

Message: 10

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 2000 17:32:54 -0000

From: Dennis Waite <[dwaite@dircon.co.uk](mailto:dwaite@dircon.co.uk)>

Subject: Mind and the Self

Whilst doing some background research for a chapter about 'thinking' (see my biography post), I encountered some statements from Sankara in his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita (II 20). The section is called "Knowledge of the Immutable Self is possible" There is an 'Objection', then an 'Answer' followed by an 'Opponent' and another 'Answer'. In is this second interchange, the 'Opponent' says "Because the Self is inaccessible to any of the senses". Sha~Nkara's reply begins: - "Not so. For, the Scripture says 'It can be seen by the mind alone.'" etc. This is supposed to be a translation of the shloka from the BrU. but unfortunatly, there didn't seem to be any further clarification.

Now my belief regarding the mind is that (ignoring the fact that it, along with every 'thing' else in the universe, is ultimately an illusion) it is so much grosser than the Self that it could never 'see' it in any real sense. This is all in accord with Kant's effectively proving that the noumenal is forever beyond our perception.

I put this to Francis Lucille and his response was that "If Sankara says that, which I doubt, (there might be a problem with the translation of the word mind), he is wrong. The Self can be seen by the Self alone. The mind has no access to that which sees the mind. Only the Self sees the Self." And I am bound to agree. This being the case, how do we explain Sankara's statements? Is it the case that his words have been mis-translated? (This is from the Samata Books version, translated by Alladi Mahadeva Sastry. It would seem surprising if it were wrong.) Any Sanskrit scholars out there with the original Sanskrit? Also, what does the BrU shloka mean? (I will endeavour to look up Sankara's commentary on this in London tomorrow.)

I put the question to the Advaita List. Sankaran Jayanarayanan gave a rough translation of the BrU shloka as follows: -

"With my meagre knowledge of Sanskrit, this is what I'm able to make of the quote from the Br. up.:

manasA eva anudrashhTavyam.h na iha naanaasti kiMchana. mR^ityoH sa mR^ityuM aapnoti ya iha naanaa eva pashyati .

"There truly isn't any multiplicity here observed by the mind.

Whosoever sees multiplicity here achieves death after death."

Here is a rough word by word meaning:

manasA : by the mind

eva : only, truly, verily

anudrashhTavyam.h : observation

na: no

iha: here

naanaa : several, multiplicity

kiMchana : any, even a little

mR^ityu : death

aapnoti : achieve

ya : who"

Saying that the mind does not see any multiplicity is certainly similar to saying that it sees the Self but not quite (is it?). What does the previous

shloka say? i.e. what is the here (iha) that is being referred to?  
The previous shloka reads: -  
prANasya prANam.h uta cakshhushhash.h uta shrotrasya shrotram.h  
manaso ye mano viduH, te nicikyur.h brahma purANam.h agryam.h

Sankaran Jayanarayanan also noted that : -

'I was puzzled by something similar in Ramana's teachings. Ramana has said several times that the mind does not exist, as does Shankara in his upadeshasAhasrii. But in one specific place in "Talks," Ramana says, "The mind is the Self." And later into the conversation with the disciple, he says, "It is the mind turned in on Itself.'

I think someone else pointed out (or perhaps I located it in my background reading - I can't remember) that Ramana also said "The mind turned outward is the ego; turned inward it is the Self." Clearly this way of looking at things might help explain the statements.

What does the List think?

Dennis

---

Message: 12

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 2000 13:33:39 -0500  
From: Greg Goode <[goode@dpw.com](mailto:goode@dpw.com)>  
Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Hi Dennis,

If the sloka \*were\* translated accurately, having Shankara say that only through the mind can the Self be known, I can't see what he'd mean. I agree with Francis Lucille's interpretation -- the mind, which the Self sees, cannot possibly look "back" or "in" and see the Self.

Here's another thing. I don't have citations at hand, but Shankara has this tripartite set of statements regarding the Self and the world:

The Self is real.  
The world is unreal.  
The world is the Self.

Some teachers speak in a way that says that all we see, hear, taste, IS the Self, because there is nothing else. But then there's no reason to give primacy to the mind as the sloka here does.

Good hermeneutic question!

Regards,

--Greg

---

Message: 15

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 2000 14:03:32 -0500  
From: "Harsha (Dr. Harsh K. Luthar)" <[hluthar@bryant.edu](mailto:hluthar@bryant.edu)>  
Subject: Mind and the Self

Dear Dennis:

You raise some important issues about the mind and the Self and how these terms are used and I will forward this to HarshaSatsangh as well. The answer to questions you ask is simple but experiential Dennis. The intellectual discussions are indeed in vain without enquiry and Realization. Such discussions may lead to confusion and not clarity unless one is encouraged to directly become aware and recognize the truth in one's own Heart. There are so many different ways of expressing the same thing which appear to be contrary before the dawn of understanding. Therefore, one should firmly grasp the truth of awareness and know it to be one's very being.

