

Wednesday, June 22

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: cg the Singularity

by **Daniel J. Shepard** on June 22, 2005 10:44PM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

cg: The Singularity

[deleted materials]

[050613 cg] The 'interdependencies of dualities in reality' refers to ALL dualities (as in A and not-A or Yin & Yang) and declares that the members of the duality must exist simultaneously.

[050615 djs] Are you suggesting there is no Singularity, no Whole of Reality?

[050617 cg] No. All things (and entities) that can be named and defined have an opposite; so, if a thing exists, then that which is not that thing simultaneously exists. As I wrote previously, "Terms such as Mind and Void [Singularity] are used to refer to the ultimate non-dual nature of reality. But that reality is beyond words and intellectualizations. It is nameless and cannot be truly named, so we label the Nameless (I often prefer the term G-d.), but the Nameless cannot defined, diagramed, or described."

[deleted materials]

[050613 cg continues] ... but one should not project additional characteristics on such an entity [the Totality of Consciousness] merely because one has labeled a collection.

[050615 djs] I'm not sure what this means. Are you suggesting this is a moral/ethical issue or are you suggesting it is impossible to do so?

[050617 cg] Neither. Doing so simply promotes confusion.

[deleted materials]

[050613 cg] If by 'non-discrete' you mean what I mean by 'non-dual', then we are in agreement. If by 'the unmanifested' you refer to what I refer to by 'the Nameless', then we are in agreement.

[050615 djs] It appears we agree yet, I'm not sure why, but I sense we are far apart.

[050617 cg] Spooky!

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Tuesday, June 21

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Buddhistic duality

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 21, 2005 12:31PM (EDT)

Dialogue: A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Symbiotic panentheism: Duality

[deleted materials]

[050613 cg] Either I do not understand your use of the term 'The Unmanifested' or I do not understand your logic. If 'the manifested' equals A and not-A equals 'The Unmanifested', then how does A exist in not-A?

[050615 djs] 'The manifested' may equal A and 'The Unmanifested' may equal not-A but that does not automatically imply A does not lie within not-A.

[050616 cg] There is no need to complicate matters. In a later section, I wrote,

[050613 cg continues] ...Terms such as Mind and Void are used to refer to the ultimate non-dual nature of reality. But that reality is beyond words and intellectualizations. It is nameless and cannot be truly named, so we label the Nameless (I often prefer the term G-d.), but the Nameless cannot defined, diagramed, or described. And you responded,

[050615 djs] Diagram 050605 section 'E' refers to this as the 'unmanifested'. As such it appears we agree.

We do agree that there is "the non-dual nature of reality". You call "the non-dual nature of reality" "The Unmanifested", which clearly is not the non-manifested (not-A), but beyond the duality of manifested / not-manifested or A / not-A.

[050617 djs] Yes we appear to agree there is 'the non-dual nature of reality', however, symbiotic panentheism simultaneously demonstrates 'the dual nature of reality'. Sp demonstrates both the existence of each and the functionality each has for the other. In essence sp does not 'reject' what it is we as limited entities are capable of perceiving and as such 'nothing is lost'. Sp suggests reality is not an 'either/or' scenario within which we as limited beings must choose which 'reality' is real before we begin our 'true' personal 'journey' but rather reality is an 'and' scenario generating a 'reality' within which we can begin our journey based not upon what it is we internally sense our journey to be (our calling if you will).

In terms of my calling 'the non-dual nature of reality' 'The Unmanifested', I would have to reply that is partially correct and partially incorrect.

In terms of your last sentence, I am confused. Let me be clear, however, about my end of the discussion. I

consider the ‘unmanifested’ as being composed of both that which the limits of our abilities preclude us from ‘ever’ understanding and that which we are capable of understanding but do not yet understand.

[deleted materials]

[050615 djs] The Whole of Reality includes all that exists and all that does not exist.

[050616 cg] How do you distinguish or what is the difference(s) between Total Consciousness (C) and Omnipresence (D)? Between Total Consciousness (C) and The Unmanifested (E)? Between Omnipresence (D) and The Unmanifested (E)? How are these different from the Whole of Reality?

[050617 djs] We are limited beings and to suggest that ‘consciousness’ is the ultimate of existence is anthropomorphic and considering the ‘size’ of the universe and the ‘size’ of total consciousness this perception is most probably erroneous.

It would be more honest, therefore to suggest: There may be more to ‘presence’ than consciousness. This ‘presence’ may be beyond our comprehension as ‘conscious’ beings. Therefore Omnipresence is depicted as being neither less nor equal to consciousness but rather potentially more inclusive than simple consciousness. Thus section ‘D’ takes on the appearance of being ‘larger’ than section ‘C’ but smaller than ‘E’.

The same applies to the differences between ‘C’ and ‘E’, and ‘D’ and ‘E’.

As for the manner in which these are different from the Whole of Reality:

The Whole of Reality is comprised of all five sections ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’, and ‘E’ plus ‘one’.

But why ‘E’? Section ‘E’ deals with the totality of ‘presence’ which is a conceptualization that emerges from conscious thought, which in turn is a limited perception. Thus ‘E’ takes on the appearance of being ‘large’ than ‘D’.

But why ‘plus one’? ‘Plus one’ deals with the whole as a non-duality. The summation of sections ‘A’ through ‘E’ deal with the whole as ‘a summation’ and thus as a form of duality.

Your existence works in the same manner. You are the sum of all your ‘parts’ plus one. If you separate all your parts and then dump them all into a container and mix them with a fork, you do not get ‘you’. There is the summation of your parts and then there is ‘you’.

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Saturday, June 18

 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The lack of 'self'

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 18, 2005 01:15PM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The lack of 'self'

[050608 cg] I'm not certain why you have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence'. You see it as a 'problem' for G-d as you understand G-d or that G-d would be less perfect in your eyes.

[050609 djs] Actually I do not have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence', nor do I see this as a 'problem' for G-d, nor do I understand G-d to be less perfect if 'this or that' were or were not the case.

What I see instead is 'man' sitting around and pining for an understanding as to the meaning of his existence.

[050611 cg] Perhaps what you see is yourself seeking the meaning of your existence.

[050613 djs] I am not seeking the meaning of 'my' existence for I am more than comfortable with who I am. What I am seeking is a rational meaning for the existence of the individual entity of knowing.

[050614 cg] Yes, I'm certain that is so.

[050613 djs continues...] The difference between 'my personal meaning' and the meaning of 'the myriad numbers of unique individuated entities of knowing' lies in finding a commonality for humanity or what might be termed a universal philosophy which would act as the foundation from which present day and future religions, sciences, and philosophies can emerge as unique human perceptions yet accept the concept of respect and tolerance for each other in a pluralistic manner as opposed to our historic perception that it is either 'my way' or else. ('or else': rejection, domination, genocide, denigration, torture, abuse, ... ad nausea)

[050614 cg] OK.

[050611 cg continues] ... The truth may be that Existence, including our existence, has no "meaning", that Existence simply is.

[050613 djs] That is a possibility. The problem with such a model, the model which states 'that Existence simply is', is that such a model provides absolutely no rational argument which rationalizes why 'humane' acts should trump 'inhumane' acts.

The result of a Reality within which 'Existence simply is' is the ultimate recognition that 'The Cambodian Killing Field' is no less legitimate than the 'American Civil War'.

The concepts of 'do no harm', you are your brother's keeper, love unconditionally, suffering must not be

tolerated, justice, compassion, ... have no meaning in a 'meaningless' Reality where 'Existence simply is'.

But again I will say: Although no rational argument supports your position, that does not negate the 'fact' that you 'may be correct'. Existence may have no meaning since it is possible that 'Existence simply is'.

[050614 cg] Let's then agree that 'Existence is'. You may believe that Existence is and has meaning. I may believe that Existence is and has no meaning. You will seek meaning and I will not seek meaning.

[050617 djs] I would never suggest you do as I do. We each have our own journey to take in life.

[050611 cg continues] ... In that case, one may abandon one's search for meaning and be natural in the present.

[050613 djs] Perhaps, I will readily admit such a position is the least stressful of all positions, but the question becomes: Is such a position rational as opposed to being simply a mechanism by which one can find inner peace?

[050614 cg] If, as you wrote above, "it is possible that 'Existence simply is'", then it must be rational to hold the position that 'Existence simply is'.

[050617 djs] Just because something is 'possible' does not make it rational. It is possible the universe could collapse into nothingness tomorrow but is it rational to stand, day after day after day, on the corner carrying a sign stating 'The world is coming to an end'?

