

## **TWIN BRAIN AND ARDHANAREESHWARA : AN INTERESTING COMPARISON**

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***ABSTRACT:** This article is a scientific interpretation of Vedic, Upanishadic, Tantric and Puranic conceptions of Cakras & 'Ardhanareeshwara' in the light of modern neuro psychological research. It also attempts to make striking similarities between the 'twin brain' and the concept of 'Ardhanareeshwara' and to show how the Ancient Indian sages conceptualized this 'two in one', brain reality long ago what neurosciences are just trying to understand now.*

### **TWIN BRAIN AND ARDHANAREESHWARA : AN INTERESTING COMPARISON**

Both Philosophy and Science aim to render intelligible to us our world of experience. Both encompass man and universe and both try to find out the origin, evaluation and nature of the universe in order to have glimpses of the principles, involved in it. The difference between these two disciplines, therefore, is in their different approaches viz. the former perception (Darshana) while the later reveals it by experimentations.

The perception of the universe and its understanding lies in the brain. So, there has been in recent years a growing interest in understanding the highly complexed brain mechanism.

Several studies in the field of brain sciences have amply demonstrated the anatomical, morphological and functional aspects of brain. The two brain theory is now an established fact. They are anatomically and

functionally different from each other and are termed as left and right hemispheres.

Ancient Hindu Concepts regarding brain science are, now attracting the scientific community to explore some of their mystical findings and make use of them in further understanding of brain – behavior. So Vedas, Upanisada and Puranas are being reviewed all over the world. A fascinating attempt has also been made by present author in comparing the Indian Tantric concepts of Brain functions with their Western counterparts (Balodhi and Singh, 1985). While reviewing the ancient literature, the author was surprised to note certain striking similarities between scientific and Tantric views on 'the theory of twin brain'. These two brains are not only mentioned anatomically independent in both disciplines but also said to produce different psychological functions, ranging from simple cognitive functions to higher cortical functions viz. creativity and super

consciousness which the sages and yogis are supposed to attain.

## **TWO HALVES OF THE BODY VERSUS TWO HALVES OF THE BRAIN**

Biologically, a human being is not a pure unisexual organism. Each human organism bears the potentiality for both male and female sex. It is the predominance of one over the other sex which determines the sexuality. A female gamete always bears one X chromosom and a male gamete may either possess one X chromosom or on Y chromosom (Nandi, 1980). So masculinity and feminity are not mutually exclusive. Two halves of the body therefore remain in one organism.

These two halves of the body function under the control of two brains, the neuroscientists have, now experimentally proved that there are two brains – left and right which are technically called hemispheres. The left brain conducts the functions of the right half of the body; whereas the left half of the body is under the control of the right brain. These two hemispheres are joined together by the ‘Isthumus’ of nerve fibres in the middle. These both hemispheres are independent and distinct to each other through they are identical in their morphology, size and shape and maintain exquisite functional harmony. It is also interesting to note that both brains have full knowledge about the input-output activity of their counterparts (Sperry, 1965, Gazzaniga and Josephe 1978).

Coming to Ancient Indian thoughts, same idea is expressed in a mystical and mythological forms.

Rigveda, the first and foremost sacred book of Hindus mentions two ‘Cakras’ or circle like entities through which one understands

the world and oneself. The text reads as follows.

Rix-Samabhyam Abhihito Gao to Soman avitah, Srotam to cakre astram dve Pantha Cara – acarao (10 – 85 – 11).

(Thy Steers are steady, kept in one place by Rig and Sama Knowledge. All channels are connected to these two chariot wheels. Thy path is tremulous in the sky).

Suci Te cakre Yatya Vyano aksahatah, Ano. Manasyam Surya arohat Prayati Patim (10 – 85 – 12).

(These two wheels, if clean, can go faster than the wind. Mind is ridden on them and Surya proceeds to her lord mounted in this two wheeled car).

Ekam Cakram Brama Aseet. Dwe Te Cakre Surya Brahmanah, Ekam Cakram Yadguh. (10 – 85 – 16).

