

# The Harmonizer

Science, Philosophy, Religion and Art are all branches of the same tree of knowledge

## Search for the whole Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja

The innate principle of life is to save one's own self, to become immortal, to come out of ignorance, and to become happy. Our very existence is being threatened at every second here where we live also, ignorance is threatening to cover our knowledge and we are always being threatened to be swallowed by misery. These are our standing enemies, our born enemies which are constantly threatening us. We must fight them in a scientific way and find out how to get free from them. They threaten our very existence, our very knowledge and our very sense of happiness. *bhidyate hrdaya-granthis, chidyante sarva-samsayah ksiyante casya karmmani, mayi drete 'khalatmani* (Bhagavatam, 11.20.30). When we gain the proper solution, all questions will disappear. That which is almost impossible and unthinkable - such a solution we will gain from the ancient scripture Srimad-Bhagavatam. Such a stage is possible. What is that? *Bhidyate hrdaya-granthis* - all the ties within the heart will be unloosened. The heart is full of different bindings. We tie ourselves with this idea, that idea - thousands of ideas. We are tied down by: "I like this. I like that. I like it." But there is a certain type of knowledge that may descend within us that will cause all these bindings to be unloosened at once. At once we will find that so many ties are all unnecessary: so unloosen them, unloosen them all. They are our enemies. We thought them to be our friends and we wanted to tie ourselves with them. Unloosen! Unloosen! Unloosen! They are not friends - but are all enemies - therefore all the ties of the heart are to be broken off. *Bhidyate hrdaya-granthis* is in the first stage: to become free of the ties of activity - karma. And the layer of knowledge is the next stage, *chidyante sarva-samsayah*: there are so many doubts; doubts after doubts, but just as mist disappears, all doubts will be cleared. There is such a stage: a plane free from all doubt. The Upanisads also come and say: *yasmin jnate sarvnam idam vijnatam bhavati yasmin prapte sarvnam idam praptam bhavati tad vijjnasasva tadeva brahma*. Enquiry is good, but enquire like a proper man, in a proper, scientific way. Search. Search for the particular thing which equates to the search of everything. Come to search that thing which will solve your entire problem. Searching after this, searching after the wants of A, searching after B, searching after C - dismiss all these mad ideas. Search only after the one thing that will satisfy everything. It is possible. *Yasmin jnate sarvnam idam vijnatam bhavati* - if we know that one point, everything is known. If we get that thing, everything is achieved. Is it possible? Yes, it is possible! And when we come to such faith, then it is real faith: it is *sradha*. It is possible - there is the central truth. If we know that, everything is known. If we get that, everything is got. So, if you want to be a student, study such a thing of absolute characteristic, the grand characteristic, not partial. Search for the whole, the conception of the whole. That will take us to the understanding of the one ruling polarity, the one unity, the oneness of the whole: the idea that from one point the whole of our conception is being controlled and ruled. The One in the whole and the One is the Master of the whole, and if I can be acquainted with that One, I will be acquainted with the whole. We are to search for the Master of the conscious plane. Almost everything depends upon consciousness. External sensations and perceptions all depend upon consciousness. A 'thing' means a perception of the thing by eye or by touch, etc. Everything that we experience in this world is a cluster of perceptions, sensations - and the whole thing is based on consciousness. So we are to search for the Master, the King of the conscious world. We have no engagement in this mundane world except to search for the cause, the prime cause. In different stages of life there is gradation of cause up to the land of beauty and love. We are to withdraw there. Back to God, back to home. Back to the centre. Home - not only consciousness.



### The Harmonizer

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Published monthly

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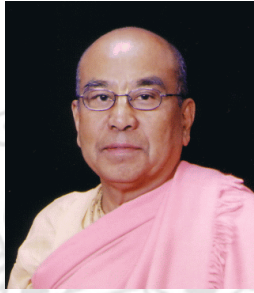
# Body and Soul

