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DIVE DEEP INTO REALITY

by

Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja



Descartes said, "I doubt everything. Whatever you say, I doubt." Then, Descartes says, the question that arises is, "Does the doubter exist: true or false?" You have to start your search for truth from there. Who am I? To whatever truth is related, whatever idea is stated, one may say, "I oppose that statement. I doubt it." Then the question arises does the doubter exist, or is he nonexistent? If he is nonexistent, then there can be no question of doubting. If one takes the position of an extreme

skeptic, he must explain his own position. He may assert, "Whatever you have said, I doubt," but he must discern whether or not he really exists. That must be the starting point for any further inquiry.

And what is the doubter? Is he an atom? A particle of dust? Is he without knowledge? And if so, then how has he come to assert doubt? This question should be examined. Whenever one may doubt, the question must be asked, "Who is the doubter? Is he conscious? Does he have reason? Has he any existence at all? Or is he imaginary? Is it matter that is submitting the question? Or is a unit of consciousness asking the question? What is the origin of this question? Who is asking the question? Has it come from the conscious region? If it has, then what shall we consider as the basis of existence? Consciousness or matter? A fossil or God?"

Before the First World War, I was a student of law in the university. In my senior year I studied philosophy under a professor named Mr. Stevenson. He was a German scholar, but during the war he took Indian citizenship. His class dealt with ontology and psychology. Professor Stevenson's language was very simple, and he used fine arguments to make his point. He gave four arguments against atheism, one of which I find very useful: "Consciousness is the starting point of everything." Whatever you say presupposes consciousness. Any statement presupposes consciousness. If we examine the fossil, what do we see? It is black, it is hard, it has some smell, some attributes, but what are these things? These are all different stages of consciousness. Without the help of consciousness, no assertion can be made. No assertion is possible at all. One

may say that the fossil is the most elemental substance. But a fossil means what: some color, sensation, hardness, taste – but the background is consciousness.

After everything is analyzed, we will find that it is an idea. This is Berkeley's theory. Everything is an idea in the ocean of consciousness. Just as an iceberg floats in the salt ocean, so the fossil is floating in the conscious ocean. Ultimately everything – whatever we can assert, whatever is within the world of our experience – is floating like an iceberg in the ocean of consciousness. This point can never be refuted.

I have had personal experience of this. When I was twenty-three, I had some deep and natural indifference to the world. At that time I had an experience of the reality of consciousness. I felt the material world is floating on consciousness just as cream floats on milk. Conscious reality is much deeper than the apparent reality of our present experience. The world of experience is like cream floating on milk which is the mind. This physical world is only the visible portion of reality floating over the mental world. I felt this myself. When there is a huge quantity of milk, the cream that floats over the milk and covers it is very meager. In the same way, I could feel at that time that this physical world is only a meager portion of reality, and that the subtle world, which is at present in the background, is far more vast. The mental world is a huge and vast reality, and the physical world is a small cover over that mental world.

Whatever can be perceived by the eye, the ear, the tongue, the nose, the skin – any of the external senses – is only a covering of reality. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Prahlada Maharaj says, *na te viduh svartha-gatim hi vishnum, durasaya ye bahir-artham*



If only we were to dive deep into reality, there we would find Vishnu. The most peaceful substance is within, but it is covered, just as milk is covered by cream, and we are making much of that cover. The real substance is within, just as fruit is covered by its skin. What we experience at present is the cover, the skin, and we are making much of that, ignoring the very substance which the cover is protecting.

- Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaja



maninah. We are making too much of the covering of reality, we are devoting our minds to the external coating – *bahir-artham-maninah* – but we do not dive deep into the eternal substance. If only we were to dive deep into reality, there we would find Vishnu. The most peaceful substance is within, but it is covered, just as milk is covered by cream, and we are making much of that cover. The real substance is within, just as fruit is covered by its skin. What we experience at present is the cover, the skin, and we are making much of that, ignoring the very substance which the cover is protecting.