I would suggest not. I am not suggesting there is anything wrong with the act, I am simply suggesting that it is not supported by any rational argument.

[050609 djs continues...] Now this pining is not a 'negative' aspect of humankind, rather the obsessing with meaning emerges from the natural curiosity of our specie and the natural desire of our specie to answer any questions which confront it.

[050611 cg] Yes, it is a natural occurrence in some of our specie, but not others. One might ask oneself, "Why do some pine for an understanding to the meaning of existence, but not others?" ...

[050613 djs] Not meaning to be disrespectful, but perhaps some individuals look to meaning because they wish to understand reality as opposed to simply existing. Others look for meaning in order to help their specie come to grips with peace and tolerance for the benefit of all as opposed to perpetuating violence and intolerance for personal gain.

[050614 cg] Yes, you are right.

[deleted materials...]

[050611 cg continues] ...For example, you may wonder if one can base an ethical system on 'emptiness', which for human beings means that we lack a "self" or "eternal soul".

[050613 djs] I have often wondered about such a possibility. So I will ask you, a Neo-Buddhist:

Is there a rational argument upon which one can ' ... base an ethical system on 'emptiness', which for human beings means that we lack a "self" or "eternal soul"?

[050614 cg] There may be logic and reason, even if there is not purpose. ...

[050617 djs] Agreed, however the statement does not rationalize the existence or the non-existence of purpose. There is nothing 'rational' about the statement. The statement is simply a statement of observation.

[050614 cg continues] ... In any case, here is how I understand the ethical situation:All that is, whether you consider it physical, mental, consciousness, illusion, G-d, whatever Reality is, we are of the same substance.

[050617 djs] And if 'nothingness' exists? Are you suggesting that we are also of the same substance as 'nothingness'?

[050614 cg continues] ... This means that we are all fundamentally equal and not separate, and is the source of respectfulness and kindness.

[050617 djs] I agree but just because you and I agree upon this statement does not make it a rational statement. The statement is simply a statement based upon the lack of an in-depth discussion of reality.

[050614 cg continues] ... All things, including us, are not self-existent; i.e., things lack a "self" (or an "eternal soul") and will pass away. This means that there is no self to be selfish

[050617 djs] I respect your perception, but the question becomes: If there is no self to be selfish then why do we speak of the individual being 'self'ish, since there is no self?

[050614 cg continues] ... and that we, our desire, and the things we desire are temporary, and this is the source

of selflessness.

[050617 djs] Again I respect your perception but again I ask: If there is no ‘self’ then do we speak of an individuals ‘desire’, an individuals selfishness, an individuals incorrect perception, ...?

[050614 cg continues] ... A truly logical and reasonable entity, knowing (or believing) the above to be true, would act accordingly.

[050617 djs] And again I respect your position. Here again you speak of ‘the’ ‘entity’ as if it exists as ‘a’ ‘self’ and as if it has free will to choose yet you speak of there being no ‘self’. Where is the rationale which explains the apparent discrepancy of the lack of self and the constant reference to self?

Although I’m not sure what to do with the last three statements let me state the following:

The metaphysical understanding put forward by symbiotic panentheism fully embraces your positions.

The purpose of symbiotic panentheism is not to establish a religion but rather to place into society a model of reality based upon scientific, religious, and philosophical wisdoms which together establish the underlying rationality needed to validate the model itself.

The model, interestingly enough, does nothing to reduce the significance or the legitimacy of Buddhism, Islam, Atheism, Judaism, Tao, Hinduism, Rosicrucians, Theosophers, Catholics, Protestants, Cosmologists, Existentialists, Phenomenologists, ...

Symbiotic panentheism is a universal philosophy capable of acting as the trunk from which all of the above can branch uniquely. The roots of sp are composed of the human wisdom generated by the above and the roots of sp find themselves anchored in the soil of rational discourse.

As such to argue the points you present is in essence to suggest Buddhism is ‘wrong’ when in fact it is no more wrong than is Christianity, Hinduism, ...

[050614 cg continues] ... Such a person

[050617 djs] But there can be no ‘person’ if there is ‘no self’. Symbiotic panentheism would purport that Buddhism is correct when it address positive issues, address issues of what is as opposed to issues of ‘what is not’. Symbiotic panentheism holds this view of all religions, sciences, and philosophies. Symbiotic panentheism also suggest that the negative absolutism embraced by religions, sciences, and philosophies is where the three must tread lightly and where the three are most likely to be in error.

For instance Buddhism address the issue of The Whole in a positive sense, but appears to state the ‘self’ does not exist. The absolutism of the negative, “self ‘does not’ exist”, is what is Buddhism leaves as it emerges from the trunk of the tree represented by sp. The religion of Buddhism then becomes a branch which distinguishes

itself from the trunk through the process of removing ‘self’. The branch therefore is symbolically ‘smaller’ than the trunk.

This does not cause the branch to be insignificant nor does it cause the branch to be invalid but rather the branch simply represents a unique perception of reality which fits the needs of specific organizations (branches of branches, stems of branches, ...) and of individuals (the leaves) and the thinkers, developers of new ideas, artists, creative individuals... (flowers found on the branches).

[050614 cg continues] ... (Such a person) would understand the illusion of separateness, of self, of gain and loss and would be free to act compassionately; i.e., respectfully, kindly, and selflessly.

[050617 djs] I agree completely with your analysis as to the affect Buddhism would have upon civilization should everyone become a Buddhist. But the fact of the matter is that not everyone will become a Buddhist because not everyone agrees with the Buddhistic premise that ‘self’ does not exist, since the premise is based upon ‘faith’ as opposed to ‘reason’.

Now there is nothing ‘wrong’ with basing one’s life upon faith as opposed to ‘reason’. In fact faith is a wonderful characteristic of humanity. We have faith in our observations and thus we reach to open the door before entering a room as opposed to walking into the door.

We have faith in our fellow man. We have faith in science. We have faith in the teachings of our religions. We have faith in our ability reason.

Without faith we could not survive.

One must not lose sight of the fact, however, that all people are not ‘logical’ and not all people are ‘reasonable’, nor will this ever be true of all people.

What then needs to be established is the trunk of the tree from which all religions, sciences, and philosophies can spring. I would suggest such a trunk can be established using human wisdom/knowledge as the roots from which the trunk emerges and rationality as the soil which anchors the roots.

The trunk is a mutual religious, scientific, and philosophical consensus arrived at through the coordinated analysis of the vast accumulation of human wisdom/knowledge developed by our specie. The trunk provides a common ground upon which the diversity of human opinion can commune and embrace diversity.

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Friday, June 17

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The Singularity

by **Daniel J. Shepard** on June 17, 2005 01:51AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The Singularity

[050610 cg] The diagram 050605 certainly illustrates your understanding. I do believe that there is a simpler understanding that is at least as true. Here are the two diagrams that illustrate that understanding: The first symbolizes the empty nature of reality. ...

[050612 djs] I understand the concept regarding 'the empty nature of reality ...' if one is referring to the physical when one speaks of 'reality'. 'The empty nature of reality' is often alluded to as the void by religions. It is religions which state the universe was created from 'the void'. As such 'the empty nature of reality' would apply to section 'A' in diagram 050605.

[050613 cg] No, not this.

[050611 djs continues...] I understand 'the empty nature of reality ...' as it applies to the formation of a void within a non-void.

[050613 cg] No, not this.

[050611 djs continues...] I also understand the potential possibility existing in terms of 'the empty nature of reality ...' when one refers to section 'B', the initial virgin introduction of the ability to know when the individual is 'first' introduced to a state of existing (Perhaps when an individual first enters the physical universe?).

[050613 cg] No, not this.

[050611 djs continues...] I do not understand the concept regarding 'the empty nature of reality ...' when one refers to sections 'B' (having already experienced), 'C', 'D', and 'E'.

[050613 cg] The 'empty nature of reality' refers to the lack of self-existence of things. What are things? Things are separate entities which may be labeled, such as 'the chair I am sitting on', the concept of a chair, me as a physical, mental, and/or spiritual entity. What does 'lack of self-existence' mean? It means that things have no inherent self; i.e., things are dependent for existence. For example, for 'the chair I am sitting on' to exist a whole chain of events must have occurred and for it to continue to exist the conditions supporting its existence must be present. The same is true for the concept of a chair and for me as an entity.

[050615 djs] Other than the entity labeled as the 'unmanifested', section 'E' of diagram 050605, I agree.

