

MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE AS FUTURE SCIENCE

**A Compilation of Articles from The Mystic's Vision
by Swami Abhayananda
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I find it interesting that the mystical realizations that occurred to me in 1966 are now showing up in Western civilization's developing scientific view of the universal reality! Here are a few of the revelations experienced in my mystical experience that are currently being formulated as emerging elements of the scientific paradigm:

I. Identity Complementarity

The term, *complementarity*, as coined by Niels Bohr, refers to the wave-particle duality of quantum physics: that light/matter may appear as either wave or particle, depending on the experiment designed to measure it. It appears now as a wave, now as a particle—but not both, at the same time. And yet, to frame a *complete* definition of the structure of light or matter, both wave and particle are required. Thus, they are considered *complementary* structures. This characterization is carried over in the definition of consciousness, as It contains a similar dual nature. It is revealed in mystical experience that, in a manner very similar to the complementarity of wave and particle in the examination of matter, the universal undifferentiated Consciousness (God) and the individual mind/body (Soul) are complementary states of the same indivisible spiritual reality. In other words, we—you and I—are both the one universal Consciousness and the limited individual consciousness; we can experience ourselves now as one, now as the other—but not both at the same time. Mystical experience is possible only because of that complementarity, as mystical experience is nothing more nor less than the transition from one state of being to its complementary state.

This nondual view of the one reality is solely a metaphysical one at this time—it has long been a feature of Eastern metaphysics—but it seems certain that, in the course of time, this view will become accepted on a broad cultural scale in the

West, even in the sciences. Mystical experience is the empirical (albeit subjective) proof of this complementary view. It is the experiential basis for the Vedantic expression, “I am That”, and, once experienced, is the foundation of certainty in the mind of the experiencer. In my own case, this experience began with the realization that:

O my God, even this body is Thine own!
 Though I call to Thee and seek Thee amidst chaos,
 Even I who seemed an unclean pitcher amidst Thy waters—
 Even I am Thine own.

Does a wave cease to be of the ocean?
 Do the mountains and the gulfs cease to be of the earth?
 Or does a pebble cease to be stone?
 How can I escape Thee?
 Thou art even That which thinks of escape!

...I am the pulse of the turtle.
 I am the clanging bells of joy.
 I bring the dust of blindness.
 I am the fire of song.
 I am in the clouds and in the gritty soil.
 In pools of clear water my image is found...¹

II. The Inseparability of Mind And Body (Consciousness And Matter)

In the clarity of that mystical revelation which I experienced, *I* (the one Consciousness) was aware that *I* pervade all existence: “I am in the clouds, and in the gritty soil.” In addition to this, I was unable to discern any categorical separation between my mind and my body. It is a common convention that the body is ‘the temple’ in which the spirit (mind or soul) resides. But, from the vantage of that integral Consciousness, I could see no separate encasement. “Where is the temple?” I exclaimed; “Which the Imperishable? Which the abode?” But there was no duality. It was clear that body and mind were not two things, but one—like a figure in a dream, or a mentally projected character in a waking fantasy, consisting of a unified mental and physical reality. This is not only counter-intuitive, going against our religiously inculcated bias concerning the separation of soul and body at the moment of death; it also denies the conventional Cartesian duality that constitutes the Western philosophical rationale for the

conceptual separation of mind and body—and, by implication, the separation of consciousness and matter on a cosmic scale. But the mystical experience reveals that these two are inseparable, one. How is this possible?

For long it had been assumed that consciousness was an epiphenomenon of the evolving complexity of matter; but eventually the illogic of that assumption became apparent. Today, precedence is being given to the consideration of the supposition that Consciousness is the primary Essence in which and from which the entire universe of Matter evolved. Many theoretical physicists are now convinced that these two long-divided categories are in fact integral. And, though there is as yet no empirical proof (aside from mystical experience) to warrant scientific certainty, there is growing inferential evidence to support this supposition.

III. The Cyclic Universe

There has also been much speculation and inference in recent years concerning the origin of the cosmos, but little in the way of scientific evidence, or certainty. In recent years, Cosmologists have proposed a theory sometimes known as the ‘Cyclic’ or ‘Oscillating’ Universe Theory. A number of scientists, including Albert Einstein, were enamored of this theory, but it was eventually regarded as flawed. This was because the theory posited by physicists was a purely physical system, governed by purely physical laws required to restart the ‘Big Bang’ after each ‘Big Crunch’. But, of course, the Source and Governor of the universe is not physical, but noumenal, not to mention omnipotent.

The Divine Mind is not limited to relying on the laws of physics to recreate the universe; It creates in accord with Its own will. That Divine Mind is alive and conscious throughout the universe, and beyond the universe; and It remains so when the universe is withdrawn. It is not some insentient mechanical force. It is the Inventor of mechanical force; and It is the Intelligence of which our own meager intelligence is but a limited facsimile, possessing but a hint of the power, living clarity, alertness, and efficacy of the universal Mind. It is He who, of His own will, breathes forth the conscious universe initially as a brilliant transformative light.

This vision of the repetitive nature of universal creation in a cyclic, breath-like manner was first depicted in the Hindu scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Bhagavad Gita* (“Song of God”) was written ca. 500 B.C.E., as part of a larger work, the *Mahabharata*, (reputedly written by the legendary sage, Vyasa), as a

dialogue between Krishna (an incarnation of God) and Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. And it is Krishna who, speaking as the Divinity itself, teaches to Arjuna the perennial philosophy, explaining that in His Divine unmanifest state He manifests the entire universe, which he describes as his ‘lower’ nature;² and He manifests this ‘lower nature’ in a cyclic fashion, periodically creating, then dissolving the manifested universe:

“At the end of a cycle, all beings, … enter into My *Prakriti* [His creative Power], and at the beginning of a cycle, I generate them all again. Controlling My own *Prakriti*, I send forth, again and again, all this multitude of beings, helpless under the sway of Maya.”³

My own acceptance of this cosmic scenario did not come about from the theories of physicists, nor from the Hindu scriptures, but from my own indubitable vision, a vision granted me by the Divine Self. In that transformed state of consciousness, during which I experienced the integral Consciousness as my own, *I* (Universal Consciousness) periodically exhale the universe in the manner of an expanding breath alternating with an inhalation in which the universe is then withdrawn back into its source. While immersed in this clear awareness, I/He stated: “I have but breathed, and everything is rearranged and set in order once again. A million worlds begin and end in every breath, and in this breathing, all things are sustained.” This utterance I regarded then, and I regard to this day, as the very word of God.

