

Concept and Nature of Consciousness in Shiva-Sutra:

An Applied Scientific Approach

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a theoretical introduction and review of research on higher states of consciousness described in the Psychology of Shiva Sutra. Consciousness is a natural human phenomenon. It is associated with the human mind-body problem. A many efforts have been in exploring and discovering the reality of consciousness. Modern sciences have tries to solve this Knott. Ancient literature and traditions have also attempted to handle the case. Shiva Sutra is valuable corpus of knowledge, science and logic. It represents a unique encoding and explanation of consciousness. Within the Shiva Sutra it is customary to trace fundamental nature of consciousness. Shiva sutra presents the modern methodologies and techniques in understanding of enquiry. It keeps resemblances with modern sciences and scientific understanding.

Keywords: *Consciousness, Shiva Sutra, Chaitanyam, Swatantrya, Modern Science*

“Consciousness” means “*awareness; person's conscious thoughts and feelings as a whole*”. The term “consciousness” however refers to experience itself. Rather than being exemplified by a particular thing that we observe or experience, it is exemplified by all the things that we observe or experience. The word ‘consciousness’ has its roots in the idea of a shared awareness. ‘The word “conscious” derives from the Latin words “*cum*” (“together with”) and “*scire*” (“knowing”). In the original sense, two people who know something together are said to be conscious of it “*to one another*”. Consciousness constitutes the reflected or co-relational grade of mind: the grade of mind as appearance. Consciousness—as a case of correlation—comprises only the categories belonging to the abstract ego or formal thinking; and these it treats as features of the object. Consciousness, having passed beyond the sensible, wants to take the object in its truth, not as merely immediate, but as mediated, reflected in itself, and universal. Such an object is a combination of sense qualities with attributes of wider range by which thought defines concrete relations and connections.

Consciousness is often called as self-consciousness used in a more general sense to indicate that someone has reached the stage of paying heed to his own qualities of character or intellect,

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irrespective of whether or not he is embarrassed about other people's estimations of them. Self-consciousness, in this enlarged sense is, of course, of primary importance for the conduct of life, and the concept of it is therefore of importance for Ethics; but its ingenuous use entails no special doctrines about how a person makes and checks his estimates of his own qualities of character and intellect, or how he compares them with those of his acquaintances. The Freudian idioms of the 'Unconscious' and the 'Sub-conscious' are closely connected with this use of '*conscious*'; for at least part of what is meant by describing jealousy, phobias or erotic impulses as 'unconscious' is that the victim of them not only does not recognise their strength, or even existence, in himself, but in a certain way will not recognise them. In this use '*conscious*' means '*sensitive*' or '*sentient*' and '*unconscious*' means anaesthetised or insensitive.

Philosophically, consciousness is the power of choice, closely associated with reason, which was considered to be cosmic, a generalisation of the real world, a synonym for universal law. Human consciousness is a form of mental activity, the highest form. By mental activity we mean all mental processes, conscious and unconscious, all mental states and qualities of the individual. These are mainly processes of cognition, internal states of the organism, and such attributes of personality as character, temperament, and so on. Mental activity is an attribute of the whole animal world. Consciousness, on the other hand, as the highest form of mental activity, is inherent only in human beings, and even then not at all times or at all levels. Consciousness also includes an axiological, that is to say, evaluative aspect, which expresses the selectivity of consciousness, its orientation on values evolved by society and accepted by the individual—philosophical, scientific, political, moral, aesthetic, religious, etc. It includes the individual's relation both to these values and to himself, thus becoming a form of self-consciousness, which is also social in origin. A person's knowledge of himself becomes possible thanks to his ability to relate his principles and orientation to the stand points of other people, his ability to consider these stand points in the process of communication. The very term "*consciousness*", that is to say, knowledge acquired together with others, points to the dialogical nature of consciousness.

In psychology consciousness is interpreted as the highest level of mental organisation of the individual, when he separates himself from his environment and reflects this reality in the form of mental images, which serve as regulators of goal-oriented activity. Consciousness is a highly complicated system consisting of diverse and constantly interacting elements and existing at different levels. This system has as its nucleus the processes of cognition, from elementary sensations and perceptions to the highest manifestations of reason, emotional refinement and the power of the human will. Sensations and perceptions are the immediate, sensuous forms of consciousness. These are the foundation blocks, as it were, for the edifice of more complex intellectual formations and representations, imagination, intuition, logical and artistic thinking. Some aspects or forms of consciousness are:

1. *Spatialization* ---Having an internal mental 'space' in which hypothetical events can 'happen'. It is impossible to think of any events occurring in time without spatializing

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them, usually on a timeline running from left to right. People who are not conscious are incapable of thinking about time or putting things in a time-ordered sequence.

