

Science and Astrology

'All sciences arise, ultimately, from everyday observations about natural events and about the relation men and women have to these events and to each other.' (Richard C. Lewontin in 'Biology in Human Affairs' – Voice of America, Forum).

Astrology is a study of the correlation of the positions of the stars and planets in the sky with earthly events, including birth of a baby and its life on this planet. It is as much a science as theories of genetics in the earlier period of their development, when critical observation of the surroundings was the mode of experimentation. Our ancient *rishis*, who were intellectual giants and who were keen observers of nature and natural phenomena, had come to some conclusions on the basis of their observations. The conclusions had some predictive values in the hands of the competent – one who had the ability to take into consideration all the parameters in their proper weightage. Presently, the conclusions may be regarded only as hypotheses; although the believers would consider that there is enough material evidence in their favour. Solid proof could come later; even as proofs for several of the biological postulates are coming by only now.

It might be of interest to note here that our *rishis* also made other observations after similar studies in other areas, for example, in biology. I would like to refer to three of the supreme postulates of the Hindu philosophy:

1. *Aham Brahmasmi*. *Atman* is universal. It is the same *Atman* present in each of us.
2. The doctrine of rebirth. We have had past lives and we will also have future. It is the same *Atman* moving from one life to the next. *Atman* would never perish.
3. The doctrine of *karma*. *Atman* when moving to the next life carries with it its own characteristics. And here its mani-

festations could be modified. Our present actions would be reflected in our next life.

One can see a parallelism of these in modern biological postulates:

1. The genetic material is universal. Each one of us has more or less the same genetic material.
2. The genetic material is transmitted to the progeny over generations. The genetic material has thus survived in the past and will also survive in the future. In fact, it would appear, that the living body is only a surviving mechanism of the genetic material. The latter would never perish.
3. The physical and the emotional characteristics of humans are carried forward to the next generation/s by the genes present in the genetic material. The genes, to start with, are at different threshold activities in each of us. The activities can change depending upon prolonged exposure to an environment. The genes are then manifested to a different extent in each of us.

It is mind-boggling that our *rishis* should have arrived at such astounding hypotheses just by observing human behaviour over generations. Presumably they had the ability to store large amount of information, recall them (quite often the information of even a previous generation, the memories of which were present in them) and correlate them.

The postulates of our *rishis* are indeed scientific, although later they got a religious hue; because the conclusions of their analysis of the information stored in their brain, when presented to the public, almost sounded as revelation.

I cannot but agonize at the thought that if only the Indian scientists had pondered in depth over the postulates of our *rishis*, they would have found that, many of the biological discoveries

of the present are in the informations on the brain in Sanskrit literature.

Let us be open-minded. It is not improbable that all events in this universe are interrelated to a smaller or greater extent. Every cause has its effect, some perceptible, some not. In atmospheric sciences one talks of the butterfly effect (figuratively perhaps!). In medical sciences, one talks of the effect of the moon on the human brain. Who knows? The activities of our genes could be governed by the events in the sky and revealed in the lines in our palms!

Biology is on the move to momentous developments. Francis Crick in his book *The Astonishing Hypothesis* states: 'You, your joy, your sorrow, your memories, your ambition, your personal identity and your free will are in fact no more than the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules'. D. S. Wood in the book *Molecular Genetics in Diseases of Brain* states: 'The genetic material carries the instruction to grow, to divide, to mature and even probably to die!' Do not such statements sound as extracts from Indian traditional knowledge?

Let us be modest to draw from the experiences of our *rishis*, who were intellectual giants. We now have more information than our *rishis* had (but, perhaps, less ability to correlate them). Knowledge is always a modification of the one present earlier. There is scope for improvement on the postulates of even the *rishis*. But first, let us know what the postulates of our *rishis* are, in various areas of human activity. Astrology is one of them.

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