From one perspective, the mind truly does not exist independent of the Self. It is Light of Self that animates the mind. Therefore Self-Realization implies the absence of the mind and what remains is Only Self Seeing It Self by It Self through It Self. Self-Realized sages know the Nature of the Self without the intermediary of the mind. So when we speak of the mind existing as an independent and permanent entity, the Sages rightly point out that that there is indeed no such thing from their direct experience. Only a Self-Realized sage can fully grasp this as it is direct knowledge.

However, another way to look at this is that Self not only animates the mind but is indeed the source of the mind. Those who have experienced Nirvikalpa Samadhi can understand this clearly. Sri Ramana has stated beautifully that the "mind is a wondrous power arising out of the Self." A mind fully turned upon itself indeed is recognized as the Self in the Heart as the Heart as Pure Being." This means that the power that is the mind, when it turns back into itself without the hindrance of thoughts and concepts, the Self is Realized. So from this perspective one can say that the Self can be seen by the Mind Alone.

In the first perspective mind is being viewed as a collection of thoughts, feeling, concepts, etc. There, it is proper to say that Self can be seen by the Self Alone. That is indeed the Truth. In the second perspective, the mind is being viewed as the power of the Self that arises from the Self and disappears back into it. In this perspective one can say the Mind Sees the Self as It Self. This is the Truth. These two Truth are One Truth.

Harsha

---

Message: 16

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 00:45:03 +0530 (IST)

From: <[anurag@sindhu.ee.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:anurag@sindhu.ee.iisc.ernet.in)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Hi Dennis!

Let me share some of my views. I have heard that understanding what mind is the toughest problem.

people say that mind is like the waves in ocean. When there is calmness

there are no waves.

no waves no mind.

we turn the mind from outward to inward. Then a stage comes when mind dissolves it self n then the self is realised.

It says mind is not something permanent. Something which is not permanent doesn't exist. Self being permanent exists everywhere in different forms relative to the perception of mind and body.

Self can't be seen.

---

Message: 17

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 2000 11:09:44 PST

From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <[sunderh@hotmail.com](mailto:sunderh@hotmail.com)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Greetings,

Like a fool entering where angels fear to tread, I am offering the references, which may be helpful.

In the Samata Books 7th ed.1977, tr.by Allady Mahadeva Shastry, Gita II:21 [and not 20] is the correct verse.

The answer, mind, is qualified in the next sentence: "refined by Sama and Dama [i.e. subjugation of the body, mind and senses], and equipped with the teachings of the Scripture and the teacher, constitutes the sense by which the Self may be seen."

The Brih. Up. reference is to IV:iv:19, where the same qualificatins are re-iterated.

Here is one quote form Ramana:

"The body is the Cross;the ego is Jesus the 'son of man'; when he is crucified, he is resurrected as the 'Sonof God', which is the glorious real Self. One should lose the ego in order to live."Egolife is not truly life, but death.

Maha Yoga, by 'Who',  
p.190; 1973, 7th ed.

---

Message: 19

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 2000 14:29:27 -0500

From: Patrick Kenny <[pkenny@crim.ca](mailto:pkenny@crim.ca)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Greetings Dennis,

Please make it a practice to post difficult questions here!

> >I put this to Francis Lucille and his  
> response was that "If Sankara says  
> >that, which I doubt, (there might be  
> a problem with the translation of the  
> >word mind), he is wrong. The Self can  
> be seen by the Self alone. The mind  
> >has no access to that which sees the  
> mind. Only the Self sees the Self."

For what it's worth, I would have to disagree with this. The statement that 'Only the Self sees the Self' is true in the trivial sense that there is no agent or seer other than the Self but the mind (buddhi) does see the self in the sense that it is the \*means\* by which the Self sees itSelf (at least this is my understanding of the Gita). What other means could there be?

Regards,

Patrick

---

Message: 2

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 05:35:23 -0800 (PST)

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

The question on the distinction between the mind and the Self is a most profound one. I shall make bold to attempt an elaborate answer, subject to correction by experts. But the attempt itself is probably only an intellectual exercise and since the Self is declared to be beyond the intellect (buddheh parastu saH), the entire attempt may turn out to be incomplete, though, hopefully, not futile!

Let me begin from rock bottom fundamentals. The technical word in Vedanta for what we call 'mind' in ordinary parlance, is 'Internal Organ' (antah-karaNaM). It has four facets. The first one is 'mind' (manaH) which receives all impulses, either external or internal with respect to the body. Desire and Vacillation are natural to this mind. But the one which discriminates between contrary desires and sorts out the confusion created by vacillation, is the

