



Part Four

13th May 2004

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28th August 2004

New Delhi, India
13 May 2004



Pilgrimage to Shalagram (Gandaki and Muktinath) Part One



Hare Krsna! All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

I'm back in Delhi from Nepal. It is not an exaggeration to say "I just made it. " A major political crisis brewed up in the country during our final days there. The Prime Minister resigned and a nationwide strike was called. Had we not been able to exit the country on the day we did (10 May), we might still be in Nepal now, unable to secure transportation for the ride to the border.

Anyway, the pilgrimage to Shalagram was ecstatic. There are so many pix on file to choose from, I shall have to publish a series of photo reports here at In2-MeC over several days. I'm quite exhausted due to the overnight journey from Gorakhpur, so the text of today's photoreport shall be minimal.



This is B. K. Rama Tamu, a vegetarian non-smoking Nepali caste brahmana, who drove us in his car from the Indian border to Pokhara on 4 May.



The ride to Pokhara is a dangerous one. Three days before we made the trip, this bus skidded off the road and crashed down the mountainside. Forty-two persons lost their lives.



The Machapuchare Peak of the Annapurna range, seen from Pokhara. The Machapuchare {"Fishtail"} peak is 6696 meters high and has never been climbed. The government forbids mountaineers from tackling it because Nepalis consider it holy. Though one of the most magnificent of Himalayan mountains, Machapuchare is a baby compared to Mt. Everest (Sagarmata), which is also in Nepal.



We stayed the night of 4 May in a hotel in the Pokhara "lakeside" district, next to the Phewa Lake. Unfortunately the view of that beautiful body of water is mostly hidden behind the sprawling business area. Pokhara has changed for the worse since my visit in 1987.





Samples of Nepali tourism trade.



This barber is a nice devotee! See the paintings he displays in his shop. He is vegetarian and worships salagram-sila every morning.



At Pokhara airport on the morning of 5 May. We are boarding the flight to Jomsom. Along with myself, Rocana and Martanda (who snapped this photo), we were graced with the company of Mataji Rasalila dd. Her skill in the Hindi language was very valuable to us.



The plane flies between the Himalayas, not over them! The flight takes only 15 minutes but seems a lot longer. The little Dornier aircraft, only big enough for 15 passengers, skims craggy ridgetops and is often buffeted by mountain winds. Inspiration for serious japa.





At last we've landed at the Jomsom airport! It's a sight smaller than LAX, but then this is Lower Mustang, not lower California. Mustang is an Anglicization of the Tibetan Lo Manthang, which is an autonomous region in north-central Nepal that borders on Tibet. The destination of our trek today is the village of Kagbeni ("Crow Confluence" in Nepali). The rocky highland stretching from Jomsom to Kagbeni--through which the Gandaki flows--is called Lower Mustang. Upper Mustang is where Damodar Kund is located, a lake that is the root source of all salagram silas. We are not going into Upper Mustang as expensive permits are required from the Nepali authorities.



After deplaning, we walk through Jomsom, pausing before the Hotel Marco Polo, where I stayed in 1987. Since then the facade was renovated but inside it's the same place.



We take an opportunity to spoof this hotel in north Jomsom that claims Jimi Hendrix roomed here in the 1960s. It's a Nepali myth we ran into more than once. Hendrix never visited Nepal at all. The myth is probably good for business, though.



After passing through the northern outskirts of Jomsom we arrive at the



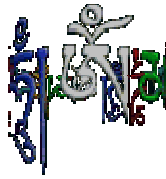
Martanda at last smiles for the camera instead of clicking it.

bank of the sacred Kali Gandaki. This is the river form of Goddess Vrndadevi. Rasalila dd offers her respects. I walk ahead, looking for a special salagram sila. Several days previous to this photo I told Rasa and Rocana that my dream was to find a red Sudarsana Cakra sila.



After walking next to the Gandaki for only a few minutes I find the sila I prayed for! It is red, its sides are round, and it has a tiny hole through its center that is visible at both ends. It is covered with mysterious markings. Sri Sudarsana Cakra ki jaya!

Part Two will follow!



New Delhi, India
14 May 2004



Pilgrimage to Shalagram (Gandaki and Muktinath) Part Two



Hare Krsna! All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

We'll continue with the photoreport at the point we left off yesterday--where we began to find saligrama silas along the bank of the Kali Gandaki River. By the way, if you would like to see a good map of Lower Mustang, double-click your pointer on this Web address:

www.footprint-adventures.co.uk/mapnep/fixjoms.html



Immediately after I discovered the red Sudarsana Cakra sila, Rasaji came upon



Formerly the Gandaki River Valley was the most important trade route between India and Tibet. It was controlled by Lo Manthang, a Buddhist kingdom of Tibetan language and culture. But more than 200 years ago the Buddhist Raja of Lo Manthang allied with the Hindu Raja of Kathmandu in a war against Tibet. This is why the present region of Mustang (Lo

this sila manifesting the face of Lord Nrsimhadeva Eventually we returned this sila to the Gandaki as He was too large and heavy for any of us to consider keeping and worshiping Him.

Manthang), which is populated mostly by Tibetan-speaking Buddhists with Mongolian features, is part of Nepal and not Tibet (now under the red flag of Communist China).



For Martanda, Rasalila and Rocana, the trek up the Gandaki River Valley was a new experience. They loved it.



In 1987 I did the trek with my Godbrothers Avinasa Candra (now HH AC Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja) and Krsnaksetra Prabhus. At that time we met our French Godbrother Pitavasa Prabhu on the way. From '87 I remembered this "couch rock," a very comfortable place to rest!



Now the trekking trail takes us away from the bank of the Gandaki for a while.



Between Jomsom and Kagbeni one sees evidence of human habitation only rarely. This is the isolated stone hut of a herdsman. Nobody was home when we passed it.



The skull of a yak. This classic symbol of desolation accentuates the atmosphere of loneliness that hangs over the Gandaki River Valley.



This metal suspension bridge spans the Gandaki River Valley. Incredibly strong winds often blow through the valley, and if you are crossing this bridge when such a wind comes up, you truly fear you'll be blown off into the river below!



Our party pauses for rest on the east end of the bridge. At this point we are thankfully within sight of the town of Kagbeni. The trek

through the valley is mostly flat and level. But the valley itself is some 2000 meters above sea level! Thus catching your breath is a problem, since there is less oxygen in the air than normal.



As we descend from the bridge to the valley floor we meet a herd of incredibly nimble mountain goats. At the upper edge of this photo you can see Ekli Bhatti, the southern "suburb" of Kagbeni.



"Hotel Hill Ton" in Ekli Bhatti. There is also a "Holiday Inn" here! Kagbeni proper is another kilometer or so beyond Ekli Bhatti, but we have no reason to go there as the Hill Ton has rooms for us. This hotel is managed by a pious Buddhist gentleman who strictly keeps to a morning and evening program of chanting and worship. Don't ask about the diet of these people, though!

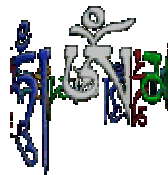


Behind the Hotel Hill Ton the holy Gandaki flows on her way from Kagbeni, visible in the distance.



As the sun drops over the Himalayan horizon, we search the blackish waters of the Gandaki for more salagram silas. Will the Lord mercifully reveal more of His transcendental forms in stone?

Part Three will follow!



New Delhi, India
15 May 2004



**Pilgrimage to Shalagram (Gandaki and
Muktinath)
Part Three**



Hare Krsna! All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

Again, if you wish to refer to a detailed map of the places shown in today's photoreport, double-click this web address:

www.footprint-adventures.co.uk/mapnep/fixjoms.html



*Late sunset inside my room at the Hotel Hill
Ton: I'm contemplating the salagrama silas
we've found today. On my forehead is a
trekker's lamp purchased in a Pokhara supply
shop. With the aid of its light, I study the silas
closely.*



Here's evidence that the Lord desires I continue to worship Him in the forms of Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana. I found a sila with the unmistakable facial features of Lord Jagannatha: two reddish eyes, a nose, and a smiling mouth. I've positioned this sila atop the Sudarsana sila that I found this morning to form Lord Patita-pavana (the name by which Lord Jagannatha is addressed when He is worshiped separately from Baladeva and Subhadra). Positioned next to Patita-pavana is a second, very beautiful, Sudarsana sila.



Yajna-purusa is the name of this combination of silas. A sila with an extraordinary mouth rests upon a Cakra sila of a wavy shape like a flame. Sudarsana Cakra is the very form of the yajna fire (savana tejas trayi), and the Lord personally appears within that fire to eat the offerings of His devotees.



This sila I found was very ugra, obviously a Nrsimha with at least 2 cakras in His mouth. Elsewhere on His body were other fearsome markings. I returned Him to the Gandaki. Too heavy, in both senses of the word.





