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The Harmonizer

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Published Monthly

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DIVINE SERVITOR

by

Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswami Maharaja



Without service to Nityananda Prabhu we will not achieve anything. Nityananda Prabhu means Gurudev. The incarnation of Nityananda Prabhu is Sri Gurudev. His position is just like Krishna's, rather it is even more than Krishna's. What Krishna cannot do, Nityananda Prabhu can do. That is His very heavy and powerful position. And by the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu we must get entrance into the *lila*

of *Radha-Krishna*. What Mahaprabhu wants to distribute in this mundane plane is *Krishna-seva* under guidance of Radharani. That is the highest goal of our life. By the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu we must receive that opportunity. Srila Guru Maharaja's line is very clear. Through service we can reach the goal, otherwise there is no possibility. Always the mood of service will give us enthusiasm to engage with even more of a serving attitude. By that mood of service we can achieve everything.

Srila Guru Maharaja gives the example of a boy playing football. The football always comes to the feet of a good football player. For one who can play nicely, the football always comes to him. The center-forward is very clever and swift, but one who cannot play properly is always running around the whole ground but the ball is always far from his feet. Similarly, for one who can do *seva*, *seva* will come to him more and more. This is a very nice example for us. It is necessary to sincerely try to serve and in this way we will find that we are always engaged; and by the mercy of Srila Guru Maharaja we must fulfill his desire. We are only to sincerely try to serve and it is good if we do not involve ourselves with any result that may come. Sometimes the result may come very nicely and sometimes no result may come but we are not to involve ourselves with that. In *Srimad Bhagavad-gita 2.14* Krishna says in regard to the mundane world's affairs:

*matra-sparsas tu kaunteya sitosna-sukha-duhkha-dah
agamapayino 'nityas tams titikhasva bhārata*

Everything in this mundane plane is sometimes coming and sometimes going. Sometimes there is happiness and sometimes sadness. Sometimes we have good food, sometimes bad food. Sometimes we achieve what we want and sometimes we do not. But service life is not like that. We must not involve ourselves with any mundane matter. We must involve ourselves with service and we must try to fulfill our service, but the result is in the hand of Krishna. Whatever comes may be good or may be bad but as much as possible I must always try to be successful. This is our life, and joyfulness and success must finally come to us. Since so long ago, in my life also I have seen many things happen but ultimately I have been successful. During the time of Srila Guru Maharaja many times many things happened in this Math, but he told me, "Don't be upset, this is your duty and any result will come through Krishna, that result must be good for you." This is the way we must try to serve. We shall try to engage in the particular service in which we have capacity and with which we are familiar. But first importance will be given to following instructions. If instruction will come for us to do service for which we are not accustomed, or which is against our nature, then we are to prepare ourselves for that.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION-EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOUL (VEDANTIC PERSPECTIVE)

by

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



Vedantic science describes evolution as the journey of the innumerable conscious particles of life (souls or spiritons) in time and space as they travel from one form of body to another under the laws of *karma* (cause and effect). Each living entity's degree or level of consciousness, *guna* (quality) and *karma* (activity) will determine the direction of his evolutionary path. Darwin's mistake was that he could not conceive the ex-

istence of consciousness or a spiritual soul. Thus, *Vedanta* does not accept Darwin's theory of evolution. Under normal circumstances, consciousness evolves linearly as well as step-wise. The different bodies or forms to accommodate a specific conscious being are already arranged by nature within a cosmic plan (*mayadhyaksena prakrith – Bhagavad-Gita 9.10*). As stated before, *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* describes as, *asitim caturas caiva laksams tan jiva-jatisu bhramadbhiih purusaih prapyam manusyam janma-paryayat*, meaning there are 8,400,000 forms of life and one gets the human form of life after having changed 8.0×10^6 other forms of life. Furthermore, *Padma Purana* gives a detailed statement regarding different forms of life as follows:

*jalaja nava-laksani sthavara laksa-vimsati
krmayo rudra-sankhyakah paksinam dasa laksanam
trimsal-laksani pasavah catur-laksani manusah*

Translation: There are 900,000 forms of life in the water, and 2,000,000 forms of trees and other plants. Then, there are 1,100,000 species of small living beings, insects and reptiles, and 1,000,000 species of birds. Finally, there are 3,000,000 varieties of beasts and 400,000 human species.



