



## Spiritual Awakening through Tantra: A Utopian Approach to Aldous Huxley's *Island*

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### Abstract

This paper explores Aldous Huxley's novel *Island* in which tantra is depicted to liberate people of the island Pala and to make the island a utopia. The issue concerning how the attempts are made to reflect tantra in the novel as a transformative force to create Pala as an idyllic island. The objective of this paper is to find out how people are trained in Pala and how Will Farnaby undergoes transformation avoiding his vested interest. The paper also aims to find out the role of tantra for maintaining unity, peace and solidarity among people in Pala and attempts are made to make it an ideal state. Adoption of tantra, use of moksha-medicine and practice of *maithuna* (the yoga of love) reflect the way spiritual enlightenment has been emphasized to make the island unique. The tantric principles are used to transcend ego, to achieve a higher sense of consciousness and unity with the world and supreme entity. Adopting a qualitative method of study, the paper reviews some articles and books on Huxley's work as secondary sources. The novel as a primary source has provided data and information about tantra and its role to transform and liberate the people of Pala and

establish a utopian vision. To address this issue, the paper has employed utopia as ideal theory propounded by Thomas More. The finding of this study indicates that tantra as a transformative as well as a liberating force in Pala and it is used to make it a paradise island or an ideal place. Tantra can also be applied as a transformative factor to create idyllic societies as it has been adopted in the novel to make it a utopia.

**Keywords:** Liberation, salvation, spirituality, tantra, utopia

### Introduction

*Island*, a novel by Aldous Huxley deals with spiritual values and ideas. Pala is an island in which the novelist attempts to synthesize the best practices of all for making it an ideal state. In this novel, tantra has been incorporated as part of holistic life to reflect spiritual significant, consciousness, energy and union. Unlike the western interpretation of tantra, the novel uses tantra as a means of deeper connection with spiritual awakening. Regarding the western interpretation of tantra, Kathleen Kesson reports, "In the western mind, Tantra is most often associated with "spiritual sexuality", and sometimes with magical practices and

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the occult” (39). Similarly, Ronald K. Bullis states, “Tantric sexuality offers images that illustrate the relationship between spirituality and sexuality. Westerners are increasingly receptive to the connections between sexuality and spirituality” (101). Thus, a western view of tantra is concerned with sacred sexuality, which has misused tantra by Herbert V. Guenther as he reports that in the western world it is often used the power and sex-inflated esoteric teaching, illuminating its connotation which is to emphasize on the eastern view of it (2). The eastern worldview of tantra reflects it as an expanded treatise as it encompasses on the holistic ideas. as being an umbrella term it includes all the things of the creation. However, Sthaneshwar Timalsina claims that tantra emphasized on cosmic energy in which human body, mind and wordly things are connected as they are composed of cosmic energy (2). By focusing on the link between the world, mind, human body, and the cosmic energy, he reflects that tantra is the medium of deeper spiritual awakening.

Huxley’s novel emphasizes on the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. It reflects the use of tantra in many activities like breathing, physical intimacy, meditation and emphasis on consciousness. There is unity in all spheres of life such as unity with body and spirit and physical experience with the spiritual journey. By contrasting the western view of tantra which emphasizes on sexuality, the novel redefines it as the path of enlightenment and self-awareness, not as a matter of shame or mere gratification. By reflecting the contrast between the western and eastern view of tantra, this paper attempts to create a gap in the existing literature by making a point of departure. The novel attempts to shift its people to the path of liberation by the emphasis on tantra. In this context, it is significant to explore how tantra functions to create that island a utopia. This paper attempts to answer following research questions:

a) How is tantra depicted in the novel

*Island* as a transformative force?

- b) In what ways does the novel attempt to portray utopian vision?  
c) How does tantra function for liberation and salvation in the novel?

This study intends to reflect how tantra contributes to make the island a utopia. It also aims to portray the techniques applied by the writer to create the island of Pala a utopia by the introduction of the practice of tantra. Besides tantra, there are other practices like the use of drug as a moksha-medicine and the practice of *maithuna* (the yoga of love) as *siddhies* (liberation) have reinforced to reflect utopian vision.

