CONSCIOUSNESS AND QUANTUM PHYSICS- AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH

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The quest for the Real is the goal of all philosophic and scientific endeavours. Hence becoming real subject implies the movement from the egoistic life towards the real subject. The ultimate result is the disjoining realm of the mind and body and joining the soul. What is this soul? It is nothing but the control mechanism within each and to further it, it is the universal link that connects each and every being in this universe by which one acts or performs or he lives. It is the Consciousness. It is wisdom. This consciousness has to be distinguished from the general terminological use of Consciousness about something. The real Consciousness is made to appear as illusory and though it is illusory it appears as real because of the fixity of man.

Knowledge or Consciousness in clearer terms is a complex of succession of interconnected assertions structured in the form of open relationship revisable through questioning and doubting. Doubting is questioning which can be either asserted or denied while questioning points to the dubitability of the indubitable. The Advaita Vedānta stresses the primacy of consciousness. Why it is so is the subject matter of this article.

In elaborating the nature of knowledge or Consciousness the philosophical system of Advaita Vedānta has a characteristic identity of its own and for this reason its conceptualization on consciousness has been recognized as the most vital contribution for theory of knowledge. Out of the

many schools of Vedānta the Advaita no doubt distinctively has achieved stronger position. This is the Non-dualistic school of Vedānta primarily explicated by Sri Śankara. This system is most pervasive and enduring Indian perspective with its tradition rooted in the Vedic and Upaniṣadic thinking and it continues to provide the most challenging philosophical horizon for the entire humanity. The central concept of Advaita Vedānta is pure consciousness otherwise designated as Brahman. In its system of theorization the manifest phenomenal universe of names and forms is conceived as illusory. Its substratum is Brahman which is the non-dual Reality, being without becoming. This Reality is formless, actionless, attributeless, changeless, beginningless, and endless. This is neither grasped by the eye, nor by speech, by other senses, by penance or good works.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते न वाचा.... तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः (Mu.U.3-1-8)

The word consciousness implies that there is something to be cognizant in life. Pure consciousness has no role in the activities other than to provide a background to every living form. This consciousness has been a subject of passionate study from the very early times. It is not a product; it is the reality and the primary substratum of the whole thing. There is no clear characterization for consciousness. Sri Śankarā advocated the concept of truth as self consciousness and falsity as Mā yā or illusion. He agrees to the point that consciousness is the supreme when there is no distinction among the knowledge, the knower and the known. In the Upaniṣads this has been variously described as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Chāndogya Upaniṣad says that this whole Universe is Brahman. In tranquillity, let one worship It, as Tajjalān, that from which he came forth, as that into which he will be dissolved, as that in which he breaths.

सर्वं खलु इदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत। (Ch.U.3.14.1)

The Upaniṣads also affirms the knowledge of Brahman as the absolute wherein nothing else will remain as distinct from Brahman. Hence it is clear that the Unmanifest is the highest being and the manifest is the lower entity. Śankara uses the word anirvacanīya to explain this manifestation.

The knower, knowable and the knowledge become one and non different. All is pure consciousness.

PHYSICS AND METAPHYSICS

The fact is that scientific tradition that is advocating the spiteful periphery of reason and evidence in all its elucidations had started to approach the Advaita for more trustworthy and changeless keys in its advancements. This is made possible solely through a logically very consistent disposition by its greatest exponent Sri Śankara. In a deeper sense, both scientists and philosophers are engaged in search for the ultimate meaning of life and the universe. The scientists try to explain the nature of reality within rationality, whereas the philosophy does so within and beyond rationality. Philosophy itself has become a Science. Today it cannot stand apart from Science. Logic and Scientific methods have acquired a new importance in the wake of the synthesizing development of philosophy and Science. The fundamental problem in philosophy has been that of the relationship between Consciousness and matter. What is primary, consciousness or matter and what is the status of the world are the two aspects of this problem. The solution put forward by different philosophers split them in to two camps- idealists and materialists. Philosophy tries to validate the idea that consciousness, not matter is the ground of all being, and in a manner Science also says about the same thing.

