

## Article

# Introduction to The Relational-Matrix Model of Reality

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### ABSTRACT

In this series of articles, we will show that reality as a whole can be consistently accounted for only if we understand that the nature of the singular existence from which reality extends through the process of repetitive and progressive self-relation isn't other than consciousness itself. Thus, we will demonstrate that consciousness doesn't come into existence at some later stage in the evolution of reality, but rather *that the evolution of existence isn't other than the evolution of consciousness* and that experiential reality itself is what comes into existence at a certain stage in the evolution of consciousness-existence. In other words, we will show that consciousness isn't a product of the machinations of physical reality but, on the contrary, that physical reality, as we experience it to exist, is itself a product of consciousness, albeit consciousness existing in relation to itself.

**Key Words:** reality, singular existence, consciousness, self-relation, evolution, relational-matrix model.

*[M]atrix 2. that within which, or within and from which something originates, takes form, or develops. (Webster's Unabridged Dictionary)*

In 1859, Charles Darwin published a book titled "On the Origin of Species." In that book, Darwin proposed a theory of natural selection or "survival of the fittest" to explain how organisms evolve into different species. This work you're now reading is a sort of cosmic version of Darwin's treatise, and could have been titled "On the Origin of Reality," inasmuch as *its purpose is to present a theory that explains how existence evolves into reality*. In Darwin's theory of natural selection, the mechanism underlying organic evolution is *mutation*. In the theory presented in this book, the mechanism underlying existential evolution is *self-relation*.

Some people are curious about the nature of their surroundings, while others are not. One attitude is ultimately no better or worse than the other; each just leads to different activities. Darwin was no doubt a curious person. I, too, am one of the curious people. Among other things, I'd like to know where I am and how I got here. It would also be nice to know just what "I" really is.

Through the efforts of modern science, it's become apparent that we're on a planet in a solar system that resides in a galaxy, which itself resides in a Universe full of such galaxies. Science tells us that the stuff which resides in this universe—e.g., the planets, the stars, our own bodies—

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is composed of energy in the form of matter. Together, all of this energy and matter is called, collectively, physical reality.

For the past hundred years or so, physicists have been trying to develop a *unified field theory*, a theory that would show how all the different forms of energy arise as variations of a single underlying energy or field. In this way, physicists are seeking to account for the whole of physical reality within the unifying context of a single underlying physical reality. So far, they haven't been successful.

Even if they were successful, such a theory wouldn't account for everything known to exist in the universe, for the universe also contains the intangible, non-physical realities we call awareness and consciousness.

In order to satisfy my curiosity, what I wanted wasn't a unified field theory, not a way of explaining only the physical aspects of existence, but rather, what I wanted was a *unified reality theory*, a way of explaining both the physical and nonphysical aspects of reality within a unifying context, as the manifestations of a single underlying reality. Being a do-it-yourselfer, I took it upon myself to develop such a theory. This work is the result of that effort.

The context within which this unified reality theory is developed is existence in the largest possible sense. In our day-to-day lives, while we encounter countless realities, both physical and nonphysical, all of these realities occur within the context of existence. That is, there are different realities, but what all realities share in common is that they exist. Existence is the common denominator, and so it's the starting point from which the unified reality theory is developed.

Thus, this work is titled *Unified Reality Theory* because within it I present a model of reality that describes reality as being the manifestation of a singular or unitary absolute existence which has consciousness as an attribute that's intrinsic to its being. It's subtitled *The Evolution Of Existence Into Experience* because this unified model of reality is developed by describing how that absolute existence evolves from a state of undifferentiated consciousness into a differentiated state that is our awareness of experiential reality.

### *The puzzle*

Constructing a unified model of reality is to some degree analogous to assembling a picture puzzle. The first thing we generally do when beginning to work on a puzzle is get all the pieces out of the box and laid on the table. We then orient all the pieces face up so that we can use the bit of the image on each piece to help connect it to all the other pieces. Next, we usually put together the outer rim of the puzzle first, so as to define the boundaries and provide context for the inner construction. We can then begin to build from the rim inward, or some inner portions may come together easily because their connecting pattern is quite distinct. Eventually, a unified and cohesive picture emerges as we link the individual pieces together into an interconnected whole.

