

The Harmonizer

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The Harmonizer

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Published Monthly

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Sadhu Sanga

MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS

by

Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja



Dr. Murphey: How can we differentiate consciousness from mind?

Srila Sridhar Maharaja: In *Bhagavad-gita* the path of differentiation between consciousness and mind is suggested: *indriyai parany ahur*. What is *atma*, the soul, the spiritual conception? We have come to the world conception by a particular process. By the process of elimination we can trace out what the mind is. It is said that the basis of the mind is acceptance and rejection: *sankalpa-vikalpa* – “I want this, I don’t want that.” What is the mind? A thing that contains apathy and sympathy for the external world. That is the mind. We have to trace within us what that thing is. It is within us, and one has to enter into his own self and try to have some personal experience of what the mind is. Then by internal analysis one can try to come directly in touch with the faculty of judgment, reason, intelligence, by asking, “What is intelligence? Where is it within me?” We should try to find that out and come in touch with that directly. We should inquire, “What is the mind? It is already within me. But what is it? And what is reason within me? What is the source of the mind and intelligence? And crossing the stage of the decisive faculty, what is the soul?” We must try, as a *yogi* does, to come in direct touch with the elements within us. Mind and intelligence are within each of us. Why should we not be able to trace out exactly what they are, to see internally what they are?

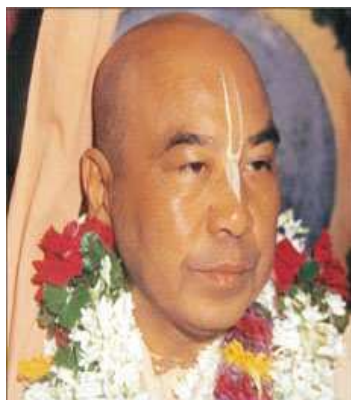
Dr. Murphey: I wanted to clarify one point. In Kapila’s system of analysis, Sankhya, he says that *pradhana* is “that unmanifested matter which is eternal.” You say that everything is consciousness. Is *pradhana* also composed of consciousness?

Srila Sridhar Maharaja: Yes. What is material is only the misconception which is the cause of all this material existence. But it also has personality – Devi, the goddess. The world begins within misconception. When you have the proper conception, then you can read *Krishna-lila* everywhere. Everything will excite you about Vrindavana. You won’t see the outward thing if you are relieved from misconception. A madman has a maladjusted brain. He may be in the midst of friends, but he is lost in his madness, his paranoia. When he goes back to his normal position, he finds the same thing – all friends. In the same way, everything is all right – only the disease, our misconception, needs to be removed.

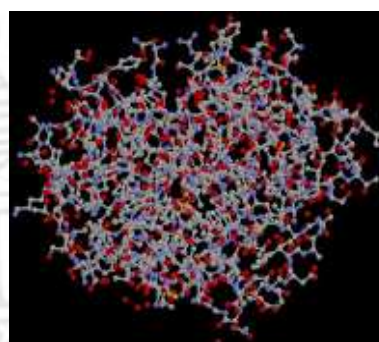
ANIMATED AND INANIMATED OBJECTS

by

Srila Bhaktisvarupa Damodara Goswami Maharaja (T. D. Singh, Ph.D.)



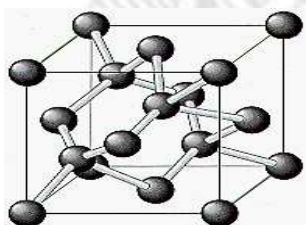
The actual subject of study in modern biology is not life itself, but the material structures and laws that are associated with the interaction of life and matter. In the Table below, the author has outlined some specific indications of the influence of life on matter in familiar living organisms.



Chymotrypsin Molecule

Secondly, matter by itself tends to reduce to thermodynamically stable forms that usually consist of small molecules exhibiting little activity. On the other hand, in living organisms we see highly unstable molecules, such as the molecule of chymotrypsin illustrated in

MATTER BY ITSELF	MATTER ASSOCIATED WITH LIFE
1. Inert and dead.	1. Animated substance or entity (e.g. a vehicle with a driver or a live bird)
2. Characterized by either low information content or absence of specific form beyond atomic and molecular structures.	2. Characterized by high information content and very specific form.
3. Reduces to thermodynamically stable states.	3. Thermodynamically unstable states play a dominant role.
4. Exhibits less organized flow of matter.	4. Exhibits a precisely regulated flow of matter (metabolism).
5. Tends to lose form or pattern under transformation.	5. Undergoes transformation without loss of complex pattern (reproduction).
6. Grows by external accumulation only. Crystal ➡ Crystal	6. Grows from within by an intricate construction process. Baby ➡ Child ➡ Youth ➡ Old Age
7. Exhibits only passive resistance (e.g. mountain).	7. Adaptive: tries to actively overcome obstacles.



