

SELECTED WRITINGS

ON

THE NEW YOGA

Volume I

Peter Wilberg

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NOTE TO THE READER

This book, like all other New Yoga Publications – not only adds to but also draws from Peter Wilberg's *entire body of writings* on The New Yoga. Consequently the reader is asked to bear in mind that some overlap and repetition of textual content, both across and within different books, has been unavoidable. It is hoped that this will not be a hindrance to the reader however, but rather serve the helpful purpose of refreshing the reader's understanding of different aspects of The New Yoga, as well as ensuring for the reader's sake that each title, whenever written, contains material drawn from Peter Wilberg's latest, most recent and concise conceptual articulation of its key principles and practices - which continue to evolve in parallel with his own meditative practice of those principles, and his ever-deepening experience of the profound realities underlying them.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR

I did not initially discover the meaning of ‘tantra’ through the study of traditional tantric teachings and practices. I discovered it through my own direct conceptual and experiential research, going back many decades. It was out of this lifetime’s research that I gave birth to my own original metaphysical teachings and meditational practices. It was only later that I rediscovered the quintessential spirit of these teachings and practices in the religious tradition known as ‘Kashmir Shaivism’, and above all in the teachings of its great tantric adept and philosopher ABHINAVAGUPTA. As a result, I found I could not only spontaneously comprehend his tantric teachings from deep within myself, but also re-formulate their foundational insights in the framework of a new metaphysical principle ‘The Awareness Principle’ - and its corresponding Practices of Awareness ‘The New Yoga of Awareness’. In thus creating ‘The New Yoga of Awareness’ I have followed tradition in seeking to do exactly what ABHINAVAGUPTA did in his time – weaving together a web of traditional tantric scriptures), teachings (*shastras*) and practices (*sadhana*s) and re-interpreting them both on a new experiential foundation and within a more refined metaphysical framework. My essential aim has been to re-embodiment the spirit of ABHINAVA’S work and life in obeisance to his name – ‘approaching’ (ABHI) all things ‘anew’ (NAVA) and in this way bringing out insights still hidden or concealed (GUPTA) within them. For as recognised in the tradition itself, ‘ABHINAVAGUPTA’ is not just the name given to a long-dead individual known for his great ‘spiritual’ learning and attainments, but is a *mantra* with its own universal meaning and ‘spirit’.

“That person is ‘Abhinavagupta’ who remains aware in the course of everyday activities, who is present in the objective domain as well as in the subjective, and dwells there without limitation. He sings the praises [of divinity] without ceasing to concentrate on the powers of knowledge and activity. He is protected by this praise even though he lives under the pressure of temporal affairs.”

Jayaratha

GUNAS

THE TRIADIC KEY TO YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY

BEYOND BIPOLAR PSYCHOLOGY

Along with the decline and loss of the centuries-old Western physiology of ‘humours’ or ‘humors’ such as ‘bile’ or ‘phlegm’(hence the phrase ‘in good humour’) went the decline too of a psychology and characterology of the four basic human moods or ‘temperaments’ – the *melancholic, sanguine, choleric* and phlegmatic. Earlier medical understandings of the *humours* have long-since been replaced by a purely biological physiology of *hormones* and neurotransmitters in the brain. Similarly, an age-old psychology and characterology of the four ‘temperaments’ has been superseded by an ever-increasing host of psychiatric ‘disorders’ and/or genetic ‘dispositions’. As a result, the whole language of Western psychology has become thoroughly *dualistic* - a dualism that pervades the everyday language and experience of the human being. Thus we speak of feeling ‘positive’ or ‘negative’, ‘good’ or ‘bad’, ‘cheerful’ or ‘sad’, ‘high’ or ‘low’, and of our ‘energy’, ‘motivation’ or ‘mood’ going ‘up’ or ‘down’. Western psychiatry, in its own current terms, is dyadic or ‘bipolar’ (‘manic-depressive’). Worse still, the very use of the modern psychiatric term ‘mood disorder’ shows how we have come to associate ‘moods’ as *such* with ‘disorders’ such as ‘anxiety’ and ‘depression’ - instead of understanding them as *underlying tones and colourations of feeling*. Moods in all their variety – understood as basic chords of feeling that shape, tone and colour our whole *awareness* of ourselves, our bodies and the world around us - are no longer recognised as an integral and indeed necessary dimension of human experience - comparable to deep musical chords. Instead they are confused and identified with their surface expression as emotional or somatic states, forms of behavioural disorders or chemical imbalances of the brain. This is like confusing our experience of the deep, inwardly felt meaning of music with the emotional labels we might apply to it, or even reducing the felt qualitative meaning of music to its measurable, quantitative ‘effect’ on specific regions of the brain. In the light of the dualism or ‘bipolarity’ that rules not only modern Western psychology but most people’s everyday emotional experience of life, we may be thankful

that Indian yogic philosophy has left us with a deeper spiritual physiology and psychology – a triadic language of three basic and innate ‘Gunas’ or ‘qualities’ – called Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. These are understood - like the ‘humours’ of old - not just as basic qualities of human nature but also as basic qualities of nature as such. In their different combinations, they are understood as elemental constituents of matter making up the natural universe as a whole - and giving shape to our individual human nature in particular. Each of the three Gunas – Tamas, Rajas and Sattva – can balance, colour, dominate or alternatively transform and transmute into one another. Each individual’s mood is always an embodiment of a different combination of the three Gunas - each of which constitutes a fundamentally different way of feeling ourselves and relating to the world.

Tamas (black, meaning ‘darkness’ or ‘obscurity’) is felt as dullness or darkness of mood, and as physical inertia, heaviness or lethargy.

Rajas (red) is felt as agitation, desire, impulse, intent and passion, and is expressed as physical tension, agitation and activity in all its forms.

Sattva (white) is felt as pureness, radiance, calm clarity, balance and buoyant lightness of being.

“The Gunas ... successively dominate, support, activate, and interact with each other. Sattva is buoyant and shining. Rajas is stimulating and moving. Tamas is heavy and enveloping.”

Ishvarakrishna Samkhyaakarika, translated by Gerard J. Larson

The triadic nature of Guna psychology is important because it is simply *truer* to human nature than the bipolar Western psychology. A simple example will suffice: if we cannot feel dull, heavy and fatigued (Tamas) how can we rest or enter into deep sleep – thus allowing us to process our experience in our dreams and to wake up feeling once again clear and bright (Sattva) and refreshed with renewed vitality and power of action (Rajas)? In waking life too, if we cannot tolerate ‘Tamasic’ states in which our consciousness feels dull, murky or clouded - or if physical

inertia, lethargy or fatigue did not restrain us from getting lost in the whirl of everyday desires, drives and activities (Rajas) then we would not feel the need or take the opportunity to rest or meditate our lives. Our Rajasic vitality itself is thus drained but not renewed. Nor do we have the chance to discover the intense Rajasic desires or emotions that often lurk under the surface of 'dull' or 'dark' Tamasic states - or to regain a 'Sattvic' clarity of awareness – and with it the guidance of clear insight and direction for our lives. Instead we simply experience Tamasic states as 'abnormal' or 'unhealthy', labelling them as disorders such as 'depression', fighting them mentally and/or with the aid of medications to 'keep ourselves going' despite them (Rajas) or to stay positive (Sattva). As a result however, we end up either in even deeper and darker Tamasic states - or in truly unhealthy Rajasic states of 'stress', 'anxiety' or manic hyperactivity. Psychiatry sees Tamas as abnormal and recognises only combinations of Rajas and Sattva as healthy – hence the extreme alternation of Tamas and Rajas called 'bipolar' disorder. Yet all three Gunas have their role to play in a natural cycle - like the cycle of waking, dreaming and sleeping states. True wakefulness has an essentially Sattvic quality, dreaming a Rajasic quality and dreamless sleep a Tamasic quality. Yet life is richer than any categories. Thus both our waking and dream lives combine all three Gunas in ever-changing permutations. In this way the Gunas make up the rich and colourful continuum of our lived experience.

MORE ON THE THREE GUNAS

1. TAMAS

Symbolised by the colours black or dark-blue Tamas is a quality of awareness reflecting the realm of latent, murky, obscured or 'occult' knowledge and power. In physical nature it finds expression as gravity and inertial mass. In human nature it is felt essentially as a downward-pulling sense of inertia and heaviness. If and when it dominates the individual however, it may be experienced somatically as 'fatigue', 'lethargy' or 'lack of energy', experienced mentally and emotionally as 'dullness' of mind, 'negativity' or 'depression', expressed outwardly as 'laziness' or 'sloth', or embodied as physical weight or obesity. It finds positive expression as dignified 'gravitas' or 'groundedness', as depth or 'weightiness' of character, the ability to 'bear', 'support' or 'pull' weight and to sink one's awareness down meditatively into the depths of one's body and being. Essentially it is potential action and awareness experienced darkly or obscurely. Theologically it is associated with the primordial darkness and power of the primordial mother goddess known as 'The Great Black One' (Maha-Kali). Temperamentally it is the Guna uniting the 'phlegmatic' with the 'black bile' of the 'melancholic'. Anatomically and medically it is associated with the bowels, abdomen and womb. Psychiatrically it is labelled as mild or severe depression. Sociologically it can find negative expression as the destructive potential of spiritual ignorance, generalised political apathy, the dullness of routinised work, lack of empathy and lifeless personal relationships. People search to compensate for Tamasic existence either through Rajas - hyperactivity and busyness, revelry in drugs and consumerism or mindless entertainment or through bland Sattvic states of spiritual harmony, peace and calm.

2. RAJAS

Symbolised by the colour red, Rajas has essentially to do with the emergence of the vital impulses to outward action and motion ('e-motion') that lay latent, obscured or blocked in Tamas. Rajas finds expression as the very process of 'emergence' (Greek 'Physis') that is the root meaning of the term 'physical', and with 'energy' in the root sense of 'action' or 'activity' (*energein*). That is why the Rajas Guna is principally associated with red-blooded vitality or passion, with the impulse to act, and also hot-blooded anger and rage – with 'seeing red', and with the aggression necessary to release blocked action or communication. Temperamentally it is the Guna uniting the sanguine with the choleric. Anatomically it is associated with the genitals and heart, blood and menstruation, psychiatrically with mania and paranoia. Sociologically it can find negative expression as rapacious greed and pervades the active realms of sport, politics and business.

3. SATTVA

Symbolised by the colour white, Sattva is a reflection of the clear light of awareness out of which alone truth, clear insight, direction and 'right action' can arise. As a natural quality this Guna is associated with radiance, light and lightness, and thereby also with the expansion and expansiveness of space. Its root meaning is 'being' (Sat). This Guna is favoured by many pseudo-spiritual types - being associated with perfect 'brightness' of spirit, 'balance' and 'well-being'. Yet the flip side of the 'balance' or 'well-being' experienced through the Sattva Guna can be a mere bland emotional equanimity, lack of empathy and blankness of mind – albeit disguised as meditative 'calm' and 'tranquillity'. Alternatively it finds expression as an idealisation of asceticism and 'spiritual' transcendence at the expense of full-blooded vitality, embodied presence and depth of soul. Just as 'black' is not intrinsically the colour of 'evil' so is white not intrinsically the colour of 'goodness' and spiritual purity – for it is also the colour of fearful pallor, of ghosts and skeletons - and, in the East, of death itself. Temperamentally the Sattva Guna unites the phlegmatic with the sanguine. Anatomically it is

associated with the lymphatic and immune systems, medically with anaemia and anorexia, and psychiatrically with schizophrenia. Sociologically it is associated with the realm of institutionalised religion and the search for inner peace and harmony through ‘spirituality’. Commercial media advertisers are very keen and clever exploiters of both the Sattva and Raja Gunas – whether it be through emphasising the Rajasic qualities of such commodities as cars or alcoholic drinks, or the Sattvic qualities of ‘well-being’ associated with ‘healthy’ foods, cosmetics, over-the-counter medications etc.

MEDITATING THE GUNAS WITH THE NEW YOGA

Each of the Gunas can be passively experienced or suffered in many different ways, not least as mental-emotional and somatic states of ‘disease’. Thus the Tamas Guna may be experienced as ‘just functioning’ on a minimal level, as dullness of mood or as a black hole of ‘depression’; Rajas as desire, vitality and dynamism or as agitation, anxiety or hyperactivity, and Sattva Guna as brightness of mood, well-being, clear-headedness or spiritual emptiness. Each moment of each day we can identify the Guna or combination of Gunas colouring our mood. None of the Gunas, in themselves, is a ‘cause’ of pain or pleasure, suffering or joy, limitation or liberation – these come about only through our *relationship* to the Gunas, and through their relationship to one another within us. It is important to be aware and affirm all our Gunic states as natural states of being. Only by allowing ourselves to be more *aware* of the Gunas can we both embrace and transcend them through that very Nirgunic awareness. Only by giving ourselves time to feel the *direct bodily sense* of each of the Gunas –not just interpreting or experiencing them in purely psychological or mental-emotional terms - will they naturally transform into another, thus freeing us from the negative ways in which we might otherwise indirectly

experience them – for example as so-called ‘negative’ emotions. Thus if, instead of just labelling a feeling as ‘anxiety’ for example, we understand it as the expression of ‘Raja’ Guna – attending to and staying with our direct bodily and *sensual* experience of it – it will gradually transform itself into another Guna. By (a) recognising our state of being as the expression of a specific Guna or ‘quality’ and (b) feeling and affirming it as a *sensual* quality, we achieve the traditional yogic goal of *transcending* the Gunas in the light of pure awareness (Nirguna). We do so by *transforming* our relationship to the Gunas - and with it our daily experience of them.

‘GU-RU’ AND THE FOURTH GUNA – ‘NIRGUNA’

Our awareness of a Guna is not itself tinged by that Guna, but free of it.

Paradoxically, though the three Gunas are themselves felt qualities or colourations of awareness, the pure awareness of them is itself a ‘fourth’ Guna, one free of and beyond all Gunas – ‘Nirguna’. Nirguna is characterised by a sense of the colourless *translucency* of pure awareness as such. The pure ‘white’ of the Sattva Guna is but the best *reflector* of the translucent, colourless light of pure awareness - of Nirguna. For light as such is not white - or any colour. That is why true transcendence of the Gunas does not come about simply by identification with the pure whiteness or ‘goodness’ of the Sattva Guna. It is also why Shiva, whilst being the personification of pure awareness and Nirguna, is also associated with all the Gunas. As the Swan (Hamsa) Shiva is white. Yet Shiva is also the Vedic ‘Rudra’, a name, which, like the Tamil word ‘Civa’, means ‘reddening’. Shiva is identified too with Tamas in the form of the blackness of the Shiva-lingam - that form which symbolises the emergence of all forms from formless darkness. Then again there is the iconic portrayal of Shiva with a blue neck. This is a mythic symbol of how he freely chose to swallow the Tamasic ‘poison’ churned up from the ocean by the other gods - and was capable of transforming it. Dark blue is another symbol of

Tamas. Light blue is the colour symbol of the colourless itself – of the sky and higher air or ‘aether’ of pure awareness that is Nirguna. This is symbolised by Shiva sitting atop Mount Kailasha, breathing the aether of pure awareness. According to the Guru-Gita, the syllable ‘Gu’ in ‘Guru’ refers to transcending the Gunas, whilst the syllable ‘Ru’ means devoid of form or quality. ‘Gu-Ru’ is one who transcends the Gunas or ‘qualities’. This can be achieved by sustaining a pure, quality-free awareness of them, whilst at the same time feeling and affirming them all within the clear light and space of that awareness.

THE GUNAS AS BASIC RELATIONSHIPS TO BEING

Behind the symbolism and experienced reality of the three Gunas and Nirguna lies a particular experience of *awareness* in relation to *being*.

The three Gunas express a triadic ‘ontology’ of awareness (from Greek *ontos* – being) that is central to The New Yoga as a new interpretation of the triadic or ‘Trika’ school of Tantra.

1. **TAMAS, BLACK** – the essentially Tamasic dimension of pure awareness is the experience of it as a negation of Being and of beings - as *Non-Being*. Yet Non-Being is not a black hole of nothingness or an annihilating void but the of all our hidden, obscured, unknown or unrealised *potentialities* of being - in contract to the *actualities* of our being and existence that belong to the realm of Being (‘Sat’).
2. **RAJAS, RED** – the essentially Rajasic dimension of pure awareness is the active *coming-to-be* or *becoming* of our potentialities of being out of the realm of Non-Being that is Tamas. Out of pure awareness arises the autonomous power of action and

actualisation that is felt as Rajas – the impulse to BE and BECOME all that we potentially ARE.

3. **SATTVA, WHITE** – the essentially Sattvic dimension of pure awareness is the experience of awareness as an affirmation of *Being* ('Sat'), feeling one's very being brought to light, illuminated by, reflecting and radiating the light of pure awareness.

4. **'NIRGUNA', COLOURLESS** – The Nirgunic dimension of is the experience of its pure, colourless, transcendent and translucent light. Whereas through Tamas, awareness is experienced as *Non-Being*, through Rajas as *Becoming* or *coming-to-be*, and through Sattva as *Being*, as Nirguna it is experienced as that light that first brings all beings to light from the darkness of *Non-Being* - letting them both **Be** (Sattva) and *Become* (Rajas) all that they potentially are (Tamas).

From the Bhagavadgita

Krishna said:

Sattva or goodness, Rajas or activity, and Tamas or inertia; these three Gunas of mind bind the imperishable soul to the body, Oh Arjuna.

Of these, Sattva, being calm, is illuminating and ethical. It fetters the embodied being,
The Jiva-atma, by attachment
To happiness and knowledge, O Arjuna.

O Arjuna, know that Rajas
Is characterized by intensity,
And is born of desire and attachment.
It binds the Jiva by attachment
To the fruits of action.

Know, O Arjuna, that Tamas, the deluder of Jiva,
Is born of inertia.
It binds by ignorance, laziness, and sleep.

Oh Arjuna, Sattva attaches one to happiness,
Rajas to action, and Tamas to ignorance
By covering the knowledge.

Sattva dominates by suppressing Rajas and Tamas;
Rajas dominates by suppressing Sattva and Tamas;
And Tamas dominates by suppressing Sattva and Rajas,
O Arjuna.

Arjuna said:

**What are the characteristics of those
Who have transcended the three Gunas,
And what is their conduct?
How does one transcend these three Gunas, O Lord Krishna?**

Krishna said:

One who neither hates the presence of
Enlightenment, activity, and delusion
Nor desires for them when they are absent; and
The one who remains like a witness;
Who is not moved by the Gunas,
Thinking that the Gunas only are operating;
Who stands firm and does not waver; and

The one who depends on the Lord
And is indifferent to pain and pleasure;
To whom a clod, a stone, and gold are alike;
To whom the dear and the unfriendly are alike;
Who is of firm mind; who is calm
In censure and in praise; and

The one who is indifferent
To honour and disgrace; who is the same
To friend and foe; who has renounced
The sense of doership; is said
To have transcended the Gunas.

GURU

EMBODYING AWARENESS

ON THE MEANINGS OF 'GURU'

SOME GIVEN MEANINGS:

A teacher of any sort.

A spiritual advisor or mentor.

A combination of spiritual educator and priest in Hindu religious culture.

A spiritual teacher with profound esoteric or transcendental awareness.

A spiritual teacher in touch with his own 'overself' or 'awareness self' (*Atman*).

A spiritual teacher (*Siddhaguru*) with highly developed yogic power (*Siddhis*).

A spiritual teacher with knowledge based on direct experience of ultimate religious truths and metaphysical truths (*Satguru*).

A spiritual teacher (*Dikshaguru*) capable of wordless transmission of inner awareness, knowing and divine grace (*Shaktipat*) and of directly awakening awareness of the divine in the student through initiation (*Diksha*).

A spiritual teacher so in touch with the divine as to be seen as the incarnation (*Avatar*) of a divinity or a source of divinely revealed knowledge.

SOME ROOT MEANINGS:

'Dispeller' or 'remover' (*ru*) of darkness (*gu*) – the darkness of ignorance.

One who can transcend the 'qualities' (*GUnas*) and the world of form (*RUpa*).

'Weighty' – from Proto-Indo-European root *grus*, as in Latin *gravis/gravitas*.

SOME QUESTIONS:

How are we to know if someone is a 'true guru' or 'satguru'?

How are we to know if someone is a true or great composer or mathematician? The answer is that we *cannot* know if we ourselves do not have sufficient appreciation of music or sufficient mathematical knowledge and skills to judge. The same applies to the knowledge necessary to judge whether someone is *satguru*. The student, *not knowing what guru knows*, also cannot fully *see who guru is* or experience what *being guru* means.

Who is 'guru'?

Since the role of *guru* is defined by the relationship of guru to the student or disciple (Shishya) 'who' the guru 'is' is partly defined by who and how he or she is seen to be by different students. That there are 'false' gurus offering limited, purely second-hand or highly *distorted* knowledge there is no doubt. Yet the long *guru* tradition is also replete with stories of students being disappointed by their meetings with a *satguru*, even appalled by their behaviour, or seeing only their human face and faults - their 'clay feet'. Only after years of nevertheless accepting and devoting themselves to this initially disappointing or even appalling 'guru' is the disciple able to finally see 'who' the guru 'is' - and come to experience them as exactly the type of *guru* they initially needed or wished for. Then they know the *satguru* as simply a higher disciple - the most devoted possible disciple (*shishya*) and worshipper (*pujari*) of that *guru* which is his most blissful, silent and divine

inner Self (*atman*). In all these ways who constitutes *guru* - or not - is determined relationally.

What is 'guru'?

Guru is first of all simply a *word* – one whose meaning derives from specific cultural contexts and traditions, and which is actually, currently and commonly applied to hundreds of thousands of people of different types, including Hindu priests and educators, and spiritual mentors and teachers of all sorts. Such spiritual teachers are all called *guru* even though they may be engaged in many different types of spiritual teaching (for example teaching music as a spiritual tradition), draw on many different Hindu religious or cultural traditions, and possess enormously varying levels and types of knowledge, awareness, ability and power.

‘GURU’ IS ALSO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

A ‘PRECEPTOR’ (ACHARYA):

‘Preceptor’ here means a person dedicated to the *protection, preservation, impartation and practice* of the basic *precepts* of a tradition of spiritual knowledge - not only through second-hand knowledge ‘about’ it but through knowledge that is experientially grounded and self-realised. A supreme *Acharya* is called ‘Abhi-nava-gupta’ – one who is capable of protecting (gupta) the ancient secrets of that tradition through its total renewal (*abhi-nava*). Yet if the tradition in question is connected with a lineage of *gurus* or even uses the word ‘guru’ in any way, such an *Acharya* must necessarily have direct knowledge of its inner meaning and truth – and therefore must be *guru* himself. A *guru*, on the other hand, may not necessarily be a preceptor, let alone a supreme preceptor. Yet only a *guru* who is *also* a supreme preceptor (*Adicharya*) can also be a genuine teacher of truth or *satguru*.

AN ACCOMPLISHED PRACTITIONER (SADHAKA):

Becoming *guru* is based on *lifelong* practice and/or development of different *yogas*. *Being guru* is itself a *yoga* of the highest order - being based on a lifetime’s practice and refinement of those *yogas* which the *guru* teaches. Conversely, a student’s dedication and patience in learning from and in learning to respect and serve their *guru* – is *their* highest *yoga*.

A PURPOSEFUL PRACTICE (SADHANA):

The practice of *being guru* has a 'tantric' purpose – that of guarding (*tra*) and expanding or spreading (*tan*) awareness, all with the intent of awakening others to the divine reality of the absolute and all-pervasive awareness that is 'God' and to the auspicious benefits it can shower on them. In order to do so *guru* must be able to identify with the divine awareness, conceptualise its nature, experience, practice and exercise the powers (*shaktis*) inherent in it, and cultivate these power as inner psychic abilities (*siddhis*). Then *guru* can also use these powers for purposes of initiation (*diksha*) and transmission of divine grace (*shaktipat*). A *satguru* is therefore also a *diksha guru* and *siddhaguru*, and someone who is religiously devoted to and worships at the feet of the supreme *guru* - The Divine - in order to receive and transmit divine- metaphysical comprehensions, awareness-bliss, grace and power.

RELATED TERMS:

GURUKUL

A *Gurukul* is a residential school in which students and *guru* or teacher live in close proximity or within the same house. The students learn from *guru* and also help *guru* in his day-to-day life, including the carrying out of mundane chores. This is not an expression of inequality of caste, class, gender or social standing but of *Guruseva* – that 'service' to *guru* which allows him to continuously carry out the work that *guru* alone is capable of doing within and for the world - and must therefore engage in without

cessation except for rest, renewal and reinvigoration through his own meditative worship.

GURUSEVA

Guru can be compared to a human power amplifier and transformer. The more active interest, dedication, respect, generosity (*dana*) and service (*seva*) he receives from his students, the more they will receive back for themselves, both directly and indirectly, from *guru* and from within themselves – yet powerfully amplified and transformed.

GURUYOGA / GURUDARSHAN

The practice of opening one's awareness to *guru* more fully, both inwardly and outwardly, and taking time to meditate his words more deeply. In particular it is through *Gurudarshan* - opening oneself to and meditating the presence of *guru* when the latter is absorbed in silent meditation that *guruyoga* brings its richest fruits - allowing the disciple to sense the divine-transcendental qualities of awareness that the *guru* is enjoying.