The sequence of events in assembling a picture puzzle may vary from person to person; yet there remain basic steps we must take if we're to eventually come to the point where we've completed the picture. Thus, in order to complete the picture, we must first accept that the disconnected pieces in the box represent different somethings which have the potential to come together as a whole. We recognize this potential because we understand that at one time all the pieces existed as a whole which was then cut up, thereby creating the now-separate pieces. Recognizing that all the pieces existed previously in a state of unity allows us to feel comfortable that our effort of reconnecting the pieces will eventually result in their assembly into a completed picture.

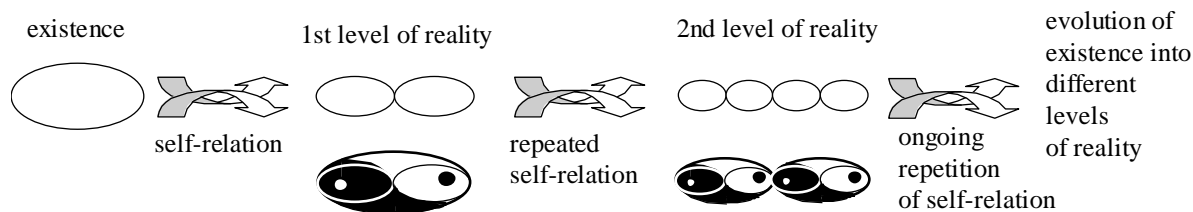
Likewise, if we're to undertake the task of constructing a unified model of reality, we must begin with an assumption and an acceptance that the different pieces of reality we have to work with did at one time, in some way, exist in a state of undivided wholeness. Unless we make this assumption at the outset—namely, that what we experience as the apparently separate pieces of reality have the potential to come together in the form of an interconnected, unified whole—then there's really no point in our taking the pieces out of the box in the first place.

### *The process of existential self-relation*

According to the unified model of reality presented in this work, the underlying process by which existence has evolved into what we experience as the seemingly separate pieces of reality is really quite simple. That process involves existence repetitively and progressively forming relationships with itself, analogous in a limited way to the repeated and progressive twisting of a rubber band upon itself.

A rubber band, as it exists whole and untwisted, represents absolute existence, i.e., existence prior to having formed any relationships with itself. Now, if we take a rubber band and twist it once upon itself, we cause it to form a relationship with itself, and in so doing, we've created a level of rubber-band reality. Likewise, when existence forms relationships with itself, what's created are levels of reality. *Reality is what existence becomes when it forms relationships with itself.* Thus, reality equals existential self-relation—i.e., reality equals existence in relation to itself.

The first twist of the rubber band creates the first relationship of the rubber band to itself. The first twist causes the rubber band to form two relative halves or poles. This first twist is analogous to the first relationship existence forms with itself, creating the first level of existential self-relation or first level of reality. This first level of existential self-relation contains the fundamental relationship that's the basis of all other relationships existence forms with itself. This relationship, this duality, is implicit in all existential relationships and levels of reality that follow.



**Figure I-1** The fundamental relationship that existence forms with itself to create reality is represented by the *T'ai-chi T'u* (or yin/yang diagram). Existence evolves into what we ultimately experience as reality as this fundamental relationship is repeated endlessly, creating different levels of reality composed of progressive levels of existential self-relation.

The rubber band, no matter how twisted it becomes, remains whole, while simultaneously becoming something in relation to itself, something different that extends and arises from the whole, composed of relationships that the whole forms with itself. The twisted rubber band is still the rubber band, but once it's twisted, it's that and something else as well. Likewise, existence, having formed a relationship with itself, is still existence, but it's that and something else as well, the something else being reality.

The more the rubber band is twisted, the more relationships it forms with itself; and the more relationships it forms with itself, the more differentiated it becomes. Yet no matter how twisted the rubber band becomes, it remains always what it is. When existence forms relationships with itself to become reality, the outcome is the same: The more relationships existence forms with itself, the more differentiated it becomes, creating different levels of reality. Yet existence always remains whole, always remains what it is.