A unit cell of diamond crystal

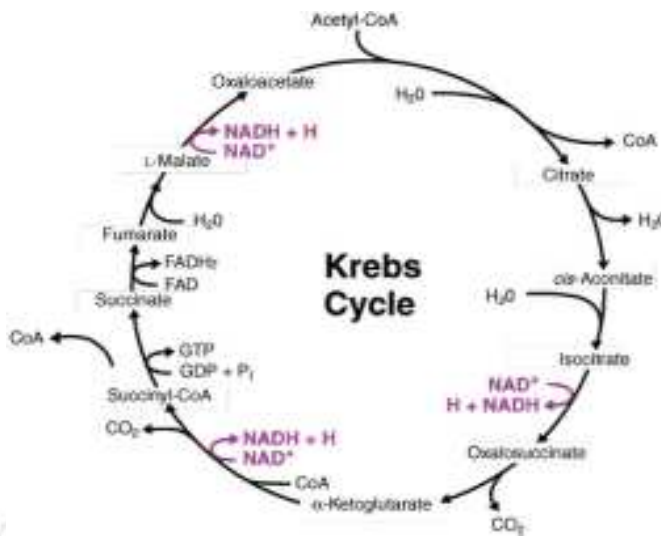


C₆₀ Molecule

First of all, matter by itself does not tend to exhibit very high specific information content. It is generally found in simple organized forms like the diamond crystal or C₆₀ molecule, or it lacks organization altogether. On the other hand, the structures of living organisms exhibit an intricate organization that we are just beginning to understand. Consider the many complex systems involved in the human eye alone, for instance. As we have already pointed out, this complexity strongly suggests that higher order laws are involved.

above figure. Such molecules are very readily broken down or denatured when subjected to ordinary chemical reactions.

Matter by itself tends to exhibit very simple patterns of flow, as we see, for example, in the flow of a river to the sea. Within living organisms, however, we see the kind of highly regulated chemical processes shown below (page 3) in the figure illustrating a sequence of cellular chemical reactions known as the Krebs cycle. Each reaction is controlled by a specific enzyme, and is adjusted so that the precise amount of the product needed by the cell is produced. The entire metabolism of even the simplest bacterial cells must contain thousands of precisely coordinated reactions of this kind. Thus, even if the cell is simply a chemical automation, it must have built into it logical instructions of complexity and sophistication that far surpass any computer program yet written by a human being. We propose that the higher order interactions ultimately stemming from the *Paramatma* play a role in the functioning of a cell analogous to the role of the programmer in a

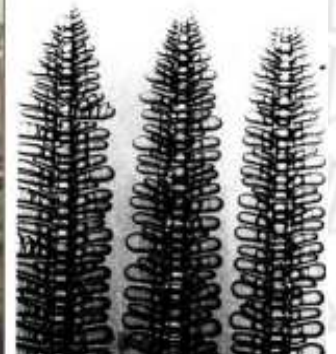


The gradual decay of an abandoned car (bottom) in contrast to the process of perpetual renewal in living organisms such as the tiny seed of the banyan tree which has the potency of becoming a gigantic tree (top).

man-made computer. (In this connection we should note that computer programs are notorious for the amount of “debugging” work required to get them to work properly and to continue to work in novel circumstances.)

We propose that the higher order interactions ultimately stemming from the Paramatma play a role in the functioning of a cell analogous to the role of the programmer in a man-made computer.

Reproduction is another feature of living organisms that distinguishes them from inanimate matter. When inanimate matter is transformed, it tends to lose whatever structure or organization it may once have had. Consider, for example, the gradual decay of an abandoned car. In contrast, living organisms everywhere exhibit the renewal of their kind without apparent loss in vitality. We may also note that there are differences in the patterns of growth exhibited by inanimate matter and matter under the influence of life. In the former, growth proceeds by simple accumulation, as we can see in the growth of a crystal. In a living organism, however, growth occurs by an elaborate internal construction process.



