

**VEDANTA AS VED-ANANTA:  
A NEW UNFOLDING OF UNIVERSAL SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS (USC) \***

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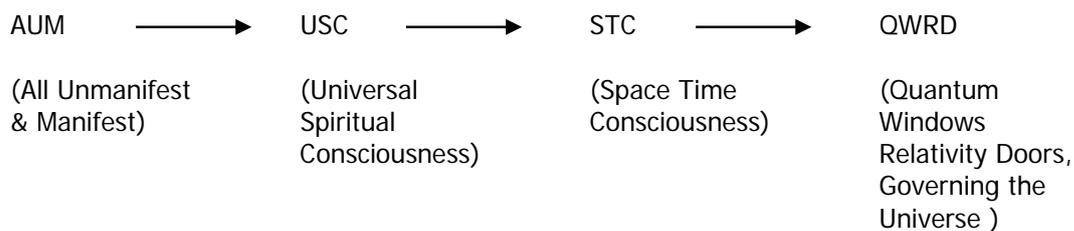
**Abstract**

This paper presents a discussion of Vedanta at philosophical level, its meaning and implications for contemporary discourse and practical application. The focus is on presenting the Vedantic thought as foundational premise for a new integration and synthesis of various religions as well as integration of science and spirituality. An understanding of this process of integration provides an approach to the study of motivation at human level. It is founded upon the symbiotic trend of science and spirituality and the confluence of philosophical thought from Western and Eastern sources, ancient and modern. To put Vedanta into practice, three approaches to solve managerial, organizational and social problems are suggested.

Vedanta is redefined, not merely as 'concluding part of Vedas', but as Ved-ananta as an all-inclusive envelope of spiritual and religious visions. The revelations from other religions in different historical and geographical contexts in their Advaita, Vishista -Advaita and Dwaita forms become part of Vedanta. This is the essence of 'New Age Vedanta' in the twenty first century.

**Einstein's Universe**

Einstein opened the 'relativity doors' and subsequent developments in physics led to the opening up of 'quantum windows'. Now it is increasingly recognized that this world is a house of God, with 'Quantum Windows & Relativity Doors'. While relativity doors draw our attention to spacetime, the quantum windows point us towards consciousness. Thus, in the concept of Space Time Consciousness (STC) the two get integrated. It may be indicated that spacetime consciousness originates from Universal Spiritual Consciousness (USC) which is essentially a manifestation of AUM (All Unmanifest and Manifest). Thus, we have the following links in the unfolding of AUM:



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## **Architectural Symbolism**

'Quantum Windows Relativity Doors' are variously represented in the temples indicating our deeper connectivity with AUM, USC and STC. Accordingly the architecture of temples represents this deeper connectivity of 'physics' and 'metaphysics'. Since symbol ॐ represents space, time and consciousness it is also a symbol of 'Quantum Windows Relativity Doors'. In symbol ॐ, there are three components, viz. ॐ, ॐ, and ॐ. ॐ represents space, ॐ represents time and their 'curved' nature, ॐ represents consciousness. Hence, ॐ represents an integration of Space Time Consciousness.

## **Physics and Philosophy**

USC (Universal Spiritual Consciousness) has been assigned different names, forms and symbols depending upon the historical context of its partial or full revelation or manifestation. While Einstein and many quantum physicists took us closer to 'Quantum Windows Relativity Doors', David Bohm took us a step closer to AUM through his concept of implicate and explicate order, which is inherent in AUM (All Unmanifest and Manifest) in relation to unmanifest and manifest aspects of the 'absolute'. Thus, David Bohm joins the rank of those seers and sages, who 'heard' the primeval word 'aum', that is considered as a 'universal symbol of consciousness' and a connecting link between microcosm and macrocosm; it is sometimes indicated by the phrase, 'God is One and One is God', which also implies 'equality of Gods' and 'equality of human beings'. For example, equality of gods can be represented through RAGA equation: Ram = Allah = God = Ananta (R = A = G = A).

When Shankara met Shiva in Shudra form, this confrontation created the enlightenment in Shankara. It led to Sankara's realization of Shivohum Shivohum, which could also mean Shankara - aham, Shankara - aham or Shankaram, Shankaram indicating Shankara and Shiva are same.

