

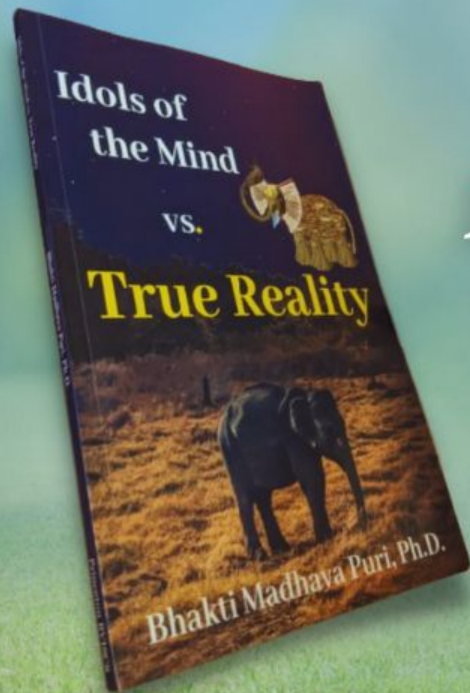


BHAKTI VEDANTA INSTITUTE
of Spiritual Culture and Science

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, USA



OSPREYHUB
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

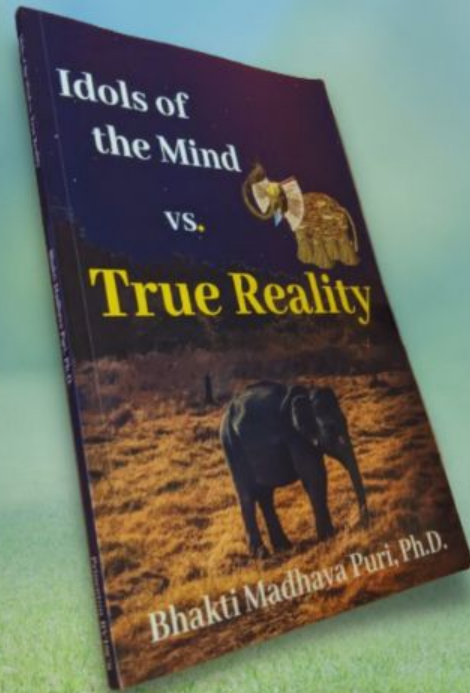


Idols of the Mind vs. True Reality

(by Dr. B Madhava Puri, Princeton Bhakti Vedanta Institute)

An Introduction to the Complementarity of
Science, Philosophy, & Religion

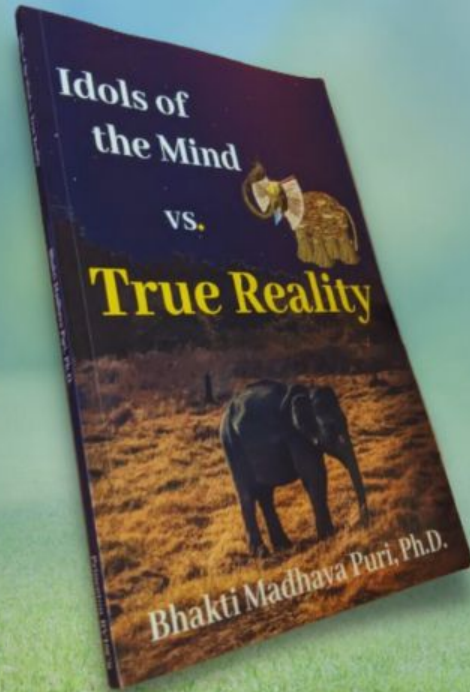
Chapter 2: Idols of the Mind
vs. True Reality (part 2)



“The title of this book comes from Sir Francis Bacon (where human concepts are thought to be objectively true) and it synthesises a Vedantic approach with that of Hegel grounded in the primacy of the idea, Spirit and Consciousness. On the basis that there is no equivalence between organisms and machines, the author criticises the attribution of metaphysical qualities to inanimate robots as a serious category error: life and consciousness do not derive ultimately from matter. Interestingly, Nobel laureate and emeritus Honorary Member George Wald was persuaded by this approach on encountering Vedantic philosophy and switched his views accordingly to assert that mind had always been present in evolution. [...] This book makes a sophisticated and significant contribution to an emerging science of consciousness.”

::David Lorimer

Programme Director of the Scientific and Medical Network
(Full book review published in Paradigm Explorer - 137 p 65)



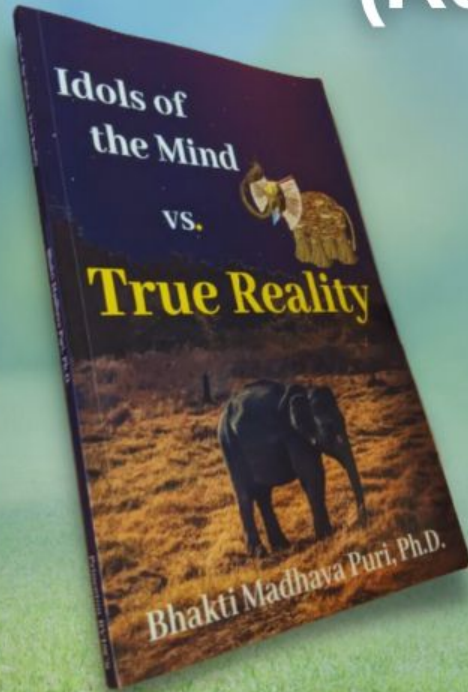
“Readers looking for a bridge between ancient Hindu philosophy and its Western counterpart will appreciate the general nature of this text. [...] This book serves as a useful synopsis of the main arguments for looking beyond materialist science toward a more holistic worldview. Although some readers will find the pace and breadth of Dr. Puri’s arguments disorienting, others will appreciate its comprehensiveness and straightforward presentation. In any case, the message is an important one, as materialist philosophy continues to wreak havoc on social relationships and the environment around the world.”

::Jennifer Lyke, PhD

Professor of Psychology at Stockton University
Science of Life Club Faculty Advisor

(Review) Chapter 1: Logic of Life

Emphasizes the teleological view of nature and life through the philosophies of Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, and G.W.F. Hegel