IV. Non-Locality

The common-sense view of the world accepts the principle of *Locality*: that objects are only directly influenced by their immediate (local) surroundings. This includes the possibility that an action at one point may have an influence at another point, if something in the space between the points, such as a field, mediates the action. To exert an influence, something, such as a wave or particle, must travel through the space between the two points, to carry the influence. But *Non-Locality* is a developing scientific view that has come about through the hard-won conceptual battles between the great intellects of the twentieth century, Bohr, Einstein, Heisenberg, Born, Schrödinger, etc. My ‘mystical’ realizations, on the other hand, were the result of a direct clarified *perception* of reality itself. In that direct clarified perception, it was perfectly clear to me that “all things move together of one accord; assent is given throughout the universe to every falling grain.” I saw, in other words, that all that is in the universe is integrally coordinated by a single

will, so that ‘all things move together of one accord’. This view of physical reality, translated into the terminology acceptable to the scientific community, states that there are no independent causes or effects occurring solely in a local setting, but everything is interconnected, coordinated universally—that is to say, non-locally. Here is a particularly well-expressed version of that understanding presented by David Bohm and his co-author, Basil Hiley, in a 1975 article:

“The world which we perceive cannot properly be analyzed into independently existent parts with fixed and determinate dynamical relationships between each of the parts. Rather, the ‘parts’ are seen to be in immediate connection, in which their dynamical relationships depend, in an irreducible way, on the state of the whole system (and indeed on that of broader systems in which they are contained, extending ultimately and in principle to the entire universe). Thus, one is led to a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical idea of analyzability of the world into separately and independently existent parts. We have reversed the usual classical notion that the independent ‘elementary parts’ of the world are the fundamental reality, and that the various systems are merely particular contingent forms and arrangements of these parts. Rather, we say that inseparable quantum inter-connectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality, and that relatively independently behaving parts are merely particular and contingent forms within this whole.”⁴

“...Ultimately, the entire universe (with all its particles, including those constituting human beings, their laboratories, observing instruments, etc.) has to be understood as a single undivided Whole, in which analysis into separately and independently existent parts has no fundamental status.”⁵

While the question of non-locality originally arose from the thought-experiment outlined in the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen (EPR) paper in which Einstein entered into his historical debate with Neils Bohr in 1935 in the attempt to prove Quantum Theory incomplete, the technological means to actually perform the empirical tests needed to determine the scientific basis for non-locality, proving Bohr correct and Einstein incorrect, did not present themselves until long after Einstein had passed away. In 1964, the theoretical physicist, John Bell, and experimenters Alain Aspect (1982) and Nicolus Gisin (1997) conclusively proved both by theorem and

by empirical methods that the existence of “non-local” influences is a real scientific fact, and this fact has been universally accepted by the community of physicists throughout the world.

Nonetheless, there remains a wide gulf between the direct ‘mystical’ knowledge of reality and a conceptual scientific knowledge based on empirical proofs. Mystical experience is a direct revelation of the living Self who is the Source and Director of the universal array. It is not a linguistically framed theory of universal mechanics, but rather a living confirmation of the one divine Mind who both contains and *is* everything that exists, including oneself. No amount of familiarity with or proficiency in the understanding of the theorems of quantum physics is capable of producing that *direct* knowledge.

The scientific principle of *Non-locality* simply expresses in an oddly roundabout way the fact that has been known for millennia by the faithful of all religions that we exist within a ‘reality’ imaged forth by the one Divine Mind, and in which everything that occurs is His doing and occurs within Him according to His omnipotent Providence. Of course, the activities taking place within the universe are not dependent upon ‘local’ causes; there are no local causes or effects. Causation begins with Him and extends in an infinite network of effects throughout the universe to bring His purposes to fruition. We are simply His eyes and ears, His instruments of knowing and exultation, His singers and worshippers, His imagined others. We too are non-local, rooted in the infinite and eternal Cause, and extending throughout the expansive universe as wave-particles of the one living Being. Halleluia!

NOTES:

1. For a complete account of my own ‘mystical’ experience, see my book, *The Supreme Self*, Winchester, U.K., O Books, 2006; or download it from my website at: www.themysticsvision.com.
2. *Bhagavad Gita*, VII.5; Swami Nikhilananda (trans.), *The Bhagavad Gita*, New York, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1944, 1987; p. 83.
3. *Bhagavad Gita*, IX.7, 8; *Ibid.*, p.103.
4. Bohm, David and Hiley, Basil, “On The Intuitive Understanding of Non-Locality as Implied By Quantum Theory”, London, Foundations of Physics journal, Vol. V, 1975; pp. 96, 102.
5. Bohm, David, *Wholeness And Implicate Order*, London, Routledge, 1980.

Mystical Experience And David Bohm's Implicate Order (8-26-2016, revised 1-9-2021)

I

Science—empirical observation—tells us that we live in a universe of material phenomena—stars, planets, nebulae, gas clouds, black holes, and all that is manifest to the human senses. But the mystic's vision (Gnosis) reveals that, at a subtler, more primal level, we are living in a universal Consciousness in which every individual constituent is interconnected.

That universal Consciousness is an integral noumenon underlying the phenomenal universe and is the Creative Source and substance of all that we experience as the material universe and its contents, including our bodies and all the objects in our environment.

That universal Consciousness is the sole primary reality, and It is therefore also our primary identity. What we know as the phenomenal universe of time, space, and individual forms exists only as an appearance projected within and upon the one universal Consciousness.

This phenomenal universe, existing as it does, as a projected appearance within the universal Consciousness, is thereby imbued with, permeated by, and identical with the all-pervading universal Consciousness.

