



teozofija v sloveniji



Edi Bilimoria

UNFOLDING CONSCIOUSNESS

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REVIEW

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Contributions to the Research of the History of the Theosophical Movement

In the spring of 2022, Shepherd-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd from London published a monumental work by the author Edi Bilimoria with the title **UNFOLDING CONSCIOUSNESS** and the subtitle ***Exploring the Living Universe and Intelligent Powers in Nature and Humans***. The extensive trilogy (with the addition of the fourth volume) has as many as 1,213 pages and represents the author's life's work, which he prepared over twenty years.

When, as a Theosophical "fellow student and traveler on the way," having the privilege of viewing an electronic copy of the book, the author asked to prepare a Review of it, I found myself faced with the difficult task of capturing in a few pages this vast work, from which it is difficult to take away a single sentence, so as not to impoverish its content. For, in addition to its wealthy content, the book also offers, at least to the non-English reader, a fascination with the artistry of the language in which it is written.

What surprises the reader at the very beginning of the trilogy is the extremely systematic approach with which the author has structured the entire work so that it could undoubtedly bear an additional subtitle: "Guide for the Unlearned." "Guide" because, using many tools, it leads the reader to learn about the unified body of comprehensive wisdom and the universality of the secret teachings of all cultures and religions. And "Unlearned" because the existence of this philosophia perennis - eternal wisdom, is supported by the reasoning and evidence of modern science, and because this realization contradicts the prevailing consensus dictates of neuroscience that thinking is generated by the brain, with Consciousness merely a disturbing by-product.

The trilogy thus represents three stages of a research journey through different areas of Consciousness. The very title of the first volume, *A Panoramic Survey – Science Contrasted with the Perennial Philosophy on Consciousness and Man*, also reveals its content. Volume two, *Peering Down the Microscope - Man's Internal Landscapes*, discusses the confusion regarding the complex human composition. Volume Three, *Gazing Through the Telescope – Man is the Measure of All Things*, portrays the universal image of man within the grand design of the universe and nature.

Before we start with the content, let's focus on the "tools" with which the author helps the reader tread the challenging labyrinths of philosophy, religion, and science. The fourth volume of the work, *Index, References and Resources, Further Reading*, is defined by the author as a guide that should constantly accompany the reader while reading the trilogy. In it, we find the following sections: *Science – Its genesis, evolution, and Western and Eastern streams, Glossary, Further Reading, and General Index*.

A kind of "superior tool" is also represented by the *Proem: The Purpose and Justification for this Work* and *Introductory: The Plan of the Contents and Route Map* to the first volume of the trilogy. While at the end of the first volume, we find three additional "tools." *Recapitulation: Unifying Consciousness through Science and the Mystery Teachings* and two appendices: *I-A: Timeline of the Progression of the Physical Sciences – Physics and Cosmology* and *I-B: Timeline of the Progression of the Life Sciences – Biology and Evolution*.

Similar "superior tools" are also attached to the other two volumes. The second volume begins with the *Prefatory: 'Man, Know Thyself' – But Who, or What is Man?* and concludes with a summary *Coda: How to Construct and Energize a Human Being – The Temple of the Divine* and Appendices *II-A: Light, Ether, and the Theory of Relativity – An extended example of 'Knowledge Filtration' in Science*, *II-B: Antahkarana – its Purpose and Function* and *II-C: The Traditionalist Stance and Mindset - Truth from just One Authority?* Two chapters of this volume could also be classified as "special tools," namely, 6. *Clarifying Some Common Misconceptions*, in which the author clears up misconceptions about such topics as the meaning of the soul, the distinction between soul and spirit, the dual nature of the mind, and why man is not just a thinking animal. And also 8. *Diverse Classifications of the Composition of Man – Harmony with Different World Teachings*, in which he summarizes the main teachings of the esoteric tradition from various sources that seem only seemingly contradictory.