Aristotle
384–322 BC



Kant
1724–1804

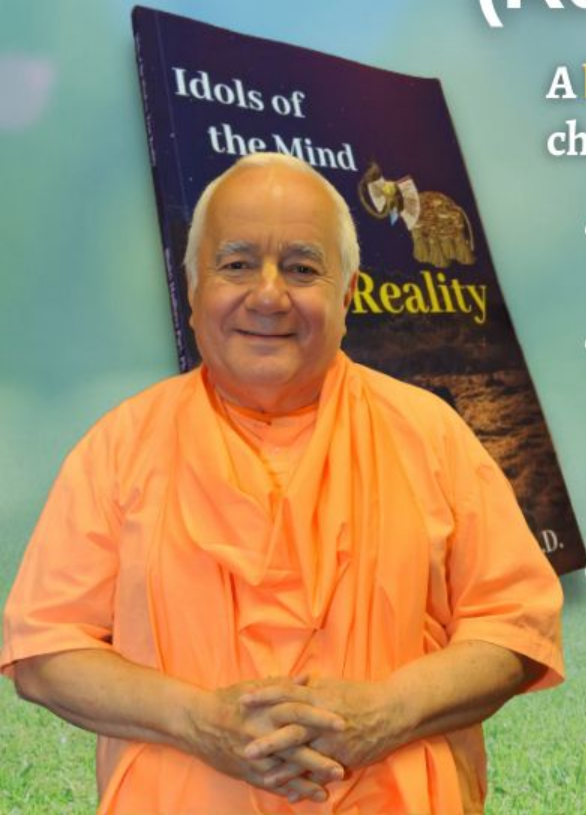


Hegel
1770–1831

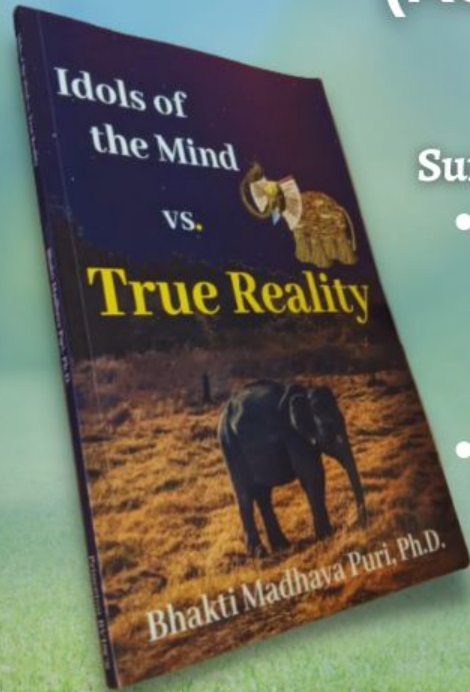
(Review) Chapter 1: Logic of Life

A **book** as a metaphor for the completeness of the mechanical, chemical, and biological aspects of a **living entity**:

- (**Mechanical**) an externally unified aggregate of paper, ink, and glue where there's no inner relation among parts
- (**Chemical**) an aggregate of alphabetical patterns, frequency of combined letters and words where parts have some inner affinity to connect based on sentence structure and the language spoken
- (**Biological**) the intention, purpose, or message of the author that is expressed through the written words on the page
 - only this level is the complete Concept of the book, which includes yet is beyond the lower levels of understanding



(Review) Chapter 2: Idols of the Mind vs. True Reality , Pt 1



Summary of main topics:

- The theistic inspiration underpinning modern science
 - Newton's "‘Lord God’ [Pantokrator], or ‘Universal Ruler’"
 - Intellectual humility
 - Axioms of modern science — the intelligibility of nature
- Distinguishing between models and truth
 - Heisenberg's discernment that science is an explanation of humanity's experience of nature, not nature in itself
 - Warning against confusing a map (model) for the terrain (truth)

While **Chapter 1** addressed the complementarity of *science and philosophy*, **Chapter 2** establishes the relevance of *religion* to science and philosophy

CHAPTER 2 : IDOLS OF THE MIND VS. TRUE REALITY PT. 2

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations



René Descartes
1596-1650

Cogito, ergo sum “I think, therefore, I am.”

- This claims that thought is the product of an “I”



G.W.F. Hegel
1770-1831

“[T]hought is only true in proportion as it sinks itself in the facts; and in point of form it is no private act of the subject.” Science of Logic §23

- This suggests that thought is beyond the “I”

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations



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1596-1650

Cogito, ergo sum “I think, therefore, I am.”

- This claims that thought is the product of an “I”
- I → Thought → Being/Existence

“‘I think’ puts the all-important power of thinking in the ‘I.’ Not only that, it also establishes the absolute being of the I. However, if we try to determine how it is that we perform this amazing activity of thinking, we draw a blank. If I don’t know how to do it, then the certainty that I do it should at least seem dubitable.”

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations



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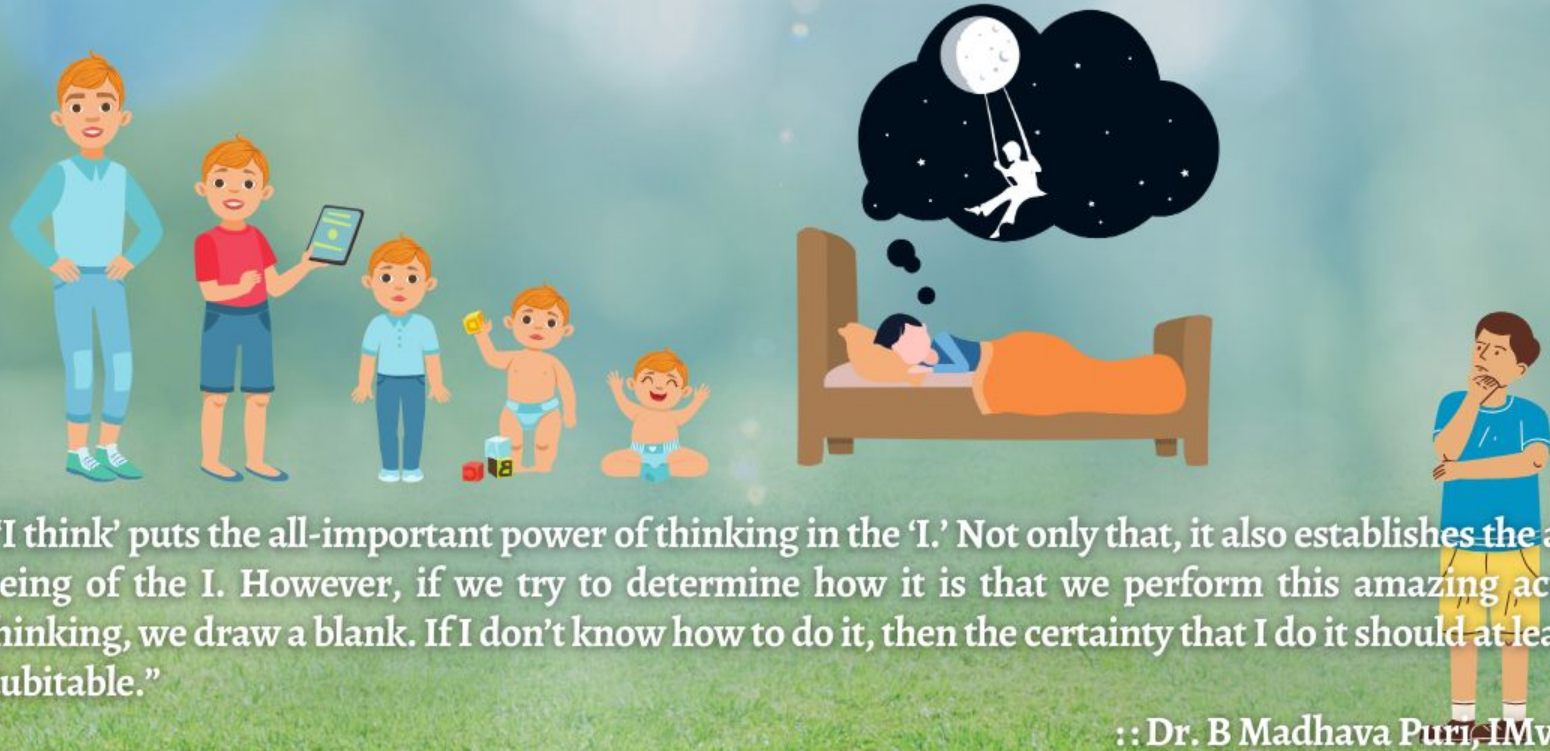
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:: Dr. B Madhava Puri, IMvTR, p 36

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The dilemma of self-centered thinking

- “I” refers to oneself as different and separate from something or someone else
- “I think” means thought is understood as private within one’s own mind
- This causes an individual to think of themselves as separate and isolated from the rest of reality, such that they can have their own private thoughts about the external world
- A mood of superiority arises when one believes that they can think whatever they want about reality without consequences
- “I” gives rise to “mine,” and people claim possession of whatever they’re able to
- But when two people want the same thing and can’t share or compromise, violence emerges