More remarkable salagrama silas. The first, found by Martanda, was too large to carry with us, so we returned Him to the Gandaki the next morning. He is liberally smeared with gold and displays five crystals in a semicircular pattern. The second, which I found, likewise has a lot of gold and crystal in Him, is multicolored, and shows very fine cakras. Then there is this nice Sesa sila supporting a Narayana sila. These were found by Rasaji. She also found a white-faced Laksmi sila that is not pictured. The Laksmi sila perfectly complements the Narayana sila on the lap of the Sesa sila!



The next morning we leave the Hotel Hill Ton on our way to Muktinath.



The trail to Muktinath carries us out of the Gandaki River Valley into the soaring mountain heights. This is not easy going. The air was thin to begin with, but now as we trudge ever-higher in the hot sun under the weight of our backpacks, the decreasing oxygen becomes more and more of a problem.



In less than half an hour, we look down upon Kagbeni as if from an airplane.



During this season one meets a good number of trekkers along the Jomsom-Kagbeni-Muktinath path. Americans, Australians, Britishers, Europeans, and surprisingly a lot of Russians!



The trail winds along the side of a steep valley formed by a white-water tributary that rushes down to meet the Gandaki at Kagbeni. In the cliffside opposite are many caves. The local Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns sometimes retire to these caves for meditation and austerity.



We approach the village of Jarkot. If you look carefully you can see the dark red Buddhist monastery perched on a hilltop at the edge of this village. It is 500 years old. The Muktinath temple is about an hour's walk beyond Jarkot. On the top of the mountain is the white lip of a glacier that feeds the Gandaki with its icy waters.



This is what Jarkot looks like as you pass through.



Having left Jarkot behind, we are approaching the Dreamland Hotel, which is the first building visible as one enters the village clustered at the foot of the hill of Muktinath. That is Rasalila dd on the horse. She and I found it necessary to rent horses to reach Muktinath. Her excuse is that she has a woman's body. Mine is that my present body is different from the one I had when I hiked up here in 1987.



Early next morning I chant japa on Dreamland's rooftop.



Now we are approaching the Muktinath Temple complex. The dark red structure behind is the entrance gate.



Buddhist prayer wheels at the entrance to the Muktinath complex. These revolvable cylinders are a common sight in Nepal. They are inscribed with the Tibetan Buddhist mahamantra Om Mani Padme Hum--"Aum! The jewel in the lotus! Hail!" The jewel is the pure spirit soul and the lotus is the purified body of the true follower of Buddha's way. Tibetan Buddhists turn these prayer wheels to earn merit. Simply pushing on them to get them revolving is supposed to be as good as chanting the mantra as many times as the wheel then revolves.

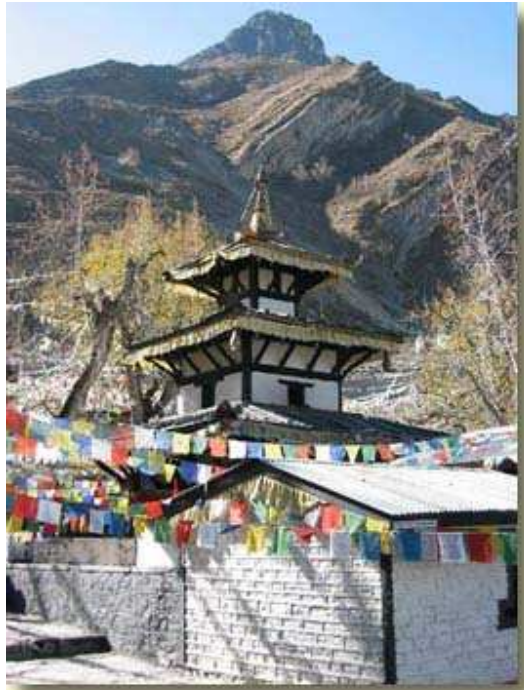




Having passed through the entrance gate, we proceed to the complex's first shrine. Muktinath is sacred to both Vaisnavas and Buddhists. In this shrine we take darsana of Sri Krsna. To my knowledge this murti of Lord Krsna is situated at a higher altitude than any other Krsna Deity in the world.



Rocana found this trisul (symbol of Lord Siva) and poses as if he were a Shaivite sannyasi.



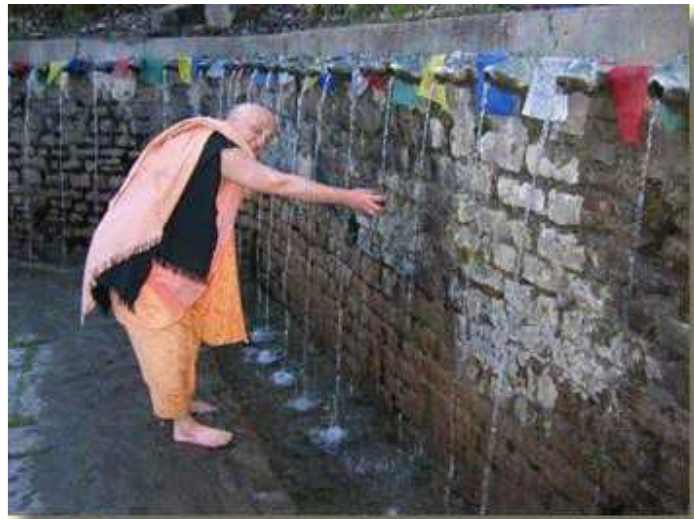
This is the Muktinath Temple proper. Lord Muktinath is, for Vaisnavas, Sri Padmapani (Lord Narayana who carries a lotus flower in His hand). Tibetan Buddhists worship Him as Adi-Buddha. Lord Muktinath's form is manifest in brass. His posture resembles that of the Yoga Narayana Deity seen in the April 2004 In2-MeC photoreport about Bhuvana Nrsimha temple in Halsi, Karnataka. Atop the hill behind the Muktinath Temple is a Buddhist shrine. Incredibly, some women of the Muktinath Buddhist nunnery daily climb this hill to offer worship up there!



Though we took a long darsana of and chanted japa in circumambulation around Lord Muktinath, we unfortunately could not take a photograph of the Muktinath Deity.



Jutting from the stone wall that encloses Muktinath Temple on three sides are 108 gomukhs or cows' mouths. From each mouth icy glacial water flows. The water is considered as pure as the Ganges, which flows from Gomukh in the Indian Himalayas.



The new salagram silas take Their morning bath!



After bathing, They are warmed by the morning sun. . .



. . . which streams from the Eastern mountaintops through the fluttering prayer flags.



Now that Their Lordships are bathed, it's my turn! Believe me when I tell you this water, sacred though it may be, is seriously cold!



Here we sit outside yet another shrine in the Muktinath complex.



Inside this shrine one can observe blue flames that spring from the mountain rock along with a stream of water. We have a photo of the fire but it is so dark there's no use publishing it here. It is said that at this spot at the time of creation Lord Brahma made an offering of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) to Lord Muktinath.



Rasaji stands before a Buddhist deity within the fire-water shrine. The flames are to be seen through openings in the base of the altar.

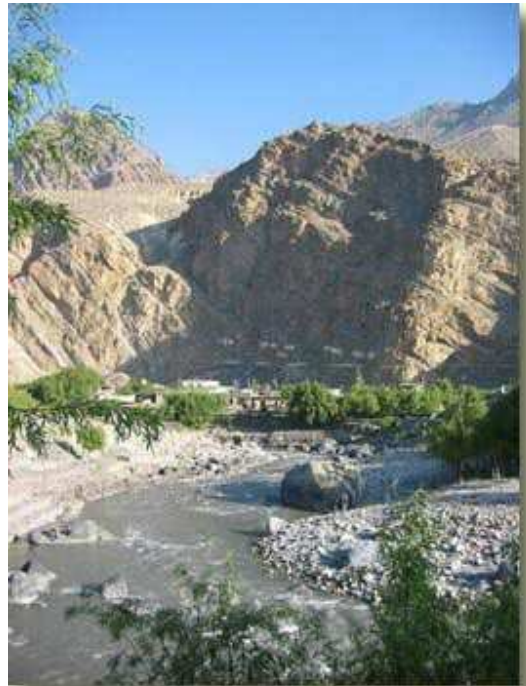


Extraordinary ladies! The intrepid Rasalila dd, who is one of the the few ISKCON women, if not the only one, to have visited Muktinath, stands

alongside a hardy but humble Tibetan Buddhist nun.



As we left Muktinath Temple we observed this helicopter coming in for a landing. Must have delivered some VIP (Very Important Pilgrims) eager to take darsana!



Back down in the Gandaki River Valley again, we approach Jomsom.



The stupendous Nilgiri peak overlooking Jomsom. Mountain ranges like the Rockies in North America and the Alps in Europe do not prepare you for the

tremendous size of these Himalayan mountains.



Back aboard the Cosmic Airways Dornier, we zip between the mountains to Pokhara.



