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Dialogue with a Neo-Buddhist: Why build a model of reality: Part Ia

by [Daniel J. Shepard](#) on August 1, 2005 02:14AM (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.

Why build a model of reality: Part Ia

[deleted materials ...]

[050720 djs] Regarding: Even if there is "an outside to the physical universe existing," Reality is without an outside. Therefore, I simplify and understand: We exist. Reality exists. We exist within Reality. (Where else could we be?) I agree.

Regarding: We experience Reality as two aspects, an internal (mental) reality and an external (physical) reality. Here I disagree. I would suggest there is the internal spirit, 'contained with the physical mind and body, contained within the physical universe, contained within total consciousness, ...













The difference in your apparent perception and mine is that

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you appear to perceive Reality as being composed of the internal and the external: the 'mental'/knowing 'within' the physical.

The model, symbiotic panentheism, would suggest Reality is composed of three layers, 'the mental'/knowing 'within' the physical which in turn is 'within' the 'mental'/knowing. As such, the physical is as much an 'internal' aspect of knowing as are individuated entities of knowing 'internal' aspects of the whole of Reality.

[050722 cg] No, I do not perceive "Reality as being composed of the internal and the external: the 'mental'/knowing 'within' the physical." Reality is not composed of anything or things. We experience two aspects of Reality that are co-dependent and co-extensive; i.e., one is not 'within' the other and neither aspect is dominant or preeminent of the other.

[050727 djs] I understand your perception and although I do not agree with it, I do respect it.

Regarding: We are of the same substance (body) and essence (mind) as Reality. If we simply understand reality to be: We exist. Reality exists. We exist within Reality. (Where else could we be?), people will logically/rationally make the assumption that the physical universe is what Reality is for they 'believe' what it is they see and they see the physical outside themselves. The product of such an understanding of reality, the resultant ethics of such a model of reality, is the establishment of physical hedonism, nihilism, and the diminished influence of altruism. The reason for such a perceptual development is that the 'greater' reality is perceived to be the physical for the individual is perceived to be within the physical and it is then perceived by individuals in general and society as a whole that's all there is, period.

If we expand our model of reality to: ... there is the internal spirit, 'contained with the physical mind and body, contained within the physical universe, contained within total consciousness, ..., people will logically/rationally make the assumption that the physical universe is NOT what Reality is

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for they would perceive the physical universe as being limited since they would visualize the physical universe as lying within 'Knowing'/total consciousness and they would perceive that we, our essence, is of the same substance and essence as what it is the physical lies within.

The result would be the understanding of society and the understanding of individuals that they are not, therefore, physical in nature. The product of such an understanding of Reality, the resultant ethics of such a model of reality, is the establishment of altruistic hedonism, the establishment of a higher meaning/purpose than that which evolves out of a physical existence, and the establishment of an expansive influence of altruism.

[050722 cg] I wrote, "We are of the same substance (body) and essence (mind) as Reality." I acknowledge both my experience of an external physical reality and my experience of an internal mental reality. I do not favor one aspect or one experience over the other. Ultimately, Reality is (without preference).It would be awesome if we all lived as if the physical was Reality. If we did, we would understand that this physical reality is actually the body of G-d. The realization that one's body and all physical things are G-d's body has a profound effect one's actions. One understands that one is always in the physical presence of G-d. So, one will naturally be respectful to oneself and others.

It would be awesome if we all lived as if the physical was Reality. If we did, we would truly confront our mortality. The realization that one will die has a profound effect one's actions. One understands that there is no eternal ownership, that each and every thing is temporary. So, one will naturally not cling or be greedy.

On the other hand, you have not shown how the belief that we are eternal consciousness, that we are not our bodies, and that

the physical is not reality leads to "the establishment of altruistic hedonism, meaning/purpose, and the expansive influence of altruism".

[050727 djs] Again I will state it: If one perceives the physical to be the ultimate form of reality one reaches for the physical as the ultimate form of rational hedonistic goals. Physical hedonism thus becomes the rational individualistic goal.

If one perceives the physical to be 'a subset' of a greater set, namely the physical is not the ultimate form of reality which one can attain, then the question becomes what is the ultimate form of reality?

If one can demonstrate that the physical/tangible lies 'within' the intangible/consciousness then the ultimate form of totality for which one can reach becomes the abstract and as such the ultimate form of rational hedonistic goal becomes the altruistic as opposed to the physical.

The result: Abstractual hedonism/altruism trumps physical hedonism/materialism.

Regarding: Is there a need to expand and create models and systems? I think not. We need only focus on and realize, "We therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d."

To simply state 'We are of the same substance and essence as G-d' is not enough. Our society is leaning towards materialism. Spirituality is being broken asunder by the unanswered questions regarding the rationality of religion. Faith is no longer enough. Spirituality is being rejected by the countless visions of various religions assaulting one another in attempts to commit various forms of atrocities such as the acts of genocide as witnessed in Rwanda, the Congo, Cambodia, Bosnia, Tibet, ...

To state 'we therefore are of the same substance and essence as G-d' simply supports the materialists and atheists who profess the whole of reality as being simply the physical since, supports the materialists and atheists who profess G-d as being the

physical universe, which according to them is validated by science's refusal to acknowledge an 'outside' to the physical universe.

I would suggest there is a 'need to expand and create a model of reality' which clearly and irrefutable demonstrates knowing/conscious is the ultimate form of reality. The model would clearly, rationally, philosophically, scientifically, and theistically demonstrate the physical is not the outer limit but rather 'knowing'/the intangible is the outer limit.

We are visual creatures and as such a model is an essential aspect for advancing human understanding.

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