DIKSHAGURU / GURUDIKSHA

A *guru* who simply teaches is called *shiksha guru* as opposed to a *diksha guru* who can also bestow initiation (*diksha*). *Guru's* power of initiation and 'transmission' of awareness can be exercised instantly and/or over years, both outwardly and inwardly, visibly and /or invisibly. It can take the outward form of words or *mantra*, of a single glance or sustained gaze, or

the descent of divine grace (*Shaktipat*) in his presence. These can induce experiences of many different sorts - yet all triggered by *guru's* intent and initiatory transmissions to them. The most powerful form of *gurudiksha* is one-to-one, close up meditative communion with *guru* – the ultimate form of *gurudarshan*.

Gurupuja

If the *guru* performs *puja* within the shrine of the *ashram* or *gurukul* this brings great benefits not only to the *guru*, renewing and enhancing his health, powers and wisdom. It can bring immense benefits to all members of his spiritual family or *kula* - providing a medium of transmission to all his students and allowing *guru* to act as a channel through which the clarifying light and awareness bliss (*chitananda*) of the divine can pervade the household.

CITATIONS

“For most Western students, guru-yoga is the great stumbling block in their discipleship. ... The goal is not being swallowed by the teacher’s personality but merging with his or her true nature, which is the singular Reality that also is one’s own true nature.”

Georg Feuerstein

“The attitude of the student towards his teacher is of great importance to the student, because it lays an unseen cable from him to the teacher, and along that cable pass to and fro the messages and help which the teacher has to give. The teacher can never lose contact with the student by going to another part of the world. That unseen cable is elastic and it will stretch for thousands of miles, because the World-Mind consciousness will travel almost instantly and anywhere. Contact is not broken by increasing physical distance. It is broken by the change of heart, the alteration of mental attitude by the student towards the teacher. If the attitude is wrong, then the cable is first weakened and finally snapped. Nothing can then pass through and the student is really alone.

The projected ideas and concentrated thoughts of a man who has made a permanent connection with his Overself are powerful enough to affect beneficently the inner life of other men. But even here nature requires the latter to establish their own inner connection with him in turn. And this can be done only by the right mental attitude of trust and devotion.

The Master may add his spiritual vitality or inspiration temporarily to the disciple's by merely wishing him well. If this is done during the Master's prayer or meditation, the disciple's subconscious will spontaneously pick up the telepathically projected flow and sooner or later bring it into consciousness. If, however, something more precise and more positive is required, he may consciously will and focus it to the disciple while both are in a state of meditation at the same time.

Where the teacher is a man of genuine Overself-consciousness, a further force is brought into play. There is a spontaneous reaction to the student's thought about the teacher, but this comes from the Overself direct to the

student... It is enough if he retires daily from contact with the world for a half hour or hour and turns his attention towards the Divine alone and opens himself as a gate through which it shall pass for the enlightenment of others. During that same period, all those who are mentally devoted to him will then automatically receive the transmitted impulse without them even being consciously in the adept's mind at the time. But such a guide is rare and such cases are consequently exceptional.”

Paul Brunton

“Acquire the transcendental knowledge from a Self-realized Master by humble reverence, by sincere inquiry, and by service.”

Bhagavad Gita

“He who makes an effort to please the Guru [through dedication to self-discipline and service] receives the [secret knowledge].”

“The first sign of success is confidence that [one’s efforts] will bear fruit. The second is being firm in that faith. The third is devotion to the Guru.”

Shiva-Sambhita

“Gurus who know petty mantras and herbal concoctions are numerous. But difficult to find here on earth is a Guru who knows the mantras described in the Nigamas, Agamas and Tantras.”

“O Beloved, he whose vision is stable without object, whose awareness is firm without support, and whose breath is stable without effort is a Guru.”

“O Beloved, he who really knows the identity of the body and macrocosm ... is a Guru and none other.”

Kula-Anarva-Tantra

“The Guru sets in motion his own consciousness in the consciousness of the disciple ... thus initiation that bestows liberation is given.”

“I bow to Lord Shiva, Vasugupta, Somananda, Uptalacharya, Abhinavagupta and Kshemaraja..” [homage to the lineage of Shaivist gurus]

Abhinavagupta

“All the sages and seers look upon Guru as an embodiment of the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara [Shiva] ... The Guru is Maheshvara when he destroys the world of concepts stirring in his disciple’s heart. The Guru is Brahma, the creator, when he purifies his disciple’s heart and sows in it the seed of highest truth. He is Vishnu when he protects this newly created wisdom of yoga within the disciple. ”

“In his purest essence [Guru] is without form and quality ... It is to impart knowledge of the Self to the disciple that the Guru takes a form. The Guru does this to awaken his disciples, to bestow yogic knowledge, and uplift the world ... When a seeker is blessed by the Guru his entire body is transformed, and he begins to move through worlds previously unknown to him.”

Guru Muktananda

‘GURU’

All that breathes without breath,

All that sees without eyes, moves without limbs,

Hears without ears, touches without hands, is Guru.

All that is shared with Guru is purified and transformed by Guru.

All awareness that is wholly turned to Guru comes back enriched by Guru.

All services rendered to Guru are services rendered to one’s Self and the World.

All that is received from Guru with awareness enables one gradually to see Guru.

All efforts to open oneself to the grace of Guru invite initiation from Guru.

All efforts to truly see and feel Guru bring effects without effort.

All that sees and is seen through the eyes of Guru is Guru.

All that is spoken through the words of Guru is Guru.

All that is enfilled and enfolded by Guru is Guru.

All that is Guru is Maheshvara.

Victory to the ancient Gurus ... who are faultless pilots through the turbulence of the waves of the sea of sacred texts.

Hail to the primordial Guru Shambhu, Shrikantha - the great Lord [Shiva] who is full of the light of awareness, whose greatness is beyond all evaluation, and who cuts asunder the bondage ... of bound souls.

The Lord has set in motion the heart of the Guru with compassion for lifting up those who have taken refuge [at his feet]. That glorious Guru has set me on the path of truth.

Having ... seen creatures who are simply carriers of the burden of [false] Gurus and their blind followers, I have prepared a trident of wisdom in order to cut asunder their bondage.

O goddesses, full of streams of ardent delight rushing from you lavishly as you move about freely [Khechari] in the domain of the Heart, and acting as the sharp cutting edge of the wisdom spike that is proficient in cutting asunder the crores of my fetters; my mind, speech and body, free of the fear of transmigratory existence, are already surrendered at your feet. May You therefore confer your favour on me exceedingly and quickly, and dwell in my Heart as Grace abounding.

O goddesses, having your beautiful and ingenious continued existence in the Seed of the Heart, [and] assigning [me] the position of Guru, it is You who have employed me in the act of exposition etc. Therefore forgive this capriciousness of my speech and mind.

Abhinavagupta

THE PLACE OF 'GURU' IN THE NEW YOGA

In The New Yoga, being Guru has many dimensions - Guru being both a person, a practice exercised through spiritual powers, a relational principle and a *responsibility* exercised with a definite purpose. As a person, Guru is a human embodiment of the Awareness Self. Guru is not simply a person with mature awareness however, but one who by virtue of this is empowered to help others to expand, deepen, express and embody their own awareness. The practice of Guru – that of being, embodying and imparting awareness - is based on a heightened capacity for *being aware* and for *becoming other* – for aware identification with the souls of others. Guru is one who has the necessary soul powers or Siddhis to shape-shift their soul body in resonance with anything and anyone, and to “enter the body of another without leaving their own” (Abhinavagupta). The Guru principle is that of educating people in awareness through mutual devotion and meditation – Guru devoting him- or herself to meditating each student’s experience with awareness, and the disciples in turn meditating Guru as an embodiment of their true identity - the divine Awareness Self within them. Just as it is the responsibility of the parent to cultivate the healthy development of the child’s potentialities and of the adult self latent within the child, so it is the responsibility of the Guru to cultivate the disciple’s potentialities of awareness and deepen the maturity of their awareness. To do so requires that Guru possess powers of initiation (Diksha) through which they can both destroy the disciple’s accumulation of unaware identifications (Karma) and bestow the disciple with a new and more aware experience of self – and to identification with their divine Awareness Self. The aim of Guru is not to either annihilate the student’s current self-experience or ego identity - or force them to surrender it to their own - but rather to become someone aware of their own ego identity as but one small expression and embodiment of their Awareness Self. Guru can be either man or woman, but like awareness and its powers, the inner self and body is neither male nor female –and also both.

THE 'SIDDHA GURU' IN THE NEW YOGA

In traditional tantra various 'perfections' or 'siddhis' were said to accompany liberation though awareness or 'moksha'.

- **Parkaya Pravesh:** Parkaya Pravesh means one's soul entering into the body of some other person.
- **Anima Siddhi:** Becoming smaller than the smallest (an atom);
- **Mahimā Siddhi:** Becoming larger than the largest;
- **Laghimā Siddhi:** Becoming lighter than the lightest;
- **Vayu Gaman Siddhi:** Through this siddhi a person can become capable of flying in the skies and traveling from one place to another in just a few seconds.

In terms similar to those of Kashmir Shaivism, in The New Yoga these and other siddhis are understood in terms of distinct relationships to and experiences of Awareness. Thus **Anima Siddhi** is the power to experience the aware inwardness of even the smallest things; **Mahima** is the power to experience to enlarge one's awareness body and/or to experience a space or body of any as a body of awareness; **Laghima** is the ability to experience the weightlessly, spacious character of pure awareness; **Prapti** is the power of being or abiding in the essential Self; **Ishitva Siddhi** is the power of abiding in and experiencing pure awareness as such; **Karana Siddhi** the power of experiencing one's body as an embodiment of the Divine Awareness pervading the cosmos - of cosmic space (Kha) and the cosmic aether of awareness (Akasha); **Prakamya Siddhi** is the power of experiencing the entire manifest world as the play of the Divine Awareness.

In The New Yoga, siddhis are seen as experienced powers of the Awareness Body or 'soul body' rather than the physical body. The comprehensive range of practices or 'yogas' of awareness that constitute The New Yoga facilitate the experience and exercise of a whole new variety of such soul body powers – siddhis of the sort practiced by the empowered guru or siddha guru. It is these that make The New Yoga into a new original form of 'siddha yoga':

- The ability to experience the sensory qualities as the expression of soul qualities: shapes, tones and textures of awareness or soul.
- The ability to surround the entire body of a thing or person in the outer field of one's spatial awareness.
- The ability to see through people's eyes into their souls.
- The ability to sense the body of another as a sensory image of their soul and to resonate with its inner qualities.
- The ability to enter the body of another with one's own awareness or soul (Parkaya Pravesh Siddhi)
- The ability to feel the soul of another in our own body and our soul in theirs.
- The ability to perceive the shape of another person's soul body.
- The ability to shift the bodily shape, tone and texture of one's soul.
- The ability to let one's awareness or soul flow into the body of another, imparting new shapes, tones and textures to it.
- The ability to sense the soul qualities pervading the inwardness of another person's body or parts of that body.
- The ability to 'meld' one's soul with that of another, dissolving the apparent physical boundaries that separate us as beings.
- The ability to modulate the tone, texture and quality of the psychological 'spaces', outer or inner that we are in.
- The ability to engage in intimate soul body intercourse with other human beings, with or without physical contact or intercourse.

- The ability to engage in soul body ‘intra-course’ with one’s higher soul or oversoul (Mahatma), with discarnate souls and with the transcendental soul qualities that constitute particular deities.
- The ability to attune to and identify with the soul qualities of all beings, to shape-shift one’s soul body in resonance with them, and reveal them through one’s physical form.
- The ability to perceive the divine, trans-personal form of another person’s soul body.
- The ability to feel one’s awareness or soul extending beyond the boundaries of the physical body into an infinite cosmic space of awareness - to experience the entire universe as our body.
- The ability to experience one’s own body and that of others as a unique portion of the divine awareness, an embodiment of the infinite space and aether of awareness.
- The ability to absorb the pure vibration (‘Spanda’) of potentiality or power of action that is ‘Shakti’ directly from space – experienced as the pure aether of awareness that is ‘Shiva’.
- The ability to contract one’s awareness to an infinitesimal point at the base of one’s spine, and experience it as a point of infinite power coiled up at the core of all things – ‘Kundalini’.
- The ability to let one’s awareness rise up from the crown of one’s head and expand into the great, all encompassing sky of awareness that is the all-surrounding space of the outer universe.
- The ability to let one’s awareness flow down from our heads and mind space into an unbounded inner soul space of awareness that is the true womb of all outer universes.
- The ability to take the awareness of others down into the depths of their soul and to release the pure power of awareness rise from those depths as ‘serpent power’ in their body – ‘Kundalini’.

- The ability to experience space as an infinite field of pure awareness, pervaded by infinitesimal units of awareness from which all things are created – the ‘aether’ (‘Akasha’) or ‘life-breath’ of soul that is ‘Psyche’ or ‘Prana’.
- The ability to experience time as an infinite time-space of awareness within which all things, beings and events – past, present and future – are constantly and simultaneously presencing, coming to be and ‘be-coming’.
- The ability to extend the temporal horizon of one’s awareness ‘before’ one’s birth and beyond one’s death, recollecting and anticipating the nature of one’s life before life and after death.
- The ability to identify with divine-transcendental qualities of awareness soul – to experience one’s soul as a body of pure bliss, space, light, air, fire, watery fluidity or dense matter.

MURTI

ON THE WONDERS OF HINDU IDOL WORSHIP

The belief that an icon or idol is a cruder, more naive or ‘primitive’ object of religious reverence or worship – or even an unholy object – is itself as crude as the belief that painting, sculpture and music are cruder or more ‘primitive’ mediums of expression of spiritual truth than the written or spoken word. In reality they can be wondrous mediums. As for the attack on idol worship by the Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – this is nothing if not hypocritical. For not only do they have their own idols – the Christian crucifix or the Muslim Kaaba for example. They also revere their own holy books as sacred *objects* in themselves – not only decorating them or filling them with iconic images but going so far as to effectively elevate them to the status of religious ‘idols’. Thus in Jewish religious practice, the holy scroll of the Torah is consecrated, housed in a sacred chamber, veiled and unveiled, carried round in procession, its tassels kissed etc.

What distinguishes the Abrahamic faiths from Hinduism and other ‘Dharmic’ religions such as Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, is not their rejection of idol worship as such therefore, but rather their exclusive iconisation and idolisation of *the word* – not least in its concrete, material manifestation as the stone tablets of Moses. The idolisation of a Holy Book is a recognition of the truth that it is more than a material artefact of paper and ink. Similarly however, there is more to a temple, cathedral, synagogue or mosque than brick or stone, more to music than man-made material instruments and the sound vibrations they produce, just as there is more to a painting than its pigments, more to a great religious sculpture or ‘idol’ than wood, stone or bronze or some idle fancy of the sculptor. That is why, in the Hindu tradition, worship of sculpted idols (Pratima) is no mere religious prop for the illiterate, the ignorant or the spiritual neophyte, even though there may be some who consider it so. For as Swami Sivananda writes:

“[Only] a pseudo-Vedantin ... feels that his Advaita [non-duality with the divine] will evaporate if he prostrates [before an idol]. Study the lives of the Tamil Saints ... They had the highest Advaitic realisation. They saw Lord Shiva everywhere, and yet they ... prostrated before the idol and sang hymns ... The idol in the temple was all Chaitanya or consciousness for them. It was not a mere block of stone.”

And yet there *are* indeed sacrilegious forms of idolatry - two of which in particular dominate today's world. One is the 'bibliolatry' of literalist religious fundamentalisms - which take the words of their sacred texts literally, never going beyond their 'letter' to their many-layered meanings or polysemous 'spirit'. This is like mistaking the menu with the meal. The other form of sacrilegious idolatry is what Marx called "the fetishism of the commodity" and "the monotheism of money" - in other words the religion of consumerism, which makes idols of branded products and uses glossy media icons to promote their worship. An advertising mantra such as "Real chocolate. Real feeling" says it all - showing how manufacturers seek an almost religious feeling of devotion to their brands and iconic logos by a purely artificial association with the entire range of authentic human feelings and values, from love to spirituality - even worship itself.* Just as Hinduism offers an alternative to the global disarray and conflicts brought about by the Abrahamic religions, so does genuine religious idol worship offer an alternative to - and a powerful weapon against - the religious fetishism, idolisation, and pseudo-spiritualisation of crass material commodities, whether chocolate, skin creams or cars. Even religious icons and idols are today reduced to the status of mere decorative items, whether sacred African carvings or statues of Buddha on the suburban mantelpiece of the bourgeoisie.

From a Hindu perspective, meditation of a 'Murti', whether in the form of an image, symbol or three-dimensional idol, no more negates an acknowledgement of God's formless or invisible omnipresence in all things than does carrying round and studying an artefact of paper and ink in the form of a Holy Book such as the Bible or Koran. On the contrary, precisely by virtue of its tangible, material form, the Murti makes it easier to experience the presence of the divine in all things, to understand that

things are just as much symbols of the divine as words are, and to come to a direct experience of things (and not just the words with which we name them) as the manifest word of the divine, its material metaphors, its solidified speech. The Murti does not hinder but offers a far more direct route to a living experience of the essence of the divine, revealing it as something neither formless and immaterial nor reducible to a particular form, but rather as a dynamic relation between formlessness and form - in tantric terms, the relation between pure awareness (Shiva) and its innate power (Shakti) of formative activity and material manifestation.

The multiplicity of human forms taken by icons, idols or 'murti' of the Hindu gods does not imply any sort of 'anthropomorphic' idea of God of the sort that belongs exclusively to the Abrahamic religions – with their claim that Man was made "in the image of God". In contrast, the human form given to Murtis of the Hindu gods is designed to awaken the worshipper's experience of their own human bodily form as a fleshly embodiment and expression of 'spirit' – of that higher 'air' or 'aether' of awareness (Akasha) that ensouls all bodies as their vital breath (Prana) and from which matter itself is formed. This aether may be perceived only as the seemingly empty space 'in' which the Murti stands as a mere object. In reality space itself (Kha) pervades every object in it, just as it itself is pervaded by the aether of which all objects are formed. As the physicist Paul Dirac noted: "A place is nothing; nor even space, unless at its heart – a figure stands." The sacredness of the space in which the Murti stands is both distinct and inseparable from it. It is what allows the Murti to stand out or 'ex-ist' in its sacrality, just as it is the presence of the Murti that makes the space around it sacred, offering an experience of the divine aether of awareness (Akasha) surrounding and pervading it.

Yet just as a spiritual text or scripture may in itself be more or less superficial or deep in meaning, and the 'letter' of its word a more or less distorted human expression or translation of its wordless inner meaning or 'spirit' - so too can a Murti be more or less crudely or beautifully crafted as an expression of spiritual truth. It is no accident that the most wondrously powerful Murtis, particularly in the form of sculptures, are not just 'objects' of reverence, worship or even meditation but show the very gods

they represent *in states of meditation*. A Murti of this sort is not just a particular divinity given a characteristic human form that enables one to recognise, name and worship it as this or that ‘god’. Instead its form is spiritually crafted to reveal the nature taken by the human form when it itself becomes an *embodiment* of particular states and qualities of meditative union with God – with the divine as such. Murti meditation is not ‘worship’ understood as mere ‘obedience’ to a particular divinity through its image. Nor is it even meditation ‘of’ the divine in the form of a particular divinity. It is co-resonance with a divinity - one whose image is crafted in such a way that its whole bodily form and bearing itself embodies a profound resonance with the divine as such. Sivananda again:

“Even as you can catch the sound waves of people all over the world through the radio receiving set, it is possible to commune with the all-pervading Lord through the medium of an idol. The divinity of the all-pervading God is vibrant in every atom of creation. There is not a speck of space where he is not.”

Just as a radio is more than a box of electronic parts but a vehicle of transmission, so is a Murti. And just as the images on a television screen are not inside the ‘box’ itself but relayed to it from without, so is the Murti itself an embodied transmission of spiritual truth carried on the waves of the divine-cosmic aether. Meditation of its bodily form (Rupa) is a way of entering into resonance with it, a resonance that can be tuned to different frequencies and ‘channels’, and that result in feeling experiences, visions and ‘hearings’. It was such hearings (‘Shruti’), borne of meditative inner silence, that first inspired the *words* of the Vedas, and all the world’s holy scriptures.

To those capable of entering into deep inner silence and resonance with the Murti – on any number of different wavelengths of spiritual attunement - its visible form will transform before their eyes. It will cease to be a mere object of their worshipful gaze, but communicate wordless wisdom to them through its own gaze. Indeed it will also speak to them directly - in the form of ‘hearings’ transmitted to their inner ear. To come to know the divine through meditating the Murti of a chosen divinity is a

truly profound and ever-new experience - an inexhaustible source of revelations, and not the mere repetition of a prescribed ritual. The Murti itself ceases to be a mere image or 'idol' of a divinity. Instead through it, the divinity itself becomes one's most intimate partner and most revered Guru in meditating, understanding and experiencing the divine – capable of answering one's deepest personal or religious questions through the knowing awareness it embodies and transmits, both in inner silence and through the word, inwardly heard. 'Puja' – ritual worship - is unthinkable without 'idol worship' – sitting in the presence of the Murti and using one's whole body and all its senses to resonate with the awareness it embodies and transmits. Through *co-resonance*, 'idol worship' becomes an experience of the particular truth of Tantric Puja – that 'to worship a god is to become that god'.

“Regular worship, Puja and other modes of demonstrating our inner feeling recognition of Divinity in the idol unveils the Divinity latent in it. This is truly a wonder and a miracle. The idol speaks. It will answer your questions and solve your problems. The God in you has the power to awaken the latent Divinity in the idol ... Puja makes the idol shine with Divine resplendence. God is then enshrined in the idol ... the idol will perform miracles. The place where it is installed is at once transformed into a temple.”

Sivananda

As Sivananda also reminds us, a Sanskrit word for meditative contemplation is 'Upasana' – which simply means 'sitting near'. The meaning and value of Murti meditation in ritual worship or Puja derives from the basic act of 'sitting near' the Murti of a god or divinity – for doing so brings us into the nearness and presence of God and Divinity.

“Upasana is approaching the chosen ideal or object of worship by meditating on it in accordance with the teachings (Shastras) and the Guru ... Upasana helps the devotee to sit near the Lord or to commune with him. It purifies the heart and steadies the mind. It fills the mind with ... pure love for the Lord. It gradually transmutes man into a divine being.”

Yet for those to whom ‘meditation’ is merely a method of steadying the mind and calming the soul, and not also a matter of feeling the Divine from the very *heart* of one’s soul – a medium of *living relationship* uniting the Self with a divine Other - such spiritual words will mean nothing without Upasana - sitting in the nearness of a material Murti, and experiencing it in all its wonders. For the sitter or Upasaka, after the ritual process of lighting oil lamps and scenting the air with incense, the meditational process begins with ensouling their own body and breathing with ever-greater awareness, particularly those regions of their body that feel tired or tense, muddled or dissonant in tone. The sitter then ensouls the body of the Murti with their own awareness, using their own body to outwardly sense and resonate with it from without and within. In time the Murti will in turn ensoul the inwardness of the sitter’s body from within and from without - allowing them to feel their own fleshly form as no less a manifestation of the divine-cosmic aether around them than the material form of the Murti itself. Union with the divinity ensouling the Murti comes to a climax when the worshipper kneels to touch the foot of the Murti, and peer up at its face allowing an even more powerful direct transmission of awareness from it - one that will pervade if not overwhelm the body and mind of the worshipper, bringing with it not only a culmination and ultimate consecration of the union they have experienced through the sitting, but an experiential answer to the deepest questions they may have felt or consciously meditated in the course of it. Murti meditation is the most ancient, primordial and powerful form of ‘channelling’ or ‘direct transmission of ‘gnosis’ (Jnana). For every truly ‘sacred’ Murti – one crafted out of a higher awareness – is in turn a powerful medium for transmitting and receiving that awareness. The unique bodily face and figure of every sacred Murti, like the unique bodily face and figure of every human being, is the *embodiment* of a unique centre and direction of meditative awareness, and a unique mood or quality of the divine awareness itself. Every such Murti can thus teach us something new - becoming a profound and enduring bodily medium of spiritual *transmission* and *transformation*. If this is called ‘idol worship’ however, then this term should not be misunderstood – in theory or practice. For the

word 'worship' derives from the Indo-European root *wer* or *uer* – 'to turn'. The starting point of Murti meditation is finding the courage to *turn* and fully face the Murti outwardly - and then, closing our eyes, learning to visualise and feel to the nature and quality of its own meditative gaze within us. The *turning point* of 'idol worship' comes when – having turned to, faced, recognised and meditated the Murti as an embodiment of the divine – we begins to feel how *it in turn* begins to turn to, face, perceive and meditate *us* in the same way – thus ceasing to be a mere 'idol' but instead becoming spiritually *alive*.

Notes:

* An advertisement (2007) showing dark-skinned neo-Mayan tribe worshipping the image of a leading branded ice-cream bar and ending with the slogan 'I am a worshipper'.