Each and every one of the separate constituents of this phenomenal universe are participants in that universal Consciousness and operate in accordance with the will of that universal Consciousness. In other words, as I observed while in a state of union with the universal Consciousness, “All things move together of one accord. Assent is given throughout the universe to every falling grain.”

But for many of us, *reality* is synonymous with merely the phenomenal appearance of the physical universe that we perceive through our senses. And yet, in the metaphysics of numerous sacred spiritual traditions from antiquity to the present, *reality* is understood to consist of at least *three* consecutive layers or levels of subtlety. These metaphysical systems invariably describe the *subtlest* primary level as:

1. **The One.** This is the divine Source of all, the Absolute, the universal Consciousness that we refer to as “the Godhead.” It is eternal, noumenal, inactive, transcendent to the phenomenal creation, undifferentiated, and ineffable.

That is followed by:

2. **The Divine Mind.**¹ This is **the One's** *Creative Power*, and It is integral to and never separate from **the One**. It is the Creator of the universe that we refer to as “God.” Periodically, **The Divine Mind** breathes forth the Light (the Great Radiance or ‘Big Bang’) that becomes manifest as time, space, and the material elements that make up this evolving world of form, including the bodies of all creatures. And then, periodically, after a great period of time has elapsed, the Divine Mind absorbs that Light back into Itself, and that cycle of manifestation and reabsorption continues to repeat itself indefinitely.
3. **Soul.** Plotinus envisioned **Soul** as an emanate of **The Divine Mind**, but **Soul** is in fact the all-pervasive field of Consciousness—**the One**—as It pervades and permeates the forms that have been created within It by Its own *Creative Power*, the Divine Mind. It is **the One** as **Soul** that imparts Its Life and Intelligence to individual human forms by virtue of their presence within It, rendering them composites, consisting of both Matter and Mind/Spirit, both body and soul, both phenomenon and noumenon.

These three levels of subtlety are similarly described in Platonist and Vedic literature going back many centuries,² and in each of these traditions, the three levels of are said to exist, not as separate entities, but integrally and simultaneously. We, in our human make-up, are said to be a reiteration of that triune cosmic reality: As conscious beings within the one Divine Reality, our identity consists simultaneously of (1) a Divine essence—thanks to the all-pervasive universal Consciousness, (2) an individualized mind/soul by virtue of the individuation of forms produced by the Divine Mind, and lastly, a physical body. Hence, the universal Consciousness is the ultimate source and core of our being; we are also manifest on a subtle level as souls; and we are manifest in the phenomenal world as separable physically embodied individuals.

In recent times, the twentieth century theoretical physicist, David Bohm (1917-1992), has similarly described the one reality as consisting of these three levels of subtlety, but he does so with some newly coined terms. He refers to the primary divine Source, the universal Consciousness, (“the One” of Neoplatonism, or “Brahman” of Vedanta) as “**the Superimplicate Order**.” The secondary level (corresponding to “the Divine Mind” in the above scheme) he refers to as “**the implicate order**,” and the last, physical level (corresponding to the phenomenal

universe in which souls are manifest as embodied beings), he refers to as “**the explicate order.**”

Bohm approaches this analysis of reality from the perspective of a scientist, a Quantum Physicist, though traditionally, the description of reality as consisting of these three levels of subtlety exists only in the mystically derived *metaphysical* systems. Conventional empirical *science* does not ordinarily describe reality in terms of these three causal levels. To do so would entail the acknowledgment of a Divine Source, a supernatural and noumenal causal agent, which would fly in the face of science’s professed empirical bias.

Physics, as an area of scientific study, delves into the microphysical in the study of Quantum physics, but it has never allowed for the positing of a source of physical reality from outside of the natural (physical) realm; nor does it ever assume a subtle intermediate ideational realm. The suggestion of any such invisible or supernatural causal realm underlying the Material World would flatly contradict the empirical requirements of science.

So, as we can see, science does not provide a clear conception of the original causal Source of the universe, and yet it *does* provide a means for the objective confirmation of its materialist theories through empirical proofs. Metaphysics, on the other hand, with its three-leveled causal progression, *does* posit a plausible Source for the manifest universe, though it does not provide any *objective* confirmation through empirical demonstrations, but only a convincing *subjective* confirmation through what is known as “mystical experience.”

I, for one, having directly experienced that subjective (mystical) confirmation, must side with the metaphysical systems (and with David Bohm) in asserting that there is indeed a subtle ideational level of reality ³ underlying, forming, and supporting the Material World. It is an integral but non-physical continuum, the origin of which is a yet subtler noumenal dimension, a “Superimplicate Order” which we may regard as ‘the transcendent Absolute’, ‘the One,’ or ‘the universal Consciousness.’⁴

If we accept that the three metaphysical levels of subtlety do indeed exist as simultaneous constituents of our Reality, we have to ask, ‘How is that three-leveled constituency compatible with the traditional scientific theory of the origin of the universe by means of the Great Radiance (the Big Bang)?’⁵ It is a question that reminds us of the unfathomably complex mystery faced by anyone attempting to comprehend the Divine creation. In the sudden universal manifestation known

as ‘the Big Bang’ or ‘Great Radiance’, God’s inherent Creative Power did not manifest simply as matter-bearing Light but, clearly, was suffused in some manner with divine Consciousness. The fact that Life and Consciousness appears in creatures evolved from that Light gives indication that the wave-particles which constitute the material constructs of that budding universe had to be permeated and ordered by a noumenal Intelligence, a subtle-level dimension, not particularized, but wavular, continuous, and conscious. And yet, how can we comprehend it?

Who indeed can begin to imagine the complex wizardry of the Divine Mind in forming and constituting this amazing extravaganza that is our universe? The poor human mind is helpless to conceive it. In the past, religious writers have suggested that God imparted His breath, and thereby His Consciousness, directly into the mouths of the original humans, thus giving them a living soul; others suggested that it seemed more likely that God’s Spirit was in some way imparted to *all* of Creation. But there has never been a concurrence of opinion as to how this was accomplished.

