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Science and Scientist

Sadhu Sanga

WE ARE ALWAYS IN THE MIDST OF CONSCIOUSNESS

by

Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja



Question: According to what you are saying, matter is also conscious because it is coming from the Lord who is the Supreme Consciousness. In the beginning, when we first differentiate between matter and spirit, we learn that matter is dead and the living entities manipulate it, but when we develop a higher realization will we see that matter is also living?

Srila Sridhar Maharaja: Yes, and that is known as *Santa-rasa*. In a higher stage of realization we can

detect consciousness everywhere: within glass, stone, earth, wood—in all the innumerable shapes and colors in which matter may appear. We are always in the midst of consciousness. Consciousness is all-pervading, but is situated in different gradations of conception. The gradation of conception may differ, but it is all consciousness, all eternal: *pasu-buddhi-tanturajanam harisyeti*. We must try to reinstate ourselves in our own plane of reality. There, without the help of this mortal element, we can live happily. That transcendental plane is not a nondifferentiated world. It is not that there you have no individuality. If a nondifferentiated mass of consciousness can be admitted, then why should we not admit the existence of a system of consciousness?

Ramanuja says that it is a system. Sankaracharya says there is only a nondifferentiated mass of light-consciousness. Ramanuja disagrees. He says that a differentiated light-mass of consciousness is the basis of reality. It is not undifferentiated or non-distinguishable. And Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says that the basis of reality is *acintya bhedabheda*, inconceivable bipolarity. Everywhere there is something common and something different. Whatever opposing points you may discuss will have something in common, and something different. Nothing is quite the same as anything else. And above all, the infinite is not within your fist. It is inconceivable. The unified and differentiated character of reality is inconceivable; its secret is in the hand of the Supreme. It does not depend upon your whim. Still, that differentiated character of the Absolute will be seen differently according to the subjective relationship we have with Him.

Krishna consciousness means full-fledged theism, up to consortherhood. All conceptions of fulfillment are found there in their purest and most desirable position. This material world, however, is only a shadow, a black imitation of reality. Full-fledged theism means Krishna consciousness. In the full-fledged conception of theism, the Infinite embraces the whole of the finite. It comes down to completely embrace and welcome the finite. This kind of full-fledged theism is found in Vrindavan. There, one negligent part of the finite may find the bliss of the embrace of



Vrindavan

the whole of the Infinite. In Vrindavan, not a corner of the finite is left unfulfilled; every particle of sand and every creeper is well-represented there, with complete personality in the loving pastimes of Sri Krishna.

Here in this material world, however, a particle of sand is nothing; it is ignored. But there, everything is well-attended. In Vrindavan there is no ignorance. No interest of anything is ignored there; everything is harmonized, and therefore the conception of Vrindavan in Krishna consciousness is the highest conception of full-fledged theism. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* says, "Whenever Krishna sets his lotus feet within Vrindavan, the Earth personified says, 'My fate is fulfilled, I have achieved my highest fortune.'" In Vrindavan, the Earth, the very dust, feels the pleasure of the highest type of conjugal love merely by the touch of His lotus feet. Wherever Krishna puts his footsteps, the Earth's joy knows no bounds. By his touch, the Earth feels the most intense type of ecstasy. In Vrindavan, Krishna is *madhurya*, sweetness personified. He is *ananda*, ecstasy personified. And Krishna responds to our own inner demands in every way.

The Supreme Center has the peculiar capacity of responding to all our needs and satisfying the thirst of all existence. According

One can taste the sugar-candy sweetness of the Absolute, according to one's capacity, just as sugar candy is tasted in different ways. For a normal tongue sugar candy is very sweet, but if there is a boil on the tongue even sugar candy is bitter. When a man is working, his manager will see him as a worker; his child will see him as a father, and his wife will see him as a husband. His servant will see him as master. Dogs and other animals will view him in another way. The same person will be seen differently according to the relationship between seer and seen. Similarly, Krishna appears differently to those who view him according to their respective rasa. In this way, the differentiated character of the Absolute is revealed according to the soul's subjective qualifications.

—**Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja**

to their capacity, rank, and dignity, Krishna distributes to all souls the juice from the sweet sea of transcendental mellow, *yo yam Sraddha sa eva sah*. One can taste the sugar-candy sweetness of the Absolute, according to one's capacity, just as sugar candy is tasted in different ways. For a normal tongue, sugar candy is very sweet, but if there is a boil on the tongue even sugar candy is bitter. When a man is working, his manager will see him as a worker; his child will see him as a father, and his wife will see him as a husband. His servant will see him as master. Dogs and other animals will view him in another way. The same person will be seen differently according to the relationship between seer and seen. Similarly, Krishna appears differently to those who view him according to their respective *rasa*. In this way, the differentiated character of the Absolute is revealed according to the soul's subjective qualifications.

