



Universalist Radha- Krishnaism

A Spiritual-Scientific
Dialogue

Steve Bohlert

This image shows an infrared view of the Spitzer telescope of the central region of the Lactea. Credit: X-ray (NASA/CXC/TUM/M.Revnivtsev et al.); IR (NASA/JPL-Caltech/GLIMPSE Team)

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Bohlert takes us along with him as he reads six books. We hear him engaging in a back and forth with the authors. He likes them. They inspire him with their deep probes into the subatomic and their high flights beyond the galaxies to the divine. But perhaps their edifices of reality lack a solid keystone. Bohlert supplies his Universalist Radha-Krishnaism. In a torrent of inspirations he knocks on the portal of the cosmic palace of God and shows us what he sees as the door opens.—Daniel Clark, Spiritual Teacher

Other books by Steve Bohlert:

Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective
<<http://www.radha-krishnaism.org/2017/07/a-theological-perspective-free-download/>>

An Authentic Life: A Spiritual Autobiography
<<http://www.radha-krishnaism.org/2012/06/an-authentic-life-free-download/>>

Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: The Way of Natural Devotion; A Practitioner's Handbook
<<http://www.radha-krishnaism.org>>

Dedicated to
scientists and spiritual practitioners
seeking a common understanding
to further the development
of a new paradigm.

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Preface

Although I always had an artistic, spiritual temperament, I also have a scientific, mathematical aptitude. As a youth, I was encouraged to be practical, go to college, become an electrical engineer, and design computers. I accepted a scholarship to Pratt Institute Engineering School for that purpose. However, after two weeks, I *knew* I didn't want to be an engineer. I couldn't transfer to the art school, but I hung out with the artists and did art as much art as I could and studied existentialism.

At the end of the school year, I dropped out and began pursuing a spiritual path that continues to this day. Beginning with the strong influence of Jack Kerouac and other beats, I followed an eclectic path that included hippie, Hindu, New Age, and Protestant influences, which I combined into Universalist Radha-Krishnaism.

I continue reading and writing about scientific books, especially quantum physics and cosmology. I am pleased to learn that many leading scientists have reached the same conclusions as me and other mystics through the ages. The universe is the conscious creation of a loving, intelligent creator who we may call Cosmic Consciousness, the One, or any number of names, and we are eternal parts of that infinite being here to develop our God-dess like quality of unconditional love.

I write this book to summarize the developing new paradigm that is displacing the empirical, materialistic paradigm based on Newtonian and Darwinian models that led to the fundamentalist religion Scientism and its subsequent global environmental, social, economic, and war crises. Once enough people embrace this new model,

we may see important practical changes in cooperative living rather than competition. My goal is to stimulate new ways of being in an easy to understand way by healing the rift between science and spirituality. All the books I write about inspired me, and I recommend them to those seeking a deeper understanding.

Quantum Enigma--A Response

"A remarkable and readable presentation."

--Charles Townes, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics

Quantum Enigma: Physics Encounters Consciousness,
Second Edition by Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner,
Oxford University Press, 2011 begins:

We dedicate our book to the memory of John Bell, perhaps the leading quantum theorist of the later half of the twentieth century. His writings, lectures, and personal conversations have inspired us.

Is it not good to know what follows from what, even if it is not necessary FAPP? [FAPP is Bell's suggested abbreviation of "for all practical purposes"] Suppose for example that quantum mechanics were found to resist precise formulation. Suppose that when formulation beyond FAPP is attempted, we find an unmovable finger obstinately pointing outside the subject, to the mind of the observer, to the Hindu scriptures, to God, or even only Gravitation? Would that not be very, very interesting? -- John Bell

Physics is crossing the boundary into metaphysics, and I certainly find it very interesting. As a lifelong explorer of consciousness, being, and primary causes I'm interested in contemporary scientific views of such matters. I enjoyed this book, which is written by two respected physicists in plain English without using formulas, and I highly recommend it. They present the undisputed experimental evidence along with a basic understanding of the theory to drag "the skeleton in the closet," that most physicists don't want to deal with, into the open for all to see. They say

that one need not be a physicist to interpret quantum physics' implications--so I'll jump in and enter the ongoing debate.

While quantum theory predicts reliable experimental results and provides us with technological wonders that fuel our economy, it also challenges our traditional worldview--including ideas of "reality" and "separability"--with some weird, spooky ideas based on quantum experiments and theory if we look beyond FAPP. While the experimental results are solid, there are many ways to interpret those results, which affect our understanding of life. Let's explore some of them.

Quantum mechanics is stunningly successful. Not a single prediction of the theory has ever been wrong. One-third of our economy depends on products based on it. However, quantum mechanics also displays an enigma. It tells us that physical reality is created by observation, and it has "spooky actions" instantaneously influencing events far from each other without any physical force involved. Seen from a human perspective, quantum mechanics has physics encountering consciousness. (xi)

As the title of the book implies, it deals with physics' encounter with consciousness from a scientific perspective. I approach the encounter from a spiritual or conscious perspective. Let's see how the two views balance and enhance each other.

As I understand, "physical reality is created by observation," physicists have no idea how the universe began at time zero. However, a direct reading of quantum theory indicates that there was a conscious observer who created the cosmic nugget that then banged, went through

an inflationary process, and created the universe as we know it. I call that observer Cosmic Consciousness, a manifestation of God-dess.

[In 1935, Einstein] startled the developers of quantum theory by pointing out that the theory required an observation at one place to *instantaneously* influence what happened far away *without involving any physical force*. He derided this as "spooky action" that could not actually exist. (4)

But it does, and Einstein could not prove otherwise. This shows the interrelatedness of all things that mystics have claimed for millennia as well as the role we play as conscious observers co-creating the universe.

According to Einstein, if you took quantum theory seriously, you denied the existence of a physically real world independent of its observation. This is a serious charge. Quantum theory is not just one of many theories in physics. It is the framework upon which *all* of physics is ultimately based. (4)

Since physics is the basis of all the other sciences, this is immensely relevant to our lives and has far reaching effects. I believe spiritual people benefit by studying and addressing contemporary scientific matters of this nature. Otherwise, we are liable to slip into irrelevance if we haven't already.

Since ancient times, philosophers have come up with esoteric speculations on the nature of physical reality. But before quantum mechanics, one had the logical option of rejecting such theorizing and holding to a straightforward, commonsense worldview.

Today, quantum experiments deny a commonsense physical reality. It is no longer a logical option. (6)

Now spiritual people can benefit by understanding the findings of quantum physics and using them to promote a more spiritual vision of reality since even physicists are forced to consider alternative realities that may better describe the "reality" we are faced with. I don't believe political, economic, or military solutions will create a sustainable future. We need a more radical paradigm shift away from materialistic consumerism and capitalism. A new universalist vision or mythos suited to the twenty-first century is needed.

Try summarizing the implications of quantum theory, and what you get sounds mystical. . . . Quantum theory also tells us that an object can be in two places at the same time. Its existence at the particular place where it happens to be found becomes an actuality *only upon its observation*. Quantum theory thus denies the existence of a physically real world independent of its observation. (7)

We are conditioned to perceive "reality" according to the current social construct from birth. However, there are numerous paradigms of what is real, and those paradigms conflict with one another fueling the culture wars that rage around us. Throughout the ages, mystics explored alternate realities and alternate ways of experiencing this "reality." I hope the quantum view of things encourages more people to engage in mysticism that tends to unify the diverse paradigms through common experiences of the transcendent conscious reality that forms the ground of being.

If an object can be in two places at the same time, I can simultaneously exist on this earthly plane and in the spiritual dimension of Braj. This is what the spiritual practice of natural devotion entails--living fully in this world while developing a Braj identity and interacting with its inhabitants there on an inner spiritual level. The two worlds are intertwined yet separate realities.

“Though the quantum facts are not in dispute, the meaning *behind* those facts, what quantum mechanics tells us about our world, is hotly debated.” (8) Philosophers and theologians pondered the meaning of life over the millennia. Given the new facts presented by science, these thinkers are qualified to interpret them and their meaning. Many physicists are atheistic materialists and their interpretations sometimes deny meaning to life beyond being like robots programmed by nature to act in a fixed way. Therefore, I encourage rational mystics to accept the facts, enter the debate, and provide a more meaningful interpretation of life. We need not limit ourselves to ancient worldviews described in revered writings no matter how sacred. Revelation is an ongoing process, and we can help it progress.

Some argue that once the electrochemical neural correlates of consciousness are understood, there will be nothing left to explain. Others insist that the “inner light” of our conscious experience will elude the reductionist grasp, that consciousness is primary, and that new “psychophysical principles” will be needed. Quantum mechanics is claimed as evidence supporting this non-reductionist view. (36)

Of course, I side with the second view and hope consciousness will be better understood through quantum

theory, although I think consciousness is beyond its purview.

“There may be forms of energy we don’t yet know about.” (49) Science traditionally confined its studies to material energy that is tangible and measurable. They are ignorant of spiritual energy, which they tend to deny and ignore--as well as the individual spirits who are conscious beings that animate and give consciousness to the body.

Now that quantum mechanics encountered consciousness, it may be easier to argue for a spiritual energy or dimension to existence. As Sir James Jeans said, “The universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine.” (53) This is not much different from the Hindu idea of Vishnu dreaming the material universes and impregnating them by his glance.

The deeper meaning of quantum mechanics is *increasingly* in dispute. It does not require a technical background to move to the frontier where physics joins issues that seem beyond physics, and where physicists cannot claim unique competence. Once there, you can take sides in the debate. (54)

Physics has entered the field of metaphysics, which I’ve studied all my life. I also have a scientific aptitude and have kept up with scientific reading over the years. Therefore, I consider my ideas as valid as any. Again, I encourage spiritual people to grapple with quantum mechanics and try to make sense of it and existence from a spiritual viewpoint because atheistic materialists are certainly busy working on it.

The *New York Times* in 2002 quoted science historian Jed Buchwald: “Physicists . . . have long

had a special loathing for admitting questions with the slightest emotional content into their professional work." Indeed, most physicists want to avoid dealing with the skeleton in our closet: physics encounter with the conscious observer. The Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics allows that avoidance. It's been called our discipline's "orthodox" position. (125)

On the other hand, I explored and studied consciousness my whole life as have other mystics and spiritual seekers. We have much to contribute to the debate from our conscious perspective.

"The Copenhagen interpretation avoids involving physics with the conscious observer by redefining what has been the goal of science since ancient Greece: to explain the actual world." (131) This shows that many materialistic scientists are willing to go to great lengths to avoid consciousness and spirituality. It behoves us to provide an alternative.

"Everyone is willing to abandon *naïve* realism. But few are willing to abandon '*scientific* realism,' defined as 'the thesis that the objects of scientific knowledge exist and act independently of the knowledge of them.' Quantum mechanics challenges scientific realism." (139) Therefore, we need to rethink the nature of reality--they are referring to objective reality, not subjective reality. This is more than just, "Yeah. We all create our own worlds in our minds."

"Concern with consciousness itself (as well as its connection with quantum mechanics) has increasingly emerged among physicists, philosophers and psychologists." (139-40) This provides a great opportunity for spiritual people to collaborate with each other and open

minded scientists to help steer the direction of debate toward a more desirable understanding of life.

Heisenberg tells us that microscopic objects such as atoms are not “real”--they’re just “potentialities.” What about things *made* of atoms? Chairs, for example? Is a not-yet-seen galaxy not really there? Pressing such questions, we confront the skeleton physics usually keeps in the closet. (143)

Quantum mechanics applies to all levels of existence from sub-atomic particles to the universe itself. If the building blocks of matter are not real, then how can their macro structures be real? Also consider that most of the universe consists of dark energy and dark matter, which we don’t understand at all. What is the real nature of this place we inhabit?

The Copenhagen interpretation . . . does not deny a physically real world. It merely claims that objects of the *microscopic* realm lack reality before they are observed. Moons, chairs, and cats are real, if for no other reason than that macroscopic objects cannot be isolated, and are thus constantly observed. And that, according to Copenhagen, should be good enough. That was not good enough for Einstein. (155)

The Copenhagen interpretation delegates quantum mechanics to the microscopic world and leaves the macroscopic world to Newton and Einstein. It focuses on practical results and predictions obtained by working the formulas and avoids the more difficult questions raised in this book.

Einstein . . . insisted that there was a real world out there. The goal of science must be to *explain* Nature, not just tell what we can *say* about Nature. (170)

I deeply believe in the reality of the world based on my observations and studies. As a transcendentalist, I tried to escape from this material plane using various means. I had brief successes, but I always returned to the same reality I left. Now I am old and death comes closer. I look to that event as the best time to make a full and final escape--I see it as a time to put my practices and theories to the test and see what other dimensions are accessible.

Philosophers and mystics have talked of reality and separability (or its opposite, "universal connectedness") for millennia. Quantum mechanics puts these issues squarely in front of us. Bell's theorem allows them to be tested. (177)

Quantum mechanics confirms "universal connectedness." We can use this to promote the interconnectedness of the web of life and encourage people to work for the common good of the environment and all species in a holistic manner.

Our world therefore does not have both reality and separability. It's in this sense, an "unreasonable" world. (178)

Clauser's experiments ruled out what is sometimes called "local reality," or "local hidden variables." The experiments showed that properties of our world either have only an observation-created reality *or* that there exists a connectedness beyond that mitigated by ordinary physical forces, or both. (185)

We can never be certain that any scientific theory is correct. Some day a better theory might supersede quantum theory. But we now know that any such better theory must also describe a world that does not have both reality and separability. Before Clauser's result, we could not know this. (186)

"Reality" has been our shorthand term for the existence of physically real properties *not* created by their observation. Quantum theory does not include such reality. The nature of physical reality has been argued about at least since Plato's day in 400 BC. And it still is. (187)

Sages in India have debated the question for a similarly long time without agreement. I feel this debate is important to continue using the most current information available, especially when it is experimentally testable. A multidisciplinary approach is desirable. We need a new vision to guide us through this twenty-first century because the old paradigms are breaking down and producing catastrophic results.

That our actual world does not have separability is now generally accepted, though admitted to be a mystery. In principle, any objects that have ever interacted are forever entangled, and therefore what happens to one influences the other. Experiments have now demonstrated such influences extending over more than one hundred kilometers. Quantum theory has this connectedness extending over the entire universe. (188)

Nevertheless, there is, in principle, a universal connectedness whose meaning we have yet to understand. We can indeed "see the world in a grain of sand." (189)

All men suppose that what is called wisdom deals with the first causes and the principles of things.-- Aristotle, in *Metaphysics* . . . Were Aristotle around today, he would surely explore "first causes" by trying to understand what quantum mechanics is telling us about the world, and about us. (193)

I spent much of my life exploring "first causes" by studying ancient myths and their theological interpretation. I study "first causes" according to physics to ground my theology in a relevant contemporary understanding of existence.

We're not at ease with non-physical "influences." Or with reality creation by "observation." Certainly not with *history* creation. Experimental metaphysics may some day lead to explanations beyond today's quantum theory. But Zeilinger warns us: "This new theory will be so much stranger . . . people attacking quantum mechanics now will long to have it back." We earlier quoted John Bell telling us that we are likely to be "astonished." (202)

It's indeed a strange world we live in. Physicists who prefer to confine their studies to the physical now must deal with consciousness and other weird facts of life. Those in the fields of consciousness raising and expansion who engaged in "experimental metaphysics" by delving deep into their own consciousness have much to offer for developing a holistic worldview. At least I'm used to the idea of this being a strange, multidimensional experience.

Most physicists (including ourselves) would agree that consciousness *itself* is beyond the physics discipline, not something to be studied in a physics department. (203)

Classical physics with its mechanical picture of the world, has been used to deny the existence of anything beyond the strictly mechanistic. *Quantum physics denies that denial*. It hints of something beyond what we usually consider physics, beyond what we *usually* consider the "physical world." (204)

This is a great opening and opportunity even though many would like to keep it closed by coming up with fantastic material explanations or denials of the enigma. They view everything as a product of physical reactions--including their own consciousness.

While there is complete consensus on the experimental results, there is no consensus on their meaning. Many interpretations currently contend. Every one of them displays a quantum weirdness. (205)

Ithaca assigns consciousness to a "reality" larger than the "physical reality" to which physics, for the present at least, should be restricted. This modest interpretation of the quantum enigma just admits a mystery. (216)

In *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism*, I also assign consciousness to a larger reality:

Cosmic consciousness cognizes and regulates concrete formations. From this perspective, cosmic

consciousness implies a differentiated, qualified state of God-dess. Cosmic consciousness is qualified in a limited sense as a partial manifestation of God-dess, who is qualified in endless ways. Cosmic consciousness exists within beings and material nature consciously maintaining all.