[050610 cg continues] ... The second symbolizes the interdependencies of dualities in reality.

[050612 djs] Duality of what becomes the question?

The model of the whole of reality as demonstrated by symbiotic panentheism would suggest duality embraces three concepts:

- 1. The whole**
- 2. Individuality**
- 3. Nothingness/the void from which the physical universe itself emerges.**

Now one might suggest that this is three, a trinity, not two, a duality. One must consider, however, that within the system of sp nothingness does exist and does have functionality but nothingness is nevertheless, just that, nothingness, a void and thus by definition not an entity but rather a (and the only) non-entity while 'the whole' and 'individuality' are entities as opposed to non-entities.

Again I ask: When Buddhism speaks of duality, what is it Buddhism is referring to:

- 1. ...?**
- 2. ...?**

[050613 cg] You may divide reality as you will. The 'interdependencies of dualities in reality' refers to ALL dualities (as in A and not-A or Yin & Yang) and declares that the members of the duality must exist simultaneously.

[050615 djs] Are you suggesting there is no Singularity, no Whole of Reality?

[050613 cg continues] ...Terms such as Mind and Void are used to refer to the ultimate non-dual nature of reality. But that reality is beyond words and intellectualizations. It is nameless and cannot be truly named, so we label the Nameless (I often prefer the term G-d.), but the Nameless cannot defined, diagramed, or described.

[050615 djs] Diagram 050605 section 'E' refers to this as the 'unmanifested'. As such it appears we agree.

[050531 cg] In this usage, I would not apply the attribute "entity" to the term ['the totality of consciousness'] as the attribute may suggest an intentional intelligence or some other attribute merely because we label the summation.

[050603 djs] Question: What word would you 'prefer'?

[050610 cg] I have no objection to the term 'the totality of consciousness', but you have suggested that 'the totality of consciousness' is an entity. This is like suggesting that "animal" is an entity like the members that compose the category and that "animal" has itself the attributes of animals. Both "animal" and 'the totality of consciousness' are merely concepts.

[050611 djs] I think we may have different perceptions here. I perceive 'total consciousness' to be 'an entity' just as you are an entity. In the case of yourself, you are composed of kidney cells, blood cells, minerals, organic molecules, neurons, synopsis, organs, tissues, ... In addition you are composed of infinite elements of experiencing beginning with the experiencing of each atom within your composition up to and through your total self experiences.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the apparently discrete elements found within your body, I would suggest you, as a whole, are an entity.

Likewise I would suggest the totality of consciousness is an entity. Now I grant you that 'total consciousness' may be but one of many aspects of the un-manifested but the totality of consciousness is as much an entity as it is an attribute just as a white blood cell within yourself is as much an entity as it is an aspect of your total self.

If the white blood cell could communicate with its cohorts, it would say much the same thing as you are saying: The whole of reality (the human body) is simply a concept. You and I know differently. So it is with the totality of consciousness/omniscience. Now some proclaim 'the totality of consciousness' to be nothing but a 'concept' but I would suggest it is both a concept and an entity in the sense that it is a discrete form of existence just as your knowing is discrete in nature.

[050613 cg] Yes, in the manner you described one could apply the attribute entity to 'the totality of consciousness'. Similarly, one could apply the attribute entity to 'the totality of chair' or 'the totality of blueness',

[050615 djs] It appears we agree

[050613 cg continues] ... but one should not project additional characteristics on such an entity merely because one has labeled a collection.

[050615 djs] I'm not sure what this means. Are you suggesting this is a moral/ethical issue or are you suggesting it is impossible to do so?

[050611 djs continues...] Now I grant you that many religions speak of omniscience as being the ultimate limit. In such a discussion one has no option but to describe the totality of consciousness as the non-discrete/the Supreme Being.

But if one moves 'outward' from 'the totality of consciousness' and adds the layer of 'omnipresence' and then 'the unmanifested' as shown in diagram 050605, then 'the totality of consciousness' retains the attribute of discreteness as does 'omnipresence' and it is the 'unmanifested' which then takes on the attribute of being non-discrete.

I hesitate introducing the concept of 'the discrete' and the 'non-discrete' at this point, however, since I am not sure it applies to our present issues.

[050613 cg] If by 'non-discrete' you mean what I mean by 'non-dual', then we are in agreement. If by 'the unmanifested' you refer to what I refer to by 'the Nameless', then we are in agreement.

[050615 djs] It appears we agree yet, I'm not sure why, but I sense we are far apart.

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Thursday, June 16

 **Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Separation through Inclusion III**
by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 16, 2005 10:43PM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

'Separation through inclusion' II

[050610 cg] I am uncertain as to how to understand your diagram 050605. I expect that where there are figures within larger figures that it indicates that the larger figure includes the smaller figure. ...

[050611 djs] Correct

[050610 cg continues] ... For example, if I draw a circle labeled "animals" and then I draw a smaller circles within that circle and label one "reptiles" and the other "mammals", that diagram would represent that the category animals includes sub-categories reptiles and mammals, that reptiles and mammals possess features in common with (all) animals, and that reptiles and mammals possess other features that can be differentiated. You have, for example, the largest rectangle labeled "The Unmanifested", but it contains smaller figures of categories that are manifested, such as "individual entities of consciousness", The Physical, etc. Are you suggesting that the manifested is included in The Unmanifested? ...

[050611 djs] Correct

[050613 cg] Either I do not understand your use of the term 'The Unmanifested' or I do not understand your logic. If 'the manifested' equals A and not-A equals 'The Unmanifested', then how does A exist in not-A?

[050615 djs] 'The manifested' may equal A and 'The Unmanifested' may equal not-A but that does not automatically imply A does not lie within not-A.

I grant you that Russell's introduction of the paradox regarding elements that are not members of sets is intriguing and may have been irresolvable to date, but I will also risk being considered arrogant by telling you that Russell's paradox is resolvable if one thinks out of the box and replaces the concept of 'separation through exclusion' with the concept of 'separation through inclusion' (see below)

The interesting result of such thinking is the development of an understanding that 'nothingness' both exists and has functionality.

[050610 cg continues] ... How so?

[050611 djs] The process is identified by the phrase 'separation through inclusion' as opposed to religious, philosophical, and scientific process identified by the phrase 'separation through exclusion'.

[050613 cg] You identify a process, which you label 'separation through inclusion', and its opposite, but you do not define or describe the process or even suggest how it answers the question.

[050615 djs] The trilogy, The War and Piece of a New Metaphysical Perception, addresses the concept of 'separation through inclusion' in detail. Tractate 9: 1970 AD The Error of Russell: Resolving the problem of 'Separation Through Exclusion'. The work is found in the library of my web site, www.panentheism.com. You can also use the web site search engine powered by Google. Type in 'separation through inclusion' to begin the search. If you have specific questions I would be more than willing to discuss the issue but it is very technical and not intended for short term dialoguing.

Having said this, I can state that in essence the concept purports a metaphysical discussion of the whole of Reality can stand on the principle that there is such a concept of The Whole/a Universal Set/a Set which includes all elements within itself. The Tractate resolves the philosophical paradox Russell introduced to philosophy regarding 'elements that are not members of a set', which in essence philosophically duplicates the paradox introduced by religions when they refer to 'G-d transcending ...'

The process provides the basis upon which the 'unmanifested' is capable of 'including' all (good, evil, consciousness, non-consciousness, existence, non-existence, a void (nothingness), a lack of a void.

My apologies but the concept is not an easy one yet is an easy one. I would be happy to discuss it if you wish.

I would initiate the discussion with:

The Whole of Reality includes all that exists and all that does not exist.

[050610 cg continues] ... You have, as another example, a large rectangle labeled "Total Consciousness" and a smaller circle labeled "The Physical" within that rectangle. Are you suggesting that The Physical is included in Total Consciousness?

[050611 djs] Yes

[050610 cg continues] ... How so? What common features does The Physical possess with Total Consciousness?

[050611 djs] The physical is experienced by discrete entities journeying through the physical. These discrete entities of consciousness later (time is only found as an element of the universal fabric of the physical) merge with the totality of consciousness while retaining their unique individuality, thus nothing is lost.

[050613 cg] You have not answered my question.

[050615 djs] Sorry let me try again: For me personally the most interesting answer is: None. The other possibility is: Everything.

The first answer provides the means of understanding answers to questions raised by paradoxes regarding 'nothingness'. The second answer raises a myriad questions generated by paradoxes regarding 'nothingness'.

I, like Ockham, prefer the simple model which is capable of answering questions as opposed to the complex model which is incapable of answering questions.