HOW COULD THE FIRST LIVING CELL ARISE TO GET EVOLUTION STARTED?

*A Discussion between Prof. Michael J. Behe and
Srila Bhaktisvarupa Damodara Goswami Maharaja (T. D. Singh, Ph.D.)**



Dr. T. D. Singh (Henceforth TDS): We all know that in the living bodies the stereochemistry of all the amino acids are present in L-forms and that of the sugar molecules in the D-forms. Why are they so? Did you think about this?

Prof. Michael J. Behe (Henceforth MJB): Yes, yes. Why are they all L-amino acids?

TDS: Is it part of the fine-tuning?

MJB: I don't know. I guess it's convenient to have them all one handed, one structure, than to have some D's and some L's.

TDS: But in nature the L and D forms occur exactly 50 percent. But why is one selectively utilized?

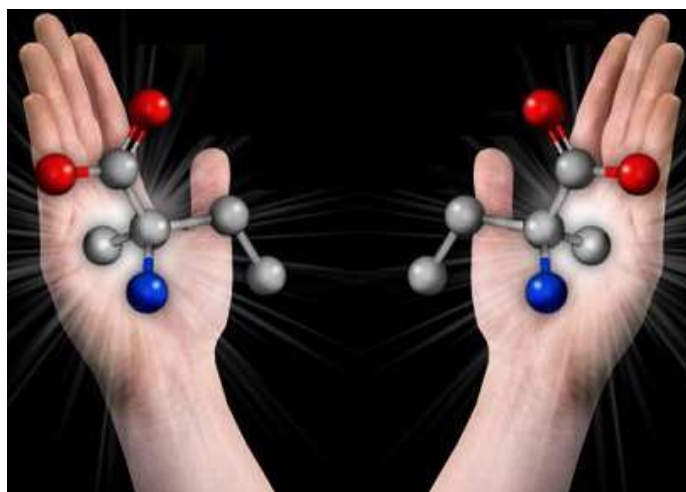
MJB: That's correct. That's been a big problem with the origin of life scenarios for a long time, as I'm sure you know.

TDS: But this could also be a part of the fine-tuning.

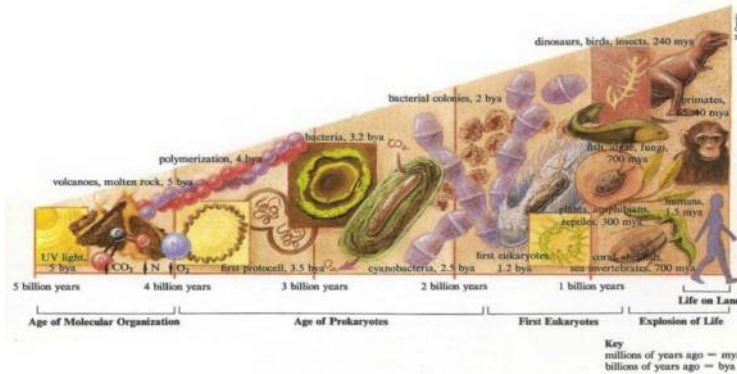
MJB: Yes, yes. I'm not quite sure how to think about that. It might start to come under the heading of design because you've got the two possibilities. Not that you just have one and use

that. You've got the L and the D isomers, and somehow, in the origin of life, only the L's had to get together to form proteins in the first cell. And whether that could occur by some physical process, even a fine-tuned physical process, is open to question. It suggests that somebody kind of picked them out and put them together. At least to me it suggests that there was a finely tuned process that allowed that to occur. But that's open for discussion, I think.

TDS: I'd like to bring up the topic of molecular evolution. Recently, I had a dialogue with Prof. Paul Lauterbur at the Department of Chemistry, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He received the Noble Prize in 2003 for discovering Magnetic Resonance Imaging, MRI. Although originally a chemist, he received the award for Physiology and Medicine, because he was working on NMR mostly. Then he went into MRI. He is currently interested in the origin of life. He has a new theory on molecular evolution, which he calls "molecular impressions." This is not yet in any journal, but when I was at his office he showed me an unpublished manuscript. I bring this up as an example to show that people are still extremely interested in the study of origin of life. I am



Carbon atom produces a tetrahedral structure with a geometric symmetry. When four different atoms or groups of atoms are bonded to the four corners of such a tetrahedral structure, two different spatial configurations are possible. Although both forms have the same structural formula they cannot be superimposed, but are, in fact, mirror images of each other. Two stereo isomers are possible for each carbon atom. Stereo isomers like left and right hands, are mirror images of each other and cannot be superimposed on one another. The carbon amino acid alanine has a single asymmetric carbon atom in the center and thus has two stereo isomers called L-alanine and D-alanine. Both stereo isomers of alanine occur in nature but only L-alanine is present as a component of proteins. Similarly, the backbone of RNA and DNA molecules contain only right handed sugars.