The biological forms impose a limitation in the development of consciousness. Therefore, different degrees of consciousness are expressed through these different bodies. *Vedanta* divides the degrees of consciousness into five broad categories: *acchadita* (covered), *sankucita* (shrunken), *mukulita* (budding), *vikacita* (blooming) and *purnavikacita* (fully bloomed).¹

Trees and plants, for example, are almost inert. They fall into the category of 'covered consciousness'. However, when we observe them carefully, we see that they have a limited consciousness. Jagadish Chandra Bose reported that plants have consciousness.² Other living entities, such as worms, insects, and other animals are in 'shrunken consciousness'. They are not as covered as plants, but their consciousness is not fully developed either.

Human beings have 'budding consciousness'. A bud appears shrunken, but it has the potential to bloom into a flower. Human consciousness has similar potential. So, human beings have the innate ability to develop their consciousness to an almost unlimited extent, up to the point of knowing the Absolute Truth. Other species do not have this special ability. That is why *Vedanta* declares that the human form of life is the most elevated and inquiry into the *Brahman*, the Absolute Truth, God is especially

meant for the human form of life.

Consciousness continues to evolve in this way because the goal of life is to attain the *saccidananda* state of consciousness. Thus, in *Vedanta*, life is distinct from the material bodies it inhabits. In the human form of life, when one begins to sincerely inquire about *Brahman*, Absolute Truth, God, one's bud-like spiritual consciousness begins to expand or evolve. That is the 'blooming' state of consciousness. When as a result of his inquiry, he practices regulated spiritual discipline, he evolves further and further. Finally, he attains complete transcendental realization, God consciousness, the 'fully bloomed' state of consciousness.

In *Vedic* cosmology, there are periodic cycles known as *yuga* cycles (ages) and creation and annihilation of the material world along with living beings take place continuously like changes of seasons. There are four *yugas* in each *yuga* cycle namely, *Satya*, *Treta*, *Dvapara* and *Kali* and the seeds of life, spiritons are injected by the Supreme Lord into the womb of material nature. When the appropriate cosmic cycle appears, many different biological forms manifest in that particular *yuga* cycle. Also according to *Vedanta*, since all biological forms have already been existing in subtle states, either manifested or unmanifested, embodied life on earth would start, in principle, from any organism-bacteria, plants, birds, animals, human beings, etc., according to the subtle laws of *karma*. Thus, *Vedantic* cosmology supports the simultaneous manifestation of many organisms. This principle is in direct contradiction with the Darwinian paradigm.

If the existence of the soul or 'spiriton' is recognized in Darwinian paradigm then the spiritual paradigm of *Vedanta* could integrate the Darwinian paradigm. Thus the missing element in neo-Darwinian paradigm or molecular biology is the spiritual soul or 'spiriton'. However, in *vedantic* paradigm, consciousness evolves and the biological forms are designed in such a way that each form can accommodate the evolving conscious level of the living entity. This process is also known as the transmigration of the soul.

During the life of each universe, by the *karma* of the conscious living beings, some living forms manifest in certain periods of the different *kalpas*³ and some may not. Also, there are partial and complete annihilations of the universe bringing catastrophes in which a whole group of living forms can disappear. Thus, in the *Vedantic* account of cosmology, it is reasonable to assume that one will be unable to find a systematic account of universal or global history in fossil records. In the *Vedantic* model, the disappearance of the giant lizards, or dinosaurs, which is still a mystery to Western science, is not unreasonable.

References:

1. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura (1896), *Jaiva-Dharma*, Chapter, 16, (translated by the author from the original Bengali) 3rd Edition 2002, Sree Chaitanya Gaudeya Math (Reg).
2. "... In many other ways we are able to find that the plant has a heart that beats continuously as long as life remains." [Cf. Dibakarsen and Ajoy Kumar Chakraborty, *J. c. Bose Speaks*, Puthipatra, Calcutta, 2000, pp.153, 195-200.]
3. 1000 cycles of four *yugas* (ages).

CONNECTION BETWEEN DETERMINATION AND NEGATION

by

Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.

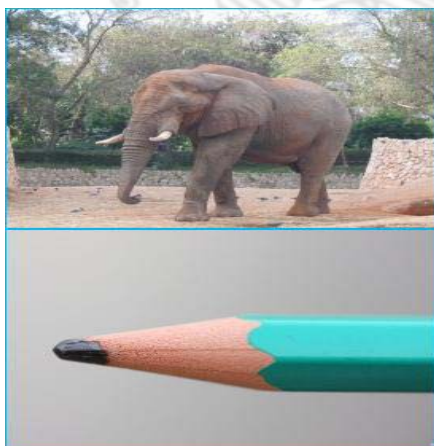


Complementarity

Niels Bohr gave us the model of the atom as having a central nucleus around which electrons were circulating in stable orbits. He also gave us the complementarity principle that states that the mutually exclusive wave and corpuscular nature of light were not merely contradictory but complementary descriptions.