God-dess relates to conditioned individuals and nature through cosmic consciousness. God-dess creates the world and enters it as cosmic consciousness. God-dess pervades, sustains, and regulates individual spirits and the universe collectively and individually as cosmic consciousness. (84)

Quantum Enigma goes on to say:

Quantum mechanics shows that our reasonable, everyday worldview is fundamentally flawed. Interpretations of what the theory tells us offer different worldviews. But every one of them involves the mysterious intrusion of the conscious observer into the physical world. . . Here's how John Wheeler puts the dichotomy:

Useful as it is under everyday circumstances to say that the world exists "out there" independent of us, that view can no longer be upheld. There is a strange sense in which this is a "participatory universe." (219)

I and other process theologians like to say we are co-creators with God--or God-dess as I prefer. The world responds to our perceptions, thoughts, and actions in ways we are not fully aware of. We see the beauty and grace of life. We also see human destruction of the environment and the suffering caused by clashing paradigms and

inflated egos vying for supremacy. We must create a holistic paradigm that unites people to work for the common good since we all share this interconnected world that is open to change for better or worse.

Belief in our free will arises from our conscious perception that we make choices between possible alternatives. If free will is just an illusion, and we're all just sophisticated robots controlled by our neurochemistry with perhaps a bit of thermal randomness, is our consciousness then also an illusion? (If so, what is it that is *having* that illusion?) (225)

Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: The Way of Natural Devotion claims the individual spirit is the conscious observer who makes free choices limited by nature, conditioning, and other factors beyond our control.

The spirit is infinitesimal, yet it pervades the physical body that temporarily encases it, like a minute sun whose conscious light pervades the whole body and beyond. It is nonmaterial, therefore, not limited by spacetime, but in this conditioned state, it believes it is. It exists as a discrete being with a field of consciousness and makes dimensional shifts in consciousness. (98)

Rosenblum and Kuttner continue:

Though it is hard to fit free will into our usual scientific worldview, we cannot, ourselves, with any seriousness, doubt it. J.A. Hobson's comment seems apt to us: "Those of us with common sense are amazed at the resistance put up by psychologists, physiologists, and philosophers to the obvious reality of free will." (226)

I must agree with them. They further point out that, "The idea of physical reality being created by its observation goes back thousands of years to Vedic philosophy. (227)" Universalist Radha-Krishnaism is a contemporary interpretation of that ancient Vedic philosophy.

"But today's cosmology, our view of the universe as a whole, presents a quantum enigma, one seeming to involve consciousness on an ever-grander scale." (258) Reflecting the writings of Paul Tillich, I consider God-dess the Ground of Being--existence itself. There is nothing but God-dess and God-dess' energies in the whole universe.

Stanford University physics professor Andrei Linde writes:

Will it not turn out, with the further development of science, that the study of the universe and the study of consciousness will be inseparably linked, and that ultimate progress in the one will be impossible without progress in the other? . . . will the next important step be the development of a unified approach to our entire world, including the world of consciousness? (264)

Yes, however, it should not be formulated only by physicists--but include the sciences, humanities, and spirituality.

But during that split second before our "familiar" quarks and electrons came into existence, the Big Bang had to be finely tuned to produce a universe in which we could live. *Quite* finely tuned! Theories vary. According to one, if the initial conditions of the universe were chosen randomly, there would only be one chance in 10^{120} (that's one with 120 zeros after it) that the universe would allow life. . . . By any

such estimate, the chance that a livable universe like ours would be created is far less than the chance of randomly picking a *particular* single atom out of all the atoms in the universe. (264)

What or who finely tuned what to create this habitable universe is the question. My answer as to who is clearly God-dess. Let me close with an excerpt from *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism* to clarify my position:

Both scientific and mythological explanations can be true simultaneously. They deal with creation on different levels of understanding. One is taught in science classes, and one in religion classes. Trouble comes when religion seeks to place ancient science on an equal footing with contemporary science and when science oversteps its bounds by discussing god.

While science and religion remain separate fields, their cross pollination can produce wonderful results. Religious interpretation adds meaning to science, and science grounds religion in twenty-first century cosmology. They complement each other and can peacefully coexist. When both views are held simultaneously a fuller understanding of multidimensional reality develops through an interpretive shift and the will to do so.

God-dess exists as the ground of being, the primal cause, the beginning and end of all, the source of life and love. God-dess exists before and after spacetime. God-dess was, is, and ever shall be. The universe springs from his-her eternal, infinite spiritual potential.

The material universe exists as a reflection of the spiritual world, like a tree reflected on water. The tree is real; the reflection is ephemeral, yet based in reality. The material universe exists as a temporary modification of the spiritual world. (Plato's theory of forms is a similar concept.) It appears real like the dream world sleepers inhabit seems real, but they wake up and realize its temporary nature. People consider the waking world real, but it forms another level of dream. However, it shares many features of the real spiritual world. (102)

About the Authors

Bruce Rosenblum is currently Professor of Physics, emeritus, at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He has also consulted extensively for government and industry on technical and policy issues. His research has moved from molecular physics to condensed matter physics, and, after a foray into biophysics, has focused on fundamental issues in quantum mechanics.

Fred Kuttner is a Lecturer in the Department of Physics at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He devotes most of his time to teaching physics after a career in industry, including two technology startups, and a second career in academic administration. His research interests have included the low temperature properties of solids and the thermal properties of magnets. For the last several years he has worked on the foundations of quantum mechanics and the implications of the quantum theory.

The Fabric of the Cosmos

His driving question in *The Fabric of the Cosmos*, then, is fundamental: "What is reality?" Over sixteen chapters, he traces the evolving human understanding of the substrate of the universe, from classical physics to ten-dimensional M-Theory.—Amazon.com Review

Brian Greene's *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality (FC)*, Random House LLC, 2007 says,

"What is reality? We humans only have access to the internal experiences of perception and thought, so how can we be sure they truly reflect an external world? Philosophers have long recognized this problem. . . . And physicists such as myself are acutely aware that the reality we observe--matter evolving on the stage of space and time--may have little to do with the reality, if any, that's out there. Nevertheless, because observations are all we have, we take them seriously. (ix)"

The overarching lesson that has emerged from scientific inquiry over the last century is that human experience is often a misleading guide to the true nature of reality. Lying just beneath the surface of the everyday *is* a world we'd hardly recognize. Followers of the occult, devotees of astrology, and those who hold to religious principles that speak to a reality beyond experience have, from widely varying perspectives, long since arrived at a similar conclusion. . . . Assessing existence while failing to embrace the insights of modern physics would be like wrestling in the dark with an unknown opponent. By deepening our understanding of the true nature of physical reality, we profoundly reconfigure our

sense of ourselves and our experience of the universe. (5)

I studied the nature of reality, including ultimate reality, my whole life. I am a mystic with a strong rational, scientific aptitude. I especially apply myself to entering an alternative reality called Braj that is free of the ill effects of spacetime. This is an internal subjective experience that may be more real than our outer lives since it puts me and other practitioners in relationship or entanglement with the Ground of Being--God-dess, Radha-Krishna--who will be fully realized at death when I fully cross from this dimension to the next.

As I practice the way of natural devotion, I like to keep my mysticism grounded in what may be understood as the latest social construct of reality based on quantum physics and cosmology. I turn to science hoping to get facts and proven theories about the cosmos and our place in it only to find that they don't really know how it works or what it is--although they claim to be making progress and new experimental results clear things up while perhaps also making them more mysterious. I like the scientific way of holding provisional truths, but being willing to change them when proven wrong or a better explanation is provided.

However, it is unfortunate that the scientific community, which is heavily influenced by materialism and atheism, goes to extreme lengths to avoid the issue of consciousness and the possibility of a conscious creator, which is the logical obvious cause of the big bang. As Greene says, "Things become definite only when a suitable observation forces them to relinquish quantum possibilities and settle on a specific outcome. (11)" God-dess' gaze collapses the potential universe to a compact particle that

then inflates to create the observed universe. The One becomes many and yet remains one supporting all.

Natural devotion comes from the Vaishnav tradition that proposes the existence of innumerable material universes that are distorted reflections of the spiritual universe, which is the infinite, eternal reality underlying this illusory apparent reality. Ancient sages pondered the same questions as today's scientists and had some similar insights. Intuitive realization plays an important role in scientific understanding today as it did in antiquity. "Classical physics provided a rigorous grounding for human intuition. (8)"

Instead of the three spatial dimensions and one time dimension of common experience, superstring theory requires *nine* spatial dimensions and one time dimension. And, in a more robust incarnation of superstring theory known as *M-theory*, unification requires *ten* space dimensions and one time dimension--a cosmic substrate composed of a total of eleven spacetime dimensions. As we don't see these extra dimensions, superstring theory is telling us that *we've so far glimpsed but a meager slice of reality.* (18)

Even decades before superstring theory's discovery, visionary scientists, including Einstein, pondered the idea of spatial dimensions beyond the ones we see, and suggested possibilities for where they might be hiding. . . . And the room provided by large extra space dimensions might allow for something even more remarkable: other nearby worlds--not nearby in ordinary space, but nearby in the extra dimensions--of which we've so far been completely unaware. (19)

I picture the spiritual realm of Braj existing in another dimension that pervades the one we currently inhabit--including our collective consciousness. All these added theoretical dimensions certainly provide room for this spiritual world and others to exist undetected by material means but accessible via a spiritual journey.

Greene says,

I wanted what Feynman described: to assess life and to experience the universe on all possible levels, not just those that happened to be accessible to our frail human senses. The search for the deepest understanding of the cosmos became my lifeblood. (21)

I had similar aspirations, but I chose to pursue them through mysticism.

Each generation takes over from the previous, pays homage to its predecessors' hard work, insight, and creativity, and pushes up a little further. New theories and more refined measurements are the mark of scientific progress, and such progress builds on what came before, almost never wiping the slate clean. Because this is the case, our task is far from absurd or pointless. . . . we undertake the most exquisite and noble of tasks: to unveil this place we call home, to revel in the wonders we discover, and to hand off our knowledge to those who follow. (22)

Just as Greene and other scientists advanced understanding by building on what came before and adjusting their course as new revelations became available, I did the same thing for the cause of spiritual understanding in my *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism* building on previous teachings but adapting to new

revelations. I pass on this wisdom with the hope that others will pick it up and advance it even further. There is certainly more to be revealed in science and spirituality.

The big bang started the universe off in a state of low entropy, and that state appears to be the source of the order we currently see. In other words, *the current order is a cosmological relic.* (171)

Or we could say, whatever banged was highly ordered in such a way that its unfolding led to our current existence just as the unfolding of an acorn leads to an oak tree.

Incredible order at the beginning is what started it all off, and we have been living through the gradual unfolding toward higher disorder ever since. (174)

Greene says, "The puzzle then is to explain how the universe began in such an unlikely, highly ordered configuration. (176)" I and many theologians point to a conscious designer rather than mere chance interactions that are most unlikely to produce a livable universe like this.

An observation today can therefore help complete the story we tell of a process that began yesterday, or the day before, or perhaps a billion years earlier. An observation today can delineate the kinds of details we can and must include in today's recounting of the past. (191)

People and processes begun in the distant past influence us today. We can't change the past, but we can change the way we view the past and how we allow the past to influence us. I did that in a couple of ways--such as

writing *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism (URK)*, which revises Chaitanya Vaishnavism using contemporary theological and scientific ideas, and writing *An Authentic Life: A Spiritual Autobiography*, which puts the events of my life in a satisfying, successful perspective from the vantage point of my life today so that all the struggles were worthwhile and fruitful. Thus, I revitalized my spiritual tradition and my personal life by looking at them in new ways based on current information and consciousness.

If there were perfect symmetry between how things are now and how they were then, if the change from moment to moment were of no more consequence than the change from rotating a cue ball, time as we normally conceive it wouldn't exist. . . there'd be no sense in which the universe evolves or changes. Time would be an abstract feature of this reality's arena . . . (226)

As I and others conceive of Braj, it is a world unaffected by time. It's inhabitants' bodies do not change--they do not experience birth, death, old age, or disease. The environment does not change in essence, but pleasing new manifestations constantly unfold giving the appearance of day and night and a sequence of events. It exists in the eternal now, and a moment can last an age. Multiple realities can coexist at once since Radha-Krishna are able to make each devotee think they are only with them in a personal relationship. Thus, residents of Braj enjoy eternity in ever novel divine play.

For reasons that will become increasingly clear, the highly successful laws of physics developed in the twentieth century break down under such intense

conditions, leaving us rudderless in our quest to understand the beginning of time. (248)

Metaphysics deals with those things beyond physics such as the beginning of time. Mysticism, theology, and spirituality over the millennia searched for the primary cause, and they came up with a variety of theories. When metaphysics combines with the latest revelations of quantum mechanics, astronomy, and cosmology, perhaps a truer vision of existence may be gained. Anyone who at all keeps up with the news knows we sorely need a new vision that can unite the world for the common good soon.

Researchers refer to the emptiest space can be as the *vacuum*, and so we learn that the vacuum may actually be permeated by a uniform Higgs field.

The process of a Higgs field's assuming a nonzero value throughout space--forming a Higgs ocean--is called *spontaneous symmetry breaking* and is one of the most important ideas to emerge in the later decades of twentieth-century theoretical physics. (260)

However, most physicists do believe that were it not for the Higgs ocean, *all fundamental particles would be like the photon and have no mass whatsoever.* (263)

The emptiest empty space need not involve a state of absolute nothingness. Without invoking the spiritual, therefore, we may well closely brush up against the thinking of Henry More . . . in our scientific quest to understand space and time. To More, the usual concept of empty space was meaningless because space is always filled with divine spirit. (269-70)

The detection of Higgs particles would be a major milestone, as it would confirm the existence of a species of field that theoretical particle physicists and cosmologists have invoked for decades, without any supporting experimental evidence. (427)

These Higgs particles were recently detected at the Large Hadron Collider, ten years after this was written, confirming the theoretical claims. Some dubbed them the "God particle" because they give mass to other particles. Perhaps a better description of them from a Universalist Radha-Krishnaism perspective may be the material energy of God-dess that gives otherwise massless spiritual energy a mass making it matter.

This raises the intriguing possibility that there might actually be a single fundamental force of nature, that through a series of cosmological phase transitions has crystallized into the four seemingly different forces of which we are currently aware. (266)

According to *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: The Way of Natural Devotion*, God-dess is that single force pervading all as the Ground of Being.

God-dess possesses infinite energies, but according to Chaitanya, the spiritual energy, material energy, and individual spirits are primary. They exist in God-dess' nature. Spiritual energy constitutes the intrinsic self of God-dess, and forms the substratum of the transcendental world where God-dess displays transcendental forms and activities. Material energy externally relates to God-dess and causes the material world. It relates to God-dess in the sense that all energies ultimately inhere in God-dess. God-dess' perfect selfhood transcends the duality of matter and exists totally free of its influence. (85)

Greene goes on to say:

A common misconception is that the big bang provides a theory of cosmic origins. It doesn't. The big bang is a theory . . . that delineates cosmic evolution from a split second after whatever happened to bring the universe into existence, but *it says nothing at all about time zero itself*. And since, according to the big bang theory, the bang is what is supposed to have happened at the beginning, the big bang leaves out the bang. It tells us nothing about what banged, why it banged, how it banged, or, frankly, whether it ever really banged at all. In fact, if you think about it for a moment, you'll realize that the big bang presents us with quite a puzzle. (272)

I put it this way:

Creation of the material universe begins the spacetime continuum. Before creation, there was no space or time. Without beginning or end, God-dess exists in the eternal now. The logos Om manifests in the big bang. The event horizon bursts from the primal singularity. The one becomes many. On this level of reality, spacetime begins.

No one can adequately explain the beginning of creation or what existed before it. No one was there--not scientists or religionists. Both speculate. Yet people want to know how creation began. Where does this universe come from? Science and religion try their best to explain the unexplainable and give people something to hold on to. (URK 101)

Greene continues:

According to inflation, the more than 100 billion galaxies, sparkling throughout space like heavenly

diamonds, are nothing but quantum mechanics writ large across the sky. To me, this realization is one of the greatest wonders of the modern scientific age. (308)

This means, as I discussed in "Quantum Enigma--A Response," the whole universe lacks objective reality yet is interconnected in a mysterious way as if it is the mind of God-dess that pervades and sustains all and ultimately is all.