By

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

## Consciousness: Infinite and Infinitesimal

According to Vedanta there are two categories of consciousness, universal and individual. The Supreme Being, God, is conscious of everything in the universe whereas the living entities are conscious of only themselves. The ontological nature of consciousness is non-physical. Sankhya darsan of the Srimad-Bhagavatam (Canto 3, Chapter 26) explains that life, 'spiriton', is characterized by the presence of a quantum of consciousness and it remains in a separate domain. In the Bhagavad-Gita (15.7), we find: *mamaivamso jivaloke jivabhutah sanatanah*, meaning, all living beings are eternal and conscious particles of the Supreme Lord. In the pure spiritual form, the living entities are also transcendental and their bodies are also made up of the three spiritual elements that make up the transcendental body of *Isvara*, God. However, the difference between *Isvara*, God and *jiva*, [1] the living entity is that the consciousness of the Supreme Being, God is universal (all pervasive) whereas the consciousness of the *jiva*, living being is localized. In the words of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, *Isvara*, God is Absolute Infinity and *jiva*, the living entity is absolute infinitesimal. In other words, the living being has the same spiritual quality as that of the Supreme Lord. But, the capacity of the living being is limited whereas the capacity of the Supreme Being is unlimited. The human soul, however intelligent he/she may be, will always remain subordinate to the Consciousness



of the Supreme Lord.

## Mind, Body and Spiritual Particle, "Spiriton"

According to Vedanta, every living being is a conscious life particle, spiriton or atman and has mind and intelligence. Vedanta proclaims that all living beings including microorganisms possess mind and intelligence. George Wald, the Nobel Laureate in biology, was struck by the intelligence depicted in the behavior of a simple single cell entity. Seeing the intelligent behavior of a ciliate protozoon in its search for food he remarked, "That's just what I would do!"

There are two types of activities in the behavior of a person-physical activity and mental or psychological activity. When we want to do a certain action, first our mind makes a plan. Then it is carried out physically. However, according to Vedanta, human activities are ultimately carried out by the will of the conscious life particle, spiriton.

Vedanta gives the following hierarchy of brain, mind and consciousness (refer Figure 1):

*indriyani parany ahur indriyebhyah param manah manasas tu para buddhir yo buddheh paratas tu sah*

Translation: "The working senses are superior to dull matter, mind is higher than the senses, intelligence is still higher than the mind, and he [the soul or 'spiriton'] is even higher than the intelligence." [2]

The interaction of consciousness with intelligence, mind, and senses is described in the Katha Upanisad (1.3.3-4) as a chariot imagery (refer Figure 2) as follows:

*atmanam rathinam viddhi sariram ratham eva ca  
buddhim tu sarathim viddhi manah pragraham eva ca  
indriyani hayam ahur vishayams teshu gocaran  
atmendriya-mano-yuktam bhoktety ahur manishinah*

Translation: "The individual (the soul or 'spiriton') is the passenger in the chariot of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self (the soul or 'spiriton') is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So, it is understood by great thinkers."

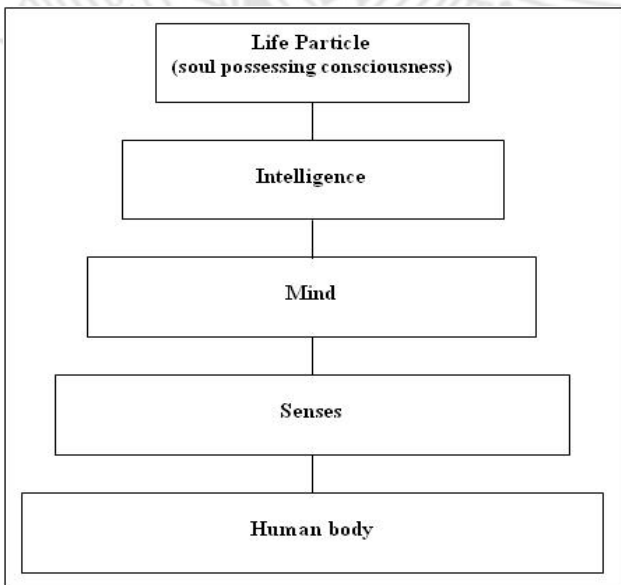
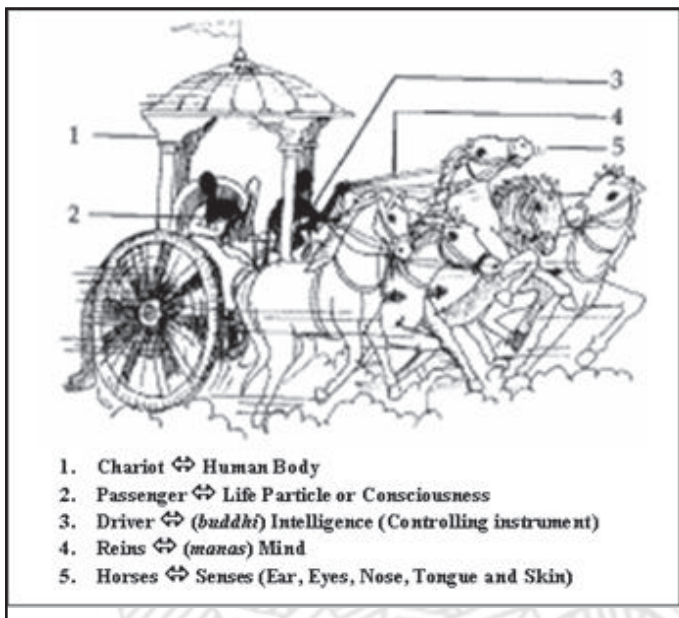


