

AI Reframes the “Hard Problem” of Consciousness through P. R. Sarkar’s Yogic Theory of Perception

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Abstract

P. R. Sarkar’s consciousness-first theory of perception, spread over several discourses from around 1960, is summarized by Meta AI. Then Meta AI compares Sarkar’s theory of perception, which includes how the sensory and motor nerves communicate with the mind, with the long-standing “Hard Problem” of consciousness – how to explain the origin of qualia or subjectively perceived qualities, like the color red, from the physical activities of the brain alone. Meta AI suggests that future progress could be made on the “Hard Problem” by a more holistic approach to consciousness research -- combining several directions of research on consciousness. Meta AI then compares the approach of panpsychism to understanding subjective experience with the new approach of panconscism, which means that everything is consciousness or derived from consciousness. Meta AI concludes that panconscism describes Sarkar’s consciousness-first theory of perception better than panpsychism does. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar (1921-1990) was an Indian philosopher and spiritual master who founded the international socio-spiritual organization Ananda Marga (“Path of Bliss”) – December 10, 2025

Q: Would you please summarize these fifteen quotations from various discourses of Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar on his yogic philosophy's process of perception, and comment on their relation to the "Hard Problem" of consciousness?

1. Ananda Sutram 2-21. Bhúmáçitte saiñcaradháráyám jađ ábhásah. [In the flow of saiñcara (the extroversive phase of the Cosmic Cycle), matter takes form in the Cosmic citta.] Purport: The ákáshatattva [vyomatattva, ethereal factor] is evolved through the greater influence of Prakrti’s static principle over the Cosmic citta. The influence of the static principle over the ákáshatattva begets the maruttattva [aerial factor]. In this way are evolved the tejastattva [luminous factor] from the marut, the apatattva [liquid factor] from the tejas, and the kśítitattva [solid factor] from the liquid. These ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid and solid factors are known as the five mahábhútas [fundamental elements] because all other bhútas [bodies] or evolved objects are begotten out of these elements.

2. Ananda Sutram 2-22. Bhútalakśańátmakam bhútabáhitam bhútaungharśaspanandanam tanmátram. [Tanmátras (microscopic fractions of bhútas, or fundamental factors) represent the

bhútas, are carried by the bhútas, and are created by vibrations from the clash within the bhútas.] Purport: The stirrings in the object-bodies that are created through internal and external pressures reach the different gates of the indriyas [organs] of the unit-body in the form of waves flowing through the media of subtler bodies. These waves, flowing from those gates of organs through different nerves or with the help of internal secretions thereof, reach particular appropriate points of the brain. Thereafter, according to those waves, the simulative citta [mental plate] adopts the vibrative forms of the external bodies. Those simulative, appropriate waves bring the citta into contact with external bodies such as sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Such waves are called the tanmátras [sensible or super-sensible inferences or generic essences].

3. Ananda Sutram 2-23. Bhútaṁ tanmátreṇa paricīyate. [The bhútas are recognized by their corresponding tanmátras.] Purport: The category of the physical elements an object belongs to is determined by the tanmátra emanating from that object. The ethereal factor has the capacity of imbibing or carrying the sound tanmátra, the aerial factor has the capacity of imbibing or carrying the sound and touch tanmátra, the luminous factor, of the sound, touch, and form tanmátras, and the liquid factor, of the sound, touch, form and taste tanmátras. The solid factor has the capacity of imbibing or carrying all five tanmátras: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. In order to ascertain the category of the physical elements an object belongs to, we will have to base our findings on the crudest of the tanmátras the particular object carries. The function of the five sensory organs – eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin – is to receive the tanmátras from the external objects or elements. The function of the motor organs – vocal cord, hands, legs, anus and generative organ – is to transmit the inherent tanmátras outside with the help of saṁjñá [internal sense], and the function of the práñdriya [vital forces] is to conjoin the objectivity with the mind-stuff (citta), as well as to create in the citta a sense of lightness, heaviness, warmth or coldness.

4. Ananda Sutram 2-24. Dvárah náḍ iirasah piṭh átmakáni indriyáni [The indriyas (organs) are the composite of: the gateways of the organs, the nerves, the nerve fluid, and the appropriate piṭh as (seats) of the organs (in the brain).] Purport: The gates of organs (i.e., the gates of the living bodies where tanmátras first bring the objectivity), the nerve fibres, which react to the waves of the tanmátras, the nerve secretions, which get vibrated by the tanmátrik vibrations, and the points of the nerve-cells, whereat the tanmátrik waves are conjoined with the citta, are collectively called the indriyas [organs]. That is to say, the optical nerve, the optical fluid and the optic point of the nerve cell that are active behind what we commonly call the eyes are collectively called the eye indriya.