MANTRA

Yet to be written

ON THE TRUE MEANING OF MANTRA

PREFACE

This compilation of writings is intended to dispel such grossly degraded teachings on sound and Mantra as currently pervade most of the New Age literature on Yoga and Tantra. The blatant ignorance of these teachings (and their authors' ignorance of the most significant of original tantric treatises on Mantra) makes itself starkly evident in a whole host of ways, of which the following are but one small sample:

1. Through unashamed linguistic ignorance of what, phonemically, constitutes a pure vowel – as opposed to a double-vowel (diphthong) or triple vowel (triphthong). Thus diphthongs such as /ai/ as in 'eye' or /ei/ as in 'rein' are frequently presented as if they were single vowels that could be sustained in chant – something vocally and phonemically impossible. The tantras on the other hand devote immense attention to the difference between the 'Ah' vowel (as in 'far'), represented by the letter 'a' and the 'Ee' vowel (as in 'sheep'), represented phonemically by the letter 'i'.
2. Through a confusion between purely abstract and *quantitative* concepts of sound deriving their false authority from modern science - concepts such as 'frequency' for example - and their *qualitative* counterparts, the inner *feeling tone* or 'Dhvani' of sounds for example, which is central to tantric linguistics and phonemics.
3. Through a total failure to distinguish between the physical body and the inwardly *felt* body - thus also between *inner* sound, the *inner* voice and *inner* ear and their physical counterparts. This in turn leads to a *de facto* rejection of one of the most fundamental teachings of Tantra on Mantra: "Those are not really mantras which are only a matter of [outward] enunciation." *Sarvajanottara Tantra*.

The mantric essence or *Dhvani* of a sound, syllable or word is nothing that can be vocally enunciated, sung, chanted or felt as some form of physical vibration with a specific 'frequency'. One reason is that sonic utterance of any form is invariably a vocal modulation of our physical *out-*

breath. That is why audibly chanting, singing or ‘toning’ the primordial vowel ‘Ah’ that is sacred within tantra, is totally incompatible with *experiencing* its Dhvani or ‘feeling tone’ – which is a blissful, silent and soundless *in-breath* of pure awareness. Similarly, uttering sacred mantra such as ‘OM’ *with* one’s body is incompatible with experiencing the *Dhvani* of the ‘M’ sound, which has to do with feeling one’s body *itself* as something *uttered* – emanated and manifested *as* a sound from soundless depths of the divine awareness. The ‘meaning of mantra’ in The New Yoga is rooted in a general recognition that the basic speech sounds or phonemes that our bodies make use of to utter words are but an echo of inner sounds *with which our bodies themselves and those of all things are uttered*. For bodies, like sounds, are but phonically shaped tones, qualities and textures of awareness.

ON THE MANY MEANINGS OF 'OM NAMA(H) SHIVAYA'

1. Accepted meanings and interpretations of 'Nama(h)'

“Sanskrit ‘nama’ means "bow, obeisance, reverential salutation, adoration". ‘te’ is the dative of the personal pronoun ‘tvam’, "you". A literal translation of ‘nama-te’ is thus "reverential salutation to you". It is commonly accompanied by a slight bow made with the hands pressed together, palms touching, in front of the chest.

In a religious context this word can be taken to mean any of these:

- The Spirit in me meets the same Spirit in you.
- I greet that place where you and I are one.
- I salute the divine in you.
- I salute the Light of God in you.
- I bring together my body and soul, focusing my divine potential, and bow to the same potential within you.
- I bow to the divine in you.
- I recognize that within each of us is a place where Divinity dwells, and when we are in that place, we are One.

“In other words, it recognizes the equality of all, and pays honour to the sacredness and interconnection of all, as well as to the source of that interconnection.” (anon.)

From 'nama-te' also comes the basic spiritual greeting 'namaste' – used to say hello or goodbye.

What has this to do with the Great Mantra (Mahantra) of Shiva?

Nama(h) Shivay(a)

Om Nama(h) Shivay(a)

It is commonly forgotten that the Sanskrit 'nama' also simply means 'name'. To address someone by name is itself a form of respectful salutation. It is therefore from the basic meaning of 'nama' as 'name' that the salutatory and gestural interpretation of the 'Nama(h) Shivay(a)' as 'I bow to Shiva' comes, for its basic meaning is nothing but 'I acknowledge you – Shiva – by your name'.

2. The inner relation of name and form - 'Nama-Rupa'

Philosophically however, 'nama' is not only a word meaning 'name' but is part of an important Sanskrit philosophical term - 'nama-rupa'. This refers to the entire world of names (nama) and forms (rupa) and thus embraces every single aspect of experienced reality - whether feelings, sensations, perceptions or even thoughts and concepts - that have form or can be named in language. It also expresses the understanding that not only do we name things according to their form but also the converse – that through their very form things announce or name themselves to us.

3. The felt nature of 'onomatopoieic' words

From the Sanskrit 'nama' came the Greek 'onoma' along with its Germanic translations as 'Name' or 'name'. From 'onoma' comes the term 'onomatopoieic' - which refers to any word which does not only name something referentially but whose very sounds directly evoke a felt sense of what the word names - for example such words as 'fluff', 'slush' or 'crack'. The root meaning of the word 'onomatopoieia' is the same as 'namarupa', since '-poieia' derives from the Greek verb 'poiesis' – to make

and thus give 'form' ('rupa') to. 'Onomatopoeic words are names (nama) which give resonant phonemic form (rupa) to their own conventional meaning or sense and can thus also amplify or evoke a direct felt sense of whatever it is they refer too. The wordless inner sense or 'resonance' of words - simply as sounds - is called their 'phonaesthetic sense'. An 'onomatopoeic' word is one whose phonaesthetic sense is in resonance with its given meaning or sense - allowing the latter to 're-sound' (resonare) more strongly by giving it form in sound.

4. The formative power of the primordial syllable OM

'OM' is not regarded in yoga as a name or word representing any 'thing', but rather as the mother of all mantra - an echo of a primordial sound or 'vibration' ('spanda') not only pervading but forming all things. It is the 'Divine Mother' of both all words and all worlds - and thus also of the entire realm of names and forms that is Namarupa. The latter is understood as a differentiation of the primordial vibration made manifest in the form of the entire multiplicity of sounds, alphabets and languages, sense-perceptions and verbal concepts, words and worlds - all of which ultimately belong to the world of form. As a simple syllable 'OM' can form part of an ordinary word or name. Alternatively it can be repeated, chanted or sung as a mantra. Yet its vocal or even mental utterance is no more than an echo of its reality as that 'inner sound' through which the entire universe of forms is itself 'uttered' - out of the wordless, womblike depths of a primordial and formless silence.

5. From OM to NAMAHA

As 'the mother of all mantra', OM is the primordial sound of the Great Mother, and is the source of her garland (Mala) of 51 skulls -representing the 51 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet (Varna), each of which is the skull-like echo of a primordial inner sound. The 'Varna-Mala' is thus the primordial sound matrix or 'Matrika' of all languages and all knowledge bound to language - all limited worlds of names and forms or Namarupa.

Hence the fourth of the Shiva Sutras, the foundational scripture of Shaivism. “The matrix [of sound] is the foundation of [conditional] knowledge.” (translation by Georg Feuerstein). In uttering the OM before NAMAHA and SHIVAYA, the worshipper not only makes obeisance to the Great Mother, descending into the inward depths of her dark and formless womb of potential names and forms. The worshipper also recognises and identifies with the Great God Shiva himself in his aspect of being wholly immersed in obeisance and reverential meditation of the Great Goddess or Mahadevi. The utterance of OM is therefore already ‘NAMAHA’ AS an act of obeisance, being identical with immersion in a primordial realm of potentiality preceding and prior to all names (NAMA). The meditative movement from the OM to NAMAHA quite literally takes the worshipper from the nameless, wordless realm of formless awareness (OM) that is the divine Mother to their own limited world of names and forms (NAMAHA). The meditator can then meditate the totality of their own experienced self or ‘Jiva’ in its every possible aspect - bodily and mental, sensory and perceptual, emotional and intellectual – as part of that world of *limited experience* and knowledge which is NAMARUPA, recognising even the slightest sensation, feeling or thought as but another limited Form taken by awareness, a letter or group of letters (Name) in the *living language* of their experienced self and world.

6. From NAMAHA to SHI-VA-YA

All names and forms have their source in the depths of that nameless, formless realm of potentiality that resounds as OM – the Mother. They are at the same time also permeated by the unbounded awareness that is Shiva - an awareness that embraces both the formless and the formed, the nameless and the named, the potential and the actual, the Mother and all her manifestations, the womb of all experienced selves and the experienced self itself. Moving from NAMAHA to SHIVAYA the meditator thus now has the opportunity to pass from being aware of every aspect of their limited, experienced self and world to identifying with the very awareness of it - thus becoming that Self (atman) which IS awareness (chaitanyatman)

and therefore also identical with Shiva Himself, who is nothing but awareness. The three syllables of his Mantric name can then become a progressive elemental experience of that awareness – first as the shining and all-consuming fire (SHI), then as the very breath or ‘air-ness’ of awareness pervading all things (VA), and finally as the pure all-embracing space of awareness it pervades (YA).

7. The Fivefold Syllables (Panchakshara)

The syllables NA-MA-SHI-VA-YA together constitute the sacred five (‘Pancha’) constituents of Shiva Mahamantra. They are traditionally associated either with Shiva’s five faces, with the five elements and/or with the ‘fivefold act of Shiva’. Such abstract and separate sets of metaphysical associations or ‘correspondences’ are easy to abstractly declare or propound and yet they give no suggestion of the profound inner ways in which their meaning can be directly sensed and comprehended by the meditator in a feeling way. The association of the syllables ‘NA’ and ‘MA’ with the elements ‘earth’ and ‘water’ for example, means nothing unless the ‘N’ in ‘NA’ is understood not as anything ‘earthly’ or ‘natural’ in a concrete sense but sensed instead as the nascent awareness concealed in all things, natural or man-made. The ‘M’ in ‘Ma’ can then be sensed as this nescience made manifest, but in a fluid way, as ‘water’. The elemental associations given to NA-MA actually bespeak a wholly new experience of the perceptual world of nameable forms symbolised by ‘NAMA’, one through which the meditator can come to sense even those apparently solid objects or forms associated with the element ‘earth’ (Na) as a sublimely fluid manifestation (‘Ma’) of the pure nescient awareness ever-present within them. The ‘elemental’ experience of ‘NA-MA’ is thus a profound experiential metamorphosis of the word NAMA and the world of manifestation it names – now sensed as having its roots in the infinite womb or ocean of potentiality that is the great mother - ‘MA’ – whose primordial consonant - ‘M’ – recalls us to the primordial syllable ‘OM’.

8. The Fivefold Acts of Shiva (Panchakritya)

These are: ‘Sṛīsti’ (Manifestation), ‘Sthīti’ (Maintenance), Samhara (Reabsorption or Dissolution), ‘Vilaya’ (Concealment) and ‘Anugraha’ (Gracing). Yet because these are five acts in one, the ‘final’ two acts (Concealment and Gracing) are a ‘Grace’ already ‘Concealed’ in the first two (Manifestation and Maintenance), symbolised by the first two syllables of the Panchakshara. The third act (Dissolution or Reabsorption of the manifest self and world in Shiva) is facilitated through the third syllable of the Panchakshara – ‘SHI’. For this has the nature of a SHining and fiery flashing forth of awareness, one, which true to the root meaning of the syllable literally ‘cuts asunder’ the cord that binds us to the world of manifestation or ‘MAYA’. It is this which allows us to experience its ‘reabsorption’ into the all-pervading air and infinite spatiality or ‘aether’ of awareness (VA-YA), of which MAYA itself is nothing but a solid-yet-fluid manifestation (NA-MA). Thus it is that the Panchakshara reveals the reality of MAYA as ‘MA-YA’ - uniting the first and last acts of the Panchakritya - Manifestation and Dissolution.

9. The Ultimate Vowel - ‘A’ (pronounced ‘u’ as in ‘cup’)

Present in all five syllables of the Panchakshara is the ultimate vowel ‘A’, representing the divine awareness that is Shiva as that ultimate or absolute reality of which there is non-higher (‘A-nuttara’). This vowel is the divine heart of awareness which inaudibly permeates the entire garland or Mala of Sanskrit letter from ‘A’ to ‘KSHA’, themselves combined in the name for syllables (KSHARA) and for the infinite all-pervading aetheric space of awareness that is ‘Aakash’ or ‘Akasha’, from ‘Aksh’ – ‘pervasion’.

10. The Mother of all Consonants - ‘M’

“Each symbol in an alphabet stands for unutterable symbols beneath it... Sound itself, even without recognisable words, carries meaning.” (Seth). The mystery of all mantra is concealed in the single consonant ‘m’. The

name of this consonant in Greek is ‘mu’. This syllable is also the root of very word *mystery*, *mystic*, *mysticism* and *mystical* themselves. All these words have a common root in the Greek *mustai* - meaning wise ones or ‘initiates’. The literal meaning of ‘mustai’ however is ‘those who close their mouths (*muein*), not speaking their wisdom aloud but embodying it mutely - in silence. It is no accident that both *mustai* and *muein* begin with the syllable *mu*. For this syllable is not just the Greek *name* for the consonant ‘m’. It is also a Greek *word* – yet one which, paradoxically, refers to an essentially wordless *sound* such as a sigh, a type of sound that we do not so much utter ‘with’ our bodies as use to *embody* a particular feeling and flow of breath. Words such as the English ‘mute’, the Greek ‘mustai’ (initiate), and the Sanskrit ‘muni’ (sage) all begin with the consonant ‘m’ and with the syllable ‘mu’. In proto-Sumerian, both consonant and syllable had the triple meaning of (a) woman or the feminine as such (as in German ‘Mutter’) (b) the source of all creation and (c) speech – or rather its creative source in lip-sealed silence. The meaning of these sounds and syllables as words can be understood as having an even deeper source in their meaning as sounds. The meaning of any sound *as a sound* rather than as a word or words is, by definition, not something that can be defined in words. Yet it is suggested by the common dimensions of meaning often found in words, which contain or begin with the same sound. Thus there is a whole cluster of words containing the specific consonant ‘m’ and/or the syllable ‘mu’ which share common dimensions of meaning all to do with womanhood, sound, silence and speech – *meditate*, *muse*, *music*, *commune*, *mother*, *woman*, *womb*, *mouth*, *emanation*, *manifestation*, *matter*, *matrix*, *matrika*, *monk*, *mute*, *muni*, *mouni* (one who observes a vow of silence), and the ‘mantra’ itself – understood as inwardly sounded *meaning*. Why should so many words like these share both a common sound and common dimension of meaning or sense? The answer is hinted at by the mother of all consonants – ‘m’.

11. The Articulatory Symbolism and Senses of Sounds

Etymology seeks the root meanings of words through the word-senses of the sounds and syllables that compose them. Yet what if both the meaning

of words as words and their meaning as sounds have their roots not in word-senses but in sound senses - in the meaning of their sounds as sounds? What sort of intrinsic senses can speech sounds carry, whether or not they find expression in the given meanings of words containing those sounds? The answer lies in 'articulatory symbolism'. Sounds as such do not 'have' meanings in the same way that words do, and yet there is a symbolic meaning to what we do in articulating them. The fact that the long 'A' sound is the most *open-mouthed* vowel is what allows its articulation to symbolise a greater openness or expansion of awareness - and with it a feeling of wonderment or delight ('Ah'). What comes first however, is the open quality of awareness that allows us to feel such a sense of wonderment and delight. The actual articulation of the long 'A' sound - or any sound - is but an embodiment of the quality of awareness or 'soul-sense' re-sounding in it. That soul-sense finds embodiment in the *articulation* of the sound whether we utter it aloud or merely shape our mouths *as if* to utter it - simply hearing ourselves uttering it with our inner voice and with our inner ear alone. Simply giving articulatory *shape* to specific sounds with our mouths, lips and tongues - without vocalising them at all - is enough to evoke or express their soul-sense. The meaning of sounds as sounds - their sound-sense - is therefore nothing but the silent shape and form they give to distinct soul-senses - to different qualities, moods or tonalities of awareness or 'soul'. Thus sealing our mouths firmly as if to make a long 'M' sound can be enough to evoke a sense of our whole bodies being permeated by a sense of Melting, warMth - as if we feel sated by a warM Meal. We may utter an appreciative 'Mmm' to express our satisfaction with the meal, but the true sound is not the consonant we utter with mouths and vocal organs but a soul-sense we express with our body as a whole. The true 'roots' of all word-senses and sound-senses are *soul-senses* and *soul-sounds*. These are sounds we do not utter 'with' our bodies so much as sounds with which we *utter our bodies themselves*. If we can learn to silently utter and feel our whole body *as an* 'Ah' or 'Mmm' - imbued with a specific soul-tone and quality - then we know how to utter any sounds as 'mantra' and to experience 'the power of mantra'. That is why neither the audible vocalisation of a Mantra through

chanting or singing - nor its merely 'mental' repetition – can substitute for articulating its soul-sense with every part of our body and with our whole bodily comportment or 'Mudra'. For just as letters are *silent* shapes or faces of spoken sounds', so are our bodies the silent face and shape of 'soul sounds'. Their 'inner sense' is a 'soul-sense' that we can silently 'articulate' and 'sound' with our whole body - limbs, face and eyes - not just our lips, mouth and tongue alone.

12. The Body as Mantra, Mudra and Murti of the Divine

Words are bodies of sound. Conversely, bodies of any sort *are* sounds – being shaped patterns, qualities and structures of vibration or tone. The human body too is Mantra, being the embodiment of those inner soul-sounds which give bodily form and shape to specific soul-tones and qualities - innate tones and qualities of awareness. Like other bodies, the human body is a three-dimensional image or 'Murti' of these inner sounds. Similarly its every gesture, movement and comportment – its every 'Mudra' - is a sound, a Mantra made visible as a bodily image or Murti. It is for this reason that bodily images or Murti of the Gods - if their comportments or Mudra give perfect aesthetic expression to the qualities of awareness associated with a given Deity - were understood as manifestations of their corresponding Mantra. It is as if, in the West, we were to recognise the physiognomy and face of a great composer as the very image and embodiment of their music itself – its soul made manifest in the flesh. So it is with the 'idols' or Murti of Divinity worshipped in Hinduism, and specifically with the Divine Awareness, transcendent and immanent, that is named, imagined and 'worshipped' as 'Shiva'. It is the innate qualities of this Divine Awareness that both resound in its Mantra and are made visible or manifest in its human bodily image or Murti. The worshipper recognises the Murti both as one among countless natural manifestations of the Divine Awareness, and at the same time recognises in its human form a perfect embodiment and 'personification' - from *persona* (face) and *per-sonare* (through sound) – of the specific soul-qualities associated with the Murti of Lord Shiva, his Mudra and his five-syllable Mantra. That is

why, through proper understanding of this Mantra one can not only enter into meditative and worshipful resonance with Lord Shiva. One can also let one's own self and body be transformed into a mirror and embodiment of the worshipped - a living image or Murti of the Divine. In this way also the true tantric purpose and power of Puja – 'worship' – is achieved - to attain a state of identification of the worshipper with the worshipped. This identification is named by that other great Mantra of Shiva: 'SHIVOHAM' - 'Shiva am I (become)'. As for 'OM NAMAH SHIVAYAH', enough has been written here to give a proper sense, not only of its inner meaning, but also of the divine nature of all Mantra as expressions of a primordial relation of Divine Silence, Sound and Speech. The interpretations I offer should also remind the reader that the very qualities of meditative and worshipful awareness needed to worship a specific deity or Devata are the very essence of that deity - both resounding in its Mantra and made manifest in its Murti. For Shiva Himself is also in constant meditative worship of The Mother and Her silent power of manifestation (Shakti) through sound (Shabda). Hence the profound truth of the ancient Tantric principle that Mantra and Devata, name and divinity, worshipper and worshipped - are One.

13. The Sixth and Central Syllable – 'HA'

There is a hidden yet central sixth syllable at the very heart of the five-syllable mantra or Panchakshara. This is the Sanskrit 'Visarga' - an 'H' that can be written after a final syllable and is followed by the last vowel of that syllable. If the Visarga is added to the last syllable of NAMA(H) it becomes NAMA-HA. That is significant because esoterically just as Shiva is associated with all vowels but above all the 'A', so is the Visarga identified specifically with an unaspirated 'HA' – expressing the the innate power of manifestation that is Shakti. On the level of esoteric and articulatory symbolism, this unaspirated 'HA' is seen as the very Heart of Shiva - a Hallowing, Hovering Hiatus or interval between that active 'ex-HA-lation' or emanation of awareness which, as Shakti, manifests the entire embodied universe and its 'in-HA-lation', a return to that pure,

unmanifested awareness symbolised by the simple 'A'. Hence by Holding the unaspirated 'H' sound as Visarga or 'HA' in one's awareness - after the final 'A' of 'NAMA' - the meditator can identify with the vibratory union of Shiva and Shakti – a truly 'A-HA' experience! Through it the meditator can experience the truth that the universe is not manifested or 'created' once and for all time by some creator god – but is in a constant vibratory state of rapid intermittent manifestation (Shakti) on the one hand and dissolution in pure, unmanifest awareness (Shiva) on the other. The meditator can experience their very own body as not simply 'there' but as constantly 'flashing forth' into embodiment or incarnation from a state of pure bodiless awareness – as if they were 're-incarnating' countless times each second. The central emission point ('Bindu') of manifestation is the 'Hridaya' or 'Heart' of awareness sensed in the mid-point of the diaphragm. By turning NAMA into NAMA-HA then, the Visarga offers an experience of Shiva as the divine couple or Yamala – as 'Shiva-Shakti'. It also adds a whole new *word* to the 'Maha-Mantra' – the word MAHA or 'great' itself. Yet it is odd that despite the great importance attached to this particular Mahamantra in the religion and practices of orthodox Shaivism, there is no mention of it whatsoever in the most sublime and refined of Shaivist traditions and treatises – those stemming from the schools of 'Kashmir Shaivism' or 'Shaivist Tantra' synthesised by the great Tantric teacher and adept, Abhinavagupta. Yet even contemporary followers of *this* great tradition emphasise the Panchakshara at the expense of its Heart - the Visarga or 'Ha'. Above all they forget that in all the major treatises or 'Tantras' of Shaivist Tantra what counted most of all was both the experiential and conceptual *comprehension* of different Mantra as *phonemically condensed dimensions of awareness*. Mantra were not seen as simple spiritual tools by which, through mere repetition or 'Japa' - and without need of any deeper *conceptual* comprehension - one could 'magically' attain an *experience* of higher dimensions of awareness. Hence the need for new in-depth treatises or 'Tantras' on 'Mantra' such as I offer here.

14. From the Kashmir Shaivist Tantras

How wonderful it is that although only one sound, that is SHIVA'S NAME, is always on the lips of their tongues, yet devotees can taste the ineffable relish of all the objects of the senses.

Utpaladeva

... Mantra is the instrument by which one comes to experience the divinities within the body.

In fact [as said in the Guhyayogini Tantra] "It is the Inner Sound that is Mantra".

In the process of expansion, the changeless, unsurpassable, eternal, reposeful, venerable Bhairava [Shiva], is of the form 'A', which is the natural, primal sound, the life of the entire range of letter powers. He in the process of expansion assumes the 'HA' form, for expansion is of the form of HA, i.e. Kundalini Shakti ... In the MA-HA, which is the highest bliss ... that which is 'A' according to the previously described principle, is the mysterious secret.

Because its essential nature is the supreme 'A', it [the HA] is an expression of the first vowel, 'A'. The blessed Lord [Shiva] is in fact eternally vibrating within himself. In him is the central power [Shakti] which is full of the abundance of all beings.

Therefore the phoneme HA, the Visarga, is termed the Rudra-Yamala, the Rudra-Dyad, because it consists of the supreme Shiva [Rudra] and Shakti, the rest and activity which constitutes the union of Bhairava with his Beloved.

‘I make the universe manifest within myself in the sky (VA-YA) of awareness. I who am the universe, am its creator!’ This Awareness is the way in which one becomes Bhairava. ‘All of manifest creation is reflected within me. I cause it to persist.’ This is the way in which one becomes the universe. ‘The universe dissolves within me. I am the flame of the great and eternal fire of awareness’ – seeing thus one achieves peace.

Mantra are the sacred phonemes both worldly and divine. They save by giving form [to comprehending awareness]. For worldly purposes they are of the form of thought-constructs [Vikalpa]; as divine or transcendental they are full of the power of higher awareness [Samvit-Shakti].

Abhinavagupta

... when the Yogi achieves a firm insight into his authentic identity, all Mantras can do all things, because he knows how they arise and pass away.

Kshemaraja

15. From Kshemaraja’s commentaries on the Shiva Sutras

(translated by Jaideva Singh)

Sutra 1, Section 2, *Chittam mantrah*

... that by which one deliberately, secretly i.e. ponders inwardly as being non-different from the Highest Lord is *Mantra*. Thus that *chitta* [consciousness] itself ... is *mantra*. The etymological interpretation of *mantra* points to its characteristic of *manana* i.e. pondering over the highest light of ‘I’-consciousness and the other characteristics of *trana-* i.e. protection by terminating the transmigratory existence full of difference. The mind of the devotee

intent on intensive awareness of the deity acquires identity with the deity and thus becomes that *mantra* itself. It is this mind [*manana*] itself which is *mantra*, not a mere conglomeration of letters.

It has been rightly said in the *Sarvajanottara* :

“Those are not really *mantras* which are only a matter of [outward] enunciation.”

In *Shrikanthi-Samhita*, it has been said;

“If the practitioner of *mantra* is different from the *mantra* then his *mantra* will never be successful.”