The third volume begins with the *Preamble: Man, a Miniature Universe – A Mirror of Cosmos* and concludes with two appendices: *Epilogue: Towards Immortality* and *A Mathematical Codicil: Mathematics Alludes to the World as Mind, the Matrix of all Matter*.

However, with this, the selection of "tools" is far from exhausted. Each of the three volumes ends with *Endnotes*, which represent an additional source of information on the topics covered by the content of each volume. Specific "tools" can also be found within the framework of each chapter of an individual volume. Thus, each chapter begins with a short *Synopsis*, which alerts the reader to what topic the respective chapter will focus on. Even more, the first few sentences of each chapter are devoted to introducing the theme, how the theme of the current chapter will develop throughout the text of the trilogy in subsequent chapters, and how it has been treated in the past chapters. Similarly, the few concluding sentences of each chapter are intended to explain how the topic was treated in previous chapters and how it will develop in subsequent ones. And even this does not exhaust all the "tools" the author offers the reader. More complex content, primarily related to the doctrines of *Philosophia perennis* regarding the structure of man and the universe, is often summarized in tables, diagrams, and lists of extracts of the topic's key points. The text is also enriched with side notes that summarize the text's essence and numerous cross-references to related content in other chapters. The exceptional quality of the work is also represented by numerous quotes from the works of giants of science and eternal wisdom.

Last but not least, the first chapters of the third volume could also be classified as “special tools.” *Symbolism: The Language of the Mystery Teachings* talks about why the literature of esoteric philosophy uses symbolic language, which is the only one suitable for conveying subjective experiences and profound truths that lie beyond words and reason. 2. *Symbolic Representations of the Unity of Cosmos, Nature, and Man*, which presents the zodiac as the most perfect expression of this unity and correspondence. And 3. *Man is the Measure of All Things – the Human Body in Symbolism*, which presents the hermetic axiom ‘As above so below,’ as an attempt to understand the incomprehensible divinity through the study of its reflection in man and the three great centers of Consciousness in man: heart, brain and generative organs, whereby even modern science now recognizes that it is the heart that rules the brain and not the other way around. And 4. *Symbolic Representations of the Principles of Man* that reveals how behind an exoteric description (such as the seven-leafed lotus) lies an esoteric key to the truth about the human constitution.

In order for the insight into the further content of this extensive and complex work to be a little clearer for the purposes of this Review, I will try to connect into sections the content that deals with various topics mainly from the perspective of eternal wisdom, and sections that primarily choose that of modern science as a starting point. However, this should not be a reason for the mistaken impression that throughout the entire content of the work, there is no constant interweaving of views from these two points of view when dealing with individual topics.

1. *Who, or What Am I?*

At the beginning of the book, the author notes that so far, only a few books have addressed the relationship between modern science and esoteric philosophy and tried to prove that many of the puzzles of modern science can only be solved in the light of *philosophia perennis*, or, on the other hand, that to a certain extent even modern science, with its conclusions and evidence, confirms the findings of this eternal wisdom. However, he adds that any true understanding of mystical experiences can only come from direct experience and not from an academic approach to mysticism as a subject of intellectual study and research, emphasizing that the researcher must go beyond the intellect but never discard it, and accept the fact, that he must be able to walk this path of exploration alone. For the central quest he must pursue is the quest to ‘know himself’ and thus the main principle of existence, Consciousness.

2. *The Mind – Brain – Thought Problem: Even Nobel Scientists Disagree*

3. *The Paradigm of Science – its Ideology, Assumptions, and Beliefs*

4. *Limitations in the Modern Scientific Picture*

5. *Straining Our Eyes to See Beyond – ‘Uncomfortable Science’*

6. *A New Continent of Thought*

Nowadays, modern science itself is discovering facts that, with the help of the theory of relativity and quantum physics, dismantle its scientific materialism and direct it towards the realization of non-mechanical reality, towards the realization that the universe is more like a great thought than a great machine and that the mind, consciousness, the creator and administrator of the realm of matter rather than its by-product. Moreover, he notes that matter as such does not exist or that it exists only because of a force that keeps its particles together by vibration and that behind this force must be a conscious and intelligent mind, which is the matrix of all matter. However, only love for the truth and a sincere

desire to know oneself can lead a person to these realizations. Because once we truly understand ourselves, we also understand all other human beings, as well as the world and the universe.