The primary step in the search for truth is to penetrate the covering and find the knower within. And then begin our analysis. What is he? Is he an atom like an atomic particle of dust? Or is he a fantastic atom in the conscious plane? At first we must approach reality in this way. There is the knower and the unknown, the inquirer and the inquired. Try to find yourself. Then gradually, you will come to know that you are the soul, the particle of consciousness within. And just as you are spirit covered by matter, the whole world is also like that; the spiritual reality within is covered. Upon realizing your self as spirit soul, you will be able to see that everything is a part of consciousness. Within the world of consciousness, worlds of different sorts of experience are floating. In the conscious sea, the sun, the moon, trees, stones, human beings, our friends and our enemies are all floating. As we approach the spiritual plane, we will find it to be nearer to our real self. And in this way, we will see that matter is far, far away, but the soul is near.

Try to conceive of reality along these lines. Spirit or consciousness is nearer to the soul and you are a child of that soil. Matter is far, far away. But the interrupting planes are so close together that we don't see the nature of spiritual reality, just as if you put your hand over your eye, you can't see the hand. But if the hand is only one foot away, we can see it very clearly. Sometimes what is very close, we cannot see. I may be able to see so many things, but I cannot see myself.

Although the Buddhists and other atheists argue that consciousness is a material thing, I say that there is no material thing. If I am to answer the question of whether or not consciousness is produced from matter, then I shall say that nothing is material. Whatever we feel is only a part of consciousness. Everything is an idea. We are concerned only with consciousness from the beginning to the end of our experience. Beyond that we cannot go. Everything is an idea: the stone, the tree, the house, the body – all are ideas. The plane of consciousness is very much closer to us than we perceive. And what is shown as a particular thing is far away. We are involved only with ideas. We can't go outside that. Everything within our experience is a part of our mind.

ORIGIN OF MATTER AND LIFE IS UNKNOWN TO MODERN SCIENCE

by

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



Scientifically, the origin of matter as well as of life is not known. There is no final theory of matter. Scientists - physicists and chemists - only try to understand the properties of different chemical components that make up the different lumps of matter and their physical and chemical properties. Biologists and biochemists, following the

footsteps of physicists and chemists, are also on the wrong path, because they borrow the concept that life is a product of chemical evolution. So in reality, they don't study life. Thus, they cannot go much further. Can the Big Bang theory explain the origins of matter and life? Material scientists take the shelter of the Big Bang theory, spiritual or theistic scientists take the shelter of God.

Previously we have pointed out that the claim made by evolutionists that molecular evolution might lead to life is not scientifically valid. This inherently weak theory has arisen because its propounders have no clear understanding of the fundamental difference between life and matter. To them, life is just a mechanical transformation of inanimate matter; and they cannot speak about life in any language except that of chemistry and physics. However, we have indicated that this approach is incompatible with the observed facts. We have further shown how life and matter can be understood as two completely different categories. One is not reducible to the other, although the latter can be transformed into structures of different sizes, shapes and colors by the influence of the former.

Since life is a non-physical and non-chemical entity, any attempt to understand life in terms of chemistry and physics cannot go very far. As explained in the earlier issues, according to the teachings of the timeless message of Vedanta, matter and its particles - molecules, atoms, electrons, protons, quarks and so on, are totally different from the life particle, spiriton. Thus the Vedantic conclusion is that a DNA molecule is not life; a protein molecule is not life; and fundamental material particles are not life. Similarly, a combination of these molecules and particles will never lead to life.

Although we can't see with our naked eyes the transcendental particle of life, it is obvious that matter behaves differently in many observable ways when it interacts with the invisible life particle. We can sense it from the functions of the organs in the living body - heart, lungs, eyes, ears and so on, and the whole body. When one dies, or the animation stops, all the organs stop

functioning. Why? Someday, all the thoughtful scholars will see this.

We have discussed in previous issues an alternative scientific viewpoint. Both the modern scientific approach and the new paradigm agree that there is an absolute truth. However, the view of modern science reduces the absolute truth to nothing but some pushes and pulls of interacting atomic particles. This view is very unsatisfying and cannot meaningfully explain many observed phenomena pertaining to both life and matter. The new paradigm, however, reveals that the absolute truth is a supremely conscious being, identified as *Paramatma* or *Bhagavan* and possessing unique features or qualities for generating both matter and life. As the leader of a nation is different from his functionary departments, although they are dependent upon him, similarly both life and matter emanate from that supremely conscious being, the original life, although they are different energies. This is quite reasonable, and it can explain all the features of both life and matter, as well as open up new possibilities of investigation



You pass from matter to life because your intelligence of today...cannot conceive things otherwise. How do you know that in ten thousand years one will not consider it more likely that matter has emerged from life?