16. A Personal Karika on 'Mantra'

What is the soul?
What is the body?
Who or what are we?
Who or what are the gods?
As souls we are fluid vowels.
As bodies we are fleshly consonants.
As spirits we are a divine symphony of
Soul tones, a divine alphabet of
Soul sounds, resounding with
Divine soul moods.
We, no less than all
Divinities, are uttered as
Living Mantra from the music of
This divine alphabet, shaped within
The divine mouth and matrix of constant creation.
We too are made flesh, manifest and materialised
Sounded into selfhood as sacred syllables,
Through the divine alphabet, the Matrika
With which God shapes Gods as
Mantra, and us as Persons too.
Doing so through sound,
'Per-Sonare', that we
Might utter Him as
Mantra anew.

OM NAMAH SHIVAYA

THE NEW MANTRA YOGA

1. THE NEW YOGA OF THE INNER VOICE

Our 'outer' physical voice is an expression of our Inner Voice. Through our outer voice we shape and modulate the tone of the audible sounds we make when we speak or sing. Through our Inner Voice we can learn to shape and modulate the silent inner Feeling Tones that find expression in our audible voice. Our Inner Voice is what tunes and sets the tone of our outer voice. The New Yoga of the Inner Voice is a revolutionary new form of voice training. Have you ever felt a dissonance between the message of your spoken words and the message implied and communicated through your tone of voice? The New Yoga of the Voice teaches us to alter the pitch, amplitude, timbre and overall tone and quality of our outer voice by first of all modulating the corresponding qualities of our Inner Voice. It is this that allows us to bring the audible tones of our outer voice into total resonance with the feeling tones we wish to communicate through it. The New Yoga of the Inner Voice is also central to 'insounding' or 'invoking' Mantra, not through mere 'mental' repetition, but through uttering the sounds of each Mantra with our Inner Voice – the voice of our entire inwardly felt body. It is in this way - through the Inner Voice - that we can learn to use Mantra to alter the entire shape and tone of our inwardly felt body, our Awareness Body.

PRACTICING THE NEW YOGA OF THE INNER VOICE

Exercise 1: Becoming aware of your Inner Voice

1. Say your name aloud (or any word, phrase or mantra).
2. Now just whisper the name.
3. Now mouth it silently, without any breath leaving your lips.
4. Finally - with your mouth completely - closed, just HEAR yourself inwardly uttering your name.

*The voice you now hear uttering it is your Inner Voice.
The ear you now hear yourself uttering it with is your Inner Ear.*

2. CULTIVATING AWARENESS OF THE INNER VOICE

Just as you can learn to modulate the tone and quality of your outer voice so can you learn to modulate that of your Inner Voice. Indeed learning to modulate your inner voice is a revolutionary way of learning to alter the whole tone and quality of your outer voice – thus bringing it into resonance with the tones and qualities of feeling you wish to communicate through your words. The key to modulating both our Inner and Outer Voice is awareness of the basic parameters of the voice as such. These are its pitch (low or high), its amplitude or ‘volume’ (low or high), its tempo (slow or fast), its timbre (flat or resonant, rough or smooth, hard or soft, sharp or dull), and its seat – where we feel our voice coming from in our bodies.

Exercise 2: Becoming more aware of your Outer Voice

Assess the basic parameters of your own ordinary speaking voice (pitch, amplitude, tempo and timbre) by marking an 'X' at a corresponding position on the lines below:

PITCH

Low ----- High

AMPLITUDE

Low ----- High

TEMPO

Slow ----- Fast

Now imagine your body as a vertical line descending from the top of your head, down through your neck, throat and chest to your belly and lower abdomen, and point to the part of your body you feel your voice coming from. Alternatively draw a vertical line and mark the main SEAT of your voice on it. Finally, draw a new set of horizontal lines along which you can mark the TIMBRE of your voice in its various dimensions – from flat to full and resonant, clear and sharp to dull, soft to hard, rough to smooth, cool to warm etc. Then experiment with simultaneously changing two or more parameters of your ordinary Outer Voice.

3. LEARNING TO MODULATE YOUR INNER VOICE

Begin with the basic exercise in *The New Yoga of the Voice*:

1. Say your name aloud - or any word, phrase or mantra.
2. Now just whisper the name. Now merely mouth it silently.
3. Finally, close your mouth and just hear yourself uttering it inwardly with your Inner Voice - 'in-sounding' or 'in-voking' it.

Now you can practice modulating your Inner Voice in its different parameters:

1. SEAT

Invoke the name again, and be aware of the seat of your Inner Voice - where you feel it coming from and resounding – for example your head, throat, chest, belly or lower abdomen. Experiment with first raising and then lowering the seat of your Inner Voice from its initial centre or location. Now see just how far you can raise and then lower the seat of your Inner Voice.

2. PITCH

Be aware of the pitch of your Inner Voice. Experiment with first raising and then lowering its pitch. Now see just how 'high' and then how 'low' you can pitch the tone of your inner voice.

3. AMPLITUDE

Be aware of the amplitude or volume of your Inner Voice. Experiment with making your Inner Voice louder or quieter, and seeing just how loud or quiet you can make it.

4. TEMPO

Be aware of the tempo with which you utter a name, word or phrase with your Inner Voice. Experiment with uttering it faster and then more slowly.

Now see just how much faster and then how much more slowly you can utter it with your Inner Voice. Try insounding or invoking the name SO slowly that you felt you could almost indefinitely linger with and elongate each sound, staying with and savouring its sensual qualities.

5. TIMBRE

Use all the other key parameters to experiment with altering the overall timbre and emotional tone of your Inner Voice, for example making it sensually and emotionally warmer or cooler.

4. MANTRA MEDITATION IN THE NEW YOGA

The New Yoga is about learning to actively shape and tone our Feeling Awareness and in this way body that awareness. It is with our physical voice that we shape vocal tones into the audible sounds of speech. It is through our inner voice and inner sounds – Mantra - that we can reshape the tone and quality of our Feeling Awareness, and in this way shapeshift our inner body – our Body of Feeling Awareness. This means learning to silently *breathe and body* different Inner Sounds – as pure shapes, tones, qualities and flows of Feeling Awareness.

INSOUNDING WITH THE INNER VOICE

1. Open your mouth wide as if about to utter a sustained ‘AH’ sound.
2. Hardly breathing out, and without making any audible sound at all, inwardly hear yourself voicing a sustained ‘AH’ sound.
3. Now imbue this inner ‘AH’ sound with a feeling tone of wonder and delight, letting this feeling tone show itself in your face and eyes.

4. With each in-breath, feel yourself breathing *in* your awareness of the world around you with this feeling tone of delight, and experience this very feeling and in-breathing of awareness *as* a soundless 'AH'.
5. Sense this blissful in-breath of awareness centering itself in your 'heart', feeling it as flame in the centre of your diaphragm.
6. With each physical in-breath feel for a gesture of your arms and hands that embodies the awareness bliss you are breathing in.

Now purse your mouth as if to make a sustained 'UH' sound (as in 'trUe'), hear yourself sounding it inwardly and imbuing your inner voice with a low pitched feeling tone bearing a quality of deep awe and reverence. Finally, closing your mouth, and, sealing your lips firmly, hear yourself inwardly humming a deep and sustained 'M' sound. Feel the inner hum permeating your entire body and imbuing it with a quality of fluid warmth.

The 'ear' with which you hear yourself uttering the inner AH sound is your Inner Ear, the voice you utter it with is your Inner Voice, the face you mime it with is an Inner Face of your soul, and the eye that lets its qualities show through your eyes is your Inner Eye and an inner self or "I". Feel yourself uttering your whole body as the AH sound, and be aware of how this alters the entire way you feel your body from within – giving it a sense of lightness and translucence. It is this way - and not through any audible chanting of 'AUM' or 'OM' - or any sounds and mantric 'seed syllables' - that you will come to experience the true meaning of 'Mantra' and the true mystery of Inner Sound.

5. PRACTICING THE NEW YOGA OF SOUND

“If we follow the successive sounds as they occur in a single word ... then we can experience all possible shades of feeling ...”

Rudolf Steiner

Were we to slow down our speech to a degree that enabled us to almost indefinitely prolong the enunciation of each and every sound of a word or name, we could savour each sound as the embodiment of a completely different “shade” or ‘flavour’ (‘Rasa’) of Feeling Awareness. We could also feel each sound as a distinct self - the ‘personification’ of a distinct face or ‘persona’ identical with that shade or flavour, tone or texture of awareness.

Mouthing, Miming and ‘Morphing’ Inner Sounds

Choose a word, personal name or sacred mantra, or, if working alone just allow sounds - vowels or consonants - to come to you one by one.

Looking at yourself in a mirror or facing a partner, silently MOUTH the first sound, taking care to position your jaws, tongue, lips in exactly the way you would to utter the sound audibly, but instead of doing so MIME it in an exaggerated way – forming the ‘Mudra’ of the sound.

Hear yourself uttering the sound inwardly. At the same time savour the ‘onomatopoeic’ quality of the sound – for example the warm, permeating quality of an ‘M’ sound, the shimmering or showery quality of a ‘SH’ sound, the languid quality of an ‘L’ sound, the uplifting quality of an Ah sound or the steadying quality of an Eh sound.

Let the tone and texture, feeling and flavour, of the sound show itself in your eyes, not only MOUTHING the sound but also MIMING its

qualities and exaggerating every feature of mouth and eyes in order to give form to the silent face or 'Mukha' of the sound.

Silently MOUTH and MIME the transition from one sound to the next as slowly as possible, so that it shows itself in an incremental MORPHING of your entire facial expression, accompanied by METAMORPHOSIS of your entire bodily sense of self, as both become imbued by the feeling tone or MOOD of the new sound, and its sensual texture.

If looking in a mirror check to see how expressively you give form to each new inner sound. If working with a partner, mirror each other's expression of each sound, and feel the resonance this brings about.

MANTRA AND THE MYSTERY OF SOUND

The true meaning of 'mantra' has to do with the mysteries of sound – in particular the intrinsic relation between sound and sense, between sense and sensory qualities, and between sensory qualities and soul qualities, sound tones and soul tones.

Sounds have an intrinsic inner sense of their own. Individual speech sounds such as 'SH' possess their own inwardly *felt* sense or meaning. The intrinsic, felt sense of individual speech sounds finds expressions in so-called onomatopoeic words such as 'hum', 'fluff' or 'hush' - words whose sound 'resonates' with their meaning or sense.

Resonance is inwardly felt sense. The inner 'resonance' of a sound, whether a speech sound or musical tone, is not its 'vibration' but its inwardly felt meaning or sense.

Awareness is always toned. Our awareness of ourselves, other people and the world is always coloured or tuned by a specific soul mood, feeling tone or 'soul tone'.

Feeling tones are echoed in voice tones. That is why a true speaker or singer does not just utter vocal tones, but brings them into resonance with the feeling tones they seek to express.

Vocal qualities express qualities of feeling tone – of soul. A voice whose sensory quality is flat or resonant, hard or soft, sharp and piercing or mellow and rounded, light or dark, richly coloured or grey and monotonous, muddled or clear, gives expression to corresponding sensual qualities of feeling tone.

Health is an unmuddled clarity of feeling tone. Healing comes about through learning to fully and consciously embody the underlying feeling tone of our mental, emotional or physical state of being.

Speech sounds are phonic shapings of vocal tone and feeling tone. Just as we use vocal sounds to shape and modulate our breath and vocal tones, so we use inner sounds to shape and modulate the sensed qualities and felt tonalities of our awareness.

We do not have a body – we body. Bodying is the process of giving physical shape and form to inner feeling tones, inwardly shaping these inner soul tones as soul sounds.

Inner sounds are soul sounds. Soul sounds are those inner sounds with which we body our own soul – giving bodily shape to inner feeling tones or ‘soul tones’.

Behind the audible sounds of all alphabets and languages is a hidden alphabet and language of inner soul sounds. This language finds expression in the use of sound in poetry, in the felt sense and resonance of so-called ‘nonsense’ words and poems, and in glossolalia – the speaking and interpretation of unknown ‘tongues’.

Matter is mantra. Mantra are not sounds or words that name or symbolise things, but words that quite literally become things – sounding them into material form.

The body is a mantra. Every bodily shape (*murti*), comportment or gesture (*mudra*), and face or countenance (*mukha*) is a *mantra* – it is a shaping of feeling tones with its own inner sound.

The true meaning of the word 'psychology' is 'soul-speech'. Psychology refers to the speech (*logos*) of the soul or psyche. For the audible sounds our bodies utter when we speak are the echo of the soul sounds with which speak our bodies themselves.

Through the babble of babies they body their own souls. The basic speech sounds that babies of all cultures first babble are the means by which they body their own soul. Babies use the 'b' sound, for example, to align the boundaries of their soul body with that of their physical body surface. They use the 'm' sound to feel the inwardness of own bodies, as they once felt the warm womb that surrounded them.

Sounds attract and condense senses in the same way that dream images do. There is a sensuous syntax of sound which wordlessly links and condenses the senses of all words that contain a common consonant.

Word with common sounds have a common dimension of sense. This is reflected in clusters of words which clearly share both a common sound and a common dimension of meaning or sense - for example 'm' words such as *mother, womb, amnion, embryo, music, muse, commune, intimate, meditate, warm, calm, balm, comfort* etc.

The intrinsic sense of a single sound (for example the 'm' sound) can never be named or summed up in a single word such as 'comfort'. That is because the overall inner sense or resonance of any word we might choose to name it with will **be**

influenced by all the other sounds it contains - each of which have their own intrinsic sense.

The given meanings of words as words are an expression of their meaning as sounds. But the given meaning or sense of a word may be more or less in resonance with its inner sense – its sound sense or soul sense – and therefore also distort that sense.

The sound sense of a word is its soul sense – its inwardly felt sense or resonance as a shaped modulation of feeling tone.

Every thing, like every word that names it, has its own inner sound and feeling tone. Just as it has an outer shape and colour tone, so does it also have an inner sound and feeling tone. Just as it has a material texture, so does it also have a felt inner timbre.

All sensory qualities have an intrinsic inner meaning or sense, whether or not we have words for it. The immediate meaning or sense of sensory experiencing lies in the felt soul qualities it gives expression to.

Sensory qualities are the outer manifestation of inner soul qualities. Thus sensory colours and textures are the expression of colourations and textures of soul.

Soul qualities are qualities of feeling tone. ‘Soul’ is awareness. But awareness is always toned and all soul qualities are essentially qualities of feeling tone. Light for example, is the basic quality of feeling tone that expands our awareness in space. Darkness is the basic quality of feeling tone that slows our awareness in time.

Matter is metaphor. The sensory qualities of material objects are a sensory metaphor of the soul qualities manifesting through them.

Both sensory qualities and soul qualities are essentially tonal qualities. Just as vocal tones have sensory qualities of hardness or softness, warmth or coolness,

distance or closeness, heaviness or lightness, brightness or darkness, flatness or depth, so are all soul qualities essentially qualities of feeling tone. Just as vocal tones give expression to feeling tones, so do sensory qualities give expression to soul qualities.

Inner sounds can only be fully sensed by insounding them. This means silently mouthing and miming the speech sounds that correspond to them, and hearing ourselves inwardly utter or sound them.

The voice with which we utter sounds or words inwardly is the inner voice. The ear with which we hear ourselves doing so is the inner ear. Most people can speak and hear. But they have lost conscious use of their inner voice and inner ear. What makes a sound or syllable into a mantra is not chanting it aloud or mentally repeating it but the full and resonant use of the inner voice to in-voke or insound it.

Through sound we personify our soul. The word *persona* referred to the facial masks worn by Greek actors. Its literal meaning is to 'sound through'. A letter is the silent face or mask of a sound. Similarly a person's mouth and facial expression - their facial mask is a silent sound.

The relation of outer and inner sounds is one of morphic resonance. By giving silent outer form (*morphe*) to a inner sound through our mouth shape and facial expression we both dramatically *personify* that sound and amplify our bodily *resonance* with its inner feeling tone.

For every sound there is a self. Using our mouth, eyes and face to personify a sound - adopting its expressive facial 'mask' or *persona*, allows us to experience every sound as the expression of a distinct self - a distinct aspect of our own soul, with its own unique feeling tone.

Sounds mould our facial features. Conversely, moulding our facial mask or *persona* in different ways not only helps modulate our vocal tones when we speak or sing, but to can be used to silently reshape and modulate our inner mood or feeling tone.

Both outer and inner sounds serve to shape, colour, modulate and texture tone. A mantram is any sound, syllable or word through which we can use our physical bodies to shape, colour, modulate and texture not only our vocal tones but our feeling tones or soul tones – thus altering the shape, tone and texture of our soul body. The soul body is a composite of the soul qualities belonging to those feeling tones.

Like words, bodies of any sort are symbols. Just as words are symbolic composites of letters so are physical bodies – objects of any sort - symbolic composites of sensory qualities. What they symbolise are the soul qualities that find expression in them.

Like words, bodies of any sort are sounds. Letters and words are not only symbols. They also have a sound. Words can be considered not just as composites but as bodies of sound. Like words, bodies are also sounds. They are also bodies of sound – not audible sounds but inner soul sounds.

Any thought, unspoken, has an inner sound. True ‘thinking’ is impossible unless we can clearly hear the mental words of our unspoken thoughts with our inner ear, and fully feel their inner sense or resonance within our bodies.

The physical organism is a musical instrument or ‘organon’ of the soul. By moulding our facial mask and bodily comportment in resonance with our basic inner feeling tone, we amplify that feeling tone and communicate it in a silent bodily way. In this way we can also use our physical body to play on the instrument of our soul body or psychical organism.

The psychical organism or soul body is a musical instrument or ‘organons’. It is the instrument with which we give physical shape and form to inner feeling tones, embodying them as cell and organ tone, muscle tonus and vocal tone.

Through vowel sounds we ensoul our bodies. By insounding different vowel sounds we can experience our soul body or psychical organism expanding beyond the boundaries of our flesh or physical organism, taking on a different shape to it, and lending it a different tone.

Through consonant sounds we embody our souls. By insounding different consonant sounds we can experience the felt shape, tone and texture of our physical organism as the embodiment of inner soul shapes, tones and textures.

The human being is a musician. The relation between the psychical and physical organism, the soul body and the physical body, can be compared to the relation between a musician and the physical instrument he plays. The instrument makes the actual audible sounds of the music being played, but it is the silent sound of the musician's facial expressions and movements that show the real music of his soul – the feeling tones he is shaping with his soul body or psychical organism.

The physical body organism is the 'word become flesh'. It is the embodiment of an inner language of soul sounds and soul tones.

The mystery of sound is concealed in the word 'mystery' itself. Like the words mystic, mysticism and mystical it has its roots in the Greek 'mustai'. Mustai meant 'initiates', but its literal meaning was the 'closed-mouthed ones', those who do not outwardly speak but speak through silence - embodying the secrets of their soul with their lips sealed.

The mystery of sound is the mystery of the 'MU'. This single syllable is both the Greek name for the 'm' sound – a sound we can only make with our mouths closed and lips sealed – and an actual Greek word. The word refers to a wordless sound such as a sigh – a sound that we do not so much utter 'with' our bodies as use to almost silently body a particular feeling tone.

The true meaning of mantra is the guarding or saving liberation (*tra*) of awareness (*man-*) that comes from the human being experiencing his own body as made up of *mana* – the innate substantiality or 'soul stuff' of awareness that is experienced as feeling tone, becomes manifest as matter and is made malleable through inner sound.

PRANA

BREATHING AWARENESS

FROM THE OLD 'PSYCHOLOGY' TO THE NEW YOGA

The term 'psychology' is understood to imply scientific knowledge of the *psyche*. The root meaning of the ancient Greek word *psyche* is 'breath'. Does this mean that 'psychology' understands itself as a science of the breath? Far from it. Instead it identifies the soul or *psyche* with the human 'mind', and knowledge of the *psyche* with insight into the functional workings of this 'mind'. Whether we speak of this mind's cognitive functions, its neurological functioning, its associative functioning or its functioning as an instrument of 'unconscious' or 'instinctual' drives, the result is the same. The *psyche* as 'mind' is seen as a functional instrument based on the functioning of a biological organ – the brain. This functionalist viewpoint sits comfortably with a general definition of health as 'functionality' and of illness, mental or physical as 'dysfunction'. The 'healthy' human being is defined as the *well-functioning* human being - whether their function be that of delivering the post, operating hi-tech military equipment or organising the transportation of other human beings to gas chambers.

The history of 'scientific' psychology cannot be separated from the history of the whole Western concept of 'knowledge' as such. The root meaning of the Latin *scire* ('to know') from which the term 'science' is derived, is to 'cut through'. Modern scientific medicine began with anatomy. The body is understood 'scientifically' through the cutting through and dissection of lifeless corpses. The ancient Greek word for body (*soma*) meant precisely that – a corpse devoid of life-breath (*psyche*). Understood in their root senses therefore, the separation of *psyche* and *soma* is the termination of the human being at death. From the point of view of the ancients therefore, the very use of the words *psyche* and *soma* as scientific 'terms' referring to separate entities is a termination of the living, breathing human being. The need to terminologically stitch together the two terms *psyche* and *soma* under the single term *psychosomatic* is stillborn – for it merely admits their *de facto* and terminal separation.

An even deeper issue than scientific terminologies lurks behind the terminal soul-lessness of 'scientific psychology' however. This is the historic identification of knowledge with having a proper 'idea' of things – with *seeing* them correctly. The word 'idea' comes from the Greek *idein* ('to see') and like the Latin *videre* (*uidere*) is related to the Sanskrit word for knowledge (*vidya*) – a word which also has the root meaning of seeing (*vid*). Language points us here to a root concept of knowledge which identifies it with *seeing* – whether in the form of scientific observations, verbal 'insights', mystical 'visions', 'clairvoyance'. The modern scientist, no less than the ancient *rishi*, is above all a 'seer'. What difference is there then, between the concept of knowledge and the type of knowledge of the 'soul' or 'psyche' that belonged to ancient Greek, Indian and Oriental cultures and that which passes as 'scientific' knowledge and psychology in the West today? The essential difference is that in the Eastern wisdom traditions, knowledge in the form of 'seeing' and intellectual 'ideas' was understood not as the *starting point* but as the *end-result* of the cognitive process – a process that was understood as beginning not with seeing but with *breathing*.

In the West, 'theory' and theoretical disciplines are still thought of as the foundation of 'practice' – of practical disciplines and applied knowledge. In the East, on the other hand, those practical disciplines known collectively as *yoga* were understood to be the very foundation of all theoretical 'ideas' and 'insight'. At the heart of *yoga* was an understanding of the bodily foundations of all intellectual knowledge. Together with this went an understanding of the human body as a *breathing body* and not merely one equipped with sense organs. That which was blindly obvious to all – the fact that the *human body* could survive without seeing but not without breathing - was taken as a vital clue to the essence of the *human being*. Indeed it was taken as a clue to the essence of reality, truth or 'being' as such. The 'old psychology', which existed long before the term 'psychology' was coined, was one in which the word *psyche* still retained its root meaning of 'breath'. In India this old psychology led to an understanding of the inner human being or 'self' as *atman* – a Sanskrit word

echoed in the German for 'breathing' – *atmen*. Breath was named *prana* and the yoga of breathing called *pranayama*.

Today such terms such as *prana*, *chi*, *qi*, or 'reiki?' are interpreted as referring to some form of universal life force or 'energy'. This interpretation accords with the fundamental dogma - shared by both modern science and New Age pseudo-science alike - that 'everything is energy'. This dogma conflicts radically with the *tantric* and yogic understanding that ultimate reality is not energy or matter but *awareness*. Similarly, the interpretation of *prana* as a form of subtle energy conflicts with the *tantric* understanding, echoed in both the Indian, Greek and Latin languages, that awareness itself has the character of 'air-ness' – being something that surrounds, permeates, fills and flows between all things in space. *Psyche* means 'breath' as well as 'soul'. Greek *pneuma* means 'wind' as well as 'spirit'. The word 'spirit' itself comes from Latin *spirare* (to breathe), as in *respiration*, *inspiration* and *expiration*.

Modern anatomy would have us believe that breathing is merely an autonomous 'function' of our body's respiratory organs. The *tantric* adepts understood things otherwise. They recognised that it is *we* who breathe and not our bodies, and that we do so with and through our *body as a whole* and not merely with specific respiratory organs such as lungs and diaphragm. Any trained singer knows this from experience. *Pranayama* - the yoga of the breath – was indeed a form of breath training, which like that of a singer, cultivated a subtle awareness or 'proprioception' of one's entire respiratory musculature – which given the relation of breathing and posture (*asana*) ultimately embraces the body's *entire* musculature. But *pranayama* had a quite different purpose and result to that of modern-day methods of breath control and meditation. *Awareness and control of breathing* was not an end in itself but a means to another end – a *controlled breathing of awareness as such*.

In the 'animistic' wisdom of all cultures we find a more or less explicit understanding that awareness is the very inwardness or 'soul' of all things – in particular that it is the soul of the elements – of earth, water, air and fire. In addition we find a more or less implicit recognition that, conversely, awareness has its own *elemental qualities* of spatiality, light, fire, warmth, air

(diffuseness), water (fluidity) and earth (solidity). Put these two primordial truths together and we end up with the formulae that form the basis of a new psychology or 'science of soul'. The first formula reads: the air of soul is the soul of air. In the same way so are the *solidity, fluidity, warmth, fire, light and spatiality of soul* (of awareness itself) to be understood as the very soul of earth, water, warmth, fire, light and space as such. Our awareness of space (*akasha*) and light (*prakasha*) is in its very essence or soul nothing but the very space and light of our awareness as such. This understanding, made theoretically explicit for the first time as a new science of soul, goes hand in hand with The New Yoga – a yoga of *awareness* which acknowledges its innate elemental and sensual qualities or 'qualia'.