This success has convinced many physicists of the inflationary theory's validity. What is of equal importance, these and other precision astronomical measurements, which have only recently become possible, have allowed cosmology to mature from a field based on speculation and conjecture to one firmly grounded in observation--a coming of age that has inspired many in the field to call our era the golden age of cosmology. (310)

The great religions of antiquity often included cosmologies based on their current scientific understanding. It is amazing to me that some Christian and Hindu groups want their outdated cosmologies taught on a par with today's science. When it comes to understanding the material world and its workings, scientists do that well. When it comes to metaphysics and meaning, it is best that science leave that alone--especially with today's crop of materialists.

The puzzle we encountered is to explain how this high-order, low-entropy starting point came to be. (314)

It's . . . this early state of order . . . that primed the universe for the subsequent evolution to higher

entropy and hence provided the arrow of time we all experience. With our current level of understanding, this is the most complete explanation for time's arrow that has been given. (322)

Clearly the universe began in a state of high order that did not result by chance from chaos. Nothing comes from nothing. In the beginning, there was a highly ordered something that became the universe as we know it today. That original something came from something or someone that ordered it to work in such a way to produce a life sustaining universe.

the *single* species of string can account for a great variety of particles because the string can execute a great variety of vibrational patterns. . . . At the ultramicroscopic level, the universe would be akin to a string symphony vibrating matter into existence. (347)

Most strikingly . . . string theory has revealed that the fabric of the cosmos may have many more dimensions than we perceive directly--dimensions that may be the key to resolving some of the universe's deepest mysteries. (374)

[T]he most straightforward reading of string theory says that the extra space dimensions are every bit as real as the three we know about. (529)

The unifying master theory has tentatively been called *M-theory*, *M* being a tantalizing placeholder whose meaning--Master? Majestic? Mother? Magic? Mystery? Matrix?--awaits the outcome of a vigorous worldwide research effort now seeking to complete the new vision . . . (379)

It is not necessarily that the extra dimensions are extremely small. They could be big. We don't see them because of the way we see. We see by using the electromagnetic force, which is unable to access any dimensions beyond the three we know about. Like an ant walking on a lily pad, completely unaware of the deep waters lying just beneath the visible surface, we could be floating within a grand, expansive, higher-dimensional space . . . but the electromagnetic force--eternally trapped within our dimensions--would be unable to reveal this. (393-4)

That scientists are coming to these conclusions is encouraging to me. Vaishnav theology portrays the universe as floating in a vast causal ocean that is a small portion of the infinite spiritual universe that encompasses everything.

Everything exists within the infinite Absolute. The infinite existence of God-dess logically excludes the existence of anything other than God-dess. All existence consists of the energy of the absolute, who remains intrinsically related to it. Everything exists within God-dess, and she-he exists within everything. (*URK:WND* 82)

Greene continues,

Right now, right next to you, right next to me, and right next to everyone else, there could be another spatial dimension--a dimension beyond left/right, back/forth, and up/down, a dimension that's curled up but still large enough to swallow something as thick as this page--that remains beyond our grasp. (400)

I see the spiritual and psychic dimensions interpenetrating the physical. Materialistic scientists long

dismissed such nonphysical dimensions, but now the role consciousness plays in physics, lack of scientific reality, and universal interconnectedness described in *Quantum Enigma* make them harder to deny.

There may be much more to space and time than we anticipated; if there is, what we consider to be “everything” may be but a small constituent of a far richer reality. (412)

This is certainly true. Exploration of the inner realms of consciousness can provide a rich life unavailable elsewhere. When we connect our individual consciousness to the cosmic consciousness of God-dess it enlivens our being and allows us to glimpse our eternal self. Natural devotion entails visualizing our life in Braj and increasing our desire to be there, which is the key to entry.

No doubt, when it comes to extra dimensions, I’m biased. I’ve worked on aspects of extra dimensions for more than fifteen years, so they hold a special place in my heart. But, with that confession as a qualifier, it’s hard for me to imagine a discovery that would be more exciting than finding evidence for dimensions beyond the three with which we’re all familiar. To my mind, there is currently no other serious proposal whose confirmation would so thoroughly shake the foundation of physics and so thoroughly establish that we must be willing to question basic, seemingly self-evident, elements of reality. (426)

I’m biased too. I’ve worked on aspects of extra dimensions for fifty-four years, so they hold a special place in my heart as well. I bought this book hoping to find scientific corroboration for their existence. I like my beliefs

to be in tune with actual existence as we best understand it today. It turns out my beliefs may be more in line with current scientific thought than one might imagine although proof is far off if ever to be attained.

I think some things like spiritual dimensions and God-
dess are beyond proof. They remain in the realm of faith and the subjective experiences of those who dare venture on the spiritual quest for self-realization. A person may find adequate experiential proof to keep their faith strong, but it is not necessarily adequate to convince a skeptic. The path to God-
dess realization is long and arduous with few willing to commit to the task.

The journey to discover the nature of space and time has been long and filled with many surprises; no doubt it is still in its early stages. During the last few centuries, we've seen one breakthrough after another radically reshape our conceptions of space and time and reshape them again. The theoretical and experimental proposals we've covered in this book represent our generations sculpting of these ideas, and will likely be a major part of our scientific legacy. (436)

Similarly with our understanding of God-
dess. There have been many advances by great thinkers and mystics through the centuries. Spirituality is a progressive path leading to fuller realization. I offer my sculpting of ideas, *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism*, to the spiritual legacy of my generation. However, just as there are those who reject scientific facts such as evolution, there are those who think only old religious beliefs are worth following. I am not one of them.

This tricky issue--to what extent is our personal identity tied to our physical being?--has been debated for years in a variety of guises without being answered to everyone's satisfaction. While I believe identity all resides in the physical, others disagree, and no one can claim to have the definitive answer. (441)

Of course, I disagree and believe identity and consciousness reside in the individual spirit. I'm surprised at how many people today think they are simply their physical body and death is the end. I actually sat across the table at Thanksgiving dinner with a man who said he was a "meat computer." How sad. At least I admire Greene's openness that is part of his scientific mindset.

Physicists spend a large part of their lives in a state of confusion. It's an occupational hazard. To excel in physics is to embrace doubt while walking the winding road to clarity. The tantalizing discomfort of perplexity is what inspires otherwise ordinary men and women to extraordinary feats of ingenuity and creativity; nothing quite focuses the mind like dissonant details awaiting harmonious resolution. (471)

This kind of thought also drives me on the spiritual quest. I constantly doubt and question. Critical examination of my beliefs and practices only strengthens my faith, making it my own--not a hand-me-down from someone else.

In due course, space and time as currently conceived may be recognized as mere allusions to more subtle, more profound, and more fundamental principles underlying physical reality. . . . Physicists

sometimes sum up this possibility by saying that spacetime may be an illusion--a provocative depiction, but one whose meaning requires proper interpretation. (471)

I say:

The material universe exists as a reflection of the spiritual world, like a tree reflected on water. The tree is real; the reflection is ephemeral, yet based in reality. The material universe exists as a temporary modification of the spiritual world. (Plato's theory of forms is a similar concept.) It appears real like the dream world sleepers inhabit seems real, but they wake up and realize its temporary nature. People consider the waking world real, but it forms another level of dream. However, it shares many features of the real spiritual world. (*URK* 102)

Instead, composite spacetime would mean that an even more elemental description of the universe--one that is spaceless and timeless--has yet to be discovered. (*FC* 472)

In a panentheistic sense, infinite, eternal God-dess is the universe itself and that which contains it.

We are thus led to ask: if the clues described in the last two sections are pointing us in the right direction, and familiar spacetime is but a large scale manifestation of some more fundamental entity, what is that entity and what are its essential properties? (*FC* 477)

God-dess who is eternal conscious bliss.

Again, there is no question that regardless of future discoveries, space and time will continue to frame our individual experience; space and time, as far as everyday life goes, are here to stay. (FC 492)

Yes, that's my experience also. Living in the material world is where day to day life unfolds. We best understand, accept, and work with it to the best of our ability for as long as we are here. It is also divine if seen with the proper vision.

Thus, the "timeless" photon perspective is limited to massless objects (of which the photon is an example), and so "timelessness is permanently beyond what all but a few types of particle species can ever attain. (497)

Individual spirits and spiritual energy are not matter and hence have no mass, therefore they are timeless. Individual spirits are much more compatible with spiritual energy than material energy, but they are able to travel between both and can identify with matter.

I can't help but like Brian Greene despite his material perspective. He is open minded and writes about complex subjects clearly and without formulas. I highly recommend *The Fabric of the Cosmos* to anyone who wants an up to date understanding of this place we call home.

About the Author

Brian Greene received his undergraduate degree from Harvard University and his doctorate from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He joined the physics faculty of Cornell University in 1990, was appointed to a full professorship in 1995, and in 1996

joined Columbia University where he is professor of physics and mathematics. He has lectured at both a general and a technical level in more than twenty-five countries and is widely regarded for a number of groundbreaking discoveries in superstring theory. He lives in Andes, New York and New York City.

The Physics of God

The Physics of God is the best book on the subject that I have ever read. It is a clear and lucid explanation of the interface between science and spirituality, as well as consciousness and matter. Anyone, scientist or layman, will benefit from this marvelous book.--Jyotish Novak, author of *How to Meditate*

The Physics of God: Unifying Quantum Physics, Consciousness, M-Theory, Heaven, Neuroscience, and Transcendence, by Joseph Selbie, New Page Books, 2018 does an excellent job of bringing together spirituality and contemporary science in a way that benefits both. His view includes an unlimited spiritual cosmos with innumerable spiritual universes where our spiritual bodies reside. This spiritual realm pervades the material universe and our body providing life and consciousness as water permeates a sponge. He uses a holographic model as I do in my writings.

“Joseph Selbie’s *The Physics of God* is a unique and welcome addition to the growing literature for the scientific evidence for God. Why is this important? To begin with, it runs counter to a misconceived bias that has dominated scientific thought now for several centuries.” (11)—Amit Goswami, quantum physicist in his foreword

Goswami continues,

[T]he scientific mainstream . . . promulgated the idea of a new philosophy by which to do science—scientific materialism. This philosophy says that every phenomenon is a material phenomenon in space and time caused by material interaction. There is nothing but matter!

This philosophy is clearly a dogma; Selbie calls it a religion, correctly I think. (12)

Some of the most compelling evidence against scientific materialism has come from quantum physics, the latest paradigm of physics that has replaced Newtonian physics. In quantum physics, objects are waves of possibility that reside in a domain of reality called "the domain of potentiality" where communication is instantaneous, without signal, nonlocal. This domain must be outside the realms of space and time where locality reigns. (13)

The most important point is that with God back in the picture and backed up by science this time, we can go about founding a human science in which all human experiences are legitimate and scientific, including the spiritual. (13-14)

Selbie helps dismantle the views of Newton, Descarte, and Darwin to present a more contemporary scientific view that is open to and even calls for the the existence of God as part of the equation. Science and spirituality need not be at odds with one another, but can complement and reinforce one another. As I say in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*,

Science does not negate God-dess' existence pervading and sustaining creation as well as transcending it. Every day, fresh scientific insights confirm the wholeness, interconnectedness, and amazing complexity of creation and its elements.

The big bang for instance calls for a divine explanation since the material manifestation had a clear beginning. The universe could not create itself. A spiritual force outside spacetime created it or

transformed itself into the universe. That spiritual force is God-dess.

The anthropic principle, the scientific notion that the universe is planned and finely tuned to develop (human) life, supports the idea that humans are created in the image of God-dess to establish a loving relationship. Symbolically, the universe is God-dess' play.

Scientific formulas alone cannot answer all questions about the origin of the universe. Belief in a creator God-dess and scientific discoveries can be harmonized. Belief in God-dess answers some questions about what came before the big bang and why the universe appears so well tuned for human existence as well as current science does. (118)

Selbie recalls,

Western philosophy tends to be drily intellectual. I learned almost nothing to help me bridge the gap between the heady thoughts of these philosophers and my heartfelt transcendent experience.

Not satisfied, I transferred to UC Berkeley, where I studied, with deepening interest, the philosophies of Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, and Hinduism. These philosophies began to narrow the gap between theoretical knowledge and my actual transcendent experience because, unlike most of the Western philosophers, who relied on reason and logic to arrive at an *intellectual* understanding of consciousness and matter, the Eastern sages relied on methodical and repeated transcendent experiences to arrive at an *experiential* understanding of consciousness and matter. (16)

Yes. I also found that immersing myself in Eastern spiritual practices that lead to a mystical union with the

divine is much more satisfying than intellectual studies. Even the Protestant church I was ordained in admitted their inability to provide a satisfying spiritual experience for me. I want a spiritual taste, not an intellectual discussion.

Selbie concludes, "I have come to appreciate that the findings of the science of religion and the findings of the science of matter—together—combine to give us the most complete view of reality: what I think of as the physics of God." (18) I concur.

Scientific materialism rests on the belief that everything there is or ever will be springs from the interactions of matter and energy—and *from absolutely nothing else*. Despite the existence of enduring major scientific mysteries, such as the origin of life and the nature of consciousness, scientific materialists believe that *it is only a matter of time* before all as-yet-unexplained phenomena will be explained by—and only by—the interactions of matter and energy. (19-20)

This is an ungrounded, fundamentalist belief as much as any fundamentalist religious belief. While claiming to be based on reason and experiment, these ideas are irrational and unproven beliefs. As others have done, we may call this religion Scientism. Unfortunately, it has a large following even among the general public, and its entrenched position among leading scientists makes it difficult or impossible for scientists to pursue nonmaterial solutions to unexplained phenomena no matter how solid their credentials and rigorous their methods.

Fortunately, most scientists are not scientific materialists, and "science's own findings—when viewed

without material bias—are far from proving that religious beliefs are unfounded, and support the existence of transcendent realities such as consciousness.” (24)

“The inescapable conclusion: *An intelligent observer plays an essential role in the formation of matter.*”

There is no object in space-time without a conscious subject looking at it.—Amit Goswami, quantum physicist (29)

Therefore, we may conclude that the material universe would not exist without a conscious observer right from the beginning. Who might that intelligent observer be but Cosmic Consciousness?

Numerous such discoveries—the role of the intelligent observer in the formation of matter, instantaneous physiological changes among multiple-personality sufferers, PEAR’s proof of telekinetic effects, the CIA’s remote-viewing successes—collectively cast significant doubt on scientific materialism’s belief that everything there is and ever will be is the result of matter-energy interactions, and have led many scientists to hold more thoughtful views as to the potential truth behind nonmaterial religious beliefs. (33)

One of those scientists familiar with Eastern spiritual thought points out:

An increasing number of scientists are aware that mystical thought provides a consistent and relevant philosophical background to the theories of contemporary science, a conception of the world in which the scientific discoveries of men and women can be in perfect harmony with their spiritual aims and religious beliefs.—Fritjof Capra (34)

Selbie concludes:

Not one of religion's core beliefs—miracles, life after death, heaven, God, or the possibility of personal transcendent experience—has been ruled out by science. Rather, it is the widespread acceptance of scientific materialism's (unproven) *beliefs* that has made many people think so. (36)

Selbie explains:

The science of religion is a collection of disciplines, usable by anyone, which, when performed with determined focus and intention, inevitably result in personal transcendent experience. From personal transcendent experience come the revelations that give meaning to all religions. The disciplines that bring personal transcendent experience deserve to be considered scientific because they provide *consistent and repeatable results* when practiced to perfection. (37-8)

It is for this reason I wrote *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: The Way of Natural Devotion; A Practitioner's Handbook* to teach an esoteric spiritual practice for contemporary Western devotees to develop their relationship with Radha-Krishna. It effectively served Indian devotees for several hundred years, and Lalita Prasad Thakur asked me to share it with Westerners.

Selbie realizes, "The original and universal message of all true spiritual teachers is easily lost, or worse, twisted out of all recognition by the unfortunate tendency of people who want to have the corner on truth." (38) I experienced this with A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami and his disciples. Therefore, I returned to the scriptures and the

universalist model of Bhaktivinode Thakur who was an essence seeker who respected other essence seekers regardless of their path by seeing their commonalities.

The primary difference between the science of religion and the science of matter is in the discovery process: the science of matter's view of reality is based on the repeatable and consistent findings of *physical experiments*; the science of religion's view of reality is based on the repeatable and consistent findings of *transcendent experience*.

As we continue our exploration, our most remarkable discovery will be that the perception of reality garnered from physical experiments and the one garnered from transcendent experience are remarkably and deeply congruent; together, they give a more complete picture of the physics of God than either can provide separately. (56)

This is why I take the trouble to comment on science books and combine the articles into a book of my own. It's important for followers of Universalist Radha-Krishnaism to have the full picture and break out of the science/spirituality dichotomy. This is especially true in the twenty-first century when so many opportunities for a wholistic vision present themselves.

