CHAPTER – VI
CONCLUSION

An almost exhaustive study of the past development of science brings out the idea of unity underlying the universe, something a superficial mind wedded to differentiation and disunity would find difficult to digest. It is to the credit of the discerning geniuses that this world view got acceptance of a generation with its mind fraught with determinism, disintegration and materialism. Naturally modern science’s holistic approach to things and events helped study the universe as a single and coherent system. If the West began familiarizing itself with this idea of underlying basic oneness very late, it was well embedded in oriental philosophies and science centuries ago. The Seers of India, in the very beginning of its civilization, realized this knowledge and preserved it in intuitive and symbolic language so that only the earnest and the worthy receive it.

A study of modern science in the light of Vedas and the Upanishads brings out the parallelism between science and eastern religions, especially the Hindu thought. Even the methodologies of understanding held by the two have something in common. Modern scientists developed new methods instead of the conventional to unravel the hidden mysteries of nature, most of them quite akin to those of ancient India’s mystical seers. Science developed a mystical and transcendental world view according to which the universe is a spiritual phenomenon. Replacing experiential evidence with experience of participation, science stood on the threshold of a new world marked with uncertainty and indeterminacy. Complementarities, uncertainties and superimpositions abounded the world of scientific thought. The quantum and bizarre nature of the world
made the scientists look beyond the physical towards the metaphysical, adding non local-causes to the local. Even the barrier between the real and supernatural appeared almost broken and matter was understood to be the result of invisible vibrations. The world one observes and experiences is a wave phenomenon with consciousness collapsing into particles. The wave nature and particle nature of the quantum objects are complementary; the wave nature is transcendental and the particle nature is immanent. The universe is both sthūla and sūkshma or gross and subtle in form as the both reflect in one’s consciousness. Planetary model of the atom with its particles in the nucleus and electrons moving at high speed and the fiery faggot band with its circular motion creating the appearance of a fire circle as referred in Gaudapada’s Māṇḍukya Kārika have been dealt with earlier. Thus both science and Upanishads come into condominium in their findings about how the visible universe evolves from the invisible, and how the speedy movement results in visibility and the resultant formation of matter. True the aim and method of enquiry followed by western science widely differ from that of the Indian seekers and to a good extent the Western scientist did not seem to accept the mystic world view of the Orient. It is interesting quote what Ken Wilber says:

Today we hear of the supposed relation between modern physics and Eastern mysticism. Bootstrap theory, Bell’s theorem, the implicate order, the holographic paradigm – all of this is supposed to prove (or disprove?) Eastern mysticism. In all essential respects it is simply the same theory with different characters. The pros and cons strut their waves, but what remains true and unchanged is simply that the issue itself is highly complex.¹
But there are also many according to whom the new scientific discoveries resemble what the seers of the orient had mystically experienced and recorded. True, Wilber’s remark that the problem is a complex one is well said, for it is not easy to find out identical elements in the two systems of thought but that both science and spirituality hold a holistic vision of the world can not be ruled out. It may also be noticed that though the findings of modern physics have some similarities with the spiritual teachings of the East the former has never touched the heights of the spiritual experience the latter had. Definitely parallelism between the two does not mean that both are one and the same. But even this parallelism can not be overlooked.

The both agree that there is a unity, and oneness everything sprouts from and returns to. The Upanishads and modern science speak about the ultimate unity and relativity. That the scientists with the vision of unity have the mindset and intuitive intellect of a mystic is an undeniable fact. Hence their going beyond the ken of ordinary perception in search of the quantum. The Big-Bang singularity, relativity, multiple world, string theory, quantum vacuum, unified field, boot strap, implicate order and many other findings of the philosopher scientists definitely come in agreement with the teachings of the lore, once ridiculed as unscientific and dogmatic by the material West. Thanks to these findings the once arrogant and immature science became matured and sublimated with spiritual touch. It almost came to have the touch of something divine or godly. It is not divinity or god of the ordinary Christian faith or the pantheistic Hinduism but the one that is Absolute or complete whole which is akin to the Brahma or the undifferentiated consciousness of the Upanishads of which individual consciousness is a fragmented reflection. It is here that science becomes philosophy or religion. To quote Amit Goswami: “...science is now mature; many feel that the science of matter, physics is seeing its final
fulfillment. So, many scientists are looking for an extension of traditional science to explain the subjective half of the world, consciousness, the self, spirituality and modern values”.

