



New Revolutions for a Small Planet: how the global shift in humanity and nature will transform our minds and lives

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Humanity is in the midst of great transformation across the globe. This is now apparent to even casual observers who are witnessing some of the changes happening on the planet at this time. Most of what we see in the daily news reports informs us of dramatic Earth changes in part due to climatic disruption: earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, etc. We are also witnessing a surge in people protest as decades of corrupt or inefficient social systems are taking their toll. Yet within this outward surge of turmoil and disruption other shifts are occurring; such as the transition from the modern mind of the industrial-globalisation model of the last two centuries into a life-sustaining, ecological-cosmological worldview. We are seeing a change toward fostering values that will be inherited by the world to come. During the current and upcoming years humanity — on both an individual and collective level — will have an obligation to re-adapt itself to a world in revolution. Why do I use specifically this term of ‘revolution’?

The reason is that right now there is a convergence of ‘revolutions’ occurring not only across the planet, off the planet, but also in our perceptions, worldviews, and within our very psyche. Yet it doesn’t stop there, as a revolution not only suggests a change in conditions in socio-cultural systems, but also implies a complete orbit or rotation as well. What I am suggesting is that life on planet Earth is undergoing all three types of revolutions: physical, psychic and cosmological.

Our human socio-cultural cycles are very much a part of our evolutionary history, with marked eras between hunter-gatherer, agrarian, city-state, industrial and planetary. Currently, our struggles are between a system marked by the inequalities of globalisation (what I call the ‘old mind’) and that of an integral-ecology era (what I call the ‘new mind’). This is a territorial — and psychic — dispute that is manifesting through resource wars and the ongoing struggle for dominating worldviews and thus human consciousness. At the same time there are many forecasts trying to predict the outcome of the present geopolitical turmoil based upon what has gone before. However, we are unable to discern the uncertain, the unpredictable and the unexpected. The Western mindset has a preoccupation, or even obsession, with a linear view of history and progress. Yet the concept of a linear development of human civilisations is erroneous and misleading. Many ancient teachings and indigenous cultures, both spiritual and secular, have long known about and taught the concept of cyclic processes that are repeated over long periods of historical time. There can also be cycles within cycles: smaller cycles within larger cycles whereby social phases can manifest within one overarching cycle. These expansions in social cycles also often coincide, or are coexistent with, changes in perception and worldviews.

In other words, major social revolutions are frequently accompanied by great shifts in human consciousness. Such shifts may also coincide with how the human species understands, and subsequently harnesses, varying forms of energy. Our spiral of cultural history involves a complex interplay of various cycles and systems: of social systems, energy systems and communications revolutions — all co-dependent and interrelated. Ecological, biological, social and technological systems are now being reorganised because of new energy flows as our world transits a phase shift of almost revolutionary dimensions.

Critical Thresholds – New Emergence

The 21st century has been reached through a growing series of critical thresholds, moving toward current global, social and environmental limits. However, at such thresholds new arrangements are forced into being. Eminent historian Lewis Mumford wrote that:

Every [human] transformation ... has rested on a new metaphysical and ideological base; or rather, upon deeper stirrings and intuitions whose rationalised expression takes the form of a new picture of the cosmos and the nature of man ... In carrying [human] ... self-transformation to this further stage, world culture may bring about a fresh release of spiritual energy that will unveil new potentialities, no more visible in the human self today than radium was in the physical world a century ago, though always present. (*The Transformations of Man*, 1956)

It was prescient of Mumford to view the next era not only in terms of ideological renewal, but also as one that brings about 'a fresh release of spiritual energy.' In a similar manner, British historian Arnold Toynbee (in his sweeping work *A Study of History*) referred to the possible 'transfiguration' of modern society into some kind of 're-spiritualised' form. Significant to this discussion is the work and teachings of Indian yogi Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri (teacher of Paramahansa Yogananda) who, in his book *The Holy Science*, talks of the cyclic attributes of the Hindu Yugas — the four ages of mankind. In terms of attributes, the Yugas generally highlight the rise and fall of great civilisations, as well as the ebb and flow in the morality, ethics and conscious quality of humankind. During the descending arc, not only do civilisations become more materially based but there is also a loss of truth, wisdom, sincerity and integrity amongst humanity.

According to Sri Yukteswar we are currently within the ascending Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age) cycle that began in ad1698 and will last for 2,400 years. In this Dwapara Yuga, humanity retains a comprehension of some of the finer forces and more subtle energies of the cosmos, and understands that all matter, all atomic form, is nothing other than the manifestation of energy and vibratory forces. Sri Yukteswar also tells us that each ascending age enhances humanity's mental faculties and clarity of understanding, which includes knowledge of the finer forces at work within the cosmos. Since we are now in the second decade of the 21st century, we are (according to Sri Yukteswar's calculations) several centuries into the ascending arc of Dwapara Yuga. It is thus our time for discovering and working with the fundamental energies that underlie our material universe. First, however, we need to align our thinking and perceptions.