One example of the remarkable similarity between the findings of science and the findings of religion is that both reveal that matter is not what it seems. Many religious traditions hold that matter is an illusion; . . . the findings of science concur that matter is nothing like what our senses reveal. In fact, most of reality is hidden from our senses. (57)

Scientists are forced to admit that empirical observation yields a limited perspective of the universe that does not adequately describe it. Spiritual people can appreciate how science shines new light on insights that ancient sages may have revealed. As I explain in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*:

However, science has its limits. This is where spirituality steps in and helps. Science cannot say what caused the big bang, what happened before it, or what exists outside this universe—although speculation on these subjects abounds. The working assumptions of science are no more or less secure than the working assumptions of religion. A modest skepticism about the abilities of science is arguably in the spirit of science itself. We offer an alternative to scientism’s scientific materialist worldview. (117)

Selbie explains, “The physical world we interact with every day only seems more real to us than a movie because all five of our senses, not just sight and hearing, are engaged with the illusion we call the physical world.” (66) Thus, the material world appears to be an enduring physical reality when in fact it is more like a dream or phantasmagoria.

Over the span of the 20th and now the 21st centuries, branches of physics have produced an astonishingly vast and predominantly nonmaterial view of the cosmos, a cosmos of which our enormous physical universe is only a tiny part. . . .

Physicists are not alone in describing a much larger, nonmaterial cosmos beyond the physical universe. Saints, sages, and near-death experiencers have also described heavenly worlds of pure energy: luminous, nonphysical realms that permeate our physical universe. (69)

Scientists and mystics are coming to a common understanding. The material universe is a small part of existence that rests upon the much greater transcendental dimension that permeates the cosmos as well as our bodies and minds. We need only look within to get a glimpse of the spiritual realm and how it is the basis of material life, which is also spiritual, being comprised of Cosmic Consciousness.

The energy-verse is . . . the location of the heavens of all religious traditions; where we live after death; where angelic beings dwell. The essential qualities of the energy-verse—that it is nearly infinite, that it exists “beyond” the physical universe, and that it contains only non-material, two-dimensional, high-frequency vibrating energy, matches uncannily well the descriptions of the heavens, or luminous *astral* regions, given by hundreds of saints, sages, and near-death experiencers. (78-9)

This spiritual dimension is the greater part of what comprises the universe. So, one need not travel a great distance and leave the universe to get there. It only requires a dimensional shift to get there, and Universalist Radha-Krishnaism teaches how to begin shifting our consciousness to that realm in this lifetime so that at the time of death we can shift there permanently.

According to many enlightened saints, sages, and near-death experiencers, the heavens are not only our afterlife destination, they also embody the *ideal form* of the physical universe. From firsthand experience, such people testify that the heavens

contain a *perfect* template of what is only *imperfectly* manifested as the physical universe. (85)

This is how I explain it in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*.

The material universe exists as a reflection of the spiritual world, like a tree reflected on water. The tree is real; the reflection is ephemeral, yet based in reality. The material universe exists as a temporary modification of the spiritual world. (Plato's theory of forms is a similar concept.) It appears real like the dream world sleepers inhabit seems real, but they wake up and realize its temporary nature. People consider the waking world real, but it forms another level of dream. However, it shares many features of the real spiritual world.

The Beloved Lord said: With its roots upward and its branches downward, they speak of the everlasting Ashwattha tree, . . .

Extending downward and upward, its branches are nourished by the 'qualities' [of nature] with its fresh shoots as the objects of the senses. Also stretched downward are its roots, promoting action in the world of humans. (BG 15.1a,2) (106-7)

Selbie explains how David Bohm solved the problem of randomness versus order in the creation of the universe, which divides science and religion as well as different groups of scientists, in favor of an implicate order.

Bohm showed mathematically that the universe, and everything in it, emerges into physical being in conformance with a *hidden order* that exists in pre-space. He called this hidden order the *implicate order* and compared matter's process of emergence into physical being to that of something initially *folded*

(flat, so to speak, in just two dimensions) then *unfolding* into three dimensions—*the explicate order*. The implicate part of the order exists in nonlocal pre-space. It serves as the template for (it provides the missing hidden properties for) the explicate order, which *unfolds* in our local three-dimensional universe according to the information in the enfolded order in pre-space, (96-7)

Bohm's deeper explorations of the weird side of quantum physics, and string theory's adoption of his holographic principle, strongly suggest that the order Einstein sought not only exists but is *nonlocal*. Ervin Laszlo, author of *Cosmos: A Co-creator's Guide to the Whole-World*, stated on the matter:

We are beginning to see the entire universe as a holographically interlinked network of energy and information, organically whole and self-referential at all scales of its existence. We, and all things in the universe, are non-locally connected with each other and with all other things in ways that are unfettered by the hitherto known limitations of space and time. (99-100)

Bohm's interpretation of quantum physics and his holographic principle are compatible with Universalist Radha-Krishnaism. I refer to them in my writings (*URK:ATP* 115)¹ and recommend my readers familiarize themselves with them. This enriches one's worldview and supports the spiritual world being the template for the material world. Also, creation is ongoing, not a past event. The material and spiritual dimensions constantly interact, and we exist simultaneously in both.

¹ *URK:ATP* is *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*

We must liberate man from the cosmos created by the genius of physicists and astronomers, that cosmos in which, since the renaissance, he has been imprisoned. We now know that we . . . extend outside the physical continuum. . . . In time, as well as in space, the individual stretches out beyond the frontiers of his body. . . . He also belongs to another world.—Dr. Alexis Carrel, Nobel Prize winner (120)

Open minded scientists like Carrel realize the false limits of the materialistic, mechanistic universe conceived by Newton, Darwin, and their followers that dominated scientific and intellectual thought for several hundred years. They understand that our consciousness is not a product of the brain, or even limited to the life of the body, but it is part of Cosmic Consciousness and resides in the eternal spiritual world beyond time and space.

The scientifically grounded idea that we exist simultaneously in multiple realms goes far beyond providing a new model for living systems; the idea that we exist simultaneously in multiple realms also opens the door for science to understand how there can be *life after death*. . . . From the point of view of the multidimensional quantum-biological model, we *already exist in the afterlife*.

Physical death is the withdrawal of the invisible organization of energy from the physical body. When the influence of the template-like holographic energy-body is withdrawn, the physical body loses its coordinated entangled coherence with its holographic energy body. Coherence gone, the physical body begins to respond to the forces of entropy—order goes to disorder, energy dissipates to equilibrium—

and the physical body decays into lifeless atoms and molecules. (125)

The holographic energy-body corresponds to the spiritual body. The energy-verse, nonlocal pre-space, or the domain of potentiality correspond to the spiritual world. Just as quantum physicists have the energy-body residing in the energy-verse while incarnate in a material body, some Vaishnav schools have the spirit soul residing in the spiritual world while incarnate in a material body. We can simultaneously be in the timeless spiritual world while incarnate in the time bound material world.

We already inhabit our energy-body. We feel and interact with our energy-body all the time—not just when we die. We feel it and experience it at every moment, even though we can't perceive it directly with our physical senses. Our energy body is the source of our life-energy, our feelings, our likes and dislikes, our motivations. *The energy-body is the source of most of what we think of as ourselves.* It is constantly, dynamically, and integrally *us*. (128)

Our eternal spiritual body is an integral part of us, our higher self, interacting with us on conscious, sub-conscious, and unconscious levels to guide us through life as we grow, learning the lessons of unconditional love. Our level of spiritual awareness determines how conscious we are of our higher self and how open we are to its guidance.

Death is only the loss of our *physical* body, the shedding of a suit of clothes that covers the energy-body; it is not the end of our existence. Once the physical body dies, we adjust to being aware of our energy-body only. And once we are beyond the confining limitations of our physical body—as the

saints, sages, and near-death experiencers all testify —we will experience a freedom and awareness unlike anything that can be experienced through the physical body. (128)

Therefore, death is not to be feared, but rather viewed as a release from material bondage. If we are going to reincarnate, we can have an opportunity to reassess our life and prepare for the next growth experience. If we are ready to live in the spiritual world as an eternal associate of Radha-Krishna, we may rejoice at our good fortune. I have long prepared for death with eager anticipation as I count on God-dess' unconditional love, grace, and knowledge of my heart's desire.

I would say that in my scientific and philosophical work, my main concern has been with understanding the nature of reality in general and of consciousness in particular as a coherent whole.—David Bohm, Fellow of the Royal Society

Consciousness is the crux of the physics of God: It is in consciousness that science and religion come together, and it is through an understanding of consciousness that we can reconcile the apparent conflicts between them. (144)

Selbie does a good job of bringing together the scientific and religious perspectives. He is trained in both fields and can do justice to both. It is in such open minded approaches that seek to find common ground between seemingly opposed views that a holistic understanding of higher truth can be found. This is quite refreshing in the highly polarized time in which we live.

He explains, "All matter is projected from, interconnected with, and dependent on, the

interpenetrating, nonlocal, two-dimensional energy-verse.” (146) I explain it as, “God-dess pervades creation and constitutes its guiding, ordering, designing principle, the ground of becoming, cosmic consciousness, the one from which many flow. Individuals exist as parts of Goddess, and like a piece of hologram or fractal, they contain the image of the whole. An individual is in the world, and the world is in the individual.” (*URK:ATP* 60) This is confirmed as follows:

I have concluded that we are in a world made by rules created by an intelligence. To me it is clear that we exist in a plan which is governed by rules that were created, shaped by a universal intelligence and not by chance.—Michio Kaku, string theorist (147-8)

Selbie sums it up as follows:

The light-show illusion that is our physical universe is continuously created by the energy-verse; in turn, the laws that inform the energy-verse’s continuous creation of the physical universe spring from infinite, nonlocal, intelligent consciousness. The screenplay for the cosmic movie, the two-dimensional holographic system that projects the cosmic movie, and the resulting light-show illusion—the three-dimensional, cosmic movie — all spring from and are guided by intelligent consciousness. (150)

The universe and our experiences here on earth are projections from the transcendental dimension of Cosmic Consciousness, the universal soul. “As above, so below.” Similarly, how we experience ourselves is a projection of our individual spirit soul that gives consciousness to our material bodily existence. As long as this connection exists, we have life. When the connection is broken, we die.

Our local, three-dimensional physical bodies are the holographic projections of our nonlocal, two-dimensional holographic energy bodies. Our two-dimensional energy bodies are the source of most of what we experience as ourselves—our awareness, feelings, motivations, memories, and life-energy. (151)

When we die, our space, time, and matter suit ceases to function, and we are no longer able to operate in space, time, and matter. When we die our awareness shifts to our nonlocal, two-dimensional energy body in the energy-verse. (151-2)

Unlike film in a projector, the holographic energy template isn't fixed or static; it is dynamically evolving in accordance with its own inherent, intelligently created laws—more like a computer program than like a film. (155)

Cosmic Consciousness, the universe, and we are all in process. Life unfolds according to the choices people make and the complex outcomes that develop through our interconnectedness. We are co-creators in the evolution of the universe and should not underestimate our potential influence for good or evil. Our life matters and has purpose. By aligning with the divine purpose, we can make the best use of our lives.

Since everything is made out of mind, it can be controlled by mind. As you develop more and more mental strength, ultimately you will be able to do anything.—Paramhansa Yogananda . . . miracles do not defy the laws of matter; rather, they

demonstrate deeper laws that science has not yet grasped. (156-7)

Since we are still in the early stages of ascending Dwapara Yuga, our consciousness remains limited by materialistic Kali Yuga thinking. As the age and our consciousness develops, we will be able to do things that today seem impossible or miraculous because we don't understand how they work.

Everyone possesses the same creative power as does the infinite intelligent consciousness that creates the cosmos.

This central truth lies at the heart of all religions: We are divine children of God, made in His formless, infinite image, inseparable from His consciousness. Like the children of all parents, we possess the abilities of our divine parent. . . . We are gods with amnesia. (157-8)

"We simultaneously exist within and beyond this physical world. Our consciousness is nonlocal, essentially infinite, and like the high-frequency energies of our energy body; it exists beyond, yet interpenetrates, our physical bodies." (160) My *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: The Way of Natural Devotion; A Practitioner's Handbook* outlines a process of developing our perfect spiritual body and integrating its identity with our identity in this life so we can consciously act from the spiritual platform as a loving devotee of Radha-Krishna.

String theory suggests that there are vast two-dimensional nonlocal realms of high-frequency energies in which our three-dimensional local physical universe exists: saturated, created, and sustained by those energies. Pioneering physicists

Werner Heisenberg, Max Planck, John von Neumann, John Wheeler, Eugene Wigner, and David Bohm, as well as modern physicists Fritjof Capra, Gary Zukav, Amit Goswami, Michio Kaku, and *many* others, suggest that these subtler, nonmaterial realms of energy are in turn saturated, created, and sustained by infinite intelligent consciousness. (163-4)

This is where the realms of Vishnu and Radha-Krishna known as Vaikuntha and Goloka Vrindaban by the Vaishnavas exist. *The Way of Natural Devotion* teaches how to enter the eternal Vrindaban as a personal associate of Radha-Krishna. It is good to have the existence of such transcendental worlds confirmed by eminent scientists as well as eminent devotees.

Matter-energy interactions alone have yet fully to explain the deepest and most important mysteries: the origin and organization of life, the nature of consciousness, and why an intelligent observer is necessary for matter to take form.

More open-minded scientists, those not wedded to scientific material-ism's beliefs, accept that matter-energy interactions alone do not explain all observed phenomena; they have been willing to explore nonmaterial alternative theories, ones that look to thought and intelligent consciousness for answers. We have seen that the expanded vision of these open-minded scientists leaves ample room for religion's most universal claims—miracles, heavenly realms, life after death, personal transcendent experience, immortality of the soul, and God, (168)

Sectarian beliefs accentuate divisions and differences. Blind attachment to exclusive dogmas leads to repression, violence, and war. . . . If one

looks past the centuries of well-intentioned but unenlightened additions to the world's religions . . . the shared truths that lie at the heart of all religions become clear. In these shared truths we find both an inspiring spiritual unity among all religions as well as ample room for the findings of science.

Together, the discoveries and theories of the broader minds of science and the testimony of the saints, sages, and near-death experiencers best reveal the physics of God. (168-9)

I explain it like this in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*:

In this postmodern age of cosmology and the human genome, a richly satisfying harmony between scientific and spiritual worldviews is attainable. According to process theology, the cosmos, knowledge of God-dess, and even God-dess evolve.

Understanding cosmic origins characterizes religions throughout history. Religion springs from the insights of inspired individuals and tries to make sense of life. Ancient seers used the knowledge of the day to describe the nature of the cosmos. . . .

Scientists constantly delve into new areas—observing nature, investigating the phenomenal world in innovative ways, digging deeper into areas where understanding remains incomplete. Universalist Radha-Krishnaism approaches the spiritual quest with a scientific attitude of discovery. It does not settle for past truths but ever seeks new truth to expand human understanding. In an ever-changing world, people need ever fresh ways to approach God-dess.

Human understanding of the origin of the universe fundamentally changed in the last seventy-

five years. Spiritual seekers benefit by understanding cosmology, creation, and origins based on facts known today, rather than following outdated ideas from thousands of years ago. People know things their predecessors did not. (115-16)

The Physics of God is well researched and easy to read. It makes an excellent companion to my Universalist Radha-Krishnaism writings. I highly recommend it since we are in basic agreement.

About the Author

A dedicated meditator for over forty years, Joseph Selbie has taught yoga and meditation throughout the United States and Europe. He is also the author of the nonfiction work *The Yugas* and the *Protectors Diaries*, a science fiction/fantasy series inspired by the abilities of mystics.

Reality Unveiled

"*In Reality Unveiled* Ziad Masri integrates the best of science and spirituality to provide a coherent explanation of the workings of the Cosmos that resonates with truth, and provides answers to one's deepest questions."

—Miriam Knight, Publisher of *New Consciousness Review*

Reality Unveiled: The Hidden Keys of Existence That Will Transform Your Life (and the World) by Ziad Masri, Awakened Media LLC, 2017 is a thought provoking book that deals with subjects like: God-dess seeks us as we seek God-dess, the material world is an illusion, consciousness alters reality, science and spirituality are compatible, unconditional love is God-dess' nature and our goal in life, and how reincarnation works. Although much of the material is not new, when it is presented in Masri's convincing way, it has a transformative effect on those who read with an open mind.

Masri explains the limited vision we have of the universe and how there is much more than meets the eye. He expertly combines scientific and spiritual perspectives to form a more complete picture of a nonphysical universe projected from a transcendent dimension. The universe rests on Cosmic Consciousness, which comprises everything, and we are its parts. Everything is interconnected and conscious.

