

The Wholeness of You by Swamini Saralananda

This is the fourteenth part of the serial article, continuation from June 2022 newsletter.

Absolute And Relative Reality

What this verse intends to reveal is that absolutely everything can be seen, and understood, from two standpoints -the absolute and the relative. 'Is-Known-Dearness', facets are absolute and constant, in and through every object in the universe. Whereas the facets of 'names and form', are ever changing, they only appear to be as though real for some time. So, we can say that they have a relative reality – which means they only seem to be real, while they last.

The dream experience is a perfect example for this relative reality. When we wake up from a dream, we clearly see that the names and forms that appeared, were only figment-of-imagination appearances. This understanding of a relative reality gives us a profound hint that waking up to a better reality is possible. Thus, the ancient seers tell us that we have to wake up one more time. They teach that we are living in a three- dimensional dream, where we take all the five aspects as equally real.

This chapter is a short, subtle, cognitive chipping away at old 'normal' thinking, attempting to give a glimpse of the undiscovered reality of 'I'. We all will see at least a glimpse when we are ready to see. Perhaps reading this a few times over before going on would be helpful, just because it is such an unfamiliar way of looking at myself.

The Creation: Macrocosm...Microcosm

Every religious culture has its own explanation about the origins of the creation. In philosophical terms those explanations are said to be creation models. A model is not the actual thing, it is a way of looking at something in order to more readily understand what it represents so that we can relate to it. Serious problems arise when any set of believers insists that their model is actual, factual, and the only real truth. The creation model, in the ancient teachings of the Vedas, do not lay claim (nor have a need) to being scientifically factual by today's standards. Yet they do not go against scientific discoveries. We will look at enough of the whole model, to serve the purpose of this book. A vast amount will be left unsaid.

The topic here: 'macrocosm and microcosm' especially connects to the previous chapter and the following one. First, we attempted to get a glimpse into the essential nature of the individual. In the next chapter, we will look at what is God, (if there is one). Looking at the concepts of macrocosm and microcosm is only one abbreviated version of looking at, what could be the relationship between the individual and the cosmos.

Cosmos Means The Total

'Cosmos' a synonym for "orderly Universe", is to be understood as the total of all that exists as the creation. It is an all-inclusive orderly whole, this universe. Science has not yet found any boundaries or limits for it; therefore, it does not go against logic to say that it is 'Infinite'. So, this infinite creation is the 'Macrocosm', the total, the Whole. It is all that is 'out there and here, known and unknown, tangible and intangible. And it has to include me, since I am just one infinitesimal creature, inextricably connected to this earth. Just as an earth worm living in soil cannot be pulled out and live somewhere apart from its source, the earth, neither can the earth-human. We need to look more closely at this fact, in order to make a shift in our old ways of thinking.

It is something so deeply imbedded in our unconscious and conscious mind that, "there's a me and there's a world out there". Scientists for so long and still do study the universe as though they are objectively studying the cosmos as something other than themselves. But they have been forced to at least look at the 'observer effect', which points to how the one who observes a phenomenon is never totally, objectively outside of it (the Heisenberg principle)

'Microcosm', means a 'total' of the whole world in miniature. In our model here, it refers to the individual and implies that in my own body-mind complex, I am my own complete mini universe. It has a wholeness and a 'total' in its own right. I am one whole person with all my parts and functions harmoniously working together for one sole purpose, to keep me alive.

What Is There Is Here

It can be sensibly said that "what is There is here, and what is here is There." i.e. whatever the macro is made of and how its functions will be the same for the micro in a mini version. For instance, think how, in distinct cycles for all the different regions, the earth moves into darkness, everything seems to go to sleep and in this

darkness, things are not seen (unless we bring in artificial light). So too, for myself, I go into the 'darkness of sleep' - thus both macro and micro, in definite cycles, have a dark time. Totally purposeful, is this cycle of day into night. There is an order about it, and it is an identical function for the macro and the micro.

What about the material stuff of the creation? This principle of "what is there is here" is the same. The Vedic model posits that the universe is made up of five great elements: Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth-which is all the minerals. (These we need not compare to the periodic table of chemistry, because we are only looking at a model which takes the broadest sweep). All we need to do, is ask ourselves whether or not this envisioning of these five basic elements can 'hold water' in so far as: can they indeed be taken as the raw material of the macro creation. They do logically seem to be that. And since I, the micro, is an inseparable part of the creation, are those five elements same for me? Does my body have space? Yes, sometimes more than I want. Does my body contain air? Of course, in every living cell. Does my body contain fire? Not to the same degree as flames but my body temperature is 98.6 warm; low grade as it may be, it is still a form of heat and any form of heat belongs to, that is to say, it is a quality of fire. Then, does my body contain water? About 80% of my body is water. If all the water were evaporated, there would just be four to six pounds of dry powdered minerals....and that is the earth of me. So, what is there is here. We say that the microcosm 'reflects', it takes after, the macrocosm. Being inseparably part and parcel of the macro, it would be strange if this were not so.