[050610 cg continues] ... As the circles of both The Physical and "individual entities of knowing" are within the rectangle of Total Consciousness what common features do they share?

[050611 djs] None, however, the one - individuated entities of knowing (the types we are familiar with, namely: human) 'use' the physical body as a medium through which they experience the physical.

[050613 cg] If The Physical and "individual entities of knowing" do not share any common features, why are they within the rectangle of Total Consciousness?

[050615 djs] Although the model of Reality outlined by symbiotic panentheism suggests it is possible that The Physical and 'individuated entities of knowing' do not share any common features with each other, they are both placed within the rectangle of Total Consciousness because they both exist within Total Consciousness.

But why does sp not 'suggest that' as opposed to 'unequivocally state that' The Physical and 'individuated entities of knowing' do not share any common features? The issue of The Physical having 'consciousness' or not having 'consciousness' is not important to what the model is capable of demonstrating to our specie, namely: It is possible to produce a universal philosophy which is capable of acting as the foundation, acting as the trunk, from which all our religions, philosophies, and sciences can branch.

The ground from which the trunk springs is rationality. The root system which holds the trunk in place within the ground is the wisdom religions, sciences, and philosophies have generated over the course their human development.

At this point, I would like to emphasize again: The concept of the physical having consciousness or not having consciousness are both easily incorporated into the concept of sp and thus have no impact to exert upon the model although the model of sp has a great deal to say regarding both possibilities and in particular sp has the most to say about the concept: The Physical has no consciousness.

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Tuesday, June 14

sp, based upon reasno, models Reality

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 14, 2005 01:39AM (EDT)

Symbiotic panentheism, based upon reason, models the whole of Reality and describes how the elements and the Whole of Reality interact with one another.

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Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Can ehctics emerge from a meaningless existence?

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 14, 2005 01:29AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Can ethics emerge from a meaningless existence?

[deleted materials...]

[050608 cg] I'm not certain why you have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence'. You see it as a 'problem' for G-d as you understand G-d or that G-d would be less perfect in your eyes.

[050609 djs] Actually I do not have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence', nor do I see this as a 'problem' for G-d, nor do I understand G-d to be less perfect if 'this or that' were or were not the case.

What I see instead is 'man' sitting around and pining for an understanding as to the meaning of his existence.

[050611 cg] Perhaps what you see is yourself seeking the meaning of your existence.

[050613 djs] I am not seeking the meaning of 'my' existence for I am more than comfortable with who I am. What I am seeking is a rational meaning for the existence of the individual entity of knowing.

The difference between 'my personal meaning' and the meaning of 'the myriad numbers of unique individuated entities of knowing' lies in finding a commonality for humanity or what might be termed a universal philosophy which would act as the foundation from which present day and future religions, sciences, and philosophies can emerge as unique human perceptions yet accept the concept of respect and tolerance for each other in a pluralistic manner as opposed to our historic perception that it is either 'my way' or else. ('or else': rejection, domination, genocide, denigration, torture, abuse, ... ad nauseam)

[050611 cg continues] ... The truth may be that Existence, including our existence, has no "meaning", that Existence simply is.

[050613 djs] That is a possibility. The problem with such a model, the model which states 'that Existence simply is', is that such a model provides absolutely no rational argument which rationalizes why 'humane' acts should trump 'inhumane' acts.

The result of a Reality within which 'Existence simply is' is the ultimate recognition that 'The Cambodian Killing Field' is no less legitimate than the 'American Civil War'.

The concepts of 'do no harm', you are your brother's keeper, love unconditionally, suffering must not be tolerated, justice, compassion, ... have no meaning in a 'meaningless' Reality where 'Existence simply is'.

But again I will say: Although no rational argument supports your position, that does not negate the 'fact' that you 'may be correct'. Existence may have no meaning since it is possible that 'Existence simply is'.

[050611 cg continues] ... In that case, one may abandon one's search for meaning and be natural in the present.

[050613 djs] Perhaps, I will readily admit such a position is the least stressful of all positions, but the question becomes: Is such a position rational as opposed to being simply a mechanism by which one can find inner peace?

[050609 djs continues...] Now this pining is not a 'negative' aspect of humankind, rather the obsessing with meaning emerges from the natural curiosity of our specie and the natural desire of our specie to answer any questions which confront it.

[050611 cg] Yes, it is a natural occurrence in some of our specie, but not others. One might ask oneself, "Why do some pine for an understanding to the meaning of existence, but not others?" ...

[050613 djs] Not meaning to be disrespectful, but perhaps some individuals look to meaning because they wish to understand reality as opposed to simply existing. Others look for meaning in order to help their specie come to grips with peace and tolerance for the benefit of all as opposed to perpetuating violence and intolerance for personal gain.

[050611 cg continues] ... If Existence, including our existence, has no "meaning", then your following statements are meaningful, but not as you intended.

[050609 djs continues...] The inability of our specie to answer the question regarding 'meaning' has led our specie down the relatively long historical path of intolerance, despair, and violence as well as down the relatively long historical path of brotherhood, hope, and peace.

In addition, the inability of our specie to answer the question regarding 'meaning' has also caused our specie to define philosophical, scientific, and religious paradoxes which have gone unanswered for centuries, which in turn have led us to several states of stagnation.

The first state of stagnation involves our intellectually understanding reality. This state of stagnation in turn has created a logjam of seemingly irresolvable intellectual philosophical, religious, and scientific paradoxes which impede our advancing not only these three arenas of study but impede the evolutionary development of our higher conscious.

The second state of stagnation involves the evolutionary development of our moral and ethical principles. This state of stagnation manifests itself in the phenomenal expanse being generated between our religious, social, legal, philosophical, moral and ethical issues and the technological advancements of our day. We are presently doubling our knowledge base every seven years while our moral and ethical advancement remains virtually stagnant and this, in turn, is impeding the evolutionary development of our social structures.

[050611 cg] Your next statement introduces a new idea to the discussion.

[050609 djs continues...] I believe humanity is capable of reaching a metaphysical understanding of reality which would propel our moral and ethical abilities far ahead of our technological vector which in turn would resolve the problems generated by the first and second states of stagnation.

[050611 cg] I believe that human beings have always been "capable of reaching a metaphysical understanding of reality". I do not know with any certainty what effect achieving that understanding would have for humanity, but I would rather it happen than not.

[deleted materials...]

[050608 cg] Finally, I have thought that if G-d is aware of all, then if one atom or even one electron of one atom in all the vast expanse of the universe were in a different position at a moment of time, then, for G-d, that universe would be entirely different experience.

[050609 djs] In terms of G-d, I agree. In terms of the individual, I agree. In terms of the mechanism itself, which regulates the interaction occurring between individuality and the whole, in terms of the dynamics of the internal functioning of reality and the meaning of morals and ethics which merge from such a mechanism, I do

not agree.

[050611 cg] I sense that you are seeking a basis for "morals and ethics". If that is so, then perhaps we should have a separate discussion regarding ethical systems.

[050613 djs] Yes, I think it is time for such a discussion if you are up to it.

[050611 cg continues] ...For example, you may wonder if one can base an ethical system on 'emptiness', which for human beings means that we lack a "self" or "eternal soul".

[050613 djs] I have often wondered about such a possibility. So I will ask you, a Neo-Buddhist:

Is there a rational argument upon which one can ‘ ... base an ethical system on 'emptiness', which for human beings means that we lack a "self" or "eternal soul"’?

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Monday, June 13

 **Buddhistic symbols**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 13, 2005 02:32PM (EDT)

Buddhistic symbols: Enjo & Tao

Two Buddhistic symbols have been added to the graphics sections of this blog at the request of cg whose discussions regarding Reality can be found with the dialogue section of this blog.

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Enjo: Buddhistic symbol for 'the empty nature of reality.'

Tao: Buddhistic symbol for 'the interdependencies of dualities in reality'.

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 **Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Buddhistic duality VS sp duality**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 13, 2005 12:03AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Buddhistic duality versus sp duality

[050610 cg] The diagram 050605 certainly illustrates your understanding.

I do believe that there is a simpler understanding that is at least as true. Here are the two diagrams that illustrate that understanding:

The first symbolizes the empty nature of reality. ...

[050612 djs] I understand the concept regarding ‘the empty nature of reality ...’ if one is referring to the physical when one speaks of ‘reality’. ‘The empty nature of reality’ is often alluded to as the void by religions. It is religions which state the universe was created from ‘the void’. As such ‘the empty nature of reality’ would apply to section ‘A’ in diagram 050605.