It needs to be made clear at this point that existence is not, in its absolute state, a physical reality that can be twisted upon itself like a rubber band. The twisting of the rubber band is used as an *analogy* to illustrate the abstract concept of existential self-relation. However, existence can form relationships with itself, and one result of those relationships is the creation of our experience of physical reality. That is, physical reality is existence, for there's nothing else; however, physical reality is existence that has evolved into what we experience as physical reality by forming relationships with itself.

Thus, existence becomes reality through progressive self-relation. What you're experiencing now as reality is a relational level of existence, a particular type of existential relationship built upon and resting upon many prior levels of existential self-relation. We are, as we are now, existence that has become very twisted upon itself. This isn't a bad thing, nor is it a good thing; it's just what is. More specifically, it's what is, as it is, in relation to itself.

### *The stages of existential self-relation*

This process of existential evolution through repetitive and progressive self-relation will be described as occurring through four different stages, steps, or levels, as outlined in **figure I**.

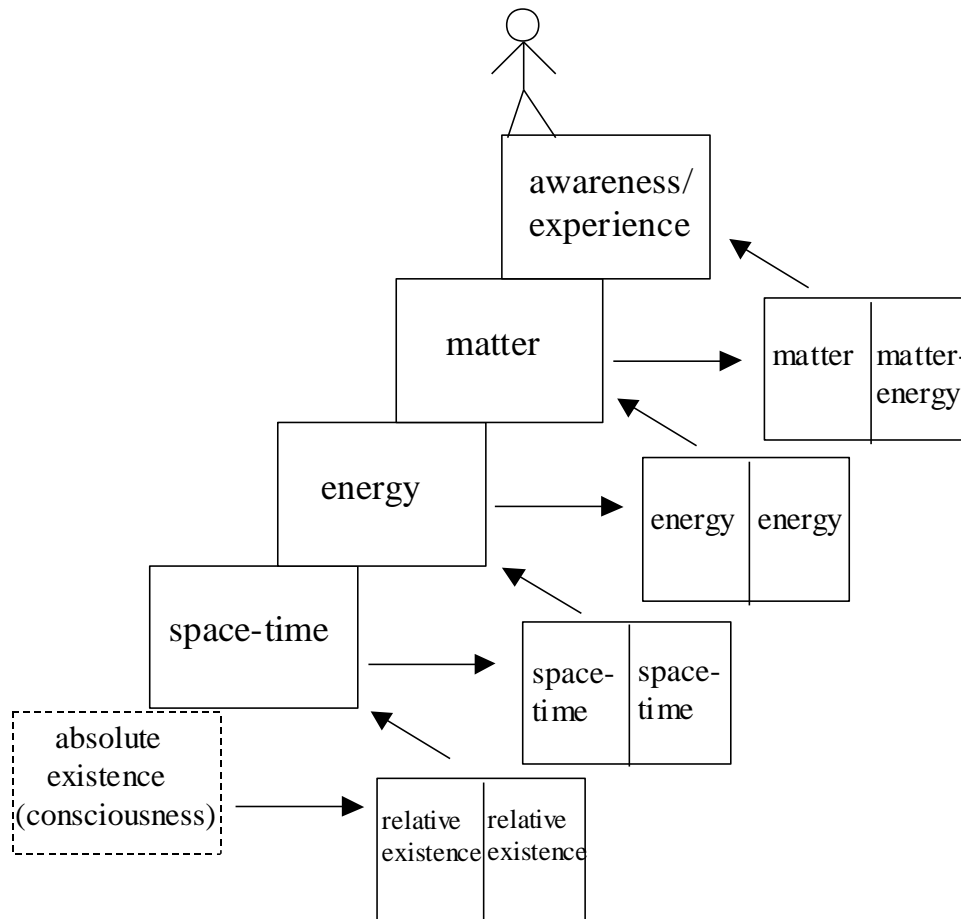


Figure I The basic outline of the stages or levels of reality through which existence evolves to eventually reach an experience of itself. Each set of relationships that existence forms with itself (boxes on right) becomes the next step (boxes on left) in this evolutionary process. Existence in this way evolves by picking itself up by its own bootstraps. When consciousness-existence reaches the top of this evolutionary staircase, it functions as awareness and is able to interact with, and so experience as reality, the levels of existential self-relation through which it has evolved and which now support it.