Both the disciplines reveal many parallel and some times similar views of thought. The Upanishads held an indeterminate and relative nature of the world with time and space only the constructs of mind. What is real and ultimate is Consciousness which in its transcendental aspect holds everything together, including the manifest world fraught with differences and diversity. In the undifferentiated consciousness, Upanishads say, thanks to the perfect equilibrium of all the attributes there is no subject-objects duality. Differentiated consciousness, according to modern physics and Upanishads, is one in which there is motion. The fire at the tip of the faggot band in circular motion gives the appearance of a circle of fire which is a probabilistic potential reality on the faggot. There are innumerable other probabilities too the manifestation of which depends on how the attributes express themselves. When the unified field of consciousness is disturbed and separation and domination of the guna or attributes occur, the resultant motion or vibration lead to the appearance of objects as distinct from the subject. The spanda or the vibration of the perfect tranquility characteristic of the Brahman or the undifferentiated consciousness occurs due to its own force (will) which the Upanishads call maya. As noted earlier experience of differences and dualities depends on the coherence of individual consciousness. The Upanishadic reference to samādhi (balanced intellect) and samsikta (coherence) are significant because the both lead to a state of total concentration or coherence of consciousness that does away the mind. When the mind ceases (amanibhava), all the dualities vanish and what remains is the non-duality or the ultimate unity which is pure light, suddhachaitanya. The lore thus explains this
with the example of triputi or the three petals – dhyāta or the seeker, dhyēya or the object sought and dhyāna or the process of seeking or meditation. The end result of the process is the final unity or the withering away of the triple aspects of meditation where the seeker, the sought and the process of seeking get united and what reminds is the true non-duality or Advaita. According to Upanishads the experienced world is only a relative function of awareness or the solid substance is only a pattern in the field of consciousness. Thus the real is the continuum and what we experience as real are the points at which our individual consciousness collapses the continuum and out of the infinite possibilities one is actualized. It would be interesting to look how Deepak Chopra explains this through the conversation of Savitri and Ramana, characters of his classic work, *Life After Death*.

He [Ramana] stood still and beckoned her to keep quiet. Savitri froze in place, and a chill passed over her skin. After a moment someone emerged from the dimness of the forest—a little girl no more than two years old, toddling toward them but not looking their way.

“Don’t!” Ramana warned, anticipating that Savitri would want to run and hold the baby.

The baby looked around blankly, then it crossed the path and disappeared into the woods again.

“Did you recognize her?” Ramana asked.

“No, how could I? Is she lost?” Savitri felt confused and disturbed by what she’d witnessed. Instead of answering her directly, Ramana said, “There are more. You are attracting them.” At that moment a second ghost appeared, this time a girl of four. Savitri was dumbfounded.
“Do you know that one?” he asked.

“It’s me!”

At that, the ghost peered her way for a moment before wandering away. “And the baby was also me?”

Ramana nodded. “Every former self you have left behind is a ghost. Your body is no longer the body of a child. Your thoughts, desires, fears and hopes have changed. It would be terrible to walk around with all your dead selves holding on. Let them go.”

Savitri could say nothing. One by one apparitions of herself appeared. She witnessed the girl of ten who sat by her mother’s side in the kitchen, the girl of twelve blushing to talk to a boy, the ardent young woman obsessed with Satyavan, her first love. The last ghost was the most startling, because it was like a mirror image, exactly her age and wearing the same shawl that Savitri had thrown on when she fled her hut.

“You see, even the self you had today is a ghost,” said, Ramana.

When this last apparition had faded back into the forest. Savitri said, “What do they have to teach me?”