I understand ‘the empty nature of reality ...’ as it applies to the formation of a void within a non-void.

I also understand the potential possibility existing in terms of ‘the empty nature of reality ...’ when one refers to section ‘B’, the initial virgin introduction of the ability to know when the individual is ‘first’ introduced to a state of existing (Perhaps when an individual first enters the physical universe?).

I do not understand the concept regarding ‘the empty nature of reality ...’ when one refers to sections ‘B’ (having already experienced), ‘C’, ‘D’, and ‘E’.

[050610 cg continues] ... The second symbolizes the interdependencies of dualities in reality.

[050612 djs] Duality of what becomes the question?

The model of the whole of reality as demonstrated by symbiotic panentheism would suggest duality embraces three concepts:

- 1. The whole**
- 2. Individuality**
- 3. Nothingness/the void from which the physical universe itself emerges.**

Now one might suggest that this is three, a trinity, not two, a duality. One must consider, however, that within the system of sp nothingness does exist and does have functionality but nothingness is nevertheless, just that, nothingness, a void and thus by definition not an entity but rather a (and the only) non-entity while ‘the whole’ and ‘individuality’ are entities as opposed to non-entities.

Again I ask: When Buddhism speaks of duality, what is it Buddhism is referring to:

- 1. ...?**
- 2. ...?**

[deleted materials]

[050531 cg] I understand the usual meaning of 'the totality of consciousness' as a conceptual (mental) reality such as "chair" or "person"; i.e., one can think of, speak of, and point to examples of "chair" or "person", but there is no physical entity to which one can point. For example, think of 'the totality of blueness'. Would you argue that 'the totality of blueness' is a physical entity, although things are blue?

There are mental entities, but they are the individual thoughts, feelings, images, etc. that occur. There is the concept, a mental entity, of 'the totality of consciousness', but it has the same attributes as other concepts; i.e., the concept of 'the totality of consciousness' does not itself have consciousness.

Having said that, I also understand that Reality (capital "R" meaning all-inclusive existence) includes, but is not identical to, the totality of consciousness, as a simple summation. ...

[050603 djs] I would suggest your last paragraph is demonstrated in 'Graphic': Diagram 050605: The whole of Reality, Sections 'D' and 'E'.

[050531 cg continues] ... In this usage, I would not apply the attribute "entity" to the term as the attribute may suggest an intentional intelligence or some other attribute merely because we label the summation.

[050603 djs] Question: What word would you 'prefer'?

[050610 cg] I have no objection to the term 'the totality of consciousness', but you have suggested that 'the totality of consciousness' is an entity. This is like suggesting that "animal" is an entity like the members that compose the category and that "animal" has itself the attributes of animals. Both "animal" and 'the totality of consciousness' are merely concepts.

[050611 djs] I think we may have different perceptions here. I perceive 'total consciousness' to be 'an entity' just as you are an entity. In the case of yourself, you are composed of kidney cells, blood cells, minerals, organic molecules, neurons, synopsis, organs, tissues, ... In addition you are composed of infinite elements of experiencing beginning with the experiencing of each atom within your composition up to and through your total self experiences.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the apparently discrete elements found within your body, I would suggest you, as a whole, are an entity.

Likewise I would suggest the totality of consciousness is an entity. Now I grant you that 'total consciousness' may be but one of many aspects of the un-manifested but the totality of consciousness is as much an entity as it is an attribute just as a white blood cell within yourself is as much an entity as it is an aspect of your total self.

If the white blood cell could communicate with its cohorts, it would say much the same thing as you are saying: The whole of reality (the human body) is simply a concept. You and I know differently. So it is with the totality of consciousness/omniscience. Now some proclaim 'the totality of consciousness' to be nothing but a 'concept' but I would suggest it is both a concept and an entity in the sense that it is a discrete form of existence just as your knowing is discrete in nature.

Now I grant you that many religions speak of omniscience as being the ultimate limit. In such a discussion one

has no option but to describe the totality of consciousness as the non-discrete/the Supreme Being.

But if one moves 'outward' from 'the totality of consciousness' and adds the layer of 'omnipresence' and then 'the unmanifested' as shown in diagram 050605, then 'the totality of consciousness' retains the attribute of discreteness as does 'omnipresence' and it is the 'unmanifested' which then takes on the attribute of being non-discrete.

I hesitate introducing the concept of 'the discrete' and the 'non-discrete' at this point, however, since I am not sure it applies to our present issues.

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Sunday, June 12

 **Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Separation through Inclusion**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 12, 2005 05:31PM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Separation through Inclusion

[050610 cg] I am uncertain as to how to understand your diagram 050605.

I expect that where there are figures within larger figures that it indicates that the larger figure includes the smaller figure. ...

[050611 djs] Correct

[050610 cg continues] ... For example, if I draw a circle labeled "animals" and then I draw a smaller circles within that circle and label one "reptiles" and the other "mammals", that diagram would represent that the category animals includes sub-categories reptiles and mammals, that reptiles and mammals possess features in common with (all) animals, and that reptiles and mammals possess other features that can be differentiated.

You have, for example, the largest rectangle labeled "The Unmanifested", but it contains smaller figures of categories that are manifested, such as "individual entities of consciousness", The Physical, etc. Are you suggesting that the manifested is included in The Unmanifested? ...

[050611 djs] Correct

[050610 cg continues] ... How so?

[050611 djs] The process is identified by the phrase 'separation through inclusion' as opposed to religious, philosophical, and scientific process identified by the phrase 'separation through exclusion'.

[050610 cg continues] ... You have, as another example, a large rectangle labeled "Total Consciousness" and a smaller circle labeled "The Physical" within that rectangle. Are you suggesting that The Physical is included in Total Consciousness?

[050611 djs] Yes

[050610 cg continues] ... How so? What common features does The Physical possess with Total Consciousness?

[050611 djs] The physical is experienced by discrete entities journeying through the physical. These discrete entities of consciousness later (time is only found as an element of the universal fabric of the physical) merge with the totality of consciousness while retaining their unique individuality, thus nothing is lost.

[050610 cg continues] ... As the circles of both The Physical and "individual entities of knowing" are within the rectangle of Total Consciousness what common features do they share?

[050611 djs] None, however, the one – individuated entities of knowing (the types we are familiar with, namely: human) 'use' the physical body as a medium through which they experience the physical.

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Saturday, June 11

 sp not a religion

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 11, 2005 12:19AM (EDT)

Symbiotic panentheism is not a religion since symbiotic panentheism is not based upon 'faith' but rather is based upon reason.

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 Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: The significance of averting 'eternal recurrence'

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 11, 2005 12:10AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

The significance of averting 'eternal recurrence'

[deleted materials...]

[050531 cg] You ascribe 'purpose' to facts and to knowing. I do not. If, as you propose, facts exist for knowing and the purpose of knowing is to experience, then what is the purpose of experience? If you answer that the purpose of experience is to create new facts, then OK, but it is circular.

[050603 djs] The argument: 'The purpose of existing is to experience and create new facts' is only circular if one leaves the argument at this point. If, however, one then asks and answers the question: 'But what is the purpose of experiencing and creating new facts?' The answer to the question, then breaks the circular argument into being simply a question followed by an answer which in turn leads to an examination of human purpose, of human 'functionality', of the purpose for the existence of discrete entities of knowing as opposed to the 'whole' of knowing.

Having said that let me break the circular argument by asking the question and answering the question:

Question: 'But what is the purpose of experiencing and creating new facts?'

Answer (Potential rationale - one must always keep in mind that there is nothing one can 'know' as a fact. We can only define truths as best we can and move on from that point. Science itself is based upon this principle: Example: Tomorrow the sun will rise in the east and set in the west. Well perhaps but that would not be an absolute truth because the universe could collapse between now and tomorrow.)

If the whole of knowing is omniscient and timeless, then it would take no time for the whole of knowing to know all there is to know. As such the whole of knowing would have no choice but to recycle all its knowing again and again and again ... Philosophers call this 'eternal recurrence'. Hollywood calls the 'Groundhog Day'.

To circumvent 'eternal recurrence', the whole of knowing has but to 'live' a 'new experience' or 'create' a 'new fact'.

The question: 'But what is the purpose of experiencing and creating new facts?'

The answer: To avoid 'eternal recurrence'.

Simple and rational.

[050608 cg] I'm not certain why you have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence'. You see it as a 'problem' for G-d as you understand G-d or that G-d would be less perfect in your eyes.