To answer the above research questions, this study adopts a utopia as ideal theory discussed by Thomas More to analyze the novel by Aldous Huxley, applying the lens of tantra and utopian vision. The novel has been taken as a primary source and scholarly papers, critical books and websites have been used as secondary sources. Spiritual practices for creating a utopian vision in the novel have also been considered a major discussion in this paper.

### Review of Literature

Huxley’s *Island* has been criticized by various critics as it has drawn the attention of many scholars dealing with unique ideals. It is his final novel which is different from his first novel which is regarded as dystopia. Concerning the view of the author regarding his first and final novel, Gorman Beauchamp reports the view of Huxley: “I’m writing a rather peculiar kind of fiction. It’s a kind of fantasy, a kind of reverse *Brave New World*, about a society in which real efforts are made to realize human potentialities” (59). It is a counterpart of his first novel as it reflects the final realization that it emphasizes on spiritual awareness. The emphasis is on its peculiarity in terms of its matter but he does not talk about the issue of utopia, spirituality and tantra which are the central issues for liberation in the

novel. Huxley is a visionary of the twentieth century whose ideas are still relevant and he possessed a sober understanding of human condition as well as inspired visions of human possibilities. In this regard, Ronald Lee Zigler claims that *Island* attempts to create a society that applies the strengths of science and technology without becoming their slave emphasizing human needs reflecting democratic values and avoiding dogmatic values and norms (27). He emphasizes on creating an ideal society free from all kinds of bondages in this novel. He raises the issue of how science is exploited but he ignores the issue like tantra and spirituality for the creation of utopian world by the integration of all.

Western technology has been reflected in a negative way in *Island*. Being guided by material greed and selfishness, the young Raja accepts the proposal of Will Farnaby. He wants to guide the island by western values and norms emphasizing on material prosperity rather than observing spiritual practices. In this regard, Ronald T. Sion states, “Huxley posits in his *Island* that humanity will always be subject to its egocentric ways; unfortunately, it has often had to learn the hard way that carnal pleasures are fleeting and that time must have a stop” (177). It emphasizes on the significance of the harmonious relationship between eastern and western ideas but avoids the issues of how ideal state can be created. There is a focus on the pleasure principle, which cannot promote for progress at the transcendental level. Similarly, Lidan Lin argues that Huxley in *Island* criticizes the Western science and promotes the Eastern principles and Pala becomes a hybrid assimilation of both Eastern and Western cultures (6). Introducing both cultures is an attempt for unity but the novel ends by the invasion of the military force by promoting the western values. Next, M. H. N. Schermer states,

In *Island*, the main dissident is Murugan, the crown prince of Pala who

eventually betrays Pala by handing it over to a rivalling neighbour Sultan who is only interested in the oil reserves. This ending of the novel may be taken to suggest that economic forces will eventually ruin any good society, but also that a peaceful pluralism is not possible. (126)

The principle of maintaining peace and unity in the island of Pala is violated when there is emphasis on materialism. The ruin of the society depends on the inclination of economic force.

All these critics emphasize on different aspects of the novel but no attempt has been made on how tantra is applied in the novel to create utopia has almost been ignored. This paper claims that tantra is adopted to reflect a utopian vision in the novel. In this way, a research gap is created in this paper to show the function of tantra for creating a utopia. Thus, it is viable to explore how tantra has been used as a transformative force in the novel for the creation of an ideal world.

## Utopianism and Tantrism as Theoretical Frameworks

### *Utopia as Ideal Theory*

Utopia is an imagined society that is ideal in every aspect of life such as by a harmonious management of political, economics, moral and social system. It was first coined by Thomas More who emphasized on equality, peace, harmony, good-governance, sustainability, and simplicity for creating an ideal state in all aspects of life. A utopia may not be possible but better and fairer world will be possible by progress in ethics, technology and governance. In this sense, utopia is an ever-increasing and ever-evolving destination. Some critics also define it as nowhere or non-existence in the sense of its limitation in the process of its definition. As Lyman Tower Sargent states, “The word Utopia, as coined by More, means nowhere and implies nothing relevant to the quality of that nowhere. It could be good or bad. It

could include the various discussions of heaven that are sometimes called Utopias” (137). In its connection with heaven, it is made complicated to define in the exact term but it attempts to achieve complete perfectness in all aspects of human life including morality, justice, sensibility, peace and harmony. It claims to perform better than any other form as a good society making everyone want to achieve it.

