

Editorial Note

How Self-Relational Consciousness Produces and Interacts with Reality

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ABSTRACT

In essence, Steven E. Kaufman's work shows how self-relational Consciousness produces and interacts with reality. But to appreciate the important work done by Kaufman, one needs to read the whole 325 pages of this Focus Issue of JCER covering his work. Our goals with this Focus Issue are: (1) bring broader awareness of Kaufman's work by scholars and all genuine truth seekers; and (2) promote scholarly discussions of the same through commentaries and responses to commentaries in the future issues of JCER. In so doing, we hope that all of us may benefit in our endeavor to reach higher Consciousness within ourselves and build a genuine Science of Consciousness.

Key Words: Consciousness, self-relation, awareness, experience, physical reality, Relational-Matrix Model, Unified Reality Theory.

Kaufman's work presented in this Focus Issue is based on his book completed and self-published in 2001 [1]. Our initial intention was inviting Kaufman to write a book summary but changed our mind after Kaufman generously made his book available to us in electronic form and we had a chance to study his book.

Kaufman's work illustrates an ontology in which consciousness accounts for the singular existence and experiential reality extends from this singular existence through the repetitive and progressive self-relation. In other words, according to Kaufman, self-relational consciousness is the basis of experiential reality. In particulars, Kaufman has shown "how existence, by forming relationships with itself repetitively and progressively, evolves into a relational structure that functions as the framework of reality" and developed a fascinating dynamical model called "relational-matrix model."

This model allow Kaufman to account for certain basic aspects of the nature and behavior of physical reality such as temporal relativity, nature of time, the basis of the speed-of-light constant, the basis of Planck's constant, the nature of gravitation, the equivalence principle, the nature of energy, wave/particle duality and uncertainty principle. The model also provides a conceptual basis for understanding how physical reality extends from the structure of space and why nothing can exist independently.

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This model further allow Kaufman to treat awareness, experience and consciousness as an integral part of reality and explain “why there exists an awareness of physical experience[, w]hy we experience physical reality as we do, as well as why we’re aware or conscious of our experience.” The model even allows him to explain mental and emotional experiences. Thus it can be said that Kaufman’s work is a genuine attempt at a theory of everything which he calls the “Unified Reality Theory.”

Indeed, Kaufman has already given us the best summary of his own work [2]: “Unified Reality Theory describes how all reality evolves from an absolute existence. It also demonstrates that this absolute existence must have consciousness as an attribute that's intrinsic to its being. Thus, it shows that consciousness, rather than being a product of the evolution of physical reality, is itself the source of what we experience as physical reality and that physical reality is itself but one aspect of an evolving universal consciousness. Ultimately, Unified Reality Theory uses science and logic to demonstrate that God exists, as a pervasive and absolute consciousness that transcends the realities of space and time, and that we, as well as everything else, are that.”

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References

1. Steven E. Kaufman (2001), *Unified Reality Theory: The Evolution of Existence into Experience*. Destiny Toad Press, Milwaukee.
2. Steven E. Kaufman (2011), *Unified Reality Theory in a Nutshell*, *Scientific GOD Journal*, V2(3): pp. 200-206.