

WHY THE UNIVERSE EXISTS TIMELESSLY

by Gevin Giorbran

If someone says, how did something come from nothing? what are they really asking about? Most of us think we know what somethingness is, but what exactly is nothing? Let's find out. Imagine you are transported all the way back to the beginning of time. Imagine standing at the very precipice of the birth of the whole multiverse. Imagine a cliff and out beyond the edge of the cliff there is nothing at all. So you put your hand out to the surface and touch the originating moment. Now push through it. Reach beyond. What is it like? Any words come to mind? Is it frightening, or menacing? Is it vibrant with all the potential of being? Is it thick or dark, warm or cold? Is it as simple as simple can be. Of course if you describe something, or feel anything, you haven't gone enough beyond the origin of existing things. So try one more time. Let your mind drift beyond the edge of time, beyond all descriptions, beyond all senses. And yes there it isn't, just beyond the edge of rational thought itself, hidden there in a blackness darker than black, a quiet beyond silence, a stillness beyond rest. Oh my, there "isn't" the absolute void.

Are you still here! You didn't disappear? And you didn't get sucked in? But did you feel it? Did you at least sense it? "NO!" What do you mean "NO"! We were right there! How could that be? I wonder what went wrong. You must not have a very good imagination! No wait, maybe you do, maybe that is the problem. Maybe your imagination is getting in the way because what we are trying to imagine isn't cold or dark, or a void or an abyss, it isn't quiet or simple, and it's hardly anything to be afraid of, because it doesn't exist. Maybe this nothing is unimaginable because there is nothing to imagine. Indeed if you came up with any sense of what is beyond the cliff, then you sort of missed the point.

This thought exercise reveals a sort of anomaly in how we see the world. We cannot imagine nothingness, that is, if we are referring to a nothing prior to existence. We can describe the type of nothing that is common in our lives, the nothing that we encounter everyday. There is nothing here or there. There is nothing to talk about. There is nothing in the refrigerator. That type of nothing is something empty, something lacking substance, something uniform or plain or simple. But the other nothing that is prior to existence is a special case in terms of semantics and meaning. By definition, words simply can't describe it, so it is different than everything else

that we define with words and everything else imaginable.

In truth there are two very different nothings, and presently the two are entangled together when they don't belong together. In other words, there is actually something wrong with the word nothing as we use it today. If we carefully study the definition of the word nothing we can discover two very different definitions of nothing. One definition of nothing is a physically real condition that has no discernable form or substance, such as a white canvas, or a uniform void in empty space. This type of nothing is real and exists, and is actually quite ordinary. An empty refrigerator has nothing in it. A white artist canvas has nothing painted on it. The real nothing is always a place or a space that is uniformly undefined, where there are no distinct things. There is just one thing, like one color, or just space alone, so we call it nothing. But the other definition of 'nothing', the one we were just a moment ago trying to touch and describe is nonexistence, which is a very difficult concept to understand when defined separately from the real nothing, which is the very reason we confuse the two. We confuse the two out of need, because one we can describe, the other we cannot.

When the dictionary defines nothing as 'something that does not exist', it is reasonably obvious that the syntax of the phrase makes no real sense. How can 'nothing' be a something which does not exist? In fact simply using any word in an attempt to mean non-existence creates a sort of riddle. How do we make a word refer to something that doesn't exist? What word can represent a form that isn't a form; a thing that isn't a thing? What language can define a concept that has no reality or meaning?

Of course we cannot solve the great old riddle of how something came from nonexistence. It's the ultimate oxymoron, and the ultimate contradiction in terms. We cannot even refer to a state of nonexistence when there is no such state, and no such form, to refer to. Any attempt to describe it isn't describing it. Any word representing it, isn't representing it. Non-existence can only really be defined as something that cannot be defined with a word. It can only refer to something that cannot be referred to. Obviously there is a vexing fundamental problem here. Any attempt to define a nonexistence using any meaningful idea or thought, by using the meaning that otherwise defines all language, that defines our reality, is predestined to fail.

Nonexistence cannot be. It cannot exist. It cannot even be meant. And that predicament, that total paradox, is very different from the real nothing that exists and can be talked about. And the fact that we confuse these two concepts is the very reason we don't yet clearly understand why we exist. We exist because there is no alternative. There never was a non-existence in the past and there never will be a non-existence. Existence is the default setting of reality. Existence belongs here. It has always been.

The Real Nothing

Imagine you are standing in a white world, like the commercials or movies portraying heaven. In this world there is nothing but white everywhere. The oneness of white extends away from you in every direction. You try to look out into the distance, but because there is just the one color you can't tell if the space of this world extends out forever or if its edge remains just out of reach. As you reach out your hand, you realize that your physical body provides the only sense of distance here. Your body is all that exists in a giant field of nothingness. There is no length or width beyond your body. There is no distance to anywhere else, because there isn't anything else to measure a distance to. So if your body happens also to turn white, then suddenly all sense of dimension is erased. The very meaning of place and distance is lost. Soon even the one color of white will disappear from your experience. You will soon become blind to white, because you don't have any other color to judge the meaning of this one color against. Soon, for you, this endless white world becomes nothing at all.

If you were born into this one color dimension you wouldn't ever be able to see it, you would not even know it was right there in front of you, since you would not have any other color or shade of gray to reference it by. Someone who is blind, for example, doesn't see black or darkness, because even if they did temporarily upon initially going blind, the black quickly loses meaning for them because it is just one color, and without differentiation the mind interprets such a world as a perceptual nothing. And in fact the mind is correct, because this is the real nothing that exists in physical reality. The real nothing is just singular form. A real nothing is a singularity, and a singularity is all a real nothing can ever be.

Within a singularity, all distances and locations lose meaning because once there is a perfect unity, a oneness, then every object, every distance, every place, is the same as any other. Singularities are commonplace. Any single color is a singularity. A perfect blue sky is a singularity. The most common everyday example of a singularity is the ordinary empty space we travel through, which is why we typically refer to it as nothing. Never the less, singularities can have content. Most everyone has heard the idea of a polar bear in a snow storm. Singularities can even be full instead of empty. Suppose we take everything from a household refrigerator, put it all in a big stove pot, add some water, and begin stirring. After we cook all this awhile all the distinct parts begin to break down and blend together evenly into a soup. If we keep heating and stirring this stew for five or six hours, or two or three days, eventually all the

many ingredients will unify into a single paste-like substance. Many have become one. All the ingredients of the refrigerator are still in there, within the one, they have just transformed into a singularity.

As we shall see, there are extreme cosmological singularities in our distant past and our distant future. Singularities are an interesting novelty of reality because, in the same way all the fruits and vegetables, the condiments, the juices and milk, in the refrigerator all vanish in creating the paste, all the physical properties of our universe suddenly vanish into thin air at the stage of becoming a singularity. If we imagine the infinity of all possible universes unified into a singularity, it would still have no size or properties. In fact if all possible worlds are at some ultimate level unified into a whole, the totality becomes something we perceive as nothing at all. The great unified whole is the white world. It can be imagined the size of a pin head small enough to fit in the palm of your hand, or an endless space stretching out forever. It can be said to exist in any point of space, as well as every place in space, here, there, and everywhere.