Utopia best be understood when expectation of the perfect world is realized. It can also be connected with social justice, politics, environment and legal system. The universal outlook can also be the best example of it because an inclusion of all is essential in this world. Collective ownership, economic equality, and justice are some of near-utopian ideas. First, the concern of utopia marks the openness in thoughts and actions. In this regard, Fatima Vieira states about utopia as neologism at the time it was baptized by Thomas More which corresponds to a new place to reveal the changes that shared values of a given group (3). It emphasizes on transformation and shared common norms for transcending human barriers. Relating More’s *Utopia* with the political and social tradition of Plato’s *Republic*, Dominic Baker-Smith reports that it is the first fully fledged Renaissance work and its publication reflects the condition of an ambitious exploitation of the new condition created by the printing press and the discovery of new places (1). Thus, it emphasized on openness and ever-increasing progress. The ultimate goal of utopia is to achieve ultimate reality in which an individual cannot find any kinds of disparities, problems and shortcomings. In fact, tantra is concerned with the spread of knowledge, about the origin of the universe, system of yoga and the mystic power achieved by the devotee. It enables the devotees to achieve a divine power. Here, Victor M. Fic claims that the fundamental aspects of tantra is to emphasize the manifestation of

the projection of the divine energy of the creator and to access to the divine energy enabling and empowering practitioners and others associated with them (24). Thus, it is a technique of meditation to make a connection with the supreme.

### ***Tantra and Human Salvation***

Tantra refers to an expansion of knowledge and wisdom. It is taken as a means to free a person from all kinds of bondages. In this regard, the idea of Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar clearly explains what tantra is. It is a process of transforming latent divinity into supreme divinity. As being the practice of expansion means liberation from all sorts of dullness, binding fetters and ignorance. As he defines the term, “Tantra in itself is neither a religion nor an ism. Tantra is a fundamental spiritual science. So wherever there is any spiritual practice it should be taken for granted that it stands on the Tantric cult” (1). It is not limited to any person irrespective of caste, creed or religion. The concept of tantra becomes clearer bringing references from traditional practices and the ideas of Sarkar by Marcus Bussy as he reports that tantra in a traditional method enables to maintain the cosmic balance and modern view of Sarkar is dynamic which emphasizes on liberation from bondages making spirituality collective act (709). The true meaning of tantra can be derived from the reference that it is a real spiritual practice which is connected with all sectors of life such as politics, economy, society, morality and so on. It is a means that liberates human beings and helps to avoid all kinds of hedonistic ideals. Traditional concept emphasizes on the liberation of individual self and the modern concept of Sarkar emphasizes on the collective liberation by establishing the relation with the supreme entity.

Tantra has become an umbrella term as it encompasses all sectors of life and all traditions emanating from the Shaivik tradition. Reflecting the correlation between

tantra and neuroscience, Venkatraman et al. report that tantra has a tremendous value in the nervous system as it helps to expand human understanding, experiential reality and cognitive enhancement as it brings the sustained changes in the structure and functions of the nervous system (1188). In fact, it enables human beings to achieve the state of salvation which is the ultimate aim of human beings. The practice of tantra brings many changes in the life of the practitioners by establishing the relation with the ultimate reality. Even in a physical state, it brings changes as reported by the experiment. As a cognitive science, tantra is linked to yoga that is a ritual practice for the realization and the liberation. In this regard, Glen Alexander Hayes and Sthaneshwar Timalsina state, "Tantra may be regarded as historical systems of ritual practices in which an individual engages with a layered cosmology, utilizing diverse senses, cognitive capacities, and sexuality in order to achieve elevated states of consciousness and embodied liberation" (1). Tantra is concerned with the conscious in which its focus is on achieving salvation. Thus, tantra enables a person to connect his or her unit mind with the cosmic mind or conscious in totality. Similarly, it is also interpreted as a channel of supreme entity. M. C. Joshi states, "Tantra refers to a complex of cultic practices, rituals, mysticism, and secret rites that are based on a philosophy and deep spiritual devotion centering on the concept of Supreme Power" (39). Thus, tantra refers to a broad philosophical term which includes all the things of the universe.

