emphasizes focusing the mind on a single object (such as the breath) to cultivate a steady concentration, thereby inducing inner tranquility and clarity (Rinpoche, 1999). Vipashyana further utilizes this focus to engage in a discerning contemplation of the true nature of phenomena, achieving a thorough understanding of the impermanence of all phenomena and their interdependent origination and emptiness (Deka, 2024). In the Dzogchen and Mahamudra traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, these methods are integrated into higher-level meditation systems, enabling direct access to the inherent state of clarity and emptiness. Scholarship has largely focused on these static meditations, viewing them as the essence of the Tibetan meditative tradition and often examining them within the context of comparative Buddhist psychology and cognitive science.

In addition to static sitting meditation, Tibetan Buddhism also inherits a range of body-mediated practices, closely integrating physical training with meditative awareness. For example, tummo (inner heat) and trul-khor (meditation wheel) are typical examples. Tummo is a meditative practice that allows practitioners to gain heat and avoid feeling cold by controlling their breathing, posture, and focused thought. Its mechanism is to mobilize the practitioner's internal wind (rlung) and fire (inner heat) (Kozhevnikov et al., 2013). While trul-khor does not specifically help with heat generation, it can enhance physical exercise and make the exercise itself spiritual. Its mechanism is to control wind (rlung) and energy (prana) within the body by controlling movement and breathing rate (Chaoul, 2021). This demonstrates that meditation is not simply about mental focus, but about achieving a harmonious unity of body and mind (Geoffrey Samuel, 2015; Miranda Shaw, 2022). However, despite this rich tradition of practice, scholarly research has been markedly biased toward seated meditation, with limited attention paid to dynamic and movement-oriented approaches.

2.2 Dynamic Meditation Traditions

While Tibetan Buddhism emphasizes dynamic meditation, it actually draws from many different spiritual traditions. For example, walking meditation (kinhin) is a Zen practice of meditation through walking. Rather than casual walking, it allows walking to become a form of practice, maintaining mindfulness and ensuring the unity of body and mind. While walking slowly, practitioners maintain continuous awareness of their body posture, breathing rhythm, and foot movement, integrating the stillness achieved through sitting meditation into dynamic processes (Hoshiyama & Hoshiyama, 2015). While much slower and more structured than Tibetan running meditation, walking meditation also embodies the fundamental concept that meditative awareness can extend beyond static sitting to embodied action.

Similar roots can be found in Indian yogic traditions, such as pranayama and Hatha Yoga, where the coordination of breath and movement plays a central role. Some ancient texts even describe sustained yogic running or ritualized walking

as methods for cultivating physical and mental endurance and deepening concentration (Staples, 2018). This demonstrates that practice is a process of mind-body integration, testing not just one's thoughts but the dynamics of one's body and the coordination of one's mind.

In comparison, the Tibetan Buddhist concept of Lung-gom-pa is not a novelty without historical origins. Rather, it has roots and has evolved into a unique meditation practice that aligns with Tibetan Buddhist culture. This demonstrates that meditation is not limited to static or sitting meditation but can be integrated with movement and exercise. However, this Eastern phenomenon has not received a correct and objective interpretation. It has long been viewed in the West as a wonder, mysterious, magical, or even as an unverifiable legend (Hozzel, 2023). Fortunately, with the passage of time and the emergence of more extensive research, more studies on Lung-gom-pa have emerged, providing a foundation for its proper recognition.

2.3 Previous Studies on Lung-gom-pa

The earliest and most well-known Western account of lung-gom-pa comes from the travelogues of French explorer Alexandra David-Néel. According to her account, Lung-gom-pa practitioners seemed to possess magical powers, gliding effortlessly across the land, seemingly traversing the air, creating a truly remarkable spectacle (Hozzel, 2023). David-Néel's account, which both defines Lung-gom-pa as a yogic practice and presents it as a near-supernatural phenomenon, captivated Western readers of the time, who were curious about Tibet's "mysterious frontier." However, her account has also been criticized for its overemphasis on exoticism and its lack of empirical evidence (McRae, 2012). While her work has undoubtedly brought international attention to the practice, it has also contributed to its portrayal as a mystical curiosity rather than an orthodox meditation method with a doctrinal basis and practical steps within the Tibetan Buddhist system.