During our return visit to Pokhara we saw the Sheti River Gorge. The water racing through the rocks is not only white with foam, it is naturally white even when taken up in a bucket from the river. Thus the name Sheti, which is derived from sveta, Sanskrit for "white."



At the Sheti River Gorge is this little temple to Lord Vasudeva-Krsna.

And that's the end of the Pilgrimage to Shalagram photoreport!



*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama (IBSA), Govardhana, India
16 May 2004*

I arrived at IBSA at about noon today. It's very hot here in Govardhana. First thing I did was to take a pleasant transcendental dip in the pure cooling waters of Manasi Ganga. Rocana and Martanda are staying in Vrndavana, in the vicinity of the ISKCON Krsna-Balarama Mandira. Here my siksa-disciple Dauji das Brahmachari is assisting me. He is the former Bhakta Gennadi, recently initiated by HH Sivarama Maharaja.

Before proceeding to Nepal at the beginning of May I stopped in here to leave my six salagrama silas under the care of Dauji Prabhu. Eight salagrama silas came to me while on pilgrimage to Shalagram. So now I have fourteen and that's too many for me to travel with. Dauji Prabhu tells me that a disciple of mine in the Ukraine, Prema-vanya Prabhu, is eager to worship the original "team" of silas. In 10 days a Ukrainian devotee will return to his country from Vrndavana and deliver those silas to him.

My own worship will not change. Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana is being replaced by a new Jagannatha-Sudarsana. There's a new Sri-Sri-Sri Laksmi-Sesasayi taking over for the earlier Ones. Lord Yajna-Purusa will take the place of the Nila-Sudarsana Deity.

I return to Delhi on 20 May. On the 22nd early morning I fly to Amsterdam. Thus starts off another European tour.

So here I am, sitting here under a ceiling fan that blows spun heat, wondering when I'll be able to upload this text to In2-MeC. The Govardhana telephone connection to the Internet isn't working at present.

The lunch prasadam gong just rang.

So that's all for now. I have a lot of stuff stacked up in my head that I want to write about. But the effects of the traveling I've been doing lately, combined with India's baking summer temperatures, have cooked off a lot of my concentration. I'll be more focused after lunch, a nap, and another dip in one of the bodies of sacred waters assembled here in Sri Govardhana.

From the late 1970s through the '80s on into the early '90s I was involved in ISKCON's underground preaching effort behind the Iron Curtain. I used to feel obliged to keep myself informed of the intellectual currents in Eastern European countries. That's how I came to know of a book entitled *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, originally *Nesnesitelna lehkost byti* by Czech author Milan Kundera.

When his book came into print in 1984 the author had for nearly a decade been living in France. But the heart of his book is the life that people lived in Czechoslovakia when the Soviet Red Army invaded the country in the late 1960s in order to halt the liberalization program of Alexander Dubcek, and, after that time of military law, when a severe Communist dictatorship of Czech and Slovak *apparatchiks* took power after Dubcek.

The problem a devotee will have with reading *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is that there's a lot of sex in it. Not graphic sex. But many pages are about couples engaged in "making love," and about the emotional-psychological bonds that tie these couples together. I don't recommend this book for that.

Apart from the sex, the book contains some useful philosophical insights. The central theme is expressed in the title: that a person--a soul, actually--finds his being, or his bare state of existence, unbearably light. Even though great philosophers of old like Parmenides counted lightness as a positive, desirable state, and even though today we continue to equate lightness with relief, release and freedom (while on the other hand we equate heaviness with being burdened, tied down, enslaved), still it is not enough for us simply "to be." We have "to do." And, you see, that's precisely *why* there's so much sex in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Because when people exercise their being by doing things, what they do is centered on sex. And by so doing they hope their lives will gain weight and significance. Kundera explains on page 5:

The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But in the love poetry of every age, the woman longs to be weighed down by the man's body. The heaviest of burdens is therefore simultaneously an image of life's most intense fulfillment. The heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become.

Fulfillment. The Real. The True. That's what people wish will be the outcome of their activities. However, Sri Prahlada Maharaja famously states in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7.9.43, *maya-sukhaya bharam udvahato vimudhan*, "Foolish people carry a heavy burden of unreal happiness." In lifting such heavy burdens as are described by Srila Prabhupada in his translation and purport to this verse, people believe themselves to be accomplishing something that makes their lives worthwhile. But Prahlada points out that all they are getting from lugging their loads about is *maya-sukha*, a sense of satisfaction that is without any substance.

"Conversely," writes Kundera on the same page,

the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant.

This reminds me of Srila Prabhupada's explanation of *phalgu-vairagya*. He said that there is a River Phalgu that flows through Gaya in Bihar. It appears to be only a dry sandy riverbed, but if one pushes his hand into the sand he'll find water beneath. Similarly, a *phalgu-vairagi* seems to have renounced the world, but underneath, in his heart, he nurtures a huge desire to become God. Hence his *vairagya* (renunciation) is in reality *phalgu* (insignificant).

Srila Prabhupada elaborated in a lecture given in Vrindavana on 18 April 1975:

Rupa Gosvami says, "Motor car is material; therefore we should not touch it--this is *phalgu vairagya*." That is stated by Rupa Gosvami that *prapancikataya buddhya hari-sambandhi-vastunah, mumuksubhih parityago phalgu vairagyah kathyate*. *Prapancikataya buddhya*. "Because it is material advancement, I therefore...*Brahma satya jagan mithya*. This world is *mithya*. This, any material thing, is *mithya*."

No. It has got some relationship with Krsna. That is to be seen. What is that? What is this motor car? It is material. But what is this material? *Bhumir apah analo vayuh kham mano buddhir eva ca, bhinna me prakrtih astadha*. Where they have got this metal? This iron, wood, metal, everything, they have got from Krsna. Therefore it has got relationship with Krsna. Now, when it is manufactured, use it for Krsna. That is *yukta-vairagya*. So we do not hate anything, material advancement. We can utilize everything for Krsna's service. Our only preaching is that "Don't forget Krsna." That is our business.

Thus there actually is a type of "doing" that gives true significance to our "being." That "doing" is devotional service, which is *yukta-vairagya*, genuine renunciation in Krsna consciousness. The *bhara* or heavy weight of material existence comes down on us when we forget Krsna in the midst of what we are doing. Krsna is Bharadhari, the lifter of the burden of forgetfulness that crushes the conditioned soul. To know Him as Bharadari, we need to remember Him as we perform our duties in this world.

Another interesting point that Kundera makes about "unbearable lightness" has to do with Western values. From pages 1-2:

If the French Revolution were to recur eternally, French historians would be less proud of Robespierre. But because they deal with something that will not return, the bloody years of the Revolution have turned into mere words, theories, and discussions, have become lighter than feathers, frightening to no one. There is an infinite difference between a Robespierre who occurs only once in history and a Robespierre who eternally returns, chopping off French heads.

Let us therefore agree that the idea of eternal return implies a perspective from which things appear other than as we know them: they appear without the mitigating circumstances of their transitory nature. This mitigating circumstance prevents us from coming to a verdict. For how can we condemn something that is ephemeral, in transit? In the sunset of dissolution, everything is illuminated by the aura of nostalgia, even the guillotine.

Not long ago, I caught myself experiencing a most incredible sensation. Leafing through a book on Hitler, I was touched by some of his portraits: they reminded me of my childhood. I grew up during the war; several members of my family perished in Hitler's concentration camps; but what were their deaths compared with the memories of a lost period of my life, a period that would never return?

This reconciliation with Hitler reveals the profound moral perversity of a world that rests essentially on the non-existence of return, for in this world everything is pardoned in advance and therefore everything cynically permitted.

The "world that rests essentially on the non-existence of return" is the Western world, where the doctrine of *karma* and reincarnation does not prevail. Kundera's point is very well taken: if the deeds of an individual man, and of mankind in general, simply evaporate in time as soon as they are done, then they have no consequence except whatever consequence is given them by the human record of history. By dry words in old books. By the ideas of academics who are sadly out of touch with the world. (Kundera gently satirizes such an academic, an idealistic leftist-intellectual Geneva professor named Franz, with these words on page 98: "Franz felt his book life to be unreal. He yearned for real life, for the touch of people walking side by side with him, for their shouts. It never occurred to him that what he considered unreal (the work he did in the solitude of the office or library) was in fact his real life, whereas the parades [political demonstrations Franz liked to take part in] he imagined to be reality were nothing but theater, dance, carnival--in other words, a dream.")

Kundera cites a German proverb: *Einmal ist keinmal*--"What happens once might as well not have happened at all." The Western understanding of how the world works is that the events of a life or an age are momentary phenomena never to be replayed. And so these events, as good or as evil as they might seem to be the instant they happen, might as well be no events at all. We can safely shrug them off. If we knew for a fact that these events will return in the future to haunt us again and again, then shrugging them off would not be so easy.