Molecular Evolution

wondering what your point of view about molecular evolution is in which scientists present that simple chemicals will lead to complex molecules, such as proteins and DNA and life may emerge eventually from complex molecular reactions. Is this conception that molecular biologists or molecular evolutionists conceive right, or could there be some other possibility?



How it got to the first living cell is so utterly unknown. Anybody is free to speculate about what would have happened. One should recognize that one's ideas are speculations. At least they are not justified by physical evidence at this point.

—Prof. Michael J. Behe

MJB: Well that, I think, is very hard to know. Here is the way I look at it. Assuming that the universe unfolded in the standard way that people think, with the big bang and so on—there were many chemicals around, some of which were the same as those that appear in living systems today, while some weren't the same. Somehow the first cell had to appear. Some of the chemicals would have been around, some wouldn't have been around. How it got to the first living cell is so utterly unknown, anybody is free to speculate about what would have happened. One should recognize that one's ideas are speculations. At least they are not justified by physical evidence at this point. And some people forget that their ideas are speculations because they assume that only physical processes unaided by anything were involved. But as far as I am concerned, one is free to think that life arose in some manner by the interaction of chemicals, maybe directed, certainly directed from my point of view, but from pre-existing chemicals. I think one is free to say that, no, something else may have happened and maybe it was not even continuous with the chemical processes that were going on before then.

* The text, illustrations and captions excerpted from *God, Intelligent Design and Fine-Tuning—A dialogue between T. D. Singh and Michael J. Behe*, Published by Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata, First Printing: 2005—modified for this publication.

A DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF PHENOMENOLOGY

by

Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.



The nature of the philosophical description of consciousness requires a mode of reflection that is different from ordinary understanding, including most of what transpires in

the name of philosophy. Therefore, it will be helpful to review once again the basic development that has been covered thus far in previous articles.

The experience of consciousness begins with sense-certainty, in which truth or being is considered to be given immediately in the particular external sensuous object. When the object is considered in relation to consciousness, however, it is the consciousness of the object that becomes the essential, so that what is in the universal substance of consciousness is considered the actual truth or being of the object, rather than the individual object in or by itself. This elevation or mediation is called perception or perceptual consciousness.

Thus, while the object is maintained as object of consciousness, its essential truth is the universal. But the form of consciousness in which the essence (truth) of an object is a universal, is that of an object perceived in the form of its properties (which are universals), i.e., as an object that manifests itself in its properties.

The word “properties” implies that they are the properties of something, so that the object is implicitly preserved even when we refer only to its properties. Since “properties” is plural or manifold, and many-ness implies difference, the properties are therefore determinate. As determinate the properties negate or exclude each other; each is therefore a One. Likewise, the properties as One’s also exclude that of which they are the properties, while the object as a One similarly distinguishes itself from its properties. An object that is a One with properties is called a Thing.

The particular object, apprehended as a One, is nonetheless essentially universal for perceptual consciousness, as previously explained. In spite of this, consciousness still takes the object to be the essential truth and, in order to preserve that truth, considers its apprehension (the *consciousness* of the object) to be false or unessential.

But perceptual consciousness knows only the various properties,

and not the object itself. The properties, as various or different from one another, are themselves sensuous universals, i.e. have being or truth in themselves. Therefore consciousness now takes what is object to it (the sensuous universals) as having sensuous being and thereby ceases to be perception and is led back to sense-certainty. This, however, is sense-certainty that is *arrived* at, unlike the immediacy of sense-certainty in the beginning. It is a *return* to sense-certainty, and as such an intermediate state is implied. A *return* to sense-certainty means that the object that is apprehended necessarily includes this intermediate state, thus the Truth of the object in its immediacy is now altered by this implicit intermediate. This intermediate is consciousness’ knowledge of its own responsibility for what it is perceiving as an object. This will ultimately lead to the understanding of the object in its purity.

Consciousness oscillates between considering the Oneness of the Thing as due to itself with the Many-ness of the properties attributed to the object, or the Many-ness of the properties as due to itself and the Oneness arising from the object. The Thing is then considered as having two distinct aspects: (1) the way the thing exhibits or manifests itself *to consciousness*, (2) the way the thing is *in itself*—reflected into itself, opposite of the way it presents itself to consciousness. Thus there appears to be two things:

- (1) the object in and for itself—having its own existence
- (2) the object as it is for consciousness

What is *for itself* implies that it is *not* for another. What is *for* another implies *not* being for itself. But how can one object have these two contradictory aspects?