Field theory considers light as a continuous wave phenomenon with a wavelength and frequency, while quantum theory considers its corpuscular nature as a discrete packet of energy called a photon. Thus we actually have an opposition of a continuous-discontinuous description concerning the fundamental nature of light. In line with what we have been discussing about the nature of reality as having an intrinsic polar nature, we have yet another confirmation at even the atomic level of investigation. This harks back to Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" where in his second antinomy he tried to show that the continuous and discontinuous descriptions of the cosmos were both possible although they were mutually exclusive of each other. Kant tried to demonstrate that this was a limitation of the way we think about the world, i.e. a defect of reason since the world is obviously content to go on as a single reality regardless of how we understand it. But we are showing here that our understanding of the world does not have to be antagonistic to it if we understand it properly. For Kant, opposites merely exclude one another. We are claiming that not only do they exclude each other but also they depend upon each other for either to exist at all.

Although we started out with a broad concept of distinct and inseparable elements, we are now able to narrow this down to a more specific principle. All of the instances we have discussed so far involved a specific kind of distinction, namely, opposites. Distinction may be related to things that are not opposites.



For instance, a pencil is not an elephant. Non-opposing distinctions like this are called mere varieties and not oppositions. Such varieties have a unity that is much more complex than the simple polarity we are investigating. Distinct opposites are therefore the specific inseparable unities that we are actually

concerned with. This requires that we have to look more at the concept of things rather than the things themselves in order to understand their opposition. It would be hard to understand the opposite of a pencil if we looked around to find out which of the various items in our room would correspond to that. The concept of pencil, however, would indicate to us that it is a writing instrument. The associated object of writing is what is written. And this would certainly be the negation of the pencil, even tangibly, especially if you did a lot of writing!

What we are trying to convey here is that it is the CONCEPT of things that is the main principle we have been discussing in all of the examples mentioned so far. Subject and object are general concepts, and although they may refer to specific things such as an individual person as subject and a particular object of the world they are nonetheless concepts that can in general refer to any individual or any object. Thus a concept is a universal or thought. But this would be a one-sided view of the concept – wouldn't it? If we considered the concept only in its universality we would be guilty of neglecting its necessary opposite – the particular. It is here that we can see the power and the difficulty that the consistent application of polarity presents us with. Thinking wants to rest on one's hard-earned conclusions and stop there and relish its victory. But in our newfound polar reality that will not be possible. We can not be satisfied until we have a complete, well-rounded understanding. A half circle will not do, we have to come full circle and consider all the sides.

Finally, before we get to the scientific considerations of all this, we will mention the inseparable distinction between knowledge and what is known. This will be especially important in our discussion of the Phenomenology. Knowledge cannot exist independently of what is known, and the known is not independent of our knowledge of it. This simple point is often overlooked, especially in understanding the relation of knowledge to the Absolute Truth.

Everything is contradictory.

Opposites are clearly distinct entities or concepts for us, but it may not be so clear why they are inseparably related to one another. Logically speaking, one is the negation of the other. Thus night is not day, subject is not object, etc. And this negation is mutual, so that in general if we say that A is not B, then B is not A is true as well. Before we can say anything about differences between A and B, however, we want to know what A is itself. All we know about A is that it is A, or $A = A$. If we look carefully at what we just said (or wrote) we just introduced a distinction in A. First of all we mentioned "what we know about A" and secondly we said "it is A." To "know" A implies that there is A and there is our knowing about it. This means the knowledge of A and the A itself which is known are distinct from each other. The statement "it is A" implies that we come upon an indeterminate "it" and determine it to be A. We mean to express an identity but we introduce distinction. This is also true when we state $A = A$. First of all, to talk about equality means that comparison is involved. We

have to have at least two things to determine whether they are equal or not. So what two things are being compared when we say $A = A$? Basically what we are saying is this: this thing that we call A or name A, corresponds with what we mean by A. Thus it is really a relation of the being of A with the thought of A.