When materialist science treats concepts such as mind, spirit, and ideas themselves as secondary, as products of material interactions, this is actually an insult to the scientific method, which is characterized by a strictly impartial and non-dogmatic approach to the investigation of nature through observation, hypotheses, then experimental testing and theoretical predictions and explanations about the phenomena in question, without prior commitment to particular ideologies or beliefs. For “science must have neither wishes nor prejudices, but must have truth as its sole aim.” And there is much more to the universe than matter, but nothing beyond the scope of natural science. This places materialism in its proper context: not as an ultimate paradigm but as an indispensable component and aspect of the whole of natural science, encompassing both physical and spiritual realms.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a promising time for the rapprochement between science and spirituality. After this period, however, materialism as an element of scientific thought gradually solidified into an ideology and then into a dogma. Despite the findings of quantum physics, this ideology became so dominant in twentieth-century academia and learned societies that most scientists today still believe it is based on empirical evidence and, therefore, represents the one and only credible worldview. As a result, the almost total dominance of the philosophy and methodology of materialism in academia, industry, and the medical and social sciences seriously hinders the scientific investigation of mind, Consciousness, and spirituality.

However, the increasingly compelling research of many near-death and out-of-body experiences points to the preservation of memory despite clinical brain death, making a purely mechanistic explanation of memory even in principle impossible. The functioning of telepathy has now been experimentally proven, as well as many other paranormal phenomena, which testifies to the existence of Consciousness that is not limited to the physical brain.

Therefore, many networks of scientists are already calling for a post-materialist scientific paradigm that will not shy away from research into spirituality and non-physical approaches to Consciousness for fear of being ridiculed by those who claim that such research is pseudo-science.

7. The Mystery Teachings of All Ages – A General Overview _

8. What Occult Science Affirms - its Contrast with Natural Science

9. The Mystery Teachings About Man – Who , or What Am I?

In the chapters above, the reader is first introduced to the secret teachings found in the works of HP Blavatsky and Manly P. Hall, and then supplemented with information from the works of the American scholar, linguist, and esoteric philosopher Gottfried de Purucker and from the works of the late Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, English historian and professor of Western Hermeticism at the University of Exeter and former director of the Exeter Center for the Study of Esotericism.

The author has made a special effort to explain as much as possible the etymology and meaning of the terms used in these teachings to avoid the confusion that often leads to meanings that range from the utterly absurd to the at least imprecise. Then, to clarify the difference in the method used by science and the occult science on the other hand for their research. The first generally moves from the particular to the general, while the second moves from the general (universal) to the particular. Because of this,

natural science provides a vast amount of factual information about individual physical phenomena but knows less about their inner nature, in addition to poorly understanding the whole picture. Meanwhile, the method of occult science provides deep insight into the origin, essential nature, and manifestation of natural processes but sometimes relies on imprecise details of specific physical mechanisms. The difference is that the scientist can only observe the object he is researching, while the mystic connects with the object he is meditating upon. In the first case, it is a matter of separation, and a lifelong connection in the second. The Litmus test of Truth is always the consistency of doctrine in all areas of nature and its universality.

In contrast to natural science, occult science uses different research instruments, namely the heightened abilities of human Consciousness, as opposed to more sophisticated physical instruments. The primary purpose of research is to reveal the inner nature of man. Because man has never stopped asking himself: Who or what am I? What is life? What is intelligence? What is force? The mystery teachings were designed precisely for man's getting answers to these questions.