The soul-scientific principles and practices of The New Yoga constitute at the same time a new understanding of *knowledge* as such. They imply, amongst other things that we can only attain a true knowledge of the elements – of air for example - by allowing our awareness to flow into and with it – uniting the air of our own soul with the very soul of air and in this way gaining a deep and direct experiential knowledge of both, the type of knowledge that went by the name of *gnosis* or *jnana* rather than *vidya*. Breathing is as essential to the attainment to this *type* of knowledge as it was in the Old Yoga and the Old Psychology. For breathing is the living link between a knowledge based on *visual perception* and *seeing* and a type of knowledge based on *proprioceptive feeling*. Knowledge based on *visual perception* is one example of knowledge based on the five bodily senses. Knowledge based on *proprioceptive feeling* is knowledge based on *whole-body sensing* rather than localised sense organs.

What we ordinarily call 'consciousness' is consciousness of something – focussed on a localised 'object' of perception or thought. Awareness focussed on a localised object goes hand in hand with a sense of ourselves as a localised 'subject' or centre of awareness – a centre that is felt by most people as located in the sensed inner space of their heads. What I term 'awareness' is more than just 'consciousness' – awareness focussed on a localised object and localised in a centre of awareness. For essentially awareness has a non-local or *field* character. Whole-body sensing is a *field awareness* of ourselves and the world around us. Through it we no longer

sense ourselves as localised centres or subjects of sensory perception. Instead we sense our *entire body surface* as a porous skin through which we absorb or *breathe in* our sensory experience of the world. Our localised bodily organs of sight and hearing are instruments of focussed awareness – of ‘consciousness’ or ‘ego-awareness’. Our body as a whole on the other hand, is truly a sense organ of the ‘soul’ – of our own field-awareness of ourselves and of the world.

Through awareness of our body surface as a whole we can feel the space, light and air around us as the very space, light and air of our awareness. We feel our awareness of the light around us as the very light of our awareness. We feel our awareness of the space and air around as the airy spaciousness of our awareness. As a result we can feel our own breathing as a breathing of awareness.

Through awareness of our body surface as a whole we can also feel the sensed inwardness of our bodies in a quite different way – not as a space filled with tissue and organs but as a hollow inner space of awareness. This awareness is permeated by its sensual qualities - of heaviness or lightness, darkness or brightness, warmth or coolness, fluidity or rigidity, diffuseness or density. Such qualities are not reducible to bodily sensations or sensory qualities that we are *aware of* - qualities such as hotness or coldness. Instead they are sensed and sensual qualities of our own *awareness* of ourselves. Such sensual qualities *of* awareness may be aptly described as soul qualities – for through them we experience our own warmth or coolness of soul, our own brightness or darkness, lightness or heaviness of soul. As qualities of our own bodily self-awareness, they are what give tangible bodily shape to our sense of self.

Through ordinary bodily breathing oxygen enters our blood from the air we draw into our lungs and in this way permeates our entire body, nourishing every cell. Through *pranayama* – understood as a breathing of awareness or ‘soul-breathing’ – we use our entire sensed body surface to draw in our sensory awareness of the world around us. From this sensory awareness we extract the ‘oxygen’ of meaning or sense – transforming the sensory qualities we are aware of into inner soul qualities, and letting these soul qualities permeate our inwardly sensed body as a whole. An example

would be listening to a piece of music, a process in which by absorbing our outer awareness of sensory sounds we sense also the soul of the music – we sense the sound tones as soul tones, and by fully absorbing these soul tones allow them to fill and permeate every corner of our soul – our inwardly sensed body as a whole.

In seeing or hearing we are not normally aware of our localised bodily organs of sense - our eyes or ears. The focus of our awareness is instead on the object of our sight or hearing. Whole body sensing on the other hand is impossible without a proprioceptive feeling awareness of our own bodies as a singular sense organ – a sense organ of the soul. In particular it is impossible without awareness of our entire respiratory musculature – which includes not only the muscles of our chest, diaphragm and abdomen but our neck and back muscles, and the muscles of our scalp and face, jaws and mouth, ears and eyes. From the point of view of external anatomy and physiology – the body as perceived from without - it seems outrageous to describe *eye muscles* as respiratory muscles. In relation to the inwardly sensed body, on the other hand, that is just what they are – for the eyes are a microcosm of our *inwardly sensed body as a whole*. Opening our eyes wide brings our awareness to the *sensed outer surface* of our *inwardly sensed body* - opening the breathing pores of that inwardly sensed surface to the sensed space around it and allowing us to feel that ‘outer’ space as the expansive space of our own awareness. Closing our eyes, on the other hand, allows us to ‘look inside ourselves’ - to become more aware of the *sensed inner space* of our bodies, and to feel this space as the space of our own inner self-awareness. Our bodily eyes are the embodiment of our ‘inner eye’. This eye is not a ‘third’ eye located in the pineal gland. It is nothing but the instrument through which we alter the modality and direction of our awareness or ‘gaze’ - which can be turned inward or outwards, concentrated at a centre, spread out over a surface periphery, and expanded or contracted in the inner and outer spaces of our sensed body as a whole.

The sensed inwardness of the body is made up of subtle flow currents of awareness linking different centres of awareness. The sensed space around our bodies is also made up of subtle flow currents of awareness –

in this case currents that link us with the bodies of others. Through awareness of our own breathing and respiratory muscles we can learn to modulate and direct these flow currents. What is more, like the currents of breath that we exhale as voice tones, we can also learn to lend them a specific feeling tone and to modulate that tone. Through simply becoming more aware of our abdominal muscles and breathing primarily from the abdomen we can learn to *re-centre* our awareness in the sensed inner space of our abdomen. In doing so we feel our out-breath not simply as an outward exhalation of air from our nose or mouth but as a subtle downward flow of awareness from the inner space of our head to that of our abdomen. We can use subtle awareness of the musculature of our eyes to aid this process. For by just relaxing our eyelids we can keep our *eyes* open whilst at the same time turning our *gaze* inward – directing it towards a centre of awareness in the abdomen and helping us to re-centre itself there. Indeed through muscular awareness of both our eyes and our sensed body as a whole we can let our awareness sink down even further down – descending in a current to the very ground beneath our feet and to an underground space of awareness beneath it.

Awareness of breathing is the key to the *breathing of awareness*. For through awareness of our respiratory muscles we can learn to modulate those flow currents of awareness that constitute the very breath of our own soul or psyche. It is these flow currents of awareness, and not currents of ‘subtle energy’, which make up our soul body – a *psychical* body or ‘breath’ body’ in the deepest sense. *Awareness of our inwardly sensed body* is the key to sensing this body - *to sensing our inner body of awareness*. This awareness body is a *psychic* or *pranic* body for it is made up of those subtle flow currents of awareness that constitute soul-breath (*psyche/prana*). But these *psychic* or *pranic* currents have in turn their own multiple and varying sensual qualities of warmth and light, colour and tone, fluidity and density. That is why the awareness body can be experienced not only as a diffuse and *air-like* body but also as an elemental body, a spacious or etheric body, and as a body of inner warmth and light, colour and tone. Nevertheless the awareness body remains in its essence a *breath body* - for all its other qualities belong to

those flow-currents of awareness that constitute *prana* – the life-breath of awareness that is the true meaning of *psyche*.

Yet in almost all contemporary yogic teachings and practices *prana* is still misunderstood as something made up of flow currents (*nadis*) and centres (*chakras*) of ‘vital energy’ or ‘bioenergy’ rather than awareness. Hence the need for a New Yoga, and in particular a new yoga of breath or *prana yoga* – one based firmly on the understanding that awareness *is the very inwardness of energy*, just as matter is its *outwardness*. That is not to say that practices of *pranayama* that belong to The New Yoga are themselves entirely new. Though they were re-discovered experientially and not from modern instruction manuals or ancient treatises, they echo the teachings or *shastras* of those treatises or *tantras* – in particular the compendium of meditational practices called the *Vijnanabbairava Tantra* – a work central to the *tantric* tradition of 7-10th century *Kashmir Shaivism*. To begin with however, we need look no further than the *Bhagavad Gita* to see their essence distilled. For as it is written in the *Gita*:

**“As the mighty air which pervades everything, ever abides
in space, know that in the same way all beings abide in Me.”**

The ‘Me’ refers to the all-pervading and infinite awareness *field* that is the Supreme Lord, (*paremesvara*) whether named as *Brahman* or as *Lord Shiva*. In the *Vijnanabbairava* on the other hand, we see meditational practices that implicitly make use of meditations on the body, space, air and light to awaken a sense of the airy spatiality and light of awareness as such – and through this achieve the enlightenment of experiencing awareness as the divine essence of one’s own selfhood and bodyhood:

The Old Yoga of Breath

Meditate on space as omnipresent and free of all limitations.

Think 'I am not my own body. I exist everywhere'.

Meditate on one's own body as the universe and as having the nature of awareness.

Meditate on the skin as being like an outer wall with nothing within it.

Meditate on the inner emptiness of the central *nadi*.

Meditate on the void in one's body extending in all directions simultaneously.

Meditate on one's own self as a vast unlimited expanse.

Meditate on a bottomless well or as standing in a very high place.

Meditate on the void above and the void below.

Meditate on the bodily elements as pervaded with voidness.

Contemplate that the same awareness exists in all bodies.

Whether outside or inside *Shiva* [pure awareness] is omnipresent.

In his book on *Tantra*, Julius Evola quotes a Tibetan meditation similar to those of the *Vijñānabhairava*:

“Visualise the physical body as being internally vacuous, like the inside of an empty sheath, transparent and uncloudedly radiant.”

Terms such as 'vacuum' or 'void' however, must not be understood in the Buddhist sense, and certainly not in terms of an abstract 'quantum vacuum'. Where *tantric* and Buddhist metaphysics differed was precisely in their understanding of The Void (*śūnya* / *nirvāna*). The *tantric* metaphysicians did not see the spatial void within and around all things as an absolute void or as mere emptiness but as a void pervaded with the pure, contentless awareness (*nirvikalpa* / *saṃvit*) represented by *Shiva*. Their argument against the Buddhists was simple: were the void an absolute void - devoid of awareness, no awareness of it would be possible. Therefore it was a contradiction on the part of Buddhist philosophers to speak of *nirvāna* as both an absolute void, devoid of awareness, and as a supremely

enlightened state of awareness. The expanded spaciousness of pure awareness associated with Shiva was seen as the foundation for experiencing his consort (*Shakti*) as the air-like substantiality of awareness known as *pranashakti*. It was also the basis for transforming one's bodily awareness of breathing into an experience of one's *pranic* or breath body – a body with its distinct own centre and a circumference. Here the central meditational method of *pranayama* outlined in the *Vijnanabhairva* was to suspend the breath and focus awareness at the centre of the body in the interval between out-breath (*prana*) and in-breath (*apana*), and to allow one's awareness to expand into the *dvadasbanta* [a field surrounding the entire body to an extent of around twelve finger widths or nine inches] during the suspension interval between in-breath and out-breath (*prana*).

The New Yoga of Breath is designed to explicitly transform awareness of breathing into a breathing of awareness. One key to this lies in an intensified awareness of our body surface as a whole, allowing us to experience it as a porous and breathing membrane - filled with an inner space of awareness and surrounded by an outer space of awareness. The other key lies in recognising that the transition 'points' of the ordinary aerobic breath cycle (the transition from physical in-breath to out-breath and vice versa) can be experienced as elongated intervals or *periods* of awareness in which another complete breath cycle takes its course – an entirely non-physical and anaerobic breathing of awareness. If the meditational methods of the New Yoga are followed, aerobic breathing with the physical body is slowed by progressively elongating the periodic intervals of the breath cycle. This does not require artificially holding our breath - instead our very need for air is progressively *diminished* by a pure breathing of awareness in the intervals of the breath cycle.

The New Yoga of Breath

1. Feel the inner space of your head as a hollow filled with awareness.
2. Feel the inner space of your chest as a hollow filled with awareness.
3. Feel the inner space of your belly and abdomen as a hollow filled with awareness.
4. Feel your entire body surface as a porous, breathing membrane.
5. Feel the entire space around you as a space of awareness.
6. Feel your entire sensory environment as your own larger body.
7. Feel a progressive elongation of the interval between out-breath and in-breath.
8. Feel the end of each nasal out-breath of air as the start of a down-flow of awareness in your body to a deep centre of awareness in your abdomen.
9. Feel the beginning of each nasal *in-breath* of air as the continuation of an in-breath of sensory awareness through your entire head and chest surface.
10. Feel a progressive elongation of the interval between in-breath and out-breath.
11. Feel your outer awareness heightening and your body field expanding beyond your skin surface in the period of the interval following each in-breath.
12. Feel awareness flowing into and pervading your inner body space in the interval preceding each out-breath.

The modern identification of 'health' with 'aerobic' breathing i.e., the oxygenation of the blood, stands in contradiction to its complement – the promotion of 'anti-oxidant' vitamins and dietary supplements. Similarly, the idea that inhibition of breathing goes together with the inhibition of feeling and emotion – a fundamental belief of body-psychotherapies such as 'bioenergetics' or 'rebirthing' is also in contradiction with the tendency to hyperventilate and over-oxygenate the brain that is associated with extreme emotional stress. Today it is also recognised that *asthmatic* attacks can be prevented by deliberately slowing and diminishing aerobic breathing

instead of gasping for breath. The gasp for air and its asthmatic blockage can only be understood as the expression of a blocked breathing of awareness. Far from inhibiting emotional feelings, it is only through the breathing of awareness that we can truly breathe in such feelings and not just air. The inhibition of aerobic breathing is only an inhibition of feeling awareness if it does not lead to a *disinhibition* of 'awareness breathing'. For by its very nature, awareness breathing does not inhibit but intensifies feeling awareness, allowing us to fully breathe our *awareness* of intense emotions.

“The soul is an exhalation that perceives.”

Heraclitus

The psychotherapist who claims to perceive but does not *breathe* their awareness of a client's feelings cannot truly absorb and understand those feelings. Such a psychotherapist is no true *psychologist* – no true scientist of the *psyche*. The Old Yoga had no place for any concept akin to that of modern 'psychology' because it was *psychology* in the deepest sense – a science of the soul's innate kinship with breath or *psyche* and thereby also with speech (*logos*).

'The New Yoga' is yoga reborn as true 'psychology' and true psychology reborn as yoga. What distinguishes the New Yoga from the old is a new but fundamental distinction between an awareness of breathing and the breathing of awareness. What also distinguishes it is an emphasis on using the breathing of awareness not to meditatively intensify and expand our bodily awareness of Self but to meditate The Other. By this I mean switching from a mode of relating based on perceiving another person's body as a mere visual 'body-object' to one based on fully breathing in and absorbing our awareness of their body as a whole. In this way we cease to simply 'see' the body of the other as some sort of physical appendage to their head and conscious mind. Instead we come to sense it as a *sensory image of their soul*.

It is only through our own whole-body awareness - in particular through a whole-body awareness of *breathing* - that we can feel our own body as a whole as a sense organ of the soul – one through which we can breathe in

our sensory awareness of others as if through every pore of our skin. In this way we cease to be simply aware of our own body but know it as an *awareness body* – a *psychical* body or ‘soul body’ capable of sensing the soul or *psyche* of another in a tangible bodily way. The most important *psychological* application and benefit of The New Yoga lies in the way it can teach us to meditate others, and come to ‘know’ other human beings in a different way – not simply through visual perception, emotional empathy or intellectual insight but through attending to the body of the other and in this way taking them in as ‘some-body’ - not just as a ‘talking head’, a set of mental-emotional processes or cognitive and behavioural patterns.

Breathing Awareness

In the presence of others, whether in a social situation or group, or in a one to one encounter, use the opportunity to engage in the following meditations:

Meditation 1: breathing your awareness of the sensory outwardness of the other

1. Become aware of your body as a whole through a whole-body awareness of your own breathing and respiratory musculature.
2. Aware of your own body as a whole, attend solely and entirely to your sensory awareness of another person’s *body as a whole*.
3. Without making direct eye-contact, attend to every feature of their bodily bearing or comportment - including posture, facial expressions and looks in their eyes.
4. Feel yourself breathing in your sensory awareness of the body of the other through every pore of your skin.

Meditation 2: breathing your awareness of the soul inwardness of the other

1. Use whole-body awareness of your breathing to sense the inner spaces of your head, chest and abdomen respectively, feeling each of them as clear, hollow spaces of awareness.
2. Attending to your sensory awareness of another person's head, chest and abdomen, intend also to feel the quality of awareness inwardly filling their head, chest and abdominal spaces respectively.
3. Feel the sensual tone and textures of awareness filling the inwardness of their 'head' space in your own head space, the quality of awareness filling the inwardness of their chest and abdominal space in the inner space of your own chest and abdomen.
4. Feel the aware inwardness or soul of the other person's *body as a whole* in the inwardness of your own body as a whole – your own soul.

The 'New Yoga' is not a yoga of the physical body but of this *psychical* or soul body – itself essentially a breath body or *pranic* body. In the West this body has gone under many esoteric names such as 'subtle body' (Jung) or 'astral' and 'etheric' body. It was called an 'astral' body because it had ultimately the same unbounded spatial dimensions as cosmic or astral space. The terms 'space' and 'ether' are both Western translations of the Sanskrit word *akasha*. The awareness body was called an 'etheric body' because it was once thought of as composed of the same 'aether' that was once supposed to fill the apparent emptiness of space. This is not some quantum-mechanical construct nor some fine material substantiality but soul substance - the primordial substantiality or 'aether' of awareness as such, permeating all space.

Yet the pure awareness we can experience through identification with the emptiness of space can also be permeated or contaminated by more-or-less healthy psychic and emotional 'climates' or 'atmospheres' in which people dwell – whether economic or political, familial or institutional, domestic or public, cultural or religious. To speak of the 'climate' of an

encounter, the ‘aura’ of a person or object or the atmosphere of a place or institution is no mere metaphor. Such psychic atmospheres have as much reality and substantiality as the very air we breathe in them. In reality they *form* that very air and imbue its physicality with their own psychic qualities. Mass psychic and emotional climates are also the true basis of changing weather conditions. It is psychical pollutants and ‘psycho-smog’ and not air-borne chemical pollutants, ozone holes in the upper atmosphere or ‘aether’, or industrial smog that are the primary source of those ‘allergens’ held responsible for conditions such as asthma. Each individual’s *pranic* body contains its own ‘micro-climate’ of emotional weather patterns - including warming emotional seas, rising emotional moisture, more or less cloudy emotional atmospheres, emotional droughts and floods, rainstorms and monsoons, whirlwinds and tsunamis, thunder and lightning. The term ‘etheric’ is derived from the Greek ‘aether’, meaning the upper atmosphere that surrounds the earth. In its *basic* structure however, the psychical is a sphere composed of ‘aetheric’ flow-currents of awareness – circulating and spiralling, radial and axial, centrifugal and centripetal. Einstein’s theory of relativity seemed to make the long-standing idea of a cosmic aether filling space redundant. This is not so, if, as in Stephen Rado’s modern aether cosmology or ‘aetherometry’, the aether is conceived of as a flowing but frictionless gaseous medium. In reality however there is no such thing as an ideal, frictionless gas. Only *awareness* as such has the ideal characteristics of Rado’s aether, capable of flowing in the same way as a gaseous aether. That is why in all primordial cultures awareness was sensed as something like air - flowing like currents of breath (*psyche*) and wind (*pneuma*). That is also why the supposed ‘founder’ of modern medicine – the Greek Hippocrates – saw ‘ill-winds’- as the primary cause of illness. In reality the ‘ether’ or ‘aether’ is not any fine or frictionless gas that physics can detect but consists purely and simply of flow currents of awareness as such.

Just as energy currents can form themselves into more or less stable field-patterns or material units, so can flow currents of awareness form themselves into more or less stable field-patterns or units of awareness. All material bodies in space are formed not simply from stable energetic patterns in the form of atoms and particles but from basic particles or

units of awareness. The root meaning of *prana* is that which precedes (*pra*) the existence of all material atoms (*anu*) or energetic units. The *pranic* body is only an 'etheric' body in this sense - being formed from the same basic *pre-physical* units of awareness from which air itself and all units of matter and energy are formed. Such units have no fixed size. The psychical body is an awareness body unit and has the same basic structure as all awareness units. This basic etheric structure is formed from patterned flow currents of awareness (*nadis*) that are *spiral* in character - another word with the same root as 'spirit' and 'respiration'

The different flows of awareness that make up our *pranic* body are not merely spiritual-scientific abstractions represented in neat schematic diagrams. They are what make us sensitive in a bodily way to the atmosphere around ourselves and other people and to all those winds or draughts of awareness (*pneuma*) that flow between and within ourselves and others – draughts that can draw us towards or away from one another, deeper into or further out of ourselves. Draughts that can also draw us into and out of *one another* - allowing our own soul or *psyche* to flow into the body of the other, and their soul to be drawn like a draught into ours. The German word for 'relationship' – *Beziehung* – derives from the verb *ziehen* – to pull or draw. The therapeutic relationship is ordinarily thought of as one in which the therapist 'draws' the client out, draws insights from the 'material' presented by the client and/or helps the client to independently draw insights from their own experience. In general we speak of people feeling more or less 'drawn' to one another, being 'drawn to' particular ideas, places or people, or being 'drawn into' discussions and endeavours. And yet neither in psychotherapy nor in everyday life do people either think or feel the 'draughts' that draw them hither and thither in a *bodily* way, as flow currents of awareness comparable to draughts of air. A therapist may be aware of 'drawing out' a client verbally, but this is quite different from attending to the atmosphere or 'aura' of their bodily presence and actively drawing it towards us – feeling it as a tangible 'draught' of awareness that we can then absorb or breathe in with our whole body. It is easy for the human being to be 'drawn' or 'sucked' so deeply *into* a set of ideas, a pattern of relating, or any some element of their

everyday activity and experiencing, that they are drawn *out* of themselves – sometimes to the point of feeling sucked dry and depleted, lacking sense of their whole self. The natural reaction is then to ‘withdraw’ back into themselves, temporarily or permanently closing themselves off from the world and retreating from the pull or draw of relationship as *Be-ziehen* - to be ‘drawn’ or ‘draughted’ by someone or something. If the process of withdrawal back down into our own deeper self is blocked it may be experienced as the downward pull of ‘depression’. To not be ‘drawn out’ of ourselves to the point of losing ourselves in the world however, does not require us to close off and ‘withdraw’ from the world. For the opposite of letting our awareness be passively drawn out or ‘sucked in’ by something or someone is not to close off but to open ourselves and to actively *draw in* and absorb our awareness of all that we experience, inwardly and outwardly - to *breathe awareness*.

Postscript

Modern psychologists attend exclusively to their client’s experience of themselves, other people and the world, to their ways of reflecting on their self-experience or reacting to others. They may seek to help them to ‘cognitively’ reflect in different ways on their experience, thereby altering their way of reacting to or ‘behaving’ towards others. Alternatively they may prescribe medications to alter an individual’s inner self-experience and outward behaviour. Yet in all modern *psychologising* - of whatever form - there is no real place for the *psyche* understood in terms of fields and patterned flows of awareness. That is because awareness cannot be reduced to an experienced phenomenon or complex of phenomena of any sort. Awareness, quite simply, is not an *experience* – whether the experience of a perception, sensation, desire, impulse, emotion, thought or action. Awareness is *awareness of experiencing*. Our awareness of an experienced perception, sensation, desire, impulse emotion, thought or action is not that experienced phenomenon. This was understood in the philosophies of the Old Yoga, which recognised the essential reality of the soul or psyche

as a field of awareness transcending all experience and all experienced phenomena. Today things are very different. 'Pre-reflective' *awareness of* experience has been replaced by *reflection on* experience and by the conceptualisation of experienced phenomena. We have forgotten that "all reflection on experience is part of experience" (Kosok) - that thoughts and concepts too are things we experience. That is why the most sophisticated psychological reflections *on* experience cannot free a single individual from their own experienced dis-ease or distress without the cultivation of an awareness distinct from *all* experience - precisely the type of 'transcendental' awareness cultivated through the Old Yoga, and recognised in the 'Old Psychology'. For this was a 'psychology' in which the all-pervading and flowing character of awareness was correctly understood as the living essence of air and 'breath' - as 'life-breath' or *psyche*. The Old Yoga was such a psychology. That is why, to revitalise 'psychology', a 'New Yoga' is called for - one which, by cultivating *awareness*, prevents us from reducing the human *psyche* to an *experiential object* of lifeless 'scientific' knowledge. For no true insight into the human psyche can be attained by any form of professional knowledge or training without first of all deepening and expanding the professionals' own bodily, *breathing awareness of themselves and their clients* as living, breathing human beings.