(The Bramana (consciousness) by its seasons, know the left and right wheels of thine. O Surya!).

This concept was further elaborated in Upanisads. In Shvetashvatar Upanisad, Lord ‘Rudra’ is described as one body though ‘Siva’ is also attached with it. (Ya Te Rudra Siva Tanu aghora.. Taya nastanuva...3.5) A beautiful example can also be taken from this Upanisad in which two birds are allegorically said to be seated in one tree and enjoying the different kinds of food. Scientifically speaking these two are the twin brains enjoying the outer perception. The text reads as follows:

(Dva Suparna Sayuja Sakhaya Saman Vraksham Parisasvajate...3.6-7) our concept becomes more clearer when the same vedic word (Arani or ‘Cakra; is used in

‘Kaivalyopanisad’ as a tool for meditation. The upanisad says that these two wheels should be made active for meditational process and once, they are in full action, the reality can be easily perceived (kaivalyopanisad 1 – 11).

Also, the same mystic expression is expressed through the concept of ‘Prana’ or ‘life energy or vital current’. In Brhadarnayaka and Shvetashvata, it is clearly mentioned that this energy is of two types in strict sense. In first category the five vital currents namely Prana, Apana, Vyana, Saman and Udans, which are technically called ‘Panch Pashavah’ or ‘five impulses’ are listed and in the second category all the sensory and cognitive functions are included. They are ‘ ‘Vak’ (Speech) manas (Faculty of registering the output stimuli) ‘Chakshu’ (eye etc. all senses); Dhi (Intellect) ‘mati’ (Retention) and ‘Smruti (memory). This statement can be fairly substantiated by the modern Neuro scientific investigation that the twin brains are responsible for each emotional / cognitive and even speech functions as these are found, localized in ‘Frontal’ Parietal, Temporal and occipital lobes.

In philosophical systems viz. Sankhya Yoga Nyaya-Vaisheshika and Mimamsa-Vedanta, the subject of brain sciences is not much discussed for two main reasons. (i) This science was labelled to esoteric teaching and (ii) Psychic powers were related to sad state of intellectual and moral degeneration. However, Samkhya’s concept of Prakriti and Purusha and yoga’s concept of unison of mental functions which was later developed in Tantrayoga as a negative and positive energy system represented by Siva and Sakti cult, in particular are worth mentioning.

This idea is further propagated and strengthened in puranas by the conceptual

presentation of ‘Ardhanarisvara’. Here it is a beautiful mythopoeic imagination which transforms the basic energy into different intellectual processes but confined to basic two opposite sexes in one organism which adds greater charm and appeal to this ‘Siva-Parvati’ cult. ‘Ardhanarisvara’ the androgynous form of Siva is very unique concept of Mahabharata and Tantras. Here, the left side of the body is depicted as female and the right side as the male. Functionally, these two halves of Siva are the unison of creative and active principles. (Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva 13. 14. 298 – 313). It is also interesting to note that the concept of Kama or lust arised from the union of this Ardhanari – Ardha Isvara given in the text co-incides the Vedic concept of ‘Kama’ which is described the first mental function (Kamah tal agre astam Rigveda 1.164.16) Ardhanari is said to carry out the creative process and begets Skanda or Kumara (Vasudeva Agrawal 1962). The feminine half is considered more violent creative and impulsive than the male half. Thus Ardha nari Svava conducts the mind beyond the objectives experience in a symbolic realm where duality is left behind.

## COMMENTS

Twin brain and Ardhanarisvara are quite distinct from each other and a similarities are purely accidental and not at all essential.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the title given as ‘Twin brain & Ardhanarisvara’ is for the sake of convenience or for want of a better term. Therefore, it should be taken in a broad sense which includes all concepts of dualism and bio – sexuality which ultimately emerge in a combination of two factors – call if man and woman, Prakriti and Purusha, or left and right brains or any other such twins

neither of which separately has the characteristic properties of a full and complete organism. These different scientific terms and mythological

expressions, in fact do not constitute different but provide different dimensions to the one and the same word.

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