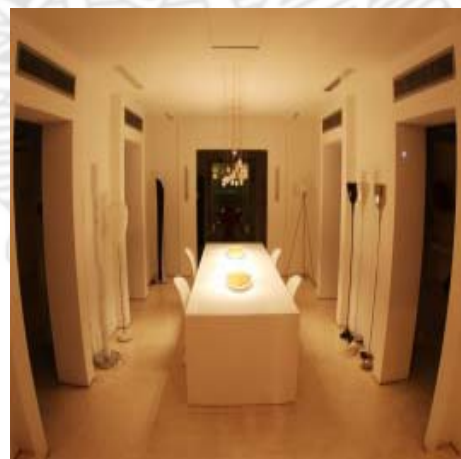
Certainly this is very abstract, so let's bring it into practical perspective. If someone asked you to identify yourself, what would you do? You can't just say, I am I, when you want to prove your identity to someone outside yourself. Even within yourself you are making a distinction. The "I am" part implies the being of yourself, and the last I implies the part of you that is aware of that being of yourself, and the whole statement is the fact that they are equal to each other. But for others some document or something different from yourself needs to be presented. In either case difference is involved in establishing identity.

In general, propositions are in the form: Subject is predicate. Thus in the proposition "Man is mortal," Man is the subject and mortal is the predicate. The predicate describes the subject in some specific way. The predicate can thus also be called a determination of the subject. For example, "the table is green" means that we have determined the color of the table as being green. We may also determine it as being hard, or smooth, etc. Determination is a word that is often found in Hegel's books, so we want to have a clear idea of what this word implies. A "termination" means an end or negation. Thus to terminate a project means to stop or put an end to it. The termination of a table would be the edge of it, etc. In this sense, termination can also mean limit, or where a thing ends. If we draw a square, the outside lines are the limit of the square or where the square is not. In that sense the limit is the negation of the square, or termination of it. In the same sense "determination" is a termination, limit or negation of something. Thus to determine that the table is green is to limit the table to that particular color out of all the possible colors. In that case it is likewise a negation of all other colors except green. In fact to call an object a table is in this sense to determine it as a table or to negate all other possible objects in the universe besides table. So when we come upon an object and ask, "What is it," the indeterminate "it" which may be anything (because it is at first undetermined) must be determined. In other words, all other possibilities except one must be negated, to say, "It is a table." The indeterminate "it" is negated as indeterminate to become the determinate, in this case, table.

This is an important point, because what we are saying here is that the complete whole is being negated in order to establish a part of it as a whole. The complete whole contains the table as one of its parts. To extract that part from the whole and "see" it as a whole in itself requires negation of the greater whole. This is something cognitive psychologists deal with everyday, and which philosophers forget everyday. It is not only the positive presence of an object that is to be understood, but the negation of the whole is also an essential part of every object. As a "part" an entity has a being that is FOR the whole that it is part of. In other words its being is not considered separately from that of the being of the complete whole. When this entity or part is considered apart from the complete whole, as a whole in itself, then its being in itself is to be apprehended. Thus being in itself refers to determinate being. We have to terminate the continuity of the specific part within the unity of the complete whole in order to separate it out or extract it for consideration as a whole itself. This is determination or negation of the part's connection to the complete whole. However, we must note that the complete whole does not thereby

suffer a diminution by this extraction. In other words, although determination may be likened to a cutting out of, say a table, from the complete whole, it is not that a hole is left in the complete whole where the table was. The complete whole remains as it was with the part in tact, for this is the meaning of the COMPLETE whole.

Being in itself, or determinate being, is being that has been cut off from its unity with the complete whole. Because it is limited or negated, i.e. terminates at specific boundaries, it is finite. In order for the part to be considered a whole in itself, the complete whole of which it is a part has to be negated. So we can say that the part negates the complete whole. At the same time, however, the complete whole also negates the part since they are different from each other. When the complete whole negates the part, the part becomes transformed into a whole itself. When the part negates the complete whole, the complete whole remains as it was before the negation, complete in itself. So we have a case where there is reciprocal negation but the results in each case are fundamentally different. In negating the part a transformation occurs, while in negating the complete whole we get the complete whole back again. Negation should produce something different or contrary to what was negated, however, in the case of the complete whole the negation or what is other than (or if we think spatially – "outside") the complete whole is the same as the original complete whole. When we try to go "outside" of something but find the same thing there as "inside" have we really gone outside at all? Such a situation in which we find the same thing inside as outside, in which the other is the same thing as that which it is other to is called the infinite, or literally non-finite. The infinite is non-finite because there are no boundaries, no limits, no place where it is not or where it is finished, finite or fini – ended. At the same time it does not thereby exclude negation. It is rather negation that establishes it as infinite, because it is only by negation that we apprehend that the infinite is indeed infinite or that which becomes other to itself and yet remains itself in such "othering." This means that the other or negation is present in the infinite. If we think about this carefully, it also means that the finite is present in the infinite, because other implies distinction, and distinction implies definite boundaries or finitude. This, however, should not be confusing to us because if we remember the polar nature of reality that we first discussed, the infinite and finite cannot exist independently from one another if either is to make sense. They must be interpenetrating and interdependent as we are seeing here at a more detailed level of investigation. There is still a deeper level yet, but we will get to that.