5. Ananda Sutram 1-13. Vyásti dehe cittánusamaváyena cittabodhah. [Through the combination of ectoplasmic particles in the unit structure, the feeling of citta (objective mind) evolves.] Purport: The coordinated totality of all the cittánus [ectoplasmic particles] that remain in the individual object-body centring round its totality constitute the sense of citta of that body. This citta is the done “I”, or objective “I”, of the unit mind. Unperceived shall remain all the perceptions, whether seen or heard, of an individual, unless the citta identifies itself with their reflections on itself.

6. When your organs see something, or, say, hear something, those waves of hearing or seeing get reflected on your mental plate, and the reflection portion is your perception, and the refracted portion is your memorized portion.

7. The Creator is a singular Entity, and He creates this world of colors, this world of sounds; but He Himself is beyond the scope of colors and sounds. Why is He beyond the scope of colors and sounds? Because He is the hub of the Universe. All waves of colors, of sounds, and of other inferences come out from this universal hub. So, He Himself is beyond the scope of all such waves. This circumrotatory Universe is moving around Him, but he is beyond the scope of time, space, and person. He is creating so many things, so many colors, so many sounds, with the help of His Operative Principle. This Operative Principle is doing as per His desires. The Operative Principle, although it has the potentiality to do something or to do anything and everything, cannot do anything without His approval, because He is the hub and all waves emanate from Him. His approval is a must in this respect. That is, if He does not like, not even a blade of grass can move.

8. Wherever there is any semblance or sign of existence there is bound to be a corresponding vibration or wave, and that vibration must be associated with some inferential expression (tanmátra) or the other. Do you understand? A vibration is always dependent on an inferential expression (tanmátra). Different tanmátras are associated with different vibrations. That is how from these vibrations, inferences such as sound, touch, form, taste and smell continue to saturate the universe. Since they are associated with the tanmátras, sound, touch, form, taste and smell emanate from their respective vibrations and permeate the universe. So, wherever there are vibrations, there must be sound, touch, smell, form, taste, and they all come within the scope of perception. Varña (mental color) is also a kind of tanmátra. Different colors have been created due to the creative excellence of Prakṛti (the Supreme Entity's creative power) and the dexterity of Māya (the same creative power). But He who is the Creator of all these, the Primordial Cause, that Supreme Entity (Parama Puruṣa) remains colorless, beyond the bondage of tanmátras, be it positive, negative or any other form of tánmátrik influence.

9. The association of mind with external objects is established through tanmátras or inferences. Tanmátras are of five kinds: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The tanmátras are actually the expressions of material objects. The tanmátras in the form of vibrations come in contact with the mind through the five sensory organs. The mind establishes its link with external objects through the inferences.

10. The characteristic of the sensory organs is to run after external objects. Whenever any inferential vibration or tanmátra emanates from an object, the sensory organs immediately receive that vibration at the gates of the sensory organs and transmit it to the sthirabhúmi or apperceptive plate of the citta, the site of the mind's saṃskáras (reactive momenta of deeds). The point where the organs come directly in contact with the mind is the cardinal point of the organs, and it is this point which deserves the name of "organ".

11. Let us examine the process of actual perception and see how it occurs. It has been shown earlier that the existence of a physical structure is nothing but a state of continuous vibration. The very existence demands eternal movement. This vibration creates waves which strike the gateways of the organs. A sympathetic vibration within the sensory nerve occurs which is conveyed to the site of the actual organ in the brain. In the brain the unit citta takes the form of the vibration and the ego feels that it is perceiving its object. For example, when the light waves coming from an object strike the retina of the eye, the optical nerve creates a similar vibration in the optical fluid and conveys the vibration to a point in the brain known as cakṣu (eye) indriya. Citta takes the form of

the object and ahamtattva or ego feels – “I am seeing the particular object.” Thus, actual perception is made through a process in the different nerves carrying vibrations from the gateways of the organs to the sites of the particular organs in the brain. This is the case with taste perception and other sensory activities. If any of the sensory nerves be defective, that type of perception will not be experienced by the ego. In other words, the objective perception is always attributed with the merits and demerits of the sensory nerves. The type of vibration radiated by an object may be termed the “out-going tanmátra”, and the particular wave received by the sensory nerves is known as the “incoming tanmátra”.