PUJA

THE TENETS AND NATURE OF TANTRIC RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

“... the gods were never dethroned in India. They were not disintegrated and dissolved by criticism and natural science, as were the deities of the Greeks ... The gods of Homer became laughable, and were ... later regarded as incompatible with the more spiritual and ethical, later concepts of divinity ... India, on the other hand, retained its anthropomorphic personifications ... to assist the mind in its attempt to comprehend what was regarded as manifested *through* them ... What is expressed through the personal masks was understood to transcend them, and yet the garb of the divine *personae* was never actually removed. By this tolerant, cherishing attitude a solution of the theological problem was attained that preserved the personal character of the divine powers for all the purposes of worship and daily life, while permitting an abstract, supreme and transcendental concept to dominate for the more lofty, supraritualistic stages of insight and speculation.”

“No one who is not himself divine may successfully worship the divinity. Having become the deity one should offer sacrifice to it.” [Ghandarva Tantra] The identity of the hidden nature of the worshipper with the god worshipped is the first principle of the Tantric philosophy of devotion [Bhakti].

Heinrich Zimmer

“Once upon a time a sannyasin entered the temple of Jagganath. As he looked at the holy image he debated with himself whether God had a form or was formless. He passed his staff from left to right to feel whether it touched the image. The staff touched nothing. He understood that there was no image before him; he concluded that God was formless. Next he passed the staff from right to left. It touched the image. He understood that God had form. Thus he understood that God has form and, again, is formless.

The Divine Mother revealed to me in the Kali temple that is was She who had become everything. She showed me that everything was full of Awareness. The image [Murti] was Awareness, the altar was Awareness, the water-vessels were Awareness, the door-sill was Awareness, the marble floor was Awareness – all was Awareness. I found everything inside the room soaked, as it were, in Bliss – the Bliss of Satchitananda (Being-Awareness-Bliss). I saw a wicked man in front of the Kali temple; but in him I also saw the power of the Divine Mother vibrating. That was why I fed a cat with the food that was to be offered to the Divine Mother.”

Shri Ramakrishna

THE RELIGIOUS TENETS OF TANTRA

THERE IS NOTHING OUTSIDE AWARENESS

THERE IS NOTHING OUTSIDE GOD

GOD *IS* AWARENESS

AWARENESS IS ALL THAT IS AND MORE.

GOD IS EVERYTHING AND MORE.

GOD IS WITHIN EVERYTHING.

EVERYTHING IS WITHIN AWARENESS.

EVERYTHING IS WITHIN GOD.

EVERYTHING IS AWARENESS.

EVERYTHING *IS* GOD.

THE NATURE OF TANTRIC WORSHIP

Spiritual worship [Puja] mostly begin with salutations to God. Generally speaking, these salutations are offered in the first person e.g., ‘I offer salutations to God, and pray that all obstacles may be removed so that I may attain my real nature.’ In Kashmir Shaivism, the manner of salutation is not only different but also unique in that here the one who offers homage to Shiva is none other than Shiva, nor are the obstacles (for the removal of which the prayer is offered) other than Shiva; and, even the means through which homage is offered, is one with Shiva.

Swami Lakshman Joo

The worship of Shiva as an image or ‘Murti’ (whether in the abstract form of a rock, stone or phallic linga, or in human bodily form) is not understood as any form of ‘idolism’ in the Tantric Shaivist tradition of Kashmir. Instead human images of Shiva, like the human body, are seen as a living symbol and embodiment of divinity – an external embodiment of our own divine inner body or awareness body (Vijnanadeha). That is why worship itself (Puja) is understood in the way primarily associated with ‘Tantra’ - as a process of ‘theosis’ through which the worshipper becomes the god or goddess which he or she worships, identifying with the Divine Awareness and with his or her own androgynous Awareness Body. For just as the individual’s inner self has countless faces and genders, so does Shiva, who is often represented as androgyne or through his female counterparts or consorts (the Great Goddess or ‘Mahadevi’ in the form of both Kali and Parvati). Whilst ultimately every thing and every being is a face of the Divine - of Shiva - the faces, looks and gestures of religious Murti each embody specific transcendental qualities of awareness and allow the worshipper to feel and identify with these qualities. Murti or god-images are not ‘idols’ – profane materialisations and ‘objectifications’ of divinity. Instead they are intended as *subjectifications* - divinisations - of matter itself. And indeed, in a long-forgotten past, higher beings or subjectivities - ‘gods’ – could and did incarnate a portion of their vast awareness in massive

stone images and monuments, silently sensing, resonating, and communicating with the human world and worshippers around them. The essence of ritual worship of Shiva is a relationship to the Murti as the temporary body of the indwelling deity. This may be sensually heightened by the sounding of bells or the lighting of candles and incense. Yet Puja can also consist simply of silently uttering or even just *thinking* the name 'Shiva', or the mantra 'Shivoham' ("Shiva is my 'I'") whilst identifying with pure awareness. For the essence of thinking is *thanking* – a thanking recognition of that Divine Awareness which grants us all Being - and that is the very source of our innermost Self.

SHIVA BHAKTI 1

DEVOTIONAL SUTRAS FOR SHIVA PUJA

Listen: neither accepting nor rejecting anything, but just sharing joyfully in everything, being as you are.

I extol that ultimate awareness from which and within which the entire fullness of being is emitted by means of will, knowing and action - whose power is always new, and the God, the great Lord, who is hidden by that power.

Always new, hidden, yet old and apparent to all, The Heart, the Ultimate, shines alone with the brilliance of the Supreme.

In You, the Supreme who transcends the abyss, You without beginning, the unique one who has penetrated the secret depths, You who rest in everything, You who are found in everything ... in You I take refuge.

Listen! Our Lord whose nature is awareness, is unlimited, the absolute master of ... every power.

I bow down to Shiva, new and hidden, in the form of the great pair [Shiva-Shakti].

The Supreme Goddess is the absolute Freedom [Moksha] of Awareness ...

**In the divine abode of the body, I adore you,
Oh God, together with the Goddess.**

**I adore you with the priceless goblet of The Heart,
which is full of the ambrosia of bliss.**

Abhinavagupta

SHIVA BHAKTI 2

Awareness is the Self.

Awareness, Shiva, is the soul of the world. *The Shiva Sutras*

Every appearance owes its existence to the light of awareness. Nothing can have its own being without the light of awareness.

Kshemaraja

**Shiva is the Self shining in all things,
all-pervasive, all quiescent Awareness.**

**May the Shiva in-penetrated into my limited self through his power,
offer worship to the Shiva of the expansive Self – the concealer of
himself by himself!** *Somananda*

**How wonderful it is that although only one sound, that is, Shiva's
name, is always on the tips of their tongues, yet [His] devotees can
taste the ineffable relish of all the objects of the senses.** *Utpaladeva*

THE WORSHIPFUL LIFE

The worshipful life is one in which at all times we identify with the very essence of the Divine – which is nothing but awareness.

That means learning to distinguish awareness as such from each and every thing we are aware of.

To do this we need only remember that our awareness of any thing or thought, sensation or perception, feeling or emotion, is not itself a thing or thought, not itself a sensation or perception, not itself an image or

emotion. It is free of things and thoughts, sensations and perceptions, images and emotions.

The name 'Shiva' points to the truth that awareness is what 'lies behind' (SHI) all things and can therefore free us from or 'cut asunder' (SHVI) our attachment to any thing we are aware of.

That is why Shiva, as awareness, is associated in the Tantric tradition with absolute Freedom.

Awareness transcends all that we are aware of. Only through identification with this 'transcendent' nature of awareness [Shiva] can we also take full delight in every thing and being that we are aware of - knowing it as a mirror and manifestation of the Divine Awareness, a unique shape and a unique face of that Awareness.

Only then can we experience the Divine Awareness as not only 'transcendent' (transcending each and every thing we are aware of) but also 'immanent' (present within each and every thing).

The name 'Shiva' does not denote a divine being or god 'with' awareness. For God as Shiva IS awareness – that Divine Awareness which is the source of all beings.

What the name Shiva does denote is a fundamental aspect of the Divine Awareness – its own primordial Awareness of Being, experienced as its self-recognition, self-being or 'I'-ness. For recognising itself in and as all things and beings, it is their very Self – which is nothing but each being's most intimate Awareness of Being. Knowing our innermost Self or 'I' as identical with that of the Divine Awareness is the experience of 'Shiv-awareness'. If meditation means identifying with the Divine Awareness that IS God, then the worshipful life consists in recognising that Awareness as our innermost Self or 'I', and in recognising that 'I' as identical with the 'I'-ness of the Divine - with Shiva.

MANTRA FOR SHIVA-PUJA

‘SHIVA’
 IS THE VERY ‘I’-NESS
 OF THAT TRANSCENDENTAL AWARENESS
 THAT IS IMMANENT WITHIN US ALL
 MIRRORED AND MADE MANIFEST
 AS ALL THINGS AND BEINGS;
 PRESENT WITH THEM ALL
 AS THEIR ULTIMATE
 SELF OR ‘I’
 THE MANTRA
 OF SHIVA IS THUS
 SHIVOHAM
 ‘SHIVA AM I’

THE SACRED SHRINE

In Puja, the Murti or ‘idol’ is no mere physical object ‘in’ space, nor is it merely a symbolic representation of some non-physical divinity. On the contrary, it is the worshipper’s meditative awareness of the Murti that first give it, the space around it and the objects in that space, the character of a sacred space or shrine – an unbounded space of Divine Awareness. It is the sacred space of this Divine Awareness that is then felt by the worshipper as manifest in the variety of sensory shapes and forms that make up the objects of the shrine, not least as an awareness indwelling and emanating from the Murti itself. In traditional Hindu forms of Shiva Puja,

we often see worshippers chanting, and at the same time offering flowers or betel leaves to the Murti or Shiva Linga. In the understanding of Abhinavagupta however “by ‘flowers’ are meant all substances, external and internal, which nourish the Heart, because they bestow their own nature to the heart.” The “internal flowers” are those innate qualities of awareness - soul qualities - felt in the body and heart of the worshipper as manifesting themselves in such sensory qualities as the scent of incense, the burning flame of a candle, the various objects of the shrine etc. Taking sensuous delight in all these objects and their qualities, but doing so from and as the pure light of the Divine Awareness “**the worshipper is both the pure and the purifier**” (Abhinavagupta).

THE SHIVA LINGAM

The chief symbol of Shiva is the ‘Shiva Lingam’. Worshippers of Shiva revere the Lingam in the form of a rounded, egg or phallic-shaped stone of any size. The stone as symbol or ‘lingam’ symbolises nothing more or less than the fact that there is nothing in the universe which is not a living symbol of the divine awareness that is Shiva – every material thing being a condensed or solidified mass of that awareness. Yet ‘lingam’ is a word that means nothing but ‘symbol’. What sort of religion can knowingly worship a symbol that is not only understood *as* a symbol but whose name actually means ‘symbol’?

Since the divine awareness (Shiva) manifests in and as all things, all things are symbols (Linga) of it – ‘Shivalinga’. The Lingam as symbol is what symbolises this spiritual truth. Meditating a stone as Shiva Lingam both reminds us of this truth and allows our awareness to expand to appreciate the awareness present and compacted in all material things. It also allows us to experience the pure immaterial awareness that is simultaneously immanent and transcendent, manifest and unmanifest in all things. For awareness of any thing is only possible in the light of awareness as such – pure awareness. Any particular thing can only manifest within a surrounding field or space of pure awareness and become visible through

the pure light of awareness. Meditating such a hard, earthly and material thing as a stone allows us to experience all things as Linga – as symbols of a symbol-free awareness, materialisations of the immaterial, manifestations of the unmanifest, forms of the formless – and to know them not just as things ‘in’ space and ‘illuminated’ by light but as solidified shapes taken by space, and as luminous condensations of the very light that illumines them. Then the boundary of every single bodily thing can be experienced tantrically - as a sensual surface through which it is ever in blissful erotic contact with the space and light of awareness around it, this being the womb within and into which it arises like a phallus. Thus it is that the Lingam in its phallic form symbolises both the ‘penetration’ of an unbounded and divine awareness into the womb of our physical universe through every body in it, and its pervasion of that womb - a universe whose very space is nothing but the pure space of awareness that first makes room for things to arise within it.

Lingam ‘worship’ then, means granting awareness to such a single, simple and seemingly insentient thing as a stone in such a way that we experience that awareness as not only seeing but sensually surrounding and touching its surface, which is a glistening reflection of the very light of awareness. And since the dense solidity of the stone is a compact mass of the very same awareness out of which *every body* in the *entire universe* arises, our worship consists in nothing but seeing this *single* stone *as* a solid symbol (Lingam) of that *singular* universal awareness which is Shiva, condensing its universal *power* (Shakti) of material manifestation. The stone, as Shiva Lingam, is like the dense core of a nuclear reactor or bomb, containing within it an *infinite* power of universal creation and destruction, and yet ever sustained within the universal awareness whose power it solidifies and manifests. Thus it is that, being physical bodies ourselves, we can also come to experience, know and say *for ourselves* the profound ‘mantra’ of Shaivist ‘tantra’, the one which says:

“I am Shiva, of compact mass of awareness and bliss - and the entire universe is my body.”

Whatever the specific 'symbolic' form of the Lingam stone, whether upright and phallic, round or egg-shaped - like the egg of Brahman which contains the entire universe and from which it is born - for the worshipper it is no 'mere' symbol 'representing' some other 'thing'. Instead it is a literal 'putting or throwing together' (Greek *sumballein*) of *all things in one*. Those Gurus who can produce Lingam stones from out of their mouths show they have tapped the power of material manifestation that is awareness as such, the divine womb or 'mouth' of creation. Yet just hearing the Linga 'Strotram' (devotional song) during Puja – whilst at the same time granting sensual awareness to a Shiva Lingam, is enough to attune us to that mouth of creation - a mouth which utters things themselves as its sensual words or 'symbols'.

WHAT IS THE SHIVA LINGAM?

Any thing in space,
Can be thought, seen and
Directly sensed as a miracle.
A miracle of creation, constantly
Manifesting and materialising out of the
Seeming vacuity of that pure thought-free,
Sense-free, and thing-free awareness
That is space, and that is
SHIVA.

A simple stone
Is a miraculous thing.

Seemingly insentient, it is in truth
 A dense and compact materialisation of the
 Pure awareness that is Shiva, both manifesting and
 Reflecting the pure light of awareness
 That pervades all of space.

Such a simple stone,
 Can be thought, seen and sensed
 As a miracle, not only of its own manifestation
 From the awareness that is SHIVA, but that of all things.
 As such it is also symbol - LINGAM - of this miracle of
 Universal manifestation and
 Materialisation.

A simple, single stone, selected
 For its solid density and simplicity of form and colour,
 Whether colourless black, absorbing all light, or bearing a
 Shining surface that reflects the light and all things around it,
 Can, by virtue of its simplicity of form become a symbol of the formless,
 Pure awareness that is Shiva taking form in the most compact way.
 Then the stone ceases to be just one single thing among others
 'In' universal space, but can be thought, seen and sensed AS
 The entire universe, and AS a compact mass of that
 Singular, universal awareness that is Shiva.

Such a simple, single stone,
 Thought, seen and directly sensed in this way,
 Becomes a spiritual STEPPING STONE to experiencing its truth
 As a symbol - LINGAM - the truth that
 All things are in each, and all things are
 SHIVA.

Thus can a stone become the
 Most singular of all symbols of Shiva,
 The revered SHIVA LINGAM.

PUJA FOR THE GREAT LORD

**On the blessed occasion of Shivratri,
I have again performed Puja for the Great Lord ...
Before him and for him, with and within him, in him and as him.
I have lit the primordial flame of The Great Lord, that burns forever.
I have seated myself before the Murti of The Great Lord.
I have meditated the majesty of his supreme Mudra.
I have received the grace and wisdom of his gaze.
I have seen his third eye as a singular star.
I have heard his inward speech as mine.
I have known him knowing me.
I have heard him hearing me.
I have seen him seeing me.**

I have felt him touching me.
I have understood him teaching me.
I have breathed the sweetness of his breath.
I have absorbed the sublime nectar of his divine bliss.
I have been put to supreme rest by his infinite patience.
I have seen and sensed his Lingam stone as all things in one.
I have sensed the boundless span of his awareness across time.
I have become the boundless expanse of his awareness in space.
I have felt his divine power of action pervading all of space and time.
I have let awareness rise as coiling incense to the heights of his sky.
I have let it descend into the depths of the Great Mother's womb.
I have let it become the tall column of fire that unbinds all bonds.
I have experienced all things as the pure awareness that He is.
I have performed Puja for the Great Lord,
Before him and for him, with and within him, in him and as him.
I have thus enacted the supreme Mantra of the Great Lord,
I have become the Mantra that he and I are two as one.

Shivoh

SPANDA
THE DIVINE DYNAMICS OF CREATION

The original *Spanda Karikas* were commentaries by either *Vasugupta* or his disciple *Kallata* on the revelatory scripture known as the *Shivasutras* - commentaries that singled out the metaphysical principle of *spanda* or 'vibration' as the fundamental and divine dynamic of creation. The *Spanda Karikas* of Kshemaraja, cousin and disciple of *Abhinavagupta* were intended as a refinement of these metaphysical commentaries. Kshemaraja's own *Spanda Karikas* begin with the following lines:

Though the ambrosia of *Spanda* has been relished in small degree from my work *Spandasandoha*, I am now making an effort for providing complete enjoyment of that [Spanda].

Hail to that power of creative vibration (*Spandashakti*) of *Shiva*, that exults in glory all over the world...If you want to know the exact inter-connection of the sutras [the *Spandakarikas*], the most excellent ascertainment of the highest reality, pointed and subtle statements of reasoning, the right application of means, the exquisite exposition through clear sense and the secret doctrine of *Shaivagama* [Shaivist scriptures] then, Oh intelligent people, apply your mind to the language of the *Spandashastra* (*Spanda* teaching) and obtain the wealth of *Spanda*.

Jaideva Singh *Spanda-karikas The Divine Creative Pulsation*

The New Spanda Karikas

What follows is a series of *sutras* or *karikas* which offer a new understanding of the ontological foundations of *tantric* theosophy, and in this way approach anew its central metaphysical principle of *spanda*, here translated as 'Q' – 'the Quivering'. *Tantric* metaphysics is interpreted as a profound phenomenological and *field-dynamic* understanding of 'the fundamental dynamic of creation' - one which recognised this to be a *dynamic* relation between an ultimate field of awareness (*Shiva*) and its 'energetic' expression (*Shakti*) in the entirety of experienced reality or 'actuality'. Within these *karikas* I have also sought to indicate important parallels between Greek philosophical terms central to *gnostic* theosophy, and the Sanskrit terms central to the metaphysical theosophy or 'theophysics' of *tantra*.

Contrary to the position held by Aristotle, the realm of potentiality or capability (Greek: *dynamis*, Sanskrit: *shak*) is prior to the realm of actuality (*energeia/maya*).

The domain of potentiality, being by nature unbounded and inexhaustible, cannot be reduced to actuality (*energeia*) - to any actual thing or being, even a supreme being.

'Non-being' is not nothing but no-thing, no actual thing or being – for it is the primordial field of unbounded and inexhaustible potentiality.

Non-being or potentiality is itself thinkable only in relation to its possible actualisations or formative potentials.

The primordial domain of potentiality is not a formless void but an unbounded fullness of formative potentials.

This was known in the *gnostic* tradition as the *pleroma*, in the *Vedic* tradition as *Brahman*, and in the tantric tradition as the great mother goddess *Mahadevi Durga*.

Potential realities, by their very nature, have no ‘actual’ energetic, material or spatio-temporal reality. They have reality only *in* awareness (Greek: *noos*) as formative potentialities, potencies or powers of awareness (Sanskrit: *Shaktis/Siddhis*).

The formative potentials of awareness latent within the primordial field of potentiality consist of potential forms or ‘field-patterns’ of awareness - individualised beings, selves or consciousnesses (Sanskrit *jiva*).

‘Awareness’ is consciousness in its divine, unbounded and non-dual character – in scientific terms it is consciousness in its non-local or field character.

‘Consciousness’, on the other hand, is awareness in its individualised, bounded and dual character – consisting of groupings (*kula*) of localised individual subjects or centres of awareness, each of which is a bounded unit of awareness.

Fields of awareness are the condition of manifestation of any localised object of consciousness for a localised individual subject or centre of consciousness.

Individualised consciousnesses are *field-patterns of awareness*, each of which configures their own world or *patterned field of awareness*.

Shiva is consciousness in its field character understood as *prakasha* – the divine *light of awareness* that first allows any object to *come to light* for a localised subject or centre of awareness.

But the divine cannot be reduced to any actual being or thing, force or energy, even a supreme being or universal energy.

The divine can only be understood as an unbounded *pleroma* or fullness of potentiality that has reality within the primordial field or light of awareness.

The divine is no actual thing or being but a dynamic relation. The dynamic relation that constitutes divinity is a dynamic relation between:

1. *Awareness of potentiality* – the unbounded realm of potentiality that has reality only in awareness and that constitutes the reality of ‘non-being’ as potentiality.

2. *Potentialities of awareness*: the infinite formative potentials of awareness that are dormant as potential forms or field-patterns of awareness – individualised beings or consciousnesses.

‘Being’ as such is not ‘a’ being, even a supreme being. It is not a state (existence or actuality) but a primordial activity.

Being is *be-ing*, the *autonomous self-actualisation* of potentialities dormant within the primordial realm of potentiality as individualised consciousnesses or beings.

‘Power’, understood as formative potentiality or capability (*dynamis/shaké*) is prior to ‘energy’ (*energeia*) understood as formative activity.

‘Energy’ (*energeia*) is essentially nothing actual but the bridge between the domains of potentiality and actuality.

‘Energy’ as formative activity (*energein*), the free and autonomous self-actualisation of the primordial domain of potentiality, is the fundamental feminine aspect of the divine named as *Shakti*.

The manifold formative potentials latent within the primordial domain of potentiality are those *potencies* whose autonomous self-actualisation takes the form of the *Shaktis* – the multiple manifest faces of the goddess or divine feminine.

The release of potentialities into actuality is conditional on our awareness of them. *Shiva*, as the divine light of awareness, is also the primordial awareness of potentiality that first releases them into their own free and autonomous self-actualisation.

The ‘starting point’ of Creation is no actual event in time, no ‘Big Bang’ and no act of some actual pre-existing being or beings.

It is ‘Q’ – a primordial *Quivering*. This is the eternally unbridgeable creative tension or ‘potential difference’ spanning the domains of potentiality on the one hand and those of actuality on the other.

It is named in Greek by the word *palintonos* – meaning a ‘stretching back and forth’. It is named in *tantric* metaphysics by the Sanskrit word *spanda* – meaning ‘vibration’.

The word *tantra* derives from the Sanskrit root *tan* – meaning to stretch, span or expand.

This is also the common root meaning of the Latin *tendere* (from which we derive words such as ‘tone’, ‘tend’ ‘attend’, ‘intend’ and ‘extend’), the English words ‘span’ and ‘expand’, and the German ‘Spannung’ – meaning both ‘tension’ and potential difference or ‘voltage’.

A string can only vibrate by being stretched to a point of tension.

The Quivering is the fundamental creative vibration (*spanda*) made possible and protected (*tra*) through a primordial spreading (*tan*) and tensioning (*Spannung*) of the primordial field of divine awareness.

The stretching out and tensioning (*tan*) occurs within the essentially non-extensional or 'intensional' space of the divine awareness field.

This non-extensional space or horizon of awareness was termed *paravyoman* or *shivayoman* – the 'supreme sky' or 'sky of *Shiva*'.

It is what first allows divine awareness to stretch or span itself, and then oscillate or resonate back and forth (*palintonos*) between:

1. the domain of unbounded potentiality or non-being.
2. the formative potentialities of awareness dormant within it.

The Sanskrit root *tra* means to shelter, guard and protect.

Tan-tra is the primordial extension, tensioning or spanning of awareness (*tan*) that first shelters and protects (*tra*) the space of that primordial creative tension or vibration that is called *spanda* – the Quivering, thus freeing or liberating the creative *possibilities* latent within that tension.

Spanda is also the primordial expansion of that realm of infinite *possibility* which itself spans the domain of *potentiality* and *actuality*, each felt potentiality of awareness having itself countless possible forms of expression or actualisation.

Our own human awareness is constituted by a creative tension, vibration or oscillation of the same nature as *spanda* – the Quivering.

For example the tension we experience between our felt but unformulated awareness of something we wish to express in words, and a more differentiated awareness of the different *possible* forms of verbal expression that we might use to do so.

The fitting word is a verbal formulation in *resonance* with the meaning latent in our initial unformulated awareness or 'felt sense'(Gendlin) of something we wish to say.

But before the fitting word or tone can be found, a ‘space’ must first of all be spread or stretched out (*tan*), a non-extensional space in which our awareness can actively *resonate* back and forth between the realm of *potential* meaning or felt sense and its different *possible* formulations.

This unformulated awareness is not a formless or undifferentiated awareness, for it is a felt sense of that which we wish to express, one with its own particular flavour (*rasa*) or feeling tone (*bhava*).

In general, *spanda* can be conceived as a resonance between outer form and inner feeling tone, feeling tones being tonalities of awareness which find outer expression as wavelengths of sound and as resonant frequencies of material objects.

Feeling tones are also embodied as cell, organ and muscle tone, finding expression through the tone of our language and gestures, movements and speech.

Spanda is not an audible sound tone but the fundamental mood or feeling tone that is the source of all actual sound tones – material and musical.

