

## The supreme energy

While scanning *Current Science*, I was intrigued with the postulates on *atman*, the immortal aspect of the mortal existence. Narasimhan<sup>1</sup> states that the *atman* described in old Hindu scripts is possibly genetic material as it carries all the manifestations, behavioural characteristics and even memory as already programmed to the progeny from generation to generation. However, it does not meet the imperishable property of *atman* and explain how it migrates to another body, when the body dies as envisaged by saints. Crick<sup>2</sup> states that one's joy, sorrow, memories, ambitions, personal identity, free will are no more than the behaviour of vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules. He does not spell out the factor responsible for the heterogeneity in human taste, temperament, character, perception and performance. This brings us back to importance of 'Nature vs Nurture' (effect of environment). Further, vedas say that the three principal gunas *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* blended in different proportions, based on

past karma, influence the mind and intellect giving a distinct flavour to each personality. This can be changed by exercising free will in this birth.

Swami Rama<sup>3</sup> says that consciousness is energy, which circulates in the energy channels and is known as *prana*. When cessation of thoughts of desire, greed, aversion, etc. is brought in mind by meditation, the appearance of the world-illusion ceases leading to self-realization.

Advances in physical science seem to validate the concept of *brahman* (derived by metaphysical science approach), a state of pure consciousness, the universal spirit, sum totality of the universe and its phenomena. Physicists are coming close to explaining, why, if everything is eventually made up of one single substance (energy), does nature provide different types of fields for energy to work its magic? Physicists now realize that these divisions of fields are nothing but different aspects of a single entity, the 'unified field'. Yogananda<sup>4</sup> stated that body is only a manipulatable form of

condensed or frozen energy. Chattopadhyay<sup>5</sup> is too simplistic in stating that our ancient wisdom derived by years of meditation by the Enlightened to explain physiological phenomena has no rational basis and does not carry conviction.

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1. Narasimhan, N. S., *Curr. Sci.*, 2003, **85**, 1115–1116.
  2. Crick, F., *The Astonishing Hypothesis*, Maxwell Macmillan, 1994, p. 3.
  3. Swami Rama, [www.hiitindia.org](http://www.hiitindia.org).
  4. Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, p. 278.
  5. Chattopadhyay, M. K., *Curr. Sci.*, 2004, **86**, 626.
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## Plight of earth sciences

The editorial in *Current Science*<sup>1</sup> has rightly pointed out the plight of Earth Sciences in India. Geology, as pointed out, is taught in a dull, descriptive manner and untouched by the excitement of modern science. This statement has to be taken seriously if at all the subject of Geology and Earth Sciences as a whole have to survive and prove their credibility as one of the most important fundamental sciences.

Students opting for geology rarely have a passion to continue research to find out mysteries of the earth which still remain to be explored. Most of them join the geology course just to get a post-graduate degree. A post-graduate degree does not fetch a candidate a good job and even if he/she

continues his research, frustration mounts as years pass by.

Some of the institutions have closed down their postgraduate centres in Earth Sciences due to lack of interest among students. The geological community in India is also to be blamed for the bleak situation that the subject is in today. Problems facing India today, viz. drought, earthquakes, groundwater depletion and contamination, saline soils, contamination of marine environment and the recent tsunami to name a few, can be studied in a holistic manner by integrating different faculties of Earth Sciences.

I sincerely hope that the recent earthquake and tsunami disaster is an eye-opener

to the government and to the Earth Sciences community to take up this challenge and change the scenario of the Earth Sciences for a better future for the generations to come.

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1. Balaram, P., *Curr. Sci.*, 2005, **88**, 5–6.
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