

CONSCIOUSNESS – COSMIC AND HUMAN

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Some aspects from the “Book of Golden Precepts”, which shares a common origin with H. P. Blavatsky’s (HPB), the “Secret Doctrine” (SD) and the “Voice of the Silence”, were translated and published in 1931 from a collection of lectures given by Dr. Gottfried de Purucker. In 1935 he published a revised edition in a narrative form, which starts with a description of the ‘Path to the Heart of the Universe’, where it says:

“... that there is a hunger in every human heart – a hunger for the Real and the Sublime – a kind of homesickness brought about by the soul-memory of our spiritual abode, whence we came and towards which we are now on our return journey, it is the saving power in men.

The pathway of wisdom and illumination begins in any incarnation right here on earth in our present life, the pathway of conscious and spiritual realization, leading ever inwards to the mystic east. Although the path is one, it is different for every human being, because every human being is himself that path, its core, build of thought and consciousness.

The stream of consciousness that flows through the mighty Whole flows also through man, an inseparable portion of the Universe. It is that inner path of Self, of pure consciousness and pure love for all that is.”

In her Collected Writings (CW) HPB says, that to give the merest outline of the States of Consciousness is the most difficult thing in the world; since the Universe is embodied Consciousness and a knowledge of the States of Consciousness means knowledge of the different planes of the Universe and of all correspondences in the Kosmos, the Solar System and Man. When Kosmos is spelt with a “K”, manvantaric¹ manifestation as a whole is meant, when spelt with “C”, the phenomena of our Solar System and the Universe is described. She further says, that an attempt to figure Consciousness in Kosmos would deceive the student by inducing him to believe that Kosmic Consciousness could be explained, whereas the whole of even the lowest plane of Kosmos transcends the highest Adept on Earth ... its explanation in material words would be to try to confine infinitude in a nutshell ... Kosmic Consciousness is absolutely outside all terms of Earth consciousness. The SD states that “The Initial Existence in the first twilight of the Maha-Manvantara ... is a Conscious Spiritual Quality ... like a film from a divine Breath to the gaze of the entranced seer ... a colourless spiritual Fluid, existing everywhere, forming the first Upadhi (foundation or vehicle) on which our Solar system is built”.

In her Article “Psychic and Noetic Action” in the CW, HPB says that Occultism regards every atom as an “independent” entity, and every cell as a “conscious” unit. As soon as atoms group to form cells, the latter will become endowed with consciousness of its own kind, and that memory has its seat in every organ of the body. Self-consciousness, belongs to Man alone and proceeds from the Self or Higher Manas. Only the psychic element (psych: desire body and lower mind or Kama-Manas in Sanskrit), is common to both animal and human beings, although in a far higher degree in man, due to the greater perfection and development of the cerebral cells. Between the psychic and the noetic – or the Personality and the Individuality – there exists an abyss which could be compared to “Jack the Ripper” and the Holy Buddha says HPB.

¹ Manvantara is a period manifestation, many millions of years of divine activity.

How suddenly a higher aspect of consciousness can be experienced was told for example by the Naval Officer and Astronaut Dr. Edgar Mitchell in his book "The Way of the Explorer". Coming back from a successful mission to the moon in 1971, he was monitoring the Spacecraft's system, and since everything functioned perfectly, he could lean back in weightlessness, watching the slow progress of the heavens through the module window. A great tranquillity started to surround him, a growing sense of wonder, feeling tuned into something much larger than himself. Although he knew, that there was much strife and discord beneath the blue and white atmosphere of the Planet Earth they were heading to, looking beyond the Earth itself to the magnificence of the larger scene, there was a startling recognition, that the nature of the Universe was not what he had been taught. There was a feeling of ubiquitous harmony, of inter-connectedness with the celestial bodies surrounding the spacecraft, a silent authority that shook him to the core. He suddenly experienced the Universe as intelligent, loving and harmonious – the view of Planet Earth was a glimpse of divinity, he says.

After such an experience nothing will ever be the same again. In 1972 Mitchell left the US Navy, turning his investigation from the outer to the "inner worlds", to the study of human consciousness, trying to prepare a common ground between science and spirit. In 1973 he founded the "Institute of Noetic Sciences" with the German Aerospace and rocket engineer Wernher von Braun. It is now a very prestigious and non-profit making Organization, sponsoring research into the nature of consciousness and related subjects.

Confronted with the strange behaviour in the sub-atomic world, many scientists have turned for inspiration to the philosophy of esoteric teachings, especially when the mystery of consciousness is involved. In the 1990s Stuart Hameroff, a Professor for Anaesthesiology at the University of Arizona, teamed up with Sir Roger Penrose, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, in an united effort to try, as far as possible, to solve the mystery of consciousness, how it comes about, and what its transmitters are. We all know what it is like to be conscious or have awareness, but what is this conscious "mind"? They asked themselves how can the subjective nature of our phenomenal experiences – or our inner life – be explained in scientific terms. The universe is perfectly tuned. The physical parameters or the measurable aspects of a system, determining physics, chemistry and biology (like the mass of a proton, the charge of an electron etc.); are precisely what they need to be to produce stars, light, life and consciousness. If any of these parameters were even slightly different, we would not exist.