## **Shankara Re-Visited**

If Shankara was explaining Vedanta in the twenty first century, he might be telling us in the following Vedantic RAGA (Rama Allah God Ananta):

Ram Allah God Ananta,  
This is the essence of Vedanta,  
Ved-ananta, Ved-ananta,  
Ram Allah God Ananta,  
This is the voice of Vedanta ...

Extending this idea further by taking liberty with Shankara's great hymn, we can have the following hymn reflecting the same spirit:

Na manas, na buddhi, na ahamkara,  
Mein to hoon sirf ek aumkara,  
Bahti hai jese, Ganga ki dhara,  
Mein to hoon sirf ek aumkara ...

Shankara was a great synthesizer. In twenty first century he would give us a new Vedantic echo that may be somewhat as follows:

Sab dharmon ka uski hi taraf ko ishara hai,  
Ram bhi hamara, aur Rahim bhi hamara hai,  
Buddha hamara, Mahavir hamara hai, sab dharmon ka ...

This is because all religions are manifestations of the same Universal Spiritual Consciousness resonating with many similar sounds. For example, Shankara might simply add, the first letter of Sanskrit (A) or first letter of English (A) to the Christian meditation mantra, ma, ra, na, tha making it another holy syllable 'Amaranatha'. It is not inconceivable that this Christian meditation mantra was derived from 'Amarnath' as it is believed that Jesus had visited Kashmir. Shankara's philosophy leads us to many such integrative insights that are very much needed by humanity today.

### **The Indian Aphorism (Kim Tvam & Kaun Tvam)**

During ancient times, Vedic sages asked the question: Kim-tvam which can also be stated as 'Kaun-tvam' to indicate the connectivity of sound with Quantum view of matter. Einstein revealed to us through his famous equation  $E = mc^2$ , a worldview wherein it is clearly implied that 'energy is matter and matter is energy'. Vedic sages have similarly observed that behind energy and matter, there is consciousness. This leads us to the C E M insight of  $C \cong E \cong M$ , Consciousness manifesting itself as Energy and Energy manifesting itself as Matter. Popular way of expressing this connectivity has been to refer to human beings as a combination of Body, Mind and Spirit. Quantum physics has been taking us in the direction of mind and spirit.

The aphorism, kaun tvam, derived from kim tvam emerges out of self-analysis, from consciousness 'spirit' level rather than from matter ('body') level. A Vedantic response to Kaun-tvam might be as follows:

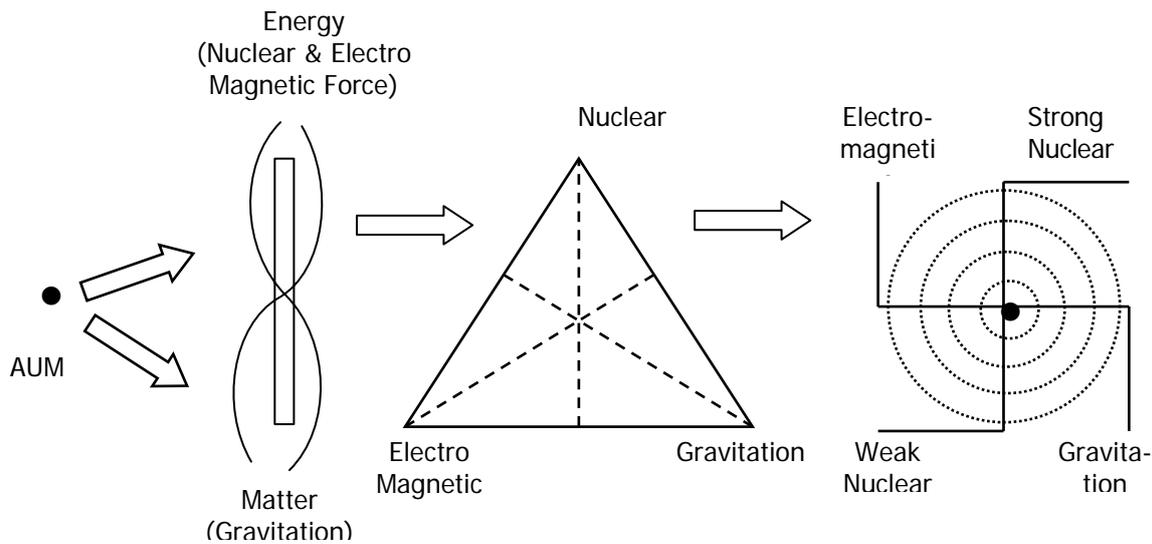
Tu hai kaun Hari, kaun Hari, kaun Hari, kaun,  
Mein hoon kaun Hari, kaun Hari, kaun Hari, kaun,  
Tu hai Om Hari, Om Hari, Om Hari, Om,  
Mein hoon Om Hari, Om Hari, Om Hari, Om ...