'intellect' (buddhi), the second facet of the Internal Organ. The intellect analyses past experience or past knowledge, memories of which are stored in 'the mind-stuff' (cittam), the third facet of the Internal Organ. This cittam is therefore the store-house of all memories. The fourth is the ego-sense (aham-kArAM), which claims agency for the desire, for the vacillation, for the discrimination, and for the decision and certainly for the action, if any, which follows. All these four are inanimate matter. But under the benign presence of the Self, and because of the self-illuminating brilliance of the Self, the internal organ (which we shall hereafter refer to as the Mind, with a capital initial letter) announces itself as the Self and refers to itself as 'I'. It stands between the body and the senses on the one hand and the Self on the other. It is the leader of the sense-organs and pervades the entire body. It is however, independent of the body. It is actually called the subtle body. Like the gross body it is also material in nature and so does not possess consciousness of its own. **The gross body derives its consciousness from the Mind** and the Mind derives its consciousness from the Self. This derived consciousness is in three levels:

**subconscious (guided by instinct), conscious (guided by reason) and super-conscious (guided by intuition).** The I-consciousness or the ego-sense is subtle and unmanifest at the subconscious level; is explicit at the conscious level; and almost non-existent at the super-conscious level. The centres of consciousness are themselves rather subtle, are six in number, and their locations are identified by yogic literature as six cakras along the spinal column. These centres are windows through which the Mind perceives the universe. When the Mind dwells in the three lower centres, it broods only on the three s's, namely, stomach, sex and the senses. When it rises to the fourth (anAhata-cakra), it feels a spiritual longing and makes effort at Spirituality. It is then that the Mind begins to be in coordination with the natural urge of the individual consciousness for a union with Universal Consciousness. But the ego blocks this direction of flow of the Mind and makes it egocentric. When the Mind rises to the fourth cakra, and by self-discipline rises further, **struggling against the ego**, it, with the help of the super-conscious level of the Mind, ultimately goes beyond the sixth cakra and **merges in the Universal Consciousness**. This process is easier said than done. Here it is that we have to distinguish

between two Minds, one the **Lower Mind and the other the Higher Mind**. The Lower Mind is the Mind with all its impurities that have been accumulated through various lives. It is this Lower Mind that has to be stilled in order to rise beyond the lower three cakras. The stilling has again to be done by the Mind itself, now by the Higher Mind, the purer part of the Mind which is full of satva. (cf. uddhared-AtmanA AtmAnaM - One has to elevate oneself by oneself). So when the scriptures say that mano-nASa (Destruction of the Mind) has to occur in order that Enlightenment may dawn on us, they mean the extinction of the desire-filled Lower Mind by the satva-filled Higher Mind. Mano-nASa means the destruction of the present form of the Mind, with all its emotions, passions and desires. This (Lower) Mind has to be 'destroyed' in order that the (Higher) Mind may rise spiritually and become one with the Absolute. So in one sense the Absolute is beyond one's Mind, and in another sense, it is the Mind that has to become aware of the Absolute.

Now, I think, the following exchange ( extracted from Sankara's Gita-bhashya: II - 21 and adapted for modern dialogue style) between Sankara and the imagined opposition makes sense:

.....

Sankara : Just as one obtains the knowledge about dharma and adharma from the scriptures, what prevents one from saying that, from the same scriptures, one can obtain the knowledge that the Self is changeless, actionless, non-dual, etc.?

Opposition: Because the Self is said to be incomprehensible by the senses.

Sankara: No. The Self is to be comprehended only by the Mind, says, Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.

(manasaiva anudrashTavyaM - Br.U. 4-4-19). By the teaching of the scriptures, and by the control of the Mind and the senses and similar disciplines, the Mind becomes purified and becomes an instrument for the **visualisation** of the Self.

(SastrAcArya-upadeSa-Sama-damAdi-saMskRtaM manaH Atma-darSane karaNaM) .

PraNAms to all advaitins.  
Profvk

=====

Prof. V. Krishnamurthy

---

Message: 3

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 10:22:02 -0500

**From: Ram Chandran <chandran@tidalwave.net>**

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Greetings Dennis:

The question that you have raised regarding the distinction between mind and Self is quite complex. Shankara's statement that "we can see the Self through the mind" is conditional. If and when the mind becomes PURE, it can comprehend the SELF. The fact that we don't agree with Shankara's statement only confirms that our mind is not pure!

There is an interesting comparison between "Pure Mind" and "Pure Water." Pure water is a scientific fact and we can comprehend it by its qualities such as colorless, odorless and tasteless. Pure Mind is a spiritual reality and the impure human mind can only understand on relative ground. All such relative comparisons are speculative using the notions created by the impure mind and consequently are subject to limitations.

Also, purity can be attained through removal of impurities. In the case of water, scientifically, it can be accomplished - boiling the water and condensing, filtering, etc. However, to accomplish the Purity of Mind, we have to remove (neti-neti process) all the impurities perceived by the impure mind! These impurities are speculative notions perceived by the impure mind and there is no guarantee that we can attain the 'pure mind.'

The intellectual exercise of understanding the 'SELF' will take us no where and they are likely fall into pitfalls. Consequently, we have to look beyond our intellect and approach it through 'faith.'

we have to seek the teaching of the scriptures such as Gita and follow them strictly with great faith to control the mind and senses. Whether the scriptures are correct can only be verifiable by the purified mind. We should divert our focus to mind purification and Gita can help us to proceed to that direction.