[050609 djs] Actually I do not have this aversion to 'eternal recurrence', nor do I see this as a 'problem' for G-d, nor do I understand G-d to be less perfect if 'this or that' were or were not the case.

What I see instead is 'man' sitting around and pining for an understanding as to the meaning of his existence.

Now this pining is not a 'negative' aspect of humankind, rather the obsessing with meaning emerges from the

natural curiosity of our specie and the natural desire of our specie to answer any questions which confront it.

The inability of our specie to answer the question regarding ‘meaning’ has led our specie down the relatively long historical path of intolerance, despair, and violence as well as down the relatively long historical path of brotherhood, hope, and peace.

In addition, the inability of our specie to answer the question regarding ‘meaning’ has also caused our specie to define philosophical, scientific, and religious paradoxes which have gone unanswered for centuries, which in turn have led us to several states of stagnation.

The first state of stagnation involves our intellectually understanding reality. This state of stagnation in turn has created a logjam of seemingly irresolvable intellectual philosophical, religious, and scientific paradoxes which impede our advancing not only these three arenas of study but impede the evolutionary development of our higher conscious.

The second state of stagnation involves the evolutionary development of our moral and ethical principles. This state of stagnation manifests itself in the phenomenal expanse being generated between our religious, social, legal, philosophical, moral and ethical issues and the technological advancements of our day. We are presently doubling our knowledge base every seven years while our moral and ethical advancement remains virtually stagnant and this, in turn, is impeding the evolutionary development of our social structures.

I believe humanity is capable of reaching a metaphysical understanding of reality which would propel our moral and ethical abilities far ahead of our technological vector which in turn would resolve the problems generated by the first and second states of stagnation.

This advance in understanding reality would, in my opinion, harm no one and harm no religious institutions that are based upon centuries of human intellectual thought. It is my opinion that human intuitive thought has not been for naught nor has human intuitive thought been simply an anthropomorphic obsession. Although much of the ancient wisdom has been verbalized in terms of ‘man’, the ancient wisdom is very enlightening when the term ‘man’ is replaced with the term ‘being’. Thus the ancient wisdom of mankind may appear anthropomorphic but is in fact very universal in nature.

As a side note: I believe the two states of stagnation previously identified, manifest themselves in the state of our present day music, art, literature, politics, religious interactions, ... The means of reinvigorating all aspects of society would thus appear to lie in advancing our understanding of reality.

In short, I see the key to reducing violence, intolerance, despair, social moral stagnation, social ethical stagnation, philosophical paradoxes, and scientific dilemmas, to lie in our advancing humanity’s understanding regarding the whole of reality and advancing humanity’s understanding regarding the role we as individuals and as a specie play within this advanced perception of reality.

‘But why now?’ then becomes the question. The answer is: It has only been in the last half of the twentieth century that humanity has begun to grasp the full significance of our galaxy, other galaxies, the possible existence of other universes, our universe being possible limited in size, our universe expanding into ‘something’, the potential for our universe to collapse, the ‘primal atom’ from which the universe emerged, ... It is because we have now begun to understand such concepts that we can begin to expand the perception we have regarding the whole of reality and the role we play within this expanded view of reality.

[050608 cg continues] ... I have no particular feeling regarding 'eternal recurrence'. It is not much in my thoughts. As best I remember from my college reading, Nietzsche was the first Western philosopher to write about 'eternal recurrence'. What I also remember is that, as I understood it, the point of 'eternal recurrence' is that one should live each moment to the fullest, as one will relive each moment eternally. Whether 'eternal recurrence' is true or not, the point is well taken.

For me, G-d's omniscience means that all that is known is known within G-d, that there is no 'knowing' that is outside of G-d.

[050609 djs] I agree, however, I also believe we are all in this together and as such have an obligation to look beyond our personal selves.

[050608 cg continues] ... As the future does not exist, it cannot be known or unknown. The headline on today's local newspaper is knowable and one may know or not know today's headline, but tomorrow's headline is not knowable nor unknowable. (This is to be differentiated from our imaginings or projections about the future. These imaginings and projections occur in the present and are knowable.)

Further, even if one states that "G-d knows all", that does not mean that G-d 'knows' as we know. I believe it is an anthropomorphic mistake to think that G-d 'knows' as we know this and that.

[050609 djs] I agree, but I also ascribe to what I said above.

[050608 cg continues] ... Finally, I have thought that if G-d is aware of all, then if one atom or even one electron of one atom in all the vast expanse of the universe were in a different position at a moment of time, then, for G-d, that universe would be entirely different experience.

[050609 djs] In terms of G-d, I agree. In terms of the individual, I agree. In terms of the mechanism itself, which regulates the interaction occurring between individuality and the whole, in terms of the dynamics of the internal functioning of reality and the meaning of morals and ethics which merge from such a mechanism, I do not agree.

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Friday, June 10

 [Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part IV](#)

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 10, 2005 01:25PM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

[Clyde G.](#) is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part IV

[050529 djs] And where does the totality of consciousness lie? The totality of consciousness would appear to lie 'outside' the physical. The totality of consciousness is what the physical 'lies within'. The totality of consciousness is the manifestation of the unmanifested. The totality of consciousness is perceived at this juncture of history as G-d yet is not G-d for we, humans, are capable of understanding 'the totality of consciousness' and by definition G-d is that which we, humans/limited beings, are incapable of comprehending.

[050530 cg] WOW! I understand "the totality of consciousness" as merely a concept, a label for a collection of things, but not an entity itself. I certainly agree that "the totality of consciousness" is not G-d.

[050530 djs] Why not an entity in itself? cck's concept of poly-solipsism, where in the individual exists and is separated from other individuals by 'nothingness' which allows each individual to retain its own individuality. If one models this concept in the form of a plane where the points 'contained' within the plane are the individuals. If one then pictures the plane having a layer above it and below it composed of the same nothingness as that which separates the individuals one from another, one can then visualize all the points in the plane contributing their 'knowing' into a vast 'expanse' of 'common knowing' reaching infinitely above and below the plane. This commonality of consciousness is simply part of the 'the totality of consciousness', i.e. an entity itself just as you and I are entities ourselves. Again I am not suggesting this 'is' the case but rather I am suggesting it is a reasonable concept which does no harm to any religions (including Buddhism) and does no harm to any lack of religion.

[050531 cg] Herein may be a subtle difference in understanding (meaning, I may have difficulty explaining my understanding).

I understand the usual meaning of 'the totality of consciousness' as a conceptual (mental) reality such as "chair" or "person"; i.e., one can think of, speak of, and point to examples of "chair" or "person", but there is no physical entity to which one can point. For example, think of 'the totality of blueness'. Would you argue that 'the totality of blueness' is a physical entity, although things are blue?

There are mental entities, but they are the individual thoughts, feelings, images, etc. that occur. There is the concept, a mental entity, of 'the totality of consciousness', but it has the same attributes as other concepts; i.e., the concept of 'the totality of consciousness' does not itself have consciousness.

Having said that, I also understand that Reality (capital "R" meaning all-inclusive existence) includes, but is not identical to, the totality of consciousness, as a simple summation. ...

[050603 djs] I would suggest your last paragraph is demonstrated in 'Graphic': Diagram 050605: The whole of Reality, Sections 'D' and 'E'.

[050531 cg continues] ... In this usage, I would not apply the attribute "entity" to the term as the attribute may suggest an intentional intelligence or some other attribute merely because we label the summation.

[050603 djs] Question: What word would you 'prefer'?

[050528 cg] Sharing a passing (now eternal?) thought,

[050529 djs] If there is such a 'thing' as a/many knowing entity/ies then: Yes, an eternal thought.

And if there is no such 'thing' as a/many knowing entity/ies of knowing, then: No, it is not an eternal thought.

Rationality/reason, however, would suggest: It is an eternal thought.

[050530 cg] WOW! All physical and mental things that arise and pass away are eternal as information. This present moment, in all its fullness, exists as it is because all of the preceding moments, in all their fullness, existed and this moment with its trace of all previous moments is the cause of all the next moments, in all their fullness, to exist.

[050530 djs] WOW? As to the comment after the exclamation: If you are simply reiterating what I have stated: What is your thought about it? If you are stating what it is you 'believe': Then I agree.

[050531 cg] WOW, you seem to be stating that the eternity of information depends on 'entities of knowing'. I am stating that the eternity of information does not depend on the existence of 'entities of knowing', where 'entities of knowing' does not include G-d. Of course, if you define G-d as the ultimate 'entity of knowing', while I would disagree with your definition of G-d (I would not use the terms "entity" or "knowing" to describe G-d.), we would be in agreement regarding the eternity of information.