Western interpretations often distort tantra emphasizing solely on sexual aspects ignoring the philosophical, transformative and meditative practices. Most tantric traditions focus on discipline, celibacy and ethics not merely on sensual pleasures. The western views blend sex and meditation celebrating tantra as a cult of ecstasy. In this regard, Ronald K. Bullis argues, "Tantra, an ancient spiritual discipline of

sacred sexuality, enjoys increased interest among scholars and lay people alike. Tantra asserts a close connection between sexual intercourse and the incarnation of divinity into the human sphere" (115). Tantra emphasizes everything in creation that is a form of one divinity from which everything is controlled but the view of the westerners is to emphasize more on sexuality. Similarly, Hugh B. Urban states that the substances which are forbidden by eastern views such as sexual intercourse, meat, wine, fish and parched grain are taken as the defining features of tantra in most orientalist discourse (142). The Westerners often mistake it as an exotic technique for enhancing intimacy or sacred sex. They never attempt to show a formal lineage to devotion, guidance and study. Such distortions are further clarified by Markie L. C. Twist when he explains, "...much of the aim of Tantric practices in Eastern cultural contexts has focused on spiritual growth; however, in Western contexts the focus has been more on sexual improvement. This kind of misunderstanding ends up minimizing the powerful part that Tantra can play in people's relational lives" (443). Thus, tantra arouses and channels the flow of energy that circulates throughout the universe, human body, and social order. In addition, it is used with the intention of connection, integration and relational communication.

### **Huxley's *Island*: Critical Analysis** ***Spiritual Outlook***

The novel *Island* reflects Pala as a miniature paradise which is guided by a utopian vision. In that society, vision of unity and inclusive nature are pervasive. At the beginning of the novel, mynah birds repeatedly call attention to making people conscious. The birds have been trained to warn the islanders of their responsibilities. There the material world is taken along with the encouragement to make a spiritually rich life. Many ideas are blended for the proper organization of society and meaningful life.



It has developed a system of government for over one hundred twenty years providing its people with the possible greatest happiness. By profession, Will Farnaby is a journalist who has shipwrecked intentionally for working as an underground reporter of an oil magnate. He was there for the vested interest of signing a contract on behalf of Lord Aldehyde. He wants to meet Murugan who will soon be the Raja of Pala and the Rani, his mother. Similarly, the society of the island Pala is based on the tantric doctrine of Hindu scripture on mysticism. It emphasizes on achieving the ultimate liberation by following good practices of the world not by renouncing or escaping. It has been focused on using all senses and experiences for the attainment of the bliss. In the novel, Farnaby reads in its treatise: "Nobody needs to go anywhere else. We are all, if we only knew it, already there. If I only knew who in fact I am, I should cease to behave as what I think I am; and if I stopped behaving as what I think I am, I should know who I am" (38). It expresses the state of self-realization because in the spiritual quest, everything is known within the self. When one searches the meaning within himself/herself, he begins to direct him/her to the mystic world, which is envisioned in the Eastern philosophy.

The island of Pala is populated by beautiful people who are conscious more about logical ideas than mere material worldview. First, Will Farnaby suffers from his broken leg and while recuperating, he learns the ruling system of Pala. Dr. Robert MacPhail, his grandchildren, and his daughter-in-law, Susila nourish him. Susila hypnotizes him and he has flashbacks of his past and feels relief from pain. He has the opportunity to read the treatise of Pala that includes what the founder of the island has stated. The founders are the old Raja, great grandfather of Murugan and MacPhail, great grandfather of Dr. Robert. Following their footsteps, the island has completed its history successfully for more

