

Critical Information about the Natha Yoga Centre

1. What is Natha?

The Natha Yoga Centre is a Danish organisation that teaches its own version of Tantra Yoga. In Denmark, Natha has at least 10 sections – among others in Copenhagen, Århus and Odense – and has been founded 1990 in Copenhagen by the Romanian *Narcis Tracau*. Today, Natha is directed by another Romanian, *Michai Stohan*.

The Romanian connection is based on the fact that Natha is a section of a Romanian Tantra organisation named M.I.S.A., founded 1990 by the Romanian Gregorian Bivolaru („Grieg”). MISA (abbreviation for *Miscarea de Integrare Spirituala în Absolut*, Romanian for „Movement for spiritual integration into the absolute”) has been directed until 1995 by Grieg and he further acts as MISA’s “spiritual mentor” and central figure. Today, MISA has sections and buildings in several countries and is called *Tara* in England, *Deutsche Akademie für traditionelle Yoga* in Germany and *Natha* in Scandinavia.

2. Natha’s tantric teaching

Natha’s goal is to let the individual develop a „higher consciousness” and integrate itself into „The highest Being” or „The Absolute”, a kind of cosmic deity. The tools for this are an esoteric insight and special religious sexual techniques that Natha itself regards as a neutral science. The basis in the methods to develop the consciousness is the so called Tantra – an esoteric Indian teaching. In short, the essential point of Tantra is to convert, or to “transfigure”, the individual by sex, sanctified by certain rituals, into a higher spiritual level.

According to Natha, the man contains a positive energy pole (Yang, Shiva, plus pole) and the woman contains a negative pole (Yin, Shakti, minus pole). The poles contain a kind of potential energy of divine quality. Between the poles, a kind of strong electrical tension or energy may arise. Certain rituals followed by Natha can activate this sexual energy and convert it to a spiritual form. This conversion to a higher consciousness may be delayed by the “karma”. If one engages in concrete matters or activities and actively acts in relation to them, according to the karma teaching one is bound by a reason-effect-relation (=karma) to those matters and therefore the salvation and the development are delayed. Therefore it is important to keep away from those matters to avoid the “karmic” bonds.

Natha has developed its ideas about world, man and salvation from a certain Hindu school (the Kashmir Shaivism), and Hindu worldviews penetrate Natha's teaching, for example that man must get free from karma and by a special knowledge and special exercises should ascend to the cosmic deity. To this Hindu skeleton, Natha attaches a series of notions and understandings taken from Daoism, Buddhism, the Romanian Orthodox Christianity, western Occultism and New Age (Astrology, Enneads etc.).

3. Impersonal Sex

Tantric Sex is an important part of the Natha Yoga Centre's method. It is ritual sex without personal engagement. In the Natha system it is important to take distance from the concrete person (or action) in order not to be captured by the karma. In this way, in Natha's Tantra every woman has sex with God Shiva and not with the concrete man. And every man indeed has sex with the Goddess Shakti. In this ceremonial intercourse, the sex partner serves as a tool in the process as bearer of a deity, a higher principle that is common for all. According to Natha, the purified energies emanating from the Shiva- and Shakti-poles advance the religious process. Therefore, experienced experts of Natha's method may have multiple sex partners, and it is important not to connect emotionally to them. The sex partner should only be a medium to achieve a higher end. The sexual practice that is such important at Natha thus becomes impersonal and instrumental. This is not compatible with many secular ethics as well with Christian ethic where every person is an end in himself and not a means to an end, and where personal love and care enjoys highest estimation.

4. Natha and Christianity

The practices in the Natha Yoga Centre may have a superficial Christian character. As Natha writes in a reply, one could join the Christian message of the "surrender to Jesus as son of God and redeemer of mankind, to live in his message of self sacrifice and compassion". At Easter 2005, Natha organised a Christian Easter procession in the streets of Copenhagen. And in the lectures of Natha, not infrequently the Our father, the Orthodox "Heart prayer", 24 hours prayers, meditations about Jesus' birth and crucifixion, blessings, "light consecration", Easter and Christmas feasting, Bible lecture and meditations about parables and the Sermon on the Mountain are used. Natha uses various religions if that is advantageous for the Organisation and its "scientific" tantric method. Natha wrote to the Dialog Centre: *Yoga means "unification". Unification between God and man. The tantric Yoga is based on the assumption that we can reach this unification in life by a conscious surrender to God. To reach this state, we may use many tools from Our father until erotic techniques.*

But the Christian characteristics of Natha are superficial and not in agreement with the basic views of Natha. It is not Christian to assume that the physical world be controlled by karma, making everybody guilty for one's own fate. According to sources, it happens at Natha that people are requested not to spoil their energy by humanitarian or political engagement, but instead to spiritually work with one selves!

Natha also teaches techniques for self redemption and bringing oneself up to the divine, thus becoming a part of the deity. The fundamental difference in Christianity is the essential difference between God and man, and it is God who salvages man and not man himself. To use ceremonial impersonal sex as a salvation method also contradicts Christian thinking. Natha covers a Hindu tantric message, fundamentally different from Christian understanding, by a Christian gloss.

5. Is Natha a cult?

If you join Natha, you will not meet a cult, but a Yoga centre that offers various spiritual lectures. The attendees will not be encouraged to keep away from the 'normal world' outside Natha. But the longer you stay in Natha, the more it will be natural that life only will revolve around Natha. You will use your vacations for Natha lectures in other countries, you will especially consort with other Natha followers, and you will be strongly influenced by Natha's strange ideas – for example that most of the problems of the political world are caused by a vicious conspiracy of free masons. In addition, central figures within Natha/MISA – not at least founder Grieg – speak with non contradictable authority and have a guru-like position close to adoration.

In the outermost layer – there where you find yourself at the start of your career at Natha -, the organisation is not a cult but a course centre. But the more you approach the inner layer – where you find the long-standing members -, the more it becomes sectarian.

6. Is Natha dangerous?

Natha does not consist of manipulating people or of those who try to get impersonal sex disguised as a religion. The attendees in the Natha courses certainly are as honest and serious as other people. But behind the Natha praxis, tantric Hindu thinking with polytheism, comprehension of karma, esoteric and "occult" techniques with a ritual impersonal sex as the method of redemption are hidden, which is far from western standards and may confuse the attendees. The idea of karma and the impersonal sex may have a blunting effect because thus the person becomes guilty for her own trouble and will be sexually used as a mere tool for a higher end. Natha has a façade with for example Christian features, but the or-

ganisation is especially inspired by an occult variant inside Hinduism, very different from Christianity.

Finally, the attendees should pay attention on sectarian features in Natha's inner circle with small or large paranoid forced thought about free mason conspiracies and guru-like adoration of the main personalities, which may prevent free, critical and mature thoughts.