Since self-centered thinking is self-destructive, it becomes necessary to contextualize the self as a part or participant in something beyond itself

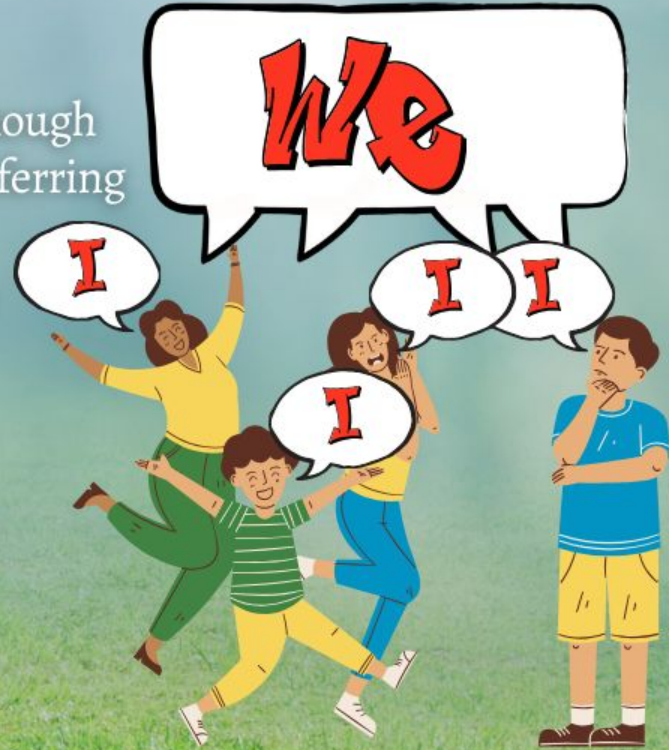
This is not an artificial imposition, but unfolds naturally through careful contemplation of what “I” really implies



The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The I that is We and We that is I

- Everyone refers to themselves as “I,” so, even though one means themselves by “I,” they’re actually referring to everyone who calls themselves “I”
 - “I” turns out to have a universal aspect to it, not just an individual



The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The I that is We and We that is I

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 - “I” turns out to have a universal aspect to it, not just an individual
 - Nuances to “I” and “We” interrelationship:
 - As conscious individuals, the collective is represented internally in our awareness and not just externally
 - The collective has shaped us as an individual in many ways



The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

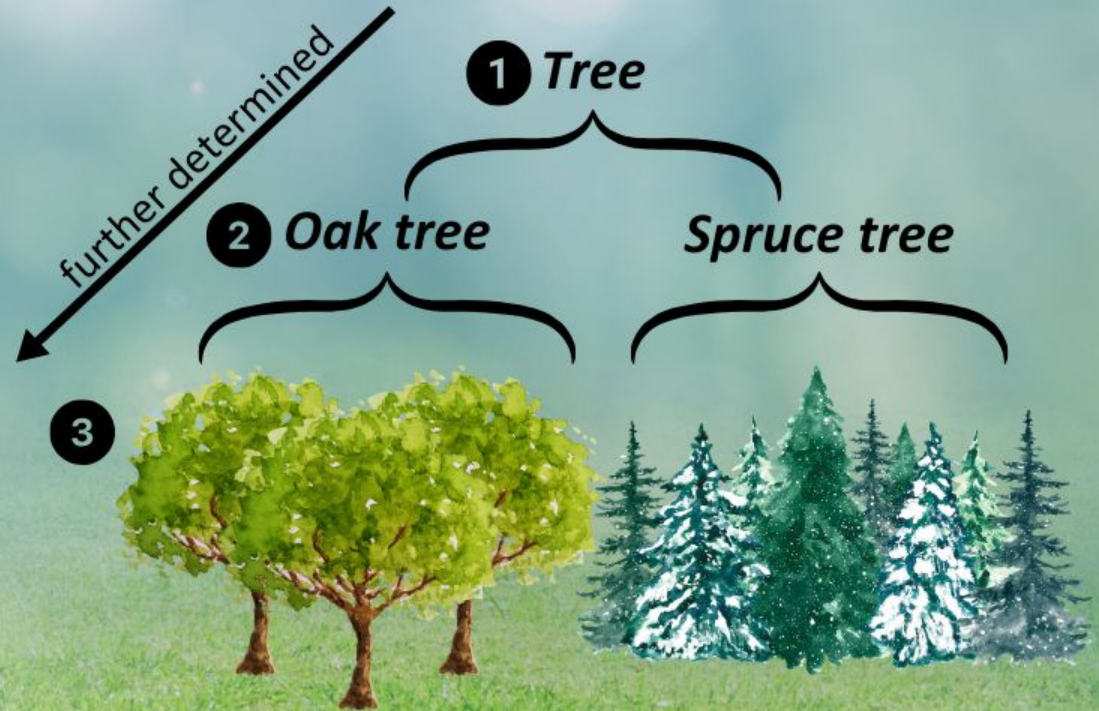
The I that is We and We that is I

- The universal is not arbitrary or impotent, it possesses the potency of the individual yet surpasses it
- The fundamental logical structure of every concept is triadic:
 - Universal-Particular-Singular (Genus-Species-Specimen)
 - Ex:/ We, tree, fruit, animal



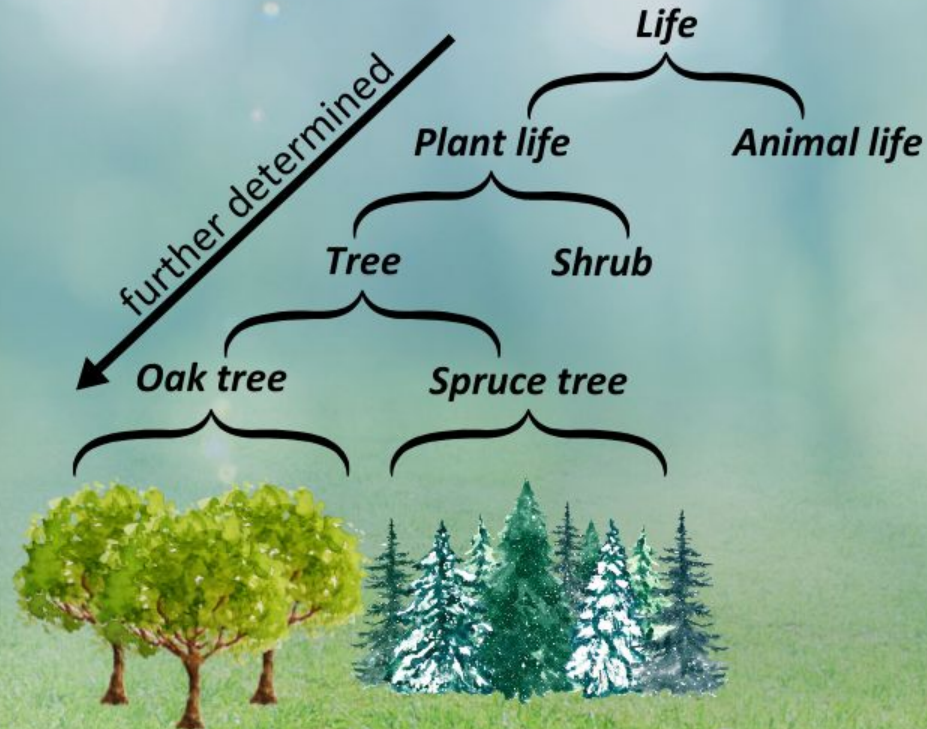
The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