Fig. 1: Vedantic Hierarchy of Human Body, Senses, Mind, Intelligence, and Consciousness.





**Fig. 2: Chariot Model (from the *Katha Upanisad*) of the Interaction of Consciousness with the Human Body, Senses, Mind, and Intelligence.**

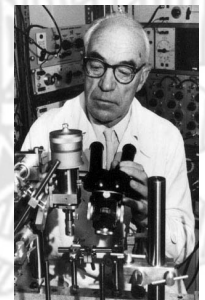
The individual conscious life particle, spiriton is compared to the passenger because he is the chief occupant and thus enjoyer or sufferer of the journey. The horses indicate the senses that always drag the chariot of the human body to the objects of the senses. Intelligence is compared to the driver because the driver employs necessary discrimination for a successful and comfortable journey. Reins are compared to the mind because they are directly connected to the horses (senses) and are guided by the driver (intelligence). An able driver (intelligence) takes control of the reins (mind) connected to the horses (senses) to properly guide the chariot towards its destination by discrimination. In this way the passenger or the soul can reach the desired destination by proper use of all the faculties. On the other hand, if any of the faculties are not controlled and coordinated properly in the hierarchy, sooner or later there may be an accident.

Thus, according to Vedanta, the human activities are carried out by the will of the conscious life particle, which is then translated through the intelligence and mind to the human body. Mind interacts with body through the brain. The brain is like the central processing unit of a computer where all Signals for activities come in and also go out, but it functions according to the will of the programmer. John Eccles suggested psychon as the fundamental unit of the mind and it interacts with the brain through dendrons. [3] Karl Pribram has suggested that psychon is something like a Gabor function, a wave function.[4] However, Vedanta indicates that the life particle lies beyond material particle and wave nature.

Hence the interaction of the life particle and intelligence is a highly complex interaction and may well lie beyond the scope of modern science.

In modern scientific research works, the majority of the scientists are largely committed to reductionism and they do not think beyond material particles, forces, waves, etc., and their logico-mathematical relations in trying to explain the nature of reality. Vedanta proclaims that this one-sided approach will not do. In this connection, John Eccles, the Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology says, "I maintain that the human mystery is incredibly demeaned by scientific reductionism, with its claim in promissory materialism to account eventually for all of the spiritual world in terms of patterns of neuronal activity. This belief must be classed as a superstition.... we have to recognize that we are spiritual beings with souls existing in a spiritual world as well as material beings with bodies and brains existing in a material world." [5] He also said, "There is a fundamental mystery in my personal existence, transcending the biological account of the development of my body and my brain. That belief, of course, is in keeping with the religious concept of the soul and with its special creation by God." [6]

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**John Eccles  
 The Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology**

**References:**

1. The individual living entity is called jiva in Sanskrit language.
2. Bhagavad-Gita As It Is verse 3.42.
3. J. c. Eccles, Proc. Roy. Soc., B777, 1986, 411-28.
4. T. D. Singh & Karl H. Pribram, "Science is Spiritual", Saviinanam - Scientific Exploration for a Spiritual Paradigm, Vol. I, Kolkata, 2002, p.38.
5. John Eccles, Evolution of the Brain: Creation of the Self, New York, 1989, p.241.
6. The Voice of Genius, Ed. Denis Brian, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1995, p.371.



# The Scientific Understanding of Mercy

By  
Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.

In order to comprehend the true unity of knowledge we have to consider more than our individual and collective finite perspectives. The sum of finite or partial perspectives is always going to be finite or partial. What does it mean to go beyond such perspectives, and what is the means for doing so? Most importantly, can such a leap beyond individual and collective finite perspectives be scientific?