-Louis Pasteur

precluded by the reductionistic view. We suggest that a serious consideration of this new scientific paradigm will prove very fruitful. The famous scientist Louis Pasteur remarked, "I have been looking for spontaneous generation for twenty years without discovering it. No, I do not judge it impossible. But what allows you to make it the origin of life? You place matter before life and you decide that matter has existed for all eternity. How do you know that the incessant progress of science will not compel scientists...to consider that life has existed during eternity, and not matter? You pass from matter to life because your intelligence of today ...cannot conceive things otherwise. How do you know that in ten thousand years one will not consider it more likely that matter has emerged from life?" [1]

References:

1. Koestler, A. *The Act of Creation*. New York: Macmillan, 1964, p. 702.

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF PERCEPTUAL CONSCIOUSNESS THAT LEAD TO RESOLUTION IN IT'S NEXT STAGE OF SUBJECTIVE EVOLUTION TO UNDERSTANDING

by

Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.



Continuing the descriptive commentary on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* [1].

Previously it was found that the Thing is *both* One Thing and another Thing at the same time. The Understanding rejects such a contradiction but Reason accepts what

comes before it and allows the necessity in thought to proceed to its own conclusion.

A. The two-fold difference or determinateness of the Thing.

1. The objective essence of the Thing is distributed among different Things, thus difference, itself, attaches to each separated Thing, i.e. each Thing possesses the quality of being different from the others.
2. This difference, which is determinateness, is also that which characterizes each Thing in its distinction from others.
3. Thus difference is intrinsic to each Thing.
4. There is consequently actual difference within the Thing (e.g. the different properties), not only with respect to other Things.
5. Therefore the Thing possesses both difference from other Things as well as difference within itself.
6. Its internal differentiation or determinateness is what actually distinguishes one Thing from another — so this is the essential aspect.
7. The difference from other Things derives from this, and therefore is considered the derivative or unessential aspect.
8. For this reason the two-fold difference within the Thing may not be considered an actual opposition of two different Things, since one is unessential.
9. Rather we may take the Thing as intrinsically opposed to other Things by its very nature, as its determinateness.
10. Therefore we may neglect the explicit moment of difference from other Things as unessential.

B. The Thing is its own undoing.

1. The essential character of the Thing is thus its determinateness (i.e., its differentiated properties).
2. It is this (its specific properties) which distinguishes it from all other Things.
3. This distinction between different Things is its opposition to them.
4. In this opposition the Thing, however, is preserved in its independence - i.e. it retains its identity and is not annulled or affected by this opposition.
5. A Thing is a One existing on its own account *in so far as* it does not stand in relation to others.

6. To be connected with others is to *cease* to be (exist) on its own account.
7. Yet it is just this absolute character of the Thing to be distinct from others that relates it to others, which thereby makes this relating essential to it.
8. Thus we must conclude that the Thing is undone by its own essential character, i.e. as a being- for-itself.

C. Summary in terms of the external being-for-itself of the Thing.

1. The Thing is posited by consciousness as being-for-itself, i.e. as independent being.
2. As such it is **not** being-for-others, or it is the negation of all otherness.
3. For consciousness the Thing is thus pure negativity.
4. As such the Thing is therefore the negation of itself.
5. Thus the Thing must have its essential being in another Thing.

D. Summary in terms of the properties of the Thing.

1. The essential property of the Thing is being-for-itself.
2. But the Thing possesses other properties as well which, though necessary, are not considered quite as essential to it.
3. Yet what is necessary cannot be unessential.
4. Thus the unessentiality of the many properties is canceled by their necessity.
5. Thus what was supposed to be the unessentiality of the Thing is negated by the intrinsic nature of the Thing itself — i.e. what was called self-negation in C.

E. Summary in terms of the internal being-for-itself of the Thing.

1. We started with two separate Things: a being-for-itself and a being for another.
2. We now have being-for-itself and being-for-another in one and the same Thing - as self-negation.
3. Within its own self therefore it is for itself in so far as it is for another, and it is for another in so far as it is for itself. [This is intrinsic to being for self.]
4. Its being-for-self (as One) is therefore canceled by its being-for-another at the same time, i.e. one aspect is as unessential as the other is.