Regards,

Ram Chandran

---

Message: 4

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 10:51:28 -0500

**From: "Harsha (Dr. Harsh K. Luthar)" <hluthar@bryant.edu>**

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Ram Chandran wrote:

**> From: Ram Chandran <chandran@tidalwave.net>**

>

> Greetings Dennis:

>

> The fact that we don't agree with Shankara's statement only

> confirms that our mind is not pure!

>

Well that is your statement Sri Ramji and not Sri Shankra's! And it is totally hilarious! :-). If purity of mind could be reduced to agreement or disagree with certain points of view, it would be quite easy to achieve. Perhaps giving up of all



points of view might become worthy of consideration at a certain point :-).

Love to all (and thanks for the smile Ramji! My apologies as I do not wish to offend anyone. My sense of humor overcomes me and I don't know how to stop it! I am very weak that way! We bow to the genius of Sri Ramji!)

Harsha

---

Message: 5

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 19:01:25 +0300

**From: "Madhava K. Turumella" <madhava@memrbksa.com>**

Subject: RE: Mind and the Self

For me:

"mana" in sanskrit means mind. Mind is the expression of Maya. Mind along with ego produces the Jeevabhava (individualism). Mind devoid of Ego produces the dEvabhava (universalism).

If you reverse the word "mana" it becomes "nama", which means "not belong to me". This is complete surrenderance. What ever we perceive in this world, we perceive them \*only\* through the five sense organs! Mind is said to be the one which attaches the reality to the objects. Reverse the mind, you go beyond what can't be seen, you hear what can't be heard, you can touch what can not be touched. You will become the Deva who is nothing but the \*self\*.

You are that, but mistaken to be something else. You are all-pervading self (mind less state), but mistaken to be a limited individual (mindful state).

Regards,  
Madhava

---

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 08:16:48 PST

**From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <sunderh@hotmail.com>**

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

namaste,

To assist the Intellect in grasping the subtlety of Intuition, the Upanishads have repeatedly resorted to metaphors; the two of the most frequently quoted ones are the chariot from Katha Upan., and the two birds from the Mundaka and Shvetashvatara. Combined with 'shravaNa-manana-nididhyaasana'[listen-think-meditate] has been the tested and proven path.

In the parables of Sri Ramakrishna, there is one about the disciple asking the teacher when God will be revealed to him. The teacher took him to a pond and dunked him and held his head under water, till the student struggled and loosened himself off. The teacher asked how he felt; to which he said I was gasping for air. The teacher said when you feel like that for God, He will show Himself!

[ This may even short-circuit faith!?!?]

Regards,

s.

---

Message: 7

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 13:11:40 -0330 (NST)

From: Gummuluru Murthy <gmurthy@morgan.ucs.mun.ca>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

namaste.

I welcome Dennis to the List and look forward to some illuminating insights.

We had a discussion on this topic around mid-November under thread "Intellectual Knowledge" (and related threads) with contributions from shri Jaishanker, Harsha, D.Hill, Madhava, myself and many others. Please refer to archives under thread "Intellectual Knowledge".

My understanding on this is the following:

manas (mind) is a superimposition (adhyasa, misapprehension) of brahman. Thus, manas would not be there when brahman is fully known (just like snake will not be there when the rope is fully known). Thus, manas cannot be an instrument to apprehend Atman.

manas is not the subtlest form of the human. The cit is. My thanks to Professor Krishnamurthy for an excellent description of the functioning of the internal sense organ antahkaraNa. Atman is to evolve from the subtlest, from the innermost to the outermost. We are Atman in the innermost, no new knowledge has to come in. It is only, the layers of ignorance have to be thinned so that Atman shines through.

It has been argued that the ignorance is in the mind and hence knowledge has to take place \*in\* the mind for the ignorance had to be driven out. As I see it, ignorance is not in the mind, but ignorance \*is the\* mind. Thus, **the mind has to destroy itself** for Atman to shine through.

I am quite aware of manasaivaanudR^iStavyam in Br. u. (IV.iv.19) and shri shankara's bhAShya on BG 2.21. They can be interpreted as "mind purified by the Knowledge of the supreme truth and the instructions of the teacher directly realizes Brahman" (as shri Sunder already mentioned).

Regards  
Gummuluru Murthy

-----  
Message: 9

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 15:49:15 -0800

From: "R. Viswanathan" <rvis@earthlink.net>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Hi!

Can we say that the mind with ego needs objective and rational interpretations?  
And the mind without ego just "is" and therefore all rational interpretations are unnecessary distractions?

The former needs two states so that it can device a mechanism to go from the "lower" to "higher" state and the uphill battle to do that providing the sense of courage and achievement to the rational mind.

The latter needs just "surrender" and "acceptance" without any two states and therefore lives in the present without judgment.