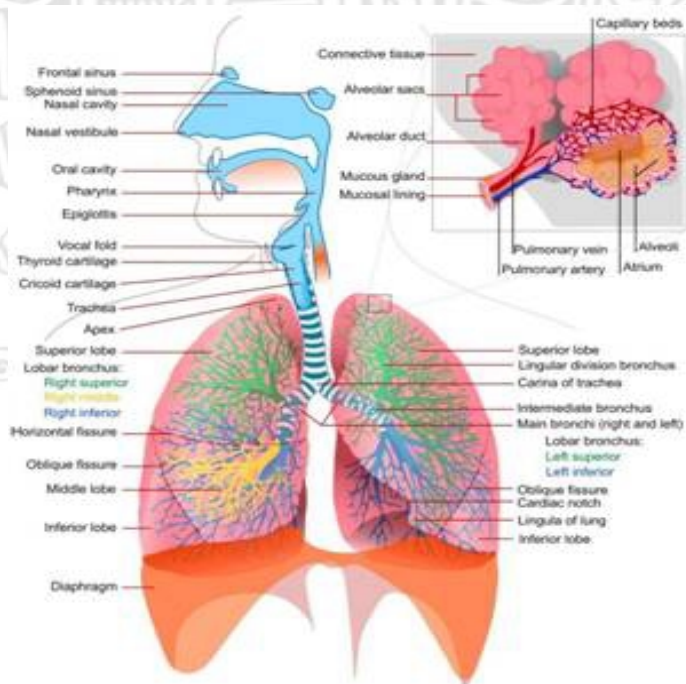
The general method of modern science is primarily analytic. We take what is given to us as integral and whole, and we separate it into constituent parts of which (we assume) the original whole is a composition thereof. Each individual may take the same concrete whole, by which I mean a unified multiplicity of parts or a unity-in-diversity, and analyze or divide it in a variety of ways, no two of which may be exactly the same.

For instance, a book may be analyzed in terms of its physical characteristics - its paper type, weight, whiteness, etc., or in terms of its chemical composition, or in terms of properties of the ink that is pressed onto the paper. One may calculate the statistical occurrence of certain letters that appear in the book, or words, or specific grammatical formations. In this way, the same object may be analyzed from a variety of perspectives right up to the meaning the author had intended, or the reader interpreted from the book.

We can claim that the book itself is the concrete unity of these various perspectives. But could we reproduce the book from the various perspectives of our individual analyses of it?

*"...Son of man, You cannot say, or guess, for you know only A heap of broken images..."* **(T. S. Eliot, The Waste Land)**

Is it possible to conceive that in their own development of culture, the ancient civilizations of Man already confronted this real problem of the unity of knowledge, and long ago realized the inherent defect of this finite approach. Thus they chose a different method for comprehending "what is" by a more holistic science that we, today, call Religion or spiritual science. No one can say that ancient Greek philosophy and science were not based on reason. The elaborate philosophical, scientific and spiritual Sanskrit treatises of India all present a viewpoint that is similar yet also quite distinct from the modern analytic perspective, in that it forms the basis of much of India's religious tradition. Did they consider their methods any less scientific than the analytic tradition, or more scientific?



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*...Son of man, You cannot say, or guess, for you know only A heap of broken images...*

T. S. Eliot



And if the latter, could that be justified?

Much can be learned from our own modern experiences if we take a more sympathetic view of the rational merit of the non-analytic viewpoint. Accounts of scientists within the modern period of science tell of inspirations and insights that do not arise from any rational method of deduction or induction, yet play the major role in scientific discovery and theory. The question of why Quantum Mechanics seems to be so successful in accounting for observable phenomena may have more to do with how knowledge comes to us from reality than with anything we have to do with creating knowledge from our own fertile brains. Is such an idea so far beyond the ken of rational thought?

Within the period after Descartes that is considered modern philosophy, Spinoza conceived the Absolute Truth as possessing the attributes of thought as well as extension. Schelling conceived Nature as "petrified intelligence." And Hegel showed that the Absolute Reality was thinking Subject as much as Substance. The conclusions that they reached were achieved by great rational effort. Yet modern philosophy has taken the one-sided approach of the cogito - the "I think" of the finite individual, and placed that in confrontation with a truth that is merely unthinking substantiality only.