Traditional religious systems suggest that God produced the physical parameters as they are. Some modern scientists take the view that there must be an infinite number of parallel universes (or a multiverse), and we just happen to be in one of them that supports consciousness – the so called 'Anthropic Principle' that is able to ask these questions. But meanwhile another very interesting theory has emerged. Roger Penrose suggested serial rather than parallel universes (aeons within one overall universe); that the Big Bang was preceded by a previous aeon, one preceding the other, or mutated in an evolutionary process. But then the question was, what is the universe evolving towards?

Penrose teamed up with Stuart Hameroff from the University of Arizona, whose professional job as an Anaesthesiologist had been for decades, to take people's consciousness away and to restore it again after a certain time. They developed a theory which is called 'Orchestrated Objective Reduction' (Orch. O.R.), which roughly contains the following assumptions: Consciousness is a process intrinsic to the fine scale structure of physical reality, or fundamental space/time geometry at the 'Planck Scale', the smallest measurement of a length of time with any meaning. The theory is that there is still

information in a subjective realm, where the physical parameters are embedded and determined. If so, the obvious conclusion would be that with each Big Bang and rebirth of the universe, the physical parameters may slightly change or mutate in an evolutionary process, suggesting the universe is evolving to optimize consciousness.

The SD expresses it like this: ... “Nature runs down [a process called entropy today] and disappears from the objective plane, only to re-emerge after a time of rest out of the subjective, and to re-ascend once more. Our Kosmos and Nature will run down only to re-appear on a more perfect plane after every Pralaya [a period of rest]. Hameroff and Penrose’s hypothesis, is that spiritual and contemplative traditions as well as some scientists and philosophers, consider consciousness to be intrinsic, woven into the fabric of the universe. That conscious precursors and Platonic forms and ethical values preceding biology, existed all along in the fine scale structure of physical reality; that it is consciousness which is driving the universe. Hameroff compares it with what Hindu Philosophy calls Brahman, the essence of an omnipresent and aware universe; that Atma would then be an individualized ripple of that consciousness: “Spirit in the fabric of space and time”, coalescing in a particular region with this underlying fabric of the universe being the container of all potentialities. This suggests there is an inner connectedness among human beings and the essence of the universe. A field of quantum vibrations containing platonic values or ethics, which humans can access as a kind of divine guidance. That the quantum vibrations of consciousness are more like music than computation (or mathematical calculations).

The physical medium for consciousness to occur in the brain seem to be microtubules, the largest filaments within cell structure and the brain’s neurons. Penrose and Hameroff propose, that aspects of quantum theory, like the phenomenon of wave function “self-collapse”, are essential for consciousness to occur. The particular characteristics of microtubules suitable for such quantum effects include their crystal-like lattice structure. They are hollow tubes, around which their sub-units, called tubulins, or globular proteins, are symmetrically arranged. That they co-operatively interact, having the same frequencies as ultrasound, and can be assembled and dis-assembled as required by the cell. Not only can they connect with the brain as a kind of quantum computer, but also to the universe itself.

Monitoring the brain waves of dying persons by using an EEG (or electro-encephalogram), showed amazing results. About 80 – 100 megahertz is our usual scale of consciousness, 40 – 60 when under anaesthetics, lower frequencies are a sign of brain damage. When the heartbeat of a dying person stops, the brain waves drop to 0. But then something extraordinary happens. Suddenly an absolute burst of activity up to 90 megahertz appears in the neurons of the brain, again for about 90 seconds to 20 minutes, even with patients who are brain-dead and also with animals. One could say, that death seems to be the most awake moment, which the scientists interpreted as the soul leaving the body. When the person experiences all the stages of their life like in a film – as reported from near death experiences.

This led to the argument for an eternal soul. If the soul is an individualized unit of the fabric of the universe itself, it could act as a quantum container of stored information of a person’s life experiences and could exist outside the body. In other words “survive it” as a kind of entangled quantum soul with all the necessary ingredients of accumulated experiences and latent possibilities for further evolution. And since after an “out-of-body” experience consciousness is able to attach itself to the existing body once more, why should it not be able to attach itself again to a new body in the form of re-incarnation. An evolutionary process optimizing its conscious awareness for its spiritual destiny.

HPB says this: “By reflection, self-knowledge and intellectual discipline, the soul can be raised to the vision of eternal truth, goodness and beauty....” (CW). Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers and wisdom will come to you naturally....” (SD).

References:

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H.P. Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I.

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Mitchell, “The Way of the Explorer”.

Penrose and Hameroff, ‘Articles on Orchestrated Objective Reduction’ and interviews on YouTube.