This response can as well be considered as a dialogue between a human being and God, wherein human being refers to God as Hari and God refers to human being as Hari. It captures the essence of Shankara and the Shudra / Shiva dialogue.

### **The AUM Model**

When we substitute Hari by different names and forms of God from different religions, regions and thought systems, we arrive at the Vedantic integration of the self and SELF (self-realisation) through linkage with Universal Spiritual Consciousness and AUM (All Unmanifest & Manifest). This is the essence of Shankara's thought and philosophy; it provides a message for the twenty first century for a new integration and convergence of religions as well as a framework for a new dialogue among religions.

The 'AUM' model also helps us understand the linkages between fundamental forces. Initially 'AUM' manifested itself in energy and double helix of matter arising from the unity of matter and energy. Corresponding to matter, there was emergence of gravitational force and corresponding to energy there was nuclear and electromaganic force, which subsequently found a separation. Nuclear force found its subsequent 'splitting' in strong and weak forms and thus emerged the nature's swastika of four fundamental forces. This unfolding of natural forces is represented in Fig.1.



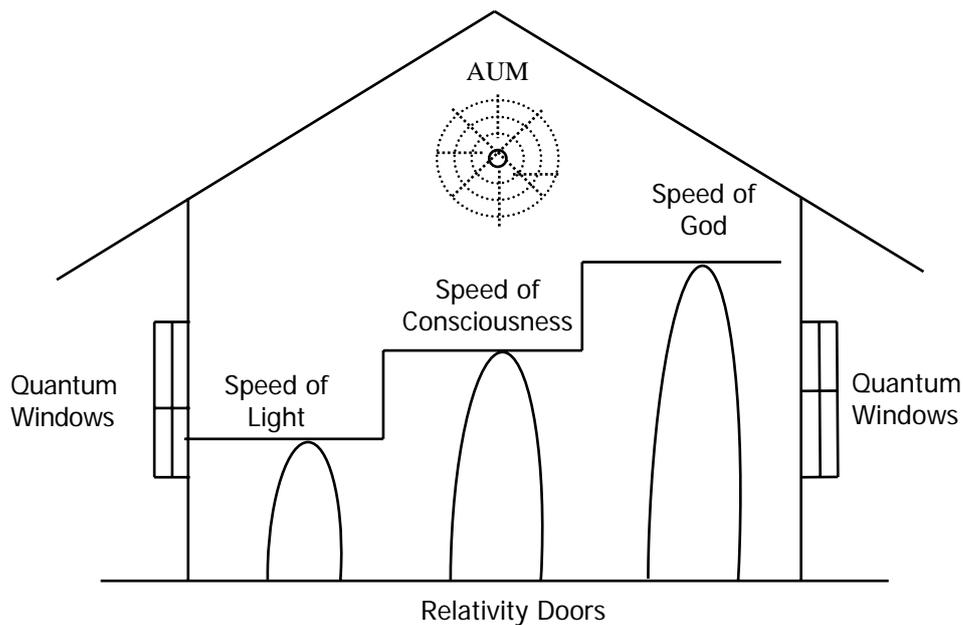
**Fig.1: From 'AUM' to Nature's Swastika – An Unfolding Process**

According to Indian mythology about the cosmos, there are 33 crore 'gods and goddesses' as manifestations of one God. This could imply that there are 33 crore subatomic particles representing many variations of the one, 'God-particle' representing the Universal Spiritual Consciousness (USC). Science has discovered a few hundred subatomic particles, and has provided its own terminology. However, it has a long way to go to discover all 33 crore particles and study their behaviour and name them.