Subsequent academic research has generally adopted a cautious, even skeptical, attitude toward Lung-gom-pa. Early anthropologists and Tibetan scholars often questioned the practice's authenticity, believing it to be merely local legend or exaggerated folklore, noting the lack of systematic textual support in orthodox Buddhist texts (Muha, 2010). Some scholars have attempted to offer physiological explanations, suggesting that the so-called "spiritual movement" phenomenon may stem from a trance-like state of dissociation, efficient breathing techniques unique to high altitudes, or the exceptional endurance honed by Tibetan monks and nomadic communities through the harsh environment (Pearlman, 2002). Other studies suggest that the West's enduring interest in Lung-gom-pa reflects a certain Orientalist tendency — one that alienates Tibetan spiritual practice into a mystical spectacle rather than understanding it within its own religious practices and disciplinary system (Barbour, 2022). While such critical stances can help dispel overly mystified narratives, they can also prematurely dismiss or marginalize the practice by overlooking the doctrinal heritage and inner experiences of practitioners.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, sports psychology and embodied cognition research have gradually re-examined the practice of Lung-gom-pa from an interdisciplinary perspective. The phenomena described — such as the sense of effortless movement, the distortion of time perception, and the experience of transcending everyday physical fatigue — show remarkable similarities to the "flow state" or "runner's high" reported by athletes at peak performance (Hendricks, 2022). Modern psychology tends to explain this through neurochemical and physiological mechanisms, while Buddhist traditions rely on a practice framework that posits the interaction between energy channels (rlung) and the mind, both perspectives point to the possibility that rhythmic, sustained physical movement combined with highly focused attention can induce states of heightened consciousness and enhanced mental resilience (Havey, 2017). This interdisciplinary dialogue has encouraged us to move beyond viewing Lung-gom-pa as a marginal cultural anomaly and instead understand it as a practice deeply rooted in the philosophical and cultural context of Zen meditation, expressing a systematic integration of mind and body. This systemic shift represents a shift in society's perspective on Tibetan Buddhism, one that is beginning to view it more rationally and objectively.

3. Methodology & Theoretical Framework

In terms of methodology, this study, using textual analysis as its core research method, systematically examines classical Tibetan Buddhist texts and historical travel accounts. Tantric texts and related commentaries provide a theoretical framework for understanding the system of subtle body practice and the Tantric interpretation of the wind breath (rlung), while travelogues offer specific accounts of Lung-gom-pa practice. Textual analysis can also help analyze the diverse perspectives of Lung-gom-pa research by various scholars, thereby providing a deeper understanding of Lung-gom-pa's unique body-mind integration and laying a solid foundation for understanding its historical, cultural, and religious origins.

Also, this study uses the comparative religious method, which is defined as the study of the similarities and differences among the world's major religions, encompassing beliefs, practices, ethics, and historical contexts. It involves analyzing various religious traditions and movements to understand their unique and shared characteristics (Paden, 2009). This study

examines the differences between Tibetan Buddhism and other religions, analyzing the characteristics of Lung-gom-pa meditation, walking meditation, Indian yoga, and other meditation methods. This helps analyze the unique characteristics and value of Tibetan Buddhism in its conception of meditation methods, as well as the specific differences between dynamic and static meditation.

From a theoretical perspective, this study draws on embodiment theory, phenomenology, performance theory and ritual research. First, according to embodied cognition theory, embodied cognition theory posits that physical interactions with the world affect cognition. Essentially, human experience and perception do not arise in a vacuum, completely separate from the body; rather, they arise through the body's medium of interaction with the world. Therefore, individual perceptions and bodily actions influence cognition. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), the bodily subject, or subjective body, is a living body. Individuals do not simply possess a body; rather, they are the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Thomas Chodas (1994, 2002) further extends this theory, arguing that human consciousness cannot be separated from bodily perceptions and experiences. The ability of Lung-gom-pa practitioners to walk and run briskly is not simply due to physical training, but also because their consciousness becomes a core driving force in their interaction with the world, enabling them to achieve spiritual transcendence and thus manifesting it in physical movement.

