

COSMOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY

Merely a century ago, we were not sure if the universes contained anything more than our Milky Way galaxy. That situation has changed dramatically in the last 50 years. With many eyes in the sky for the last two decades, we can study the cosmos as never before, using the entire electromagnetic spectrum. Such an abundance of knowledge has been gleaned that we can truly say we live in the golden age of cosmology. We now have an accurate knowledge of how this vast and busy universe developed since its beginning 13.7 billion years ago from a tiny nugget of space. The confidence in our model is so high that Nobel Prizes are now being awarded for cosmology.

The discovery of the minute changes in the microwave background radiation detected by COBE and WMAP satellites has given us a treasure trove of information about our universe. One of the most significant realizations to result from this discovery is that the primary feature of the structure of the universe we observe today, from the Milky Way to the largest super cluster of galaxies, originates from “quantum seeds.” This revelation provides the most direct and compelling evidence that quantum physics and cosmology is inextricably intertwined in the making of our universe. We will be further astonished to infer that this intricate relationship is indispensable for maintaining the very viability and operation of the universe and also that everything in this universe most likely comes from a single source.

When we study the universe, we also study ourselves. Because, the universe is not out there somewhere. It’s all around us and we are an essential part of it. For the first time in human history, these studies provide scientific answers to some age-old spiritual questions: Who am I? Why am I here? What is behind our existence? The answers are by no means comprehensive, but they are enough to significantly improve the quality of our lives through spirituality anchored in science.