The growth in living organisms through an elaborate internal construction process versus the growth in a crystal by simple accumulation.

At present, scientists have only dimly surmised the principles underlying such growth processes as the development of an embryo from a fertilized egg.

Finally, we can see that living organisms adapt and actively strive in many ways to overcome obstacles or achieve goals. This is exhibited in the process of healing, the migration of birds, the climbing of mountains, the building of industrial empires, and innumerable other examples. However, inanimate matter exhibits only passive resistance to change. Even man-made computers fail to display the kind of flexible adaptability visible in so-called primitive organisms. (In fact, computer systems tend to go out of control very easily despite all attempts to build in safeguards, and for this reason they require constant human attention.)



Matter Driven by Life

PERCEPTION: OR THE THING AND DECEPTION

by

Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.



The movement of Perception

Consciousness in the form of sense-certainty wants to apprehend its particular object as being-there (existing). But as demonstrated in previous articles in

this series, the only truth of sense-certainty is merely that *something is*, and because everything *is*, being is universal. Here it will be shown that perception is the consciousness of the universal as the truth of a particular being. And because universality is the very principle of perception, both object and the I are also universal. Because this universality is *arrived at* through a mediating process or thinking, it is not just an immediate 'happening' as is found in sense-certainty - rather, it proves to be a logically necessitated content.

With the emergence of universality, therefore, the moments of consciousness and its object, which are both merely given as immediately being there in sense-certainty, come into being as universals in perception. In other words, perception is a 'coming into being', i.e., a movement or process of becoming. The conclusion is that the truth of being is becoming. This difficult concept is developed in great detail in Hegel's *Science of Logic*. The process for sense-certainty consists merely in 'pointing out' the here or now. It consisted of three steps: (1) it starts with the original object, (2) negates it, (3) and then negates the negation. These three 'steps' may also be perceived as the moments of a movement.

But the object perceived also changes in this same movement or process since the object is only what we perceive it to be — if our perception changes the object

changes along with it. We must thus consider the object to be essentially this movement. With the universal or movement as the essential object of perception, the immediately distinct ego and object - the perceiver and perceived - become unessential and abstract elements (since they are now mere abstract or fleeting moments of this overall movement). At the same time, they are essential because there is no question of perception unless there is also a perceiver and perceived object. Therefore, the entire triplicity (perceiver-perception-perceived) is involved in the movement.

The perceiver and perceived are opposites - one is what the other is not, but if they are both essential then we cannot take only one as essential and the other as unessential, even though this is what opposition would imply. So at this point all that may be inferred is that they must share the distinction of essentiality and unessentiality equally. At the same time the object is considered to be independent of whether it is perceived or not, so that, from this angle of consideration, the movement of perception seems to be the unessential moment with the object being the essential.

The object of perception is manifold.

The object is itself a universal in its own self (i.e. as a single object- since everything is a single object). Since it is essentially a universal then it must also display this universality in itself, which it does by being a "thing with many properties". This will be described more fully shortly.

The wealth or multiplicity of the objects of sense-certainty is not part of sense-certainty itself, since sense-certainty detects only singleness or individuality. Thus multiplicity or many-ness belongs to perception whereas sense-certainty is merely the source of single instances. Perception contains actual negation (as in the above-mentioned process). This implies difference (because difference means what is **not** This or the negation of This); thus only perception can

contain manifoldness or the difference that allows us to speak of many-ness. This is an important distinction between sense-certainty and perception that is often overlooked by those who try to reduce everything to the mere data of sense. In other words, it is not the senses as such that distinguish one object from another, but perception, constituting the same universality that is generally called mind.

Thinghood and properties.

The This as negated is not-This, but the negation of something is not its annihilation or its relegation to Nothing. Rather as the Nothing of the This it is a determinate Nothing. For example, to say it is not-Night, tells us something. We are not left with Nothing to think about. The content is still Night even though it is negated.



G. W. F. Hegel

The singular This of sense is negated in perception or becomes not-This, i.e. the universal. Thus the not-This has as its content the This. In perception the sense-object perceived does not lose its existence, even though perception grasps the universality of the object, or the

negation of the object as singular being. This negation with preservation is in German *aufgehoben* or *aufheben*, which means sublimation, sublation, or supersession (superseding).

