

THE NEW YOGA AND GLOBALISATION



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What passes as 'Yoga' today has become little more than a global commercial industry – a respectable bourgeois 'opium' for the middle classes of East and West. The New Yoga of Awareness is no part of this global industry. For it aims at subverting and overturning the entire framework of global capitalism itself - through a global revolution in awareness.

To do so the very concept of 'yoga' itself must be renewed and become something 'global' in a very different way – not as a worldwide industry exploiting one or more Asian spiritual traditions but as an entirely new global world outlook and way of thinking - one that gives new expression to the ancient wisdom traditions of all races, religions, cultures and continents - Eastern and Western, Northern and Southern, Aryan and Semitic.

In the revolutionary social, cultural and political movements of the 1960's the word 'awareness' was associated with 'raising' people's 'awareness' or 'consciousness' of uncomfortable political and economic facts and events - thereby confronting them with the need for worldwide revolution. In THE NEW YOGA the political importance attached to the term 'awareness' does not simply lie in 'awareness raising' of this sort – raising awareness of something. Instead it refers to the raising of a New Awareness, one that has to do with the transcendental and liberatory nature of awareness as such rather than anything we are aware of. Therein lies its link with the Tantric 'Gnosis' or inner wisdom tradition, this being the sole tradition which recognised that awareness is the ultimate reality behind all things, and that only through awareness as such - 'pure' or 'transcendental' awareness - can the individual liberate their consciousness from bondage to any particular thing or things that they experience or are aware of.

THE NEW YOGA recognises that this type of 'transcendental' awareness is not just a means of individual liberation, salvation or 'enlightenment' however, but the only way to 'save the world' from the ravages of global capitalism. The New Yoga of Awareness is therefore not just a 'revolutionary' new interpretation of the yogic tradition known as 'Tantra'. It is a Revolutionary Yoga - aimed at peacefully promoting global revolution – saving the world - through the dawning of a New Awareness.

Revolution means 'turning round'. Only through this new Awareness can the topsy-turvy world of global capitalism be turned around - a world in which science has literally turned reality 'on its head' by treating awareness itself as a by-product of the head and brain, a world in which ever more costly medical drugs and technologies

are responsible for ever more deaths, totally ignoring the relation between health and awareness; a world in which 'psychology' no longer even recognises the reality of the soul or 'psyche'. It is also a world in which ever-more advanced and easily available technologies of communication go hand in hand with a dearth – indeed the near-death – of spiritual culture – and in which education systems generate ever-greater historical, cultural, and spiritual ignorance, not to mention linguistic illiteracy.

THE NEW YOGA is revolutionary because, as Education in awareness it is the precondition for a historical, spiritual, scientific, economic and cultural revolution – one based on an entirely new way of thinking. meditative awareness is the sole source from which this new way of thinking can arise – a meditative thinking that is not purely calculative or technological – and that is truly rational because it does not merely serve to cynically rationalise the purposes of current political and economic interest groups.

THE NEW YOGA affirms the true and traditional aim of Yoga and Tantra as such. That aim is simply truth – personal and political, scientific and spiritual, rational and religious. That is why it goes hand in hand with what I have called 'The New Science' and 'The New Thinking' – both of which are rooted in the recognition of Awareness as the ultimate scientific and spiritual reality. The new science and New Thinking unite spirituality and socialism, meditation and Marxism. For only through Marxism can we understand how the evolution and eventual domination of ego-consciousness went hand in hand with the development of class societies based on private property. Through Marxism too, we can understand why it is that awareness is the biggest single threat to global capitalism. For this is a system which relies for its survival on ensuring that individuals are kept so busy DOING by selling their labour time that they have no time to become more aware - and to think more deeply - about what they are doing and why.

The result is a world in which economic wealth is paid for through time poverty, attained by economically exploiting the labour time of others, and used to pursue ever-new ways of squandering time or making more money. Consequently, people feel that they either have 'no time' or - whether super-rich or poor and unemployed - do not know what to 'do' with the time they have except squander it, reinforcing the capitalist work ethic that 'the devil makes work for idle hands'. Even most of those in 'employment' suffer from the hidden unemployment of their individual creative potentials, which can find expression only as hobbies or part-time activities.

Marx is often quoted as declaring that individuals' awareness is determined by their 'social being' - their economic status in class society. For Marx this was not an eternal truth but a temporary condition associated with class societies. Therefore the converse truth also holds - individuals with awareness can save the world from the stranglehold of class society in its final stage - global capitalism. For by giving themselves time to be aware - all the time - they will begin to think and act in ways that can usher in what John Buchan foresaw as a "4-dimensional Communism", one that incorporates the 4th dimension of time, and recognises that the degradation of human life begins with the exploitation or qualitative degradation of time. Only through awareness can we expand and qualitatively enrich the inner time-space of each and every moment of our lives. That is why time is the frontline in the struggle for a better world, one based on cultivating awareness and on encouraging and empowering individuals - in whatever personal, relational, institutional, corporate or political contexts they live and work in - to resist all pressures which prevent them taking time to be more aware and enriching the meaningfulness or qualitative richness of the time they devote to themselves, their work and others. For purely quantitative time and wealth do not bring meaning to people's lives - unless they are spent thoughtfully, out of awareness and in pursuit of the richness of meaning and spiritual wealth of soul that awareness alone can bring. For even the pursuit of 'enlightenment' through meditation is essentially a part of 'Man's Search for Meaning' (Frankl) and not simply an end-in-itself, another understanding that distinguishes the philosophy of THE NEW YOGA from the Old (see What is Yoga?).

The simple fact of the matter is that if it is to survive much longer, human culture and civilisation can no longer afford to maintain a society in which awareness is the preserve of the few and in which 'yoga' and 'meditation' are misused - used to minimise the felt 'stresses' of global capitalism rather than to overcome it through awareness. Awareness itself is not a luxury that we can only afford to give ourselves at special times through 'meditation'. On the contrary, the true purpose of meditation is to teach us to maintain and stay in awareness all the time - a transcendental or 'field' awareness free of bondage to any particular thing we are aware of - thus preventing any particular focus of awareness from preoccupying our minds, wearing down our bodies, and unwillingly dominating our lives.

A basic principle of THE NEW YOGA is that we are as much aware of our self as a whole - our soul - as we are aware of our body as a whole. The moment a person's awareness of their own body and

mind is replaced by identification with their current bodily and mental states or activity, they become unfree.

The moment a person loses awareness of their body as a whole, their awareness of their self as a whole is contracted too. Because of this contraction of awareness they can only think and act from a small part of themselves and in a purely reactive and unaware way. Without awareness of our body, self and world as a whole our larger 'Awareness Self' – that self which does not have but IS awareness - is contracted to our personal ego-identity. And our larger 'Awareness body' – that body which does not 'have' but is the very shape OF our awareness - becomes bound to our physical body.

The secular but quasi-religious dogmas of modern 'science' and economic 'liberalism', together with the resurgence of literalistic religious fundamentalisms, are the two vehemently and ever-more violently opposing faces of today's world. This is a world which The New Yoga does not turn its face away from but is there to save and give a new face to. The New Yoga is 'Conservative Revolutionism' in the best and most progressive sense. It conserves the historically subversive tradition of 'Tantrism' (Tibetan, Tamil and Kashmiri, Chinese and Indian, Taoist and Shaivist) whilst at the same time offering a genuinely new and revolutionary form of 'Tantric Wisdom' that is truly relevant to today's world - the culmination and turning point of the 'Kali Yuga'.