How the Understanding of Time Can be Reconciled Between Vedānta and Modern Physics

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The concept of time has intrigued philosophers and physicists for many centuries. Classical physics embraced the "flow of time" model that has been negated by Einstein's two theories of relativity. The "space-time" continuum of Einstein treats time as one of four dimensions but the centrality of time is paramount. Also the three arrows of time (cosmological, thermodynamic, and psychological) may be invoked to partition time into past, present, and future. But is time a truly basic concept that must be a foundation of any physical theory of the world, or can it be derived from more primitive notions? No matter what physical theory one subscribes to, it is undeniable that science cannot and does not explain the "meaning/purpose" of an experience at a given point in time.

Vedānta posits that time is a product of creation of this universe and places it in the domain of "Māyā". This presentation will discuss the concept of Māyā and will attempt to reconcile the understanding of time in modern physics and Vedānta. It will also highlight some verses from Vedāntic texts that can help an individual get out of the "space-time" domain.