than hundred years. He is impressed by the environment of Pala which is full of spiritual culture. He suffers guilt for his past mistakes and concentrates on the present. The superior civilization of the wise people of Pala makes him seek what is beneficial to human beings for their perfection. Dr. MacPhail explains the goal and ambition of the island to be happy by being fully human not by material prosperity (141). This reflects that the society emphasizes on spiritualism and utopian vision rather than material satisfaction. People are endowed with wisdom as life is organized by provisions like free love, extended family, drug use religiously for attaining mystical experiences, and so on. There is emphasis on self-independent and liberation by the promotion of such practices. In the novel, William W. Matter states that emphasis is made for the self-awareness, self-discovery and self-satisfaction by the provision of things like proper education and spiritual orientation (149). In this way, Pala is made an idyllic paradise that is out of the touch of the outer intervention. The Palanese are trained in such a way that they are fully conscious and are made independent by such practices.

*Island* deals with the theme of religion. There is also the use of science for the quality of life. On the island of Pala, technologies have been developed to solve problems like famine, pestilence, and war not for selfish gains. The application of any technology has been weighed against the quality of life. It is a pacifist society in which military enterprises, the establishment of an army, and the use of weapons are rejected and banned. Similarly, it was free from all traders and missionaries who were regarded as invaders. It was a community oriented, stress-free, meditative, and unselfish culture in which evil practices like aggression and crime were non-existent. In the novel, as Schermer claims that the religious and spiritual convictions are duly observed to bring oneness with nature or cosmological

whole by connecting human nature and human self (124). The rituals followed by the islanders emphasize mindfulness, sustainability, and community. The novel also sketches that for the progress of a community scientific knowledge needs to be employed carefully for the achievement of the quality of human lives. Only by imposing it there may be a problem. For this reason, there is an effort in making the fusion of both religion and science. Sally A. Paulsell reports that Huxley's emphasis of visionary world is reflected by his philosophical teaching that leads to a visionary world in people by glowing light and the unity with the (102). It attempts to reflect through the process of the realization of the self. The attempt to create unity is the significant thing which leads people to the path of spirituality.

In Pala, due to fear of the abuse of power, many things are controlled and avoided. When there are no armies, there are no commanders, and formal religions based on hierarchies are forbidden. There is also the provision of limited personal wealth and governing units are established to run the island. The personal spiritual experiences are promoted as transcendental meditation is common for the unity with the supreme consciousness. There is also the practice of healthy skepticism toward all dogmatic beliefs. The inhabitants of Pala were trustworthy as well as naïve in dealing with the outside world as they were indoctrinated to concentrate on the present moment to avoid regret for the past and anxious anticipation for the future. While talking with Ranga, Will Farnaby knows about the doctrine of tantra and nirvana that emphasize that no one can escape the world as it lies within them and all the things of existence are the means to their liberation. Making the difference between the Western and the Eastern philosophy, the former makes the statement about the nature of man and the universe, and the latter helps to test the validity of the truth. As he notes that the

Eastern philosophy in comparison with the Western is pragmatic and operational and being guided by tantra people in the East are trained not to renounce the world and its value (76). Therefore, the basic doctrine of the Eastern philosophy about the state of self-realization makes sense for the people of Pala who are trained to practice it. It also means to see all things as the expression of the supreme and realize one as its part.

The novel envisions an ideal society and for the empowerment of its people many attempts are made. Education is made a central thing which contributes to unity, transformation, liberation, salvation and progress. The modern world is pervaded by science and technology and people in Pala are trained to cope up with the modern technology together with the practice of spirituality. For the all-round development of people, many kinds of attempts are made and people are oriented to the right path making them avoid greed and material comfort. In the novel, many things are synthesized by the transcendence of the self, awareness against human duality, peaceful coexistence of people, and mystical goal of life to reflect reality in a new way. As Sion states, "*Island* is the synthesis of his beliefs. He must have known that it may take its place as his final fictional achievement, and as such, it does leave a lasting imprint" (177). Huxley himself has realized the importance of spirituality and he has used such ideas like utopia, tantra, mysticism, moksha-medicine, compassion and *maithuna* in his novel. The education system of Pala also proves how children are taught to concentrate on the present movement. The promotion of rational thinking, discipline through concentration, and spiritual exercises enable the islanders to seek self-knowledge leading to good life. They see God in all reality and realize that false ideas create sorrow and cause unnecessary emotions. Compassion and acceptance are the basic of personal responsibilities as basic moral percepts.