After enumerating the nature and characteristics of the most important ancient mystery schools, the author pays attention to the modern Theosophical movement as the central movement (from which many other branches emerged), within which the teachings of eternal wisdom were published, and current esoteric practices were developed and cultivated. Then he reveals the central point of the mystery teachings, namely the dual nature of man's mind principle, which connects man on the one hand with his spiritual and on the other with his 'animal' principles, and their central purpose, which is to train man various techniques and processes to be able to reveal its spiritual or inner nature gradually. However, he points to the mistaken belief that cultivating spiritual practices makes a person more virtuous, reasonable, and compassionate. The truth is precisely the opposite, a person becomes more spiritual when he deepens his virtue, compassion, and reason.

The author opens the second volume with the saying '*Man, know yourself*' - and asks the question: who or what is man? And the answer: man is an immortal spiritual being clothed in a mortal animal body - in its mechanism of action.

1. *What Occult Science says about the Composition of Man – Clearing the Decks*
2. *The Occult Constitution of Man – How Man is 'Builded Up'*
3. *The Occult Nature of Man – How Man Functions*
4. *The Three Selves – Man's Three Primary Vehicles of Consciousness*

Ever since the remotest antiquity, humankind has sensed the existence of an inner spiritual entity, a subtle body located within the human physical body. Man is said to be composed of a series of 'principles' ranging from spirit to meta-spirit and finally to gross matter. But mystery teachings around the world classify man's invisible anatomy and physiology in various ways that at first glance seem inconsistent or contradictory. Like every branch of science, every esoteric tradition has developed its own specific terminology, so the author tries to explain individual terms. When science deals with the paranormal, it makes enormous efforts to understand phenomena outside the realm of the materialistic paradigm. Still, it faces a problem because it is an entirely different category of phenomenon. It is impossible to explain or disprove astrology in terms of the laws of physical cosmology, as it is impossible to understand Consciousness in terms of physical science. For with man, we must distinguish

between his constitution and his nature, whereby man's constitution is connected with his Consciousness, with what man is, with his potentiality, while man's nature concerns the way he acts as a result of what he is, with his capability.

Different divisions of the human constitution are known from the esoteric tradition. As basic, we have a twofold division, which divides man into individuality and personality; a threefold division, which divides man into spirit, soul, and body; and a sevenfold division, which divides man's constitution following the sevenfold law. The author then presents this sevenfold division in detail.

For anything to work, two principles must be present that trigger the action, namely a higher positive and active principle and a lower negative or passive principle, which represents the carrier through which the action occurs. After the author explains the meaning of the individual terms used by the esoteric tradition to illustrate the individual carriers for the operation of Consciousness on each of the seven levels, he presents in even more detail the joint operation of both principles on these levels, the three main carriers delimiting the states of Consciousness, Buddhi, Manas, and Kama.

The three primary human carriers of Consciousness are also called the three human "selves," which naturally belong to the threefold division of the human constitution, spirit-soul-body. These "selves" have been named in the esoteric tradition the "auric sheath," the "causal (karmic) body?" and the "mortal garment." These are in mutual relations, of which the author mainly elaborates on the relationship between the higher and lower mind. Finally, he pays attention to the occurrences after the death of a person, thus leading us to the next chapter, which is dedicated to the phenomenon of death.

5. Death is Transition – Time at the Door of Eternity

The author presents the main stages and states of Consciousness that a person goes through after physical death and the processes that lead to rebirth. He pays special attention to the intermediate element or carrier of Consciousness, which acts as a bridge between the lower and higher manas and is known as the Antahkarana. The latter acts as a medium of communication between the lower and higher egos and as a filter that transmits to the immortal higher entity only those elements of the transient personality that bear the stamp of nobility, selflessness, and spirituality. The author deals with this topic in more detail in a special appendix at the end of this volume.