On page 221, Kundera has the main character of his book, a Czech man named Tomas, consider a world that worked according to a different plan.

Somewhere out in space there was a planet where all people would be born again. They would be fully aware of the life they had spent on earth and of all the experience they had amassed here.

And perhaps there was still another planet, where we would all be born a third time with the experience of our first two lives.

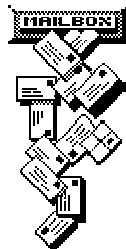
And perhaps there were yet more and more planets, where mankind would be born one degree (once life) more mature.

That was Tomas's version of eternal return.

Of course we here on earth (planet number one, the planet of inexperience) can only fabricate vague fantasies of what will happen to man on those other planets. Will he be wiser? Is maturity within man's power? Can he attain it through repetition?

Unable to bear the lightness of the Western "idea of history," Kundera's character speculates a universe that in key ways resembles the one described in the Vedic scriptures. There will be more ruminations on *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* in future entries of In2-MeC.

ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama (IBSA), Govardhana, India
17 May 2004



Hare Krishna Maharaj,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

I draw inspiration from your journal every day of my life. Your journal is very practical and we can see Krishna Consciousness working every day of our life because of your writings.

Thank you very much for giving us this mercy.



Hare Krsna Maharaj,
Please accept my humble obeisances.

nice to c you back on in2-mec. well to be very honest . . . the photos were absolutely breathtaking esp. the one of gandaki at sunset. really one could feel being out there with all you people in the beautiful valleys of river gandaki.

Absolutely magnificent.



Sri Radhikastaka

from the *Govinda-lilamrta*, by Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja
Versification by Dravida dasa (ACBSP)

*kunkumakta-kancanabja-garva-hari-gaurabha
pitanancitabja-gandha-kirti-nindi-saurabha
ballavesa-sunu-sarva-vanchitartha-sadhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Her gold complexion steals the pride of golden lotus tinged with red.
Her fragrance mocks the scent of lotus bloom with saffron powder spread.
Her skill in satisfying Sri Hari is perfect and complete . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*kauravinda-kanti-nindi-citra-patta-satika
krsna-matta-bhrnga-keli-phulla-puspa-vatika
krsna-nitya-sangamartha-padma-bandhu-radhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Her colored silken garments shame the splendor rubies can display.
She is a blooming garden where the bee of Krsna loves to play.

She worships Surya every day so She and Madhava can meet . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*saukumarya-srsta-pallavali-kirti-nigraha
candra-candanotpalendu-sevya-sita-vigraha
svabhimarsa-ballavisa-kama-tapa-badhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Eclipsed by Radha's tenderness, the fame of budding blossoms dims.
The moon, the lotus, sandal paste, and camphor serve Her cooling limbs.
When Krsna burns with love's desires, Her soothing touch dispels the heat . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*visva-vandya-yauvatabhivanditapi ya rama
rupa-navya-yauvanadi-sampada na yat-sama
sila-harda-lilaya ca sa yato 'sti nadhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Though youthful goddesses adored by all adore the goddess Sri,
She lacks Sri Radha's beauty, youth, and every other quality.
So when it comes to lovers' sports, with Radha no one can compete . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*rasa-lasya-gita-narma-sat-kalali-pandita
prema-ramya-rupa-vesa-sad-gunali-mandita
visva-navya-gopa-yosid-alito 'pi yadhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

In arts like dancing, singing, joking Radha is by far the best.
She shines with endless traits divine, like love and gorgeous form and
dress. Among the famous gopis of Vrndavan, She's supremely sweet . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*nitya-navya-rupa-keli-krsnabhava-sampada
krsna-raga-bandha-gopa-yauvatesu kampada
krsna-rupa-vesa-keli-lagna-sat-samadhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Eternal pastimes, beauty, youth, and love for Krsna make Her rich.
The loving gopis tremble just to see Her love, at highest pitch.
Her meditation on Sri Krsna's form and pastimes is complete . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*sveda-kampa-kantakasru-gadgadadi-sancita-
marsa-harsa-vamatadi-bhava-bhusanancita
krsna-netra-tosi-ratna-mandanali-dadhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Perspiring, trembling, hairs on end, and crying, falt'ring of the voice,
Impatience, joy, and guile--these signs of rapture make Her friends rejoice.

For Krsna's eyes Her many jeweled ornaments provide a treat . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*ya ksanardha-krsna-viprayoga-santatodita-
neka-dainya-capaladi-bhava-vrnda-modita
yatna-labdha-krsna-sanga-nirgatakhiladhika
mahyam atma-pada-padma-dasyadastu radhika*

Apart from Krsna for a moment, Radha feels anxiety
And restlessness and other moods--the highest kind of ecstasy.
But when She meets Him with some effort, all Her sufferings retreat . . .
May Radhika bestow on me the service of Her lotus feet.

*astakena yas tv anena nauti krsna-vallabham
darsane 'pi sailajadi-yosid-ali-durlabham
krsna-sanga-nanditatma-dasya-sidhu-bhajanam
tam karoti nanditali-sancayasau sa janam*

Exalted goddesses like Parvati can hardly ever see
Sri Krsna's lover, Radhika. But if a humble devotee
Recites these verses, then Sri Radha, who enjoys with Sri Hari,
Will pour the nectar of Her service down on him eternally.



Rendering Service to Devotees

In the *Padma Purana*, there is a nice statement praising the service of the Vaisnavas, or devotees. In that scripture Lord Siva tells Parvati, "My dear Parvati, there are different methods of worship, and out of all such methods the worship of the Supreme Person is considered to be the highest. But even higher than the worship of the Lord is the worship of the Lord's devotees. "

A similar statement is in the Third Canto, Seventh Chapter, verse 19, of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*: "Let me become a sincere servant of the devotees, because by serving them one can achieve unalloyed devotional service unto the lotus feet of the Lord. The service of devotees diminishes all miserable material conditions and develops within one a deep devotional love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. "

In the *Skanda Purana* there is a similar statement: "Persons whose bodies are marked with *tilaka*, symbolizing the conchshell, wheel, club and lotus--and who keep the leaves of *tulasi* on their heads, and whose bodies are always decorated with *gopi-candana*--even seen once, can help the seer be relieved from all sinful activities. "

A similar statement is found in the First Canto, Nineteenth Chapter, verse 33, of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*: "There is no doubt about one's becoming freed from all reactions to sinful activities after visiting a devotee or touching his lotus feet or giving him a sitting place. Even by remembering the activities of such a Vaisnava, one becomes purified, along with one's whole family. And what, then, can be said of rendering direct service to him?"

No one can approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. One must approach Him through His pure devotees. Therefore, in the system of Vaisnava activities, the first duty is to accept a devotee as spiritual master and then to render service unto him.

Sri Rupa Gosvami affirms that all the quotations given in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* from different scriptures are accepted by the great acaryas and devotees of the Lord.

--*Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 12

What is Euclidean and non-Euclidean logic?

Euclid was a Greek mathematician of the third century B. C. who applied the deductive principles of logic to geometry, thereby deriving statements from clearly defined axioms. Architects and cartographers surely owe a profound debt to Euclid. But his geometric logic exerted an influence on the Western mind that went far beyond mere technical fields. It became the fuel of the faith of the rationalism of Descartes, "the father of modern philosophy. " Rationalism believes that the secrets of life can be entirely figured out by the human intellect. (Descartes once bragged in a letter that he was convinced he would live far beyond a hundred years of age because of the power of his rationalistic investigation of health matters. He died at age 53.)

To render it into a definition of as few words as possible, Euclidean logic is *the axiomatic method of thought*. An axiom is a self-evident rule. A classic example is the rule that the three corners of a triangle, *any* triangle, when measured with a compass, will add up to 180 degrees--or in other words, an arc that describes exactly half a circle. This value is always true and is never an approximation. There's no chance involved--we do not need to "check" using human methods of observation and measurement to make sure that the corners of an odd-shaped triangle shown on the page of a book really add up to 180 degrees. They will. Hence Euclidean logic seems to usher us into the presence of absolute truth.

Euclidean geometry operates in reference to a library of axioms. When Western European thinkers rediscovered this geometric logic of the ancient Greeks, they were fascinated and enthusiastically assumed that it could be applied to fields of inquiry like philosophy and theology.

