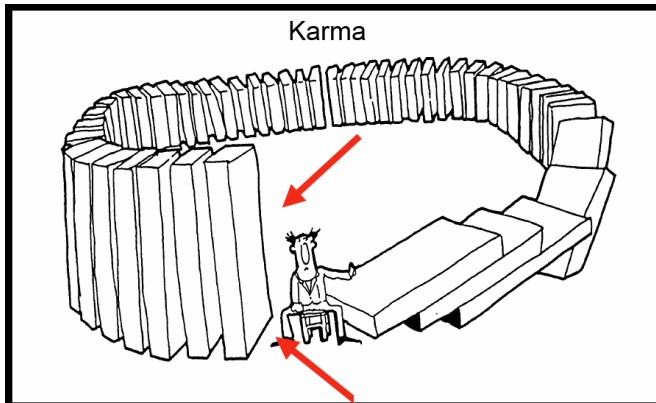


The Spiritual Scientist

An ezine for those who think!

Is The Law of Karma Scientific ?



Question: Is the law of karma scientific?

Answer: Yes and no; “yes” in the sense that the law of karma is, like the other laws of nature discovered by modern science, a foundational principle governing the world we live in; “no” in the sense that it involves the interaction of non-quantifiable parameters like consciousness, free will and motivation that are beyond the ken of classical physics.

Science has discovered that nature obeys laws for any interaction of any kind from the microscopic level to the macroscopic level. In fact, classical physics is nothing but the study and application of nature's laws. If laws govern all of nature, wouldn't it be patently unscientific to claim that humans alone are the law-exempt odd man out? Of course, humans have subtle endowments like consciousness and free will, which insentient matter doesn't have and which are beyond the capacity of classical physics to precisely discern, quantify and explain. However does the inability of classical physics to explain a phenomenon automatically make that phenomenon non-existent? The reality of consciousness is undeniable; all of us know it as a self-experienced reality. Even sceptics who deny the existence of consciousness are able to deny because they are conscious. Thus, consciousness is such an inescapable, foundational ground-reality, that its attempted denial becomes its undeniable proof. Given the inadequacy of classical physics to explain an aspect of reality as foundational as consciousness, wouldn't it be unreasonably narrow-minded to exile out of our notions of reality so vital a field of knowledge as the interactions of consciousness by labeling it as “unscientific”? Wouldn't the human quest for knowledge be checked and choked by such narrow-mindedness? Physicist David Bohm calls for open-mindedness by reminding us that the realm of scientific study is potentially open-ended: “The possibility is always open that there may exist an unlimited variety of additional properties, qualities, entities, systems, levels, etc., to which apply correspondingly new kinds of laws of nature.”

One such new level has been uncovered by quantum physics, which has supplanted classical physics in many fields. And quantum physics is increasingly recognizing consciousness as an integral aspect of reality. So it's possible that future development of quantum physics may acknowledge as scientific concepts like the law of karma that are today deemed unscientific.

Moreover, the law of karma can be said to be scientific in another sense; reason and logic - the basic cognitive faculties that undergird the scientific spirit of enquiry - can be used to gain a general understanding of the working of karma.

To conclude, vis-à-vis modern science, the law of karma is not unscientific, but trans-scientific; open-mindedness to its study can expand the horizons of human knowledge and modern science.