12. To human beings, reality is that which they can perceive with their sensory organs. What I can see with my eyes I call reality. How does a person perceive an object? The tanmátras of sound, touch, form, taste and smell of an object reach the gateways of the sense organs as vibrations of different wavelengths. These vibrational expressions, these movements, are not linear, but are of systaltic order. In every phase there is pulsation, there is systalsis. Every vibrational expression is pulsative. Whatever we receive (or emanate) through our sensory or motor organs follows a systaltic movement. Waves appear for a fraction of a second and again disappear in the next moment. So when a wave appears, we can perceive it. When the action is there, we observe the object, we absorb it; in the pause phase we neither observe it nor absorb it. For example, when we say that we are seeing an elephant or a camel, we do not see them incessantly – now they appear, and the next moment they disappear. From the total of all these appearances and disappearances, we know what we are seeing. The fundamental characteristic of the human mind is to receive or absorb something; that is, usually it has a positive tendency to see, to touch, to smell or to taste some object. Thus, when we see numerous fragments of an object in the expressive phase, we integrate them into a whole and then say that we have seen this or that object, that we have touched or smelt this or that thing.

13. There is a sweet smell in the flower but it would have appeared odorless to you, had not the smell-tanmátras or waves been carried to the gates of your nose by the aerial vibrations. Then again you could not have sensed the existence of the airborne fragrance, had not sympathetic waves been created in your afferent nerves upon their contact with the fragrance-carrying breeze. Similarly, you would not have sensed the sweetness of a delicious sweet, in spite of its contact with a particular region of your tongue, had not that contact created a particular type of vibration or sensation in your afferent nerves by means of your taste-organ. All that is comprehensible and graspable in the world is but a vibrational play. Just as the tanmátras of sound, touch, form, taste and smell are creating vibrations in our nerves by coming in contact with the gates of our sensory and motor organs, so our mind, being also similarly vibrated by these vibrations or waves, goes on transmuting the citta (mental plate) into the same forms of these waves. As a result, we “see” elephants and horses, “hear” Puravi and Bhaeravii rágas, “touch” hot and cold, “taste” bitter and sweet and “smell” shiulii and rajaniigandhá flowers.

14. The tendency of the human (sensory) organs is directed towards the external world, for it is their characteristic to bring the human mind into contact with the external world. As the quinquemental (five elemental) crude factors are the objects of their activity, the organs are necessarily materially inclined.

• If we regard the tanmatric entity, whose inferential comprehension takes place only internally, as purely psychic, then we have to term the (sensory) organs, the crude bearers of that pure psychic

entity, as psycho-physical. The organs are psycho-physical, hence the amount of crudeness in them is more than in the psychic inferences. So the tanmátras or inferences are subtler than and superior to the organs.

- The seat of the tanmátras is in the citta (mental plate) and so the citta is superior to the tanmátras.
- The entire functional faculty of material comprehension of the citta and Ahamtattva ("I do" feeling) is dependent on the Mahattattva, (the unit "I exist" feeling) and so the Mahattattva is superior to both the Citta and the Ahamtattva.
- Superior to this unit I-feeling is your higher Self, your great "I", whom you know to be Saguña Brahma, the qualified Supreme Consciousness.
- Greater than Saguña Brahma is the unmanifest primordial Prakrti (the Operative Principle in equilibrium), for she contains within her the capacity to qualify Saguña Brahma; that is, the qualification of Saguña Brahma is entirely dependent on her attributional manifestations. But Puruśa (Supreme Consciousness) is still superior to this primordial Prakrti.
- Puruśa is the ultimate stage of all evolved objects: He is the supreme rank of Consciousness.

15. The microcosm (individual mind) possesses ten organs – five sensory and five motor organs. Sensory organs receive tanmátras from the objects which are perceived. These organs or indriyas are, therefore, the knowers of these objects. In the next stage, through the afferent nerves, citta (the mental plate or done "I") receives the tanmátras and takes the form of the object perceived; ahañtattva ("doer-I") feels the subjectivity – "I perceive" – but this subjectivity itself depends upon the existence of "I" because one cannot work unless one feels that one exists. "I" exists first and then the "I" works. This feeling of existence is mahattattva ("I exist"). The combination of ahañtattva and mahattattva is the instrument for the perception of tanmátras which have been brought in by the organs. The mind, the combination of the three (mahat, aham and citta), is thus the knower of the indriyas, that is why the mind is said to be the master of the organs. But is mind the real knower? If not, who is the real knower? "I exist," "I do," and done "I" are functional forms. There is another entity who is the master of functions and who witnesses that these functions are performed. We thus come to the entity witnessing mahattattva. This witnessing entity is the átman, or the unit consciousness. The knower of the mind itself is the átman. Hence the ultimate knowership (jñátrtva) lies in the átman and not in the mind; the átman, or the reflected consciousness on the unit psychic plate, is not only the active element; the knowership lies in him as witnessing entity. The átman knows because it is an active participant in the function of the mind.