But here’s an explanation that should be considered: Let us agree to assume that the divine Thought produced by the Divine Mind, which manifested as The Great Radiance—that burst of divine Light which became our phenomenal universe—occurred *within* the all-pervading Consciousness that is the Absolute One. And because that spreading universe is *within* that divine Consciousness, it is evident that the entire universe is thereby permeated and wholly governed by that divine Consciousness, just as the thoughts existing within our own individual minds are pervaded and governed by the consciousness of those minds. Such an evident explanation obviates the need to invent any further machinations by which God may have imparted Life and Consciousness to His Creation. Also, it is a solution that is clearly born out in St. Paul’s statement, “In Him we live and move and have our being.”

We may readily accept and acknowledge that we consist of the above mentioned three levels of subtlety, but it is well known that words do not adequately represent these subtle levels of reality, rather, these realms are to be *experienced* as real conscious states of being, not simply labeled and defined for purposes of philosophical speculation. Whether the subtle ideational reality underlying the physical reality is called “the Divine Mind”, “*Ishvara*”, “the implicate order”, or anything else, matters but little from the mystic’s perspective. What is of importance is to *experience* that subtle reality (*the implicate order*), and to experience firsthand its source, the One, the Absolute Ground (the Superimplicate Order), who is the ultimate Self of all existence. It is only His gracious gift of that

liberating mystical experience that is capable of revealing to us the glorious truth of our ultimate divinity, and of freeing us from the limitations and sorrows attendant upon the false illusory sense of a separate isolated identity.

Having been gifted by God with divine vision and having seen into the hidden realm where all is one conscious continuum, where the only identity is that one all-inclusive Consciousness, I have to declare that, underlying this many-formed world of separate distinct entities and personalities, is a Divine Reality in which nowhere is there any separateness, in which there is only the one 'I' manifest in and as everything everywhere. How, then, can we know It? How can we experience It? This indivisible continuum of Consciousness can be known by our human intelligence only when we are brought by God's grace to a higher subtler level of consciousness. Only then is it possible to perceive It. There is no other way to know It. It has no time-space coordinates but is revealed only in the unfathomably clear depths of the Divine Mind.

II.

"Relativity and, even more important, quantum mechanics have strongly suggested (though not proved) that the world cannot be analyzed into separate and independently existing parts. Moreover, each part somehow involves all the others: it contains them or enfolds them.... This fact suggests that the sphere of ordinary material life and the sphere of mystical experience have a certain shared order and that this will allow a fruitful relationship between them." ⁶

--David Bohm

According to the mystics who have seen into the nature of reality, the one absolute Consciousness is the Source and Cause of all phenomena, manifesting the universe by Its Creative Power in a manner similar to the way an individual consciousness projects a thought within itself. This Divine Thought contains implicit within it the entire design and evolution of the universe, from its initial coming into being to all the refinements and transformations necessary in the process of its ultimate evolutionary development. And since that Divine Thought is projected in a field of Consciousness, that Thought is itself permeated by Consciousness, lending consciousness to all its elements.

Science does not recognize such a scenario as tenable but relegates the visionary knowledge of the mystics to the category of speculative metaphysics. However, one brave scientist stepped forward to acknowledge the possibility that the mystic's vision could provide a basis for a true and consistent scientific worldview; his name is David Bohm.

David Bohm (1917-1992) was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on December 20, 1917. His father was a Jewish furniture dealer, but David went to college, receiving his B.Sc. degree from Pennsylvania State College in 1939 and his Ph.D. in physics at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1943. At U.C. Berkeley, he studied with Robert Oppenheimer; and when Oppenheimer went to Los Alamos to work on the "Manhattan Project", Bohm remained at Berkeley as a research physicist. There, he worked on the Theory of Plasma and on the Theory of Synchrotrons and Syndrocyclotrons until 1947, when he took a position as an Assistant Professor at Princeton University, working on Plasmas, Theory of Metals, Quantum Mechanics and Elementary Particles. It was there he met and had regular meetings with Albert Einstein.

In 1949, during the repressive McCarthy era, Bohm was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee, and he was asked to testify against Robert Oppenheimer who was being accused of Communist sympathies. Bohm refused to testify and was thereafter tried and acquitted. But the damage had been done; he was fired from his position at Princeton University, and was unable to find work in this country. He then moved to Brazil where he taught briefly at the University of Sao Paolo. He also taught for a brief time in Israel before moving to Bristol, England in 1957. In 1961, he became professor of physics at the Birkbeck College of the University of London, and remained there for the next 30 years, writing and publishing his several books: *Causality and Chance in Modern Physics* (1957), *The Special Theory of Relativity* (1966), *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (1980), and *Science, Order and Creativity* (1987). David Bohm died in 1992.

In the 1950's David Bohm was widely considered one of the most talented and promising physicists of his generation. But his primary work from the 1950's to the 1990's—the ongoing development of his "causal interpretation" (which he later referred to as an "ontological interpretation") of quantum mechanics as an alternative to the standard 'Copenhagen Interpretation'—was met with dismissive hostility by the majority of the world physics community. In his attempt to

provide a scientific formulation of quantum physics consistent with the mystic's vision of a Divine source from which our world becomes manifest, Bohm presented his 'ontological theory' in a book entitled, *Wholeness And The Implicate Order*.

The first part of the title of Bohm's book, "Wholeness," reflects a theme that grew out of his long familiarity with Quantum Physics. It is ordinarily true that, when we seek for causes of isolated events or things, we settle arbitrarily on a preceding local event or state which we designate as the *cause* of the present event or state. But as scientific investigations into the Quantum reality tend to show, the internal web of relationships between events and between things is endless. Not only from the point of view of Quantum mechanics, but also from the point of view expressed by the mystics, isolated things and events are not caused by other things and events but are rather linked in a complex web of relationships within a larger common Whole whose nature in turn determines the nature of those constituent things and events. In other words, the material reality is no longer thought to be the independent bits of which the Whole is constituted, but rather the other way around: the overall condition of the universal Whole governs the functions and interrelations of all constituent parts within the Whole.

