

Subject: Spiritual Human

Article: 14

The Sufi Universes

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The modern science of physics is seriously discussing the possible existence of multiple universes. Scientists claim that there may be several, even an infinite number of universes. The *multiverse* model is a source of debate within the scientific community and has its antagonists as well as its supporters. Among the supporters of the multiverse hypotheses we find: **Stephen Hawking, Steven Weinberg, Brian Greene, Alan Guth** and **Michio Kaku**. The *multiverse* contains parallel and alternate universes; universes which are beyond the grasp of the logical mind. The existence of multiple universes is the subject of not only physics, but also of religion and mysticism.

Islamic Sufism accepts that there are several more universes beyond the physical one in which we materially exist. These universes may be considered as the mystical counterpart of the multiverse model. The Sufi universes are both parallel and also multi-layered. There are five superimposed layers and each layer is more difficult to grasp mentally. As the Sufi follows the path (*Tarik*) towards enlightenment he/she becomes aware of these universes made out of fine and subtle energy fields. The drawing below is a metaphoric visualization of these multilayered and superimposed universes. Each universe is infinite and the access to each of them is a mystical ascent called *Miraj* (ascension). *Miraj* is a heavenly journey which leads to illumination and to an internal state of unification with God. I will start to explain these universes from top to bottom.



Five superimposed universes

Universe 5: This is a **chaotic** universe which is beyond words and beyond human understanding. It is called the **Hahut** universe and is defined as **Gayb-ul Gayb**, "The hidden beyond the hidden". The word **gayb** in Arabic means "inconceivable and hidden".

This universe is prior to God and beyond any description. Therefore the **Hahut** is accepted to be indefinable for any mortal human being.

Universe 4: This is the universe in which **Allah/God** exists. It is called the **Lahut** and can be described in words. In Islam Allah/God is accepted to be indefinable and therefore one starts by negating any categorization. The word corresponding to the negation of any definition is "**Tenzih**". Thus after negating any similarity one can start finding adjectives. Allah/God is accepted to have certain adjectives and can be mentally grasped through 99 "divine names". These beautiful adjectives or names are called the "**Esma-ul Hüсна**", where **esma** stands for 'divine names' and **hüsn** means 'beautiful'. These names are a way of understanding and conveying the adjectives of Allah. The verbal description is called "**Teshbih**" and means 'connotation'. It is accepted that in every human being one adjective of Allah is paramount. His/her character revolves around that divine name.

Universe 3: This universe is called the **Melekut** and is the universe in which angels exist. It can be defined as being "*the kingdom of God*". Paradise, Hell, several **Melek** (angel) and all **Jinn** (devil) exist in this kingdom. Angels and *Jinns* are inorganic energetic entities which have the capacity to influence humans. In Arabic "**meleke**" means 'capacity' and therefore it is believed that each human capacity –be it mental or physical- is related to the influence of either an angel or a devil. This influence becomes effective only if the person is willing to incorporate it and activate it. Thus the Islam belief system accepts both a global will (**Küll-i irade**) of God, transmitted either directly or through the intermediary of angels, and also a local will (**Jüz-i irade**) under the control of the human being.

Universe 2: This universe is called the **Jaberrut** and is the universe in which universal laws of nature exist. Jaberrut is related to the word **Jabr** meaning 'to force'. All existents – organic and inorganic- are under the influence of the physical laws of nature. It is believed that all forces of nature originate in Universe 2 and act upon Universe 1. According to the Islamic belief system the **Jeberrut** universe is prior to the physical universe in which we exist. Thus, natural laws and forces are metaphysical in origin and existed before the material universe came into existence. This is the '*first appearance*' and is called **ilk tecelli**.

Universe 1: This universe is called the **Nasut** and is the medium in which all beings have obtained a 'physical appearance'. It is both the physical world of matter and also the realm of the human mind. Thus, we see that each universe is an emanation of energy and the final energetic emanation is the one imagined and produced by humans. All science, technology, literature and visual arts are human creations which appeared in the **Nasut**. This is why in the **Holy Qur'an** (*Qâf Sûra; Verse 16*) God says "**I am nearer to humans than their jugular vein**". This verse can be interpreted as asserting an inseparable holistic unity between the creator and the created. Humans too have the capacity to create and the human imagination is infinite. So is the **Nasut** universe.

We see that the **multiverse** hypothesis is not such a new invention and has been imagined long ago by Islamic mystics. The synthesis of the *multiverse* model with the multilayered universe model of the Islamic mystics, leads us to accept that there exists an infinite energy field which is conscious and is capable of acting upon itself. This energy field is the source of the vast and splendid heavenly hierarchies of the **Sufi cosmogony**. We can thus conclude that there may quite be a bunch of universes all operating at different frequencies. Only one of them is this physical world that we call "our universe".

See also article **10 – Sufi Psychology**: <http://www.halukberkmen.net/pdf/172.pdf>