

Philosophy, Yoga and Human Destiny

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walnutpublication
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Paperback ISBN: 978-1-957302-63-8

First Published in January 2023

Published by Walnut Publication (an imprint of Vyushta Ventures LLP)

www.walnutpublication.com

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Social Philosophy, Yoga and Human Destiny

A collection of selected papers presented at the Joint Conference of 15th International Congress of Social Philosophy (ICSP) and 9th International Congress of Yoga and Spiritual Science (ICYS) held in the Department of Philosophy at Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha -751004, India, from 7th to 9th of January 2023.

Contents

The Scientific Spirit and the Life of Yoga	3
Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya's Reflections on the Bhagavadgītā	31
Srimad Bhagavadgita: An Antidote to Arjun Syndrome	39
Can the Virtue 'Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah' Be Established Through Violent War?	48
Changing Dynamics of Freedom: India@75	52
Social Philosophy of Indian Communication: Gandhian Paradigms	65
Swadeshi and Swaraj: Then and Now	72
The Social Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda	83
Social Epistemology in the Context of Goldman, Habermas and Foucault	93
Consciousness, Mind and Ethical Values: A Scientific Approach	106
Buddhist Meditation (Samādhi) and Mental Health Well-Being	113
Consciousness, Mind and Yoga	120
Yoga of the Gītā as A Form of Life	130
Sri Aurobindo's Views on Indian Culture	136
Neurology of Yogic Meditation - Towards a Spirituality of Oneness	141
Value Education for Personality Development	149
Uparisadic Mantras as Interpreted in Tagore's Songs	155
Value Education for Personality Development	162
Challenges of Ethnocentrism to Social Harmony	172
Yoga Philosophy and Buddhism: A Comparative Analysis	176
Dealing With Emotions In Everyday Life: An Integrated Approach of Rājāyoga and Āyurveda	184

ii

Yoga and Self-Realisation	189
The Meditation of Mindful Breathing	196
Social Philosophy of Bhagavad Gita	201
Sthitaprajña: Its Social Dimensions	208
Sri Ramakrishna: An Embodiment of Religious Harmony in Modern India	216
Explorations of Religious Friendship Through Faith	224
Religion, Man and Humanity: Swami Vivekananda's Vision	238
Sree Nārāyana Guru: A Revolutionary Spiritual Humanist of Modern India	245
Wellbeing and Sthitaprajña: A Practice	255
The Evolution of Virtue and Care Ethics in the Social Sphere	262
Triguna Theory: In Context of Bhagavad Gita and Sankhya Philosophy: A Philosophical Perspective	272
Gandhi's Ecosophy: An Exploration of Environmental Sustainability	278
Inter-Religious Dialogue -A Contextual Reflection of Religions for Humanizing World	284
Am I a Free Soul? A Philosophical Contemplation of Law of KARMA and Human Destiny	293
Social Responsibility of New Media & Freedom Speech and Expression	301
Religion, Practical Morality and Social Living	308
Relevance of Yoga in bringing Global Peace and Harmony	314
Yoga Philosophy and Inner Peace: Its Significance in Modern Context	320
Pra'yāhāra and Stress Management: A Practical Approach	325
Anxiety and General Health Among Yoga and Non-Yoga Practicing Adults - Symptomatic Understanding	335

Relevance of Yoga in bringing Global Peace and Harmony

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Abstract

Yoga is a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. Yoga is all about universal balance, harmony of body, mind and soul and unity of individual consciousness with the cosmic consciousness. The practice of Yoga helps to develop qualities like positive thinking, peace, compassion, skill for non-violent conflict resolution which is regarded as components of peace behavior. Thus, considering Universal application of Yoga, this paper studies the relevance of Yoga activities in bringing world peace and harmony. As today's world is full of various antisocial activities, Yoga is the only activity which will bring harmony and peace in the society through individual transformation. Yoga and spirituality have the potential for global transformation which plays a pivotal role in making the individual, family, society, nation and the world more civilized and enlightened.

“Yoga is the art work of awareness on the canvas of body, mind and soul.” - Amit Ray

Yoga is a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. Yoga means balance, harmony and unity. Yoga is all about universal balance, harmony of body, mind and soul and unity of individual consciousness with the cosmic consciousness. The ancient science of Yoga, trains the human being to achieve a new level of world peace, environmental sustainability as well as harmony between individuals,

communities and nations. But in modern times, it is not mere a means of physical exercise postures but also enhances the spiritual and wellness of the entire body.

The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word “Yuj” meaning to unite. It embodies the unity of body, mind and spirit, thought of action, restraint and fulfillment and leads to harmony between man and nature. It is not only about exercise but to unite the oneness with oneself, the world and nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it will enhance our wellness. Yoga is all about balancing our mind and body which will work in synchronization ahead. If our external and internal lifestyles are balanced, then all the systems of our body will work in harmony and human being is mentally, emotionally and spiritually fulfilled. Yoga helps us to keep control of body as well as mind. It is a great channel for releasing our stress and anxiety. It has gained popularity gradually throughout the globe and is now spread in all regions of the world. It unites people in harmony and peace. Path of self knowledge and self - realization can be attained via positive thinking, perseverance, discipline as well as humble and kindness with the help of Yoga.