### Three Doors to Universal Consciousness

The word space contains in itself the notion of time indicated by word 'pace', contained within it. This is an interesting coincidence. Space arises from consciousness and pace of space is indicative of flow of time. In fact, we can identify three speeds viz. speed of light, speed of consciousness and speed of grace often referred to as speed of God (Grace of divinity). While in physical reality, speed of light may have a limit, in spiritual worldview, speed of consciousness and speed of grace are well accepted notions. While scientists are yet to recognize the synergy of physical and spiritual forces, spiritual masters often talk about the speed of consciousness and speed of grace or cosmic force field.

Thus, there are three doors in the house of 'quantum windows relativity doors' through which we can experience cosmic realities viz. door of light, door of consciousness and door of grace. These doors can also be referred to as Einstein door, Vivekananda door and Aurobindo door, because of emphasis of Einstein on speed of light, Vivekananda on speed of consciousness and Aurobindo on speed of grace through the descent of 'supermind'. After entering the house, one can look at reality either through the 'quantum windows' or 'relativity doors', thereby leading to different descriptions of reality. Hence, the two theories could be complimentary as they are describing different parts of reality. It may be indicated that while 'quantum windows' take us in the direction of consciousness, 'relativity doors' take us towards spacetime curvatures. Hence, quantum view of the world is more closer to spirituality and relativity view is more closer to 'matter' view of the world. For a total view of reality, we need to look through both the perspectives. Fig.2 presents this framework of a unified perspective of reality.



**Fig.2: Viewing Reality Through Quantum Windows & Relativity Doors**

There is a common genetic link of various life forms just like many manifestations of 'God particle'. This link is through 'Gene of Divinity' (GOD). In common parlance, human beings are referred to having 'God-potential' and 'totipotentiality' of God. Vivekananda said, "human being is potentially divine, the purpose of one's life is to manifest his / her divine potential". Aurobindo talks about 'life-divine'. These are pointers to life initially originating from a single cell of GOD (Gene of Divinity) and then manifesting itself in various forms through splitting and multiplication of Gods and Goddesses (Genes of Divinity). Some put this number at 33 crores! This indicates the varieties of life forms that originated from single cell of GOD (Gene of Divinity). This is the essence of the 'Vedic vision of life' reflected through the phrase, 'Life is Divine'.

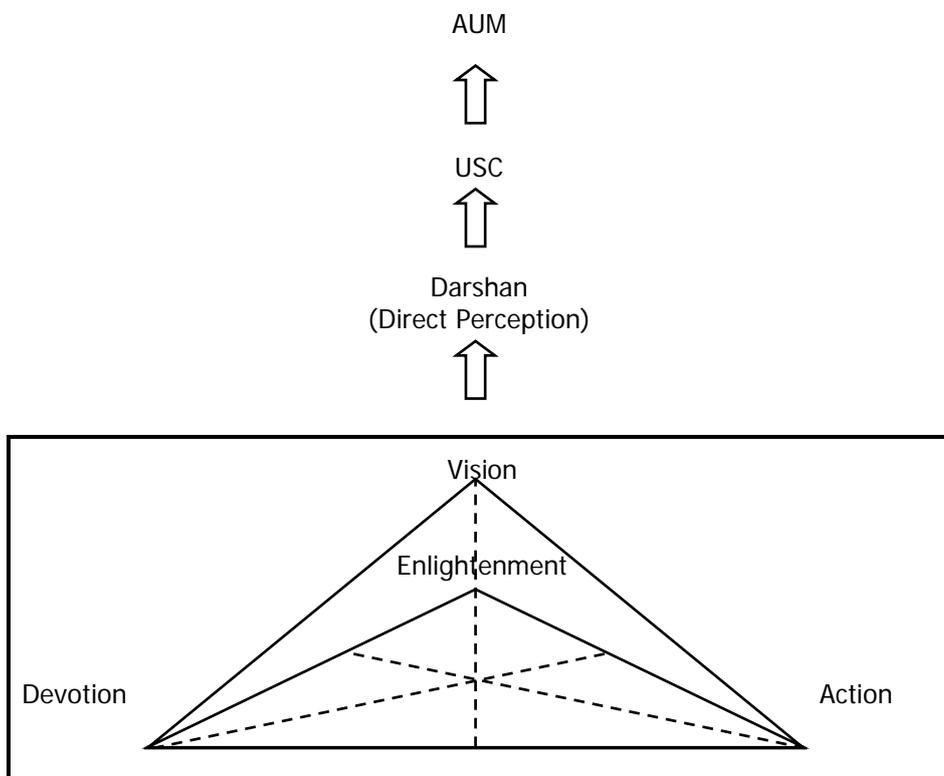
### **VEDA Model for Integrating Various Schools of Spiritual Thought**