Universal Being is what it is by virtue of the negation of singular being, i.e. as not-this being, thus it has negation within it. This negation or difference that is within universal

Being may, therefore, be considered a determination of universal Being, and when positively *expressed* this determination it is called a property. These properties have the following characteristics:

- a) Many such properties coexisting simultaneously imply the mutual negativity of the properties, i.e. each property is different from the other, or **not** the other.
- b) They are also identical only to themselves and thus may be considered to exist in free indifference to one another.
- c) They are universals since they are determinations within the universality of Being.

The universality of Being is also distinct from its properties or expressed determinations. As simple identity with itself it is the *medium* in which the various determinacies or properties are found. Since this medium is a simple unity, the various properties must interpenetrate in order for the many to coexist in this unity. In fact it is through this participation in this simple universality or medium that they are understood as completely indifferent to one another so that they can interpenetrate, i.e. without interference from each other. This abstract universal medium of many properties is called *thinghood* or simply the Thing. It is essentially the same as the togetherness that was found, for example, in the Here and Now examined in the previous installments, where any This was a unity of Here and Now, that were in truth universals.

An example will help to clarify these abstract notions. Consider a crystal of salt. It is situated in a simple Here, yet at the same time it is manifold since it is also white, also tart, also cubical, etc. The many properties coexist within the simple Here as it does in the simple Now. Each property is not a different Here but represents the same Here regardless of the property. Thus they interpenetrate each other without modifying themselves in any way. In this manner they are indifferent to each other and connected to each other only by the indifferent Also which is their medium. This medium is abstract *thinghood* which holds the various properties together.

Thinghood as One or the Thing.

Thinghood is abstract unity because it is being considered here merely indifferently, as a universality along with other universalities. Because there are *many* properties, distinction or determination is implied. Thus although their indifference is found to be necessary for their interpenetration, they must also be different from one another, i.e. non-interpenetrating or excluding one another. As such they would then fall outside the medium of the indifferent. Also, as exclusive of others, this medium is then a One, i.e. a unity which excludes an other. It is as exclusive of its properties, i.e. as a One, that the abstract *thinghood* becomes a Thing.

In other words, a Thing is considered different from its properties or **not** its properties. In *thinghood* each element is transparent to any other - both the medium and the properties. This is certainly a necessary aspect of the situation, but it is abstract since it does not give a full understanding. A Thing is **not** the same as its properties. This is the way we understand Things. At the same time the abstract aspect that is first considered is not wrong, it is just one *aspect* that *must* be there since the many properties do interpenetrate in one place. But this is only an aspect or moment of the whole and that is why it is considered abstract.

The One is the moment of negation since it *excludes*, or is **not**, the other. Negation is inherent as a property of determinateness since to determine means to negate. Determinateness is immediately one with the immediacy of Being since what something is determined as being, is considered its being. The immediate unity of being and the negative is the sensuous universal. An immediacy that is united with its negation or determination in this way is called universality, i.e. the universal is the negation of the singular immediate instance and therefore its determination - it tells us what the singular is. As a One, however, this determinateness or negation is itself excluded from it so that the One exists in and for itself. In other words, the

One is different from whatever determinations are made of it, e.g. its qualities.

Summary and completion of the Thing.

A Thing consists of all these moments taken together:

- 1) The indifferent medium or universality which includes the many properties or *matters*.
- 2) The negation, or the One which excludes the many properties.
- 3) The many properties themselves - i.e., the negation which is implicit in the *many* indifferently related properties [relates the negation in (2) to the indifference in (1)].

In so far as the different properties are considered part of the universal medium, they are indifferent to one another as universals. In so far as they are considered as different from each other, they are exclusive or different from the Thing as One. Both of these moments are necessary to the Thing. In addition, the pure universality develops through the properties as different from one another to the One as necessarily exclusive of those properties. It is in this sense that the properties form the link or unite the pure universality (*thinghood*) with the One. It is all these moments and their relations that finally constitute the Thing.

Notice how Hegel identifies the Thing as the totality of thought determinations and development that are intrinsically present in the concept of Thing. There is a flow of rational necessity that drives the progressive development from one moment to the next. Hegel does not discard anything of this process but incorporates it all as the comprehensive substance of whatever particular subject matter is under consideration. This process is followed throughout the *Phenomenology*. It is necessary to be careful of failing to account for anything or adding anything extraneous to the rational necessity that is intrinsic to the development of the subject matter itself.

(To be continued in next month's edition)