

Review of Dr. Edi Bilimoria, *Consciousness Came First: Revealing Evidence for Universal Intelligence and Mind Beyond the Brain* (London: Collective Ink, 2026)

By Christina G. Waldman

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How do we know whether something is true or not? Often, our knowledge comes to us second-hand; we must decide whether or not to rely upon the opinions of experts. We strive to be objective and rational, but we don't necessarily discount our "gut feelings." Increasingly, through the internet, we are bombarded with phony representations attempting to trick us. Due to bad actors, we now often have to prove we are human to use the internet. Knowledge is power, yes—for good, but also potentially for evil. Can we trust the information which comes to us through our five senses? What about that which comes to us in ways we cannot yet fully explain?

Our media urges us to "trust the science," but scientific knowledge is constantly evolving; hypotheses are always subject to challenge. However, when it comes to explaining the mysteries and secrets of nature and the universe itself, modern science has largely boxed itself into a corner by searching for *consciousness* solely within the physical brain. This stems from the prevailing quasi-religion of "scientism" or "physicalism" which holds that the Universe and everything in it is no more than physical matter. Under this view, humans are no more than soulless physical bodies and brains. Taking such a position, however, requires its proponents to ignore a substantial body of contrary *evidence*, as Dr. Bilimoria demonstrates in his new book, *Consciousness Came First*. In all areas of knowledge, it seems clear that "ultimate truths" will not be realized by closing our minds to evidence which contradicts our pet theories.

Scientific dogma has not always denied man a soul. To Blaise Pascal, writing in the 17th century, a denial of the soul was illogical:

And what completes our incapability of knowing things, is the fact that they are simple, and that we are composed of two opposite natures, different in kind, soul and body. For it is impossible that our rational part should be other than spiritual; and if any one maintain that we are simply corporeal, this would far more exclude us from the knowledge of things, there being nothing so inconceivable as to say that matter knows itself. It is impossible to imagine how it should know itself Who would not think, seeing us compose all things of mind and body, but that this mixture would be quite intelligible to us? Yet it is the very thing we least understand. (*Pensées of Blaise Pascal, transl. W. F. Trotter* [London: Dent, 1943], #72)

To explain such mysteries, a body of "ultimate truths" emerged which was passed down by ancient sages through the ages. These doctrines pertain, of course, to such matters as the soul, immortality, and divine intelligence in the universe. Dr. Bilimoria who has studied esoterica for

the past fifty years, refers to this body of ultimate truths as the “perennial wisdom.” There are levels of wisdom. While some teachings are commonly taught, in one form or another, in all religions, some are reserved for those who have shown themselves ready to receive them; for they are powerful, and power should not be abused, but used for good. Thus, In the *Novum Organum*, Bacon analogized his desire that his doctrine “enter quietly” into those minds that were “fit and capable of receiving it” to Borgia’s conquering soldiers quietly marked out their new lodgings with chalk, rather than entering forcefully (“Aphorisms Concerning the Interpretation of Nature and the Kingdom of Man,” #35, *The Works of Francis Bacon* 14 vols, ed. by James Spedding et al [London: Longmans, 1857–74], 4:53). Bacon’s “doctrine,” too, encompassed both knowledge and higher wisdom.

Consciousness Came First is a condensation of Dr. Bilimoria’s comprehensive four-volume set, *Unfolding Consciousness* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 2022). This densely-packed shorter version, in which Dr. Bilimoria was assisted by journalist/philosopher Tim Wyatt, is intended for the general reader. It contains detailed footnotes, a glossary, suggestions for further reading, and an index. *Unfolding Consciousness* has been called a “tour de force on the *philosophia perennis*.” It received a People’s Book Prize. Dr. Bilimoria’s prior book, *The Snake and the Rope: Problems in Western Science Resolved by Occult Science* (Wheaton IL: Quest Books/The Theosophical Publishing House, 2006), was awarded the Scientific and Medical Network’s Book Prize. I first learned of Dr. Bilimoria’s impressive resume and body of work through my membership in the Francis Bacon Society, of which he is a trustee and council member.

