



# The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy

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#### The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and **Philosophy**

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Are mystical experiences primarily formed by the mystic's cultural background and concepts, as modern day "constructivists" maintain, or do mystics in some way transcend language, belief, and culturally conditioned expectations? Do mystical experiences differ in the different religious traditions, as "pluralists" contend, or are they identical across cultures? Twelve contributors here attempt to answer these questions through close examination of a particular form of mystical experience, "Pure Consciousness"--the experience of being awake but devoid of intentional content for consciousness. The contributors analyze pure consciousness and other mystical experiences from historical Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Jewish sources, as well as from modern mystics. They demonstrate that pure consciousness poses serious conceptual problems for a contructivist understanding of mysticism. Revealing the inconsistencies and inadequacies of current models, they make significant strides towards developing new models for the phenomenon of mysticism, breaking new ground for our understanding of mysticism and of human experience in general.



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