Standing in front of a dusty mirror one can see one's image blurred and distorted. To make the image clear one has to just clean the mirror. When the egotistic mind is cleaned one sees the true Self.

Another way to look at this is this. One does not see one's image in a mirror if there is complete darkness. If the person is illumined with bright light he/she sees the clear reflection in the mirror. This illumination of the normal self occurs

through faith (acceptance and surrender) and Grace (Ishwara Kripa).

How does it all relate to Immanuel Kant and Chakras is an exercise to the active mind!

-- Vis

---

Message: 12

Date: Sat, 12 Feb 2000 23:30:00 -0500

**From: Ram Chandran <chandran@tidalwave.net>**

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Greetings Harshaji:

First, I just want to clarify that it is not my intention to curtail discussions on the topic of Mind and the Self. I do not intend to imply that purity is implied by blanket agreement to everything everyone says.

Discriminant intellect is an integral part of Shankara's Advaita Vedanta. We should never hesitate to pointout inconsistencies and that is the very purpose of this spiritual forum. We can learn from each other and broaden our understanding from east, west, north and south.

I believe that the question, What is pure mind? can only be comprehended by the person who has the pure mind. It is same as saying that the Brahman is the only knower of the Brahman. Pure Mind, Self, and Brahman are experiences that all that perceive about them are incomplete. Agreements and disagreements can both happen due to ignorance. With wisdom, agreements and disagreements disappear by total silence. The answer to the question whether the Mind can perceive the Self depends on the answer to the paradoxical question: Who comprehends the mind and Self?

regards,

Ram Chandran

"Harsha (Dr. Harsh K. Luthar)" wrote:

> .....

> If purity of mind could be reduced to agreement or disagree with certain points of view,

> it would be quite easy to achieve. Perhaps giving up of all

> points of view might become worthy of consideration at a certain point :-).

> ....

> Harsha

\*\*\*\*\* Printed up to here \*\*\*\*\*

Message: 1

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 10:08:43 -0330 (NST)

From: Gummuluru Murthy <[gmurthy@morgan.ucs.mun.ca](mailto:gmurthy@morgan.ucs.mun.ca)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

A small point which may or may not have a place in this discussion.

Swami Venkateshananda, in his lectures on Yoga VashiShTa, says very clearly that pure mind is a mis-nomer. Mind arises only when there is impurity. Thus, pure mind is a contradiction in terms.

Regards

Gummuluru Murthy

---

Message: 3

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 09:23:57 -0500

From: Ram Chandran <[chandran@tidalwave.net](mailto:chandran@tidalwave.net)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Hari Om Murthygaru:

Namaskar,

I agree with you that 'pure mind' is mis-nomer in some frame-work. Mind is considered as the collection of thoughts. When the thoughts are pure, the collection of thoughts will be pure. The thoughts of Andal and Meera were pure - only on Vishnu (Brahman) and they were able to realize the Brahman through their thoughts. This is another framework!

The point is that the issue of 'mind' is quite complex - as complex as the realization of Brahman. We have two unknowns - 'mind' and SELF. Mathematically, it can't be resolved until we can comprehend either or both. This is the paradox!

regards,

Ram Chandran

---

Message: 4

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 09:48:39 -0500

From: "Harsha (Dr. Harsh K. Luthar)" <[hluthar@bryant.edu](mailto:hluthar@bryant.edu)>

Subject: Mind and the Self

Yes. Sri Murthyji made a good point in that the use of the term "pure mind" is somewhat problematic. Perhaps it needs to be remembered that the use of the term "mind" is always contextual and it can have a range of meanings according to the function (of mind) under discussion. This is why we even see Sages appear to use the word "mind" in contradictory fashions. I believe this is what Sri Ramji is indicating in his message by pointing out that a number of frameworks can be used to conceptualize

entrance into Reality. One way to understand the term "purity of mind" is from a yogic perspective. When Sattva guna predominates, the mind might be considered pure as it is easy to come to stillness or focus on God/dess as one conceives Him/Her. A still and a quiet mind is helpful in meditation and is a willing prey to the Divine Light, being itself a reflection of it. Upon absorption of the "pure mind", .....Reality dominates in all its nakedness.

By the way, I am a Punjabi Hindu and am not familiar much with Sanskrit or other Indian languages (outside of Punjabi and Hindi) and don't understand the term Murthygaru. Does the garu stand for Guru? Is our beloved Sri Murthyji a Guru and if so, is Murthygaru the proper way to address him? Thanks.

Love to all  
Harsha

---

Message: 5  
Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 11:16:39 -0500  
From: Patrick Kenny <[pkenny@crim.ca](mailto:pkenny@crim.ca)>  
Subject: mind and self

Greetings,

As Harsha pointed out at the beginning of this debate, there is only one way to settle this question of whether the mind can see the self, namely by experience. I'll be away on a business trip next week so let me stick my neck out and say that anybody can train his mind to see the self in all beings and all beings in the self by taking the Gita at face value and doing just what it says. (Admittedly you won't be able to see the Self when you're angry, frustrated, resentful etc. but you can bring it about that this way of seeing is the rule rather than the exception.) All that's required is that you be willing to set your mind to it to the extent of reading the Gita over and over again, say 2 or 3 dozen times in the course of a year.