To be for itself implies relation, and relation implies mediation or negation. Thus for itself is the negation of itself as immediacy or the supersession of its immediacy. To be for another likewise implies the supersession of the immediacy of a thing. Therefore for-itself is essentially the same as for-another—the two can coexist without contradiction since they are identical in essence, i.e., they are essentially a (synthetic) unity. In this way the Thing in-itself and for-itself, as having its own being, is overcome just as the immediacy of being in sense-certainty was previously overcome.

The immediacy of being in sense-certainty was overcome by universality (perception), yet this universality was afflicted by sensuousness, viz. the object was still there as *object* while its being or truth was taken up (superseded) by consciousness. Likewise the Thing is simultaneously a One (particular) as well as a manifold of properties or “free matters” (universal)—thus it

is a distinct, specific Thing and is also that which is determined only in relation to other Things.

All of these considerations when taken together express the full essential nature of the Thing (universal), yet the Thing in itself still remains as an existence for another (particular). It is only when the being-for-itself of the Thing is understood as identical to its being-for-another that the sensuous otherness is overcome and one reaches the original synthetic unity of the Concept (*G. Begriff*) which contains all the different yet inseparable moments of essentiality, unessentiality, particularity, universality, distinction and relatedness. In other words, the Thing is simply the nature of the Understanding which constitutes it, and in which all the conflicting moments are unified. This is the Unconditioned, because the Thing as a sensuous other, or thing-in-itself, is overcome by the recognition of the identity of being-for-itself and for-another, i.e. both are the same mediated immediacies.

Common sense or consciousness as perception thinks it is dealing with substantial things which have their own being, when in fact thought or the activity of consciousness is at work and present in each and every moment. Without recognizing this presence of thought in its experiences, consciousness becomes dominated by that which is abstracted from itself, as having a being on its own, and does not realize that the things which appear to be outside and beyond itself are its own essence, intimately integrated with it. It is in this way that perceptual consciousness fails to arrive at the Truth of Things (since it does not acknowledge the constitutive role of consciousness) and is rather left to reveal its own untruth (since it thereby deals only with abstractions). This may also be considered a reference to Kant's philosophy that Hegel criticized as being only at the level of perceptual

consciousness.

The consciousness of Understanding deals with the aspects or the "in-so-far-as" perspective of things. It does not deal with



G. W. F. Hegel

things in their contradictory wholeness. Rational consciousness, however, deals with wholes that are only abstractly divided for the sake of Understanding. It is the task of Reason to determine how to deal with wholes as wholes. Most importantly, is that comprehension of the whole, even when that is attained, puts the comprehending consciousness outside the whole that it is comprehending. This is therefore *not* the whole as it is in and for itself. The whole must include the

consciousness comprehending it as well as everything else, and it must have its own being beyond any finite conception of it, and in fact produce the finite conception of itself. It is perhaps one of the most significant achievements of Hegelian philosophy to be able to reach this goal—Truth in and for itself and not only for consciousness. Another is that Hegel is able to expound a scientific system that deals with a substantial Reality that is essentially Subject, i.e. a Truth that is rationally conscious of itself—God. And finally within his system he is able to deal with all the problems of philosophy in a consistently methodical way that proves to be both necessary and complete. All of this is the product and development of Reason which is the integrating and differentiating substance of Reality that is essentially Subject—viz., the Absolute Reason of God.

Subjective Evolution of Consciousness



Evolution is generally thought of as something merely objective. But objective evolution is a misperception of reality. Evolution is actually based on consciousness, which is subjective. Subjective evolution, however, seems to be objective evolution to those who are ignorant of this perspective.

Consciousness seems to be the unessential embedded in a concrete substance, but actually it is just the opposite. Consciousness is the substantial and its objective content or world is floating on it connected by a shadowy medium like mind. This view finds surprising support in advanced modern science from which physicists like Paul Davies have concluded that it is necessary to adopt "a new way of thinking that is in closer accord with mysticism than materialism."

The dynamic supersubjective living reality that produces as much as is produced by its constituent subjective and objective fragmental parts or moments is in and for itself the embodiment of ecstasy, i.e. forever beyond the static reification of materialistic misunderstanding. With an irresistible passion for truth, Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja, the author of *Subjective Evolution of Consciousness* takes us to an incomparable synthesis of thought from Descartes, Berkeley and Hegel in the West to Buddha, Shankara, and Sri Chaitanya in the East to reveal the ultimate conception of reality in all its comprehensive beauty and fulfillment.

**To obtain the book *Subjective Evolution of Consciousness* please contact us at:
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