

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE HOLY ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF GLYFADA REGARDING THE FORTHCOMING CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST “INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA”

Date : 19 Ιουνίου, 2015

The day of the summer solstice, a festive day for sorcerers, occultists and satanists has been selected for the annual celebration of the “International Day of Yoga”. According to a resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations (Plenary Meeting of December 2104), the 21st of June has been proclaimed “International Day of Yoga”. The rationale behind this resolution was that “yoga provides a **holistic** approach to health and well-being”; furthermore, it was claimed that it is “beneficial for the health of the world population”! However, this explanation is in conflict both with the Orthodox Christian perspective and with scientific evidence.

The so-called *holistic perspective*, on which yoga is based, comprises teachings of occult and para-religious groups, according to special Pan-Orthodox Conferences on matters pertaining to heresies and para-religion. These Conferences -which include special delegates from all Orthodox countries- have repeatedly dealt with yoga and the spiritual dangers it entails. References to yoga can be found even in the international bibliography on sects, as well as in the extensive reports of MIVILUDES (**the French Interministerial Mission of Vigilance and Combat against Sectarian Aberrations**), which has filed **yoga under the category “Dangers to Health”**.

We remind you that yoga is described as physical exercise, whereas in reality it is one of the 6 schools of Hinduism. The way it is promoted through the observance of the “International Day of Yoga” (under the slogan “Yoga for Harmony and Peace”) is **misleading and unconstitutional**, since proselytism is forbidden by the Constitution. Yoga is a religious practice of eastern religions and for this reason being an Orthodox Christian is **totally incompatible** with practising yoga or participating in any yoga celebration or festival, or in a yoga workshop.

The term “yoga” is derived from the Sanskrit root “yuj”, which means “the union of the soul with the Oversoul, i.e. God”. Yoga is a **non-Christian practice**,

which cannot be isolated from its religious background and which harbour **spiritual, physical and mental dangers**. The spiritual dangers are: a) the risk that yoga will function as a **bridge** through which unsuspecting Christians will be led to eastern religions and occultism, and b) the serious peril of **exposing oneself to the occult**, which has been emphasized both by gurus themselves and by scientific researchers.

Here is an indicative list of some of those registered dangers:

- “temporary or permanent loss of sanity”[1]
- “inappropriate and incoherent emotional outbursts, muscle twitching, spasms, hallucinations”[2]
- “terrifying visions”[3]
- “mental confusion”[4]
- “psychosis”[4]
- “epilepsy and other involuntary body movements”[4]
- “stress”[4]
- “depression”[4]
- “irregular breathing”[4]
- “immoral behaviour”[4]
- “musculoskeletal disorders”[5]
- “physical injuries”[6]
- “gastric problems”[6]
- “internal bleeding”[6]
- “temporary blindness”[6]
- “pseudo-psychosis”[6]
- “panic attacks”[6]

- “anxiety”[6]
- “homicidal urges”[6]
- “risk of vertebral artery dissection of the cervical spine”[7], which may induce a stroke
- “destruction of the nervous system”[8]

It should be further noted[9] that the American Yoga Association itself discourages children, as well as pregnant women and nursing mothers from practising yoga, stressing the fact that “it is extremely dangerous for pregnant women to do Yoga because of the possibility of air embolism.” Also, many yoga teachers, as well as the American Yoga Association emphasize the physical dangers that yoga entails, especially for children under the age of 16.[10]. Nevertheless, in the forthcoming celebration of the “International Day of Yoga”, which is going to take place in many Greek cities, too, we see the promotion of yoga workshops for children, adolescents and pregnant women. This is not only**dangerous; it is also unconstitutional**,

considering that the Greek Constitution, which has precedence over UN resolutions, states the following: “The State shall care for the health of citizens and shall adopt special measures for the protection of youth”.[11]

Meanwhile, as part of the mass promotion of yoga, a number of “Laughter” events take place these days. These are more than mere occasions of mirth and merriment; they are actually another form of yoga -the so-called “**Laughter Yoga**”[12]- with all its repercussions.

Furthermore, we would like to inform all devout Christians, as well as every concerned citizen, that the upcoming “**Colour Day Festival**” is not simply a festival of colours, but a **Hindu religious** festival, known as “Holi”. In the Greek website created for it we read that it is a “renowned religious festival in India”, which “has been reverently celebrated for thousands of years”, yet no one in Greece has informed us about its true identity. This festival takes place in honour of Krishna and during its course there is a ritualistic re-enactment of the story of the female demon Holika[13].

As devout Christians, we are obliged not only to completely refrain from all the above, but also to inform others and to protest in

an Orthodox manner. In these times of devious, covert proselytism and of the overthrow of eternal values, Christians are called upon to be vigilant, to keep praying, to avoid conforming to the pattern of this world and to fight with spiritual weapons. It is our duty to do so, unless we wish to find ourselves without excuse on the day of reckoning.

REFERENCES

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- [11]. Article 21, par. 3
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Ψηλαφώντας την των πραγμάτων αλήθεια...

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