Mind from Matter or Matter from Mind?

Hi Charles,

This discussion fits into the two fundamental theories about creation. They are: Srishti-Drishti Vada and the *Drishti-Srishti Vada*. The first, *Srishti-Drishti Vada* means that 'We see the creation because it exists', and the second one that 'The creation exists because we see it'. Most everyone accepts the former but Vedanta says that the creation is there because we see it.

Charles: Gaudapada made an excellent job of pointing out the logical inconsistencies in the various philosophies both Astik (Sankhya, Nyaya) and Nastik (Jainism, Buddhism) which do not accept the Upanishads as a means of Self knowledge. Sankara has done a similar analysis in Brahma Sutra, and it is irrefutable logic.

However in those days, Quantum Mechanics as a branch of science had not arrived on the scene but phenomena was there all the time:))). Recently Amit Goswami propounded that Consciousness/Awareness is the substratum of everything and is the missing link in the Quantum Mechanics Paradigm i.e the reason why there are anomalies in the equations.

Ram: Amit is correct. If you take Consciousness into account all questions can be resolved.

Charles: Paul Davies in his book "God and the New Physics" argues against both, whether it is necessary or not to postulate existence of God. "Suppose a scientist states that Consciousness is just a product (which is opposite to the substratum view) of the complex brain i.e the particles, atoms etc. In the dream state what is stored in the memory is just being played out like a video recording and then in sleep the video gets switched off, simple, when the brain dies, that is the end of it all."

Ram: I suppose the answer to this depends on the meaning of 'it'. That's all for the brain but what is the brain but gross material? He seems to think that the brain does the thinking when it is the mind thinking through the brain. The mind doesn't die when the brain dies. This quote is an example of *sristhi-drishti vada* (the materialist view) and is all quite wonderful but who or what is doing the switching? The materialist view is neat and tidy but it is very limited. How did the brain get so complex, for example? You start with inert elementary particles…no one is going to claim that quarks are conscious… and then say that they mysteriously and purposely organize themselves into this complex organism? Consciousness had to be here before the creation; there is no other way to explain the creation's intelligent design. How something like Consciousness which is self evident and all pervasive can be not taken into account when one investigates creation of material reality I don't know…unless you assume that I am here because the creation is here which means that without thinking you assume that the senses and inference are your sole means of knowledge.

Charles: Of course then we end up with having to account for life in the Plants:)) With reference to the previous email on consciouness /awareness being a product of special configuration of atoms and molecules, this hypothesis has then not only to account for "Life" in plants and simple life forms but also where did all the atoms came from.

Ram: The problem with this theory is not only that life is certainly not limited exclusively to human beings or the origin of matter, but 'who' or 'what' is configuring it? Matter is not going to configure itself because it is not conscious. If you say that matter is conscious then why call it matter? Simple observation shows that this is a self aware universe.

Charles: Of course Quantum Mechanics leads to the world of particles and strings which appear and disappear into the field of energy and as per Einstein matter and energy are one and same but in

different form. Moreover energy cannot be created or destroyed. Hence matter cannot be destroyed or created.

Ram: Yes, because it is actually eternal consciousness seeming to move. Ignorance about the creation is due to attachment to the senses as the only valid means of knowledge.

Charles: Swami Paramarthananda used this law of thermodynamics in conjunction with Gaudapada to reveal that there is no creation as per Sankhya philosophy and of course Gaudapada also got rid of the notion of causeless cause ie. *prakrati*.

Ram: If we take the idea of causality seriously then the causeless cause…which is not actually a cause because reality is non-dual…is Consciousness. This is a word problem that depends on the definition of *prakriti* (nature, the creation). If it is material it is not going to cause anything. For something to happen, a creation, you need two factors, an intelligent agent (*naimittika karanam* or Consciousness) and something that the agent acts on (*upadana karanam* or Matter). This is why Vedanta 'invents' *Iswara/Maya*. God, the creator, is a concept. It only has meaning if the creation has meaning. And the creation only has meaning as long as you don't understand the non-dual nature of reality.

Charles: So going back to the matter/consciousness hypothesis, we are eventually left with the energy field from which all matter came forth and which in turn produced consciousness and this energy field is Nityam i.e causeless.

Ram: Yes, but actually, according to Vedanta the 'field' is not causeless. The field is 'caused' by the knower under the spell of ignorance. It is not conscious either. It seems to be because of its 'proximity' to Consciousness. It is actually not close to Consciousness; it is Consciousness.

Ignorance is a peculiar phenomenon; it not only makes what is impossible possible but it gets everything backwards. Oh, well, let them think that consciousness evolved out of matter if it pleases them. It seems logical until you try to understand it. It just goes to show that science is similar to religion in that its hypotheses..and sometimes its 'truths'…are little more than beliefs that don't stand up to scrutiny.

Charles: The question then remains, where did all that energy come from? Well, the obvious answer Big Bang. New problem: how did the Big Bang come about as it is an event in time?

Ram: What is called energy is actually Consciousness apparently moving. It seems to move (as particles or waves) because it is being viewed through an instrument that is in time, the mind/senses. It 'comes from' or is created by a mind that is ignorant of the nature of Consciousness. To formulate it a little differently, Consciousness under the spell of *Maya* identifies with the mind/intellect which is in time and this produces the appearance of movement. This is *dristhi-srithi vada*, "It's 'there' because I am 'here.' When the mind is shut down but doesn't sleep (*Samadhi*) movement stops and when it is reactivated movement begins. The mind/intellect is an *upadhi*, a conditioning or limiting adjunct. You look at clear water in a blue glass and it seems to be blue. Time is relative to the mind. It is just a concept. When you see from Consciousness' point of view time doesn't exist. Without time you can't have a creation.

To repeat, the issue of the relationship of matter to Consciousness depends on the definition of matter. Is matter insentient or is it sentient? If it is sentient then why have two different words? Matter is insentient. It is incapable of knowledge. It exists (sat) but it doesn't know that it exists (chit). So how can Consciousness evolve out of matter? The scientific materialist evolutionary idea does not make sense from this point of view. If there was a 'big bang' something or someone (God)

had to do the banging. Matter is not able to 'bang' because it is inert. The atom bomb is only dangerous when a conscious being hits the switch.

It is possible for matter to apparently evolve out of Consciousness, however, if we bring Ignorance into the equation. Consciousness is limitless. This means that it has all powers. If it didn't have the power to forget what it was it wouldn't be limitless. Ignorance, however, is not limitless, meaning that it ends when knowledge dawns. When either through an accidental epiphany or through the practice of yoga (*chitta vritti nirodha*) or through Vedanta pramana the mind no longer operates as one's sole means of knowledge…but doesn't sleep…it is clear that there is no creation per se, that it is just a projection of the mind.

When you start in Maya and take the world to be real and you trace back to the beginning you cannot resolve the relationship between Consciousness and matter because the one making the inquiry, the intellect, is in Maya. This renders it limited in knowledge (*avidya*). As such it cannot understand its own cause which is limitless Awareness. A light bulb shines but it does not illumine the electricity that is being transformed into light by the bulb. But when ignorance is removed, the intellect, which is actually Consciousness all along, can see clearly that there is no actual creation. It is *mithya*, apparent.

Charles: Just throwing out some thoughts. Any comments would be greatly appreciated.

Charles: BTW have you come across the following: Michael Comans book on 'Method of Early Advaita' if so , do you recommend it.

Ram: I've heard about it, Charles, but I haven't read it. Sorry.

Om and Prem,

Ram