To conceive a sentient Absolute leads us to contemplate the possibility that we could be recipients or perhaps participants of knowledge rather than producers of it. For example, in the Bhagavad-gita (15.15), Krishna (the Personified Absolute) tells Arjuna, "From Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness." This study wishes to demonstrate that a rational and experiential (or scientific) process is involved in comprehending and accessing such a non-finite source of knowledge. It is not based on assuming superiority to "what is" and attempting to grasp it within our fist or mind. Rather, the opposite attitude is implied - a submission to or letting one's attention sink into the object of study and allowing the object, as it were, to speak for itself - "If they become silent, the stones will cry out." (Luke 19:40).

If the Absolute - the Truth - is intelligent, rational, and systematically organized, then it must be scientifically accessible, i.e. amenable to our own reason and experience. What is required is neither the loss of reason nor experience, the two fundamental principles upon which science is based. What is needed is an antithetical change in the attitude that we bring to science. But this change is not as drastic as it may at first appear.

In a real sense, scientific thought is controlled by the object, or by our experience of the object. If an object contains Sulphur, our experiments will show the presence of that element and any theoretical conclusions must be based on that evidence.



***In the Bhagavad-gita (15.15), Krishna (the Personified Absolute) tells Arjuna, "From Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness."***

Scientific thinking is not free to conclude otherwise. In this sense scientific thinking is absorbed in its object, and our experience of (experiment on) the object determines the course of our thinking about it. We are not free to think whatever we want about the object - at least within the discipline of a particular science. The defect with this type of thinking is that it brings to the object a specific number of fixed ideas or categories that experience of the object, itself, may not suggest. This procedure more or less forces the object into a Procrustean bed, in which the parts that do not conform to the experience of the object that we can make any claim to having arrived at truth.

This conformity or identity of thought and thing is to be understood not merely in its identity, but also in its difference. The logical form that comprehends such an identity-in-difference is called dialectic. Within the Cartesian dualistic logic, from which modern science has developed, thoughts and things are as impossible to tie together as rocks and clouds. Dialectic logic overcomes this problem. Furthermore, the inherent dynamic nature of dialectical logic means that we no longer deal merely with static things or being, but with becoming and change.



***Thinking is inherently active, and essentially spontaneous or self-active. Aristotle called it noesis noeseos, or self-thinking thought.***

Thinking is inherently active, and essentially spontaneous or self-active. Aristotle called it *noesis noeseos*, or self-thinking thought. Any unity with thinking (a verb) must consequently involve activity. "What is" is thus transformed into "What is becoming." But this is completely misconceived if it is thought of as an evolution from simple elements to more and more complex compounds of them, or even as an emergence. The "becoming" that is mentioned here refers to the explicit development in mediate thought of that which is implicit or immediate and relatively thing-like. In other words, Truth is a gradual revelation of itself to itself. As part and parcel of Truth we are as much witnesses to that self-revelation as we are integral moments of its intrinsic dynamic.

The work of harmonizing and integrating the various fields of knowledge is not left to the individual as much as it is already accomplished in and by the Complete Whole. Rather, the individual must become self-forgetful, which is achieved anyhow in the universalizing activity of science. And more than self-forgetful, the individual becomes a self-sacrificing or dedicating unit within the self-realizing Absolute. It is here that entrusting oneself to the intelligence and reason of the True, once it is scientifically realized, introduces us to the concept of the mercy of the Absolute.

This can be understood only when the essential negativity that characterizes reality is comprehended along with the positivity that is normally associated with Being. "Thinking" is negative activity because it is a determining - literally a terminating or delimiting activity. It is what produces distinction and differentiation - particularity, within the universality of mere positive being.

Although it is constantly at work in scientific endeavours, the negative contribution of thought to the constitution of reality has all but been neglected and forgotten, or at best misconceived and nullified by reduction to electrical activity or as an epiphenomenon of positive being or matter. But there can never be anything such as "positive" without simultaneously conceiving the "negative." We form the conception of "blind" only because there is someone who can see. Opposites are essential to the existence of each other, and therefore everything has an opposite, or it would not be conceived. It is this fact that is naturally expressed in and as dialectical logic. Sometimes this is referred to as the logic of "and" rather than the logic of "or." In dialectical logic we can have the simultaneous existence of "identity and difference," rather than the "identity or difference" of formal logic.

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