

Author's Accepted Manuscript

KUHN, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND PARADIGMS

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www.elsevier.com/locate/bios

PII: S1550-8307(18)30176-9
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.explore.2018.04.004>
Reference: JSCH2290

To appear in: *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*

Cite this article as: Stephan A. Schwartz, KUHN, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND PARADIGMS, *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*, doi:10.1016/j.explore.2018.04.004

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Section Head: Schwartzreport

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The Schwartzreport tracks emerging trends that will affect the world, particularly the United States. For EXPLORE it focuses on matters of health in the broadest sense of that term, including medical issues, changes in the biosphere, technology, and policy considerations, all of which will shape our culture and our lives.

Something very profound is happening in science, something not seen in more than a century is occurring: the paradigm of science is changing. Consciousness, particularly nonlocal non-physiological consciousness, is becoming mainstream. The world view of materialism is increasingly inconsistent with the reported experimental data in a spectrum of disciplines, as any search of PubMed, Academia.edu, or Researchgate will quickly reveal. I think it is time to retire the limitation and go where the data goes.

I believe materialism did not arise from scientific findings but was the result of a science culture that formed as a result of the pronouncements of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the principal one being a prohibition against science studying "spirit," which is to say consciousness, on pain of death. It is a taboo that lasted for centuries, and for more than three centuries it tortured and killed. An unknown but large number of doctors, scientists, herbalists, particularly village herbal women, philosophers, alchemists and others were tortured and killed, often by being burnt alive. I have described this elsewhere in these pages.¹ Materialism is a self-imposed limitation not a scientific absolute. There is nothing in science that precludes consciousness being studied like anything else, and there is much to urge that it should be studied. In non-Christian countries like China, consciousness has always been and remains a part of science. In China religion has been stripped of any power in government, and so the study of consciousness is not burdened by its beliefs, although it is incorporated anthropologically as Shamanism has been in the West.

I have been involved with this transition for almost half a century, smiling and leaning toward a world view that incorporates consciousness. As the process has gone along what I have found most interesting, yet least noted in much of the academic discussion is that the transition, is as much a cultural movement as a scientific one. No one understands this better than the late Thomas Kuhn, M.Taylor Pyne Professor of Philosophy and History of Science of the Princeton University and, later, Laurence S. Rockefeller Professor of Philosophy at MIT. His 1962 exegesis, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, is perhaps the most important book about the history and philosophy of science ever written. Today there is hardly a college offering a course in the history and philosophy of science that does not cover his book. In it he lays out the nature of the

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