Our internal energies and our mind are inseparable; they exist almost as one and have a very intimate dependent relationship. If human being consciously tries to develop positive states of mind like confidence, kindness and wisdom, this will raise the quality of our internal energies and in turn improve our health and many other aspects of lives. With the help of Yoga, human being is encouraging this process and creating the inner peace, space and other conditions conducive to the natural healing process. The Yoga makes one aware of his oneself and creates awareness with which the whole world changes. Thus, to create a healthy and beautiful society, energetic human beings are a necessity. Yoga is therefore not necessitated in individual life but also in social and global life. A human being as an individual is the smallest unit of the society. Thus, when an individual is shaped and nurtured with human values through the practice of Yoga, a healthy society of tolerant, truthful, energetic, honest, calm and non-violent caring individuals begins to build.

Yoga and Self Transformation

As Swami Vivekananda puts it, connecting to the source of infinite power and potential within each one of us is the main goal of our yoga practice. That connection is built with love and compassion, empathy and forgiveness, gratitude and selfless service. Yoga practice systematically develops self-awareness and self-mastery. When people

have mastery in themselves, they can show tremendous improvements in major domains of social aspects like education, healthcare and global sustainability. The benefits of this Yoga practice are completely holistic. There are many benefits that come with the practice of Asana, meditation and Pranamayama. Yogic methods can help clear the mind, reduce stress, help in weight loss, increase strength and promote restful sleep.

Eightfold Path to Peaceful and Joyful Living

The mind is the best tool that nature has given us. With this tool, one can discover the limitless wealth that lies in this world and the boundless joy that is buried within human being. A confused mind spoils our relationships and distorts our perception of ourselves and others. To lead a joyful and peaceful life, a calm and quiet mind is necessary which leads one to a higher self and a great purpose of life.

The first step in this Eightfold path is *Yama*(self-regulation, self-observation). Yama means that which helps us to stay within the boundaries and not trespass on others boundaries. At this step, five principles are embraced:

- Non-Violence(*ahimsa*)
- Truthfulness(*Satya*)
- Non-Stealing(*Asteya*)
- Non-indulgence(*Brahmacharya*)
- Non-possessiveness(*Aparigraha*)

The second step in the practice of Yoga is *Niyama*(Self Discipline, self-commitment). This step also consists of five components: purity (*shaucha*), contentment (*santosha*), austerity (*tapas*), self-study (*svadhyaya*), and surrender to God (*Ishtam prandhana*).

The third step in the path of raja yoga is *Asana*, postures. After hundreds of years of constant research and personal practice, yogis concluded that the human body is endowed with limitless potential. All these postures can be classified into two main categories: physical postures and meditative postures. Physical postures have a direct impact on restoring physical health and an indirect impact on cultivating a joyful mind. Meditative postures have a direct impact on cultivating a joyful mind and an indirect impact on restoring physical health.

The fourth step in raja yoga is known as *Pranayama*. *Prana* means "life force", *ayama* means "expansion." Pranayama practices help us infuse our bodies and minds with vital energy, the life force.

Then comes the fifth step, known as *Pratyahara*—literally "to disentangle yourself wisely and skillfully." It means to disentangle our senses and mind from the unhealthy and undesirable objects of the world, gather all the scattered energy of the senses and mind, and turn them inward to explore the higher dimensions of life.

The sixth step is *dharana* (concentration). It is the state of *Dhyana*, the act and object of thought remain distinct and separate states of consciousness.

The seventh step is *dhyana* (meditation). Meditation is simply an advanced stage of concentration. In meditation, the mind begins to expand and touch the dimension of reality known as the field of intuition. Through meditation, one can be able to free his mind of the days' anxieties and stresses. Meditation will refresh and help the one to enter into a restful state. It is the highest stage of attention and is the best management of the firmness of the intellect. In meditation, there is no consciousness neither physical nor mental but only spiritual consciousness is there. It enhances your inner strength and focus. With more focus, one can balance the things in life much easily and will be able to enjoy his life to the fullest.

The eighth step is *Samadhi* which means putting together, joining, and combining with, union, harmonious whole. At this point, one has transcended his mind and the realm of consciousness. There is no distinction between the past, present and future. The world known by the senses and the world beyond the reach of the senses are fully integrated in this spiritually illumined consciousness. This is called attaining perfection, attaining immortality. One views the whole world filled with an incredible beauty and joy. This experience is so real and fulfilling that one does not need others to admire his beauty. Rather, one find himself brimming with such joy that inner beauty is beyond all admiration.

Individual Transformation: Base for Global Transformation

Yoga is universal in nature and applicable to the world humanity irrespective of caste, creed, religion and nation. Today, world is witnessing various social and political problems like terrorism, religious issues, global warming etc. It is only through Yoga that