

Time and Universal Consciousness

(Chapter from the book ["Nature of Human Thought"](#))

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Time is a strange thing. It is everywhere and is always running and always goes in one direction - forward. All living entities have a concept of time. In fact consciousness is a result of time. According to Einstein's theory of relativity time can start slowing down at very high speeds or can stand still at the speed of light²². But it can never vanish.

Imagine that time can be removed from and introduced into the universe. In that case the total time in the universe will be constant. This sounds weird but as explained below, it may be possible.

Our journey starts with higher dimensional space. The world that we see both with our eyes open and closed (in dreams) is made up of four-dimensional space-time. This world is experienced by our senses and is the only world we can feel, smell, hear and touch. However there are other dimensional worlds we can visualise and comprehend through higher mathematics.

When 100 billion neurons in the brain fire with laser like action to produce a single deep thought, which can be held for a long time, that thought can occupy a higher dimensional space via the thought-engine described in Chapter 2. Mundane thoughts which do not use so many neurons also produce a structure called thought but it exists in four-dimensional space and its energy is attenuated according to well known inverse distance law ($1/r^2$). Higher dimensional thought however can go to large distances without attenuation since higher dimensional space is "rigid".

Higher dimensional space can also have memory because of its rigidity. **Thus memory and space are related.** The transformation of four-dimensional space-time to higher dimensional space is via a thought-engine, which is analogous to a heat engine²⁶. This thought-engine works when a large number of inputs are involved in producing an output. Their numbers could be in the range of 1-100 billion and more. The most important thing is that the process has to produce a structured output. It seems that the structured output can only be produced by a living entity.

If we extend the thought-engine analogy further, lower dimensional spaces can be transformed to higher dimensions up to the highest space which is G-dimensional, G being an arbitrary number higher than four. In reaching this G space even time is absorbed. Time is the last thing to be sucked in. By the principle of equivalence, it is also the first thing to come out when G dimensional space converts into lower dimensional space, G-1. The G dimensional space is the final destination in the universe to which everything ultimately converts. Probably it is God. This is what Adi Shankaracharya has described in his book *Vivekachudamani* where he calls the ultimate reality as *Akash* (Sanskrit word for space)²⁸.

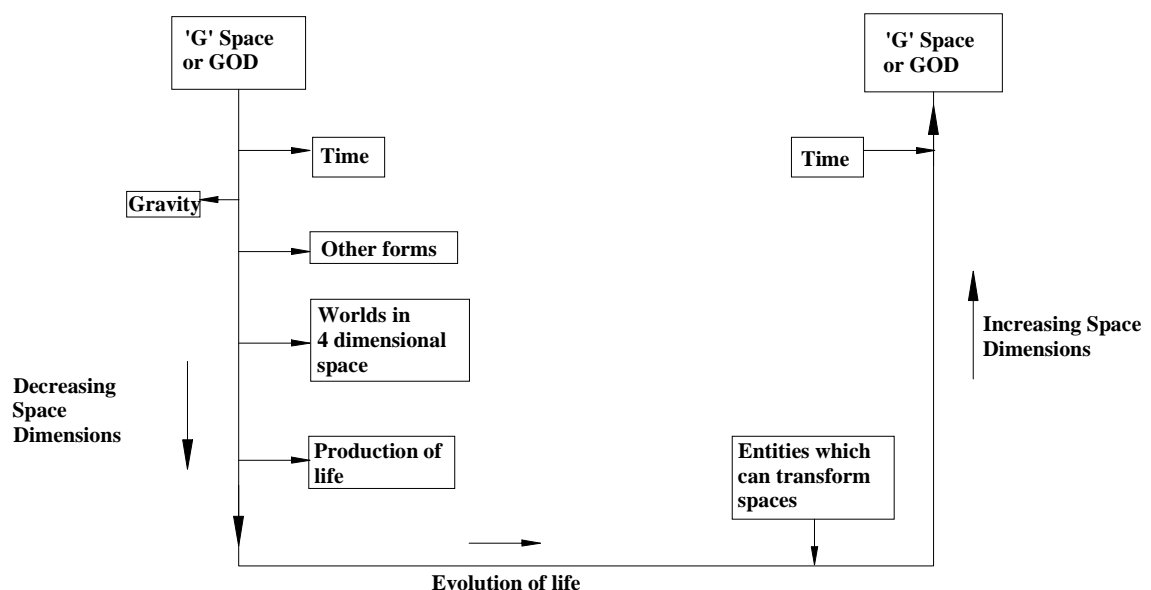
This concept has an interesting implication: Time, space and energy are interchangeable and have similar characteristics, which may be **geometric in nature**. This is the only way in which time can evolve from and devolve into space. This also means that since the total time of the universe is constant, there was never a singular big bang. Instead, there have been a large number of big bangs and a continuous transformation of G space \leftrightarrow four-dimensional space. Many universes are being formed continuously and there are many continuously evolving and dissolving universes. We do not know how long it takes to complete one cycle. The expansion of the universe we perceive today is an illusion and the signal we are getting could be distorted by higher dimensional space.

A similar type of analysis is given by brane theory physicists²⁰. According to this theory our universe exists in the form of a membrane (hence, “brane theory”) and there are parallel universes in other membranes very close to ours. These universes are not visible to us since we only live on our membrane, but when they collide with our membrane, the collision is like a big bang. Scientists suggest that these collisions are taking place continuously.

Since time remains nearly till the end (the last thing to be removed before G space is formed), it is possible that the universe has the dimensions of time. We are not sure what those dimensions are. Also, as time is the last thing to be absorbed, it is theoretically not possible to go back in time. It is also possible that each universe has its own time and it is interesting to speculate about the boundary and interaction of two universes.

Time and Evolution

I hypothesise that the G dimensional space starts “becoming” when time comes out. Devolution of G to G-1 space releases time and then the regular evolutionary process starts. **It seems therefore that time is life and life is time**. The evolutionary process continues with life forms merging and evolving to highly intelligent life, till all the entities again reach G space. The cycle continues as shown in the figure below.



Why does the God or ultimate space go through the journey starting from the humblest of living systems and proceeds to evolve into a highly thinking human brain? **It is because movement and “becoming” is the only way in which consciousness can exist.** A system in which nothing is happening is a dead system. The ultimate space, G, can only “feel” and enjoy itself through living systems and thus wants to maximise the number of living bodies. This happens only when time comes out of space 'G'. This is also the reason why all life forms want to maximise their numbers and hence life forms are afraid of death.

Just like rainwater starts its journey through a very large number of small tributaries and goes through rivers and ultimately to an ocean, the ultimate G space may go through innumerable life forms and may evolve through humans and other more evolved forms. This follows the thermodynamics laws in which the system tries to maximise the flow of energy and materials through it with minimum of resistance. This evolution continues till these forms obtain ultimate knowledge. Then closure of space takes place. Thus evolution and extinction of lower species is normal. It is also possible that this cycle may have fixed time and hence the evolution of mankind towards greater technological and spiritual sophistication is deterministic.

The scenario I have described connects to the Indian yogic system’s concept of duality. I feel duality takes place only when time comes out since “Ultimate reality” or Universal Consciousness is non-dual. According to ancient Indian scriptures like Brahma Sutra and Upanishads etc. duality consists of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, or *Pran* and *Akash*⁴² and the combination or interaction of these two produce different worlds. This interaction could be possible via the thought-engine. In the final analysis when time itself is sucked in, only the G space or non-dual “ultimate reality” remains.

[HOME](#)