“That death has been with you every moment of your life,” Ramana replied. “You have survived thousands of deaths every day as your old thoughts, your old cells, your old emotions, and even your old identity passed away. Every one is living in the afterlife right now. What is there to fear or doubt?”^3
At every moment the consciousness is collapsed to form a fragment which would last only till the next collapse of consciousness. As pointed out every thing in this world is relative. What is not relative is Brahman, the undifferentiated whole, the super subject without any object external to it. Brahman is the substratum and the external world is only a superimposition on it. As one gets more and more conscious of this truth he comes nearer to reality. This consciousness which is illumination makes the vision clear that one becomes consciousness itself. As Sankara points out, the senses, mind and intelligence (buddhi) engage in their respective activities in the light of consciousness inherent in the ātman, just as men work with the help of the light inherent in the sun.\(^4\) Objects exist relative to awareness and perception. What is existent may appear nonexistent as awareness and perception changes. The gradation of reality as prātibhāsika, vyāvahārika and pāramārthika, illusory, the worldly and the ultimate depends on the level of awareness attained. Science speaks of the nonlocal connection of events and things. Albert Einstein pointed to many unknown but knowable truths and the final and absolute truth. According to him “what is important is the force of this super-personal content and the depth of the conviction concerning its overpowering meaningfulness”.\(^5\) It is true that Bohr-Einstein controversy finally saw Bohr and his colleagues outdoing Einstein’s view of an objective world and establishing the existence of a subjectively created world of complimentarity. Every object or event is a part of the universal consciousness which intertwines them as the intricate patterns of the universal whole. Also through his theory of relativity Einstein left to the world of thought the question that if everything is relative is there no truth that stands beyond the world of relativities. In fact he inspired the scientists like Bohr whom he deemed a great thinker to get deep into many enigmas of nature. He spent his whole life, he wrote in his diary, in pursuit of the Absolute immutable truth which sustains the mutable and illusory universe
and imparts rhythm and order to it. Behind the seeming probabilities and chaos there is an order, regularity, a unity or wholesomeness which the scientists like Bohm considered implicate. According to Bohm reality is an unbroken whole which holds together the implicate order or the inner truth and the explicit order or the manifest world of space-time characterized by diversity. Universe was to him like a hologram, each part reflecting the entirety. The world emerges from an undivided flowing background of energy which in its different frequencies causes different patterns in manifestation. This whole movement which he calls ‘holo’ movement is illustrated with the analogy of a moving fluid with relatively constant stable patterns of movement. A stream flowing past a bridge produces vortices and stationary wave forms, each vortex or stationary wave form an abstraction of an ordered form of movement centered in a certain region of space but actually involving the whole fluid. What he saw was an enfoldment which holds the dialectics of manifestation and withdrawal. Bohm writes

   In the implicate order every thing is thus internally related to everything, every thing contains everything and only in the explicate order are things separate and relatively independent…Every body has many experiences of this implicate order. The most obvious one is ordinary consciousness, in which consciousness enfolds everything that you know or see?

Matter, Bohm says, is only a ripple in the vast sea of energy. Upanishads like Chhāndogya call this vast sea as ākāśa or the space everything comes from and recedes to. This vast sea of energy or space Upanishads speak as ākāśa which is Brahma itself, the alpha and omega of everything.

   To what does this world go back? ‘To space,’ said he.
   Verily, all things here arise out of space.
They disappear back into space, for space alone
is greater than these; space is the final goal."\(^7\)

Einstein too deemed space as the ultimate ground where according to quantum thinkers everything is interconnected. This all inclusive super-space points to the interconnectedness of all events and things in the universe. Modern physicists, though not directly accept the idea of an all inclusive Brahman, hint at an ultimate entity which is absolute and goes up to the discovery of an all inclusive consciousness which the Upanishads call Brahman. Every thing in this world is only a pattern in the field or space of consciousness. The observer-observed connection of modern science even holds a parallel to the seeker-sought relation as found in Vēḍānta. According to Wheeler’s theory of participatory universe the observer does not have separate existence from the observed, but becomes a part of the observed world. Hence the replacement of ‘observation’ with ‘participation’ because by ‘sitting out’ one can not know what is going on inside. Instead of experiment science points to the desirability of experience, for it requires one to be a part of the experimented world since participation which makes the observer a part of the observed world gives one the real experience. When the individual becomes a part of the universal he gets the real knowledge and becomes knowledge itself. This reminds one of the salt doll of an Indian parable that dived into the sea to fathom its depth and dissolved losing separate identity. Individual consciousness, to quote Vardhamana Mahavira, merges with the universal like a dewdrop falling into the heart of an infinite ocean. The Seers of the Upanishads, transcending the world of separation between the observer and the observed through their spiritual preparation, realized the oneness or unity which they intuitively experienced. It is true that science has travelled to the close proximity of Vedantic wisdom. As Capra says,
Modern physics, of course works in a very different framework and cannot go that far in the experience of the unity of all things but it has made a great step toward the world view of the Eastern mystics in atomic theory...It has come to see the universe as an interconnected web of physical and mental relations whose parts are defined only through their connections to the whole.\textsuperscript{3}

But to experience this unity, modern science has to go further, leaving its arrogance and claim of being the sole custodian of knowledge. It should incorporate all the paths to knowledge, expand and enrich the plane of wisdom. It is also interesting that the western science is now zeroing in on the study of consciousness of which the explicit inclusion according to the physicists like Wigner would be an essential aspect of the theories of matter likely to come up in future. This development, if materialized, would open new the horizon where western physics and eastern mysticism will revel in rendezvous. Such a harmony of science and spirituality can work wonders in the progress of culture. A philosophically sublimated science and a religion with scientific credibility put together can help human civilization advance to great extent.
End Notes.

3. Deepak Chopra, *Life After Death*, pp. 81-82