"Becoming more aware of how the world works on an energetic and spiritual level raises your consciousness, which then allows you to tap into a higher level of functioning. And when that happens a shift in perception takes place, and you suddenly see the world through an empowering new lens." (3) Masri presents some concepts that I've been skeptical of, but he presents them with such

convincing evidence that I am now open to them, and they enhance my perspective.

As I do, he advises, "As with anything new, take what resonates with you and leave the rest." (4) We are not presenting a dogma that must be totally accepted. Always trust your own inner guidance foremost. Masri continues:

While you should be discerning and not accept anything just because I (or anyone else) said it, it's just as important to be willing to openly examine your own beliefs. Are they truly yours? . . . If we're honest, we often find that many of the things that we believe to be true, and seemingly self-evident, are actually a product of conditioning and not necessarily self-discerned truths. (4-5)

In *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*, I point out:

Beliefs come and go. Do not cling to them, because faith does not depend on belief. Beliefs are like the furniture of faith: they can be reorganized, replaced, or set aside. Some beliefs develop faith more than others. Devotees need not believe the unbelievable, such as accepting the fantastic stories of the Puranas as literal history. They also need not accept outmoded beliefs of the past such as uncritical acceptance of a guru's teachings. Religious thought develops in a progressive evolutionary way. (53)

"Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.—Albert Einstein . . . there is a staggering amount of scientific evidence that proves that the reality we perceive with our senses is actually a highly convincing illusion. (9)" Thus science confirms the Vedic teaching that the material

energy is illusory. Science and spirituality are reaching a common understanding.

From an empirical scientific viewpoint, "When we realize that virtually everything we currently believe about the nature of existence comes from trusting our senses, and yet those very senses can only detect an infinitesimally small portion of reality, we become open to questioning if we actually know the nature of reality at all." (11) Thus scientists are forced to reassess the nature of reality.

Indeed, the body is showing us only what it is programmed to see, much like a computer can only show us what it is programmed to display. And yet we have been trying to use what it shows us as "proof" of the nature of reality. Do you see the faulty logic at play here?

We're using the very thing that is programmed to show us only a tiny aspect of reality as proof that this tiny aspect of reality is how things are or that this is all there is. (12)

The science developed by Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton "came to be known as 'classical physics,' and it looks at external reality as solid, stable, and machinelike in its predictable behavior.

This science is still taught in schools and is accurate for describing the physical world that is visible to the naked eye, which is why most people think it's the only science in which we can have faith. But when we examine the subatomic world, we find that all the rules of classical physics become completely and utterly *violated*. (13-14)

Quantum physics has created a revolution in science that is embraced as a liberating new paradigm by some

and resisted as a threat by others. It belies the empirical/reductive/materialist perspective and opens a transcendental basis for the universe. "If quantum mechanics hasn't profoundly shocked you, you haven't understood it yet."—Niels Bohr (13)

"Study quantum physics beyond a cursory level, and you'll reach the inescapable conclusion that the reason physical particles behave in such a strange way is because they're not physical at all." (18) There is no physical, material world. It is "is all a very convincing illusion being projected from a 'dimension' completely outside time and space." (20)

"I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness."—Max Plank (21) The consciousness from which the universe is derived is the Cosmic Consciousness that pervades all and is all. It is the Ground of Being.

"In fact, the inescapable conclusion from all of these scientific discoveries is that 'separation' is the biggest illusion of all. In reality, quantum physicists have discovered (much to their shock) that everything is connected as one thing that is merely appearing to be many things." (22) This corresponds to the Vedic teaching that the One became many and yet remains One simultaneously. As Masri affirms:

[I]t's all One thing—an ocean of energy that collapses into seemingly separate forms that we call stars and planets and animals and trees and human beings, giving them the temporary illusion of solidity and separation from their purely energetic source.

But they always remain one with one another and their source. (23)

The solution to escaping the prison of perception is to let go of the idea of separation, regardless of how real your senses are telling you it is, and to think more in line with what modern science (and . . . also ancient spirituality) tells us reality actually is. This can essentially be captured in one idea: Unity. Everything is unified. Everything is One. Separation is the true illusion. (25)

What a welcome view of life. Rather than isolated, alienated individuals in a strange world, we are one with all. Rather than separate from nature, we are an integral part of it called to nurture rather than dominate it. Rather than separate from and needing to compete with other people, we are connected with all and our wellbeing is connected with theirs encouraging cooperation rather than competition.

“When we meditate or pray in concert, we can create what’s called ‘energetic coherence.’” (27) “As the peak of one wave overlaps with the peak of another, they amplify each other,” (16) in the same way, our thoughts and prayers can amplify each other to produce powerful, positive changes in the world as has been shown in numerous experiments. For example:

In 1978, a scientifically controlled study was conducted on a group of 7,000 expert meditators. The group meditated together for a period of three weeks, focusing on thoughts of love and peace. Incredibly, it was found that during this period, there was a significant drop in global crime rates by an average of 16 percent. Global suicide rates and

automobile accidents were also reduced. Most astonishing of all, there was a 72 percent reduction in global terrorist activity! (26)

“[I]n the mid 1990s Dr. Masaru Emoto, a Japanese scientist, decided to see whether thoughts, words, and music could have any effect on water.” (28) As logical, rational human beings, we’ve always been taught that inanimate objects and elements can’t change their form based on thoughts and words. This is impossible in a Newtonian version of the world. The water is supposed to exist distinctly apart from us. It is supposed to have its own separate existence, and it is not supposed to be alive in any way to respond to thoughts and words like humans can. And yet, the evidence is as clear as day. It *does* respond. “In fact, it responds more directly and beautifully than any one of us could have ever imagined by changing its very structure to reflect the *energy* of the words or thoughts.” (34)

This confirms the benefit of thinking or saying a prayer, mantra, or blessing before drinking a glass of water. It clearly has a purifying effect that is especially important since so much of our water is contaminated. It also shows that even an inanimate object like water has a certain awareness.

“[As] physicist Tim Folger describes in his article *Quantum Shmantum*: ‘Despite the unrivaled empirical success of quantum theory, the very suggestion that it may be literally true as a description of nature is still greeted with cynicism, incomprehension and even anger.’” (38) Many scientists follow what may be called a materialistic, atheistic religion of Scientism that is no more open to having its beliefs challenged by new facts than other fundamentalist religions.

Whether you are a scientist or a religionist, "The question to ask is: Are you willing to open up to the possibility that most of what you've believed to be true up until now will ultimately be accepted as self-evidently false, with a truer picture of reality replacing those outdated beliefs?" (39) This is the position of essence seekers such as Bhaktivinode Thakur whom we follow. We welcome new ideas from all quarters that shed light on the truth since, "unquestioned blind faith can disempower us and leave us susceptible to control." (39)

"All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particles of the atom to vibration. I must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter."—physicist Max Planck. (40) Again, this Mind is Cosmic Consciousness, which "is the matter—i.e., the illusion of separation exists not only between all matter itself but also *between all matter and its Creator*. . . . We are one with the Creator in a very literal sense, as we are an inseparable part of the infinite, intelligent consciousness that not only brings forth physical reality but also makes up its very fabric." (40)

Richard Conn Henry, professor of physics and astronomy at Johns Hopkins University [declares]: "Get over it, and accept the inarguable conclusion. The universe is immaterial—mental and spiritual."

Keep in mind that this is a scientist talking. Scientists have long been believed to be at odds with spirituality. And yet more and more of them are being forced to accept the inescapable conclusion that everything is mental; everything is aware; everything is spiritual at the fundamental level. There is only One Mind here, appearing to be many.

There is only One universal intelligence manifesting as *seemingly* living and nonliving matter with a separate existence unto itself. As Einstein reminds us, it is all merely a very convincing illusion. (41-2)

Masri asserts, "There is actually mountains of scientific proof that demonstrates how everything is conscious and therefore alive, aware, *and* intimately connected to everything else, acting more as an interconnected conscious being rather than as a bunch of separate and distinct things 'out there; in some objective reality apart from its Creator." (42) Another way to look at this manifestation is as the Universal Form described in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The universe is the body of God-dess with all the parts forming an interconnected whole being, and yet the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

In *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*, I also state,

We affirm God-dess' goodness and deny the ancient ideas that matter is essentially evil. We also reject the traditional concept of matter lacking any activity or feeling. Because actual entities are dipolar, they all have a physical aspect, but none entirely lack psychic qualities, although usually these qualities are negligible. Thus, being physical does not negate having mind-like qualities. (71)

"Dr. Cleve Backster . . . describes more than three decades of fascinating research with plants, food cells, bacteria, and human cells . . . [using] a polygraph machine (lie detector) to see what would happen." (43) His research showed that everything is highly aware and has a mind without the necessity of a brain or an evolved humanlike consciousness. "And so what is the mind? It is the universal consciousness that we've been talking about. . . .

scientific results show, far from what we've been taught to believe, *everything* is conscious and aware." (44-5) Dr. Backster said,

[I]f you pray over your food, being thankful for it and feeling a sense of love, then it somehow accepts its role as providing sustenance for you, . . .

That puts into new scientific light the religious and spiritual teachings that tell us to pray before we eat. . . . It's not that we should be thankful that we are being given sustenance by a Creator separate and external to us, but rather that we should be thankful and loving because everything we interact with is ultimately interconnected as One Mind or One Spirit, being illusory projections of the One energy that many people label as "God." That is, the entire physical realm of living and nonliving things is the direct extension of the nonphysical realm of pure, infinite consciousness that is the Creator. We, and everything else we interact with, are not separate from the Creator but the expressions of the unified consciousness that the Creator uses to experience Itself. There is only One appearing as many. All separation is merely illusion, even between us and the Infinite Consciousness that is the Creator. And we have the science to prove it. (47-8)

This brings to mind the Christian idea of communion being the body and blood of Christ and the image of the snake eating its tail. Since everything is a manifestation of the Cosmic Consciousness, when a new creature is manifested, its food is also manifested from the same source, and we have one part of the One eating another part of itself. Because even plants are aware and afraid of being killed and eaten, vegetarians and vegans are also engaged in killing and pain. Being prayerful and respectful

of this sacrifice mitigates it by acknowledging the divine gift of life and can transform it into a sacramental act.

“Possibly the most incredible and *directly verifiable* proof of what happens after death comes from children who remember their past lives.” (51) Much research has been done on this subject verifying the accuracy of these memories. Hypnosis and near death experiences have also been used to show that reincarnation is a fact. Not only that, but “modern science . . . verifies the existence of other energetic realms that spiritually or religiously would be called the spirit world.” (58)

Spirit souls travel to this spirit world after death where they share common experiences. “We must understand that time doesn’t exist in the spirit realm in the same way as it does on the physical plane. . . . Practically speaking, this means that we often spend what would seem to be hundreds of years in the spirit realm in between lifetimes, but we can then choose to incarnate into a physical body only nine months after our last body died.” (60-61)

And so at some point, we (with the help of our guide) decide that it’s time again for another physical incarnation. Here we are taken to a life selection place where we are given the choice of one of several bodies and lives that we can choose to live. We are given the opportunity to see the major events that will occur that will test us in each of the potential lives while keeping enough hidden so as not to dissuade us from difficult but potentially beneficial lives from the spiritual sense. (62)

I have always had difficulty believing I chose this life with these parents and experiences. However, “Not only are we getting the data from thousands of people who are

in a state of hypnosis and therefore accessing unconscious memories but also all of them are saying the same thing regardless of their backgrounds and beliefs. This point cannot be overstated.” (63) Therefore, I am now more open to the idea that I chose this life.

The purpose is simply to have the opportunity to learn the lessons that we failed to learn in all of our previous lifetimes so far. And the lessons center on nothing more than love, kindness, forgiveness, and compassion. . . . As such, the life that we choose will by definition include certain difficult trials and tribulations to induce the lessons we failed to learn in previous lifetimes. (63)

We’re not victims, unlucky, or being punished. Remember, “we, with the help of more evolved beings, set it all up this way for a very specific purpose. . . . keeping this ultimate reality in the back of our mind can be very helpful and prove to be a self-empowered way to live life.” (64) Acceptance of our circumstances as a voluntary learning experience is a freeing perspective.

“Yes there have been crashed craft, and bodies recovered. We are not alone in the universe; they have been coming here for a long time.”—Dr. Edgar Mitchell (69) This is my conclusion as well based on personal experience, study of ancient history, and modern accounts. Masri confirms, “the existence and involvement of a multitude of civilizations from beyond our planet. Not only are we not alone but also our ‘visitors’ have been with us for millennia.” (70)

He reminds us that based on, “what quantum physicists now understand about the universe, we’ll remember that not only is matter fundamentally an illusion but so is time

and space. For any advanced civilization that discovered this, it would mean the ability to travel seemingly unimaginable distances in extremely short periods of time, using technology that could warp time and space at a quantum level." (71)

One of the best pieces of evidence for the presence of extraterrestrials on earth is the Great Pyramid. "Even today, thousands of years after the Great Pyramid was built, we are still very far away from being able to create a comparable structure using the most modern available technology." (73)

"Whoever built the Great Pyramid was clearly not from here. They had vastly advanced knowledge of Earth and space as well as a very superior understanding of mathematics, technology, and building techniques that are light years ahead of ours." (75) This is also true of other ancient megalithic structures.

In addition, "nearly every ancient civilization that we know of has depicted contact with extraterrestrials in their art." (76-7) "Artistic evidence from more recent history abounds, and it is truly remarkable." (80) "What are the odds that every culture across history has 'imagined' spaceships and that they've imagined them to look the same way?" (81)

Modern photographic evidence from around the world shows that

the vast majority of these spaceships look exactly like the ones depicted in historical art. So there we have our modern-day picture proof of what these old civilizations must have been witnessing firsthand and recording on the walls of their caves, on their metals, and in their paintings and tapestries. In my view it's

clear that it's not merely coincidence that they all drew similar objects in the sky despite being separated by incredible geographic and temporal distances. They were simply reporting what they saw. (87-8)

In 2013, Paul Hellyer, the former defense minister of Canada, testified in front of former members of the US Congress in a citizen hearing on UFO disclosure.

During that hearing he unequivocally stated: "UFOs are as real as the airplanes over our heads." He also incredibly testified that government reports have been issued, confirming that at least four extraterrestrial species have been visiting the Earth for thousands of years. The fact that they've been visiting for thousands of years corroborates astronaut Edgar Mitchell's claims, as well as all the historical evidence we've seen so far, ranging from the impossible technical achievement of the Great Pyramid to historical art depicting our space visitors to an African tribe that has had impossibly precise astronomical knowledge for thousands of years that they say was given to them by beings from a distant star system. (94-5)

And here we come to one of the biggest secrets and governmental cover-ups of all. Namely, not only have various extraterrestrial races been visiting Earth for thousands of years, but also the world's major governments at the highest levels have secretly been in physical contact with many of them right here on Earth. And if this one is too difficult for you to believe, there is proof via a multitude of insider whistleblower testimony, (95)

Masri gives a beautiful theological exposition that is in agreement with my Universalist Radha-Krishnaism:

Assume, if you will, that there exists an infinite Being. There is nothing outside this Being because it is literally infinite. So it is everything and it is One thing simultaneously. It is inherently non-dual. And in non-duality there is no subject and object. There is only Beingness. Assume also that the nature of this infinite, non-dual Being is pure love. But because nothing else exists for this Being to express that love, it is unpotentiated love that is in a state of pure, infinite potential.

So this Being decides that it wants to experience its full potential, and to do that, it splits itself into an infinite number of sub-selves. With that, the universe is born. From undifferentiated formlessness, differentiated form has come forth—and with it duality. Now we have subject and object. We have this and that.