In *Consciousness Came First*, Dr. Bilimoria contends that the effect on humanity of prevailing science’s rejection of the doctrines of universal, ageless wisdom has been devastating. Spiritual impoverishment has led to humanity’s being guided by passions rather than higher principles, leading not to harmony and happiness but to strife and chaos, cruelty and suffering (to paraphrase). Spiritual teachings formerly provided an “anchoring philosophy or moral compass in life” to “large swathes of humanity” that is now sorely missing (xvii). This is unfortunate, for such truths are increasingly being *confirmed* by modern scientific research. For example, we have long known that subatomic particles *move* inside every atom. In fact, our very thoughts can influence such motion (see 37–38, 42, 251–252). These teachings are not so new: Max Planck (xviii) first proposed quantum physics with its implications of “mind over matter” in 1900. Werner Heisenberg first proposed quantum mechanics with its “uncertainty principle” in 1925, and Albert Einstein first proposed relativity which includes the theorem $E = mc^2$ in 1905!

Moreover, a theory of consciousness that transcends the physical body helps to explain the real-life “paranormal” experiences so many have reported. These involve, for example, such categories as telepathy, precognition, and communications of various sorts with deceased loved ones. Medical doctors have reported their own near-death or out-of-body experiences which occurred when their *brains were not functioning* due to coma or anesthesia (9–10). Unbidden, young children have told their parents matter-of-factly about their past lives. People have reported encounters with angels. And, as Rupert Sheldrake’s studies have shown, dogs *do* seem to know when their owners are coming home (9, 59). Such evidence is too prolific to entirely discount. The evidence is far from being anecdotal only, however. The book is replete

with references to actual studies such as research into remote viewing performed by the US military (34–35). Apparently, there really *are* “more things in heaven and earth” than are dreamt of in Horatio’s philosophy! (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*)

As Dr. Bilimoria explains, scientific evidence does *not* support the theory that our brain is merely a “wet computer.” Despite efforts, memory has not been found in neurons which comprise the brain’s physical matter. Neurons die and are replaced, but memories remain. A more workable theory seems to be that the brain functions as a transmitter. Genes, too, might function as transmitters (see 22–28, 42, 159–62). Memory and instinct present tricky problems, but:

Morphogenesis, organizing fields, and immaterial wave-structures collectively show the indispensable non-physical, non-local functioning of mind in addition to the working of the physical body and brain. There is a strong allusion to subtle bodies and subtle energies that, in addition to the familiar physical body, constitute our whole being. (29)

This is fascinating, cutting-edge stuff!

Historically, the primacy of intellect in scientific thought which began in the 17th century was reinforced by Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution in *The Origin of Species* (1859). Dr. Bilimoria does not reject the theory of evolution outright; rather, he positions it as one of seven theosophical principles derived from three axioms in Helen Blavatsky’s framework, as described in her book, *The Secret Doctrine* (Wheaton IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1993). According to the “seventh principle,” “active intelligence” lies “behind the laws of nature” (91–93). Personally, I have wondered how mammals obtained sustenance while their sweat glands were evolving into mammary glands What Francis Bacon wrote makes sense to me: “I had rather believe all the fables in the legends, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind.” (“Of Atheism”) How can there be laws of nature—of mathematics—without a Lawgiver?

At heart, many of us might agree with the French philosopher and Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.” “At heart,” used here to mean “inside,” is related to the word *esoteric*. As contrasted with *exoteric* which pertains to that which is outward, “Esotericism is known as the “Doctrine of the Heart,” namely, seeing into the inner meaning of a subject or object using the awakened spiritual eye.” (Bilimoria, ch 7, “The Mystery Teachings of All Ages: A General Overview,” *Unfolding Consciousness*, vol 1 [London: Shephard-Walwyn, 2022], Google Books, https://books.google.com/books/about/Unfolding_Consciousness.html?id=CRenZgEACAAJ. In *Consciousness Came First*, see part two).

This book may make you question what you have come to think or believe about human consciousness. You may find that disconcerting at first, as I did. On the other hand, you may

find it comforting to learn that scientific studies are affirming universal truths about the Universe and our place within it.

For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance, he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.

— Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*

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