

### SCIENCE and MYSTICISM.

Carina Aguilar-Chávez, Blanca E. Carvajal-Gámez, José L. López-Bonilla  
[lopezbjl@mexico.com](mailto:lopezbjl@mexico.com) ; [jlopezb@ipn.mx](mailto:jlopezb@ipn.mx)

#### a). Maya and the Scientists.

Could science be assumed a type of religion? We should recognize the fact that to research and decode the mechanisms of the material world would help establish the purposes and ways of the will, of pervading atoms, of bodies, and galaxies. Here are some comments made by men devoted to science.

Maya denotes the transient character, and in consequence, the unreality of the phenomenal world. This is expressed by Sri Aurobindo:

“... then I saw the intense activities in Bombay as though performed on film, everything became unreal! “

or in Nobel prize winner Max Planck’s words,

“We must assume that behind the world of phenomena exists a Superior Mind. This Mind is the Creator of the Universe”...

According to Luis Pasteur,

“In those supreme moments, in the deep of our soul, we have the feeling that the world should be more than a mere combination of facts due to a mechanical equilibrium”.

From these statements, it would appear that science might provide a great leap forward should experimental research probe the underlying reality of existence. As Paul Brunton wrote, this reality was experienced by Nobel Laureate, Werner Karl Heisenberg.

“Without learning, studying or practising yoga, Heisenberg, famed nuclear physicist, formulator of the law of indeterminacy, unwittingly entered what is considered a high spiritual level to yogis, called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This periodically happened at the end of the deepest abstract thinking about his subject. Thoughts themselves ceased activity and he found himself in the "stillness of the void" wherein he developed an awareness of his existence as a spiritual being”.

In 1929 Heisenberg visited India to attend a conference on quantum mechanics. Probably that magic and mysterious country left a deep imprint on the soul of this German scientist,

which some time later, guided him to experience samadhi. Heisenberg died in 1976 at his home in Munich, a victim of cancer. Paul Brunton informs us that'

“When he was dying, Heisenberg said to von Weizsäcker, ‘It is very easy, I did not know this before’. In another moment he said, ‘I see now that physics is of no importance; that the world is an illusion’. He passed away peacefully”.

To understand the illusory nature of physical world represented for Heisenberg, the most defining achievement in his entire distinguished scientific career; an achievement even more meaningful than the Nobel prize. If it were possible that more men and women dedicated to science could experience the sublime samadhi, they would learn that the spiritual is fundamental in studying the Universe.

### **b). W. Heisenberg and the Kevala Samadhi**

Werner Heisenberg was one of the founders of quantum physics, which is the study of the dynamic laws that govern the microcosm. This theory and its association with respect to the ‘reality’ of physical world represented a great shock for Heisenberg. He had to accept that things are determined by how we measure them. In other words, it is necessary for an observer to interacting with a system in order for the system to acquire reality.

These statements are totally compatible with Emptiness (Buddhist) and Maya (Hindi) teachings, where the phenomenal kingdom lacks integrity since it is just a mental construct. Therefore, if there is no mind then there is no world. Albert Einstein disagreed with this interpretation because he always insisted that the Nature has its own reality independent of any observer. In 1939 Rabindranath Tagore talked to Einstein at New York and tried to explain to him that the world depends on the human factor; that the beauty and the truth are not independent of humanity. But Einstein never changed his deterministic perception of the Universe.

Now we would like to mention Heisenberg’s second shock:

In the Yoga International magazine (Vol. 3, No. 6, 1994), it was published that Prof. Heisenberg had a spontaneous experience of kevala samadhi. This was confirmed by Paul Brunton and Paul Cash. It is not surprising that Prof. C.F. von Weizsäcker (we may remember that this important German scientist had, in the 50’s decade, a deep inner experience during his visit to Ramanasramam at Tiruvannamalai) and Heisenberg had invited several yogis to Germany, (for example, Gopi Krishna,) who explained to them how to awake the kundalini shakti. In chapter 14, entitled “An experience in the Cosmic Consciousness” from Yogananda Paramahansa's book “Autobiography of a Yogi”, you can find a beautiful poem in which the mystical experience of Samadhi is described

The essential point is that in kevala samadhi, the mind is turned off and the physical world disappears along with its conception of space and time. The universe is perceived as an illusion without intrinsic reality. The ego is dissolved and reveals the Oneness of Creation and the existence of a Cosmic Mind. When somebody experiences samadhi at least once, a deep internal transformation takes place that annihilates all patterns and “reality” of the

world. Then, it is not difficult to imagine the impact that the great experience of kevala samadhi had on Heisenberg. Surely this experience reinforced his concept of 'reality' that was introduced in the 20<sup>th</sup> decade as a fundamental aspect of quantum physics.

Samadhi is a state which one describes in very personal terms, so we are now trying to locate writings in which Heisenberg narrated his own mystical experience. This is important if there is to be an establishment of a direct correspondence between science and spirituality.

National Polytechnic Institute, Mexico city