Now, in Srila Prabhupada's explanation of Krsna conscious deductive logic (*avaroha-pantha*) we can discern a similar-looking system of thought. Srila Prabhupada said:

Just like if the child is warned, "My dear child, do not touch fire. It will burn you. " So if the child accepts, then he gets the perfect knowledge immediately. If the child does not accept, he wants to make experiment, then he will burn his finger. So our process of knowledge--you should take from the supreme authority. Then we save time [from being used up] for research work. That is Krsna consciousness movement. We take perfect knowledge from Krsna. (--Lecture on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 22 May 1975, Melbourne)

"If you touch fire, it will burn you" is an axiom. Hence the *avaroha-pantha* (descending method of knowledge) is a kind of axiomatic method of thought. But it is important to understand that it is a *transcendental* kind of axiomatic thought. As Srila Prabhupada concludes above, "We take perfect knowledge from Krsna. "

At the end of the day, material axiomatic thought caves in to mundane assumptions. For example, there's an axiom that every man has a father. Srila Prabhupada employed this axiom on numerous occasions. He asked his listeners to consider that as each of them has a father, so similarly their father has a father, and that father has a father. . . on and on it goes, back through the chain of fathers until at last we come to the Original Father: Krsna. Once a man challenged Prabhupada's transcendental conclusion that Krsna is the original father. He thought the axiom "every man has a father" must be applied to Krsna too. "Who is God's father?" he demanded to know from Prabhupada. His Divine Grace replied that God, by definition, has no father even though He is the Father of everyone. The man retorted, "It becomes a belief rather than a logic now, then, for when we think about the God. You were saying everybody has father, so why God, in exception, He hasn't got a father?" Prabhupada stuck to his point that God is by definition the Father of everyone who Himself has no father. *Prabhupada's position in no way contradicts the axiom, "Every man has a father. "* The axiom tells us only that every man has a father; it does not tell us that every father is a man. But the fellow who raised the challenge tried to attach the assumption "every father is a man" to the axiom.

"Whenever you assume something," goes a saying, "you make an ASS of U and ME. "

"Every father is a man" makes a very poor axiom. Don't dogs have fathers? And if they do, are the fathers of dogs men?

Ponder this point a moment. Because it ushers to the doorway of non-Euclidean logic.

Rationalist philosophers and theologians who embraced Euclidean logic supposed that it gave them the right to speculate freely on metaphysical problems and to present their speculations to the public as absolute truth. If a rationalist was criticized for making pronouncements about things outside of human reach, he could point to Euclidean geometry as evidence that some absolute truths are accessible to deep thought--so why not others?

But Euclidean geometry is *not* absolute.

Consider this globe:



If we divide any of the squares on the surface of this globe into triangles, we'll find that the sum of the arcs of their corners *exceeds* 180 degrees. That's because these triangles exist in spherical space, not flat space.

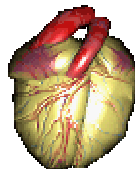
The axioms of Euclidean geometry work only in terms of flat 2-D space.

There is another kind of curved space called hyperbolic, which curves toward a point. Think of the sides of a cone. The sum of the arcs of the corners of any hyperbolic triangle is always *less* than 180 degrees.

Curved space is essential to the theory of relativity. Relativity in turn brings up issues of dimensions, which I discussed in a recent In2-MeC entry. Non-Euclidean geometry is simply *non-Flatland geometry!* Remember--we *actually* live in a world of three dimensions, of curved space. Therefore non-Euclidean logic is certainly practical. But when you read about it, it's often given this aura of something so very abstract and esoteric.

That's because most of the conceptual, metaphysical thinking that was going on in the Western World until quite recently was Flatland thinking.

This willy-nilly excitement to apply geometric logic to problems of philosophy and theology belies a *sudra* bent of mind. Srila Prabhupada often said that a *brahmana* is broad-minded. Which means he has the capacity to think in other dimensions, particularly the transcendental dimension of Brahman. The word *sudra* means "one who always laments. " He's trapped in the low-D realm of human assumptions. If you're a regular reader of In2-MeC, you know what assumptions I mean: social issues and stuff like that.



A long time ago, man would listen in amazement to the sound of regular heartbeats in his chest, never suspecting what they were. He was unable to identify himself with so alien and unfamiliar an object as the body. The body was a cage, and inside that cage was something which looked, listened, feared, and marvelled; that something, that remainder left over after the body had been accounted for, was the soul.

Today, of course, the body is no longer unfamiliar; we know that the beating in our chest is the heart and that the nose is the nozzle of a hose sticking out of the body to take oxygen into the lungs. The face is nothing but an instrument panel registering all the body mechanisms: digestion, sight, hearing, respiration, thought.

Ever since man has learned to give each part of the body a name, the body has given him less trouble. He has also learned that the soul is nothing more than the

grey matter of the brain in action. The old duality of body and soul has become shrouded in scientific terminology, and we can laugh at it as merely an obsolete prejudice.

But just make someone who has fallen in love listen to his stomach rumble, and the unity of body and soul, that lyrical illusion of the age of science, instantly fades away.

--Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, pgs. 39-40.

ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama (IBSA), Govardhana, India
18 May 2004

Sriman Mahaprabhor-asta-kaliya-lila-smarana Mangala-stotram
By Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

*Sri gauranga mahaprabhos caranayor ya kesa sesadibhih
sevagamyataya sva bhakta vihita sanyair yaya labhyate
tam tan manasikim smritim prathayitum bhavyam sada sttamair
naumi pratyahikam tadiya-caritam sriman navadvipa jam*

Devotional service to the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu is far beyond the perception of Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Lord Sesha-naga and the rest; but it is continual engagement of the Lord's own devotees. It is always available to other souls as well. Now I will begin my descriptions of the process of *manasi-seva* (service to the Lord executed within the mind). This process is fit for continuous remembrance by the most virtuous sages. Therefore I offer my most respectful obeisances to the eternal daily life and pastimes of the Lord born in Navadvipa.

Brief codes describing his daily schedule in eight periods

*ratryante sayanotthitah sura sarit snato babhau yah prage
purvahne sva ganair lasaty upavane tair bhati madhyahnake
yah puryam aparahnake nija grihe sayam grihe 'thangane
srivasasya nisa-mukhe nisi vasan gaurah sa no raksatu*

(1) At the end of the night (before sunrise), Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gets up from His bed, washes His face and converses with His wife.

(2) In the morning, He is massaged with oil and bathes in the celestial Ganga river, then worships Lord Vishnu.

(3) In the forenoon period. He enjoys discussing topics about Lord Krishna with His devotees during visits to their homes.

(4) At midday, He enjoys pastimes in the gardens on the bank of the Ganga

(5) In the afternoon, He wanders about the town of Navadvipa, sporting with all the residents.

(6) At dusk, He returns home to worship Lord Vishnu and be with His family.

(7) In the evening, He goes with his associates to the courtyard of Srivasa Pandita to chant the holy names and dance in ecstasy.

(8) At night, He returns home to take rest.

May this Lord Gaura protect us all.

". . . this sankirtana or street chanting must go on, it is our most important program. Lord Caitanya's movement means the sankirtana movement. You may simply take two hours for chanting sixteen rounds daily, two hours for reading congregationally, and balance of time go out for sankirtana. We must do both, reading books and distributing books, but distributing books is the main propaganda. "

--Letter from Srila Prabhupada, 09-18-72



Individual Free Will vis-a-vis Krsna's Supreme Knowledge

During a morning walk in Mayapur, 14 March 1976, this exchange ensued between Srila Prabhupada and several disciples.

Ramesvara: I spoke with one man who argued that "Krsna is very cruel because He knows everything past, present and future, so He knew that we would all fall down from the spiritual sky, but still, He gave us the independence to fall down. "

Prabhupada: Hm?

Ramesvara: "Even though He knew we would fall, because He knows everything. . . "

Acyutananda: That's a common question.

Prabhupada: That is another foolish question. Unless you have got independence, what is your life? Then you are dead stone. You want to become a dead stone? That is not Krsna's concern. Krsna does not give such perfection, that you become a dead stone.

Acyutananda: The thing is that because Krsna knows the future, past, present, and future, so He knew that we would fall down, so why didn't He help me?

Prabhupada: No, no, future means, just like. . . . This is the law of nature, that if you steal, you'll be punished. So if I say, "Oh, you are stealing; you'll be punished," this is future. Suppose this is the month of March, and if I say, "In the month of July [the time when monsoon season begins] there will be rain. " So I know; you know; everyone knows. This is not a future telling. The natural sequence is everyone knows it.

Madhudvisa: But does that means that Krsna doesn't know something?

Prabhupada: Krsna. . . . If everyone knows, why Krsna does not know? "He knows everything" means this common sense everyone knows.

Madhudvisa: Does He know what you will choose?

Prabhupada: Eh? Just try to understand. Future means like this: nature's law; and it will happen. After summer there will be rainy season; it will happen, and they will call, I am foretelling future. It is not future; it is natural sequence, automatically happened.

Satsvarupa: But that's predictable. If I have my own free will, what I'm going to do, you don't know.

Prabhupada: No, no, if you are in knowledge, you can predict. But if you are fool, you cannot say. If I see that in July there will be rain, and if you are a fool, you'll protest. That is your foolishness. It is natural sequence, one after another.

Madhudvisa: When is the natural sequence. . . ?