Here is how Bohm and his co-author, Basil Hiley, explained this understanding in a 1975 article:

"The world which we perceive cannot properly be analyzed into independently existent parts with fixed and determinate dynamical relationships between each of the parts. Rather, the 'parts' are seen to be in immediate connection, in which their dynamical relationships depend, in an irreducible way, on the state of the whole system (and indeed on that of broader systems in which they are contained, extending ultimately and in principle to the entire universe). Thus, one is led to a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical idea of analyzability of the world into separately and independently existent parts. We have reversed the usual classical notion that the independent 'elementary parts' of the world are the fundamental reality, and that the various systems are merely particular contingent forms and arrangements of these parts. Rather, we say that inseparable quantum interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality, and that relatively independently

behaving parts are merely particular and contingent forms within this whole.”⁷

The second part of Bohm’s book’s title, “*The Implicate Order*,” refers to his unconventional suggestion, inspired by the mystic’s vision, that the phenomenal world is “unfolded from a subtler “enfolded order”—in other words, from an underlying noumenal Source. He refers to that noumenal Source as “the implicate order” and he refers to the phenomenal world manifested by that noumenal source as “the explicate order”.

According to his theory, *the implicate order* is an invisible substratum containing the archetypal template for the emergence and dynamic unfoldment of both matter and consciousness, much the way an individual’s mind is the archetypal template of conscious thoughts produced from it. And in his wonderfully lucid writings Bohm endeavored to explain in the context of quantum mechanics how the *explicate order* (this perceived phenomenal universe) has its source in and unfolds from an (invisible) implicate, or enfolded order. The implicate order produces from itself the explicate order, and the explicate order manifests as the phenomenal reality.

Bohm theorized that, in the implicate order, all things—matter as well as consciousness, body as well as mind—are integrally interconnected in a way that transcends space and time. This is because the implicate order is a noumenal substratum resembling a transcendent Thought-matrix which generates, forms, and organizes the constituents of the explicate order. These constituent elements, or quanta, appear wavelike until they are observed; that is, witnessed by a conscious observer. Then they appear to those observers as particulate, i.e., as individualized ‘entities.’ Bohm suggests that this wave/particle complementarity can be explained by the implicate-explicate order duality: The *implicate order* is one indivisible continuum, a noumenon consisting of waves; but the *explicate order* is perceived by the human consciousness as congregates of particulate, individualized elements, such as electrons, protons, etc. This, he suggests, is the basis for the well-known wave-particle duality.

Together, the implicate order and the explicate order comprise what Bohm regards as *the holomovement*, which he describes as “the unbroken wholeness of the totality of existence as an undivided flowing movement without borders”.⁸ From the point of view of the mystic, the One, the transcendent Absolute, is the supreme Source (the ultimate Cause), and it is the divine Mind (the implicate order), which is the active causal principle of the Absolute One. But in David Bohm’s ontological theory, nowhere is there any indication of a primary origin for this

“undivided flowing movement”. He does suggest, however, that the ultimate source of the *holomovement* might include a “superimplicate order”, which in turn may result from a “super-superimplicate order”, and so on indefinitely. In his theory, Bohm does not explicitly define these possible primary causal orders, but he suggests that, ultimately, underlying all noumenal implicate orders, there must presumably be an Origin, an eternal Intelligence, or Divine Ground, something along the lines of an Absolute, the “Brahman” of Vedanta, or “the One”, of Neoplatonism. But Bohm, as a scientist dedicated to the empirical method, seems to prefer to remain wholly noncommittal regarding the distinct nature of any primary supernatural cause.

For the mystic, informed by direct visionary experience, the perceivable phenomenal world is the manifestation of the Creative Energy of God. That Creative Energy (which Plotinus called *Nous*, “the Divine Mind) is the Source of all phenomenal manifestation. The One, the all-pervading Consciousness, is inherently implicit in Its Creative Energy. It fills all animate and inanimate beings, to varying degrees according to their evolution, with Its own Consciousness and Joy. Thus, the manifested beings, who are the evolutes of Its Creative Energy, are able to know within themselves Its being, Its freedom, Its Consciousness, Its Joy. They are able, by the power of God’s Grace, to transcend the limitations of the egocentricity imposed on them in the process of manifestation and are able to ascend to the very Consciousness of God, knowing Him as their own original and authentic Self.

In that mystical ascension to the Divine Mind (*the implicate order*), the manifest souls are able to perceive the perfection of the universal manifestation in which all created things are linked in a wonderful unity of being and becoming.⁹ Like the atoms in a cresting wave, or in the flowering of a rose, they are participants in a synchronous dance of movement toward their intended evolutionary culmination. How vast and perfect in every way is their dance! It is indescribably wonderful! In the mystic’s vision, the unfolding of the universe and all that unfoldment entails is seen to be a coordinated and integrated presentation wherein “all things move together of one accord;” and wherein “assent is given throughout the universe to every falling grain.”

If David Bohm experienced at some time in his career such a mystical revelation, I have not been able to find any mention of it in his writings. Nonetheless, his exposition of “The Implicate Order” offers many similarities to the direct perceptions frequently reported by many well-known mystics. In David Bohm’s broad suppositional theory, causality is seen to reside in the ideational substratum (the implicate order), and then becomes manifest in all its effusive multiplicity as a

universe of time and space (the explicate order). Events in the explicate order are merely manifest expressions of an implicit noumenal order. And, while this ‘ontological interpretation’ of David Bohm’s is a marvelous restatement of the expressed vision of the mystic, it remains, from the standpoint of conventional science, merely another speculative philosophy, unprovable (unfalsifiable) by science’s criterion of proof. Bohm’s work, however, is ground-breaking proof that gnosis is indeed a fruitful source for scientific investigation and understanding. Perhaps other scientists will follow the path he has shown, expanding on his vision, and bringing us closer to a science that corresponds with the declarations of the gnostics of every generation.¹⁰

NOTES:

1. To many, the notion of a distinction between the Absolute Ground (the One, Pure Consciousness) and the Creative Power (the Creator, the Divine Mind) seems to be a false distinction, establishing a Duality between The Godhead and God, which is nonexistent. But it is, in fact, a necessary distinction, not only from a logical theological standpoint, but from an experiential standpoint as well. Given that we are made in His image, I think we can get a sense of this distinction by examining our own conscious makeup, wherein our ever-present substratum of conscious awareness and our creative faculty of thought-production, though interrelated, are nevertheless distinguishably separable from one another.