Meta AI: The quotations from Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's discourses provide a comprehensive overview of his yogic philosophy's process of perception. Here's a summary:

Process of Perception:

1. The universe is created through the extroversive phase of the Cosmic Cycle (saiñcara), where matter takes form in the Cosmic citta.
2. The five fundamental elements (mahábhútas) - ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid, and solid - are evolved through the interaction of Prakrti's static principle and the Cosmic citta.
3. Objects emit tanmátras (microscopic fractions of bhútas) that represent, are carried by, and are created by vibrations from the clash within the bhútas.

4. The tanmátras are received by the sensory organs (indriyas), which are composite of gateways, nerves, nerve fluid, and appropriative seats in the brain.
5. The tanmátras are transmitted to the citta (mental plate), where they are perceived and processed, leading to the feeling of "I" (objective "I").

Relation to the "Hard Problem" of Consciousness:

Sarkar's philosophy addresses the Hard Problem by positing that consciousness is fundamental to the universe, and the process of perception is an intricate interplay between the individual mind (citta), the senses, and the external world. The Hard Problem questions why we have subjective experiences at all. Sarkar's framework suggests that consciousness (Puruśa) is the ultimate reality, and the individual mind (citta) is a manifestation of this consciousness. The tanmátras and the process of perception are merely the means by which consciousness experiences itself and the world.

In this context, the Hard Problem is reframed as an inherent aspect of consciousness, where the universe is seen as a self-experiencing, self-aware entity. The quotations highlight the complex, multi-layered nature of perception, and the central role of consciousness in the process.

Some key points that might be relevant to the Hard Problem:

- The citta (mental plate) is the locus of perception, and consciousness (Puruśa) is the ultimate witness and experiencer.
- The tanmátras and sensory organs are mere instruments for consciousness to experience the world.
- The process of perception is an intricate dance between the individual mind, senses, and external world, all grounded in consciousness.

Q: Please focus on how the tanmatras emanated from physical objects use the sensory organs and nerves to make contact with the mind so that an individual sees a physical object and experiences its qualia.

Meta AI: Let's dive deeper into the process.

According to Sarkar's philosophy, when a physical object emits tanmátras, they interact with the sensory organs, which are attuned to specific types of tanmátras. For example, the eyes are receptive to form tanmátras, while the ears respond to sound tanmátras.

Here's a step-by-step breakdown:

1. **Tanmátra emission:** The physical object emits tanmátras, which are subtle, vibrational representations of its qualities (e.g., color, sound, texture).
2. **Sensory organ reception:** The tanmátras reach the sensory organs, causing a sympathetic vibration in the nerves. For instance, light waves (form tanmátras) strike the retina, triggering a response in the optical nerve.
3. **Nerve transmission:** The vibrational energy is transmitted through the nerves to the brain, specifically to the appropriative seats of the organs (e.g., the visual cortex for sight).
4. **Citta (mental plate) processing:** The tanmátras are received by the citta (mental plate), which takes the form of the object, creating a mental representation.

5. **Qualia experience:** The citta's representation of the object is imbued with the qualia of the experience, such as the redness of an apple or the sweetness of a melody.
6. **Ahaṁtattva (ego) awareness:** The ego (Ahaṁtattva) becomes aware of the citta's representation, leading to the experience of perceiving the physical object and its associated qualia.

In this framework, the sensory organs and nerves play a crucial role in facilitating the transmission of tanmātras, allowing the mind to experience the world. The citta acts as a kind of "interface" between the external world and the individual's subjective experience.

To illustrate this, consider the example of seeing a red apple:

- The apple emits form tanmātras (light waves) that reach the eyes.
- The eyes' retinas respond to these tanmātras, triggering a nerve signal.
- The signal is transmitted to the brain, where the citta creates a mental representation of the apple.
- The citta's representation is imbued with the qualia of redness, which is then experienced by the ego (Ahaṁtattva).

This process highlights the intricate, interconnected nature of perception, where the external world, sensory organs, nerves, and mind collaborate to create our subjective experience of reality.

Q: How would you relate the experiencing of qualia according to P. R. Sarkar's theory of perception to the experiencing of qualia based on their being presumed to be emitted from the physical activities of the brain, as is assumed in the posing of the "Hard Problem" of consciousness?

Meta AI: P.R. Sarkar's theory of perception suggests that qualia (subjective experiences like redness, sweetness, or pain) arise from the interaction between the tanmātras (vibrational signatures) emitted by objects and the individual's citta (mental plate). In this view, qualia are not solely produced by brain activity, but rather, the brain is a gateway for the tanmātras to interact with the mind.