7. Is the Brain a 'Wet Computer' – Are Humans 'Lumbering Robots'? The Closing of the Scientific Mind

Although the human brain exhibits some of the mechanical functions and characteristics of a computer, this does not mean that the functioning of the brain and the computer are not different. The essence of the problem is that materialist science, with its theories of mind and Consciousness, does not recognize the difference between a machine and the one who controls the machine, between the instrument and the one who plays the instrument. In this sense, the mind is the brain's software. A scientist should be able to see the limits of his theories and work within them rather than extending them into areas whose phenomena they are unable to explain. Namely, materialistic science is extremely ill-equipped to deal with phenomena outside its self-imposed limits of research of objective and physical phenomena.

At the beginning of the third volume, the author asks: what is the central factor that obscures human awareness and discernment of the deeper spheres of existence? It is not difficult to recognize it. Materialism is an essential factor but not central; it is simply an extreme weariness of worldly things. The only authentic call we can truly hear and respond to is the inner voice of our higher self. In its elusive

tones, it constantly whispers to us through the interlayers of our activity and involvement in worldly happenings, urging us to avoid fleeting pursuits and to look beyond illusions.

5. *The Hermetic Axiom and the Law of Analogy*

6. *Cosmogogenesis: The Unfolding of Consciousness - Kosmic Planes to Terrestrial Planes*

7. *Anthropogenesis: The Unfolding of Consciousness - Divine Self to Human Body*

8. *From External Sensation to Internal Experience - the Subjective Perception of an Objective Universe*

9. *Divine Forces in the Human Being - the Awakening of Latent Faculties and Powers of Consciousness*

10. *Man's Limitless Evolution - Our Unfinished Journey*

Esoteric tradition recognizes seven philosophical keys that open the door to sacred secret truth. One of these is the Hermetic axiom 'As Above, So Below,' which illustrates the analogy, correspondence, and interrelation between the macrocosm and the microcosm. The man entering through the gate should observe the following counsels: 1. Treat everything within the limits of Consciousness, 2. Use the keys of analogy and correspondence, for analogy, is the surest guide to understanding occult teachings - all in the universe, in all its kingdoms, it is CONSCIOUS and follows analogy 'as above, so below'; but 3. Before we can concatenate strings, we need to learn the formula! The analogy between nature's ever-becoming and ever-evolving processes in the cosmos and in man is perfect. This is because the Divine Consciousness is always Unmanifest, the source and prototype of all in the Manifest, which is a repeated projection and reflection of the Unmanifest on various levels. On three primary levels: 1. The Unmanifest is projected and reflected in the Divine, 2. The Divine is projected and is reflected in the Spiritual, 3. The Spiritual is projected and reflected in the transitory and mortal.

A recurring theme of this work is that man, at his innermost self, is a universe in miniature. Therefore, it is impossible to study a human without the simultaneous inclusion of nature and the universe, since it is basically one organic being that is ever-becoming, constantly developing, and is therefore inseparably interconnected. Man is the measure of all things because he mirrors the cosmos in that the same principles and laws that govern the development of the cosmos also govern the development of man. The similarity, however, is not only in appearance or structural coherence but also in function. The seven levels of the cosmos are reflected in the seven principles of man or the seven states of Consciousness. The entire spectrum, therefore, represents a practically infinite field of experience, both actual and potential, available and accessible to anyone with the necessary and appropriate capacities of Consciousness developed and functioning at any individual level.

From what has been said, it follows that man evolved from spirit and not by ascending from matter. All things, including man, have their origin in spirit. Evolution always starts from the top and continues down, not the other way around. It is a process of gradual materialization of forms until the point of deepest materiality is reached, at which a person is the furthest from his SELF. The spiritual nature of man is not embodied in the matter in one life. In everyday life, man perceives this truth in the gap between his potentiality and his ability, in the frequent feeling that he could achieve and create much more if he were not limited by his physical capacities (energy and time). There is a larger part of him that cannot engage in physical life. In other words, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Only occult science is capable of solving the central puzzle currently plaguing neuroscience: to discover the neural correlate of Consciousness, that is, how external and objective input to the physical senses