1. Universal (Genus)
2. Particular (Species)
3. Singular (Specimen)



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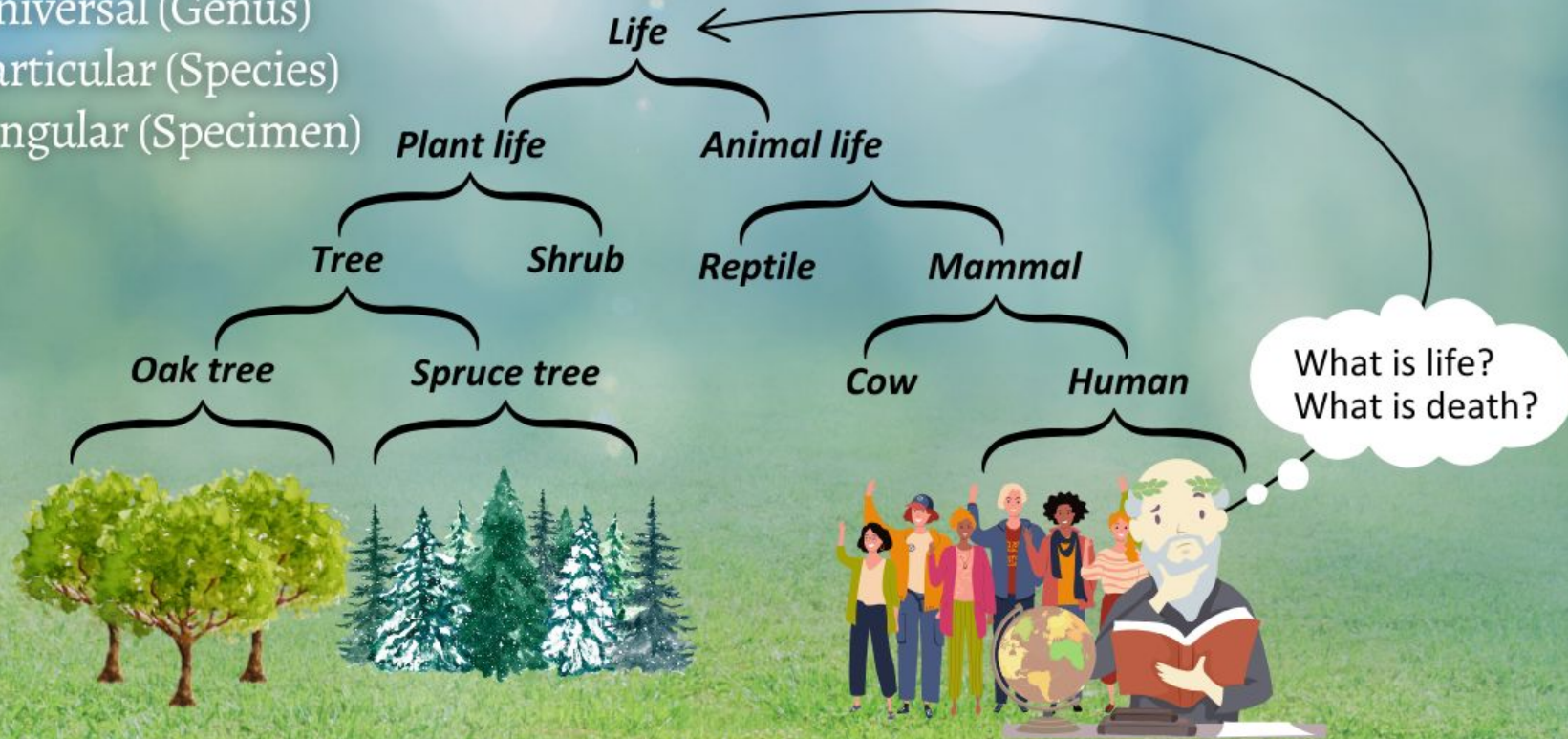
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- There is life beyond death

The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

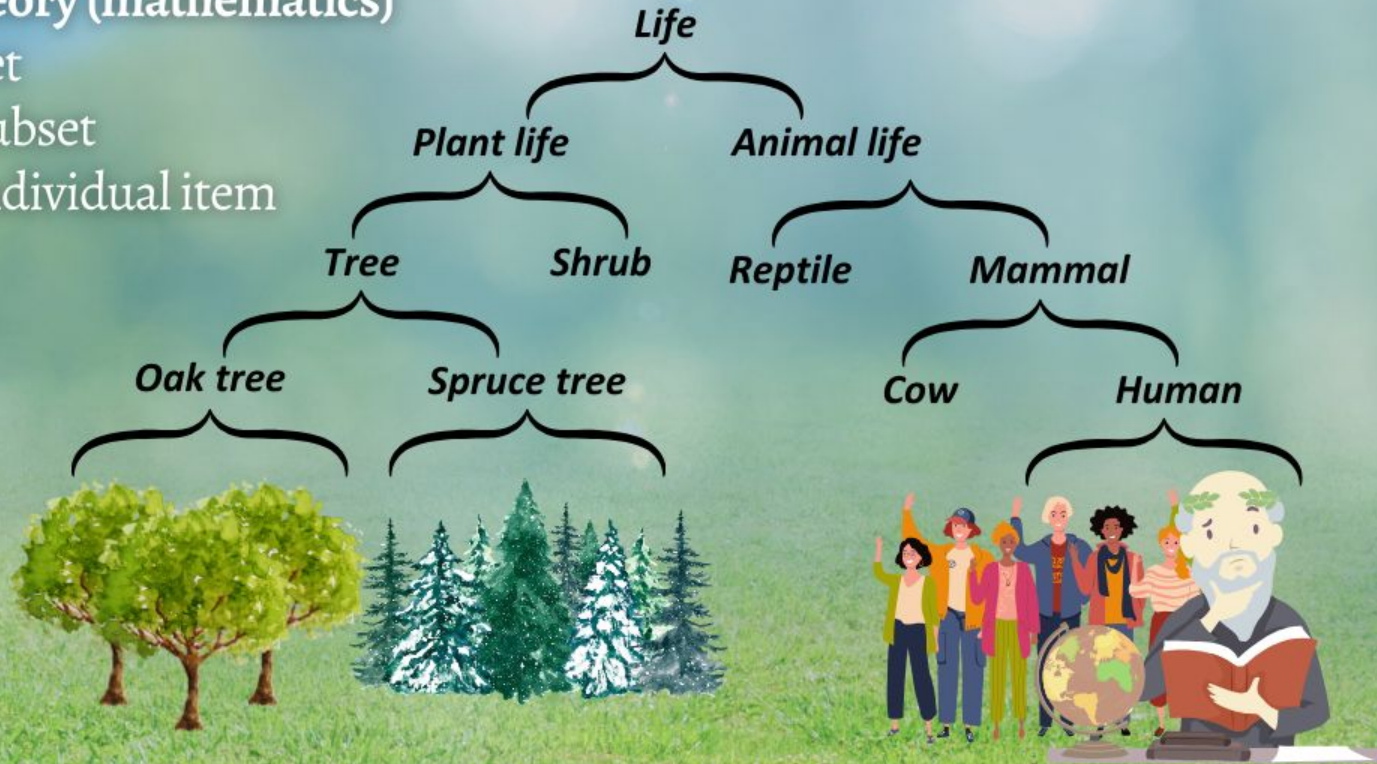
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The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

Set theory (mathematics)