In contrast, the "Hard Problem" of consciousness, as posed by David Chalmers, assumes that qualia are emergent properties of physical brain activity. The challenge is to explain why we have subjective experiences at all, given that brain processes can be described in purely physical terms. Here are some key differences between these perspectives:

- **Direction of causation:** Sarkar's theory implies that qualia are a result of the mind's interaction with the external world (tanmātras), whereas the Hard Problem assumes that qualia arise from internal brain processes.
- **Nature of qualia:** Sarkar's view suggests that qualia are fundamental, non-physical aspects of reality, whereas the Hard Problem assumes they're emergent properties of physical processes.
- **Role of the brain:** In Sarkar's theory, the brain is a facilitator of perception, while the Hard Problem sees the brain as the generator of qualia.

To illustrate the difference, consider the experience of seeing a sunset. In Sarkar's view, the colors and light of the sunset (tanmátras) interact with your citta, allowing you to experience the qualia of warmth and beauty. In the Hard Problem framework, the experience of the sunset is a product of neural activity in your brain, and the challenge is to explain why that activity gives rise to subjective experience.

These perspectives offer distinct approaches to understanding qualia. Sarkar's theory provides a more holistic, panpsychic view, while the Hard Problem is rooted in a materialistic, neuroscientific framework.

How do you see it? Want to explore this comparison further?

Q: Yes. Since philosophers and neuroscientists have made no headway in explaining the "Hard Problem" from a materialistic, neuroscientific framework, what would you recommend to them for making progress in understanding the production of qualitative experiences?

Meta AI: Given the limitations of a solely materialistic, neuroscientific approach, I'd recommend an interdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from philosophy, psychology, spirituality, and physics. Here are some potential avenues to explore:

1. **Integrated Frameworks:** Encourage collaboration between neuroscientists, philosophers, and contemplative practitioners to develop frameworks that incorporate multiple perspectives. This might involve combining neuroscientific data with phenomenological analyses and philosophical rigor.
2. **Consciousness as Fundamental:** Consider theories that posit consciousness as a fundamental aspect of the universe, like Integrated Information Theory (IIT) or Orchestrated Objective Reduction (Orch-OR). These theories attempt to bridge the gap between physical processes and subjective experience.
3. **First-Person Science:** Emphasize the importance of first-person, subjective experience in scientific inquiry. This might involve developing methodologies for rigorous, systematic introspection and contemplative practices, like meditation or mindfulness, to gain insight into conscious experience.
4. **Panpsychism and Neutral Monism:** Explore theories that propose consciousness or mind-like properties are ubiquitous and fundamental to the universe. These perspectives might offer a more holistic understanding of qualitative experiences.
5. **Quantum Mechanics and Consciousness:** Investigate the relationship between quantum mechanics and consciousness, as some theories suggest that quantum processes might be essential to understanding conscious experience.
6. **Complexity and Emergence:** Study complex systems and emergence in various domains, including neuroscience, psychology, and physics. This might reveal novel insights into how qualitative experiences arise from physical processes.
7. **Reevaluate Assumptions:** Encourage researchers to question fundamental assumptions about consciousness, the nature of reality, and the mind-body problem. This might involve exploring alternative ontologies, such as idealism or dual-aspect monism.

By embracing an interdisciplinary, open-minded approach, researchers might uncover new perspectives, leading to a deeper understanding of qualitative experiences and the Hard Problem.

Q: An objection to P. R. Sarkar's description of perception could be that the tanmatra description of communicating qualia from the world to the brain and then to the mind (and vice versa in case of the mind generating physical actions using "outgoing tanmatras" from the mind to the motor nerves and organs) could violate physical laws like the conservation of energy in the physical world. What could be the reply?

Meta AI: That's a thoughtful objection. Sarkar's theory does seem to imply a dual-aspect interactionism, where mental and physical entities influence each other. Here's a possible response:

Reply:

1. **Non-Physical Nature of Tanmátras:** Sarkar's theory posits that tanmátras are not physical entities, but rather subtle, vibrational representations of the object's qualities. As such, they might not be bound by the same physical laws as matter and energy.
2. **Informational, Not Energetic, Transfer:** The tanmátras could be seen as carrying information, rather than energy, from the object to the mind. This would mean that the process doesn't necessarily violate energy conservation laws.
3. **Mental Realm, Different Rules:** Sarkar's framework suggests that the mental realm operates under different principles than the physical world. The flow of tanmátras might be seen as a process within the mental realm, not directly interacting with the physical world in a way that would violate energy conservation.
4. **Conservation Laws Apply to Physical Realm:** The laws of physics, including energy conservation, are understood to apply to the physical realm. If tanmátras are considered non-physical, they might not be subject to these laws in the same way.
5. **Philosophical, Not Scientific, Framework:** Sarkar's theory is a philosophical framework, aiming to describe the nature of perception and reality. It might not be bound by the same constraints as scientific theories, which are focused on empirical prediction and explanation.