Prabhupada: Natural sequence. . . . Just like you are infected, some contaminous disease. You'll suffer. There is a story that one fool was sitting on a branch of a tree and he was cutting off. And somebody said, "You'll fall down. " "Ha, fall down. " But when he fell down he said, "Oh, you are a great astrologer. " So who goes to the astrologer? Only fools and rascal. No sane man goes. They know that what is. . . . *Yad bhavyantam tad bhavata.* (?) What is to happen, that will happen. Why shall I go to astrologer?

Gurukrpa: I can prepare myself to make change.

Prabhupada: Yes. My only business is to serve Krsna. I don't mind what will happen next.

Pusta Krsna: That desire to serve Krsna, though, that Krsna. . . .

Prabhupada: Don't talk like foolish. That desire everyone has. He is serving. He is serving so many things, but he doesn't want to serve Krsna. That is his foolishness. He is serving *maya*; still, he denies to serve Krsna. That is his misfortune. *Ei rupe brahmāṇḍa bhramite kono bhagyavan jiva*. So unless one is very fortunate, he does not agree to serve Krsna.

It was many years ago when I first came across this exchange. I remember that I was deeply satisfied with Srila Prabhupada's answers here. Prior to my reading this, a few people had challenged me with the argument that belief in an all-knowing God negates individual free will. If God knows what we will do before we do it, then what we do is pre-determined. On the other hand, if we really do have free will, and at the same time there is a God, then we must conclude that God does not know ahead of time what choices we'll make. In that case it is wrong preaching to proclaim God as all-knowing. Before I became aware of this morning walk conversation, I was unsure how to properly reply to this challenge.

I will restate Prabhupada's position thus:

Yes, the individual soul has freedom to choose, but choice operates in the context of different sequences of natural results. Krsna knows all these sequences. Thus He knows what the outcome of our choice will be. His foreknowledge of the outcome does not rob us of the power to decide to initiate a particular sequence of events leading to that outcome. In short, the soul does have free will. But as Srila Prabhupada always said, our free will is minute. It operates under a higher law.

In Vrndavana on 20 October 1972, Srila Prabhupada made the following observation in a lecture on *Nectar of Devotion*.

So material *rasas*. That is being experienced in different types of body. Just like somebody wants to taste fresh blood, flesh and blood. So he's given the next life a body like a tiger, like a other carnivorous animal, and he tastes very nicely blood and flesh. Nature gives all the facilities. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamanāniḥ gunaiḥ karmanī sarvasaḥ, ahaṅkāra-vimudhatma kartāham iti manyate. Prakṛti*, nature is doing everything. I am desiring something. That means I am contacting, contacting the certain type of the modes of material nature.

What we exactly choose, then, is a question of *rasa* or taste. In Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy, **taste** is the key to everything. "For one who has a particular material taste," writes Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura on page 135 of *Brahmana and Vaisnava*, "that taste appears supreme. " In the next sentence he adds, "The faith of living beings is determined by how they identify themselves. " So our conceptions of who we are, and what activities we ought to choose, are ruled by the law of taste.

To arrive at a clear understanding of free will, we must know that the individual soul is ever a servant to his taste. His will of movement is free in a sense similar to the glowing "free" sign one sees on a taxicab plying a city street. Yes, the cab is moving

freely here and there, but the very meaning of that movement is that *it is actively seeking a passenger*. As soon as a passenger gets aboard, off goes the "free" sign. The cab now moves under the direction of another. That's *why* there are cabs.

So here's a vital point to comprehend. "Free will" in the *jiva* never means "a dispassionate, autonomous decision. " The word "free" should always be understood to have overtones of "seeking engagement. " The nature of the will of the *jiva* is that of servitude to *rasa* in general. Within that position of servitude, a choice of *rasas*--material and spiritual--is available. Yes, there's a choice. . . but the *jiva* makes his choice out of an abiding need.

To think,

Once I was a liberated soul completely above it all. I must have been so transcendently intoxicated with my own self-satisfaction that I sort of accidentally blundered into *maya*. I mean, being liberated and all, I couldn't have really *wanted* to be in *maya*, could I?

shows signs of confusing the position of the living entity with that of the Supreme Lord. It shows signs of not appreciating the inherent *needfulness* of the individual spirit soul, that the spirit soul is originally and always the *dependent servant*, not the *independent master*. And it shows signs of not owning up to the responsibility for one's choice of *rasa*.

This brings us to the point of the natural sequence that follows individual choice. If--referring to the quotation previous by Srila Prabhupada--I take aboard the taste for fresh blood and flesh, my karmic travels will bring me to the destination of the body of a tiger or other carnivorous animal. That destination is known to Krsna. But His knowing it does not make it His fault that I have become a servant to a taste that is contrary to my best interests.

The principle here--that one person's gift of foreknowledge of the consequences of another person's choice does not rob the other of his free will--is explained in a book titled *Impossibility* by John D. Barrow (Oxford U. Press 1998, pg. 233-4). Barrow offers us a scenario involving a scientist who's figured out how to determine people's choices before they make them, and the subject of the scientist's experiment, a man who is about to order his lunch.

So long as he [the scientist] keeps this knowledge to himself, his deterministic theory of the diner's thoughts and actions can continue to be infallible. He could tell other people [what the diner will order for lunch]. He could even write the prediction down on a piece of paper and show it to the diner after he had chosen his lunch. In both cases, he could have predicted correctly, but would not have exercised any constraint upon the diner's free choice.

As we see from the questions above asked of Srila Prabhupada by his disciples, people are sometimes inordinately obsessed with the issue of whether God knows before we choose what we will choose. They even go so far as to conclude that if He does have such foreknowledge, then He is cruel, since when He foresaw I would choose to come to this world of suffering He yet did nothing to stop me. There's this "bug" (like a computer bug) in their logic that forces them to conclude, "If God knows, then *He's* responsible for what I do, not me. "

When we follow closely Srila Prabhupada's replies to these questions we see he stressed that the misfortune of the fallen *jiva* is his choice to not serve Krsna even though constitutionally he is always a servant. Therefore the *jiva* now suffers in the service of *maya*. At the bottom of his suffering is an attitude of determined contrariness, a resolve to never surrender. Krsna isn't imposing this attitude on him. The *jiva* willingly takes on this attitude in defiance of Krsna.

At this point someone can ask, "But if my real and original taste is to serve Krsna, then why would I choose something against my nature?" The implication in this question is that if I have an original nature, an original "program" in my soul of transcendental, Krsna-centered tastes, then that program should logically *determine my choice*. In other words, if--in the core of my heart and in the essence of my being--I really do like to serve Krsna, then I wouldn't choose to serve *maya*.

Coming back to the scenario of the scientist and the diner: accepting that the scientist has the ability to "read" the diner's food preferences from his brain state, Barrow asks if that guarantees that the diner will choose what the scientist predicts he will choose.

The answer is 'no'. The subject can always be stubborn, and adapt a strategy that says, 'If you say that I will choose soup, then I will choose salad, and vice versa!' Under these conditions it is logically impossible to predict infallibly what the person will choose if the scientist makes his prediction known.

The point Barrow is making (he's actually following an argument proposed by a British cognitive scientist named Donald Mackay in 1957) is that determinism--which is the doctrine that an individual's choice isn't really free because it is preset by natural law; it only appears to be free because the individual is unaware of that law--*does not logically mean that the individual is incapable of defying the law*.

Following the logic of the materialistic version of determinism, Barrow shows how the supposed natural law that a person's choice is determined by the state of his brain allows for defiance of that law.

Suppose your brain is in state 1 and we predict you will act as P(1). Would you be correct to believe the prediction P(1) if it were shown to you?

First, we must consider the effect on your brain state of believing the prediction P(1). If believing the prediction changed the state of your brain to state 2, then the act of believing the prediction P(1) would put your brain into a different state from that on which the prediction was based. The new brain state 2 would give rise to a new prediction P(2). The key question is whether we can build into our predictions the effects of making the prediction P(1) known to you, so that we could make the prediction P(2). But, if that were done, we could not claim that P(2) is what you would be correct to believe, because it is brain state 2 that leads to prediction P(2), and if you believed P(2) this would again change your brain state from state 2 to some new state 3, say, and P(2) would not be a correct prediction of the action that follows from that state.

Now, in this essay we are considering a spiritual version of determinism. To restate it: if my original spiritual nature is to take pleasure in serving Krsna, then from that nature it should be predictable that I will choose to serve Krsna. If at any time I

choose *not* to serve Krsna, then I may rightly ask whether my original nature is to take pleasure in serving Krsna.

Maybe my original nature is merely neutral. Maybe I was originally in the *brahmajyoti*. Maybe I have to be especially blessed with a taste for Krsna-*bhakti*, then only will it become my nature.

Maybe maybe, but what Srila Prabhupada stated above is clear:

Pusta Krsna: That desire to serve Krsna, though, that Krsna. . . .