[050603 djs] Regarding: Of course, if you define G-d as the ultimate 'entity of knowing' ... we would be in agreement regarding the eternity of information.'

I do and so it seems we are in agreement.

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Thursday, June 9

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part III

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 9, 2005 07:54AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part III

[050531 cg continues] ... I do not agree that "the present exists within consciousness", if that implies that any present could not exist without the existence of consciousness, unless one gives G-d the attribute of consciousness or defines G-d as Consciousness. ...

[050603 djs] One does not 'give' G-d attributes but one can rationalize 'such and such' is an attribute of ... Symbiotic panentheism outlines the rationale of 'consciousness' being 'an' attribute of G-d. (See Graphic: diagram 050605: The Whole of Reality

As for defining G-d as consciousness, that is the position upon which many present day religions adhere to. Many religions do not address the issues of section 'D' (omnipresence) and/or section 'E' (the un-manifested) presented in diagram 050605.

Symbiotic panentheism begins the process of opening up a dialogue regarding the omnipresence of G-d, the 'un-manifested' attributes of G-d, and the role of nothingness as it relates to the dynamics of reality.

Diagram 050605: The Whole of Reality, demonstrates that although G-d may have the attribute of consciousness, G-d is much more than consciousness.

[050531 cg continues] ... I would argue that consciousness is not an intrinsic attribute of G-d; i.e., G-d, as Reality, may currently have the attribute of consciousness, but did not have the attribute in the past and may not have the attribute in the future, and G-d, in Itself, has no attributes; so the attribute is not intrinsic. To define G-d as Consciousness may be OK, but I do not know what that would mean.

[050603 djs] The 'unmanifested', section 'E' (See Graphic: diagram 050605: The Whole of Reality) would not 'be' 'consciousness'. As the diagram clearly shows, the ultimate aspect of 'G-d' may well be beyond our limited ability to understand and as such can only be known to our limited form of 'consciousness' through the means of 'negation'.

Having said this, what does it mean? It means I agree with you.

[050531 cg continues] ... I would agree that an impression of the present exists within one's consciousness; the mind is often likened to a mirror.

I wrote that I experience consciousness presently and that the present, as the 'here-now', is Reality.

And what does "the totality of 'the present'" mean as differentiated from "the present"? Does "present" mean subjective presence; i.e., within one's (or presumably a collection of ones') consciousness and "the totality of 'the present'" mean the all-inclusive Reality? If so, OK, but I suggest we use Present (with a capital "P") to mean "the totality of 'the present'".

[050603 djs] It is not the 'present' with which I am concerned, since the present has already 'occurred' and as such is the past.

It is the future with which I am concerned for it is what we do with the future which will mold what will become 'the past' as we refer to 'it' while living in the physical, section 'A' in diagram 050605 found in the graphics. 'The past' in turn is what we call 'the present' when we return to the ethereal, section 'C' of diagram 050605.

In essence the process of experiencing the physical, creating (art, new ideas, music, ...), and/or molding the future into 'the past' (section 'A' where time is a part of the universal fabric of existing) and 'the present' (section 'C' where time is not a part of the universal fabric of existing), becomes the focus of one's concern for it is only the future one can directly affect.

How then does one 'affect' the whole of Reality? One 'affects the whole of Reality through the process of molding the future, molding what it is section 'A' (diagram 050605) becomes/the past and thus forming what 'is', forming 'the present', forming sections 'B' and 'C' which in turn are attributes of sections 'D' and 'E'.

One might then ask: What is real and what is not? And the answer would be: Why they, the temporal and the ethereal and nothingness, are all real and all interact and play a vital role with each other.

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Tuesday, June 7

Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part II
by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 7, 2005 12:11AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Our ability to affect ‘The Whole of Reality’ - Part II

[050531 cg] ... It is the present that allows facts and ‘art’ to emerge; in fact, the present, as the “here-now”, allows everything that emerges to emerge, even consciousness.

[050603 djs] I would suggest it is not consciousness that emerges within the present but rather that it is the present that emerges within consciousness.

I would suggest that ‘the present’ is in consciousness and not in the physical.

‘And where is consciousness?’ then becomes the question.

I would suggest consciousness is ‘within’ the body and ‘outside’ the universe (see diagram 050605) Thus, we as consciousness beings are made of the ‘same substance and essence’ as ‘the Whole’ (G-d if you wish). And thus we as discrete entities of consciousness short-circuit the age old philosophical paradox of ‘eternal recurrence’ or what one might term ‘permanent equilibrium’ which science has basically debunked as a concept.

‘The present’ is therefore understood to be ‘within’ you and ‘within’ total consciousness within which the physical itself resides.

Separating the present ‘within’ you from the ‘present’ outside you is the physical where the past and future lie.

[050528 cg] ... but also the universe itself in this moment as information; i.e., this moment exists as it is because the preceding moment, in all its fullness, existed and this moment with its trace of all previous moments is the information that causes the next moment.

[050529 djs] This part of your last sentence is a surprisingly intriguing aspect of a complex sentence.

This aspect of your last sentence gives insight into ‘Reality’ for it implies three aspects ‘composing’ Reality, namely: the ‘previous moment’/past, the ‘next moment’/future, and what ‘is’/present.

In addition, the implications of your statement lead to an understanding of the structure of Reality through the understanding of ‘moments’.

Within the physical only the past and the future exist. The present does not exist in the physical since the present is of such ‘short duration’ it no more exists than does a point on a line exist.

[050530 cg] WOW! The present has no duration, but is the eternal now. ...

[050530 djs] WOW? What does WOW mean? WOW as in ‘Hmmm I never thought of that or WOW as in ‘That is really off the wall?’

[050531 cg] WOW as in “We start with the same ‘facts’ (the past, present, and future, and the universe, which we agree has a physical and mental aspect) and yet have a different, but perhaps not so different, understanding.”

[050603 djs] Agreed.

[050530 cg] ... I understand the physical as being objective reality and only existing in the present moment; the past and future existing only as thoughts (or images, etc.) in the mental. I understand the mental as being subjective reality and also existing in the present moment. Therefore, the present fully contains the past and future within itself.

[050530 djs] I agree completely, the question becomes: Where does one find the three, the present moment - the past and the future, in relationship of one to the other? The term 'where' refers to a visual model of Reality one builds to understand Reality.

[050531 cg] You do? ...

[050603 djs] Actually, yes I do – see graphics, diagram 050605 sections ‘B’ and ‘C’.

[050531 cg continues] ... Then there is no 'where' except for the present as the "here-now".

[050603 djs] The model of Reality described by symbiotic panentheism (see diagram 050605) embraces the concept that the physical may very well oscillate in and out of existence and therefore, the past and the future (tools available for consciousness to develop new experiences, new facts, new art, ...) in essence come and go.

The Buddhistic concept of oscillating universes demonstrates that timeless existence can only be equated to the present – sections ‘B’ and ‘C’ in diagram 050605.

In addition, the physical alone contains space, distance, time, matter, energy, ... but it is consciousness which contains the knowing of space, distance, time, matter, energy, ...

[050529 djs] The question then becomes: Where does the present lie? The present would appear to lie 'within consciousness' and the totality of 'the present' would appear to lie within the totality of consciousness.

[050530 cg] WOW! I understand consciousness as the present awareness of the physical and the mental. I understand the present as being the eternal now of the physical and mental, and of our consciousness.

[050530 djs] I agree completely.

[050531 cg] You do? When you wrote, "The present would appear to lie 'within consciousness'", did you mean that you believe that the present exists within consciousness or did you mean that an impression of the present exists within consciousness? Or something else? ...

[050603 djs] Both and yes, something else.

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Monday, June 6

[Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part I](#)
by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 6, 2005 12:18AM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

Our ability to affect 'The Whole of Reality' - Part I

[050528 cg] During a recent contemplation I thought of "that which is created and thereafter eternal": information. I mean information in its broadest sense. This would include knowledge, facts, and data, ...

[050529 djs] Correct but keep in mind that the passive existence of 'data', 'facts', 'knowledge', has no meaning without a 'knower'/consciousness/'soul'...

[050530 cg] While I understand the relationship of knower and the object known, facts have an existence at least as real as our existence. For example, the relationship of pi to the circumference and radius of a circle existed before sentient beings discovered that fact and will continue to exist even should sentient beings cease to exist in the universe.