Secondly, Phenomenology is a method in which researchers focus on studying human experiences, including the way people conceptualize their lived, shared experiences. Regarding the meditative practice of Lung-gom-pa, certain phenomena, such as the intense concentration and focus achieved by practitioners while running briskly, and the rhythms of movement, breathing, and running speed, all demonstrate its approach to achieving a unity of mind and body. In this process, practitioners do not simply sit quietly or think, but instead engage in specific practices through movement, ensuring the body's involvement in the meditative experience. This contradicts traditional theories that strictly separate body and mind (Brandmeyer et al., 2019), emphasizing that the body is not an accessory but a constant interaction with consciousness.

Furthermore, according to performance theory, actions and gestures, as performances, can convey specific meanings and demonstrate beliefs or identity, while ritual studies explore the functions of specific religious rituals. In relation to each other, rituals are performative because they are completed actions, while performances are ritualized because they are standardized and repeatable behaviors (Katherine Bell, 1991). In the context of Lung-gom-pa, bodily movements are performative because breathing rate, specific rhythms, and running speed are all manifestations of participation in the practice and the practitioner's driving thoughts, while ritualized practice can achieve a unity of body and mind.

4. Lung-gom-pa: The Practice of Running Meditation

4.1 Origins & Etymology

The word "Lung-gom-pa" etymologically consists of two parts: the Tibetan "lung" (rlung) and "gom" (sgom). The former represents breath, wind, energy, or the energy within the body's tsa meridians, while the latter represents a meditative approach and awareness training (De Mille, 2017). Therefore, Lung-gom-pa formally refers to running meditation, but in essence, it requires practitioners to mobilize energy within the body through breathing wind, maintain vitality and positivity, achieve meditative concentration, and engage in a mind-body unity training (Shaw, 2012), thereby achieving spiritual transcendence and physical lightness.

Historical accounts of Lung-gom-pa generally categorize it as part of the esoteric practices of the "Six Laws of Naropa" and Tibetan yoga systems, which utilize the manipulation of subtle energy channels to support advanced meditative states (Pearlman, 2002). While direct references to Lung-gom-pa in classical texts are more limited compared to seated meditation methods like shamatha or vipashyana, oral traditions and travelers' accounts indicate that the practice was primarily practiced in secluded monasteries or hermitages, where it was passed down as a specialized training (Shaw, 2012). Thus, its development can be traced to the intersection of tantric physiological theory and Tibetan traditions that integrate physical practice into the path to liberation, reflecting the Tibetan Buddhist emphasis on the unity of body and mind.

4.2 Techniques

Records of the specific techniques of Lung-gom-pa practice are primarily scattered through traveler accounts and ethnographic reports, rather than systematic textual guides. The most influential source is the field notes of Alexandra David-Néel. She describes practitioners undergoing rigorous training that integrates three key elements: breath control, imagery, and mantra recitation (David-Neel, 2012). Breath control forms the foundation of the practice: practitioners precisely synchronize inhalation and exhalation with bodily movements, creating a rhythmic continuity that significantly reduces physical fatigue. This breathing, far from being a routine, involves a highly refined technique of energy and meridian manipulation, designed to synchronize physical energy and mental focus (Kay, 2007). Furthermore, visualization practices often require practitioners

to anchor their attention on a guiding light or sacred image on the horizon, serving both as a reference for mental orientation and as a focus for meditative concentration. Mantra recitation further strengthens concentration, creating a symbiotic field of mind and body through the resonance of sound vibrations with the body's rhythms of running.

The resulting state of mind and body is often described as a profound trance. However, these Lung-gom-pa practitioners are in fact highly focused. Precisely because of this intense mental concentration and focus, they are able to move with their consciousness, maintaining a lightness of body and mind, as if moving through space, a significant difference from the ground-based approach of ordinary runners (Bajič, 2014). Their spiritual goals drive them to run great distances within a given period of time while maintaining stability, rhythm, and a lightness of movement. This demonstrates that these practitioners have achieved a high degree of physical harmony and coordination, and through this, they are able to achieve a unity of mind and body.

4.3 Phenomenology

From a specific phenomenological perspective, Lung-gom-pa practitioners do not simply run at speed, as ordinary runners do. Instead, they experience a sensation of moving through the air, a magical experience that demonstrates the power of religious motivation (Bajič, 2014; De Mille, 2017). In this context, practitioners can run vast distances within a certain timeframe without feeling fatigued, which is precisely the purpose of the meditation practice. This phenomenon suggests a profound phenomenological shift in practitioners' way of being-in-the-world—they no longer feel reliant on their own will to drive their bodies, but rather are carried and propelled by a holistic rhythm encompassing their breathing, mantra recitation, and visualization.

