

ARE WE AWARE OF CONSCIOUSNESS?

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It is useless to determine what is consciousness or what is knowledge. Who cares anyhow, since we know without definitions. But what we fail to know, yet what we must know, is the nature of pristine consciousness that lies integral and progressive within every functioning organism. The brain is the seat of ideal consciousness. . . . The vast bulk of consciousness is non-cerebral. It is the sap of our life, of all life.

—D. H. Lawrence^{1(p.214)}

For many of us familiar with particular writings of D. H. Lawrence, it might come as a surprise that he wrote about consciousness and its derivatives, such as the chakras, the unconscious and the super-conscious. He traces the origin of consciousness in the fetus as arising from the solar plexus, maturing and spreading, as the child is born, to the heart and the head. He postulates that consciousness develops on successive planes, each plane providing a dual polarity of subjective and objective.^{1(p.232)} The active first plane of subjective unconsciousness rests in the sympathetic solar plexus and voluntary lumbar ganglion. He postulates that the nature of consciousness may be different at each of the planes. He also mentions that the nature of consciousness cannot be understood unless we move into the mysterious domain of unconscious. The play between the conscious and the unconscious should be understood at each center or chakra (a word he uses). We should try to understand “the psychic manifestations at each center [and] . . . discover the psychic results of the interaction.”^{1(p.233)}

The task in all this is to liberate the free spontaneous psyche or the soul, as Lawrence puts it. Thus, from the nucleus unconscious in the ovule, as the

fetus develops, consciousness proceeds to evolve into different levels and polarities. The ganglia in the central axis of the body (interpreted as chakras, or at least connected to them in a non-physical manner) form the locations of consciousness, with sophistication as we ascend the central axis.

There are of course, other definitions of consciousness.² Dr. Rao categories consciousness into four segments; he introduces liminal areas of reflective awareness and self-awareness along with subliminal areas of awareness-as-such and subliminal awareness.^{2(p.26)} Consciousness could also be viewed from the perspective of its content or from the process involved. The subject-object relationship of consciousness is about content; the degree of awareness is in the realm of process. As the noted psychologist, David Chalmers puts it, mind feels and it puts into motion certain behavioral features.

The understanding of consciousness goes through an allusion to awareness. In modern science, a technical word cannot (and should not) be explainable by another technical word. In other words, each word is a well-defined independent entity, having its own existence and characteristics. When it comes to consciousness, there seems to be no consensus on a concise definition. George Miller seems to have quipped: “Consciousness is a word worn smooth by a million tongues.”^{2(p.14)} We leave these ideas without more elaboration, since the reference cited above achieves full justice to all aspects of consciousness.

The first paper is a Presidential Address by Christine Page, M.D. titled *Creating Wormholes: A Journey in Consciousness*. The author mentions in the Abstract that we are “. . . creating wormholes or passages of light between different states of awareness and different dimensional perspectives.” This statement is poetically appealing and perhaps true scientifically also. There are speculations that the acupuncture meridian system may be light guides within the interstitial tissue layers that connect various organs and chakras. As she maintains, unity is not just being in association with like-minded; it “. . . means that everything is brought into the light of consciousness including darkness.” How can we transcend the current human feelings of separation and alienation that is producing so many problems in the world today? So long as we encompass fear in our hearts and secrets, then we cannot trust others to be in concert with our ideals and we feel alien in our own world. So let us bring them into light and “. . . love the unlovable parts of the Self and to remember they are all aspects of the Great Mother.”

The second paper by Grandmaster Mingtang Xu titled *Diagnosis and Healing of Energetic Diseases* is based on a talk given by him at the ISSSEEM Annual Conference. He talks about internal and external energies, their interconnection and how we can avoid sicknesses through proper activity and diet. In Ayurveda also, we have the concept that diet should vary according to weather conditions; what we eat in winter is not the same as in summer if we want to stay healthy. The Grandmaster continues that many problems including cardiac, liver related, asthma and others fall in the category energy diseases, an imbalance in the energy system of the body. If “appropriate” energy is infused, perhaps we do not need expensive surgical and other corrective procedures. The author says “Energy healing . . . is regulating the light energy of our organs, keeping it in its natural place.”