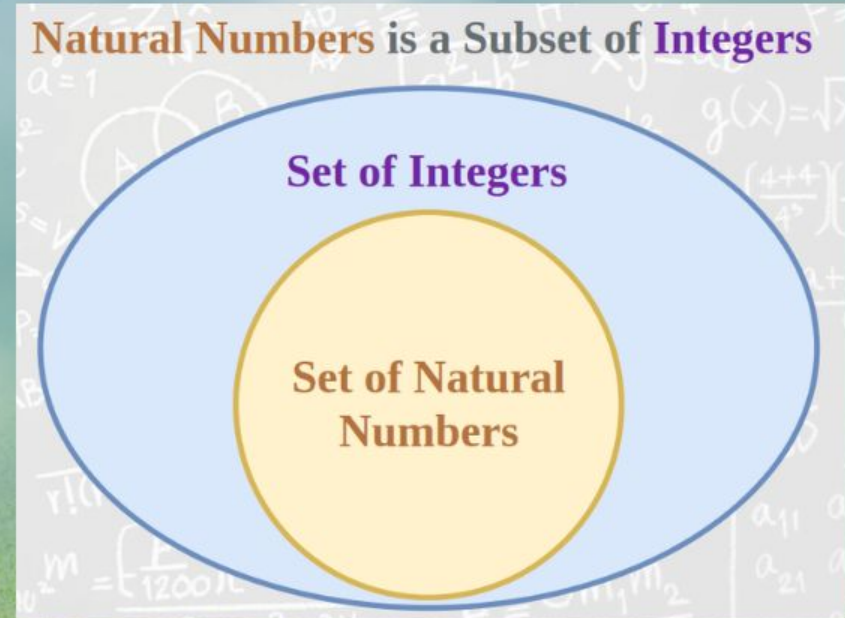
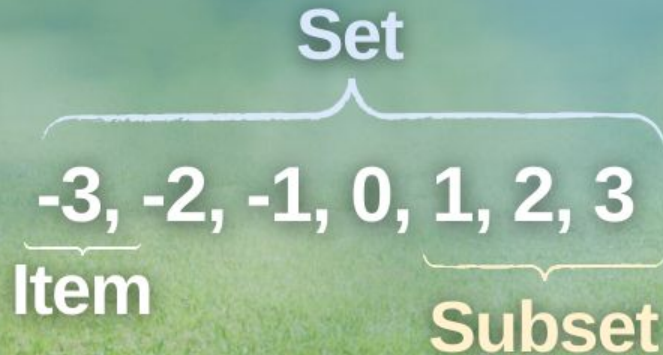
- Set
- Subset
- Individual item



The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

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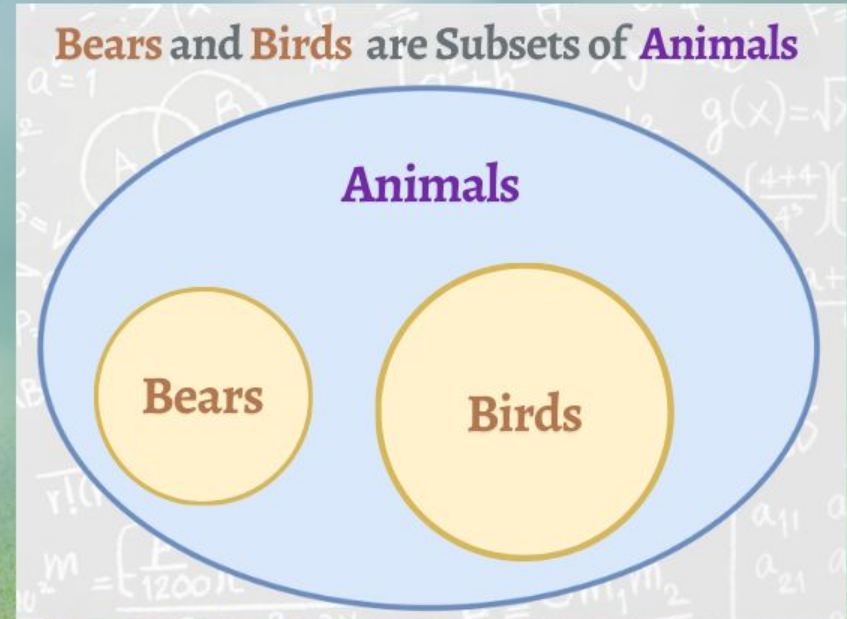
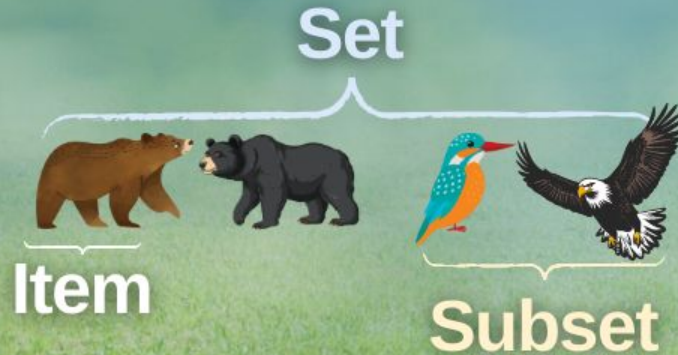
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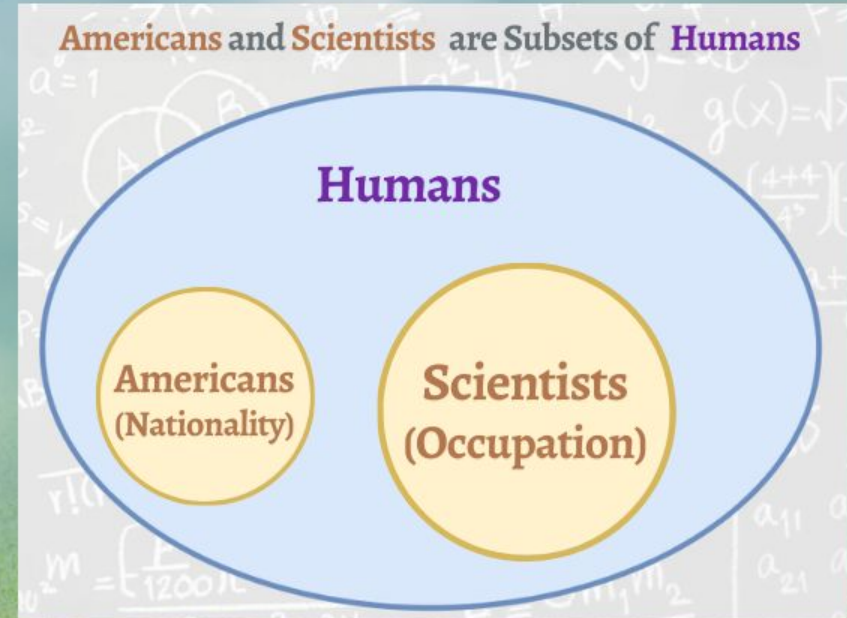
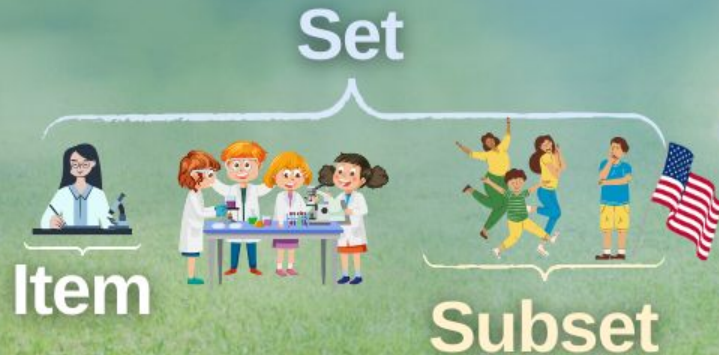
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The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

Set theory (mathematics)

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The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The I as self-consciousness

- Deeper comprehension of “I” is that it is self-referential, it takes oneself as an object of thought
 - Animals act as individual selves, but the extent to which they know themselves as a self is doubtful



The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

The I as self-consciousness

- It logically follows that the Universal I (We) i.e. the Universal Self also possesses this property of self-consciousness (items/subsets are in the set)
 - The Universal Self is not just an aggregate of individuals, but is a whole unto Itself, it is the set within which subsets of individuals exist and derive their properties



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How does this self-consciousness practically manifest in collectives like teams, governments, and organisms?