Likewise, the Godhead, which is the Ground and Source of all activity, is Itself inactive, and is sometimes referred to as “pure Consciousness.” Its active, Creative Power, is The Divine Mind, or God, and is sometimes referred to as “the Creator.” They are two, but they are one. They are one, but they are two. This is why, in every metaphysical description from every religious tradition, these two are distinguished by separate names: Purusha-Prakriti, Brahman-Maya, Shiva-Shakti, Tao-Teh, Jahveh-Chokmah, Theos-Logos, and on and on. The distinctive nature of these dual aspects of Divinity requires recognition of the unique and separate nature of each.

2. For Plato and Plotinus, the three levels of reality were *the One, the Divine Mind (Nous)*, and *Soul*. *The physical cosmos* was produced by *the Divine Mind*. For the authors of the Upanishads, the three levels of reality were *Brahman/Atman, Ishvara/Maya*, and *jiva*. For the Buddhists, it was *Tatatha/Dharmakaya, ekachittakshan*, and *samsara*.

3. I use the term, ‘ideational’ to describe the secondary subtle level of reality that Bohm calls “the implicate order” only because I don’t have a better or more fitting term... It is ‘ideational’ in the sense that it is non-physical, and non-individualized; the separate forms of this ideational reality may be perceived (by the divine eye), but they are constituents of a single continuum. That continuum is subtler than physical reality, but we have no acceptable term to describe it, except for ‘spirit,’ ‘soul,’ or ‘idea’. It is not a humanly produced ‘idea’, but a divinely produced ‘idea’. It might be construed as equivalent to Plato’s ‘Forms’ or David Bohm’s ‘implicate order’ of reality, containing no individuation or material substance.
4. ‘The transcendent Absolute,’ ‘Supreme Cause,’ or ‘universal Consciousness,’ is the uncreated Source, beyond time and space, the Godhead, the imperceptible and inconceivable Self of all.
5. For references to ‘the Great Radiance’, please see my article, “How God Made The World (6-07-2013)”, or “The Phenomenon of Light (10-15-2014), or “First Light (4-12-2013)” all available at my website: www.themysticsvision.com.
6. Bohm, David; quoted in Friedman, Norman, *Bridging Science And Spirit*, St. Louis, Missouri, Living Lake Books, 1994; p. 95.
7. Bohm, David and Hiley, Basil, “On The Intuitive Understanding of Non-Locality as Implied By Quantum Theory”, London, Foundations of Physics journal, Vol. V, 1975; pp. 96, 102.
8. David Bohm, *Wholeness And The Implicate Order*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980, p. 172.
9. The mystical experience is frequently referred to as “the unitive experience” because it reveals the identity of the experiencer to be identical with the one all-pervasive Reality, i.e., it reveals that ‘I and the Father are one.’ This nondual ‘mystical’ experience occurs because it is, in fact, a revelation of the subtle level of reality, what Plotinus called *Nous* (the Divine Mind), or what David Bohm calls ‘the implicate order.’ Previous to the “unitive experience”, the ‘explicate order’, which had been the experiencer’s former “reality”, appeared to consist of separate individual things and beings in a world of incredible diversity and multiplicity of identities. But now, suddenly awakened to this subtle level of reality (the implicate order), there is but one identity spreading

everywhere; ‘I’ am in the clouds and in the gritty soil; ‘I’ am the pulse of the turtle; ‘I’ am the clanging bells of joy. In that implicate order, one ‘I’ is all-pervasive, constituting the one and only identity of everything everywhere.

10. For a first-person account of ‘the mystical’ or ‘unitive’ experience, see my book, *The Supreme Self*, Atma Books, 1984, available as a free PDF document downloadable from: www.themysticsvision.com.

* * *

Freedom Or Determinism?

In the field of physics, the dispute over whether light is particulate or wavular played out over several centuries. Isaac Newton (1642-1727) asserted that light was particulate; Michael Faraday (1791-1867) and James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) showed that it was wavular. In the twentieth century, Max Plank and Albert Einstein demonstrated that it was particulate, while Louis DeBroglie and Erwin Schrödinger showed that both light and matter (electrons) were wavular.

Eventually Neils Bohr broke new ground in attempting to settle the matter by declaring that light and matter are *both* wavular *and* particulate, depending on how you go about measuring them; and he declared them to be “complementary” phenomena, each contributing to the total information about light and matter.¹ As a result, today we speak of “wave-particles” or “wavicles”, and the phrase “wave-particle duality” is a commonplace one.

For physicist David Bohm (1917-1992), this wave-particle duality indicates that there are at least two different planes or levels of reality: the (particulate) phenomenal reality that we experience through our senses and a subtler, underlying, invisible (wavular) reality that is the source of the phenomenal reality. The phenomenal, material reality he calls “the explicate order;” and underlying that, he suggested, was a creative thought-matrix that is invisible and beyond time and space, which he named “the implicate order.”² This ‘implicate order,’ he says, is a noumenal *wavular* substratum to the phenomenal ‘explicate order’ which we experience as the *particulate* physical world. As for the source and origin of ‘the implicate order,’ Bohm suggests the possibility of a yet subtler realm from whence the implicate and explicate orders arise, a “superimplicate order,” but he is unwilling to specifically define it.

Though Bohm's scheme is intended to explain the subtleties of Quantum physics, we can easily see that his scheme goes beyond empirical science and enters into the realm of theoretical metaphysics. Bohm's three-leveled reality is simply a reiteration of the familiar metaphysics of the Neoplatonist, Plotinus, or that of the Vedantic scriptures. His 'implicate order' is simply another name for a subtle and supernatural level of spiritual reality similar to Plotinus' "Divine Mind," or Vedanta's "Brahman," neither of which is demonstrable by the methods of empirical science.