(such as electromagnetic waves on the retina or airwaves on the eardrum) results in an internal and subjective experience of color or sound. The author then describes in detail the correspondences and consonance between the universal mind and individual minds and how perception causes sensation and the conversion of neurology into experience. He shows how occult science can be used to solve a problem he calls “Schrödinger’s mind-sensation problem”, one of the most challenging puzzles in modern neuroscience, namely how and why an entirely subjective, internal, and conscious experience can arise from thought itself to some event or some previous experience, without any external input to the five physical senses. Namely, the physical brain is the form that the mind takes to act as a means of its conscious expression on the physical level. On the other hand, Mind is the form Consciousness takes to act as a means of expressing it on the mental level. It does not follow from this that there is a physical world and behind it some mental world, but that there is only a mental world and an apparent physical world, which is an appearance of the mental world. This is also the conclusion reached by enlightened modern science based on its own theory and rigorous experimental work.

The whole human being, but especially the heart, brain, and generative system (the main centers of Consciousness), can be considered a divine instrument that transforms the universal Consciousness into its physical basis. Two glands in the human body work as the neural transducer of Consciousness. The pituitary gland is associated with pure psychic visions, as opposed to the pineal gland, which is associated with spiritual visions. The emergence of intuition is a direct recognition of the truth in all things. This is the highest spiritual faculty in man, but it remains dormant as long as man is too attached to the senses and the lower mind. When a poet, scientist, or artist receives glimpses of intuition, his mind is quietly receptive and porous to the influences of his higher nature - the higher mind. The characteristic of an authentic spiritual experience is recognized by its consequences, in terms of whether this experience radically changed the person for the better - in terms of less self-centeredness and terms of a greater degree of universality of view.

Man has within him all that the cosmos has, whether active or latent. Man’s carriers of Consciousness include not only the physical body but also his subtle bodies, which range from the divine monad (spirit) through the intermediate levels of Consciousness (soul) to the physical body. Evolution is simply the awakening and manifestation of what is found within, in matter, in various bodies, which change and perfect their sophistication and complexity through the ages. This allows the spirit to gradually express in them an increasing proportion of its potentiality at any level of manifestation. For this reason, the human center of Consciousness, the divine monad, has taken on the title Pilgrim, who walks the path of his constant growth because the term growth is the key to the meaning of evolution, as it illustrates the process of developing ability and the organ of action associated with it.

11. Summary of the Theme – Consciousness is an ELEMENT

In the last chapter of the trilogy, the author emphasizes the invaluable contribution of science to the improvement of human physical life and existence, as well as to the understanding of the universe, nature, and the miraculous functioning of the human body. However, he points out that the latter has a hard time understanding the hidden side of the universe, nature, and man, as a result of which it cannot offer satisfactory answers, which has led to dehumanization and the abandonment of man's search for the soul. Moreover, even the true scientific spirit has become a rarity among researchers. Science, in its true sense, like everything else, is an idea in the divine mind and hidden in the bowels

of nature. Its appearance on the world stage means an essential stage in the evolutionary cycle of nature because nature yearns to know itself; otherwise, there would never be evolution. Because of this, the light of truth cannot be perceived only through the prism of science but only through the convergence of science, religion, and philosophy or with the help of philosophia perennis, which reveals the organic unity of the cosmos and man and the view from the point of view of Consciousness. Because every idea, all our dreams and aspirations, joys and sorrows, in fact everything we know, is experienced through Consciousness. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge the primacy of Consciousness. Consciousness comes first; in other words, Consciousness is the ELEMENT. It is “substance” in its most basic form; it is indivisible, it is the ever-present primary element of all manifestation, which is in a constant process of unfolding.

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The reader of the present Review of the extraordinary trilogy UNFOLDING CONSCIOUSNESS should bear in mind that this is only a modest attempt to capture in a few pages an extraordinarily complex and extensive work, and the process to highlight the essential themes that he will encounter if he decides to purchase it. I recommend it to anyone who considers him or herself a serious student of science or the esoteric tradition.

Anton Rozman