Prabhupada: Don't talk like foolish. That desire everyone has. He is serving. He is serving so many things, but he doesn't want to serve Krsna. That is his foolishness. He is serving *maya*; still, he denies to serve Krsna. That is his misfortune.

Everyone has a natural desire to serve Krsna, and that desire is observable in the *jiva*'s natural condition of servitude; yet still the *jiva* can choose to not serve Krsna directly. Thus he becomes an indirect servant of Krsna.

Matter is the dictionary of spirit, said Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. From Barrow's demonstration of the logic of materialistic determinism, we can demonstrate that spiritual determinism does not rule out that a *jiva* can choose to serve *maya* instead of Krsna.

Barrow's point is that even if for argument's sake we accept that the state of the brain determines an individual's choice of action, we must acknowledge that the state of the brain is variable. If I come to know that my brain state 1 will result in me performing activity 1, that knowledge changes the state of my brain. It is no longer certain that I will perform activity 1, because now I am in brain state 2.

The core idea here is not a big chore to grasp: as soon as I think *about* my brain state, I am no longer *in* that state. Even a materialistic determinist cannot deny that we all have the ability to think about who we are and what we are doing. As soon as I think in that way, a relationship manifests *of* my self *to* my self. That relationship in turn opens up an opportunity for a change in how I relate to my self. That I am in relationship with myself means there is a potential for the relationship to change.

Now, if it does change, the original "I" still remains. So what is happening? It is that this "I", this entity who is invested with the nature of choice, is simply exercising his nature.

This is just the way things are.

Krsna is Acintya, which means that He, as He is, is not defined by the logical capacity of the human mind. He is always more than what the mind can say about Him. Similarly His energy--which is ultimately the energy of everything--is *acintya-sakti*. Thus all our mental formulations of ontology ("what is") fall short of what really is. In this light, the nature of things can be called paradoxical if we take "paradox" to mean a statement that, even though true, seems to be saying different things at the same time. Not a few people in this world are troubled by this definition of paradox. But without doubt it is valid (see

<http://www.andrews.edu/~calkins/math/biograph/199900/topparad.htm>). Not a few people in this world would rather that paradox mean "an impossibility; something that doesn't exist except as a baffling idea."

Consider Russell's paradox (named after the famous British mathematician-philosopher Bertrand Russell). Since you, my reader, have reached this page through your computer modem, I'll explain the paradox in this way: suppose 1) the dialup number programmed into your computer is a set of digits from 0 through 9 (let's say 0935481276) that we'll call D; 2) since we see in D the numbers 0 through 9, we can conclude this set called D belongs to itself; 3) yet at the same time because it a set, it is not a member of itself. Hard for the mind to follow? Yes. Is it therefore an impossibility? No, and that is why I'm explaining it in terms of your dialup program. You click once on a button on your screen. Your computer dials 0935481276. After a short wait you are connected to the Internet. There's nothing in the dialup number other than the digits 0 through 9. It can't be denied that D equals 0935481276 and 0935481276 equals D. But your clicking on this number once *as a set*, D, is different from having to click on *each digit individually* to get your computer to dial the number manually.

Simultaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference is not paradoxical in the sense that it is impossible. It is paradoxical in the sense that our minds can't quite put together oneness and difference simultaneously.

Have a look at this animation: Does it show white silhouettes of faces, or does it show a blue flower vase? As you view it you know the animation is showing two images in one image. But your mind is not able to fit both together seamlessly. You see one image or the other, either faces or the vase.



Simultaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference is just the way things are.

Determinism is supposed to mean that things are the way they are because they are the way they are, not because we made them that way. Fine. Let's not argue about that. Let's just point out that when the logic of the way things are--simultaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference--is brought to bear on determinism, then undifferentiated monism is not an option. There will be variety. And because there will be variety, there will be choice.

The natural state of the living entity is that he is the part and parcel servant of Krsna. But that state is variable. Variable means that even in his original transcendental position, the living entity is not without power to think of himself differently in that position. It is perfectly natural for him to think that way, as difference is a component of his nature.

Krsna's energy--His *maya-sakti*, or *svarupa-sakti*--is one, but it is manifested in varieties. *Parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate* (*Svetasvatara Up.* 6. 8). The difference between Vaisnavas and Mayavadis is that Mayavadis say that this *maya* is one,

whereas Vaisnavas recognize its varieties. There is unity in variety. For example, in one tree, there are varieties of leaves, fruits and flowers. Varieties of energy are required for performing the varieties of activity within the creation. To give another example, in a machine all the parts may be iron, but the machine includes varied activities. Although the whole machine is iron, one part works in one way, and other parts work in other ways. One who does not know how the machine is working may say that it is all iron; nonetheless, in spite of its being iron, the machine has different elements, all working differently to accomplish the purpose for which the machine was made. One wheel runs this way, another wheel runs that way, functioning naturally in such a way that the work of the machine goes on. Consequently we give different names to the different parts of the machine, saying, "This is a wheel," "This is a screw," "This is a spindle," "This is the lubrication," and so on.

*parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate
svabhaviki jnana-bala-kriya ca*

Krsna's power is variegated, and thus the same *sakti*, or potency, works in variegated ways. *Vividha* means "varieties." There is unity in variety. Thus *yogamaya* and *mahamaya* are among the varied individual parts of the same one potency, and all of these individual potencies work in their own varied ways. The *samvit*, *sandhini* and *ahladini* potencies--Krsna's potency for existence, His potency for knowledge and His potency for pleasure--are distinct from *yogamaya*. Each is an individual potency. (--*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 13. 57p)

Srimad-Bhagavatam 1. 2. 11 declares the Absolute Truth to be *advaya*, not divided. Yet within this undivided Transcendence, the verse continues, there are various states of realization. These correspond to the potencies Srila Prabhupada listed: Brahman realization corresponds to *sandhini* or *sat* potency, Paramatma realization corresponds to *samvit* or *cit* potency, and Bhagavan realization corresponds to *ahladini* or *ananda* potency.

Liberated *brahmanas* are connected to the *sandhini* potency and so realize Brahman. Liberated *yogis* are connected the *samvit* potency and so realize Paramatma. Liberated devotees are connected the *ahladini* potency and so realize Bhagavan. Yet at the same time all are connected by *Yogamaya* to the same undivided Absolute Truth.

A liberated soul's awareness of the different states of realization in the different potencies of the Absolute permits him to vary his own state. Remember Barrow's explanation that when one becomes aware of brain state 1, a different brain state results in which a new course of action becomes manifest. But this is just mundane logic, you say? You ask, where is the evidence that this deterministic argument can be correlated to transcendence?

Answer: see pages 136-7 of *Brahmana and Vaisnava* by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. Some rapid-fire quotations--

The three features of the nondual Absolute Truth are endowed with energies. . . As an object is perceived differently by different senses, so the Absolute Truth, although one, appears in three forms. . . Thus the indifferent *brahmanas* who know Brahman, the *yogis* who realize the Supersoul, and the devotees of the Supreme Lord are all engaged in serving the *advaya-jnana* Absolute Truth. . . If the *brahmanas* who know

Brahman desire to practice *yoga*, they can do so; and if they desire to worship Krsna, they can also do so. If the devotees of Krsna become averse to worshipping Krsna, in other words, if they fall from the path of devotional service, they can become *karma-yogis* or *jnana-yogis*; and if they fall from knowledge of Krsna or knowledge of the Supersoul, they can become *brahmanas* on the platform of impersonal knowledge. The *yogis* are situated on a platform below the devotees of the Lord, and the *brahmanas* who know Brahman are situated below the *yogis*. The *yogis* who have realized the Supersoul can advance to the position of the devotees or degrade to the position of impersonalist *brahmanas*. When *brahmanas* accept the doctrine of fruitive activities in the world of material qualities, they also become affected by material qualities. . .

On page 139 of the same book Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati points out, "The cause of the spirit soul's coming to live in this world in aversion to Krsna is his misuse of free will. When this aversion becomes strong, the living entities accept a material mind and body in order to enjoy the temporary material world and thus come under the control of fruitive reactions. "

The spirit soul in his relationship with Krsna has different options before him. He may choose to elevate himself in Krsna consciousness, following his natural transcendental taste. But he may conversely choose to defy his natural transcendental taste in favor of impersonalism or even the mundane *rasa*. There is nothing illogical in the *jiva's* so choosing, as these choices all appear in relation to the same undivided Absolute Truth who is *akhilarasamrta-murti*, the very form of the different tastes that may be desired by His parts and parcels. Even the material *rasas* have no other origin than Him.

Krsna knows everything about our original nature and our conditional nature. These two natures are comparable to water in its liquid state and water in its frozen state. As water remains essentially water whether it is liquid or ice, so our essential power of choice (*tatastha-sakti*) continues to function in both states of our nature as conscious entities.