It seems like we would have to do a lot of work simply to say, "It is a table!" Perhaps you will never look at "it" in quite the same way again. Logically, negation of the complete whole is what is implied. Practically speaking, if you asked someone to pick up a cup, they would have to be

able to distinguish the cup from the table, or know that the cup was not the table, or not the picture on the wall, etc. So practically we also have to negate the environment around that particular object upon which we are focused. Focusing is not only a positive activity; it is also a negative or negating activity. So determination is negation. This was Spinoza's dictum: "determinatio negatio est." It will be important when reading Hegel to keep in mind this connection between determination and negation.

Now that we know that determination or limit means negation, we can understand distinction or difference as negation. To state that A is different from B means that A is not B, and that B is not A. One is related to the negation of the other, and this is what we mean by difference. Since we have seen that $A = A$ implies a distinction within itself, this distinction implies that a negation is involved. If the cup is different from the table, then the cup is not the table, and likewise the table is not the cup. This "not" is the negation. In the case of an identity, a cup is a cup, means that any cup that "is" there fits the thought we have of cup. The distinction here is between the being of a cup and the thought of the cup. In other words, one is the negation of the other.

Within identity there is difference. Both A and not A are found within A. This distinction is based on the way we think about an identity. We distinguish between the being and the thought of A. Furthermore, we distinguish being from thought, and this distinction involves a negation. Thought is the negation of being. Being is the negation of thought. Although we will eventually learn that being is the barest and most abstract of concepts, at the immediate level we are considering here, being implies something of substantial significance to us. Thought on the other hand, seems quite the contrary – to be very insubstantial – only a thought. If being is to imply what has substantiality and bulk, something that is found in space and time, then thought is that which is quite ephemeral and without substance and cannot be found anywhere in space and time. In this sense thought and being are quite distinct from each other. This distinction is their negation. Thus thought is the negation of being.

We don't generally think of thought as being the negation of things. Yet the thought of a thing and the thing itself are distinct and quite contrary to one another, even though we consider them to be identical. Thus when I am driving down the road and I see a red traffic light, I don't make a distinction between the thought of the red traffic light and the actual traffic light. In general, although everything in our lives involves this difference we don't usually make anything of this difference. It is only when we start thinking about things philosophically that the difference may come to our attention. Of course there are other instances when this distinction may be important. If we walked into a dark room and stepped on a rope but thought it was a snake, the difference between the thought and thing would become apparent to us. We may think the sun to be a small disc moving in the sky, but more careful thought would reveal something quite different. So we have to

agree that thought and things are different, despite our tendency to ignore that difference in ordinary life.

Thought is the negation of being.

Therefore, thought is the negation of being, and knowing is also the negation of what is known. The word "know" sounds just like the word "no" in English. To know something is to "no" it, or negate it. We generally think that we have gained something positive through knowing, but actually we have negated what is known. At the same time we have gained something – knowledge. A positive has been produced out of a negative. And this is an important principle about negation. Negation doesn't mean annihilation. If thought is the negation of being then that thought is not nothing. Just as day is the negation of night does not mean that night is nothing. During the day, night is certainly absent or totally negated. But this non-existence of night during the day does not mean that night has no existence or is nothing. Sleep is the negation of waking but certainly sleep is something real. Negation is an affirmation or just as positive as the positive itself. But it is an affirmation of what is NOT present. What is not present must also BE in order to recognize that it is not present.

The identity of a thing includes its distinction or negation. Everything in being what it is contains its negation, or what it is not. Thus thought and the thing are inseparably connected in spite of being related negatively to each other. In this way everything is intrinsically contradictory. There is also extrinsic or external contradiction. Understanding this requires a careful discrimination of the different types of being. Generally we do not think of being as differentiated. Considering the way things have been progressing in this discussion so far, we may be ready to recognize difference in the least expected places. Basically we have to consider two types of being. Being-in-itself and being-for-itself or for another.



yet for itself a fully developed human being. Here we are distinguishing being in itself in the sense of potentiality and being for itself as what it is in actuality.

Hegel gives the example of a seed or an embryo to explain the difference that is implied here. Because the seed of an oak tree will grow into an oak tree, we can say that the seed is potentially or implicitly an oak tree. In this sense the seed is an oak tree in itself or implicitly. A fully developed oak tree is an oak tree for itself, or explicitly as such. Likewise, a human embryo is in itself a human being but not