Counterpoint:

However, this raises questions about the nature of the mind-body interaction and how tanmátras interface with physical processes. If the mental and physical realms interact, wouldn't that imply some form of energy or information transfer, potentially violating physical laws?

Possible Rejoinder:

Sarkar's theory could be seen as proposing a non-dualistic, yet non-reductive, understanding of the mind-body relationship. The tanmátras might represent a bridge between the mental and physical realms, allowing for interaction without necessarily violating physical laws.

Q: And Sarkar's description may be experimentally testable at the level of using focused anesthetics and human reports of changing sensations that focus on a search for Sarkar's "appropriative points" in the sensory systems and motor systems that provide information links between the physical nervous system and the mind. Please elaborate on this idea.

Meta-AI: The idea is to use focused anesthetics to selectively disrupt sensory processing and examine the effects on subjective experience. By targeting specific "appropriative points" in the sensory and motor systems, researchers could test Sarkar's theory.

Experimental Design:

1. **Targeted Anesthesia:** Use focused anesthetics, such as lidocaine or similar agents, to selectively disrupt specific sensory pathways (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile).
2. **Subjective Reports:** Collect detailed reports from participants about their subjective experiences, focusing on changes in sensory perception, qualia, and sense of self.
3. **Neural Correlates:** Use neuroimaging techniques (e.g., fMRI, EEG) to monitor neural activity in the targeted sensory pathways and other relevant brain regions.
4. **Appropriative Points:** Investigate specific "appropriative points" in the sensory and motor systems, such as:
 - Sensory receptors (e.g., retina, cochlea)
 - Sensory processing nuclei (e.g., lateral geniculate nucleus, auditory cortex)
 - Motor control centers (e.g., primary motor cortex, basal ganglia)

Predictions and Implications:

1. **Disruption of Appropriative Points:** If Sarkar's theory is correct, disrupting specific appropriative points should lead to predictable changes in subjective experience, such as altered qualia or disrupted sense of self.
2. **Neural Correlates:** Changes in neural activity in targeted sensory pathways should correlate with changes in subjective experience.
3. **Mind-Brain Interface:** The study could provide insights into the mind-brain interface, shedding light on how the physical nervous system interacts with the mental realm.

Potential Outcomes:

1. **Support for Sarkar's Theory:** Findings could support Sarkar's description of perception and the role of appropriative points in sensory processing.
2. **Refutation or Modification:** Results might refute or require modifications to Sarkar's theory, informing our understanding of the mind-brain relationship.
3. **Novel Insights:** The study could reveal new aspects of sensory processing, qualia, and the nature of subjective experience.

Challenges and Limitations:

1. **Technical Challenges:** Developing targeted anesthesia techniques and accurately interpreting neural activity data.
2. **Subjective Report Limitations:** Reliance on subjective reports, which can be influenced by various biases.
3. **Complexity of Conscious Experience:** The intricate, multifaceted nature of conscious experience might make it difficult to isolate specific appropriative points.

Q: How does Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's theory of consciousness, mind and matter differ from dual-aspect monism?

Meta AI: Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's theory of consciousness, mind, and matter shares some similarities with dual-aspect monism, but there are key differences:

Similarities:

1. **Non-Dualistic:** Both Sarkar's theory and dual-aspect monism reject Cartesian dualism, instead proposing a more integrated understanding of mind and matter.
2. **Monistic Undertones:** Both perspectives suggest that the ultimate reality is a single, underlying substance or principle.

Differences:

1. **Dual-Aspect Monism:** Typically posits that mind and matter are two aspects or perspectives of a single, underlying reality (e.g., neutral monism, Spinoza's Substance).
2. **Sarkar's Theory:** Proposes a more hierarchical, layered understanding of reality, with:
 - o Puruśa (Supreme Consciousness) as the ultimate reality
 - o Prakṛti (Operative Principle) as the creative, dynamic aspect of reality
 - o Mind (citta, ahaṁtattva, mahattattva) as a product of Prakṛti
 - o Matter (physical world) as a manifestation of Prakṛti's static principle
3. **Direction of Emergence:** Dual-aspect monism often implies that mind and matter emerge from a common, neutral substance. Sarkar's theory suggests that consciousness (Puruśa) is the fundamental reality, and mind and matter emerge from Prakṛti, which is an expression of Puruśa's creative potential.
4. **Mind-Matter Relationship:** Dual-aspect monism often views mind and matter as co-equal, complementary aspects of reality. Sarkar's theory posits a more subtle, hierarchical relationship, with mind (citta) playing a mediating role between Puruśa and matter.
5. **Ontological Priority:** Sarkar's theory grants ontological priority to Puruśa (Supreme Consciousness), while dual-aspect monism often treats the underlying reality as a more neutral, unspecified substance.