Alexandra David-Néel (2012) describes advanced practitioners in her accounts: their gaze fixed on the ground, their movements adopting a nearly automatic rhythm, as if they were in a deep trance. From the perspective of contemporary neuroscience, these descriptions bear some resemblance to what sports psychology calls the "runner's high," characterized by reduced pain perception, heightened focus, and a heightened sense of pleasure, often associated with the release of endorphins and altered brainwave patterns (Kay, 2007). However, what makes Lung-gom-pa unique is that this state is not a physiological phenomenon that occurs incidentally during physical exertion, but rather a meditative goal actively cultivated through the systematic regulation of subtle wind (rlung), breathing rhythm, and focused awareness. It is rooted in the comprehensive theoretical and practical stages of esoteric Buddhist practice.

4.4 Religious Function

Beyond its unique psychosomatic characteristics, Lung-gom-pa also carries a clear religious function within Tibetan Buddhism. First, it constitutes a rigorous training in concentration: by synchronizing focused gaze, breathing, and mantra, practitioners significantly enhance the stability of their meditative state (Paine, 2005). Second, the practice fosters a sense of ascetic mobility. In Tibet's high altitudes and vast natural landscape, the ability to move continuously over long distances facilitates pilgrimages to remote sacred sites, thus seamlessly integrating physical endurance training with religious practice. Third, Lung-gom-pa possesses profound symbolic significance: by transcending conventional physical limits, practitioners embody the fundamental Buddhist ideal of liberation from the bondage of samsara (Shaw, 2012). The seemingly effortless, timeless gliding gesture becomes a ritualized act of detachment from worldly constraints. Thus, Lung-gom-pa vividly embodies the core tenet of Vajrayana: the body is not an obstacle to practice, but a vital vehicle for enlightenment. The practice integrates physical training, meditative concentration, and religious pursuit into an embodied path of transformation.

5. Body–Mind Unity in Dynamic Meditation

5.1 Doctrinal Context

Within Buddhist philosophy, the mind-body relationship is consistently understood as an interdependent, dynamically constituted whole, rather than as a separate, dual entity. Classical teachings portray individuals not as eternally self-existent but as a temporary, conditioned aggregation of the five aggregates (skandhas): form (rūpa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saṃjñā), mental formations (saṃskāra), and consciousness (vijñāna) (Holba, 2019). This theoretical framework profoundly emphasizes that physiological and mental processes are not independent entities, but rather, as conditioned phenomena characterized by interdependent origination and emptiness, arising and ceasing in a mutually interconnected relationship.

In Mahayana Buddhist thought, the doctrine of emptiness (sūnyatā) further reinforces the interdependence of body and mind: since neither possesses independent self-existence, their existence and function are constantly in a state of symbiosis and mutual construction (Vy & Huynh, 2015). The Vajrayana tradition channels this philosophy into a unique tantric practice, proposing a theory of the subtle body centered around "qi" (rlung), "nadis" (tsa), and "bind" (thigle) (UPADHYAYA, 1988).

These elements mediate between bodily functions and conscious activity. In this model, qi not only serves as the breath that sustains life but also as the vehicle for the flow of mind and awareness. Therefore, the transformation of consciousness necessarily depends on the regulation and purification of the flow of qi and nadis. This doctrinal context is crucial to understanding Lung-gom-pa: it is not an unconventional physical practice but a concrete practice of tantric anthropology, in which the goal of liberation lies in the deep integration and synergistic operation of breath, body, and consciousness.

5.2 Embodiment Analysis

From the perspective of embodiment theory, Lung-gom-pa presents a profound fusion of physiological processes and meditative intentionality in a strikingly powerful way. This practice embodies the tantric model of tsa-lung (channel energy): through the precise synchronization of rhythmic breathing and movement, practitioners guide the subtle wind (rlung) along specific channels, thereby stabilizing consciousness and transforming embodied experience (Havey, 2017). In this process, the body ceases to be a passive vehicle to be overcome and becomes a dynamic medium for consciousness to actively direct and achieve fundamental transformation.