2. *Analog I*---Being able to see 'in' one's spatialized mind what one would 'see' if one were in a certain situation. For example, if a person comes to a fork while walking through a forest, they can 'see' 'in' their mind what they would through their eyes if they took either of the paths. It's based on this information that they can decide to take one path (perhaps more scenic) over the other.
3. *Analog Me*---The 'I' is the subject performing actions, through whose eyes we 'see'. The 'Me' is an object 'seen' in its entirety. Contrast the first-person view in computer games with a third-person view behind the main character. One can often 'see' oneself performing actions 'in one's mind' as if one were 'outside' of one's own body.
4. *Excerption*--The taking of a small aspect of something to stand for that whole thing. No one who thinks of their city imagines every house, every street-corner and every sewer. One takes something, perhaps the skyline or city hall, and let it stand for the whole thing. The same occurs for everything. Recalling one excerption after another by a chain of associations is what constitutes 'reminiscence'.
5. *Conciliation*---Something similar to assimilation of knowledge to fit a schema but done 'in' a conscious mind.
6. *Narratization*---The constant unnoticed activity of thinking of one's life in terms of little stories, in which one is the star character.

The existence of several planes of consciousness has made it a target of research by many sciences and all art. For philosophy the main question is the relationship of consciousness to being. As a property of highly organised matter (the brain), consciousness is consciously perceived existence, that is to say, a subjective image of the objective world or subjective reality, and on the epistemological plane, as the ideal in contrast to the material and as a unity of the two.

FROM THE ACCOUNT OF SHIVA SUTRA

Consciousness is described as the ultimate mystery in ancient Indian texts and its study is lauded as the highest science. Shiva Sutra is ancient Indian master-piece, written by Vasu Gupta, containing the nature of self, universe and knowledge. This is corpus of knowledge of human development. This represents an ultimate theory of Consciousness, which is spiritual as well as scientific.

According to Shiva Sutra, this universe, which is a world of consciousness, is filled with and is one with the supreme state of God consciousness. God consciousness is 'Spanda' (Pulse), a unique reality of supreme movement filled with nectar and an outpouring of the supreme bliss of independence. The very first opening verse of Shiva Sutra contains the nature of pure consciousness---

“चैतन्यमात्मा”

(The independent state of supreme consciousness is the reality of everything.)

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Chaitanyam is the transcendental aspect of Chittam or Cit in man. Word *Caitanya* means "the independent state of consciousness." *Caitanya* means the complete freedom of universal consciousness. Because of the impurity *anavamala*, which is attached with *Kala* (limited action) and *Vidya* (limited knowledge), *Caitanya* (independent universal consciousness) is lost. It is absorbed in *raga* (attachment) and limited by *Kala* (time). It is confined in the bondage of *niyati* (attachment to a particular object). *Chaitanyam* is Universal Consciousness having absolute *Jnana Sakti* and *Kriya Sakti* (Knowledge and Action Power attributable to Siva only). Self is Siva or Reality. The act of consciousness is the same in the conscious and the unconscious. For the one who is conscious, the act of consciousness is there. For the one who is not conscious of the act of consciousness, it is also there in the background. The conscious being is the being who makes others conscious. This being is independent in all knowledge and every action. Such a reality is called *Caitanya*, which means "complete independence." All knowledge and all action are united in one consciousness-completely independent God consciousness. Only Parama Shiva possesses this completely independent God consciousness.

Swatantrya—the True character of Shiva

Lord Siva is complete independence, '*Swatantrya*'. *Swatantrya* is a creative power of the supreme (Lord Shiva) Reality, *Vimarsh*, *Jnana* and *Kriya* (self-consciousness, Knowledge and Action). All beings are dependent on the conscious being, Siva. Although the complete, independent state of Siva possesses many divine aspects-such as being eternal, all-pervading, completely full and all-knowing-these divine aspects are not unique to Siva. They could also be found in other beings. The independent state of consciousness is the self. It is the self of everything, because whatever exists in the world is the state of Lord Siva. The independent state of God consciousness is also found in the individual states of body (*Sarira*), breath (*Prana*), intellect (*Buddhi*) and void (*Sunya*). In the body, he is above the body. In breath, he is above the breath. In intellect, he is the super intellect. In voidness, he is full. In nothingness, he is everything. This is the reality of universal I (*Aham*). Independent supreme state of God consciousness is the nature of the self, which is found in every *Shastra*. It is the reality of the supreme self (*Paramatman*). Beyond all coverings, it is fully exposed. The independent state of God consciousness is not only the form of the existing world; it is also the form of the nonexistent world. The independent supreme state of God consciousness is the formation of the universe. The supreme state of God consciousness can never be realized by any separate means; it can only be realized by the means that is filled with God consciousness. So then there is no need to realize anything; it is already realized. The supreme state of God consciousness is that it is in a state of movement. It is not fixed or situated in any one place. It is located everywhere. Wherever there is space, it is there. Wherever there is not space, it is there. It is in space and beyond it. State of God consciousness can be attaining when the last impressions, including even the most faint and elusive remaining impressions of Maya's illusory veils are completely overcome and destroyed.