The source of music and song is a creative tension in the awareness of the composer. The potentialities vibrating or quivering in this creative tension are not heard as actual sound vibrations but felt as patterned tonalities of awareness arising from a fundamental ‘mood’ or feeling tone.

As *spanda* or *palintonos*, the Quivering is not a mechanical vibration or sound oscillation occurring in a material, energetic or etheric medium.

Spanda or *palintonos* is the quivering vibration of divine awareness spanning the domains of potentiality and actuality, and resounding as a fundamental tonality of awareness in the divine mantram OM.

Tantra is the primordial spreading or stretching (*tan*) of the non-extensional space of awareness in which the fundamental tone can resound as *spanda* — the all permeating vibration that is the Quivering.

A non-extensional space of awareness has the same nature as the space of our aware inner resonance with a piece of music – something distinct from the measurable physical spaces in which sound energy travels as mechanical oscillations or movements of air molecules.

Just as loud music may set our body into resonatory vibration without us feeling any inner resonance with the music, so is the Fundamental Tone not to be confused with an audible sound vibration.

It is within this non-extensional space of awareness that the divine awareness field resonates as *spanda* between the domains of potentiality and actuality, resounding as the fundamental tone, and expanding a space of infinite ‘musical’ possibility.

All the potentials of awareness latent within the primordial domain of potentiality resound as potential sub-tones or harmonics of the fundamental tone, and as the infinite tonal patterns that these can give rise to.

Like musical or vocal tones, different tonalities of awareness or feeling tones have their own intrinsic sensory qualities – qualities of light and darkness, colour and shape, lightness and heaviness, warmth or coolness.

These sensual qualities of awareness or psychical Qualia are the subjective taste or subtle essences (*rasas/tanmatras*) of any and all sense-perceptible qualities of objects.

Individualised consciousnesses or ‘selves’ are unique tonal field-patterns of awareness: made up of Qualia - sensual tonalities of awareness.

Every individualised consciousness or ‘self’ is a tonal field pattern of awareness that configures and illuminates its own sensory ‘world’ or patterned field of awareness.

The ‘objective’ world of manifest phenomena is the result of an *inter-subjective* interplay between the sensual qualities and field patterns of awareness that constitute individualised consciousnesses, human and divine.

The phenomenal ‘world’ of any consciousness or ‘self’ is the manifestation, within its own sensory field of awareness, of the tonal field-patterns of awareness of *other* consciousnesses.

At the same time, all ‘selves’ are but individualised *self-manifestations* of the divine field or light of awareness that is *Shiva*.

Since all phenomena emerge from fields of awareness and give expression to interweaving field patterns of awareness no phenomenon can be said to be the ‘cause’ or ‘effect’ of other phenomena manifesting in the same field.

Since all sensory phenomena, including light, are only visible *in the light* of our own awareness of them, they can only come to light as expressions of the divine light of awareness (*Shiva*) that is the source of all individualised consciousness (*jiva*).

The Sanskrit root *spbur* refers to both a quivering or throbbing and to a sparkling or shimmering. *Spanda* is not only sound but a unity of sound and light, not only tone but a unity of tone and colour – a unity implied by the terms ‘tone colour’ and ‘colour tone’.

The quivering of *spanda* that occurs through the stretching or expansion of a primordial space of awareness has the character of a *sono-luminescence*. Indeed the very creation of an expanded space of awareness itself can be likened to the phenomena of *sono-cavitation* – the creation of bubble-like spaces or cavities in a fluid through sound.

The divine light of awareness that is *Shiva* itself sparkles or shimmers with the *spburana* of *spanda* - for this divine light is the primordial expansion of a non-extensional field of awareness *spanning* the realms of potentiality and actuality and resounding as the fundamental tone or vibration of awareness.

All the formative potentialities or potencies of awareness that emerge into actuality as *Shaktis* within the divine field or light of awareness that is *Shiva* have the character both of patterned tonalities of awareness and of patterned colourations of the light of awareness.

Spanda is *Bhairava* - the dynamic unity of *Shiva-Shakti* which bridges the divine light of awareness with the dark domain of unbounded dormant potentiality.

All consciousnesses, all manifest phenomena and all worlds emerge into light from the primordial domain of unbounded potentiality, and continue to bear within them their own dark and still dormant potentialities, which are as inexhaustible as the primordial womb of potentiality itself.

This unbounded and inexhaustible womb of still dormant potentiality is *Durga* – the dark mother goddess and the dark side of Lord *Shiva* and his consort *Shakti*.

Kali is the divine reality of *Durga* within individualised consciousness, its own unbounded and inexhaustible domain of dark and still dormant potentiality, striving for free and autonomous self-actualisation (*Shakti*) through the divine light of *Shiva*.

Any dormant potentiality of awareness can be actualised in different possible forms. But the awareness of any given possibility of actualisation implies other possibilities –multiplying the unactualised possibilities dormant within our field of awareness.

A word is a pattern of sounds implying other possible sounds and sound patterns. A sentence is a pattern of words implying other possible words and word patterns.

Thus consideration of a particular word or word pattern with which to formulate a felt but unformulated meaning automatically implies other possible sounds, words and word patterns with which to formulate the same felt sense or meaning.

Each possible formulation lends its own pattern, sound and colouration to the felt meaning it serves to express, being a specific field-pattern of awareness which brings meaning into the light of our awareness according to that pattern. It also multiplies the number of possible patterns and dimensions of meaning which remain darkly dormant within our field of awareness.

The automatic multiplication of different *possible* actualisations of potentiality that occurs when any given possibility emerges into the light of our awareness leads both to an expansion of awareness and to a heightening of the creative tension.

In this heightening of creative tension, the gulf between *potentiality* and *actuality* swells with ever-multiplying *possibilities* of actualisation seeking creative release.

On a divine scale, this creative tensioning is *spanda* and this swelling is that of the great womb of potentiality that is *Durga* and the cosmic 'egg' of creation that is *Brahma*.

The autonomous self-multiplication of possibilities is also represented by the demon warrior *Raktjeeba*, whose every drop of spilled blood created another warrior, and whom *Durga* - incarnate as *Kali* - only defeated in battle through her capacity to swallow every drop of blood released.

In this way she both *reabsorbed* the self-multiplying possibilities of actualisation into herself, but at the same time fuelling her own potency and wild vitality with them.

The simultaneous *ex-tension* and *in-tensification* of awareness that is *tantra* and *spanda* leads to a point where *Shiva* surrenders to *Kali*, releasing particular possibilities present in the light of awareness into autonomous and unrestrained actualisation as her *Shaktis*, whilst allowing others to submerge back into the dark womb of dormant potentiality that is *Durga/ Brahma*.

Manifestation or creation (*maya*) is a never-ending dynamic of simultaneous emergence (*unmesa*) and submergence (*nimesa*), the opening and closing eye of *Shiva*.

Through the simultaneous ex-tension of awareness (*tan*) and its in-tensification as *spanda*, tonal qualities of awareness (Qualia) reach a pitch of intensity at which they are liberated – finally transforming into energetic quanta (Qn) and sensory qualities (Qs) in extensional space-time.

Spanda understood as ‘Q’ – the Quivering – is no mere ‘Quantum void’ (Qv) but the fundamental tone from which arise all qualitative tonalities of awareness (Qt) together with their different sensual qualities of awareness Qualia (Qa).

Fields of awareness are composed of densities of intensities, each with their own unique tonality and sensual qualities. *Tantra* means also the richly interwoven and ever-changing sensual fabric of these qualitative tonalities and intensities of awareness, their sensual warp and woof.

At certain pitches, these *quantitative qualities* or intensities of awareness transform into *qualitative quantities* or ‘units’ of awareness. These are not yet ‘quanta’ of energy (Qn) in the sense understood by physics – for the latter

lack any qualitative distinctness. Instead they are bounded units or ‘quanta’ of awareness each of which is *qualitatively unique*.

Just as matter and its sensory qualities are the manifest outwardness of energy, so is awareness its unmanifest inwardness.

Shiva and *Shakti*, awareness and energy, inwardness and outwardness, are united as the aware inwardness of energy that is *Shiva-Shakti*, an inwardness that flows through and forms all things, but is never exhausted by its outward manifestations.

Qualitative units of awareness may be called *Shiva-Shakti* units. They are precursors both of energetic Quanta (Qn) and of their manifestation as patterned sensory qualities (Qs) of matter.

They constitute a form of *Qualitative inner energy* or ‘energy’. At the same time they are the *Qualitative inwardness* (Qi) of energy – its aware inwardness.

Shiva-Shakti units or Qi units have properties of qualitative attraction and repulsion and affiliate to form in patterns. Patterns of Qi units at sufficient intensity become visible as sensory patterns.

Every Qi unit is formed around a central point (*bindu/vindu*) that has the nature of a distinct ‘emotional tone’, a qualitative tonality of awareness (Qt) that can vary in intensity.

At a sufficient pitch of intensity this central emotional tone can transform a *quality* of awareness (Qa) into a qualitatively distinct unit or *quantum* of awareness – a Qi unit.

The peripheral boundary of each Qi unit can take any shape or form. It is a pre-physical boundary state of emergence (Greek: *physis*, Sanskrit *unmesa*)

and is therefore 'energy' in the primordial sense of formative activity (*energein*) giving rise to physical form.

Its central point (*bindu/vindu*) is a concentration of wavelengths of feeling tone at the central *nodal point* of a wave cycle linking the dimensions of potentiality and actuality.

Qi units have properties of qualitative attraction and repulsion which allows them to align and affiliate, forming patterned groupings or gestalts (*kula*).

The *Shaktis* are the innate power or capacity of individualised Qi units to group themselves and manifest as sensory patterns of matter. Together they constitute the supreme power of manifestation that is *Parashakti* — the supreme *Shakti*.

Qi units are the 'subjective' source of all 'objective' sensory qualities (Qs). At lower levels of intensity, patterns of Qi units are emanated as invisible, pseudo-physical formations resembling material objects. Dream objects are formed of Qi units, which are also emanated by all material bodies, including the human body.

Qi units are both infinitely differentiated in their patterns, colours and tones — the unity-in-diversity and singular multiplicity that is *Parashakti* - and united by the undifferentiated light of awareness that is *Parashiva*.

Each is also nourished by the darkly concealed richness of inexhaustible potentiality symbolised by *Durga*, to which each unit is linked through its central point or *bindu*.

Qi units are both externally bounded and *inwardly unbounded* in their inexhaustible pattern-forming potential.

The knowledge that awareness has its own intrinsic sensual qualities of substantiality and spatiality, light and darkness, levity and gravity, warmth and coolness, sound and tone, pattern and form, is the foundation of *tantric*

science — not a physics of Quanta but a metaphysics of Qualia and of Qualitative units of inner energy.

Tantra also means 'loom' or 'weave'. The inner universe, the *tantric* universe is an ever-changing pattern or tapestry of interweaving Qualia, part of a singular field continuum of awareness. This is not a Quantum Void but a 'Qualia Continuum' (Qc) beyond the space-time continuum of matter and energy.

In this true '5th' dimension' – the dimension of awareness - Qualia never merge into indistinction but remain both distinct and in-separable elements of the awareness fields which are their source. Within these fields they interweave both in resonance with one another and with their expression as energetic fields and the rich tapestries of sensory qualities they weave.

Qi units, as *Shiva-Shakti* units, are the bridge between the *tantric metaphysics* of Qualia and the physics of energetic Quanta.

They emerge as infinitely varied units of awareness each defined by their own central tonalities and energetic field-boundaries of awareness.

These field-boundaries can be compared to three-dimensional wave-envelopes of sound shaping and colouring a particular tonal intensity of awareness (Qt) and giving its sensual qualities sensory form.

Spanda is the quivering bridge of vibration whose fundamental tone is a back and forth resonance between the realms of potentiality and actuality, inwardness and outwardness, awareness and energy, a vibration spanning and expanding a space of awareness that constantly swells with multiplying possibilities of actualisation.

Each harmonic of this fundamental tone can itself become a distinct Qi unit or *Shiva-Shakti* unit; one whose central point or bindu is a unique tonal

intensity of awareness – the central node of a single wave-cycle linking the realms of potentiality (-) and actuality (+).

The aware inwardness of each *Shiva-Shakti* unit itself quivers and shimmers with *spanda*, for it is a microcosm of the primordial space of awareness that opens up within the dark realm of potentiality that is the great goddess *Mahadevi Durga*.

This is the ever-expanding space of awareness whose light is *Parashiva*, a space that constitutes the great sky of awareness that is *Paravyoman*, a sky that sparkles with the infinitely varied colours of *Parashakti*, the sonoluminescence or *sphurana* of *spanda*.

A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary...A boundary is not that at which something stops, but as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing....Space is in essence that which lets into its bounds.

Martin Heidegger

That primordial space of awareness which opens up within the unbounded realm of potentiality, also lets into its bounds the infinite possibilities of actualisation, allowing them to simultaneously come to presence within it.

As such it is also a 'spacious present' - a primordial *time-space* or field of *presencing* which knows no past, present, or future and is the source of infinite possible time-lines.

Within the primordial time-space of awareness however, all actualities are constantly and simultaneously presencing or coming to presence.

Within this time-space every event from a sneeze to a ‘big bang’ is continuously and unceasingly happening – actualising itself or coming to be.

Only for the bound soul (*pashu*) is space experienced as a limited realm of already given, *co-present* actualities and time as a *succession* of experienced actualities.

Only for the bound soul is *spanda* - the voltage or potential difference spanning the realms of potentiality and actuality – experienced as a tension or potential energy spanning the temporal nodes of past and future.

Only for the bound soul is this tension experienced as the driving force of desire for self-actualisation of a sort than can only be realised through *karma* - a succession of acts in time or a succession of lifetimes.

The bound soul is the soul bound to a linear succession of impulses and desires, actions and experiences in space-time - now happy, now sad, now experiencing pleasure, now pain.

The bound soul is “deprived of his glory” by *kala* – both by the harassment of time (*kaala*) and by a succession of partial experiences (*kalaa*) of self and world, and of limited actions (*keriya*) of the self in the world.

Only for the bound soul is the spiritual desire for *tantra*, the expansion of awareness and identity, experienced simply as an extroverted desire for *outward* expansion through *outgoing* activity and the exploration or conquest of *outer* space, territorial or cosmic.

The bound soul is the soul bound to *space-time*, unable to experience the expansion of awareness as a meditative *inward* expansion of the inner *time-space* of the moment.

The bound soul is unable to experience the moment as something that can inwardly expand to embrace or let into its bounds all possible actualities - past, present and future.

This is the function attributed to *Mahakali*, the ‘devourer’ of time (*kala*) - within whose spacious womblike bounds all possible pasts, presents and futures are both constantly emerging into presence (*unmesa*) through the light of awareness and withdrawn or sub-merged back again (*nimesa*) into the dark, unbounded realm of potentiality.

This simultaneous double movement of emergence into presence, being or actuality and submergence or absorption into absence, non-being or potentiality was represented in the *tantras* as the opening and closing of the eye of *Shiva*. It is also comparable to a ‘white-black’ hole.

Each Qi unit can be thought of as the Quivering (*spanda*) of an alternating white-black hole in time-space - bridging the darkness of potentiality with the light of awareness in such a way as to bring into manifestation all the infinite shapes and colours of the experienced world, and experienced self, including every shape of thought and colour of feeling.

It is through them that “the subtle energy of awareness assumes the solid form of matter.” (Abhinava).

A thought is itself a *Shiva-Shakti* unit of potentially infinite inward expanse, resonating with *spanda* according to the specific tonality of its *bindu* — a coupling (*yamala*) of awareness and energy in the form of inner sound or resonance that in turn releases inner light and in-sight.

Mantra is thought itself understood as *spanda*, a sono-cavitation in which a stable abode or space of awareness (*Shiva*) can expand, and in which the quivering of *spanda* can resound in the form of unique shapes of inner sound or resonance.

Not only thoughts but every single *thing* is a *mantra*, continuously and inwardly *sounded* into manifestation as supreme speech (*paravak*).

As groupings and field-patterns of *Shiva-Shakti* units, each with their own inner sound, things are *materialised mantra*, their sensory shapes and colours being the manifestations of inner sound shapes and colourations of feeling tone.

Like every thought, every thing has its own inner sound. When we look at it we not only see its visual shape but sense what it would feel like to touch and what it would sound like if struck. A soft object is a soft inner sound, an unsounded mantra, materialised.

All objects have an ‘unstruck sound’ with its own qualities, an inner-sound *quality* whose vibratory shape and wavelength no instrument can *quantify*. The object *is* an unstruck sound and an unsounded *mantra*.

The inner sound of our thoughts has the capacity or power (*Shakti*) to release electromagnetic light energy from a central point of emission or *bindu*.

It is not energy that powers, but power or *Shakti* that is the source of all energy, a power that has an inexhaustible source in the realm of unbounded potentiality.

The pulsating heart of every *mantra* and the central power-point of every *Shiva-Shakti* unit from which matter itself is formed is its *bindu*, a black-white hole through which the darkness of potentiality (*Durga*) is actualised (*energein*) and transformed into vivid and colourful actuality (*Shakti*) through the light of awareness (*Shiva*).

Insight — the light of awareness – releases energy through the autonomous power of self-actualisation latent in the darkness of potentiality.

This power (*Shakti*) is therefore the source of unlimited energy. It can be freely released through awareness (*Shiva*) of the vibration of *spanda* quivering and shimmering in every thought and every thing.

Just as thoughts are themselves ‘things’ – *Shiva-Shakti* units, so are things themselves also thoughts.

As Plato recognised, the form of a thing is nothing material or energetic – you cannot pick up or measure its roundness or redness. Form (Greek *morphe*) is the outer aspect or *eidōs* of a thing, nothing material or energetic but its ‘Idea’.

The essence of form consists of inner sound shapes and field-patterns of awareness, for it is these which in-form *both* thoughts and things, finding expression both as *mantra* and as matter, as thought-forms and as material form.

Let those who think that such deep metaphysical ideas are ‘mere’ words or thoughts and *mantra* ‘mere’ sounds or names therefore take heed. For “Just as the man who thinks intensely that he is a sinner becomes such, one who thinks himself to be *Shiva*, and none other than He, becomes *Shiva*.” (Abhinava)

Once our awareness fully enters into the resonant inwardness of a thought – experiencing it as *mantra* – we find ourselves in a space of pure thought-free awareness (*Shiva*) resonating with the creative power (*Shakti*) of *spanda*.

Similarly once our awareness enters the resonant inwardness of a thing – experiencing it too as *mantra* — we find ourselves in a space of pure thing-free awareness (*Shiva*) resonating with the creative power (*Shakti*) of *spanda*.

This is like entering a telephone booth and finding, once inside it, that its enclosing walls have disappeared and we are surrounded by nothing but the all-encompassing expanse of the heavens.

The thing itself – the telephone booth – consists principally of its walls. But these walls *do not themselves have walls*. Allowing our *awareness* to fully enter the booth – does not mean walking into it, but rather becoming it – identifying with the walls and thus no longer experiencing walls around us.

Doing so means that our awareness too, is no longer enclosed by these walls in the way it would be if we just walked into it.

Like the original *Spanda Karikas*, all such “abstractions of high-grade metaphysics” are, as Abhinava knew, not abstractions at all but “based on spiritual experience”.

They derive their whole value from the dimensions of awareness that are their source and which they themselves can lead one into – but only if they are meditated upon as *mantra* and taken not as ‘mere’ speculative thoughts.

By “spiritual experience” we must not understand experience in the ordinary sense. Everything that can possibly be experienced in our inner and outer life, in our inner and outer world, belongs to the realm of *Shakti*.

All thoughts and emotions, impulses and actions arising from our experience are also part of our experience and thus also belong with the realm of the experienced.

The realm of experience includes not only the experienced world, inner or outer but the experienced self. It includes not only experienced ‘objects’ but the experienced subject, and the dynamic process of experiencing that unites them.

The entire realm of experience, including the experienced self, its world of experienced phenomena, and the process of experiencing itself is *Shakti*. Only the pure awareness of experiencing belongs to the realm of *Shiva*. An experience of something is not the same as the awareness of experiencing that thing.

Our awareness of something experienced — a sensation or perception, emotion or thought, *is not* that experienced sensation or perception, emotion or thought.

Consciousness is not awareness. It is awareness understood only in its limited or localised character — as conscious ‘experience’ or ‘experiencing’.

To every conscious experience of something belongs a limited awareness both of the experienced object, the experienced subject or self, and the relation between them — experiencing as such.

Experiencing is a dynamic relation between a specific phenomenon experienced as other-than-self and a specific experience of self.

Changes in the way we experience ourselves bring about changes in the way we experience otherness — the phenomenal world and other people.

The experienced self is the specific way of experiencing ourselves that accompanies any experienced phenomenon.

Awareness transcends experiencing. It is a liberating, non-local or field awareness of both the experienced phenomena and the experienced self.

Awareness, unlike consciousness, is not a function of an abstract and indeterminate ‘ego’ or ‘subject’.

Awareness is not a function of a localised ‘empirical’ subject such as the perceived body or brain of an individual human being – for that is not a subject at all but an experienced object.

Awareness is not a function of the experienced self or ‘I’ either, for that is constantly changing along with its experiences — and it too can be turned into an experienced object or ‘me’.

Finally, awareness is not a function of a so-called ‘transcendental’ ego, subject or self – one that cannot itself be experienced or turned into an object.

For awareness, in its non-local, unlimited and field character, is identity or ‘I-ness’ in its transcendental character, in its non-local, unlimited and field character.

That is why it is falsely understood by the Buddhists as ‘non-self’ or ‘no-self’, for they confuse selfhood as such with the experienced self, a self which they know to be ever-changing.

Awareness in its self-being - as selfhood or ‘I-ness’ - is identity without limitation. *Shiva* is awareness and identity and ‘I-ness’ without limitation.

The unbounded self-being or ‘I-ness’ of awareness that is *Shiva* is at the same time the essential self or ‘I-ness’ of the bounded identity. For the bounded self too, experiences itself only *in* the light of awareness as such – a light that has an essentially unbounded or field character.

The very self-being ‘I-ness’ of *Shiva* as unbounded field-awareness becomes real to itself only through the localised centres and bounded fields of awareness that constitute the multiplicity (*kula*) and selfhood (*atman*) of individual souls (*jiva*).

The essential 'I-ness' of the individual becomes real only as the 'I-ness' of *Shiva*. The essential 'I-ness' of *Shiva* becomes real only as the individualised 'I-ness' of each and every soul.

The selfhood of *Shiva* is not a thing but the very activity (*Shakti*) of 'selving' - the *self*-bounding, *self*-limitation and *self*-localisation of an unbounded awareness field.

The *transcendental* field-awareness that is *Shiva* is at the same the awareness *immanent* in all localised individual experience.

The larger *transcendental* self or field-identity that is *Shiva* is at the same time the self *immanent* in all dimensions of individual self-experience.

The notion of 'spiritual experience' is intrinsically paradoxical. Spiritual experience occurs at the vibrating interface (*spanda*) of experience - including self-experience - and our *awareness* of what we are experiencing.

For it is only our *awareness* of experiencing and of the experienced self that in turn imbues that experience and that self with 'spiritual' qualities - for example breaking down the division between our experience of 'self-ness' and our experience of 'otherness'.

As the very awareness of experiencing, *Shiva* is the ultimate *experiencer* within us all - irreducible to anything we can experience.

As the ultimate, unbounded field of awareness, *Shiva* is also that light of awareness which is the condition of all experience.

For it is the light of awareness that first allows any phenomena or any self to come to light in our own awareness field and to be experienced within it.

As *prakasha*, the light of awareness, *Shiva* is not only the ultimate experiencer but the totality of all that we experience, for it is this light and

nothing else that takes shape in the variegated shapes and colours of our experience.

The light of awareness that is *Shiva* is not only the *transcendental* condition of all experience. It is also *immanent* in all the phenomena we experience, allowing them to not only come to light in *our* awareness field but to shine forth (Greek: *phainesthai*/ Sanskrit: *prakasha*) and to radiate the light of *their* own immanent awareness.

Kula is the awareness *immanent* in any bounded unit of awareness – in our bodily self-experience, and in any body or grouping of bodies that we experience. *Akula* is the transcendent field of awareness. The term *kaula* represents the unity of *kula* and *akula*, of which it is an acronym. From this derives the whole meaning of *kaula tantra* and its aim, the achievement of the *kauliki siddhi*.

***Kauliki* is one who though immanent in all manifestations, is herself (subjects and objects) *akula*... one who abides in *kula* but is *akula* is '*kaula*'. The entire range of manifestation abides as such because of its being rooted in the *light of akula* i.e. *Shiva*.**

Abhinava

The *kauliki siddhi* is the realisation of the very immanence of the transcendental awareness – realisation of the unbounded inner space of awareness that opens up within experience itself, and in particular within the space of the inwardly experienced body.

The transcendental light of awareness is something personal, inter-personal and transpersonal, both human and divine.

We not only experience the world in the light of our own awareness of it. We also experience ourselves in different ways *in the light* of our experience of the world around us and other people.

All 'spiritual experience' has the character of a *mutual gaze* in which we do not merely experience others in the light of our own awareness, but experience ourselves in the light of their awareness.

In this way we experience the immediately reciprocal and trans-personal nature of awareness as such - its transcendental character.

The archetype of all experienced phenomena is the *eye*. For a person's eyes are more than just an experienced object.

What reveals itself through the eyes is the subjective light of someone's *gaze* – their whole way of looking out on and experiencing the world, or of looking into and experiencing themselves.