- There's a central intelligence that organizes and maintains the collective (for the well-being of the whole and not just a part)



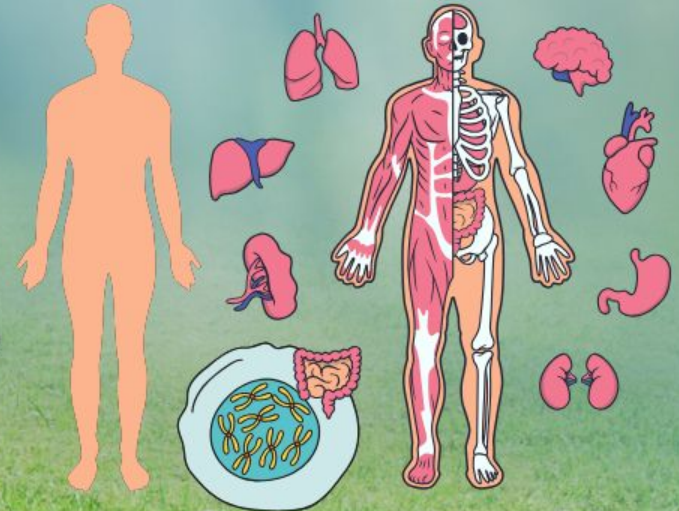
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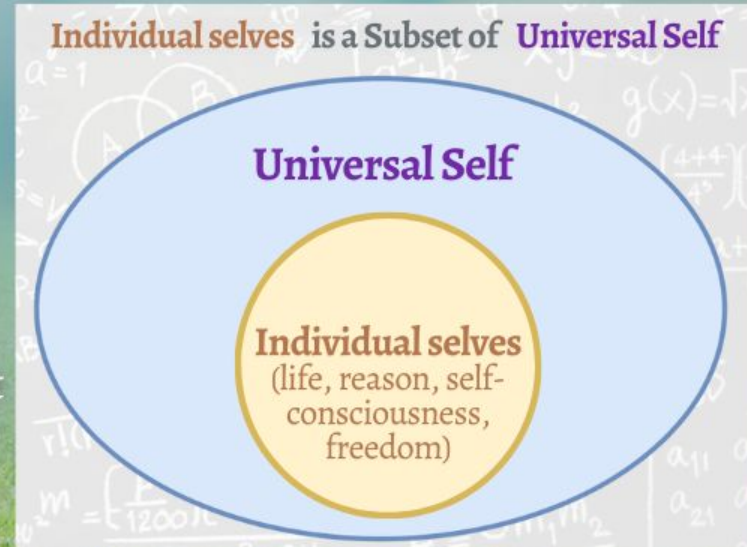


The theistic development of conceptualizing whole-part relations

Theistic conclusion

- All the qualities that we “possess” are derived from the reality of which we are part or participant
- The Universal Self as living, reasonable, self-conscious, and Absolutely free, is the Idea of God

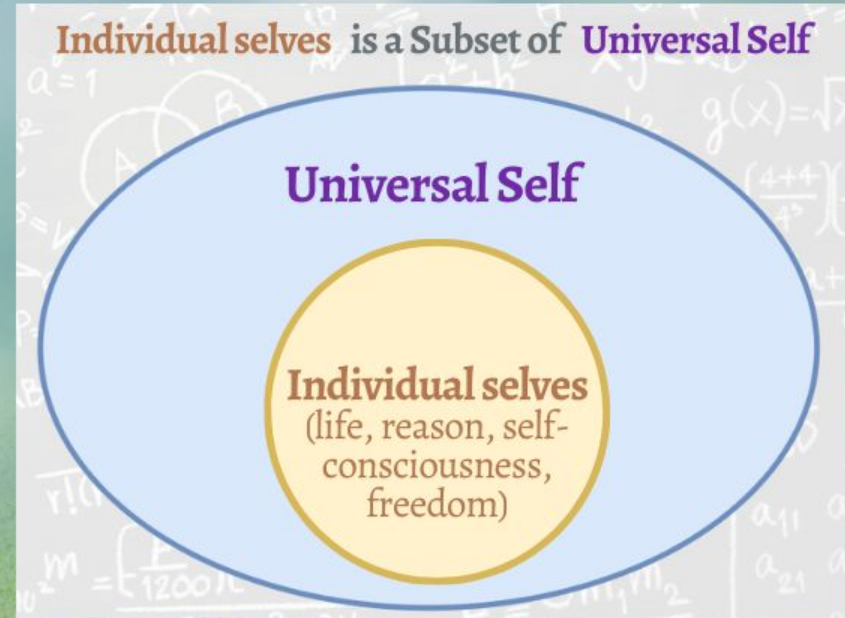
As the living cells in bodies exist for the sake of the living organism as a whole, all individual selves exist for and serve functions of the Organic Whole, the Universal Self that is God