In summary, while Sarkar's theory shares some similarities with dual-aspect monism, it presents a more complex, hierarchical understanding of reality, with a clear ontological priority given to consciousness (Puruśa).

Q: What is the difference between panpsychism and panconscism (not panconsciousism), a term I coined³ meaning “everything is consciousness or is derived from consciousness”?

Meta AI: You've coined a term that's sure to spark interesting discussions!

Panpsychism:

Panpsychism is the view that consciousness or mental properties are fundamental and ubiquitous in the natural world. It suggests that even basic entities, such as electrons or atoms, possess some form of consciousness or mental properties, albeit likely very simple and rudimentary.

Panconscism (your term):

Panconscism, as you've defined it, posits that everything is consciousness or is derived from consciousness. This perspective implies that consciousness is the fundamental reality, and all entities, including physical objects and mental states, are ultimately expressions or manifestations of consciousness.

Key differences:

1. **Direction of Derivation:** Panpsychism typically suggests that consciousness is a fundamental property of physical entities, whereas panconscism implies that consciousness is the fundamental reality from which all entities, including physical objects, are derived.
2. **Scope of Consciousness:** Panpsychism often attributes consciousness to specific entities or levels of organization (e.g., atoms, cells, organisms), whereas panconscism implies that everything, without exception, is either conscious(ness) or an expression of consciousness.
3. **Ontological Priority:** Panpsychism doesn't necessarily imply that consciousness is the ultimate reality; rather, it's a fundamental property of the world. Panconscism, on the other hand, grants ontological priority to consciousness, suggesting that it's the fundamental substance or reality underlying all existence.

Relationship to Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's Theory:

Sarkar's theory, as we've discussed earlier, posits that Puruśa (Supreme Consciousness) is the ultimate reality, and everything else, including mind and matter, is derived from it. In this sense, Sarkar's theory aligns more closely with panconscism, as you've defined it.

What do you think? Is panconscism a term you'd like to explore further, or would you like to discuss implications or potential criticisms?

Q: Take the example of a chair and an atom. What would be the panpsychist and panconscist analysis of each?

Meta AI: Let's apply the panpsychism and panconscism analysis to a chair and an atom:

Chair:

- **Panpsychist Analysis:** The chair, as a composite object, likely possesses a very simple or aggregate form of consciousness. This consciousness might be an emergent property of the chair's constituent atoms or molecules, or it might be a novel, irreducible property of the chair itself. The chair's consciousness would likely be very different from ours, perhaps lacking self-awareness or complex mental states.
- **Panconscist Analysis:** The chair is an expression or manifestation of consciousness, a temporary configuration of conscious experience. The chair's existence is dependent on consciousness, and it has no inherent reality apart from its being an aspect of conscious experience.

Atom:

- **Panpsychist Analysis:** The atom, as a fundamental entity, possesses some basic form of consciousness or mental properties, such as sentience or responsiveness. This consciousness is likely very simple, perhaps akin to a basic feeling or sensation.
- **Panconscist Analysis:** The atom is an expression or manifestation of consciousness, a particular way in which consciousness presents itself. The atom's properties and behavior are ultimately an aspect of conscious experience, and it has no independent existence apart from its being an expression of consciousness.

Key differences:

1. **Inherent vs. Derived Consciousness:** Panpsychism attributes consciousness to entities like atoms and chairs as an inherent property, whereas panconscism sees them as expressions or manifestations of consciousness.
2. **Complexity and Hierarchy:** Panpsychism often implies a hierarchy of consciousness, with more complex entities (like humans) possessing more sophisticated forms of consciousness. Panconscism, on the other hand, suggests that consciousness is equally fundamental and essential to all entities, regardless of their complexity.

Q: So a panpsychist would consider an atom and a chair to be somewhat conscious, while a panconscist would not necessarily, since being derived from consciousness is not the same as expressing consciousness?

Meta AI: You're hitting on a crucial distinction!

Panpsychist View:

- An atom and a chair would be considered somewhat conscious, as they possess some form of consciousness or mental properties, albeit simple or aggregate.
- The panpsychist would argue that consciousness is a fundamental property of these entities, albeit expressed in different ways.

Panconscist View:

- An atom and a chair are derived from consciousness, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're conscious in the same way we think of it.
- Being derived from consciousness means they're an expression or manifestation of consciousness, but they might not possess consciousness themselves.
- Panconscism focuses on the idea that consciousness is the fundamental reality, and everything else, including atoms and chairs, is a product or expression of that consciousness.

The key difference lies in the direction of the relationship:

- Panpsychism: Entities (atoms, chairs) possess consciousness.

