

Death Was Never Born Life Never Died

Reincarnation or Evolution?

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BIRTH, PLAY AND FINALE OF MIND
Consciousness is Forever

Dwaraknath Reddy

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It opens very much like the Shvetashwatara Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda – in the hushed silence of the hall where the top-most philosophers are gathered to discuss the deep issues of the beginnings of creation. Time, Nature, World-order, Universal will, Matter, God, are some of the principles proposed for, and later deposed from, the hoary seat of the Origin of things. The writer of the present work, Shri Dwaraknath Reddy has evidently imbibed the spirit of the Upanishadic teachings and is ready to rub shoulders with the Brahmavadins of the space age. The compulsions of this age inspire the writer to present the ancient vision of the ultimate Truth in the garb of modern science. And, one may be tempted to say, he goes one step further and induces the vision to perform a stunning cat-walk to impress how well the new garment fits its elegant form.

This makes the book very attractive. Here we have an artist at work, an artist who is a scientist by education and a mystic by

accomplishment. This singular combination sets the book apart from a number of others that have been written about the same theme in the recent past, perhaps beginning from 1975 when Fritjof Capra published his acclaimed work *The Tao of Physics*. Such works have already created in the world of scientific thought an atmosphere receptive to what the spiritual masters have to say on life and its beginnings. On the one hand, the breath-taking developments in scientific investigation after the establishment of the twin theories of Relativity and the Quantum, have compelled the scientist to forsake the mechanistic world-view. Instead of trying to explain life as mechanical groupings of particles and the effervescence of chemical changes, the scientist has begun to suspect the changes observed in matter have to be accounted for by an intelligence governing the entire system. For instance, the study of the ways in which the biosphere regulates the chemical composition of the air, the surface-temperature of earth, etc. seems to suggest that the planet is by itself a living organism like the body of a living human being. Referring to these aspects of Earth, Dr. Capra observes: "Her properties and activities cannot be predicated from the sum of her parts; every one of her tissues is linked to every other tissue and all of them are mutually interdependent; her many pathways of communication are highly complex and nonlinear; her form has evolved over billions of years and continues to evolve. These observations were made within a scientific context, but they go far beyond science. Like many other aspects of the new paradigm, they reflect a profound ecological awareness that is ultimately spiritual". (*The Turning Point*).

On the other hand, the social scene of the twentieth century, whose setting has been almost entirely designed and executed by modern technology, is fast losing the initial glamour of progress and prosperity. It has actually begun to exhibit un-mistakable signs of a tragedy about to overtake entire humanity. Even the common man is able to realize that the problems of pollution in the industrially advanced areas, the threat of the green-house effect,

the gaping holes made in the ozone layer, the ecological imbalance created by unthinking extermination of fauna and flora – all these stem from a wrong life-style which in turn arises out of a warped world vision – a vision that does not speak for the harmonious inter-relatedness of life that Nature unfolds in every field. Those seriously concerned with human welfare are crying for a halt to these technologies and the social systems that these technologies sustain and for their replacement by saner methods of living. This is asking for nothing short of a cultural revolution on an universal scale. The thoughts contained in the present work are very relevant to both the developments mentioned above – viz. of making clear the correctives needed to be given to the scientific approach, and of enhancing the mood of man for a total revolution of life-values.

Apart from these two, this book holds a third dimension – that of philosophy. As the “Epilogue” reveals, the author is an ardent follower of the teachings of Shri Ramana Maharshi, the world-renowned Saint of Arunachala in South India. The Maharshi’s message of self-inquiry leading to self-enlightenment and emancipation was typically Upanishadic. In the Upanishads we find mainly two approaches to the ultimate Truth – one analyzing the world-phenomena (the ‘idam’) and the other fathoming the self-experience (the ‘aham’). Both lead to the discovery of the same Truth – Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma, “Aham Brahmasmi”. Both the paths of discovery involve processes of elimination and assimilation. But somehow an impression has gained currency that Vedanta is world-negating and hence irresponsible and even amoral. Therefore, some Advaitic schools like the Kashmiri Shaivism laboured hard to stress the fact that self-awareness is creative by its very nature. The names and forms which it projects and which we perceive as the world, are not hoax but artistic symbols or expressions of the self’s unsullied sumptuousness and sweetness. If the scientist is to be reminded that in merely wrangling about the Time-Space symbols he is committing a grave mistake, the philosopher is equally condemnable for his trying to reject the world expression as trash

and thus killing the artist and making life empty and meaningless. The great master of Vedanta, Shri Shankara Bhagavad Pada, closely following what Badarayana Vyasa posited in the Brahmasutras, expounds Brahma as the ultimate Truth which creates the world by its innate talent as a dancer “produces” his dance. The present work succeeds in presenting this positive aspect of Vedanta. In that process the writer throws fresh light on the three “gunas” originally enunciated by Samkhya philosophy but amply used by Vedanta to explain the creative process – and also on such points as why God is defined as sat-chit-ananda, what is the idea behind the analogies of mirror-reflection and dream-experience employed by Vedanta texts to illustrate the untouched nature of awareness which initiates and participates in the creative process.

Dwaraknath Reddy is a gifted writer. With a style that is precise and incisive he is able to drive home subtle points in few vibrant words. His keen sense of humour makes the conversation – the entire work is a dialogue between the writer and the scientist or the reader or, sometimes with himself – lively and spiced with witty “asides” and whispered sarcasm. The flow of writing is not burdened with scriptural quotations and references to standard texts. It resembles a mountain river that is boisterous at the start, bouncing on rocks of astounding cosmic-principles and cutting deeply into them to make way to green valleys of spiritual considerations, only to emerge finally into the plains of Pure Vedanta where the flow is smooth and stately till it merges with the oceanic silence. It is this eloquent silence which man needs more than any sounds of high-tech.

Personally it has been a very enjoyable and invigorating experience for me to go through the MS of this book and I wish more works like this are available to weary man-kind. How comforting it is even to hear: “At the core of one’s own existence lies the complete answer to the riddles about creation” and we are assured that the path to this core is open to all anytime, unlike Aldous Huxely’s “green-door” that comes up by an unpredictable chance leading

you into the magical garden that vanishes as suddenly. The door to man's freedom does not even need a "knock", only a deep "look" for it to open.

May this radiant eye (or I) be opened to all.