“मोहजयादनन्ताभोगात्सहजिवद्याजयः”

(After conquering the field of illusion (Maya) by destroying its many impressions, one attains the victory of the pure knowledge of consciousness.)

Illusion is this completely differentiated universe filled with impressions and experiences. When this illusion is conquered (*Jayat*), which means overcome (*Abhibhavat*), then victory is achieved. But this only occurs when the last faint impressions (*Samskarah*) of this illusion are also destroyed. Through this pure knowledge (*Vidya*) is realized, where eternal aspects are revealed and supreme God consciousness is obtained. Then being victorious, you attain and hold this supreme pure knowledge of consciousness. Illusion must be conquered. This can be reduced of the eradication of threefold *Malas*---

- Anav Mala
- Karman Mala, and
- Maya Mala

This can be eradicated through the threefold ‘*Upaya*’ or means of knowing or union---

- AnavopAya , the pathway of action for the individual soul, ‘*Anu*’
- Bhedopaya, involves Kriya (action) on the part of the striving soul
- Shaktopaya, Shakti path for union
- Sambhavopaya, inclusive path for union

One should master the natural knowledge meaning the knowledge with reference to *Anavopaya*, so that we can graduate to *Saktopaya*. *Sahaja Vidya* is the nature of *Unmana* which is attained by conquering delusion. *Sahaja Vidya* is another name for *Unmana*. By not identifying the Self with the bonds is at the stage of *Samana*. Superior to *Samana* is *Unmana*. *Unmana* stage is the highest and confers the knowledge of the Highest Self. One becomes omniscient. It is *Siva-Vyapti*, pervasion in *Siva*. The inferior state is *Atma Vyapti*, pervasion in the Self, which is establishing oneself in consciousness without *Kriya Sakti*. When *Atma* rises to *Unmana* at the level of *Siva Tattva* and enters the state of *Siva*, it is *Siva Vyapti*. There are several levels between *Anu* and *Unmana*. Up to *Samana*, mind rules. *Samana* is at the stage of *Sakti Tattva*. By vanquishing delusion (*Moha*) one obtains *Atma Vyapti*, the stage of Pure Consciousness of his own; there is no pervasion yet into I-consciousness of *Siva* at the level of *Samana* or *Atma Vyapti*. When the mental consciousness or the mind drops or dies, the divine consciousness dawns.

STAGES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

According to Shiva Sutra, consciousness is four-fold Consciousness in waking state, Dream State of consciousness, Deep Sleep state of Consciousness with no thoughts or ideation and state of consciousness, being the witness of the preceding three states.

“जाग्रत्वाप्नसुषुप्तभेदेतुर्याभिसंभवः”

(Such a heroic yogi experiences the expansive state of *Turiya* in the differentiated states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep)

Jagrat, awakening in the waking state. Here the objective aspect (*Prameya*) is dominant for the knower (*Pramata*). The Swapn or Dream universe is made of thought waves or *Vikalpas*. It is *Abahya*, meaning there is no exterior in this dream universe; it is all internal propagation of thought waves; there is no connection between the external world and the world of dreams; it is all confined to the mind of the dreamer. *Susupti* or sleep, wakefulness in deep sleep. It is *Udita*, meaning risen, ascended, being above, tall, lofty. You have risen above the world of impressions and entered the world of negation of impressions.

All the states of experience, waking, dreaming and deep sleep are one with *Turiya*. He does not experience any difference between this world and the state of Samadhi. This happens to that yogi who is a great yogi, with advanced development of awareness. In the differentiated states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, that supreme consciousness of *Turiya* is found as one. *Turiya* or *Turiya* is the fourth state of consciousness marked by union of individual consciousness with I-Consciousness of Siva. *Turiya* appears like a thread of experience of ecstasy going through all three states of waking, dream sleep and deep sleep in the perfected Yogi. *Turiya* is the unchanging witness of all three changing states of individual consciousness. In awake state all our senses, mind; in dream state, mind and Prana operate; in deep sleep, only our Prana or breath operates. *Turiya* is the only entity that operates as a witness, unchanging reality and background of all events in our life in unobtrusive fashion. It is our job to bring it to the forefront so that it embraces and takes possession of the individual consciousness and becomes the guiding light and leading part of our lives.