Western civilisation has created a mindset that, although it can be termed 'modern', is one that is overly rational and logical, and which seeks to regulate and control. It has also, unfortunately, succeeded in taking the enchantment away from a mystifying universe. Our predominant worldviews, or the views which are the dominant conditioning forces, prefer to support the 'dead universe' theory — that is, a view that assumes all life was organised by random processes thanks to a spewing out of chemical debris from a massive explosion several billion years ago. Life, it seems, is a random chance event on this rock of ours hurtling through a largely inanimate universe. Not much to tell our grandchildren! Yet perhaps there is a different story that we can learn to tell: a story of a living cosmos that is dynamic, creative and which is a seamless sea of energy where consciousness abides. Within a living universe the whole underlying energetic order is recreated and sustained at each moment; rather than being a lifeless, random mass. Such a shift in perception attached to the meaning of our cosmos would have profound implications for our understanding and significance of human life. The realisation may finally dawn on us that there is no inconsistency in viewing our cosmos as a living, energetic environment. It is my view that in the coming years, humanity will not only advance in its scientific discoveries, but also that as a species we shall develop our organs of intuition, empathy and new patterns of thinking.

A Global Empathic Mind

Technology also, specifically the revolution in global communications, is having a profound affect upon human consciousness that is impacting our collective empathic mind. In fact, modern human technology might be enabling or giving birth to a new 're-wiring' of the human psyche that is better equipped to understand the requirements of a planetary society. Increased physical and emotional connectivity through our global-social networks appears to be catalysing the emergence within us of an empathic mindset. The spectacular rise in global communication technologies (Internet and mobile phones, etc) reflects a new form of participatory consciousness, especially among

younger people. These systems reflect a distributed model that connects people through networks rather than through hierarchical structures. Also, since people are connecting amongst themselves in multiple relations it impels them to have an active engagement. In this era the individual is no longer compelled to be a passive receiver of information but can now be both the *user* and the *producer*. We have learnt to democratise our engagement through inexpensive, or free, radio sites (podcasts), home websites, newsletters, where each person can learn to orchestrate and manage their own forms of voice and self-expression.

In preparation for this we have nurtured an emerging psychological consciousness that during the 20th century experienced an explosion of transcendental practices. Through psychoanalysis and the theories of Freud and Jung, and the counter-culture trends of the 1950s and 1960s, an era of self-evaluation emerged. People were increasingly exploring their own feelings, self-reflection and the interior gaze. The 20th century's exploration of the psyche mixed with today's communication networks herald a more reflexive mode of self-expression. During our current phase of socio-cultural and human inner evolution we are being challenged to expand and develop our mental, emotional, and perceptual faculties. The psychological impacts available today for the young people growing up with a global/planetary awareness are without precedent. Our current mode of human self-consciousness could very likely be the forerunner to new generations being born with heightened intuitive minds. We might refer to them as 'supramental' minds, where intuitive rationality, or heightened common sense, becomes the predominant state of mind. It is both a form of the transpersonal as well as the integral. In other words, it is recognising *mindfulness* beyond our physical mind, and which encapsulates our growing awareness of our place within a grand, creatively dynamic cosmological order. We can say that it is a mindfulness that is simultaneously vertical (transpersonal) as well as horizontal (integral).

Opportunity & Responsibility

These changes that are underway appear to correlate with a greater shift towards individual responsibility; a deepened sense of self and psychological reflection; an increased sensitivity to internal and external states; and a heightened recognition and appreciation of human community. It is also my understanding that changes in our human and technological environments will foster positive developmental change within our planetary society. In these and upcoming years, humanity will find itself needing to adapt to a world in revolution — in resources, communications, and psyche — and our lives are likely to be catalysed into new arrangements and possibilities. The revolutions that are occurring on our planet in these coming years will have a lot of surprises in store for us.

To summarise, the opportunity is here for change and betterment like never before in our recent history. This means that the responsibility is also here; and these two factors may never be present again at exactly the right moment when they are so badly needed. What the human species may now be witnessing during these years is the rise of intuition, empathy, greater connectivity to the world and to people, and a sense of 'knowing' what changes need to be made. Furthermore, within each person is a growing sense of the greater cosmic whole: the realisation that humanity exists and evolves within a universe of great intelligence and meaning. This serves to impart within humanity a more profound, and acknowledged, spiritual impulse. I am pleased to say that the future is here...right where you are sitting.

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Extracts from Essay on Man

by Alexander Pope (1688 1744)

What can we reason,
but from what we know?
Of man, what see we but his
station here,
From which to reason, or to
which refer?
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho'
the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in
our own.

Go, wondrous creature! mount where science guides,
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old time, and regulate the sun;
Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod
And quitting sense call imitating God;
As eastern priests in giddy circles run,
And turn their heads to imitate the sun.
Go, teach eternal wisdom how to rule—
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool!

He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What vary'd being peoples every star,
May tell why heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro'? or can a part contain the whole?
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

Then say not man's imperfect, heav'n in fault;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.