[050530 djs] Agreed, the question becomes what is the purpose of facts without knowing? The purpose of knowing can be described as: Knowing exists to experience. Experience what becomes the question. The experiencing does not necessarily have to do with facts. The experiencing may incorporate love, happiness, sadness, art. The experiencing may deal with the creativity of knower. The physical acts both as a 'place' within which 'facts' emerge and a place within which 'art' emerges influenced by the 'facts of life'.

[050531 cg] You ascribe 'purpose' to facts and to knowing. I do not. If, as you propose, facts exist for knowing and the purpose of knowing is to experience, then what is the purpose of experience? If you answer that the purpose of experience is to create new facts, then OK, but it is circular.

[050603 djs] The argument: 'The purpose of existing is to experience and create new facts' is only circular if one leaves the argument at this point. If, however, one then asks and answers the question: 'But what is the purpose if experiencing and creating new facts?' The answer to the question, then breaks the circular argument into being simply a question followed by an answer which in turn leads to an examination of human purpose, of human 'functionality', of the purpose for the existence of discrete entities of knowing as opposed to the 'whole' of knowing.

Having said that let me break the circular argument by asking the question and answering the question:

Question: 'But what is the purpose of experiencing and creating new facts?'

Answer (Potential rationale – one must always keep in mind that there is nothing one can 'know' as a fact. We can only define truths as best we can and move on from that point. Science itself is based upon this principle: Example: Tomorrow the sun will rise in the east and set in the west. Well perhaps but that would not be an absolute truth because the universe could collapse between now and tomorrow.)

If the whole of knowing is omniscient and timeless, then it would take no time for the whole of knowing to know all there is to know. As such the whole of knowing would have no choice but to recycle all its knowing again and again and again ... Philosophers call the 'eternal recurrence'. Hollywood calls the 'Groundhog Day'.

To circumvent 'eternal recurrence', the whole of knowing has but to 'live' a 'new experience' or 'create' a 'new fact'.

The question: 'But what is the purpose of experiencing and creating new facts?'

The answer: To avoid 'eternal recurrence'.

Simple and rational.

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Sunday, June 5

 **Diagram: 050605The Whole of Reality**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 5, 2005 07:47PM (EDT)

The Whole of Reality

See Graphics: [Diagram 050605](#)

Religions generally speak of God as being all of consciousness, 'Omniscience/Omnipotence', 'C' in the diagram.

Some religions do distinguish between regions 'C' and 'D'.

Some religions distinguish between 'C', 'D', and 'E'.

But all religions, including Atheism*, speak of G-d as 'the All'.

Philosophy understands and embraces the concept of 'the whole', the All.

Science understands and embraces the concept of 'the whole', the All.

It is the concept of 'the whole' which provides religion, philosophy, and science the common ground from which they can begin a common dialogue for resolving social issues.

***Atheism may not acknowledge 'God' but Atheism does acknowledge the concept of 'the whole'**

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Saturday, June 4

[✓](#) Aphorism: Regarding 'Proof of God's Existence'

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 4, 2005 01:00PM (EDT)

Aphorism: Regarding 'Proof of God's Existence'

**There is no 'proof of God's existence'
But having said that, one can go on to say:**

There are hundreds, thousands, of rational scientific, religious, and philosophical arguments supporting the existence of God.

There are no rational arguments supporting God's non-existence.

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Friday, June 3

[✓](#) Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Where is 'the present' moment of time?

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 3, 2005 07:29PM (EDT)

Dialoguing - A Neo-Buddhist and a Symbiotic Panentheist

Clyde G. is a respected thinker and Neo-Buddhist who has been acknowledged for his ability to ask questions going to the heart of issues regarding metaphysical models of reality.

[050528 cg] djs:

You have written about three categories:

that which is uncreated and eternal

that which is created and thereafter eternal

that which is created and non-eternal (destroyed)

I understand that you believe souls are in the second category (created and thereafter eternal).

[050529 djs] Correct. Such a position, however, by no means denies the concept of reincarnation. The concept of a soul visiting the physical one time or a multitude of times has nothing to do with the concept: 'that which is created and thereafter eternal'.

[050528 cg] During a recent contemplation I thought of "that which is created and thereafter eternal": information. I mean information in its broadest sense. This would include knowledge, facts, and data, ...

[050529 djs] Correct but keep in mind that the passive existence of 'data', 'facts', 'knowledge', has no meaning without a 'knower'/consciousness/'soul'/...

[050528 cg] ... but also the universe itself in this moment as information; i.e., this moment exists as it is because the preceding moment, in all its fullness, existed and this moment with its trace of all previous moments is the information that causes the next moment.

[050529 djs] This part of your last sentence is a surprisingly intriguing aspect of a complex sentence.

This aspect of your last sentence gives insight into 'Reality' for it implies three aspects 'composing' Reality, namely: the 'previous moment'/past, the 'next moment'/future, and what 'is'/present.

In addition, the implications of your statement lead to an understanding of the structure of Reality through the understanding of 'moments'.

Within the physical only the past and the future exist. The present does not exist in the physical since the present is of such 'short duration' that it no more exists than does a point on a line exist.

The question then becomes: If the present does not lie in the physical, then where does the present lie? The present would appear to lie 'within consciousness' and the totality of 'the present' would appear to lie within the totality of consciousness.

And where does the totality of consciousness lie?

If the totality of consciousness does not 'lie within' the physical, then the totality of consciousness would appear to lie 'outside' the physical. The totality of consciousness is what the physical 'lies within'. The totality of consciousness is the manifestation of the unmanifested. The totality of consciousness is perceived, at this juncture of history, as G-d yet is not G-d for we, humans, are capable of understanding 'the totality of consciousness' and by definition G-d is that which we, humans/limited beings, are incapable of comprehending.

[050528 cg] [Sharing a passing \(now eternal?\) thought,](#)

[050529 djs] **If there is such a ‘thing’ as a (many) knowing entity (ies) then: Yes, an eternal thought.**

And if there is no such ‘thing’ as a/many knowing entity (ies) of knowing, then: No, it is not an eternal thought.

Rationality/reason, however, would suggest: It is an eternal thought.

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Thursday, June 2

 **Human Issues - Singularity of God - Catholicism**

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on June 2, 2005 07:03PM (EDT)

Singularity of God – Catholicism

Question

If God is the whole of all, is omnipresent, than how is it possible, other through the process of ‘separation through inclusion’ (The War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception, Daniel J. Shepard, Global Academic Publications, Binghamton University SUNY, New York. 2002), to account for the existence of unique souls being located ‘within’ a omnipresent God if God is not composed of parts?

Introduction

God is not made of parts. (Father Mueller, Sacred Heart Seminary, 5/21/03, Detroit, Michigan)

Analysis

Perhaps the most significant perception I drew from the meeting between Father Mueller and myself was the statement that Catholicism would have difficulty accepting symbiotic panentheism since it implies that God is composed of parts.

The perception of God being composed of parts is, however, far from the truth revealed by symbiotic panentheism. Pan-theism and the passive state of pure pan-en-theism as opposed to symbiotic pan-en-theism purport that God, is composed of parts. Symbiotic panentheism provides the understanding that God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient and as such God is the ‘the ultimate’ form of singularity regarding

omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence.

At the same time, symbiotic panentheism provides the understanding as to how it is possible for God to be omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and contain all the parts of singularity while not being composed of parts. The process of God being the whole void parts is thoroughly rationalized through the process of ‘separation through inclusion’ versus present day perceptions of ‘separation through exclusion’.’ Separation through exclusion’ is what permeates present day ontological and metaphysical models of reality.

In the War and Peace of a New Metaphysical Perception Tractate 8, The Error of Russell, describes the concept of ‘separation through inclusion’. Tractate 10. The Error of Heidegger, describes the function of nothingness and how nothingness becomes the very tool by which ‘separation through inclusions’ provides the means by which the soul of the individual is capable of ‘adding’/growing God’s omniscience without in fact changing God since God is a ‘region’ lacking a universal fabric composed of matter, energy, space, and/or time. Other tractates in the work, address the concept how ‘change’ can occur in an ‘existence’ void time and space without causing ‘change’

Remarks

Symbiotic panentheism provides the rationale which supports Christian concepts of God being ‘one’, being ‘a’/’the’ whole void parts. The process by which the paradox is resolved involves the tool of ‘separation through inclusion’. If God is capable of using such a tool to resolve dilemmas facing Himself perhaps we/humans, could find the tool to be a useful means to resolve many of our social paradoxes.

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