**Realization and Transformation**

Will Farnaby has a mission of signing the contract of oil supply with Murugan and the Rani. He comes across with the details of the system of Pala where technology, healthcare, education and family life are used in such a way that he transforms himself avoiding false state adopting the Palanese way of life. He realizes that he has been wandering due to lack of proper ideology in life. His past damaged emotional has been healed by Susila and he comes to a state of realization and transformation accepting life in the present state. In this connection, Zigler reports that in *Island* the author attempts to reflect a society committed to the advancement of upward transcendence by creating essential educational objective and worthy of lifelong pursuit (27). As such, in his novel, Huxley has incorporated many positive aspects to create the island an ideal state free from all kinds of evil practices. Being accustomed with such environment, Will Farnaby rejects the consumerist values represented by Rani and Murugan. His visit culminates in him taking the moksha-medicine, the psychedelic drug that reinforces the spiritual life of the island. The medicine has a great significance in that society as Dr. Robert says, "Thanks to the moksha-medicine, you will know what it's like to be what in fact you are, what in fact you always have been. What a timeless bliss! But, like everything else, this timelessness is transient. Like everything else, it will pass" (169). He finds the people of Pala extending time and energy to perfect all other aspects of their lives including planning for the genetic future. Likewise, tantra expands and liberates people from bondages and ego the use of psychedelic drug that brings the state of bliss. Thus, the use of the medicine in the novel aligned with the use of tantra for liberation.

For achieving transcendental state, Palanese are using the moksha-medicine which is found everywhere. This medicine is also used for religious purpose as

it is regarded as sacred which brings transformation in the state of people. Sharing her experience of taking the medicine the Palanese use, in the novel, Susila says: "Goodness, that last time we took the moksha-medicine together! He started by looking like a hero out of some impossible mythology—of Indians in Iceland, of Vikings in Tibet. And then, without warning, he was Maitreya Buddha" (280). The usage of drugs in the novel brings the experience of supreme consciousness into the minds of people. The medicine brings the occult power in the state of the characters after using it as it is used to sensitize them for it. In the Eastern tradition, tantra also brings the vision of heavenly state. Tantra as a spiritual framework encourages the integration of the body, mind and spirit. Similarly, Sarkar says, "There is spiritual force in each and every living entity. The practical interpretation of Tantra is to awaken this spiritual force and expand it, with the one objective of unifying it with the Supreme Divinity" (2). This resonates with the idea expressed in the novel: "In theological terms," said Vijaya, "the moksha-medicine prepares one for the reception of gratuitous graces—pre mystical visions or the full-blown mystical experiences. Meditation is one of the ways in which one cooperates with those gratuitous graces" (184). Through tantra, the novel portrays the path of enlightenment aligning with Huxley's broader theme of mysticism. Thus, tantra functions as a means for creating Pala a utopia. The utopian visions are supported and enhanced by tantra.

*Island* is such a novel of Huxley which deals with his final and mature vision concerning the fate of humanity and the union with the divine. Thus, the novel is a utopia of the modern world, a synthesis of his thoughts concerning liberation, and his mystical perception. For happiness, love, freedom, mind-body interaction, and personal pleasures are instantly applied instead of the vague promise of the future in



the novel. In the novel, the efforts are made for all people to experience the state of bliss. Research has been made for the liberation of the self as reflected in the novel: "A century of research on the moksha-medicine has clearly shown that quite ordinary people are perfectly capable of having visionary or even fully liberating experiences" (172). In the island of Pala, children are instructed in the yoga of love from their early life and science is used to serve men not to control them. Moksha-medicine is used to bring to the state of meditation. Talking about how it works, Mrs. Rao says, "The moksha-medicine takes you to the same place as you get to in meditation" (184). The medicine used in the novel leads to the spiritual path as it is the embodiment of tantra. In Pala, there is an emphasis on the regular use of moksha medicine as tantra is practised regularly for salvation.