The Logic In This

In order to clearly understand the next chapter, we need to be able to accept this logic. I, the microcosm, am not separate from the Whole- macro-creation any more than a wave is separate from the ocean. If you could ask "Oh Ocean, how many waves do you have within you at any given time, do you prefer some better than others?" Ocean would laugh and say "all the waves are me; it is not that I 'have them'." There is no ocean which is a separate entity apart from water, waves, foams bubbles, currents.... all of these put together, make up the name and form 'Ocean "so what is there to count?" None of the' forms it contains can be distinctly separated out to be counted. Uncountable indicates Infinite.

Science Proceeds By Taking Things Apart

Science often 'counts' for the sake of study; it takes apart a form or a phenomenon

and examines things in facets, parts and pieces. And this can often make them available for manipulation. When the atom was split, they were able to create an atom bomb. But back to the ocean, from its own standpoint it is only one whole phenomenon. The magical beauty of it is, that it can allow a dance of fluidly changing motions and forms within itself; currents, waves, foam, bubbles, spray.... but those do not make for any real divisions.

As the one whole microcosm of myself, it is the same in the sense, that all my limbs and senses and functions, every cell of my body, exists as one whole being. It gets disassembled into parts for the sake of analysis and manipulation. It all started with Newtonian Laws that science gave itself over to the orientation of measuring, and disassembling everything as though the universe is one big giant machine that can be taken apart and put back together perhaps differently. They took the body as though it were something like a clock with all its functioning bits and pieces. It was thought that when we take it apart, we can fix any of the pieces then put it all back together again. This has much truth to it and it is a mechanistic view; and to a degree that is incredibly useful. Our medical system operates based mainly on this understanding. A heart specialist, a dermatologist, a podiatrist, a urologist.....we all know.

How We Come To Wholistic

There is a lot of brilliance to be seen here in terms of scientific advances, like even the 'wonder' (facetiously) of the atom bomb. These days a reaction to this mechanistic view has been the entire "Wholistic" movement. It seeks to come back to a better sense of one interconnected wholeness within oneself and how we are inter-related and inter-dependent with regard to the macro. The wholistic movement at the macro level we can say is the 'green movement'. The attempt is to give priority to seeing the One interconnected Wholeness of the Cosmos.

The Vedic Vision Has Always Been 'Wholistic'

Since before recorded time, the Vedic vision has always held to this as the basic reality. This is why subjects such as astrology were taken seriously as a 'science'. They understood that, whatever was happening in the Macro, at the time of the birth of the micro, would have a definite connection. They devised a mathematical system by which they could discern certain influences that the larger universe would have on the individual. A 'science' of astrology was based on statistical analysis over an unimaginably long period of time. It was never a subjectively

'mystical' mysterious practice. Even if it cannot be scientifically proven to be valid as an exact science in the 'modern' world, there are still so many people, especially in India, who give it a lot of credence. Especially so when an astrologer is considered well learned.

The Western industrial orientation seeks to make everything useful to serve our needs and wants, which in itself is not bad. But when it overlooks the interconnectedness and oneness of everything, we can see negative consequences, like hoarding resources, over pricing, etc. etc. The thinking has been influenced by the conclusion that all living beings and the rest of the cosmos are separate. Even parts of the body are singled out for separate specific treatment. Whenever we see ourselves as separate from the whole world, then life becomes a grabber game of competition.

Out Of Sync With The Universe

Even if we were not brought up in the West, there is still enough heavy conditioning around, that it's "me against the world, god(s) are in the heaven and what is there is definitely not here", forever separate. And so, we feel: "I am only this much here and life is something out there happening to me." This is the opposite of feeling in flow with the universe, knowing that I am in it and it is in me. This is opposite to an understanding that I am supported by it and I am grateful and want to live in harmony with the universal laws. Even to recycle, is to be in harmony with the laws.

Suppose a wave can take itself out, jumping on to the shore to stand apart and complain, "Look at how this ocean slaps me around up and down". The reality of the wave is that it is dancing in and out, one with the oceanic flow. The 'separation' is only in words, a form has a name 'wave' attached to it but this can never mean there is any division. The ocean is nothing but water, and the wave is also nothing but water; and water is only one; the wave flows in and out changing its mass and form while never apart from its source, the ocean. So too, the individual is in flow within the cosmic rhythm of life and when I understand that and choose to live in harmony with it, I need not live my life defending myself from all sides, like a ninja.

To be continued...