The pillar of modern science is Quantum Mechanics. This theory basically disproved Newtonian Mechanics, which was no longer philosophically correct. At the beginning of the 20th century, Max Plank, German physicist postulated that the electrons emit and absorb energy in only certain specific, discontinuously discrete amounts- or quanta of energy- thus starting quantum physics. Then, Einstein in 1905, wrote his first work on quantum theory, challenging the established belief that light is a wave phenomenon, instead he suggested that light exists as bundles of energy, quantum, whose energy is directly relative to its frequency. It was not based on the right ideas, how the world worked was really rather different. The World is no deterministic, but in fact, quantum effects are quite indeter-

minable. Quantum phenomena are most prominent on an atomic scale; nevertheless it can affect us on a gross scale. This quantum physics completely changed basic ideas of mechanics and of determinism, nevertheless Newtonian mechanics still alive. It works very well as an almost perfect approximation for macroscopic objects. This quantum mechanics is very valuable and it works tremendously well. It seems to work and yet quantum physics predicts that there is an infinite amount of energy in every volume of the world regardless of how small it is.

QUANTUM PHYSICS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

There are many common currents in quantum physics and Vedanta. But the fundamentality of Vedānta is at variance with quantum physics. This is the link, the bridge over the century old chasm between science and philosophy and it is the science of transcendence. Advaita Vedanta depends on the assumption that consciousness is the building block of our universe. Quantum physics may give the most accurate description of the power of human consciousness to create immanent reality, just like Vedāntic literature explained 20 plus centuries ago.

Quantum and Vedanta believe instead that there is a conventional, simply hierarchical world and there is also an ultimate reality, quantum reality, whose laws are not simply hierarchical but are based on tangled hierarchies, in which the knower affects the known. This concept is exemplified in the Upaniṣadic metaphor of mind and consciousness as two birds on a tree branch; one eats or tastes the sweet and bitter fruit of worldly existence in separation the other just looks on. The first one is essentially what we call the ego, the other is the quantum self, the Atman, the bird that ultimately gives

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति।। (Mu.U. 3-1-1)

In classical Newtonian Physics, objects are objects. Their movements are determined and their whereabouts calculable at all times. Quantum physics has fundamentally changed the primitive perception of the motion

of an object. In this physics, movements of objects are not determined. They are shrouded by the cloud of uncertainty which means that quantum objects are not objects of actuality, but are waves of possibility. Technically they are called wave functions. As a wave the object can be at two places at the same time. And yet, the observation collapses the spread out wave instantaneously to one place. Quantum possibility waves reside outside of space-time, but when we measure them, we find an effect inside the space-time. The collapse of the quantum wave in to the particle state or the discontinuity in the quantum wave is caused by the insertion of the observer considering the event from an inviolate level or personal consciousness. So consciousness is a necessary condition for collapse. It collapses the quantum wave, resulting in the separation between subject object. The self of self reference and the consciousness together make what is self consciousness.

In Quantum Physics, we cannot see both the particle and the wave at the same time, and in our daily life we cannot see things separate but integrated. Vedānta posits a realm of pure ideas as the source of material and mental phenomena, similar to the platonic allegory of the cave. Before quantum, our philosophical Scientists try to prove the real thing, i.e., Consciousness. This is the fundamental philosophy of Vedanta, by which beyond nāma and rūpa shines the light of Brahman, the universal consciousness, the ground of all being, one without a second. Any way the consciousness pervading the universe is immensely creative, it decisively informs the material world, and because we are expressions of that consciousness, we have the opportunity to participate with it in manifesting events in our daily lives.

Advaita Vedānta is found to be the only philosophy that has the capacity to be scientific. It can absorb all the modern concepts of Science without any contradiction. Quantum Physics is the scientific philosophy that can revitalize rather than refute Vedāntic Non dualism. This Science and philosophy are getting more and more important to man in the modern age. They are two great disciplines which when combined harmoniously,

can bring about an all-round expression of human genius. In this century, a new approach is becoming obvious, and the representative thinkers of Science and Philosophy are beginning to discern a close inter relation between these two branches of human knowledge. So there is a complete ontological agreement between Science and Philosophy.

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