

Evolution of consciousness

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Abstract:

According to Vedanta, consciousness is the living energy and the fundamental quality of life particles and it is partly spiritual. The conscious (self or soul) will continue to transmigrate from one form to another. According to the conscious evolutionary cosmic time scale, one gets the human form of life after passing through millions of varieties of life.

Introduction

Vedanta is the utmost scientist and philosophical treatise of the spiritual and cultural and heritage of india. It is a composite sanskrit word, combining two words veda and anta.

Vedanta - Veda + Anta

Veda means knowledge and anta means end.

In Vedanta, there is never a conflict between science and spirituality. Science studies material nature where as vedanta studies both material nature as well as spiritual nature.

Five fold truth of Vedanta Sutra

Vedanta sutra speaks of five fold tattavas, truths or realities. These are:-

1. Isvara or god
2. Jiva or soul
3. Kala or time
4. Prakrati or matter
5. Karma or action

1. Isvara

He is the supreme controller and prime mover of all cosmic manifestation. He has universal consciousness and he is the well wisher of every living being.

2. Jiva or Atma

Every living being has a Jiva or soul in it

3. Kala or time

In a spiritual world view, time has no beginning and no end it has been existing eternally.

4. Prakrati

Matter is the inferior energy of the supreme lord, it has no conscious symptoms.

5. Karma

Karma is not eternal. We can change the result of Karma by using the free will rightly. Vedanta describe that all the other forms of life below the level of karma under the normal circumstances.

Scientific Commentary

According to the Vedic scientific views, there are 8.4×10^6 varieties of life (microorganism, plants, aquatic, birds, reptiles, animals, humanoids and human beings) counted on the basis of different species bearing similar states or degrees of consciousness.

According to the conscious evolutionary cosmic time scale, one gets the human form of life after passing through millions of varieties of life.

It should be noted that according to Vedanta, biodiversity is a process to accommodate the conscious level of each individual and there is a gradual evolution of consciousness passing from a form of less constructed to form of higher consisted according to the stable laws of Karma (cause and effect)

Vedanta further explains that many life forms manifests simultaneously. In other words genetic variations is already with in a cosmic plan.

Arber's observation that genetic mutation is not due to error or mistake corroborates with the Vedanta conceptions.

According the Vedanta, biological forms are already within the cosmic plan and it is ,therefore just the opposite of Darwin's concept of biological evolution.

It is not the natural selection and random mutation which is the case of biodiversity.

The conscious self (or soul) will continue to transmigrate from one form to the next until the conscious self or spiritual particle (cit-kana) realise the human form.

In the human form of life the consciousness (chetna), intelligence (buddhi), mind (manas) and sensors are fully developed.

Vedantic paradigm of consciousness :

Since the last few decades, consciousness has emerged as an important field of study in scientific and philosophical disciplines.

There is a growing interest to investigate consciousness among quantum physicist, neurophysiologist cognitive philosophers and spiritualists, William James, Von Newman, Eugene winger, Erwin Schrodinger, and David bohn are some of the pioneers in the study of consciousness.

One common features among the leading quantum physicist is that they all try To explain the collapse of the wave function through some interaction of the mind or consciousness.

However there is a little evidence that such a collapse of the wave function really occurs.

In the author's opinion, quantum mechanics with its limitations in mathematical language, can at best indicate the presence of consciousness but can neither prove it nor describe it.

According to Vedanta consciousness is the living energy and the fundamental qualities of life particle and it is purely spiritual.

Vedanta describes that consciousness is beyond the mind and the brain, intelligence is still higher than the mind and soul even higher than the intelligence.

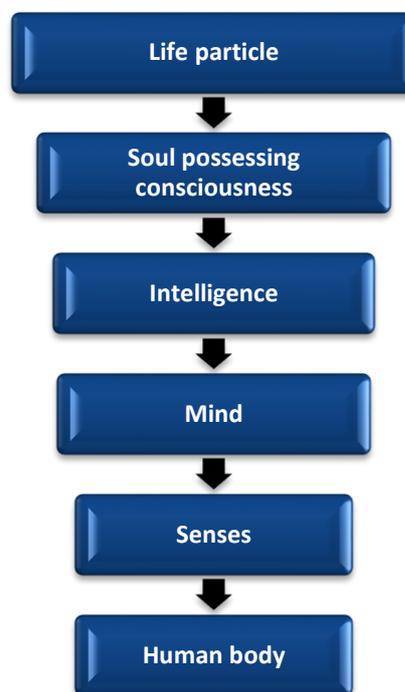


Fig 1. Vedantic hierarchy of human body mind and consciousness

Evolution of Consciousness

In the Vedantic view, evolution is defined as the journey of the innumerable conscious particles of life 10 time and space as they travel from one from of body to another under the laws of Karma (cause and effect).

Each living entities degree of level of consciousness, Guna quality and Karma activity will determine the direction of his evolutionary path. Darwin's mistake was that he could not conceive the existence of consciousness. Thus, Vedanta does not accept Darwin's theory of evolution. Under normal circumstances consciousness evolves linearly as well as stepwise.

There are more than 84 lakh forms of lives - 900000 forms of lives in the water and 20,00,000 forms in the water and 20,00,000 forms of trees and other plants then there are 1,00,000 specious small living beings, bisects and reptiles 1000000 species of birds. Finally they are 3000000 varieties of beasts and 4,00,000 human species.

As stated earlier, the biological forms impose a limitations in the development of consciousness. Therefore different degree of consciousness are exposed through these different bodies.

Vedanta divides the degrees of consciousness into five broad categories “Achhadita” (covered) “Sankucita” (shrunken) “Mukulita” (budding) “Vikasita” (blooming) and “urnaviksita” (fully bloomed).

Consciousness continues to evolve in this way because the goal of life is to attain the “Sachidanand” or the state of consciousness.

Conclusion

A chemist can enquire who is the supreme chemist behind all the wonderful molecules, DNA, chlorophyll, proteins etc.

Vedantha explains that if we undertake research for enough, we will find that the ultimate source is ‘God’.

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**“Sometimes you put walls up not to keep people out ,
But to see who cares enough to break them down .”**