As will be described in detail in this work, the first set of relationships that existence forms with itself creates the underlying framework or relational structure of reality. We experience this relational structure of reality as *space-time*. Using this first set of relationships as a foundation, existence then forms a second set of relationships with itself. This second set of relationships, occurring within the context of the first set of relationships, results in the differentiation of the relational structure of reality. We experience this differentiation of the relational structure of reality as different forms of *energy*. Then, using this second set of relationships as a foundation, existence forms a third set of relationships with itself. This third set of relationships, occurring within the context of the first and second sets of relationships, results in the further differentiation of the relational structure of reality. We experience this further differentiation of the relational structure of reality as different forms of *matter*.

As will be described in detail in later parts of this work, the first, second, and third sets of relationships that existence forms with itself allow existence to form a fourth set of relationships with itself. This fourth set of relationships that existence forms with itself consists of the relationships that are responsible for experience itself. It's through this fourth level of existential self-relation that the other three levels of existential self-relation finally come to be experienced by awareness as reality.

As existence evolves by forming these sets of relationships with itself, existence differentiates, but it never becomes divided from itself. As will be described, what we experience as the apparent separability of existence from itself at the physical level of reality is an unavoidable byproduct of the process by which experience itself comes to exist—i.e., it's an artifact created by the nature of the fourth level of existential self-relation.

### *Hidden simplicity*

Although reality may be the result of a very simple process, explaining that simplicity to individual beings who experience reality as we do involves some complexity. It's one thing to make a statement, and another thing to provide evidence that the statement is true. If all that we needed was to state the nature of reality, this work would be exactly one sentence long: "Reality is the result of a process whereby existence repetitively and progressively forms relationships with itself." But what does such a statement mean? By itself, not much. For that statement to have meaning, it needs context. For any model of reality to be meaningful, that model must be relevant to the reader's experiences of reality.

Our goal in this work is to examine the simple process of self-relation that underlies the evolution of existence into reality, and thereby allow the reader to see beyond the complexity apparent in experiential reality into the underlying simplicity and unity of existence that's the foundation of reality.

If the nature of reality is truly as simple as it's here being described, as simple as repetitive and progressive self-relation, as simple as twisting a rubber band upon itself, then why has this simple truth remained hidden? Well, just because something is simple doesn't mean it's obvious. Underlying simplicity is often obscured by a superficial complexity, or a perspective that introduces complexity. A tree is a relatively simple structure, but if we have only a perspective from above, through the leaves, then that unifying simplicity is hidden from us by the apparent complexity of all the different leaves. Conversely, if we look at the tree from below, from a position of "standing under," the complexity of the different leaves is then seen within the context of the underlying and unifying simplicity of the trunk, and can then be literally "understood."

Experiential reality is itself the leaves that obscure from view the simple underlying reality of existential unity. Humanity's approach to understanding the tree of reality through *science* has generally been from above—i.e., from a position of standing over rather than standing under—viewing and describing reality as it's seen through the leaves of experience and experimentation. As a consequence, scientific descriptions of reality have tended to become more and more

complex, even though science has uncovered many of the branches that connect the different aspects of physical reality. On the other hand, humanity's approach to understanding the tree of reality through *spirituality* has generally been from below—i.e., from a position of standing under—viewing and describing the leaves and branches of reality as they extend from the unity of the trunk. However, in our modern world, dominated as it is by the advancements of science, the approach to reality through spirituality has become unpalatable and unacceptable to many people because it lacks the tangibility and verifiability of scientific experience and also fails, in most cases, to account for what we do know regarding the nature of physical reality.