This is the representation of consciousness, according to Shiva Sutra which is ultimate ways of attaining of Shivanhood or ultimate reality of self. The centralization and differentiation of consciousness brings into existence the individual *Atma* whose knowledge is limited to such an extent by this process that he begins to behave like a deluded individual lost in the jungle of worldly desires and experiences. The first refers to the essential nature of the Monad who is divine and therefore shares the “*Sat-Cit-Ananda*” nature of Divinity. Consciousness is concealed by the adjustment of the ego on a limited body in the waking state, the dreaming state, and the state of deep sleep, does not perceive the original state of their God consciousness, which is great and which belongs to Lord Siva himself.

SHIVA SUTRA AND MODERN SCIENCE

Scientific attitudes towards consciousness have changed due to the recent advances in neurophysiology and because modern physics and computer science are confronted with the question of the nature of the observer. In many ways, the study of consciousness is centre-stage in the discussions of modern science. From a modern Scientific viewpoint, living systems are

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dynamic structures that are defined in terms of their interaction with their environment. Their behaviour is taken to reflect their past history in terms of instincts. Living systems can also be defined recursively in terms of living sub-systems. Machines, on the other hand, are based on networking of elements so as to instrument a well-defined computing procedure and they lack a recursive self definition. The reality of consciousness is evident not only from the fact that responses are different in sleepwalking and awake states.

Reality, emerging as divine power, by her own independent will, unfolds the manifested universe on the screen of her own consciousness. According to the occult doctrine the manifested universe not only appears periodically but it runs its course according to a plan which is present in the Divine Mind, and unfolds according to the divine ideation which takes place in the Divine Mind. It is only when the consciousness of an individual is able to contact the Divine Mind that it becomes aware of the working of the Divine Mind, and knows the splendour of the inner realities which are hidden on the spiritual planes behind the apparently purposeless and chaotic working of the physical universe. Science, seeing only this outer shell, and being unaware of the existence of these inner realities, naturally sees the universe only as 'a fortuitous concourse of atoms', or a chaotic expression of energy in multifarious forms. Its theories about the nature and origin of the universe are therefore bound to be wrong because they are based upon extremely limited data and uncertain and arbitrary assumptions.

So when it want to bring out that aspect of the ultimate reality which is the cause and instrument of manifestation, we use the word *cit* in contradistinction to the *sat* aspect which remains unmanifest, in the background, and is the roots of the principle of divine will which finds expression in divine power. When Siva, whose essential nature is *sat*, the ultimate and the whole truth, wills that the universe shall manifest, the *cit* aspect comes into play, the whole drama of manifestation begins and continues until the universe is reabsorbed into his consciousness at the time of '*Pralaya*', destruction. In view of this connection between the theory of consciousness of Shiva Sutra and neuron mechanic and the fact that Neuron mechanical models of consciousness are being attempted.

The cognitive categories of Shiva Sutra are of relevance in computer science. At present only a subset of these categories can be dealt with by the most versatile computing machines. Current research is focused on the lower categories such as endowing machines with action capacities (as in robotics) and powers of sense perception (as in vision). At the higher levels, machines can be endowed with some capacity for judgment that typically involves computation of suitably framed cost functions, or finding patterns, or choosing between hypotheses, but the capacities of concretization and especially self-awareness seem to be completely out of the realm of present day computing science. The Shiva Sutra theory of consciousness also speaks of a process of evolution. In this evolution the higher animals have a greater capacity to grasp the nature of the universe. The urge to evolve into higher forms is taken to be inherent in nature.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that, the ultimate reality in its cit aspect or as universal consciousness, being absolutely independent and self-contained, is the ultimate cause of manifestation, and bringing a manifested system to its appointed consummation. Siva is the name for the absolute or transcendental consciousness. Ordinary consciousness is bound by cognitive categories related to conditioned behaviour. By exploring the true spring wells of ordinary consciousness one comes to recognize its universal (*Siva*). This brings the further recognition that one is not a slave (*Pasu*) of creation but its master (*Pati*). Shiva Sutra's thought is "*pre-Scientific*" and at best it represents "archaic modes of thought". The Shiva Sutra view of consciousness goes beyond the notion of Spanda and it represents a unity. This is why Shiva Sutra ideas finds rich resonance in quantum theory which is also a theory of wholes. And this is also proved by modern science.

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