The gaze is a transcendental phenomenon – the light of someone's awareness - immanent in and yet revealed through a physical phenomenon, their eyes.

We only really *see* a person's eyes by *not* seeing them with our eyes alone - as physical objects reflecting physical light — but by seeing the trans-physical and transcendental light of their gaze, the light of their subjective awareness.

Ask a person to look at you. Look at their eyes as you would any other object of visual perception, and you have an ordinary visual experience.

But if you now attend to your inner *awareness* of your own eyes, to your awareness of looking at the other person's eyes, and to your awareness of what you are seeing there — then you will begin to see much more than your eyes alone behold.

Your seeing will become a *feeling seeing*. You will begin to feel in your eyes the light of your awareness. You will feel the invisible light of your gaze.

You will also begin to see the awareness of the other person – the light of their gaze – shine out from their eyes.

What is true of the eyes is true of all perceived physical phenomena. We do not come to know them through their sensory qualities and through bodily senses alone, but only by sensing these as physical manifestations of transcendental phenomena – those sensual qualities of awareness which I term Qualia.

If you look at a tree and regard it as a mere object for your eyes that is one thing — an ordinary visual experience. But if you now attend, with your whole body, to your *awareness* of seeing the tree, then you will begin to sense it as well as see it — and to see and sense something quite invisible to your eyes.

You will sense your body surface becoming ‘all eye’. And in what you *see* with your eyes you will also begin to subtly sense something with your whole body. What you may begin to see and sense is the *awareness* of the tree itself, emanating as a type of light from its leaves and branches.

If at any time you attend, not just with your eyes but with your whole inwardly felt body, to your *awareness* of another person’s body – then your body can *emanate* the qualitative energy of your awareness and communicate it to the other. At the same time it can draw from them the qualitative energy of their own bodily self-awareness.

The emanation of awareness takes the form of an emission (*visarga*) of *Shiva-Shakti* units. It is the very breath (*prana*) of awareness (*purusha*) sounded into material form (*prakrti*) as *mantra* by divine speech (*paravak*).

Visarga is emission, emanation or emergence into presence – the *tantric* term equivalent to Greek *physis* (emergence).

It is the emanatory or emissional power or *Shakti* of *Shiva*, forming the entirety of the experienced world of manifest creation or *mayashakti*.

Shakti, the realm of experience, includes both the experienced self, the experienced world and the process of experiencing. This entire realm of experience was understood as the emanation and emission, mirror and expression of the *experiencing* self, identical with the ultimate *experiencer* named as *Shiva*.

The experiencing self is not the *experienced* self and its world but the ultimate field of awareness within which all experience of self and world takes shape.

It is not experience but the pure awareness of experiencing that allows the light of awareness to know itself through its own reflection in the experienced phenomena it brings to light - and thus attain the character of a primordial self-awareness (*vimarsha*).

Spanda is therefore a dynamically pulsing boundary state of awareness and experience, *Shiva* and *Shakti* that is the *pure awareness of experiencing*.

Only through this dynamic boundary state can both its sides be known as distinct but inseparable elements of awareness, experiencing being both a reflective mirror (*vimarsha*) and emanation or emission (*visarga*) of the pure light of awareness.

Spanda in this sense is a slight and most subtle movement or oscillation of awareness itself — between all that one is *aware of experiencing* and one's *awareness of experiencing it*.

Through *awareness of experiencing* we come to a new *experience of awareness* as such - in particular an experience of its intrinsic sensual qualities or Qualia.

Spiritual experience is not experience of manifest qualities such as colour or sound but of Qualia – felt qualities of awareness as such, its felt colourations and tonalities, its felt spatiality and substantiality – in a word its felt *sensuality*, experienced as divine bliss (*ananda*).

Yet only a sustained *awareness of experiencing* in which awareness does not lose itself in experiences - *including* spiritual experiences - can be said to be truly free, allowing one to reach the state of 'liberation in this life' (*jivanmukti*).

Only by sustained *awareness* of all that we experience can we come to know ourselves as distinct from all elements of that experience, from the mundane to the spiritual, from our experience of self to our experience of the world and other people.

Only in this way can we also engage in true *tan-tra*, constantly expanding (*tan*) our experienced self and world whilst being guarded (*tra*) from identification with that self and world - knowing it as just one expression of that ultimate experiencer and divine awareness field that is *Shiva*.

***Siddhi* or accomplishment is the acquisition of bliss by turning round to have a firm hold on that very principle...identity with the perfect I-feeling of *Shiva* who is the highest awareness and whose nature is *spanda* or the eternal throb of delight in manifestation.**

Abhinava

The word 'aware' has the root meaning of 'to guard'. The root meaning of *mantra* is a *guarding awareness* - the active guardianship (*tra*) of awareness (*man*) that allows for an infinite expansion of both our experienced self or identity and our experienced world or reality.

The inexhaustible source of this expansion is the realm of unbounded potentiality – the great mother — which finds expression in the infinite

varieties of experience that are the energetic and experiential expression of her potencies or *Shaktis*, released into free self-actualisation by the light of awareness that is *Shiva*.

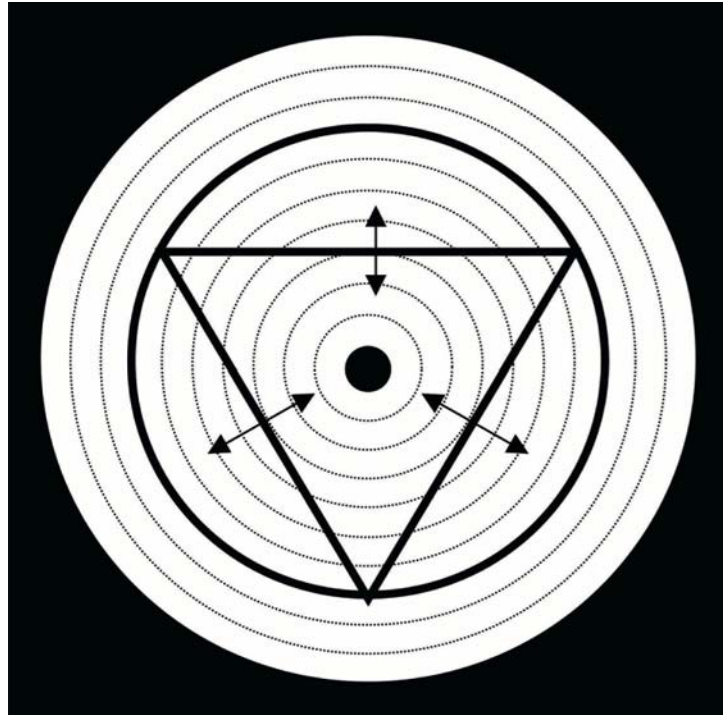
Visarga is not only the centrifugal expansion of awareness and its expression in experience. It is also a centripetal reflection and reabsorption of awareness into the ultimate field through the heart centre or *hrdaya*.

The power which resides in the heart of awareness is freedom itself. The purpose of its creative activity is the group (*kula*), the entire range of experienced self, experienced object and process of experiencing.

Abhinava

The white area in Diagram 1 represents the ultimate field and light of awareness (*anuttara*) that is *Shiva*, bounded only by the unbounded realm of potentiality represented by the black background. The circle represents the realm of *Shakti* - experience - and the triangle within it the three vertices of experience: the experienced self, its experienced world, and the process of experiencing. The dot at the centre or heart of the circle represents the self as pure experiencer – the pure awareness of experiencing that is identical with *Shiva*. This centre – the heart centre or *hrdaya* - links the individual or atomic self (*anu*) with the ultimate field boundary of awareness marked out by the all-embracing black periphery of the ultimate awareness field. The two-way arrows and dotted circles represent *visarga* — the centrifugal emanation and expansion of the light of awareness and its centripetal self-reflection (*vimarsba*) into the awareness field through the heart centre, or *hrdaya*. This oscillatory movement is the essence of *spanda* - being at the same time an oscillation between the realm of unbounded potentiality (black) and all its possible actualisations in experience (*Shakti*) through the light of awareness that is *Shiva* (white).

Diagram 1



For the practicing *yogin(i)* the diagram can be interpreted in a different way too, understanding the three corners of the triangle as a *recursive cyclical* process that leads:

- (1) from a new *awareness of experiencing* to
- (2) a new *experience of awareness* and its sensuality, and thus
- (3) to a new quality depth and expansiveness of *aware experiencing*.

Meditation *is* this never-ending cyclical process, one through which the *yogin(i)* achieves a new sense of 'I-ness' – of the divine self or experiencer within. This experiencer is one individualised centre of a supreme unbounded awareness field – *Shiva* - that embraces all that can be experienced.

Meditation is also what leads inwards to an awareness of something *transcending* the entire realm of one's own experienced actuality – the spacious inwardness of potentiality immanent in All That Is as the great mother divinity or *Mahadevi*.

Thus it is that we can come to experience her self-actualising powers or *Shaktis* that invisibly quiver and shimmer in every thing and in every body, resounding with the vibration of *spanda*.

The *Mahadevi*, as recognised in the *tantras* is both Mother and Father of us all...and neither. (S)he is both *Mahakali* and *Mahakala*...and neither. (S)he is mother of the *Shaktis* and father of *Shiva*...and neither. (S)he is also father of the *Shaktis* and mother of *Shiva*...and neither.

How can (S)he therefore have any dualistic attributes of masculinity or femininity, when the ultimate is an *awareness* of all possible attributes that is quite distinct from all such attributes — a singular non-dual awareness of duality and multiplicity?

(S)he is *anuttara*, the ultimate, and as such is not a being at all. How can (S)he be known as any actual being when (s)he is but that knowing awareness of potentiality that is the source of all actual beings? As pure potentiality (S)he herself is all darkness and non-being.

Her own self-being or 'I-ness' as *Mahadevi* is achieved only through a great *mantra*. That *mantra* is the *Mahadeva Shiva* himself - the very self-being or 'I-ness' of awareness as such - whether awareness of potentiality or of the actual.

(S)he is the darkness within the very light of awareness that is *Shiva*. As *Shakti* (S)he is all the colours of the world that manifest as the divine interplay of light and darkness. That play and interplay (*div*) is the root, not only of the words *devi*, *deva* and *divine*, but constitutes their very essence.

(S)he is the unbounded depth and power of silence that eternally quivers in the subtle vibration of *spanda* – the silence within each sound, the stillness within each movement.

The ultimate *gnosis* attainable through *tantra*, its ultimate *mantra*, is not ‘I am’. Still less is it “I think, therefore I am”. Its *mantra* is:

Abiding in continuous awareness of all that I think and feel, sense and perceive, express and experience — being aware of all that I am and can be – I become what I most truly am, the knowing that is the very source and bodily substance of my being.

STRIKA

TRIKA
THE 'TRIKA' PRINCIPLE OF TANTRIC
PHILOSOPHY

A fundamentally trinitarian principle runs through the religious philosophy and metaphysics of The New Yoga, echoing the triadic or 'Trika' school of Kashmir Shaivism - itself not so much a 'school' as a principle of 'triadism' or 'threefolding' that runs through all its main schools or doctrines. The key signifiers of this threefold are Shiva, Shakti and their dynamic relation: Shiva-Shakti.

In 'the doctrine of recognition' (Pratyabhijna) the threefold takes the form of:

1. pure awareness as such (Shiva)
2. its manifestation and reflection in all experienced phenomena (Shakti)
3. its self-recognition in and as those phenomena (Shiva-Shakti)

In 'the doctrine of vibration' (Spanda) it takes the form of:

1. pure awareness (Shiva)
2. its dynamic potencies or potentialities (Shaktis)
3. the primordial vibration (Spanda) of Shiva-Shakti through which they become manifest.

In the 'Kaula' school or doctrine it takes the form of:

1. Akula – the space or field of awareness within which all experienced phenomena and all bounded units or monads of awareness – all beings - come to be (Shiva)
2. Kula – any and all 'bodies' in the universe understood as bounded units or monads of awareness (Shakti)
3. Kaula – the union of Akula (Shiva) and Kula (Shakti) understood as a relation of 'non-duality' between all embodied monads of awareness (Kula) and the space of awareness around them (Akula), a relation of non-duality or inseparable distinction comparable to that between space and any object in it - the objects being both distinct and inseparable from the space within which they stand out or 'ex-ist'.

ADDING NEW DIMENSIONS TO TRIKA

The New Yoga adds two *further* fundamental triads or threefolds to the Trika principle.

The first is based on a new understanding of the divine as an Awareness both transcending and embracing three basic ‘ontological’ dimensions of reality.

1. Awareness of ‘Being’ – understood as the entire realm of actuality – of all that *is*.
2. Awareness of ‘Non-Being’ – understood not as nothingness but as a realm of boundless potentiality, one no less real than all that is actual.
3. Awareness of ‘Becoming’ – understood as the process of actualization by which all possible or potential beings constantly come to be or ‘be-come’.

The second new threefold is based on a new scientific doctrine of ‘qualia’ rather than energetic quanta – qualia being understood not simply as the outwardly experienced sensory qualities of experienced phenomena such as their colour or shape but as innate sensual qualities of pure awareness itself.

1. pure awareness
2. its innate sensual qualities (the space, light, air, breath and fire of awareness etc)
3. their manifestation as manifest sensory qualities

This threefold not only reinforces and refines the traditional tantric affirmation of sensuality, but is also of profound relevance to tantric *practice* - recognising the latter as an iterative cycle or spiral based on three repeated stages:

1. the experiencing of phenomena (and of their sensory qualities)
2. the pure sense-free awareness of phenomena and their sensory qualities

3. the sensuous experience of pure or transcendental awareness as such (for example as the space, light or fire or air of awareness)

TRIKA AS A TRIADIC CYCLE OF AWARENESS

The threefold practice of (a) attending to our sensory experiencing of phenomena (b) identifying with the pure, sense-free awareness of the sensory (c) experiencing the innate sensuality of pure awareness itself – this whole cycle itself needs to be ‘iterated’ or repeated in order that:

1. the absolute or ultimate awareness (Anuttara) not be reduced to any specific experience of it - no matter how sublime, blissful, powerful or profound
2. all experiences of pure awareness be both sustained by abiding in a higher-level awareness of them, and
3. ‘spirally’ transformed into a yet higher-level experience of pure awareness.

This cyclical or spiral threefold is the foundational practical principal or Fundamental Formula of The New Yoga:

**from a new or higher *awareness* of experience
to a new and higher *experience* of awareness**

Unless this principle of tantric practice is recognised, the danger is that whenever religious devotees or yogic practitioners attain a profound, powerful or blissfully transcendent experience of the divine as pure awareness they identify the particular felt and sensual *quality* of that experience with God - with pure awareness *as such* - instead of recognising it as one among countless possible sensual-transcendental qualities of the Divine Awareness. Whilst most of the religious philosophies behind different streams of Hinduism and schools of Yoga pay lip service to union (‘Yoga’) with the Divine –

and many recognise its essence as Pure Awareness – yet no *single* Hindu stream, teaching, sect or community has shown itself capable of spiritually *transcending* the specific *quality* of pure awareness, flavour of devotional feeling or dimension of mystic experience that is its historic source – reflected in its religious symbols and god-images, sustained through its religious rituals or yogic practices, pervading its ashrams or temples and permeating its communal 'spirit'. In all religions this spirit will bear a specific taste or flavour ('Rasa'), one that will attract some and put off others, depending on their 'taste' or affinity with this flavour – one capable in equal measure of both *opening* them to the Divine and *limiting* their felt experience of it.

THE SEMIOTICS OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM

“Shiva is the meaning; the word is his wife.” *Linga Puranan*

'Semiotics' is the study of signs, in particular the relation between the sign as 'signifier' and what it signifies – its 'signified'. Even though we might only be able to give it expression *through* signifiers such as words, names, gestures, acts and symbols, the signified sense or 'meaning' of any such signifier - of any word, name, symbol, act or symbol - is *not itself* a word, name, symbol, act or gesture. Nor is it any 'objective' thing or being 'referred to', 'represented', 'named' or 'denoted' by the signifier. Instead, like the sensed meaning of a word, the meaning or 'sense' of any signifier is essentially an intrinsically *symbol-free* and *wordless* sense. Only if our 'reading' of any text, or our understanding of any word, name, sign or symbol – not least religious scriptures and symbols - is 'referential' or 'representational', will we take its signifiers as referring to or representing 'objective' entities or events, things or beings. 'Literalistic' understandings of religious words and symbols however, belie their whole purpose, which is to defy any form of referential or representational reading or understanding and lead us instead into wholly *wordless* and *symbol-free* dimensions of awareness –

dimensions of awareness that not only transcend but can totally transform our everyday experience of the world. The true role of religious symbols then, is to re-link (*re-ligere*) unite or con-jugate us (*yoga*) with that ultimate, primordial or divine awareness - *pure and symbol-free* - that is the source of all words and all worlds, all symbols and all languages. It is in this way that religion can help rid us of the primary *delusion* that has become the accepted 'scientific' view of truth. This is the naive belief in a pre-existing universe of objects that are perceived by the senses and then merely 'signified' - referred to or represented - by signifiers such as words and symbols. The deeper spiritual truth is that the most self-evidential scientific 'fact' is not the *existence* of a material world of bodies in space and time (or even a spiritual world of aware or sentient beings) but *awareness* of such a world, a world in which things themselves are 'words' or 'signifiers' - possessing innate meaning or significance. We ourselves are not aware because we 'are' - because we are pre-existing bodies or beings, material or spiritual that can be named. Instead we only *come to be* and to be *aware* from out of an ultimate, primordial or divine *awareness* of being - and of all possible beings and names. The Divine is not some supreme being signified by the word 'God' but *is* this primordial awareness - one that we can re-link with because we are each portions of it. In contrast, the very idea of 'proving' the 'existence' of God is a contradiction in terms, implying that the signifier 'God' refers to some objectively existing being 'out there' - rather than reflecting that absolute awareness or 'subjectivity' within which all beings first *come to be* and within which they forever abide. Beings as such are not merely entities signified in language but *languages in themselves* - meaningful patterns of awareness woven in the great 'loom' of awareness that is the essence of 'tantra'

ABOUT PETER WILBERG AND 'THE NEW YOGA'

There are many who follow 'yogic' and 'tantric' practices derived from Indian religious traditions, just as there are teachers all over the world who seek to transmit the deeper wisdom of those traditions, and those who study and research these traditions as devoted scholars. Yet it is rare to find writings such as those of Peter Wilberg – which offer a new bridge between in-depth scholarly and philosophical study of such traditions on the one hand, and their exposition and experiential practice in different contemporary schools of yoga on the other. Fewer still are teachers and authors who do not merely write 'on' or 'about' these traditions, but instead are able to offer a wholly original contribution *to* them, intuitively re-conceiving both their philosophy and practices – and doing so from direct meditational experiences of a new sort as well as deep study and broad learning. Peter Wilberg is one of these rare few. That is why, amidst the mountains of literature and thousands of courses and websites on 'Yoga' and 'Tantra', the teachings of Peter Wilberg on 'The New Yoga' do indeed have something fundamentally *new* to say, not least about the very meaning of such basic terms as 'Yoga' and 'Tantra', 'Vedanta' and 'Advaita', 'Meditation' and 'Mindfulness', 'Prana', 'Kundalini' etc. That is because his aim has always been not just to share his own embodied spiritual awareness or 'inner knowing' but to crystallise it into a comprehensive new *body of spiritual knowledge* - one relevant not just to the life of the individual, but to our whole understanding of society, the sciences, religion and the future of human civilisation.

'The New Yoga of Awareness' is a body of refined 'yogic' knowledge built on the foundation of 'The Awareness Principle' and 'The Practice of Awareness'. It offers a wealth of new spiritual--scientific insights to all types of readers, whether those familiar with traditional yogic and tantric practices or not, whether practitioners or teachers, scholars or philosophers, Hindus or Buddhists, Christians, Jews or Muslims. That is because Peter Wilberg, who understands himself as a "Tantric Hindu

Gnostic Christian Socialist Jew”, has reinterpreted the inner meaning of Eastern religious terminology, thought and practices in the broadest possible global and historical context. In particular however, he saw how his own unique inner experiences found their reflection in the different schools of Tantric religious philosophy known collectively as ‘Kashmir Shaivism’ or ‘Shaivist Tantrism’. As a result he has been able to reinterpret this highly refined spiritual tradition on a new experiential basis and within a wholly new conceptual and terminological framework, one which he calls simply ‘The Awareness Principle’. ‘The Awareness Principle’ and ‘The Practice of Awareness’ constitute the two inseparable aspects of ‘The New Yoga of Awareness’. The New Yoga then, is an entirely new range of practices or ‘Yogas’ of awareness founded on ‘The Awareness Principle’. Together they offer not only simple but profound life-principles for the individual to practice, but also powerful new forms of Tantric pair- and partner meditation. These are rooted in an entirely new understanding of ‘tantric sex’ (Maithuna) as the expression of a spiritual but highly sensual intercourse of soul – as *soul body* intimacy and intercourse.

The Principles and Practices of Awareness which make up The New Yoga of Awareness unite religion, psychology and metaphysics in a way that truly makes it not just ‘a’ new yoga but THE New Yoga - effectively an entirely new and contemporary school of Tantra, and a rebirth of Tantric wisdom both *from* and *for* today’s world. As such it has tremendous relevance *to* that world – not only scientifically and theologically but also for the psychological health of individuals, human relations and the world as a whole. That is because ‘The Awareness Principle’ provides a radically new philosophical foundation for our understanding not only of religion but of science and society - see www.thenewscience.org and www.thenewsocialism.org

It is the purpose of Peter Wilberg’s writings to make this new Tantric wisdom known to the world in order that it can work *for* the world - reawakening in us all a recognition of that Divine Awareness which is the absolute or unsurpassable reality (‘Anuttara’) behind all realities. The nature of this Divine Awareness (‘Shiva’) and its immanent and autonomous creative power (‘Shakti’) was hitherto most clearly recognised in the Tantric

religious philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. Through The New Yoga however, the profound wisdom of this local and little-known historic tradition can now serve a much-needed contemporary global purpose – that of resisting ‘The New Atheism’ and the secular ‘Monotheism of Money’ that dominate today’s world - along with the unquestioned assumptions of the purely technological ‘science’ that is *its* new ‘religion’. In this way The New Yoga can help bring an end to the rising ocean of spiritual ignorance, and to the grave ecological devastation, economic inequalities and global mayhem that go with it. The New Yoga is a way of accomplishing this world-transforming aim not through Jihad, violence or war but through the supreme principle and innate power of Awareness. It makes known again that ‘God’ which is not simply one being among others ‘with’ awareness, but *is* awareness - an unbounded awareness that is the divine source of all beings, yet also immanent within them all as their eternal and divine Self.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1952 of German and German-Jewish parentage in North-West London, Peter Wilberg’s inborn spiritual knowledge, psychic abilities and profound intellect came to expression early. At the age of eight he wrote an essay for his religious education class entitled ‘Time as a form of Energy’ which anticipated his profound reinterpretation of Tantric teachings on the divine creative vibration or ‘Spanda’. Whilst still at primary school he was able, each evening, to build up so precise a mental image of an actual physical location as to literally ‘climb’ into a dream of it, limb by limb, until his entire ‘dream body’ was within it, thus entering the parallel dream location with full lucidity or awareness directly from the waking state and without going to sleep.

Whilst studying philosophy at Oxford University he was also a ‘frequent flyer’ over its quads in so-called ‘out-of-body’ states. His MA dissertation was based on direct experiential research into group

dimensions of 'lucid dreams'. In his own lucid dreams he encountered numerous teachers and Gurus, travelled beyond our planetary system and experienced planes of awareness beyond the dream state. This period of exploration culminated in direct experience of his own higher consciousness or 'oversoul', from whom he was directly and wordlessly instructed with his spiritual life-mission. Over many years he continuously practiced a variety of self-originated yogas. These included sensing and mirroring the bodies, faces and eyes of other people, so as to be able to feel their own soul in his body and his body in theirs, to directly sense the nature of *their* awareness of the world and literally look out on it through their eyes. In 1975, he had the first experience of the unique form of 'Tantric Pair Meditation' and 'Tantric Initiation' that he describes in his writings – one that he has now practiced for over 30 years. Out of this he evolved, over the decades, the original metaphysical principles and meditational practices of The New Yoga - principles and practices through which he has given birth to the first comprehensive 'New School of Tantra' to be created for over ten centuries. Yet in doing so, Peter Wilberg has also become an empowered and initiatory 'Guru' ('Siddha Guru' or 'Diksha Guru') in the most traditional sense - capable of embodying the innate potentials or powers of awareness ('Siddhis') and using them to bestow initiation ('Diksha').

Though belonging to no contemporary lineage of Tantric Gurus Peter Wilberg is a truly 'Self-realised' teacher. For it is from the in-born, bodily awareness of his own past-life and inter-life experience that he has been able – through decades of intuitive self-training in a number of creatively self-originated Yogas – to gradually bring this condensed bodily awareness to expression through a new body of esoteric knowledge – The New Yoga. Having a lifetime's study of profound European thinkers and philosophies behind him, this new body of intellectually refined experiential knowledge is, in the most literal sense, a European 'reincarnation' of the sublime Tantric teachings of Kashmir Shaivism, above all those of its great 10th century adept - Abhinavagupta.

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www.thenewyoga.org

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