This work has been designed to appeal to both the scientist and the spiritualist, because it integrates the perspective of each approach into a coherent and consistent model of reality. Science and spirituality are two ways of looking at the same tree of reality that has grown out of existence and is composed of existence in relation to itself. The unified model of reality presented in this work merges these two perspectives and thereby demonstrates that the descriptions of reality presented by science and spirituality are not mutually exclusive or opposed, but rather are complementary, because each description arises from a different, yet valid, perspective upon the same underlying existence.

### *The model*

The idea that the universe consists of existence which has formed relationships with itself isn't new; Taoists have understood this idea for at least a couple of thousand years. What's new here is that this idea of the universe being constructed through a process of self-relation is presented in this work in the form of a detailed and defined structural model which, once developed, will be correlated with our current experiences regarding the basis and nature of physical reality, as described by science in general and physics in particular.

That structural model, called the *relational-matrix model*, will be shown to be especially useful in explaining and understanding the basis of some of the more interesting and perplexing aspects of what we experience as physical reality, such as the nature and relativity of time, wave-particle duality, and the speed-of-light constant. In addition to using the relational-matrix model to explain the basis and nature of our physical experience of reality, we will use this model to explain the basis and nature of our mental and emotional experiences of reality as well.

On the basis of our experiences, we each have our own ideas about the nature of reality, about the way things are ordered in the universe and, possibly, beyond. In presenting this model of an ultimately unified reality, my goal is to take the reader on a journey from wherever they are with regard to their own ideas about the nature of reality, toward a final destination—to a point where all that we experience as reality can be seen to be inseparable parts of an indivisible, interconnected whole.

If we're to undertake this journey together, we first need to establish common ground, a conceptual base camp, from which the reader can then feel safe in venturing forth into new conceptual territory. In the second and third articles of this work, wherein the relational-matrix

model of reality is developed and related to space-time and physical reality, represents the establishment of such a base camp.

Following that, in the fourth article of this work, using the unified model of reality developed in the second and third articles, we will examine the nature of the relationships that are responsible for experience itself. Once the nature of experience has been described, we will then analyze the more nebulous concepts of consciousness and awareness, again using the unified model of reality developed in the second and third articles as the basis for that analysis.

In the fifth article of this work, we will also examine the nature of mental and emotional experiences, including their relationship to consciousness, awareness, and the unified model of reality developed in the second and third articles of this work. In this way, we will account for the existence of the three fundamental experiential realities—i.e., physical, mental, and emotional—within an interconnected, unifying framework that shows the relationship of each experiential reality to the other, and of all three to the underlying whole.

Ultimately, we will show that reality as a whole can be consistently accounted for only if we understand that the nature of the singular existence from which reality extends through the process of repetitive and progressive self-relation isn't other than consciousness itself. Thus, we will demonstrate that consciousness doesn't come into existence at some later stage in the evolution of reality, but rather *that the evolution of existence isn't other than the evolution of consciousness* and that experiential reality itself is what comes into existence at a certain stage in the evolution of consciousness-existence. In other words, we will show that consciousness isn't a product of the machinations of physical reality but, on the contrary, that physical reality, as we experience it to exist, is itself a product of consciousness, albeit consciousness existing in relation to itself.

Following certain sections throughout this work, there will be *conceptual checkpoints* where the most important points made in the preceding sections are reviewed, so that the simplicity of the various concepts presented regarding the nature of reality isn't lost in the complexity of the statements necessary for their proof. These conceptual checkpoints review the essential concepts that the reader needs to have with them in order to make it to the next clearing, the next level of understanding, regarding the ultimately unified nature of reality as it's herein being presented.

There's one indispensable instrument that you, the reader, must carry with you at all times when undertaking such a journey. Please take with you an open mind. Without one of these handy, it's doubtful whether you'll make it very far. However, if you're reading these words, it's more likely than not that you already have one. In that case, take care not to lose it along the way, for the path to our final destination involves many small journeys, and parts of the path may at times seem treacherous and thick with confusion before each new clearing is reached.

With that said, let us press on.