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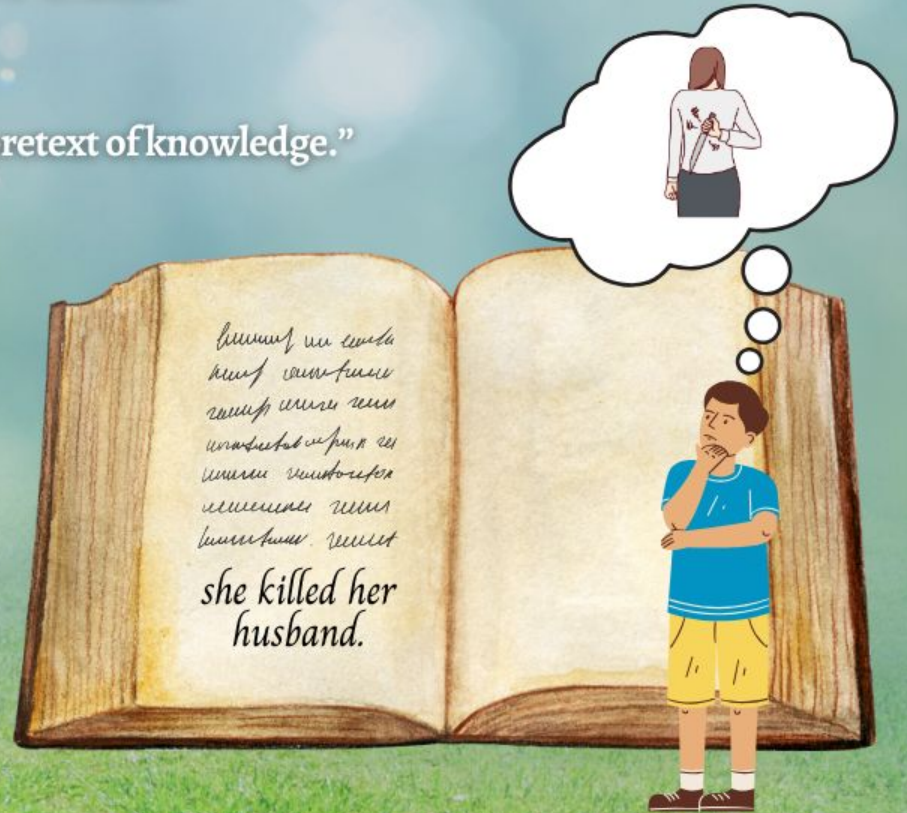
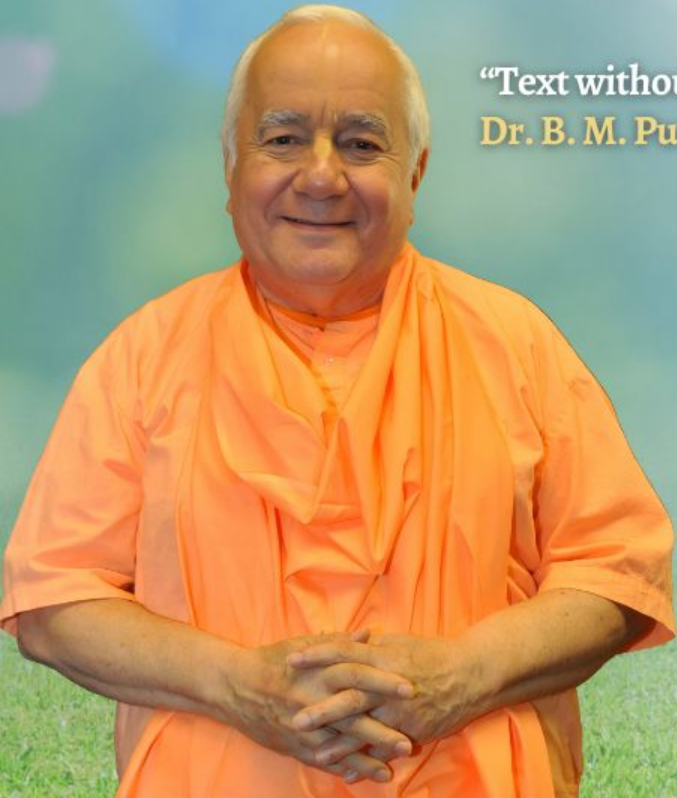
CHAPTER 2 : IDOLS OF THE MIND VS. TRUE REALITY PT. 2

Comprehending that the truth is the whole

Comprehending that the truth is the whole

“Text without context is a pretext of knowledge.”

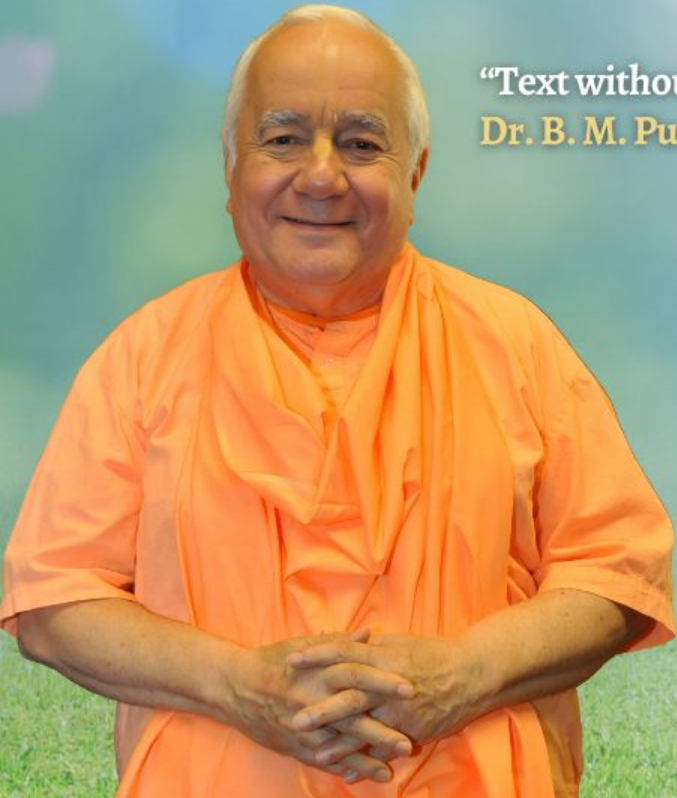
Dr. B. M. Puri



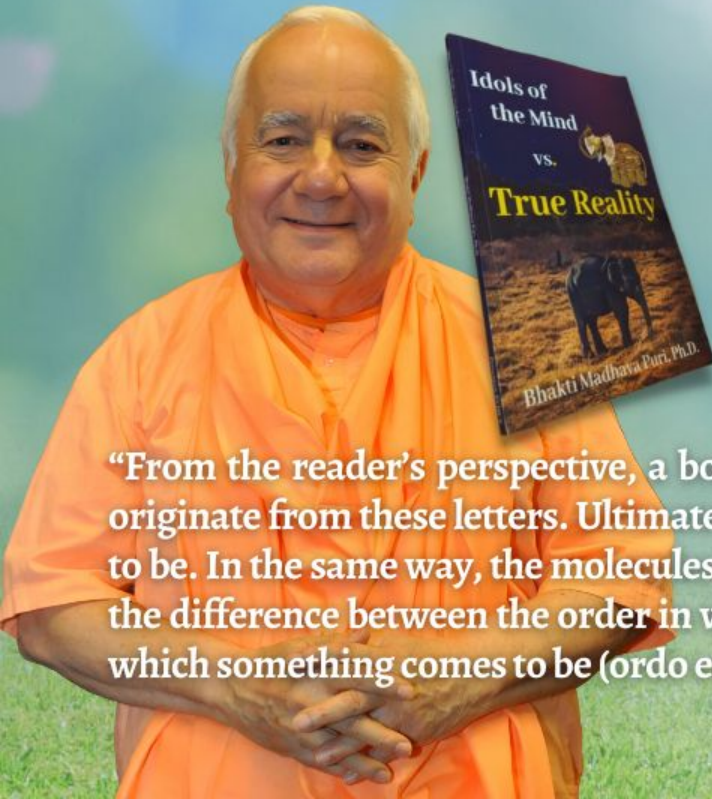
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Comprehending that the truth is the whole



Ordo cognoscendi

- experienced reality / being
- *that* something is (immediate appearance)

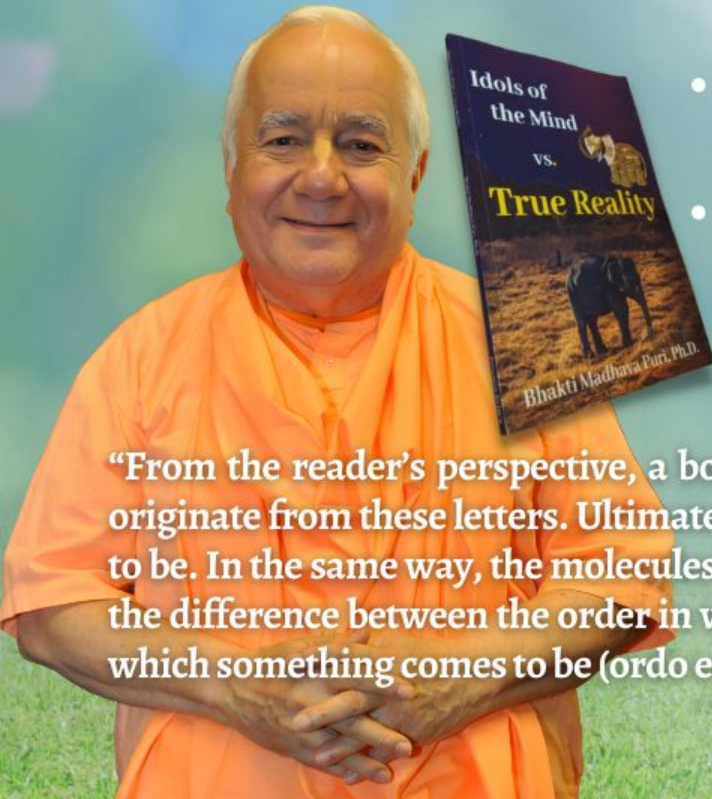
Ordo essendi

- conceptual reality / essence
- *what* something is (mediated context)

“From the reader’s perspective, a book is composed of alphabetical letters; but the book itself did not originate from these letters. Ultimately it is from the ideas of the author that the letters of the book come to be. In the same way, the molecules of a biological organism are the result, not the origin of life. This is the difference between the order in which we come to know things (ordo cognoscendi) and the order in which something comes to be (ordo essendi).”