In the realm of metaphysics, another dispute similar to the wave-particle debate had also been going on for centuries: it was between the advocates of causal determinism and the advocates of free will or choice. The question is "Are we entirely governed by the will of our supernatural Creator, or do we have an independent free will to choose and act? Do we move in accordance with the will of an invisible supernatural causal tide, or do we each have the ability to determine our own fate according to our own wholly independent choices?" Through the centuries, this dispute has gone back and forth in a manner reminiscent of the wave-particle dispute, with no resolution. And no one seems to have noticed that this metaphysical dispute was directly linked to the wave-particle dispute of physics!

As David Bohm theorizes, in the invisible contiguous (wavular) field or continuum (*the implicate order*), everything consists of ripples or waves—there are no distinct individual entities; everything is interconnected within the whole, and is governed by the whole, as waves spreading on the ocean consist of the ocean and are integral to the ocean. But in the phenomenally manifested *explicate order*, occurring in time/space, things are individualized, particularized, each thing or being having its own separate and distinct identity or soul.

If David Bohm is correct in his interpretation of the wave-particle duality, then, in a way similar to, and directly related to, the wave-particle complementarity, there is a complementarity in our self-identification: In other words, we are both the one universal (implicate order) Self and the particularized (explicate order) self; and our possession of free will (in the implicate order) and our determinism (in the explicate order) are also complementary states. In other words, since we are both wavular and particulate—both identical to the universal Consciousness and distinct as individual souls—we are also *both* free *and* determined! As the eternal Self, we are free; and as the individualized soul, we are determined by our source. Just as light and electrons—viewed from different perspectives—appear to be either wavular or particulate, our identities—viewed from different perspectives—appear

to be either contained in and identical with the universal Consciousness or manifest as distinct individual and independent souls. Likewise, viewed from those different perspectives, we may have either a free will or we are totally determined by subtle universally interconnected causal factors.

The notion that we, and everything else in the universe, are both wave and particle (quantum) has not yet sunk into the collective psyche; imagine how difficult it will be for humanity to come to terms with the understanding that, on one plane of reality, we are, in fact, the one Spirit, entirely free; and on another plane, we are an individual soul at the mercy of the universal causal fiat. We are *both* the wavular manifestations of the one nondual continuum in the superimplicate and implicate orders, *and* we are particulate as individual souls in the explicate order; in other words, our wills are *both* free *and* determined! ³

Mystical experience such as that of my own and others, along with the experimental findings of respected physicists, leads us to acknowledge that the wave-particle duality is not just a curious paradox; it represents a new paradigm whose implications haven't quite yet dawned on the scientists and psychologists—let alone on the public. The fact that light and matter reveal themselves to be particulate in some experiments and wavular in others suggests to some physicists, like David Bohm, that there are two separate (levels/kinds of) realities overlapping—a wavular one and a particulate one—even if the particulate reality turns out to be merely an induced subjective illusion.

So far, humanity has been stumped concerning the question of whether we are determined or free in our willing; but perhaps through a comprehension of the principles of contemporary physics we will arrive at and accept the understanding that the freedom-determinism duality, like the wave-particle duality, is in fact a complementarity. This would require the recognition that we consist of waves on the one ocean of Consciousness, and are, at the same time, individualized entities, independent souls—that we are *both* free *and* causally determined at the same time. Such an understanding, acknowledging that these two apparently opposing notions are in fact complementary to one another—however challenging that may be to our current worldview and to everyone's sanity—would go a long way to resolving this long-standing metaphysical dispute.

NOTES:

1. Neils Bohr: "Evidence obtained under different experimental conditions cannot be comprehended within a single picture but must be regarded as *complementary* in the sense that only the totality of the phenomena exhausts the possible information about the objects." This quote is from: "Discussions with Einstein on Epistemological Problems in Atomic Physics". In P. Schilpp. *Albert Einstein: Philosopher-Scientist*; New York, Open Court Publishing, 1949.
2. In the "mystical" experience that occurred to me in November of 1966 (see my book, *The Supreme Self*), I did indeed feel as though I had entered a different dimension, a different reality, from the one experienced ordinarily in which my identity was uniquely my own, separate and distinct from all others. It was as though these two dimensions, or realities, existed alongside each other, but at uniquely different levels of consciousness, whereas in the one I played my accustomed role in the physical world of distinct individual beings, and in the other I was omnipresent as a single non-physical continuum extending within and throughout all things.

From my individual perspective, the transition from the consciousness of myself as a distinct individual to that of an all-embracing and pervasive presence was not in my power to accomplish. By some power other than my own, it had just happened. Yet, in that transition, I had become eternal, all-pervading and perfectly whole and complete. For that few minutes, I had become God—or, as David Bohm might say, 'my consciousness had become one with the superimplicate Consciousness that manifests and upholds both the implicate and the explicate orders.' And so, I know, as few others do, that these two intersecting realities—by whatever names they are called—do indeed exist and constitute the foundation and fabric of all existence.

3. Ultimately, of course, the one 'I' is the *sole* reality. It is both Determiner and determined. The question of who is determined by whom thus becomes moot.

The Moving And The Moved

Empirical observation tells us that we live in a universe of material phenomena—stars, planets, nebulae, gas clouds, black holes, and all that is manifest to the human senses. But the mystic's vision reveals that, at a subtler, more primal level, we are living in a universal Consciousness in which all Its individual constituents are interconnected and possess the same identity.

That Consciousness is an integral noumenon underlying the phenomenal universe and is the Creative Source and substance of all that we experience as the material universe and its contents, including our bodies and the objects in our environment. That universal Consciousness is the sole primary reality, and It is therefore also our primary identity. What we know as the phenomenal universe of time, space, and individual forms exists only as an appearance projected within and upon the one universal Consciousness.

This phenomenal universe, existing as a projected appearance within the universal Consciousness, is thereby imbued with, permeated by, and identical in every respect to the all-pervading universal Consciousness.