Lung-gom-pa fundamentally differs from static sitting meditation in its thorough integration of the bodily dimension. While traditional shamatha or vipashyana meditations primarily focus on stabilizing cognition and cultivating insight, Lung-gom-pa requires practitioners to integrate muscular endurance, respiratory rhythm, and dynamic fluidity as integral components of meditative practice (Vranich & Sabin, 2020). The trance-like state described by observers—the experience of gliding in weightlessness—is the phenomenological manifestation of this profound integration of body and mind: practitioners are essentially inhabiting a new mode of "being-in-the-world" in which the traditional distinction between physical activity and spiritual practice is completely dissolved (Havey, 2017).

Thus, viewed through the lens of embodiment theory, Lung-gom-pa strongly exemplifies the view that meditation cannot be reduced to a purely mental activity. It is an ontological practice in which the living body constitutes a fundamentally transformative foundation. Through the meticulous synchronization of wind breath (rlung), mantra, and bodily movement, practitioners reveal the body's dual role as both subject and object of awareness — in the process, transforming the Buddhist philosophical teaching of interdependence into a lived, tangible reality (Havey, 2017). In this sense, Lung-gom-pa is not a marginal anomaly within the Vajrayana system, but rather an ideal exemplar of its philosophy of the non-duality of body and mind: a meditation realized in motion, a path to liberation through embodiment.

5.3 Comparative Insight

Comparing Lung-gom-pa with other dynamic meditation traditions not only highlights its unique value but also reveals deep resonances across cultural practices. In Zen Buddhism, walking meditation (kinhin) embodies a fusion of mindfulness and slow, highly conscious movement (Koster et al., 2025). Practitioners coordinate their breathing with the rhythm of their steps, maintaining a constant awareness of each bodily movement. Its pace is slow, and its movements imbued with ritual, its core purpose being to maintain a continuity of awareness between sitting and walking meditation. Lung-gom-pa, in contrast, represents the other end of the dynamic spectrum: rather than slow movement, it is characterized by sustained, rhythmic running over long distances (Havey, 2017). Nevertheless, both practices share a fundamental principle: both use physical movement as a vehicle for meditation, thus disrupting the traditional dichotomy between "stillness" and "movement" in practice.

From the perspective of embodied cognition theory, this type of dynamic meditation practice can be seen as a prime example of how bodily movement can engage with and reshape states of consciousness. This phenomenon resonates deeply with the "flow state" phenomenon explored in contemporary psychology—the experience of intense concentration, self-dissolution, and altered time perception during skilled, rhythmic activity (Marshall, 2020). Endurance athletes often report states of euphoria, pain insensitivity, and sustained focus, often closely associated with the release of neurochemicals (such as endorphins and endocannabinoids) and the synchronization of mind-body rhythms. The experience of Lung-gom-pa practice aligns closely with this description, but its uniqueness lies in the fact that this state is not a spontaneous physiological effect of exercise, but rather a spiritual achievement actively achieved through systematic training, with clear methodological and religious implications (Barbour, 2022).

Therefore, this comparative analysis yields two core insights: First, Tibetan Buddhism and Zen traditions share the view that meditative practice is not limited to static sitting but can also be achieved through bodily movement—both transform everyday actions into ritualized expressions of mindfulness and concentration. Second, the Tibetan interpretation of Lung-gom-pa aligns with modern flow theory and endurance research, revealing a cross-cultural mind-body continuity: the moving body offers a universally effective path for the transformation of consciousness. Thus, Lung-gom-pa lies at the intersection of religious ascetic practice and the shared psychophysiological potential of all human beings, embodying both Tibetan

Buddhism's unique theoretical construction of dynamic meditation and its profound interpretation of the global phenomenon of embodied practice.

6. Discussion: Rethinking Meditation through Embodiment

Based on this, reflecting on Lung-gom-pa reveals that mainstream culture's definition of meditation is very narrow. For example, meditation implies that individuals must sit quietly, remain silent, and contemplate for hours, unaffected by external influences. This definition is often closely tied to commercial marketing. Many people may also confuse meditation with yoga, believing both to be static, seeking spiritual well-being through stability and tranquility (Roth, 2018). While this has increased awareness of the characteristics and benefits of meditation, it has failed to truly uncover its mechanisms, nor has it recognized the potential for dynamic meditation. It has overlooked the crucial concept of the unity of mind and body (Lindahl et al., 2014), easily leading to the misconception that body and mind are strictly opposed to each other.