We now turn to a method of using the above concepts to a synthesis of spiritual thought from different theologies. USC (Universal Spiritual Consciousness) provides us a foundational premise for integration and synthesis of various religions through the acronym RAGA (Rama Allah God Ananta). We can now achieve an integration of various schools of Indian thought through the 'VEDA' model, wherein 'VEDA' implies Vision, Enlightenment, Devotion and Action. 'VEDA' signifies the manifestation of USC through the routes of Vision, Enlightenment, Devotion and Action. All books, regardless of their historical and geographical context, provide the idea that vision, enlightenment, devotion and action are all part of Veda. Thus, Bible could be considered as 'Christian Veda' and Koran as 'Muslim Veda' and in a broader sense they could be viewed as part of an envelope of spirituality and religion under the generic term Ved-ananta with continuity in different historical and geographical contexts. This is an interpretation of Vedanta that has been echoed repeatedly by Vivekananda, Gandhi, A P J Abdul Kalam and many others from the Indian subcontinent.

There are three schools of Indian spiritual thought viz. Advaita, Vishista Advaita and Dwaita. The 'VEDA' model integrates these schools of thought. The three schools constitute the 'BGK' (Bhakti Gyan Karma) i.e. Bijak - seed of the Indian thought. While 'Advaita' represents the Gyan marg, Vishistha-Advaita represents the Bhakti marg and Dwaita represents the Karma marg. Both Bhakti and Karma marg are moderated by Gyan. It is not too fanciful to state that G (Gyan) placed between B (Bhakti) and K (karma) suggests this role. Similar integrative essence is also communicated through 'VEDA', wherein the integration of Enlightenment (Gyan), Devotion (Bhakti) and Action (Karma) leads us to Vision of Ananta. Thus, Advaita, Vishista-Advaita and Dwaita find an integration in the very word 'VEDA'. This is the essence of 'New Age Vedanta' i.e. Ved-ananta or 'Eternal Knowledge'.

This concept of Vedanta serves as an umbrella concept for integration of not only various Indian schools of thought but also for integration of various religions. Fig.3 presents this integrative concept indicating the linkage between Universal Spiritual Consciousness (USC) and AUM (All Unmanifest and Manifest) through vision that leads to Direct Perception (Darshan) of USC and AUM. This diagram indicates three complementary paths to the same destination. Thus, Dwaita / Action / Karma

can directly lead to Vision and thereby to USC and AUM. Vishista Advaita / Devotion / Bhakti can directly lead to Vision and thereby to USC and AUM. Advaita / Enlightenment / Gyan can lead directly to Vision and thereby to USC and AUM. Further, a combination of Enlightenment, Devotion and Action also leads to Vision and thereby to USC and AUM. Since different religions may follow different paths, they may be Dwaitic, Vishista Advaitic or Advaitic in nature. In Gita, we find a synthesis of Bhakti, Gyan and Karma. Hence, it has been considered as 'Bijak' (BGK) of Indian spiritual thought.



**Fig.3: Integrating Advaita, Vishista Advaita and Dwaita Schools of Thought Through 'VEDA' Model**

### **Vedanta In Practice: Division, D-Vision and Divine Vision**

There are essentially three approaches to problem solving and decision making viz. Division, D-Vision and Divine Vision. In Division approach, an attempt is made to solve a problem through analysis into sub-divisions. It is typically a 'scientific' and analytical approach to problem solving. In contrast, D-Vision approach is a holistic approach to problem solving. It is like looking at the horizon or rainbow and viewing the total picture in front of us. When in an empty space, a statue of God is installed or a divine symbol is inscribed, the space is no more an empty space but acquires a new meaning and it becomes sacred. For example, when a rainbow covers a temple, the view becomes divine and could create enlightenment. Hence, in Divine Vision approach a problem is solved through 'super-intuition' because we realize the deeper underlying connectivity of everything with everything. In Division approach there is a 'distance' between the subject and object. In D-Vision, subject and object are close and in Divine-Vision, there is fusion between subject and object.