F. Totality of the contradictions taken as a unity: the unconditioned as the object of Understanding.

What is essential to the Thing - its particular distinction from other Things - is thus overcome and made unessential, just as the particularity of sensuous being was overcome by universality. But certain immediacies or unresolved oppositions remain:

1. The universal *originates* or is derived from the sensuous - this is a one-sided bias, a condition on the universal and hence cannot be true universality at all.

2. The universal of perception appears to be split between an individuality (of sense) and universality as such.
3. In the Thing we also have One (property) and an Also of many such Ones or free matters.
4. Each of the above seem to present a being-for-self confronted with a being-for-another.

Since, however, both sides are found in a single unity (one Thing) we then have an unconditioned (because it is not-one-sided) absolute (because each moment is negated by its opposite) universality, which is the object of Understanding.

Note: The object of sense-certainty is particular being. The



G. W. F. Hegel

object of perception is the universal burdened with sensuous particularity. The object of the Understanding is unconditioned universality. These are the differences of the three grades of consciousness or knowing that have been presented so far.

- a. Sense certainty is absorption in the being of an object of sense (particularity) as such.
- b. Perception is the cognition (universality) of an object of sense (particularity).
- c. Understanding is cognition of the pure universality (the inner) of things - thus it is called "under-standing" since it cognizes what is "under," supporting or constituting the thing.

G. The defect of perceptual consciousness.

1. The singular of sense-certainty becomes the universal of perception through dialectical movement as described in the preceding and summarized as follows.
2. The *being* of the particular object of sense that is merely meant (ascribed, projected) by the consciousness of sense-certainty vanishes in perceptual consciousness and becomes the sensuous universal.
3. This is because perception takes the being of the object as it is, i.e. as it appears in its universality, removing any bias of particular meaning.
4. Thus we have universality.
5. But the singular being or One also appears here and is not sublimated in that universality but sits alongside it — so that we have both the universal and the singular together in a totality of contradictions.
6. At the same time they are not merely *two* separate entities alongside each other but are contained within a common unity, viz. both are being-for-self burdened with being-for-another.
7. Perceptual consciousness, however, tries to abstract from the multiple contradictions of the Truth by the saving device of speaking of an angle of vision, point of view, aspect, etc. — the '*in so far as*'.
8. But rather than maintaining the Truth it only achieves the opposite, since it is abstraction and thereby succeeds only in sustaining deception — what is not Truth.
9. By holding to one-sided abstractions and avoiding oppositions such logic becomes a monotonous universality

devoid of distinction or determination.

H. The defect of understanding based on perception.

The attempt to maintain distinctions such as essential vs. unessential, singleness vs. universality, etc. may appeal to what is called 'ordinary common sense,' but it can now be seen that they are really only abstractions from the actual truth that constitutes the entirety of perceptual consciousness. Those who do not have the presence of mind to rise above the being of the material of sense may proudly assert what they consider to be real and solid, while in truth it is only the play of abstractions that they deal with, so that such boasting is poorest where it fancies itself to be the richest. Rather than apprehending Truth, such an attitude sets itself against the Truth by calling it mere thought, 'only in the mind', etc. It is not possible for them to engage in scientific philosophy in which one result proceeds from another by rational necessity because they think that *convincing by argument* (holding one side against the other) is the natural process for winning Truth. But this is the definition of sophistry, directly the opposite of scientific philosophy in which Truth unveils itself by the rational necessity of its own dialectical development.

In fact, Philosophy does also deal with mental entities but at the same time it recognizes thought as the pure essentiality that it is. It is the ignorance of our '*scientific age*' that we neither appreciate, understand or even know how to comprehend the origin and nature of thought which is so fundamentally essential to human culture. Those who are the most neglectful of such knowledge are at the same time those who most vehemently propound sensuous materialism in the name of realism and seek to annul the place of thought altogether, thus sapping Truth of its own essence. Perceptual understanding holds on to mere abstract fixed essentialities without comprehending their specific determinations, i.e. it apprehends concepts as simple familiarities and therefore does not penetrate into the actual determinateness that constitutes such concepts. In that way it fails to master them; rather such abstract essentialities become the master of this understanding, constraining it to an endless bondage in opposing dualities.