Each and every one of the separate constituents of this universe are participants in that universal Consciousness and operate in accordance with the will of that universal Consciousness. In other words, as I observed while in a state of union with the universal Consciousness, "All things move together of one accord. Assent is given throughout the universe to every falling grain." But it should be remembered that there exists only One; It is not only the eternal Source; It is "all things," and it is by Its accord that those things are all moving together. That One is who you are: You are both the moving and the moved, both the Governor and the subject, both the Determiner and the determined. In short, that you and I are anything but Divine Bliss is simply an illusion.

* * *

Mystical Experience And Near-Death Experience

Have you ever noticed the difference between the descriptions of the spiritual world by the so-called 'mystics' and the descriptions by people who claim to have had a 'near-death' experience? Have you ever wondered how these stark

differences can be explained or reconciled? Is it possible that both perspectives are true? The vast majority of those people who claim to have had a ‘near-death’ experience speak of having gone out of their bodies, of having perceived a loving light at the end of a tunnel, and of having moved rapidly through that tunnel toward the light. They experienced themselves as being outside of their body, sometimes hovering over it, and observing the occurrences taking place in the physical world around them. While they were out of their bodies, they sometimes perceived deities or messianic figures, or experienced meetings with relations and loved ones who had ‘passed over’. They sometimes experienced visions of beautiful ethereal landscapes to which they became attracted; and then came the sudden, often non-volitional, return to their body.

The mystic, on the other hand, experiences no such out-of-body excursions, no soul-travels or events relating to an individual ‘me’ at all. Rather, he experiences a sudden shift of consciousness wherein he becomes the all-pervading spiritual identity, in which there is neither subject nor object, neither an ‘I’ nor a “Thou”, but rather a blissful awareness of identity with the one eternal Being. The mystic experiences that he *is* that eternal Being (‘I and the Father are one’), and often is able to see clearly into the workings of that eternal Being as well. How can we possibly explain the vast differences between these two descriptions of spiritual experience?

First of all, we must come to recognize that there are at least three distinct levels of subtlety, not only in the world, but in ourselves. These three levels of subtlety are simply progressively subtle elements of the one conscious Being who is the sole reality.¹ Our own human make-up is a reiteration of that triune cosmic reality; in other words, as conscious beings within the divine reality, we have our origin in the eternal Being—the Divine Mind; and secondly, within that Divine context, we exist as an individual soul; and lastly, we have a transient association with a physical body. On the physical level, we see each other solely as physical bodies; but the awareness of one who experiences a ‘near-death’, no longer identifies himself as a body, but sees himself and experiences existence as an individual soul, living and operating on what some call ‘the astral plane’. As a soul, he is free of the body, and yet retains all the memories of the people and past events associated with it.

However, at the highest, or deepest, spiritual level, there are no souls, and no individual perceptions; there is only the divine Self, the Eternal, wherein all the various levels of manifestation—including the material and the astral—are merely potential. This ultimate reality has been called the One, Brahman, the Godhead,

the Self, the Void, the Tao, and many other names; and is realized by enlightened sages to be the highest truth, the sole source and origin of all the manifest planes of existence, and everyone's ultimate Identity.

The Near-Death experience and the mystic's unitive experience are different because the focus of our attention is different. A focus on the state of one's personal well-being will likely result in an experience of the Soul, whereas a focus on God and the determination of His will would likely result in a unitive Mystical experience. People often experience themselves in a near-death situation as souls moving about in the astral realm at a very crucial time regarding their personal well-being; some few, whose focus is on God and His service, are blessed to experience the eternal Being as their true Self. But understand — there is no contradiction implied between these two experiences. The Self may reveal Itself as one's eternal Identity, or it may present Itself as a disincarnate soul on the astral plane or as a soul associated with a body in the manifested plane. Many, including myself, have seen disembodied souls on the astral level; and many, including myself, have experienced the universal Spirit, the divine Self, as the ultimate Identity. The soul and the Absolute Self are not mutually exclusive. He is all, and all is He—including souls. He also transcends all. The Godhead, Brahman, the one Spirit, is the ultimate Reality and Source of all that exists and constitutes the ultimate knowledge to be attained. But, at a grosser level of consciousness, each of us is an individual soul, just as we are temporarily—at a yet grosser level—manifested in this phenomenal world as a *material* body.

The Creator and the created, manifesting as our divine Self and the individual soul, are not two; there is only the One, appearing in many forms, and as the many varied souls. And yet, since most of us do not frequently experience an intensely intimate level of consciously relating to God, we seldom experience ourselves as the divine Self; instead, we experience ourselves as individual souls with distinctly unique attributes, and we deal with others as individuals with unique attributes—though in fact, there is only the one Divinity living and acting in the world as manifold individual souls. Look more deeply into the truth! Lift the veil! See God in each other! There is no one here but God—appearing as you and as all in this world. This is the highest knowledge and the highest attainment. Identify with the attributeless Self and become free of the limiting soul attributes. Once you've known your divine Identity, those soul-attributes may or may not continue. No matter. Know that you are free. Know that you are the one Divine Reality.

Realization of the eternal Self does not put an end to one's soul or one's body, just as, in other cases, knowing or recognizing the whole does not negate or destroy the

constituents within that whole. We, as souls, live within Him, even while being aware of our oneness with Him; and we partake of that vision by His loving Grace. So, let us put away our arguments, acknowledging that we are both the divine Self and a uniquely individual soul, and that we may rightly experience ourselves as either the one or the other. These two, Self and soul, are complementary aspects of our own conscious identity; they are, in fact, complementary aspects of the one all-inclusive Divinity in which we live and breathe and have our being.

NOTES:

1. The three levels of subtlety were described by Plato, and by the 3rd century Roman Neoplatonist mystic-philosopher, Plotinus, as consisting of *the One*, followed by Its Creative Power, *the Divine Mind*, and thirdly, the *Soul*. As for our bodies: according to Plotinus, our material bodies consist of an illusory substance produced by *the Divine Mind* by which the *Soul* is ensnared and with which the *Soul* then becomes identified. Our modern understanding of the nature of *Matter*, by which we recognize that the phenomenal world is comprised of electromagnetic impulses masquerading as substance, would seem to reinforce Plotinus' notion of *Matter* as an illusory substance.

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