



On the Mystery of Being: Contemporary Insights on the Convergence of Science and Spirituality

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As science advances in its understanding of the universe, scientists must periodically let go of long-held preconceptions and replace them with new facts. Take our limited understanding of consciousness. Science doesn't have a clue about how neural activity creates conscious experiences, but through scanning, it's become clear that the conscious experience—recognizing color, smell, taste, for example—originates in specific parts of the brain. In other words, if the brain weren't involved, these sensory experiences wouldn't exist. Emboldened, some scientists have joined mystics to come to the breathtaking conclusion that space, time, and physical objects exist only in consciousness as well. So general relativity, quantum mechanics, and all those other theories built around space-time are out the window.

Heady stuff, and with all manner of spiritual and existential ramifications. Alas, all we can do is place the question of whether science can ever explain consciousness on the shelf with classics like *who are we?*, *what's our place in the universe?*, *where do we go from here?*, knowing that the best thinkers in both science and spirituality are seeking answers.

Zaya and Maurizio Benazzo's *On the Mystery of Being* provides a fascinating update on whether some of those great minds are making headway. A collection of essays from Deepak Chopra, Adyashanti, Jean Houston, Robert Thurman, and fifty or so others, the book champions both scientific theory and spiritual wisdom, knowing the two disciplines will benefit from working with each other for the good of humanity.

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2019)

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