#### ***Tantra and Utopian Vision***

The Palanese are conscious about the effects of new technology for its contribution to the quality of life and social welfare. They count it from the perspective of achieving inner peace, eternity, and enlightened consciousness rather than merely taking its material comfort. Their purpose in life is to make a union with the divine which is the meaning of yoga in the spiritual sphere. Reading a book by Old Raja, Will Farnaby observes, "But Good Being is in the knowledge of who one is about all experiences. So be aware—aware in every context, at all times and whatever, creditable or discreditable, pleasant or unpleasant, you may be doing or suffering. This is the only genuine yoga, the only spiritual exercise worth practicing" (40). The people of Pala are aware of developing a social system for the promotion of human welfare by making the balance between matter and spirit. By realizing their potentialities, the inhabitants of Pala are trained to become fully human beings. In this connection, Jake Poller claims that the people are engaged in in

a spiritual practice by the use of moksha-medicine and the practice of *maithuna* for attaining supernatural power to celebrate the body and nature (25). Thus, tantra is used for spiritual awakening and for the union of body, mind and spirit. The use of the medicine and the practice of *maithuna* also emphasize on tantra. In this regard, Timalsina states, "Tantric texts and practices focus on transforming experience from commonsense to mystical, although the category of "mystical" needs to be read as translating Tantric esoteric experiences" (1). Tantra in this sense brings changes in the state of thoughts by evoking mystery and the novel attempts to emphasize mystic world by the practice of tantra.

In the novel, the attempts have been made to express men's highest thoughts and deepest aspirations. Huxley turns to neo-Advaita, Zen, and Mahayana Buddhism in favour of tantra. Through tantra, it is possible to attain liberation or enlightenment. Pala is committed to pacifism as it is a federation of self-governing units by adopting tantra. It emphasizes on moral and spiritual stamina living in a peaceful environment, conducting to the inner growth. The surge of deciphering the mystical experiences in the novel is reinforced by years of meditation, tapas and using moksha medicine for genuine mystical state sometimes producing unusual stimuli which have not found before (137). Similarly, the medicine is used in the novel bring the mystical experiences as it opens the silent areas of the brain. It also enables to enlarge the volume of mind by opening some kind of neurological sluice. In fact, the practices of tantra are concerned with its expansion as reflected in the novel. The experiences people get either by fasting, spiritual practices, or moksha-medicine as discussed in the novel are therapeutic and transforming as bringing a mental transformation of the characters. The novel includes the term *Tat tvam asi*, the propositions in metaphysics, refers to the psychological experience and its operations

can be explored by yoga, or *dhyana*, or Zen—or, in certain special circumstances, *maithuna* to bring the state of bliss (76). Such references in the novel emphasize a broader spiritual outlook promoting tantra for reflecting the utopian visions. How Lesley Whiting refers tantra as a science that expands mind and spirit and liberates it from all kinds of bondages (67). Similarly, the novel employs tantra as a tool for transcendence and spiritual enlightenment for promoting Pala as a utopian society.

### Conclusion

Huxley's *Island* reflects the spiritual practices, realization and transformation to achieve an ultimate goal of life. He envisions Pala an ideal state and many practices are employed for the liberation of people. The tantra observed in the island of Pala is a manifestation of Palanese philosophy of life which encompasses the integration of spiritual, bodily, and social well-being. By adopting tantra, utopia is attempted to achieve mindfulness, spiritual practice and transcendence. Tantra has become a means of transformation for achieving a utopian state. It has been adopted to cultivate spiritual enlightenment, well-being of all people, self-awareness, and holistic approach. People of Pala are inclined to the path of liberation. The more the island adopts tantra, there is a great chance they have to be guided by utopian visions as it has integrated spirituality, self-awareness and sensuality. Through the adoption of philosophical and scientific practices, mindfulness and acceptance are promoted to create Pala an ideal place in the novel. To create the island a utopia, tantra has contributed to realize the human potentiality. Avoiding the western misinterpretation regarding tantra, Huxley has used tantra in his writing as a larger spiritual framework that integrates the mind, body and spirit of the people of Pala. Thus, the novel personifies tantra as a sacred tool for transformation and reflecting utopian visions as the final realization of

Huxley. By adopting tantra in human life, spiritual enlightenment can be promoted to make ideal societies in the world.

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