The Tibetan Buddhist Lung-gom-pa practice provides a prime example for dispelling this misconception, as it emphasizes that meditation is not necessarily static or sedentary, but rather dynamic. Practitioners can achieve a unity of body and mind through practice, ensuring rhythmic, sustained movement and steady breathing. Practitioners can also use this practice to maintain a high level of mental focus, running towards a distant goal, thereby enhancing meditative concentration. While running, practitioners can regulate their breathing, achieving a brisk pace, and achieving a concentration of energy within the body, making their steps light and effortless. As consciousness interacts with the world, the body gradually becomes clearer and more fulfilled (Lindahl et al., 2014). From the perspective of the mind-body interaction, spiritual transcendence need not remain solely at the conscious level but can also interact with the physical body.

Lung-gom-pa presents a unique form of "embodied spirituality," whose path to enlightenment is not achieved through separation from the body but through a deep collaboration with it. Unlike ascetic practices that view the body as an obstacle to transcendence, Tibetan Buddhist running meditation reveals the body as a collaborative partner in spiritual practice. Rhythmic movement, breath control, and the perception of endurance are not distractions from practice, but rather catalysts that stabilize the mind and expand awareness (Sandler & Lee, 2013). This perspective challenges the traditional assumption of mind-body dualism, proposing a continuum of intertwined spiritual and physical experience—one in which spiritual insights emerge from personally practiced, embodied experiences. This suggests that spiritual awakening does not necessarily rely on a silent retreat into the inner spirit but can also be achieved through dynamic, body-rooted practices, achieving a dialectical unity of physical engagement and meditative awareness.

From the perspective of interdisciplinary research, the study of Lung-gom-pa shows that it is vital to look further critically at the form of static meditation, and learn to see through the essence of meditation, not be bound by fixed forms, and achieve transcendence of the spiritual dimension and control of the physical level. From a kinematic perspective, practitioners of Lung-gom-pa often have super endurance, and because of their high concentration, they can maintain a flow state, derive pleasure from the process of running rather than fatigue, and remain mentally positive and energetic. From a cognitive perspective, continuous physical movement and highly focused consciousness are often interdependent, such as movement and consciousness being synchronized, and consciousness tending to move at a high frequency. This shows that Lung-gom-pa is an example worthy of study that can demonstrate the close interaction between body and mind.

7. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Lung-gom-pa in Tibetan Buddhism breaks the traditional misconception that meditation must be static, emphasizing instead the unity of body and mind as the true meaning of meditation. The interaction between individual consciousness and the world is manifested through the body, which is a crucial element in practice.

The academic significance of this study lies in exploring the multiple values of the "Lung-gom-pa" case and examining its significance and value from the perspectives of embodiment theory, phenomenology, and performance theory. By demonstrating how dynamic meditation offers a complementary perspective to static cognitive training, this study emphasizes the centrality of the body as the fundamental site for the generation of awareness, the internalization of knowledge, and spiritual transformation. This not only deepens our understanding of the diversity of Tibetan Buddhist practice systems but also provides a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary theoretical framework for exploring the complex interactions between body and consciousness in meditative practice.

Future research could integrate methods from anthropology, neuroscience, and comparative religion to advance the multidimensional interpretation of Lung-gom-pa. Ethnographic fieldwork within Tibetan meditation communities could reveal the practice's contemporary transmission, forms of practice, and adaptive evolution, deepening understanding of its living cultural context. Neuroscience, leveraging physiological monitoring and brain imaging, could investigate

the neurophysiological mechanisms of dynamic meditation, analyzing how rhythmic movement and breath control synergistically modulate attention allocation, states of consciousness, and flow experiences. Comparative studies could systematically compare Lung-gom-pa with other embodied meditation traditions worldwide (such as Sufi whirling and Zen walking meditation), thereby identifying cross-cultural commonalities and cultural specificities in the integration of mind and body. Together, these approaches expand theoretical understanding of meditation as an embodied practice and promote a paradigm shift in research beyond static paradigms.

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