While a scientist largely uses the Division approach, an artist uses the D-Vision approach and a Rishi [an intuitive scholar-mystic] uses Divine approach to look at the same problem. Division approach is typically left brain oriented, D-Vision is right brain oriented, while Divine-Vision is 'mind and consciousness' oriented. In scientific approach water is H<sub>2</sub>O or 'Matter' and Ganga is merely flowing water. In Divine vision approach, water is not merely H<sub>2</sub>O but has a life giving meaning and is sacred with its connectivity with Universal Spiritual Consciousness. Thus, H<sub>2</sub>O acquires the meaning of Happiness, Happiness and Oneness. This is what people feel, when they take a dip in a holy river. Depending upon the nature of problem, all the three approaches are required to find better solutions to the problems humanity is facing today. It may be indicated that Division approach is dualistic as revealed by mind and matter dichotomy. D-Vision approach is 'omnijective' (a combination of subjective and objective) and Divine Vision approach is integrative, synthetic and all-inclusive spirituality. The three approaches to problem solving broadly correspond to Dwaita, Vishista Advaita and Advaita worldviews and provide us a typology of knowledge viz. scientific or dualistic, holistic and advaitic. In Divine Vision or Advaita approach, matter, mind and consciousness are integrated together with its link with Universal Spiritual Consciousness. This linkage has been communicated through the well known phrase, Sat-Chit-Ananda, wherein life is viewed as integration of Sat ('Matter'/'Existence'), Chit ('Mind'/'Psyche') and Ananda ('Consciousness'/'Bliss').

Scientists and rationalists through Division approach have focussed on matter, while Rishis and others including intellectuals who have attained self-realization have viewed life through D-Vision and Divine-Vision leading to an integrative view of matter, mind and consciousness. Hence, scientists and rationalists are generally considered as dualists or 'Dwaitic thinkers'.

The three approaches to problem solving and decision making could also be viewed in terms of 'Reason to Vision' spectrum or 'Reason to Revelation' spectrum wherein Division approach reflects the 'Reason' based approach, D-Vision reflects intuition and wisdom based approaches and Divine-Vision reflects 'super-intuition' / revelation or cosmic - vision approach. In fact, reason, intuition and revelation constitute the three steps of knowledge creation in consonance with Dwaita, Vishista Advaita and Advaita paths. They are also illustrative of the stages of human self-development from pure self-interest to transformational leadership and transcendental leadership.

We can see the application of these approaches in our day to day life in national, organizational and social contexts. Today, religions largely follow the division approach. Hence, there are conflicts arising from divided-vision because division approach leads to divided-vision of nations and world. Many times, social scientists also tend to follow 'scientific' or Division approach to problem solving. Hence, recommended solutions lead to more divisions and divided visions. Most 'isms' are rooted in Division approach to life, hence they create conflicts in society instead of promoting harmony. The contemporary need is to shift towards D-Vision and Divine Vision approaches to develop integrative ideas, metaphors and symbols. This can be provided by Vedanta. Thus, Vedanta can be used as a practical tool for solving problems. This was also the essence of Vivekananda's concept of 'Practical Vedanta'.

### **Eternal Relevance**

In spite of changes in society, production systems and technologies, there are certain fundamental elements of knowledge that have eternal relevance. Vedanta deals with 'self' and 'SELF' and their connectivity between a human being, nature and cosmos. It deals with the evolution of consciousness and its model of human being is one of infinite potentiality of 'man'. It argues in favour of evolution of consciousness from ego-man (I am ego) to superb man (I am thought) to spiritual man (I am spirit) to cosmic man / divine man (Shivohum, Shivohum, I am aum, You are aum). Its starting point being AUM (All Unmanifest & Manifest), it has many eternal ideas. Hence, new definition of Vedanta as Ved-ananta i.e. eternal knowledge.

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