Regards

Patrick

---

Message: 9  
Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 11:14:35 PST  
From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <[sunderh@hotmail.com](mailto:sunderh@hotmail.com)>  
Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Namaste,

'Paradoxes', 'misnomers', etc. happen on all levels of understanding OTHER than the Self.

For example:

Gita: 10:22: indriyaaNaM manashchaasmi .[of the senses I am the Mind]

9:19: amR^ita.n chaiva mR^ityushcha sadaschchaahamarjuna .

[I am the immortality as well as death;existence as well  
non-existence.]

15:18: yasmaatsharamatiito.ahamaksharaadapi chottamaH .

[Because I transcend the perishable and am even higher  
than the imperishable..]

These are not unlike the koans of Zen tradition. They serve the purpose of catapulting the perception/view to that ineffable beatitude.

Regards,

s.

---

Message: 10

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 11:37:43 -0800

From: Chuck Hillig <[chillig@jetlink.net](mailto:chillig@jetlink.net)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Dear Sunder,

But isn't it all still only the Self? Isn't the Self "big enough" (for lack of a better phrase) to also include (and actually BE) all of the paradoxes and misnomers, too? To paraphrase St. Paul, "Outside of the Self, there is nothing."

So maybe the idea is not to be free OF thought; maybe the idea is to be free FROM thought.

But, then again, isn't that just another thought, anyway? :-)

With Blessings,  
Chuck Hillig

---

Message: 11

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 12:09:15 PST

From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <[sunderh@hotmail.com](mailto:sunderh@hotmail.com)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Dear Chuck,

No disagreement at all!! I thought(!) I was making the same point by capitalising the word OTHER. Anything divorced from the self is bound to be a contradiction.

Regards,

s.

---

Message: 12

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 15:23:28 -0800

From: "Anand Natarajan" <[anandn@myworldmail.com](mailto:anandn@myworldmail.com)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

In one of the discourses that I attended, the speaker said , "The mind is the unrealized Atman". I find this sentence very powerful and it is relevant here. By this sentence we can reconcile the difference between the statement that everything is indeed Brahman and the perception of diversity we have. Due to our ignorance, we perceive the Atman has having forms and that is the mind. When the Sun of knowledge dawns , the same mind will evaporate its forms and what remains is THAT.

Om

Anand

---

Message: 13

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 15:46:00 -0800

From: Chuck Hillig <[chillig@jetlink.net](mailto:chillig@jetlink.net)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Dear Anand,

Very well put! It's important to remember that the "mind" (and its so-called diversities) is not a "problem" at all for the Atman.

Atman, however, is a very big problem for the non-existent "mind" to come to terms with because the mind can never hope to contain the uncontainable?

With Blessings,  
Chuck Hillig

---

Message: 14

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 15:58:03 -0800

From: "R. Viswanathan" <[rvis@earthlink.net](mailto:rvis@earthlink.net)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Hi!

Rightly put.

The infinite (Atman) can contain the finite (mind) and not vice versa, however much we try!

-- Vis

---

Message: 16

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 19:30:59 PST

From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <[sunderh@hotmail.com](mailto:sunderh@hotmail.com)>

Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

namaste,

The ineffable nature of THAT is beautifully expressed in Shankara's dashashlokii( last verse, #10):

na chaika.n tadanyaddvitiya.n kutaH syaat.h

na vaa kevalatva.n na chaakevalatvam.h .

na shuunya.n na chaashuunyamadvaitakatvaat.h

katha.n sarvavedaantasiddhaM braviimi ..

When there is not One Itself, how can there be two as distinct from It?

Neither is there Its absoluteness nor non-absoluteness;

Nor is it a void, nor a non-void.

The Self being by nature unique, how can I speak of whose existence is established by all the Upanishads?

from Prayers Unto Him, 1985, 2nd ed. p. 356

Sw. Chinmayananda,

Chinmaya Publications Trust,

.....

NONDUALITY SALON

WEBSITE

<http://www.nonduality.com>

<http://welcome.to/nondualitysalon>

MAILING LIST

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/nondualitysalon>

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MAILING LIST

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/ndhighlights>

PHOTOS, GRAPHICS, ARTWORK, OTHER FILES

<http://www.onelist.com/files/NondualitySalon/>

NONDUAL PEOPLE

<http://www.nonduality.com/morea.htm>

NONDUAL DELIGHTS

<http://www.nonduality.com/context.htm>



CHAT ROOM  
<http://www.eScribe.com/religion/nondualitiesalon/chat>  
New to Chat?  
<http://dragon.minopher.net.au/WebEd/protocol.htm>

---

Message: 6

Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2000 21:32:48 -0800  
**From: Vasant G Godbole <vashug@juno.com>**  
Subject: Re: Mind and the Self

Dennis,  
I think the connotation of mind is different to different people in different times and in different cultural mind-sets. In Indian philosophy a mind is conceived as an instrument psycholog

---

Message: 10

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 2000 17:57:06 -0500  
**From: Ram Chandran <chandran@tidalwave.net>**  
Subject: Re: - Revised Link Address!