The third paper is an attempt to measure changes in acupuncture meridian activity while patients underwent fiber optic bronchoscopy using the AMI machine. The paper is based on research conducted by Naohiro Nagayama, M.D. and Hiroshi Motoyama, Ph.D. This machine is a fast data acquisition system and collects the electrical current that goes through acupuncture points at the extremities when an imperceptible voltage is applied to them. The lung meridian acupoints showed significant changes after a bronchoscope procedure. The AMI procedure is useful in picking irritation to internal organs by observing the changes in electrical parameters of the meridian system. This instrument is possibly a subtle energy monitoring system.

The next paper is by Prof. Kaku on the role of string theory in trying to provide a holistic view in physics. He starts with the statement: “The universe is a lot stranger, a lot more wondrous and beautiful, a lot more harmonious and unified than we physicists can imagine.” Perhaps the artists and natives in all lands had a view of grandness and harmony of nature that made them appreciate nature through myriad ways.

It is indeed astonishing to know that the universe is made up of 73% dark energy, and 23% is invisible matter. It is obvious that humans occupy a space that is virtually the size of a dust particle in the universe. To amend T. S. Elliot a bit, we come with a whimper and then after a minuscule time, we go out with a whimper! No big bang here! The author creates a scenario of space and time travel: “. . . these wormholes are apparently short cuts

through space and time. . . Perhaps these wormholes can be used as time machines.” It could take a few centuries to achieve this objective, but then the possibility is fabulous. In one of these travels we might find the ‘energies’ that light up the holistic horizon, healing the sick and curing the ailing. Though the paper does not address directly the possible connection of string theory to healing and wholeness, biophysics of string theory might well develop to provide yet another model for healing.

The last paper is by a group from Australia on *Neurophysiological Effects of Harmonisation: the Effects on Heart Rate Variability, Respiratory Rate and EEG*. The Authors Peter C. Meier, Susan E. Ballinger, Barbara Hoi and Victor Vickland have used a technique known as Harmonisation to try and bring increased focus and calm to people under stress. This practice is a centered silent prayer by a trained person who then “. . . opens and nourishes the subject’s chakras, using touch.” This study is to investigate a neurophysiological basis for the practice. The physiologic data recorded are EEG, respiration and EKG. During the initial phase, termed “opening phase,” a lowering of both alpha and beta activities were noted. It is difficult to interpret the results except as “calm alertness.” Obviously, more work is needed to understand the physiologic response and healing mode of harmonisation.

Lastly, a book review is included in this issue. A book titled *Life and Mind: In Search of the Physical Basis* edited by Savely Savva, M.S., a long time researcher in biology who introduces the idea of bioenergy control systems. His concepts and those of other scientists he has brought together in this volume are of immense value to scientists searching for a possible mechanism in understanding bioenergy healing and many psi phenomena.³ These researches are carried out in many labs around the world under controlled conditions. The new physics emerging in the book and the biological basis should form a definitive reading material for biologists, physicists and healers working in the field of bioenergy.

The cover art is titled *Band of Angels* by Mary Sally Emslie. Ideas and new thoughts arise from an unconstrained mind, a free floating imagination. The artist says she enters a “World of Make Believe,” maya of the mind. If a telescope is not useful in observing an object, you just turn it around and make it into a microscope! Presto, a new world emerges. The world is in the eye

of the beholder and surely this is a fine way to understand our present predicament. We need a new vision to solve our eternal problems. The problems are not new but their solution at this stage in human development is critical. Who wants to go back to the sea and wait for evolution to bring a bunch of humans again! The artist, the poet and the scientific healer need to come together for a bright new future.

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REFERENCES & NOTES

1. D. H. Lawrence, *Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1961).
2. K. Ramakrishna Rao, *Consciousness Studies: Cross-cultural Perspectives* (McFarland & Co, North Carolina, U.S.A., 2002). Here, at last, is a book that covers much ground; from Western Psychology to Eastern esoteric, definition of consciousness and its derivatives are dealt with in detail. This is an excellent text for anyone interested in the study of comparative ideas on consciousness.
3. Dean Radin, Evidence and Implications of Mind-matter Interactions, *Subtle Energies and Energy Medicine* **15**,1 (2004), p. 51.

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