But this universe (of seemingly endless differentiation and separation of infinite elements and beings) cannot actually be apart from or outside of its Creator because, by definition, that Creator is infinite. What could exist beyond the limits of infinity when it has no limits by its very definition? And so it's the illusion of separation and duality that has been born within this universe. Each seemingly separate element or being now has its own distinct point of view, its own distinct "life" that seems to be apart from its Creator, but in reality, this separation and duality is only illusory. The whole thing is by design because the Creator wants to experience itself from an infinite number of perspectives and experience its true nature (love) in an infinite number of ways. (100-101)

In Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective, I explain,

God-dess sympathetically experiences human happiness and pain out of pure love. As devotees develop love of Radha-Krishna, they learn to sympathetically experience their bliss more intensely than individuals experience bliss separately. God-dess creates infinite beings for infinite new loving relationships. We appreciate God-dess' love being active as well as passive; it is as important that God-dess wills the good of the individual spirits as that he-she is affected by their happiness and distress. (59-60)

Individual spirits share God-dess' spiritual nature but live in material nature until they are ready to fully enter the spiritual realm. The more people learn to experience God-dess and live responsibly, the faster they evolve to spiritual maturity. God-dess uses her-his attractiveness to entice all beings to the spiritual world to experience full existence. (68)

As Masri further reminds us:

Remember that the whole physical and nonphysical universe is the "body" that the Creator uses to experience itself from an infinite number of perspectives. The Creator's ultimate reality is pure love and so the whole experience is geared toward growing more and more into the experience of pure, unconditional love. . . . So the whole meaning of life and the universe itself is to learn the meaning of love in the difficult classrooms that the illusion of duality provides. (105)

By Its very nature of being unconditionally loving, the Creator has created reality in such a way as to

give all of Its aspects (i.e., us) free will. Therefore, we aren't forced to express love. (107)

In *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*, I also assert, "Individuals' innate function is to love Goddess, but philosophically speaking, they possess free choice in everything. So in this regard too, they are free to please God-dess by submitting to manifestations of spiritual energy or to experience the manifestations of elusive material nature." (100-101)

Addressing the question of evil, Masri says,

If we understand that we are truly all One, then this naturally includes all the negative, evil, and dark aspects in the universe. Since nothing can exist outside the One Infinite Creator, by definition it is all included. Of course, what makes this easier to understand and accept is to realize that evil is ultimately an illusion because it is spawned by nothing but separation consciousness, which is itself illusory, as the reality is that there is no separation. Remember that this is all a grand stage where we get to play out the dance of separation and duality. (109)

I put it like this:

One objection to the idea of a deity whose "body" is the universe is that it implies that all values, both the good and the evil, are within God-dess, which is true, but not in a sense that compromises divine goodness. As a point of logic, wholes do not necessarily share the characteristics of their parts. God-dess is related to any non-divine creature as whole to part. Indeed, this is a basis of Radha-Krishnaism's view that we are fragments of the divine, not the whole of it.

God-dess' goodness is not diminished if a fragmentary individual neglects the good of others through indifference or harmful intent. Yet, God-dess' goodness allows the suffering and wickedness of individuals to enter Goddess' experience. God-dess sympathizes with sufferers and grieves for lost opportunities to create good. Those who inflict suffering on others are punished by the laws of karma and/or the state.

God-dess feels the contrast between what could have been and what is. The "what is" is not solely determined by God-dess but is left, in part, to the individuals; God-dess and individuals co-create. Thus, there are tragic and sublime aspects of divine love. (73)

Masri clarifies,

The various teachings make it clear that the law of karma is very real. Basically, this is a universal law that says that what you put out is what you get back. So if you decide to take the negative path and hurt others, then you will suffer greatly for your choices in a multitude of ways and across subsequent lifetimes. . . . The evil deeds meet their own consequences through the very laws on which a just universe is built. What you put out is what you get back. (110)

However,

[I]t is understood that everyone eventually ends up in the same place. All beings eventually end up reuniting with the Creator, and no one is left out because the Creator is by definition all-inclusive and not separate from the creation. . . . You cannot say that God loves unconditionally while also saying that God judges and punishes. (116)

Masri informs us:

As it turns out, some modern astronomers have discovered the existence of a 25,920-year orbit that our entire solar system makes around a neighboring brown dwarf star (a star that is very difficult to see even with advanced telescopes). By measuring the effects of gravitational pull, they have discovered that our sun likely exists as part of a binary star system (i.e., two suns orbiting each other). (126)

This is similar to the teachings of Sri Yukteswar regarding the yugas as well as the Mayan calendar. This ancient knowledge shows how advanced these civilizations were. We must ask where did they get the knowledge from. Was it extraterrestrials?

As Masri says, “[W]hat we do in the illusion is always secondary to how and why we do it. . . . If we try to fight injustice with hate, we only add fuel to the fire and can never bring about the lasting meaningful change we desire.” (140) The goal is to become unconditionally loving like the divine. Therefore, we best work at transforming ourselves and transforming others by our example rather than coercion. Compassion for all is an appropriate response as we manifest our true spiritual nature.

“The ultimate reality is that we are already whole and complete. . . . We are Spirit having a temporary human experience.” (142) Therefore, we need not be anxious about life or our salvation. Looking within and cultivating our innate love is the path of natural devotion.

There’s nothing you have to prove to deserve love. You’re already there, at the finish line, behind the illusion. Your only role is to be a conduit of

experience to the Infinite Self that you truly are, which wishes nothing but to experience itself from an infinite number of perspectives and to expand from this experience. (142-3)

And so, to conclude and bring everything together, when you let go of attachment to your desires—knowing they won't bring true fulfillment—and accept (even embrace) the negative or dark aspects of yourself and others, then you can go through life having what you want while also living out your deeper purpose and evolving your consciousness to make the shift to a higher plane of existence. (156)

Masri claims, "I didn't write about these subjects merely from a theoretical perspective. On the contrary, I have had the most profound blessing of directly experiencing a glimpse of this higher reality and therefore know, beyond mere belief, it exists." (185) I can make a similar claim, and if you apply the teachings in your life, you can have a similar experience that will allow you to know too.

Masri covers a wide range of topics in a well written manner that challenges the reader's beliefs to open to a new level of understanding. While I may not agree 100% with everything he says, I feel this book is quite compatible with Universalist Radha-Krishnaism and complements it well. Try it and see if it doesn't expand your understanding of truth.

About the Author:

Ziad Masri is an author and entrepreneur who has taken the road less traveled. Driven early in life by the seemingly conflicting desires of worldly success and deep spiritual

fulfillment, he set out on a 15-year journey of self-discovery. During this period he achieved business success while continually exploring ancient spirituality, non-mainstream science, and mystical practices to find the deeper meaning of life and the universe. Emerging with a profound understanding of the hidden truths of reality, he is now on a mission to help people transform their lives—and the world—by guiding them to rise above their limited sense of self to live a deeply meaningful and awakened life.

Infinite Potential

Lothar Schäfer's *Infinite Potential* presents ideas about the nature of reality, and our role in it, that at first seem utterly ridiculous. But as the book unfolds, his arguments become increasingly plausible. By the conclusion his ideas are both obvious and shocking. This tale of radical cosmic holism is not a flight of fancy or mystical revelation. It is firmly grounded in science and told by a distinguished professor of physical chemistry. A careful reading will transform your assumptions about who and what you think you are.--Dean Radin, author of *Super Normal*

I read a number of quantum physics books, but I think *Infinite Potential: What Quantum Physics Reveals About How We Should Live* by Lothar Schafer, Deepak Chopra Books, 2013 provides the best argument for a spiritual dimension underlying and directing the universe and our lives. He asserts, "Everything that exists in the visible world has first existed as a state in the cosmic field of potentiality." (2) This field is non-material, and corresponds with Cosmic Consciousness, the universal unconscious, or the spiritual realm. It affirms that the material world is a reflection of the spiritual world.

"All visible things and phenomena *need* an underlying image, or they couldn't have appeared in the visible world." (6) Things don't just appear by chance, as in Darwinian evolution, but because they are based on a pre-existent form, archetype, or pattern existing in the mind of Cosmic Consciousness. As I pointed out in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective* (120)

Generally referred to as theistic evolution,
Universalist Radha-Krishnaism calls it panentheistic

evolution. Scientist-theologian Huston Smith explains this as follows [*Forgotten Truth: The Common Vision of the World's Religions*]:

And so long as we can form no idea of the way a material system may become a conscious, responsible person, it is an empty pretense to suggest that we have an explanation for the descent of man. Darwinism has diverted attention for a century from the descent of man by investigating the conditions of evolution and overlooking its action. Evolution can be understood only as a feat of emergence. (127)

The nonanthropomorphic counterpart of special creation is emanation. In the celestial realm the species are never absent; their essential forms or archetypes reside there from an endless beginning. As earth ripens to receive them, each in its turn drops to the terrestrial plane and donning the world's fabric, gives rise to a new life form. The origin of species is metaphysical. (139)

Schafer explains, "Newton's physics and Darwin's biology, two of the most powerful formulations of materialism of our history, weren't inspired by the facts of nature, but by the language of their authors." (7) "The problem is that the visible surface of things is incomplete because it has little to say about the nonempirical realm of reality, where the cosmic potentiality has its home. . . . The things that you see in the world are somehow actualizations of waves; they are emanations out of the One." (9) Thus, he confirms Smith's explanation.

Religions of all ages have always insisted that the essential reality isn't found in the material world, but

in some transcendent part of the universe. However, all that you have to do to experience an invisible world is to look inside you, where your feelings and the images of your mind are real. (16) . . . We are singular points in the cosmic field of potentiality, which seems under pressure everywhere to actualize in the visible world; and in us it has found a special way to do so, defining a cosmic destiny for each one of us! (18)

This confirms the spiritual world is real, while the material world is an imperfect, temporary manifestation of it. That spiritual world exists in a transcendent dimension of the universe as well as within us. Looking within ourselves as parts of the divine being is the easiest way to experience this spiritual world, commune with the divine, and realize our potential.

Schafer exclaims, "there is no matter!... Basically, there is only spirit!" (19) Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington writes, "The universe is of the nature of `a thought or sensation in a universal Mind." (19) Sir James Hopwood Jeans goes even further, "The universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine." (19)

When the material world is seen with enlightened spiritual vision, it is no longer material but spiritual. It's good that even some scientists are able to see that Cosmic Consciousness pervades the universe, and is all that exists. This is a great time for the integration of scientific and spiritual ideas.

Schafer admits, "practically all of the unexpected concepts that quantum physicists are using to describe the world were invented by spiritual teachers thousands of years ago." (20-21) "The fact is that, by the way in which

it describes the world, quantum physics has taken science right into the middle of historic traditions of spirituality." (21) "Plotinus thought of God as 'the One,'" and he developed the idea that "the world is an emanation out of God, due to a necessary flowing over of the divine. As Hirschberger reports: 'The One is all. All is out of the One.'" (23)

God-dess overflows with love, creativity, and the desire for novel experiences to share with the living entities. Therefore, this is one of innumerable universes designed to experience loving relationships with individuals based on their exercise of free will.

Idealists in philosophy are people who believe that true being rests in an invisible realm of ideas and not in the visible world of things. . . . So, because it seeks the essential reality in an invisible part of the world, without any doubt, quantum theory is a form of idealism! (23)

While not all quantum scientists have accepted this invisible realm, a growing number have. Quantum theory can also be considered a form of mysticism as scientists seek direct realization of these nonmaterial truths. Thus, the Enlightenment divide between science and spirituality is being bridged to form an integrated view of life.

Schafer speculates, "Is it such a long shot to think that Jung's realm of forms and the realm of forms of quantum physics are one and the same realm of the cosmic potentiality—a medium of spirit where our scientific, philosophical, and spiritual convictions are integrated in the nondual order of the One?" (25-6)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel taught, "Your consciousness isn't your own, but the consciousness of the cosmic spirit; your thinking isn't your own, but the thinking of the cosmic spirit who is thinking in you; your potential isn't your own, but the cosmic potential to which you are connected. 'Man knows of god only,' Hegel writes in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 'insofar as god knows of himself in man; this knowledge is god's self consciousness.'" (26-7)

As we learn to subdue our material ego and surrender to God-dess, we can become instruments of the divine, serve the whole, and become free of karma. This is the goal or purpose of life—surrendering to the divine will.

As Hegel describes it, 'The spirit of human beings, to know of god is only the spirit of god himself.' In addition, Hegel believed that God evolved with us in our history and in all cosmic processes of becoming. 'The truth is the whole. The whole, however, is nothing but the essential being, which is perfecting itself in its evolution.' If God's mind is in ours, it follows that his 'words can be in our mouth,' as the Bible describes it in Jeremiah 1:9. (27)

The evolution of God-dess is part of my process theological thought. The divine is dynamic, not static. It must evolve along with us and the cosmos. When I gave a sermon as a pastor, I advised the congregation to "Listen for the Word of God." in my words with faith that I was used as an instrument of God. When I write today, I am being used similarly. Ancient truths are still valid today.

"So, where is the kingdom? It is the nonempirical realm of the cosmic potentiality, and it is in you." (29) The kingdom of God or Braj exists inside of us—not in a distant

place. We are microcosms of the macrocosm. We and the divine are one and different simultaneously.

Modern atomic theory is thus essentially different from that of antiquity in that it no longer allows any reinterpretation or elaboration to make it fit into a naive materialistic concept of the universe. . . .—
Werner Heisenberg (33)

The scientific evidence prohibits a materialistic concept. “The phenomena of quantum physics force us to believe that the basis of the visible world doesn’t rest on some material foundation, but on a realm of nonmaterial forms that have the properties of waves, as though our world were afloat on an invisible ocean.” (33)

“The atoms and molecules in ordinary things constantly interact with one another, and it is in these interactions that they find their empirical existence.” (45) Thus, we, our possessions, the earth, the moon, etc. do not constantly shift to a nonmaterial wave form. Rather the world gives the appearance of being a permanent solid existence due to constant interactions with other things. “Empirical reality is a cooperative effect. It emerges in interrelations and isn’t found in isolated things.” (46)

However, “The visible world is an actualization—an emanation—out of a domain of transmateral and transempirical potentiality forms. *The basis of reality is a domain of transmateral forms, images, or elementary thoughts.*” (47) Therefore, the spiritual level of existence is primary and the material is secondary.

In an empirical science that claims that the world can be understood by observing and measuring its visible surface, the discovery of the realm of

potentiality was a shock. It marked the end of the era of Newton's and Darwin's materialism and the dawn of a new idealist era that seeks the essence of the world in a transcendent part of reality. For the understanding of your own nature the discovery was a triumph: Since a realm of potentiality exists in the universe, it can also exist in you as an inner potential that takes you beyond the limited possibilities of your material body and brain. (50)

The Newtonian/Darwinian worldview presented a bleak, deterministic life with no free will. I met one man who admitted to thinking that he was a meat computer and when he died it was all over. I think this view is more common than many care to admit. He has since died, and I hope he had a great awakening. The quantum view offers unlimited potential as part of the divine along with free will to accept or reject the potential course of life desired by the divine. If we choose to accept our divine purpose, we can enter into the transcendent realm free of material entanglement.

This structure of the world is so important to understand because your own situation is very similar. You, too, have a future only because of the inner potential in you. . . . Much of the unhappiness in this world is due to the fact that many people aren't aware of their inner potential and so do nothing about it, because it is hidden deep inside in invisible states and easy to neglect. The virtual structure of things is important at the human level, because it is a model of our personal structure. (62)

We are faced with such high levels of depression, suicide, drug addiction, and other problems of alienation due to a failed materialistic world view. Accepting a

spiritual perspective can be an effective counter measure to these problems by attuning ourselves to the divine potential for a wholistic life of love and cooperation, working together for the good of the whole.

Relativity and quantum theory agree, in that they both imply the need to look on the world as an undivided whole, in which all parts of the universe, including the observer and his instruments, merge and unite in one totality ... The new form of insight can perhaps best be called Undivided Wholeness in Flowing Movement. This view implies that flow is, in some sense, prior to that of the 'things' that can be seen to form and dissolve in the flow ... In this flow, mind and matter are not separate substances. Rather, they are different aspects of one whole and unbroken movement.—David Bohm (75)

This is a very Taoist view, and it is a huge improvement on the mechanical Newtonian view of the universe. Everything is interconnected in a fluid whole. People can follow the watercourse way to their benefit and the good of the whole.

Schafer explains, "we belong to the wholeness and that the cosmic wholeness is active in us. Specifically, this would mean that the inner potential in you is cosmic. When you actualize your potential, the cosmic wholeness is actualizing in you. You could say that you are an embodiment of the cosmic potentiality." (76)

"The tiniest parts of the universe, your brain and the atoms in it, contain the entire order of the world." (77) As I mentioned in *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*, "The holographic paradigm developed by physicist David Bohm and neurophysiologist Karl Pribram

suggests this world exists as a multidimensional holographic projection of the spiritual world.” (115) Thus every part contains an image of the whole, and we can find the universe in a grain of sand or in our heart.

Just think how you would interact differently with people in a holistic universe in which you are connected to the rest of humanity than in a world of isolated material things and beasts of prey, where the Darwinian virtues of aggression and selfishness are adequate. (78)

The Darwinian model is leading us to the brink of another world war, environmental destruction, and social break down. A new unifying paradigm is needed to get the world on a course in harmony with God-dess’ unifying, holistic vision of life and love.

“No measurement of the world and no experiment can prove the wholeness of the universe, but it is a plausible hypothesis—and more plausible, at that, than the opposite claim that a holistic nature of the universe is impossible.” (84) Schafer concludes, “All of reality is one, and you and I belong to it.” (91)

People have been misled by the material conception of life for so long, it is like they are waking up from a bad dream. We are going from being slaves of material nature to being children of God-dess. Our potential is infinite. We simply need to go within and tap into it.