The URL link in my previous posting is incorrect.  
This is the Correct URL: <http://www.onelist.com/links/advaitin>  
My apology for the error,  
Ram Chandran

=====  
Ram Chandran wrote:

>  
> Several Gita links such as Ishwara Gita, Chitanya Gita, Avadhuta Gita etc., can be found at  
> <http://www.onelist.com/culture/advaitin/links>  
>  
> The link page has many useful links to advaita related sites.,  
>  
> I request members to go to the site and add the links that they are familiar with. Every link that  
> we add can help many to save search time for the rest of the members. This is a great  
> opportunity to show your public spirit!  
>  
> regards,  
>  
> Ram Chandran  
>

---

\*\*\*\*\* Printed up to here \*\*\*\*\*

Message: 10

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 2000 21:25:54 -0000

**From: Dennis Waite <dwaite@dircon.co.uk>**

**Subject: Mind and Self so far**

Many thanks to members of the list for their thoughtful and instructive replies to my query regarding Sankara's reference to the 'Mind "seeing" the Self'. Any expectations I might have had (not that I go in for these of course!) regarding the value of joining this list have already been exceeded. Clearly this is the place to be for discussing Advaita!

I appreciated all of the responses but below are just a few comments I noted on reading them. Before reading, please excuse any apparent disrespect - none is intended. I have yet to discover the tone of postings on the list. My natural inclination is just to say things as they strike me. I would never be intentionally rude - this could never serve any useful purpose - but I acknowledge that occasionally some of the things I say may appear too outspoken. Of course, on a list such as this, one ought to be able to say anything without upsetting anyone, since there should be very little left of any ego to take offence! (And anyone doing so reveals his undisciplined ego to one and all, as happened once or twice on the Advaita List a few years ago, as I recall!)

Greg Goode, Feb 11th: - It was not intended as a hermeneutic question but one of exegesis. (Now everyone else can get their dictionaries out - I needed the OED for that one, Greg!)

Dr. Harsh Luthar, Feb 11th: - This almost seems to be saying that it is pointless discussing this unless we are realised. I hope this is not true! I believe that the 'mind does not exist independently of the Self' (though I am not Self-realised). I do not see that it follows that the mind is absent for one who is realised. At the relative level of existence, it must still be available; otherwise how would the Sage move about in the world? And it is already non-existent at the absolute level, whether one is realised or not. I was confused by the third para, about the Self being the 'source of the mind'. (Also isn't someone who has experienced Nirvikalpa Samadhi necessarily also Self-realised?) Is the Self any more the source for the mind than it is the source of everything? (Presumably we agree that nothing at all actually exists anyway?) I suppose my difficulty with the 'second perspective' is in 'power turning back on itself'. I don't really know what this means. I understand that the Self does nothing. Only the guna (appear to) act.

anurag@sindhu.etc (sorry, your name did not appear in my digest) said a stage comes when 'the mind dissolves itself'. Can't see this!

I agree with Sunder Hattangadi, Feb 11th, that mind has to have support of scriptures and a teacher, and be 'refined' before it can do anything useful.

Patrick Kenny, 11th Feb, suggests that the Self uses buddhi to see itSelf. I'm not sure I agree - if the Self were dependent upon anything, wouldn't that be a limitation? (Though I have read somewhere that the world was created in order that the Self could enjoy itSelf!) In any case, surely it does not follow that, if the Self uses buddhi in order to see itSelf, then the buddhi sees the Self? This would be equivalent to saying that, since I use spectacles in order to read a book, therefore the spectacles are

reading the book, wouldn't it?

Prof. V. Krishnamurthy provided a very succinct definition of the antahkaraNa. It is a clearly a source of no end of problems that people discuss topics such as this using the general term 'mind' without specifying which 'organ' of mind they are talking about. Unfortunately, this seems to be a particular problem with Ramana Maharshi. I attended the monthly satsang of the UK Ramana organisation on Saturday, at which the topic was 'Mind and Heart' according to RM. A number of readings were given from various RM talks and I found them very confusing for this reason. In the posting, one statement I did not quite agree with was that 'the gross body derives its consciousness from the Mind'. Surely it derives its consciousness from the Self, along with everything else? Also, is the categorisation into 'subconscious', 'conscious' and 'super-conscious' defined within Advaita? I have not come across it. Is it part of the system that talks about the cakras? (Tantra? Samkhya? I am not very knowledgeable about systems out of mainstream Advaita.) The post then goes on to talk of 'lower' and 'higher' minds. How does this map onto the sub-super-consciousness model or the buddhi-manas-citta model? Is this not complicating things? My understanding is that reality is not ACTUALLY like any of these models; they are only 'maps' to give some concept of the nature of the terrain. I suppose it might be useful to have three different maps if one were going to a foreign country but then again...