- Panconscism: Consciousness gives rise to entities (atoms, chairs), which are expressions or manifestations of that consciousness.

Your interpretation highlights the subtlety of panconscism, where being derived from consciousness doesn't automatically imply that the entity is conscious. Instead, it's more about the entity's existence being grounded in consciousness.

Q: Would you say that Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's theory of consciousness, mind and matter aligns more closely with panpsychism or panconscism and why?

Meta AI: Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's theory of consciousness, mind, and matter aligns more closely with **panconscism**.

Here's why:

1. **Consciousness as Fundamental:** Sarkar's theory posits that Puruśa (Supreme Consciousness) is the ultimate reality, and everything else, including mind and matter, is derived from it.
2. **Derived Existence:** Entities, including physical objects and mental states, exist because they are expressions or manifestations of Puruśa's consciousness.
3. **No Inherent Consciousness:** In Sarkar's framework, entities don't possess inherent consciousness; instead, their existence is grounded in Puruśa's consciousness.

This aligns with the panconscist view that everything is derived from consciousness, rather than possessing consciousness as an inherent property.

In contrast, panpsychism typically attributes consciousness or mental properties to entities themselves, which isn't exactly Sarkar's approach.

Sarkar's theory emphasizes the central role of consciousness as the fundamental reality, making panconscism a more fitting alignment.

Below, Figure 1 is a diagram showing how P. R. Sarkar's philosophy of perception reframes the "Hard Problem" of Consciousness.

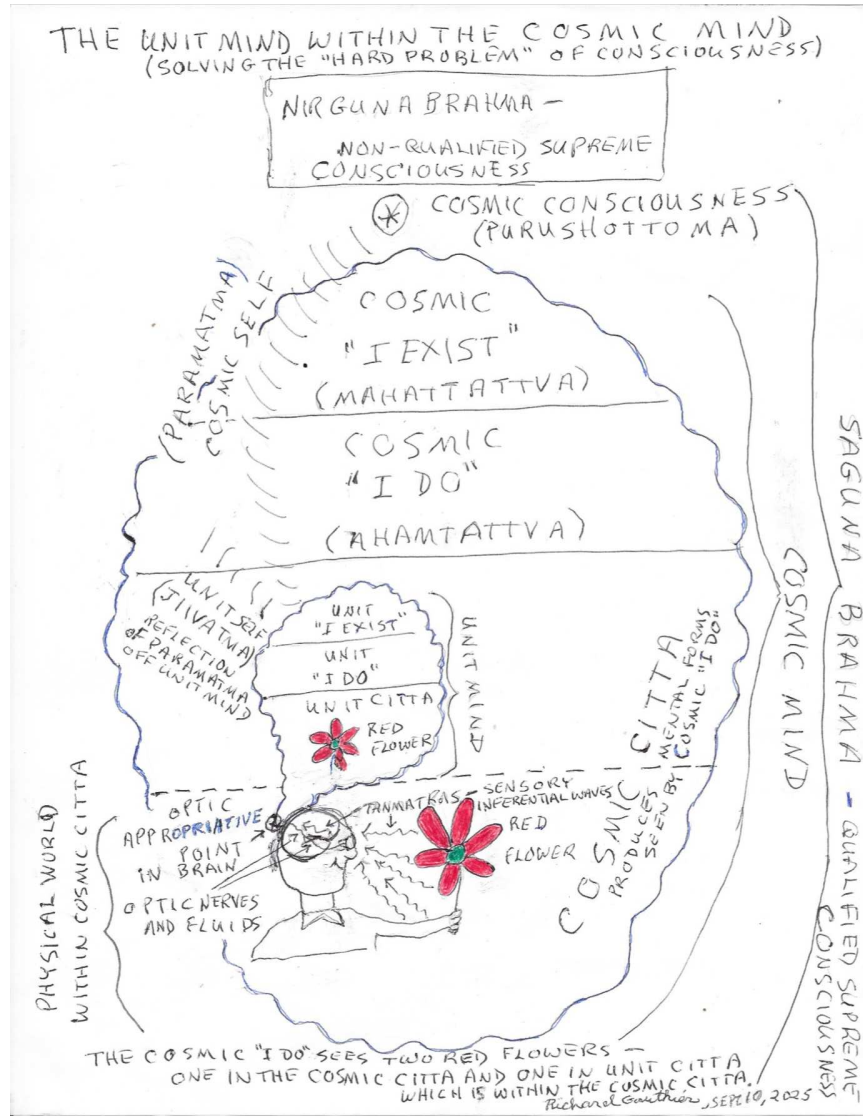


Figure 1. Diagram showing how P. R. Sarkar's philosophy of perception reframes the "Hard Problem" of Consciousness.

References

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