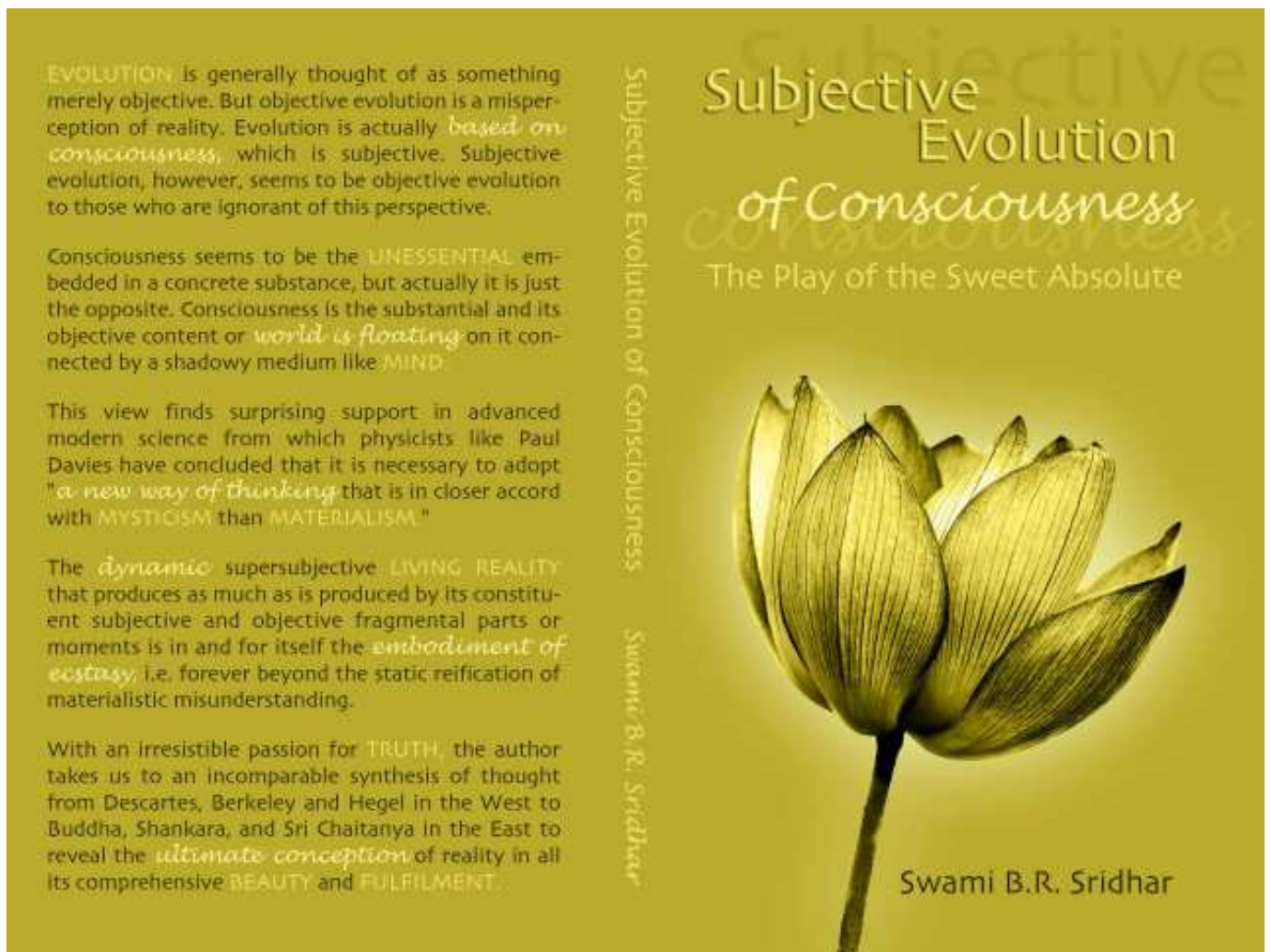
By holding on to only one determinateness as truth in opposition to its other and then turning to the opposite one (e.g., as we find in Kant's antinomies) the ultimate unessentiality of both is established, yet it ignores this fact. What perceptual consciousness should do is accept the unessentiality of both sides and thereby recognize the sublimation of these opposing elements in a higher unity. Instead of doing that, however, it resorts to the *in so far as* and thus leads itself into abstractions and untruth.

[This is the end of the section on Perception.]

Reference:

[1] G.W.F. Hegel, G.W.F. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, A.V. Miller (Translator), J.N. Findlay (Foreword), § 124 - § 130, Oxford University Press, 1979.

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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