Ram Chandran, 12th Feb, suggests that understanding the Self intellectually will take us nowhere and that faith is necessary. I do not believe we can 'do' anything and think that 'following a path' of any sort only really satisfies the ego (which obviously cannot attain Self-realisation). However, I thought Sankara insisted that jnana was the highest yoga and that other techniques (presumably you are implying bhakti?) are only pre-cursors for this. (This, of course, is in line with his suggestion that the mind CAN see the Self, when purified, we agree.) Again, perhaps we are not really disagreeing here. I would accept that we can bring manas under control through karma or bhakti yoga but I wouldn't have said they directly affect buddhi. Buddhi is indirectly affected because it can only operate properly when manas IS under control and itself working correctly.

Madhava Turumella 12th Feb, made some nice observations including Sanskrit roots. I have not come across the use of 'individualism' and 'universalism' in Advaita before. 'Nama', "not belong to me" is also the mark of reverence of course - the "bow", which ties in nicely with your 'complete surrender'. A remarkable language, Sanskrit!

Sunder Hattangadi 12th Feb, reminded us of several metaphors from the Upanishads and quoted from Ramakrishna. I am familiar with these. We were also told in the School that the one desire that one is allowed to have is the desire for truth. (Don't know the derivation of this.) It is interesting to ask people following these ideas whether, if someone offered Self-realisation to them right here and now, they would accept. Most people seem to have the attitude "Well, not right now, there are just a few things I want to do first"! I wonder how members of the list would respond. For my part I confess that I would not always answer in the affirmative!

I'm going to stop now. I haven't finished going through all of the replies yet by some way but, because I have run out of time today, and this post is becoming rather long, I'll send this to be going on with.

Dennis

---

---

Message: 11

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 2000 16:58:00 -0500  
**From: Gregory Goode <goode@dpw.com>**  
Subject: Re: Mind and Self so far

Dennis,

What a nice and succinct summary of the topic. This post of yours is one for the archives.

You seem to be interested in advaita vedanta's conceptual scheme of the micro- and macro-cosm, the person and world. I have a great graphic image in Visio 5 format of the pancakosa, very much like a map. It relates the 5 sheaths, 3 bodies, and 3 states, along with the locus of vasanas, ignorance, Isvara, etc. Authored by Dr. George Romney of the Chinmaya Mission's Manhattan Study Group, and computerized by me. It is large, in 11 x 17" format. I can ask George for permission, then if he OK's it, I can put it in PDF format and send it to you. You're right that this is not a map of any external or internal territory, but just a way of representing the unrepresentable. This to facilitate the sublation of concepts, freeing us ever more from attachment to concepts, until none attach.

Regards,

--Greg

Message: 15

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 2000 18:13:21 PST  
**From: "Sunder Hattangadi" <sunderh@hotmail.com>**  
Subject: Re: Mind and Self so far

namaste,

>It is interesting to ask people following these ideas whether, if someone offered Self-realisation to them right here and now, they would accept. Most people seem to have the attitude "Well, not right now, there are just a few things I want to do first"! I wonder how members of the list would respond. For my part I confess that I would not always answer in the affirmative!

\*\*\* Also depends what kind of phrase would be palatable! eg. Are you willing to let your ego die? Or Do you want to be totally conscious even when fast asleep? or Are you prepared to die now for the promise of God's vision? One who has been chosen by a Guru will never have any hesitation.

This URL, I think, gives a good summary of Mind by Ramana Maharshi.

<http://www.hinduism.co.za/newpage21.htm>

Regards,

s.

Message: 13

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 2000 18:43:50 -0800

From: **Vasant G Godbole** <[vashug@juno.com](mailto:vashug@juno.com)>

Subject: Re: Responses to 'Mind and the Self' - Part 2

The mind -Atman relation looks difficult because we we fail to understand the original metaphor. The sages say Brahman and Atman are vidnanaghan. It may have the same resemblance to human consciousness as a black hole has to a black paint. AntahkaraN is inert, Jada, and the consciousness it shows is a reflection of Atman. The four flashes of consciousness (flashes are the same as vritis but in metaphor of light) manas, budhi, chitta and Ahankar display a rainbow of intermixed satva(white), raja(red) and tama(black). The more satvic the antahkaraN, the purer the reflection of Atman. Since the Ahankar is the most tamasic( because it is impulsively dvait for survival) and Budhi the most satvic, the latter is the only means we humans have to get a glimpse of Atman. Budhi is awakened intelligence, awakened because it reflects Atman more perfectly. Mind understands Atman not actively as an ego understands the nonego but passively when it is completely still. A realised person(jeevanmukta) surely has to live to clear his karma. But the quality of his living is such that it does not generate new karma. You may say he is in meditaiton day and night.