According to Schafer, “We all carry in us an inner potential that needs to be actualized. I am convinced that this potential is an expression of the cosmic potentiality that tries to actualize in us. We won’t find peace of mind

when we neglect our inner potential, whatever it may be." (93) This is our dharma.

"If the background of the universe is mindlike, it is possible that consciousness is a cosmic property. I will refer to this as the cosmic consciousness." (96) In *Universalist Radha-Krishnaism: A Theological Perspective*, I explain,

Cosmic consciousness cognizes and regulates concrete formations. From this perspective, cosmic consciousness implies a differentiated, qualified state of God-dess. Cosmic consciousness is qualified in a limited sense as a partial manifestation of God-dess, who is qualified in endless ways. Cosmic consciousness exists within beings and material nature consciously maintaining all.

God-dess relates to conditioned individuals and nature through cosmic consciousness. God-dess creates the world and enters it as cosmic consciousness. God-dess pervades, sustains, and regulates individual spirits and the universe collectively and individually as cosmic consciousness. (65-6)

Schafer continues, "The physical realm of the world is based on a metaphysical realm. And, even more shocking, the metaphysical is primary and the physical is secondary." (101) Thus coming from a scientific point of view, he confirms the Vaishnav teachings of the primacy of the spiritual world as a model for the material.

Schafer says, "What I like to suggest is that these operational principles appear in our mind out of the mindlike background of the universe. They are

actualizations of forms that exist in the realm of the cosmic potentiality, and they can appear in us because the universe is a mindlike wholeness and our mind is connected with it.” (107-8)

It should give us great comfort to be part of a universal mind that cares for us rather than chance accidents with no real purpose other than survival and reproduction of the fittest enjoying whatever fleeting pleasures we can in this brief life of struggle and competition.

There are recurring ideas about the order of the world and human nature that are so deeply rooted in us that they constantly emerge in the thinking of people in different ages, different cultures, and different parts of the world. Already thousands of years ago, the Indian sages knew about this phenomenon; they called it *Sanatana Dharma*. . . . In the history of Western philosophy, *Sanatana Dharma* was introduced as *perennial philosophy*.

I consider perennial philosophy as a special form of synchronicity: It is the independent appearance, without any visible connection, of identical thoughts in different minds, at different times, and in different parts of the world. . . . human minds have been connected with a cosmic field at all times and everywhere in the world. The connection is possible because consciousness is a cosmic property and our individual minds are connected with it. (116-17)

The most important lesson from perennial philosophy is that consciousness means cosmic connectedness. Your mind is connected with a transpersonal domain. It follows that your potential isn't restricted to the activities of your genes—it is

much more. It is the creative tension, the primordial urge, the impelling force: it is the spanda [the ultimate vibration (samanya-spanda)] in you and, therefore, it is infinite. (120-21)

This is the path of the essence seeker who goes beyond sectarian boundaries to realize a broader, more integrated whole capable of healing the sectarian divisions that so divide the world. Ultimate truth is one. Everything is ultimately one. Divisions are artificially created by ignorance. For the good of all it is time to heal those divisions.

According to Schafer, "the primary function of your mind is its ability to serve as an outlet for the cosmic spirit. Your mind is a tool by which the cosmic consciousness can actualize its potentiality in the empirical world." (122-23)

This is the basis of devotional service. We surrender our mind and body to serving the will of the divine. As I said in the church, "God has no hands, legs, mouth, etc. to work with except ours. Therefore, we need to be instruments for God's work."

"Neo-Darwinism isn't only a scientific theory but also a way of life. Because its view of the world is the wrong view, it has led humanity to a wrong way of life and the globe into a crisis." (128)

In my lifetime, this has never been more apparent than today. International relations, the threat of devastating war, social break down, corrupt politicians, corporate greed and power, etc. are a clear signal that we need a significant paradigm shift, not just a little reshuffling here

and there. The whole system is based on false premises, and it is leading us down the road of destruction.

“Virtual state actualization (VSA) is the mechanism by which a new order evolves in the world. If you think about it, the principle applies to everything, not only life.” (141)

Things develop from subtle to gross. Coming from the spiritual level of cosmic potential, new forms emanate to the material level where they may actualize. As we open ourselves to the inner prodding of cosmic consciousness, we gain directions for how to live our lives in the most productive way to bring about the necessary changes to a more integrated, peaceful, loving, and sustainable world.

“Life is evolving within the order of reality. We must think that we will fare best when we are in contact with the One and live in accordance with its principles.” (145) It is clear that living in harmony with the One is beneficial for us on the material and spiritual levels. We reap the karma that we sow. When we surrender to God-dess, we become free of karma and facilitate the unfolding of the divine plan to benefit the whole.

Schafer says, “My suggestion is that, if consciousness belongs to the cosmic potentiality, it will look for living organisms as a means to manifest itself in the empirical world. For all we know, it is possible to think that the forms in the cosmic potentiality may be evolving together with us to ever increasing complexity.” (158) Everything is in process. Let us become fluid and in harmony with the flow to further the divine process rather than stumbling blocks that inhibit the flow. We all under utilize our divine potential that we are called to awaken and actualize.

"We are not 'stuck' with an innate viciously competitive nature," writes Bruce Lipton in his book *The Biology of Belief*. Instead, "survival of the most loving is the only ethic that will ensure not only a healthy personal life but also a healthy planet." (160) Love is the answer. It's time we not only give lip service to this truth, but make it the foundation of our life and actions. "A life in agreement with cosmic order is an authentic life. The inauthentic life isn't worth living." (165)

"World ethos is the system of principles of conduct that proposes that only a life that is in harmony with the order of reality is meaningful or true; in view of the holistic nature of the world, such a life is a wholesome life." (168) We are integral parts of the universe and of the cosmic consciousness. Isn't it time we wake up to this fact and live accordingly rather than being selfish, egoistic, dumb sheep following a materially conditioned way of life that is self destructive and collectively destructive of the world?

Schafer points out that "we find in the depths of the quantum reality suggestions of virtues that are identical with the virtues of some of the great moral minds of our history." (172) This isn't a new idea, but a time honored truth presented from a new perspective to capture the imagination of contemporary people. Hopefully, it will catch on and spread.

"Peace of mind isn't found in the mindless satisfaction of bodily needs, but only in the interactions with the One." (174]) This wisdom coming from dedicated scientists lends a rational approach to spirituality and can help lead us from sectarian religious divisions to a universalist perspective that more people may be inclined to act on.

Much of what our morality is about is found in the connection of our mind with the mindlike background of the universe. When moral decisions have to be made, suggestions appear out of this connection, telling us the right way to act. Your inner sense of existence is ultimately the sense of the cosmic consciousness in you, which you feel as identified with you or inseparable from your existence. (178)

Schafer thinks, "quantum phenomena have led us to the point where we don't have a choice anymore: There is no denying that a transcendent part of reality exists. It makes a life with values possible and necessary, and it makes it impossible to think that we are nothing but robots condemned to the boring life of machines." (187) Thus he counters the atheistic, materialist, empirical, reductionist points of view from a scientific perspective that is hard to refute.

"Morality is the manifestation of a transempirical, tacit moral form that exists in the realm of potentiality and appears spontaneously in our consciousness when it is needed, offering its advice to our judgment and free will." (188-89) This corresponds to the Super Soul, inner guide, or Higher Power offering non-coercive guidance to us. We are not left on our own to figure things out, but have divine wisdom to turn to as we make our choices in life.

Schafer suggests, "The discovery of the quantum phenomena signifies an evolutionary metamorphosis of the human consciousness, a leap of the evolution of life into a new human species." (195-96) As the ascending Dwapara Yuga advances, we will see humanity advance to higher levels of consciousness as the quantum paradigm gains more acceptance. The remnants of materialistic Kali Yuga

consciousness are reaching their limits of appropriateness, especially when armed with nuclear weapons and other advanced technologies. More and more people see the need for change.

This new consciousness “can combine spiritual views of the world with a rational understanding of cosmic order. . . . And we will be able to live to the fullest our individual potential in a holistic world in which all things and people are one.” (196) Mystics have advocated this for millennia. Perhaps now that we are in ascending Dwapara Yuga and science confirms this need, it will actually manifest by the divine awakening of and empowering of enough people. “Thus, when unexpected aspects of the wholeness of the world appear together with signs of stress, as this is happening at the present time, it seems prudent to prepare for another movement of the evolution of life.” (197)

“It is no accident that, when quantum physics discovered a realm of forms at the foundation of the visible world, Carl Jung discovered a realm of forms at the foundation of our mind. What the unconscious is to the mind, the nonempirical realm of reality is to the empirical world.” (198) The changes are happening on different levels, in different disciplines to manifest a holistic paradigm shift. Let us strive to be change agents for this.

The original state was the archaic structure of consciousness, in which human beings felt one with the world and “were not distinguished from the universe.” We will, of course, not restore the archaic state in its original form, but we will integrate those of its aspects that we accept as true with our current rational understanding of the world. . . . in the newly emerging integrative consciousness, archaic,

magical, and mythical motifs emerge naturally in a rational understanding of the world. (200)

“Our nature is the nature of the universe. Since the purpose in us came out of the wholeness and belongs to it, the conclusion must be that purpose is a cosmic property.” (208) Rather than strangers in a strange land, we are one with the Ground of Being and nurtured by it.

“We can’t know what the purpose of the universe is, but we might make a guess: Its purpose is to take the structure of consciousness to ever increasing levels of integration.” (209) Through devotional service, we can integrate ourselves with the divine whole. “When you begin to understand your inner sense of existence as the feeling of your being in the ‘oneness of God’s being,’ it will open the door to your infinite potential.” (212)

“That science now supports the search for the transcendent comes as a shock. It is the shock that drives the metamorphosis of the mind. Searching for the transcendent in the quantum phenomena, we are finding out that the transcendent is searching for us.” (213) Goddess’ loving presence has been reaching out to us for eternity just waiting patiently for us to respond favorably. Isn’t it about time?

Quantum reality offers reasons for hope. When reality is an undivided wholeness, we aren’t hemmed in by its infinity, but we belong to it. When the background of the universe is mindlike, we aren’t alone in the universe, but the cosmic spirit is thinking with us. In your thoughts are divine thoughts. In your kindness, divine kindness comes to the fore. And in the potential in you, the infinite divine potential is trying to express itself in the

empirical world. Why it needs us, I have no idea.
Perhaps the answer is that we are the cosmic spirit
and the cosmic spirit is us. (215)

About the Author: Lothar Schäfer is the author of *In Search of Divine Reality: Science as a Source of Inspiration* and is a distinguished professor of physical chemistry (emeritus) at the University of Arkansas.

What Is Reality?

This book does indeed succeed in providing a new map of reality, for millions of aspiring global citizens to see beyond today's conflicts and ideological and religious factions, grounding our spiritual and instinctive vision of wholeness, the inseparable oneness of our human family with all life on this planet.—Hazel Henderson, Author of *Building a Win-Win World* and *Paradigms in Progress*

What Is Reality? The New Map of Cosmos and Consciousness, by Ervin Laszlo, Select Books, 2016. Augmented by insightful commentary from a dozen scholars and thinkers, along with a foreword by Deepak Chopra and an introduction by Stanislav Grof, *What is Reality?* offers a fresh, liberating understanding of the meaning and purpose of existence.

Laszlo and friends echo many of the same themes as other authors in this book. The general agreement shared by these authors shows a widely accepted, but still contested, new paradigm that is developing and replacing the destructive strangle hold of the empirical, materialistic paradigm with a holistic, spiritual perspective.

The new reality perceives embracing interconnection among all things in the universe. It is not based on matter, and it incorporates space and time in the embracing interaction that defines evolution in the integral system of the world. This is not a radically new concept; it has been intuitively known for millennia. (x)

The new paradigm that is supported by the latest scientific understanding, agrees with the insights of

mystics through the ages. Life unfolds according to a divine plan, not by mere chance. The universe is not dull dead matter, but a living, conscious manifestation of Cosmic Consciousness, and we are parts of that consciousness whose purpose is to further its evolution.

As Deepak Chopra points out, "Only the evolution of consciousness can produce a better world." (xv) Therefore, our purpose in life is to bring our consciousness in harmony with that of Cosmic Consciousness, which is based on unconditional love. In this way, we and the divine evolve to higher states of being.

Chopra claims, "The epoch of naive realism (the belief that the world of the five senses can be simply accepted as a given) is quickly drawing to a close." (xvii) Our senses are so limited in their range of perception that they give an extremely inadequate view of reality. "It has been rightly said that the 'real world' is actually a reflected image of how the brain works. It is an abstraction built up from mechanical manipulation at the neural level." (xix) It may be called an illusory view of the world.

Stanislav Grof says, "In his unique systemic and interdisciplinary approach to problem solving, Laszlo now succeeded in producing a map that dissolves the boundaries between natural science and the study of mind and spirituality." (xxiii) Pre-Enlightenment sages utilized a more holistic approach to their inquiries that is now being adapted by leading contemporary researchers.

Some transpersonal experiences are related to a dimension that is radically different from consensual reality. It is immaterial and lies beyond spacetime; within it there are no boundaries and everything seems to coexist in the eternal Now. It is a realm

that harbors archetypes, cosmic principles that form and inform the material world: these can manifest either in their universal form or in the form of specific culture-bound entities. It is the realm Laszlo in this book calls the deep dimension, the domain of the cosmos beyond space and time. (xxx)

This is similar to what other authors we discussed have claimed and called by different names. It confirms the transcendental dimension is the ideal source and model of the material dimension. "As above, so below."

"The inclination to mistake the existing paradigms for an accurate and definitive description of reality has been pervasive in the world of science." (xxxii) Enamored by their successes and the hubris of thinking they have conclusively understood the workings of nature, empirical, materialistic scientists are threatened and reluctant to accept new perspectives being revealed especially by quantum physics.

According to Grof:

The most important general conclusion that one can draw from various avenues of modern consciousness research is that consciousness is not a product of the neurophysiological processes in the brain, but an essential and integral part of existence. This realization is also the basic tenet of Laszlo's map of reality. According to this map, consciousness does not originate in the brain, but in the Akashic field. (xxxii-xxxiii)

The Akashic Hologfield harbors the logos of the cosmos; it contains the information, rules, and regularities that govern events in the manifest world and the behavior of its constituents. It also

conserves a complete holographic record of the history of the universe and of our planet, including the patterns of consciousness that it created. Since this domain has no boundaries and partitions, all the information contained in it is present in all its points. (xxxiii)

Ervin Laszlo explains:

The current and now obsolete, but in some respects still dominant paradigm is the inheritance of classical physics. It views the world as consisting of individual bits of "matter" that interact in passive space and indifferently flowing time. This concept has been challenged by the relativity revolution in the first decade of the twentieth century, and by the quantum revolution in the third. The new paradigm at the dawn of the twenty-first century consolidates these revolutions. It sees the world as a whole system where all things interact and together constitute an entangled, quantum-like system in which all things [sic] are intrinsic elements in an integral whole. (3-4)

Newton's mechanistic universe and Darwin's chance, competition based evolution are being replaced by a holistic, interconnected, consciousness based universe in which the One becomes many seeking to manifest a world filled with unconditional love. This new paradigm is the cure for the ills of the world that severely threaten us today. Laszlo continues:

The things that furnish space and time are coordinated patterns of interfering waves. The manifest world is a set of clusters of coordinated vibration in the excited state of the cosmos. The coordination of the clusters of vibration indicates

nonrandomness at the heart of reality. The clusters are "in-formed" by a factor we identify (as does Planck) as an underlying cosmic intelligence. (9)

The things we consider matter are really clusters of energy waves formed by the archetypal designs found in the transcendental dimension manifested by Cosmic Consciousness. "Neither matter nor mind is the basic reality. The basic reality is the intelligence that coordinates the clusters of vibration that appear as object-like and mind-like phenomena." (12)

"The creation stories of the world's religious and spiritual systems speak of a primordial domain out of which the manifest world would have emerged. In some Eastern metaphysics this domain is a cosmic egg," (16) the *mahat*, the causal ocean, or the lotus flower growing out of Vishnu's navel.

The recognition of a deep dimension beyond space and time is a recurrent feature in the history of philosophy. Plato called it the sphere of Forms and Ideas, and identified it as the seat of the Soul. The Hellenic philosophers gave it various names: Pythagoras called it Kosmos, and Plotinus The One. (16)

The idea of a spiritual dimension beyond spacetime from which the material manifestation arises goes back thousands of years and is universal in scope. Now even science is forced acknowledge its existence and lend credence to it even though we cannot experience it with our senses. Spirituality, philosophy, and science are coming to agree on certain important basic principles.