Dr. B. M. Puri

Comprehending that the truth is the whole

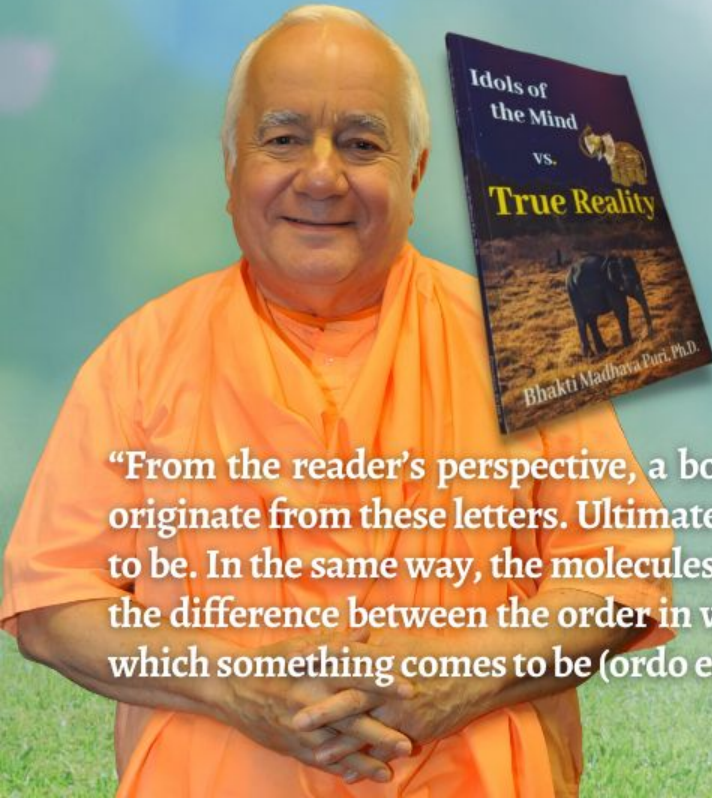


- Without proper context, text (a description of any phenomena) is pretext (incomplete and potentially misleading)
- Being-for, that for the sake of which something exists, is its proper context
 - this type of purpose-oriented (teleological approach) restores all four aspects of Aristotelian causality (material, efficient, formal, and final)

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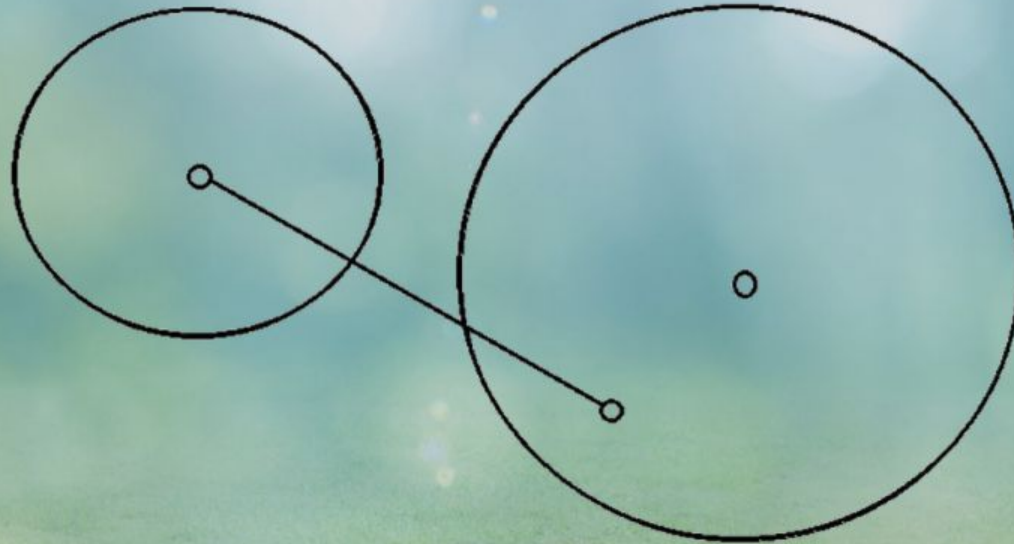


- Just as the molecules of an organism are a result of the development of the organism (which is a reciprocal whole-part relationship), *the individual “I” is also a result* of a dynamic relationship between itself and the Universal Self

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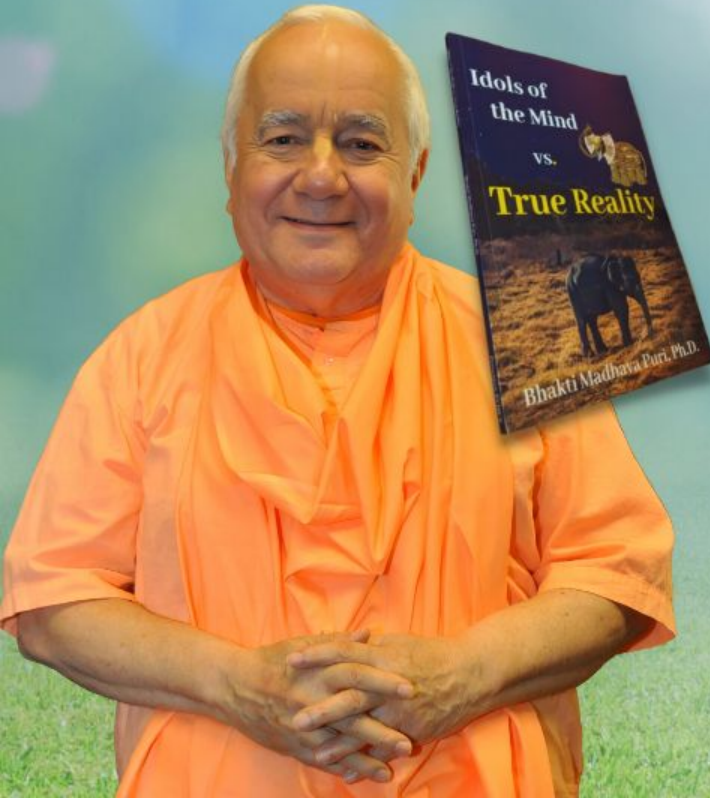
Comprehending that the truth is the whole



Ego centric
False ego

Theo centric
True Reality

Comprehending that the truth is the whole



- Scientists want to study objects and their relationship to one another, but not to the person talking about them i.e. the person for whom they're objects of description (the scientist/observer)
- Modern science is largely a pretext because it hasn't properly integrated the purposeful and consciousness-based context of phenomena
- The purpose of our study is to help develop science beyond this through philosophical and religious insights