Laszlo realizes:

Brahman is the eternal and eternally unchanging reality. The world of space and time is lila, the unceasing play of appearance and disappearance, of forming and dissolution. It is a surface manifestation of the deeper, beyond-space and time reality of Brahman. (17)

As Shakespeare said, "All the world is a stage, and we are but players on it." The world is manifest so the divine can enjoy playing the roles of all the humans, gods, animals, forces of nature, and everything else she/he becomes to relish the taste of unlimited novel experiences.

Laszlo explains:

Initially Pribram advanced the holonomic brain theory to account for holographically coded information originating in Bohm's explicate order, but in collaboration with Bohm he then explored the possibility that the holographic information received by the brain originates in the implicate order—the deep dimension of the cosmos.

Presently the idea that the deep dimension would be a hologram, and the things we observe in space and time would be its projection, is a hypothesis. It is a plausible hypothesis, however, given that it explains the entangled, nonlocal character of object-like as well as mind-like phenomena in the universe, overcoming the outdated materialism and local realism of the classical paradigm. (26)

I discussed the holographic nature of the universe in others chapters. This shows that it is widely accepted. However, this does not imply that the universe is a computer simulation created by an advanced civilization as some materialistic scientists propose. Rather it explains how Ideas are transmitted from the two dimensional deep

dimension to the four dimensional material realm according to the design of Cosmic Consciousness.

Laszlo concludes:

Reports of consciousness without cerebral activity come from a variety of sources. . . . Many such reports have been examined by scientists, medical doctors, physicists, and neurosurgeons, and a rapidly growing number among them affirm that they are veridical: there is reason to believe there is consciousness beyond the brain. (27-8)

The brain does not create consciousness nor does it limit where consciousness can function. Consciousness forms the brain and body as a vehicle to function through on the material plane. It exists prior to birth and after death of the body. Simple organisms without brains have rudimentary consciousness. As Cosmic Consciousness, consciousness pervades all things including the inorganic where it exists as a dim awareness. Consciousness and existence go hand in hand.

Astrophysicist David Darling wrote: The brain does not produce consciousness at all, any more than a television set creates the programs that appear on its screen. . . . On the contrary, the brain filters and restricts consciousness, just as our senses limit the totality of experience to which we might otherwise have access. (38)

Between the limits of the brain and senses, we have such a partial distorted view of reality that it can certainly be called illusory. Therefore, rather than giving an objective, complete view of existence, empirical, materialistic science gives a partial distorted view that it clings to like an outmoded fundamentalist religious belief.

Both consciousness and body are in-formed by the vibration of the ground state of the cosmos. The cells, organs, organ-systems, and the organism as a whole, as well as the mind or consciousness associated with the organism, receive and resonate with the intelligence that in-forms the universe. (43)

Cosmic Consciousness creates and guides the life of all things. There is a divine vision for our life, and the more we can attune ourselves to that vision, the better our life will be. This is a loving God-dess who has our best interests at heart and wants us to grow in loving relationships.

Laszlo agrees:

The wisdom traditions are unanimous in affirming that the mind survives the body. Beyond the demise of the body, there is a "soul" or "spirit" that continues to exist, even if it does not exist on the same Plane as the body. The Planes of existence are not limited to the Physical Plane, where consciousness is associated with the body. There are also transcendent Planes such as the Astral, the Mental, the Causal, and the Etheric. On these Planes the soul or spirit continues to exist beyond space and time. (48)

Universalist Radha-Krishnaism affirms the eternal nature of the individual spirits who are parts of the divine. They can reincarnate in material bodies or by practicing natural devotion, develop a perfect spiritual body that allows them to enter the transcendental realm of Radha-Krishna and engage in loving spiritual pastimes with them.

Jude Currivan says, "The universe evolves as a whole system, whose macrocosmic intelligence is experienced, explored, and evolved at all scales of existence." (118) We are not left here to struggle for survival in a hostile world on our own. Rather, a loving Cosmic Consciousness guides everything, but due to free will, not everything goes according to the divine plan and evil is allowed to exist. However, goodness and love ultimately persuasively prevail in all things.

He continues:

At this momentous time we are coming to recognize that everything we call physical reality is expressed as a cosmic hologram, and that each of us is a holographic microcosm. Our new science-based understanding tells us that there is no real separation between cosmos and consciousness, and that the appearance of this separation is merely the perspective from which consciousness in the cosmos views its own projection. The apparent duality of mind and matter questioned by David Chalmers is an illusion. The wholeness of consciousness, of what Einstein referred to as the cosmic mind, is being progressively revealed in the context of the wholeness of the cosmos. (119-20)

Allan Combs and Stanley Krippner explain:

IF WE LOOK DEEPLY AT THE implications of many holographic and informational theories of the cosmos, an extraordinary prospect presents itself. This is the possibility of the existence of entire worlds that are not simply distant in space, but which lie entirely outside the "material" universe of physical events as we know them, though still resting in the same holographic informational plenum as ordinary reality. (120)

This is good news for us. The transcendental realm where Radha-Krishna engage in their loving pastimes is holographically present in all things since each part of the hologram contains the whole. Therefore, it is accessible to us as we attune our consciousness to life on that spiritual level.

Stephan A. Schwartz suggests:

Now imagine that the astronomical vastness of that space is undergirded by consciousness. Can this be possible? The physicalist worldview says no; consciousness arises from physiology. Yet thousands of well-conducted experiments and case studies insist there is an aspect of consciousness that is not physiologically based, and that is not limited by spacetime. More than that they propose consciousness itself is the foundation of all that is. (126)

It is becoming clear that the empirical materialistic paradigm is no longer viable. Consciousness is all pervading. It is the ground and primal cause of all. It gives life to all things and provides the pattern for their existence.

The [sic] corollary to the idea of nonlocal consciousness is that all life is interconnected and interdependent, that we are part of a matrix of life, but even more fundamentally that spacetime itself arises from consciousness, not consciousness from spacetime. (126)

Clearly, there is a divine consciousness from which creation springs forth giving life to all things that may appear as independent individuals but are actually interconnected and interdependent parts of the One. They

are simultaneously one and different. As such, an attitude of cooperation and working for the good of all is called for.

Einstein explained it this way, "A human being is a part of the whole, called by us 'Universe,' a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest, a kind of *optical delusion of his consciousness*. [italics added] This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us." (129)

This is the material false ego that separates us from the rest of existence. Mechanistic Newtonian physics and competitive Darwinism have reinforced this delusion for several centuries leading to the global crisis we experience today. Fortunately, these ideas are being replaced by a more holistic paradigm that gives new meaning to life as we progress in Dwapara Yuga and more people attain a higher spiritual consciousness.

Denierism is a powerful force in both science and society. Science in the twenty-first century is the arbiter of what is real, and the transition to this new map of reality is a process that will in large measure be controlled by the science community's acceptance. (138-9)

We are in a transition period between the old materialistic paradigm which still holds great influence over people, and the new spiritual paradigm that offers a more sustainable and rewarding life. It is up to each of us to do our part in advancing the collective consciousness. Therefore, I write this book and encourage you to do what you can. The more individuals are enlightened and share

what they experience, the more the collective consciousness is raised.

“To change the beliefs of an entire community, only ten percent of the population needs to become convinced of a new or different opinion. At that tipping point, the idea can spread through social networks and alter behaviors on a large scale.” (145)

Nitamo Federico Montecucco says:
IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD we are witnessing today the birth of a global civilization with a global consciousness. Consciousness is the core of every living being and the key to human evolution. It is also the core of the paradigm emerging in field after field in science, culture, and spirituality. (153)

There is good news and reason for hope. New ideas are catching on, people are awakening, interactions are changing, and the crisis we are now in may lead to even more rapid change toward the new paradigm. The conscious element of creation can be counted on to guide us on the path of progress toward a better future.

For centuries the old paradigm has divided consciousness from matter, the soul from the body, nation from nation, and science from religion, creating a world of divisions and wars without respect for the consciousness of human beings. Responsibility for the rise of ecological, economic, and social crises can be ascribed to the dominance of the old dichotomous paradigm. That paradigm is no longer tenable. . . . The emerging paradigm in science is part of a more ecological, humane, and sustainable trend in the world. (154)

Modern science provides a basis for formulating hypotheses that can explain spiritual experience and provide a logical background to grasp the complex mechanisms that govern the elusive phenomena of consciousness.

When we “die,” the psychosomatic unity of our body disorganizes and breaks apart: the atoms of the somatic biochemical body become separate elements, while consciousness (the “soul”) becomes free of spacetime boundaries and experiences itself in a dimension of nonlocal information. (159)

The corroboration of scientific and spiritual views of life strengthens faith in both. We can confidently believe in life after death experienced in a transcendent realm free of material limitations. This dimension has been experienced and described by mystics, near death experiencers, and hypnosis subjects. Death has lost its sting.

The shaman, Na Aak explains: “The final judgment comes from the state of our own consciousness: can we love and accept ourselves unconditionally? Or do we despise our self? This will decide the state into which we shall pass.” (168-9) We can work on developing unconditional love in this life to ensure our progress in the next life. With sufficient practice and grace, we can enter a transcendental realm with God-dess and not need to be reborn on the material level.

Jean Houston says:

For what is mysticism but the art of union with Reality and a mystic, a person who aims at and believes in the attainment of such union. In its classical, spiritual form, it is a heroic journey, and valiant efforts are required to follow the path. . . . Once the province of the few, the mystic path may

now be the requirement of the many—a unique developmental path for self and world. (175)

The Way of Natural Devotion teaches one such path to union with Radha-Krishna, the Divine Couple. Many consider this the highest spiritual attainment. I present it in a manner accessible to contemporary Western seekers.

Houston continues:

In studying the fractals of the mystic way of the journey beyond space and time, we find that love is the supreme quality that underlies the after-death experience. It is through the experience and practice of love that we travel both here and hereafter to the heart of the One, to Consciousness itself, lured by love to our infinite being wherever and however we exist. (181)

Natural Devotion cultivates love in this life and the next as we develop our relationship with Radha-Krishna. This path was developed in India and successfully practiced for over five hundred years. Modern, scientific minded people can practice it without inner conflict using my updated presentation.

Christopher M. Bache explains:

Laszlo's vision of the cosmos lifts science to a new horizon. He sees our universe floating in an invisible meta-universe of infinite potential, matter dancing in the quantum field, galaxies informed by a cosmic intelligence, a seamless wholeness that sustains and orders the diversity of life, every part driven by a relentless urge to grow and evolve, self-emergent creativity operating on timeline that staggers the imagination, our minds a fractal manifestation of the logos, the mind of All-That-Is. (182-3)

This description is in perfect agreement with Universalist Radha-Krishnaism's theological position. As universalist essence seekers, we acknowledge the common wisdom we share with Laszlo, his friends, and others who came to the same conclusions through the ages. The more we can step out of narrow sectarian views and unite with others of a similar understanding the more we can create a better world for all.

Bache concludes: "Behind creation lies a love of extraordinary proportions, and all of existence is an expression of this love. The intelligence of the universe's design is matched by the depth of love that inspired it." (188) This is an excellent description of Radha-Krishna's love as the basis for creation.

Taoist Zhi-Gang Sha explains:

The paradox of individual existence is that our individual consciousness and our space-time-bound bodies are ultimately part of a universal consciousness, a pure field which I call Tao and Laszlo calls the ground state of the cosmos. This deep reality beyond spacetime is without beginning and end and it encompasses all that we are, all that we think, and all that we feel in a unitary presence that transcends space and time. (191-2)

Again, this description corresponds to what I call Cosmic Consciousness. Once more we see shared truth between Taoism, science, and Universalist Radha-Krishnaism. This shows the growing consensus of the new paradigm that defines the nature of reality. Spiritual people of many paths can unite around this understanding.

John R. Audette says, "The meaning and purpose of all existence is to evolve into a pure expression or manifestation of unconditional love for all things. Unconditional love is the abiding ultimate organizing principle of the universe/metaverse." (196) *The Way of Natural Devotion* is meant to cultivate unconditional love within our hearts harmonizing our life with the cosmos and its creator.

"Death challenges us to make our lives meaningful, and in that sense, all of physical life should be a continuous preparation for death." (202) I've been curious about death since I was a boy and dedicated myself to the spiritual path in preparation for it. Now as an old man, I patiently await its arrival eager to see what new revelations it brings.

Albert Einstein, possibly the world's brightest scientist ever, is reputed to have said: *There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.*

It seems to me that the latter point of view is the most accurate way of thinking and perceiving reality. How can life and all creation be anything other than an amazing miracle? (206)

Yes, it is miraculous that life as we know it exists. The odds of it happening by chance are nil. The divine creator is a miracle worker creating laws of nature that allow creation to exist as it does. Miracles are in harmony with nature because they emanate from the divine consciousness that constitutes nature itself.

Kingsley L. Dennis explains:

[T]he cosmos is a self-organizing and self-actualizing whole. Holotropic evolutionary trends underlie all manifestation of its unfolding reality. Evolution in the known physical universe—in its laws and processes—as well as in and among living organisms, it appears, tends toward more sensitive and stable coherence, as well as toward conscious interconnectivity. (209)

Creation has a divine purpose that evolves from the vision of Cosmic Consciousness. Of course, that evolution doesn't always go exactly according to plan due to free will and the existence of evil. However, if we look at the big picture, we can see the progress of conscious evolution toward interconnected universal love. We have a long way to go, but at least we can see the goal now.

Alexander Laszlo concludes:

THE MEANING OF EXISTENCE, according to the conclusions reached on the basis of the new map of reality, is to participate in and enable the evolution of consciousness. Participating in and enabling the evolution of consciousness lends meaning to existence in the world. It lends meaning to our own existence. The question to ask is how we can live in accordance with that meaning. (226)

Universalist Radha-Krishnaism provides the Way of Natural Devotion as a viable path to meaningful conscious evolution. I benefit greatly by following it, and I offer it freely for the benefit of others. As you can see, it offers breadth and depth of realization by drawing from a wide range of sources and being adaptable to individual needs.

“Our age is ripe for an awakening based on an ancient truth: All is One. If indeed All is One, then selfless, loving action is rational—aligned with the ultimate nature of

reality.” (273) Won't you devote yourself to being part of this great awakening that is so desperately needed now? Help us tip the scales of consciousness and make the new paradigm of love dominant.

About the Author

Ervin Laszlo received the Sorbonne's highest degree, the Doctorat ès Lettres et Sciences Humaines in 1970. Shifting to the life of a scientist and humanist, he lectured at various universities in the United States, including Yale, Princeton, Northwestern University, the University of Houston, and the State University of New York. The author, co-author or editor of ninety-one books that have appeared in a total of twenty-four languages, Ervin Laszlo has also written several hundred papers and articles in scientific journals and popular magazines.

He is a member of numerous scientific bodies, including the International Academy of Science, the World Academy of Arts and Science, the International Academy of Philosophy of Science, and the International Medici Academy. (337-8)

About The Author

Steve Bohlert helped lead the Krishna Movement to its early success (1967-74). Its founder, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, initiated him and named him Subal Das Goswami. Bohlert served as associate editor and business manager of Back to Godhead magazine and started eight temples in North America, India and Fiji.

Bohlert lived in India for three years as an itinerant monk. While staying in Vrindaban, he was befriended and mentored by O.B.L. Kapoor, a prominent devotee, doctor of philosophy, retired professor, and author of over thirty books. Kapoor directed him to Lalita Prasad Thakur (1880-1980), who initiated Bohlert into the esoteric practices of natural devotion.

In 1978, Bohlert taught at the Whole Life Center in Palo Alto, California. In 1979, he served as State Networker for the New Age Caucus in Los Angeles. In 1988, Bohlert began his studies at San Francisco Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. In 1991, he graduated with a master of divinity degree and was ordained as a pastor and teacher in the United Church of Christ. He served three churches in Iowa, North Dakota, and Michigan until 2002. In 2002, he began an independent eclectic ministry. The Kent-Ionia Labor Council presented Steve Bohlert their 2004 Eleanor Roosevelt Award for his work leading a living wage campaign in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Steve Bohlert and his wife moved to Hawaii in 2005. They lived an off-grid lifestyle of voluntary simplicity in the jungle on the Big Island. This lush setting provided an ideal environment for his writing and spiritual practices for thirteen years. In 1918, a major volcanic eruption just a

few miles from their home created unhealthy living conditions. This prompted a move to Morelia, Mexico where Steve and Jahnava enjoy urban life with a rich cultural and artistic presence.