All this is true, but it is completely illogical to argue that Krsna's knowledge of our nature determines whether we are "liquid" or "frozen. " Our state is determined by our choice. Our choice is determined by the quality of *rasa* we submit to. And the quality of *rasa* we submit to is determined by our attitude towards Krsna.



Even though Genesis says that God gave man dominion over all animals, we can also construe it to mean that He merely entrusted them to man's care. Man was not the planet's master, merely its administrator. Descartes took a decisive step forward: he made man *maitre et proprietaire de la nature*. And surely there is a deep connection between that step and the fact that he was also the one who point-blank denied animals a soul. Man is master and proprietor, says Descartes, whereas the beast is merely an automaton, an animated machine, a *machina animata*. When an animal

laments, it is not a lament; it is merely the rasp of a poorly functioning mechanism. When a wagon wheel grates, the wagon is not in pain; it simply needs oiling. Thus, we have no reason to grieve for a dog being carved up alive in the laboratory.

.

Mankind's true moral test, its fundamental test (which lies deeply buried from view), consists of its attitude towards those who are at its mercy: animals. And in this respect, mankind has suffered a fundamental debacle, and debacle so fundamental that all others stem from it.

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Another image also comes to mind: Nietzsche leaving his hotel in Turin. Seeing a horse and a coachman beating it with a whip, Nietzsche went up to the horse and, before the coachman's very eyes, put his arms around the horse's neck and burst into tears.

That took place in 1889, when Nietzsche, too, had removed himself from the world of people. In other words, it was at the time when his mental illness had just erupted. But for that very reason I feel his gesture to the horse has broad implications: Nietzsche was trying to apologize to the horse for Descartes. His lunacy (that is, his final break with mankind) began at the very moment he burst into tears over the horse.

And that is Nietzsche I love. . . stepping down from the road along which mankind, 'the master and proprietor of nature', marches onward.

--Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, pgs. 284, 286-7

ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama (IBSA), Govardhana, India
19 May 2004



Srila Prabhupada told us that he played football as a youth and was secretary of the club. He was also remembering his childhood friends. "For marriage they would trace the genealogy for seven generations. It is prescribed that there can be no family ties within these seven generations. In the West there is no genealogy-no family-it is dog society. "

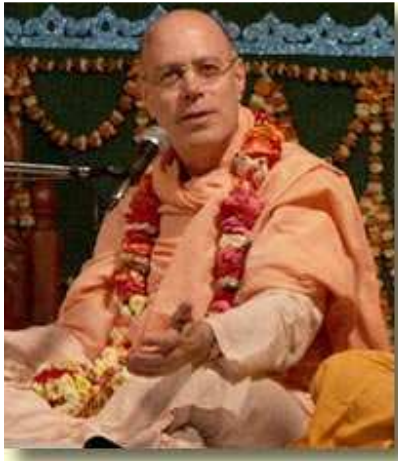
"If it were not for you, our position would be hopeless," I said.

"I could understand you had no family love, anything. You were very nice boy. You were selling so well, you encouraged me to print Back to Godhead with Dai Nippon. Only by your encouragement. Otherwise we were printing only two thousand, three thousand. Now they are printing my words 'Prabhupada Speaks Out.' It is very good. They should come to their senses. Before me everyone said, 'Yes, you are good.' Perhaps this is the first time from the Eastern side they are getting such a chastisement. They are not even civilized, what to speak of knowledge.

"Western civilization is to make something new always. There is a nice house-destroy it and again build. And in Los Angeles with the old temple-there was no need of breaking. D. L. Roy has written a song, 'Put your head down, your legs up; you must do something new, no matter how odd or ugly or rubbish it is.' But our philosophy is nothing new. Stick to the old. Childish means 'cannot stick to one principle. '

"Therefore I say the Western civilization is childish. One car design, then finished and next year a different one. A devil's workshop. Entanglement in useless work. Chewing the chewed. Am I right about this? So remain Krsna conscious. Stick to the principles. You are making definite progress. I can see. Do you feel?" Prabhupada asked each of us. "When you eat, no one has to ask if you are satisfied. "

"My Guru Maharaja called Ramakrishna 'murkha pujari'-a foolish, illiterate priest. Any quotation attributed to him was actually made by his disciples after his death. "



"In my horoscope, it was written that after seventy years, he will go outside India and establish so many temples. Guru Maharaja foretold this before my Godbrothers in 1935: 'He will do the needful. No one requires to help him. ' Sridhara Maharaja was present. I left India hopeless. I did not want to come back. I went with the intention, 'I shall do this job!' In 1970, there was a conspiracy. I do not wish to remember it. So I came back. I called you from Paris to take me away from Los Angeles. Otherwise, I would have made Los Angeles my headquarters. My plan was like that, but Krsna's plan was different. When I was leaving Los Angeles, I was not happy. I said to Dvarakadisa, 'You have brought me here; now why are You dragging me?' Krsna wanted

me to leave Vrndavana. 'You were retired, I will give you a better place. ' And He has given a temple one hundred times better than Los Angeles. " After lunch we showed Prabhupada the map drawn according to the description of Jambudvipa in the Fifth Canto. "It was not possible for me to write as a layman on such subjects. Someone [Krsna] had to help me. "

- From *TKG's Diary* by HH Tamal Krishna Goswami



Sri Gauranga's beautifully brilliant luster overshadows the sun's shining rays and dazzled my eyes. The beauty of His long, slightly drooping eyes, curved like the petals of a lotus, cannot be adequately described in words.

His form is eternal. His exquisite complexion is of the color of sandalwood paste. His wide chest is decorated with a gently swaying wild-flower garland and His luminous, moon-like face is pleasing, cooling and comforting to see. The Lord's long arms reach down to His knees.

Sounds of victory and praise reverberated in all directions when the Lord came into this world to inaugurate the congregational chanting of the Holy Names. The earth goddess felt especially blessed at the advent of Lord Gauranga. The gods in the heavens sang in great joy and danced in ecstasy.

The Golden moon Sri Chaitanya had arisen and sounds of great joy filled the air in all directions. His beauty humbled the beauty of a million Cupids. Meditating on His own beauty He smiled when contemplating His own dancing and singing.

His lovely face and charming eyes were stunning to see, as was said in the Veda in the descriptions of the beauty of the incarnations of God. His feet were marked with the signs of flag, lightning etc, just like Lord Krishna's feet. His entire exquisite form was decorated with features to enchant the minds of everyone.

All fear and despondency was dissipated and the world was showered with immense fortune when the Lord came into the world and showed His divine form



People usually escape from their troubles into the future; they draw an imaginary line across the path of time, a line beyond which their current troubles will cease to exist.

--Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* pg. 161

In the material world we are struggling for existence with the hope that someday in the future we will be happy. Yet we are bewildered. An animal in the desert sees a mirage, a shadow of water, and he runs after this shadow again and again. He runs further and further, and in this way, as he crosses the hot sands, he becomes more and more thirsty and he finally dies. Our struggle for existence is like this. We are thinking, "Let me go a little further. There will be water eventually. There will eventually be happiness. " Yet there is no water in the desert. Those who are unintelligent, who are like animals, seek happiness in the desert of the material world. This false attachment has to be given up by the process of *bhakti-yoga*. This must be taken up very seriously, not artificially. Krsna in all seriousness wants to see whether one has finished all his material desires. When Krsna sees this, He is very pleased. We are actually busy with *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksa*, but when we transcend these, *bhakti* begins.

--Teachings of Lord Kapila, Chapter Eighteen



[C]onsistent theories of the fundamental forces of Nature appear to require the Universe to have many more dimensions of space than the three that we habitually experience. The original string theories required the Universe to have either 9 or 25 dimensions of space! Since we see only three dimensions we must either conclude that these theories are wrong, that dimensions can be something other than what we are used to thinking them to be, or that lots of dimensions of space are hiding somewhere. While either of the first two options might turn out to be the case, it is generally assumed that the third provides the answer to the conundrum. Some process must be found which allows three (and only three) of the total number of dimensions to grow very large while the rest remain trapped at the Planck scale of size, where their effects are unperceptable to us. . . The possibility that our Universe contains many more than three dimensions of space, trapped at the Planck scale of size, means that our access to the overall structure of the Universe might be limited more dramatically than we have previously suspected --John D. Barrow, *Impossibility: The Limits of Science and the Science of Limits*, pgs. 184-185

Well, Mr. Barrow, if we're expected to swallow such a colossally unverifiable enterprise as this 9-D or 25-D cosmology you've described--which seems to have a bit more in common with the theological musings of Medieval scholastic monks ("How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" "How many dimensions can dance in the incomprehensibly tiny Planck scale of size?") than the demonstratable, physical proofs of hard science--we might as well invest our valuable gift of faith in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Fifth Canto description of the structure of the Universe.

Everyone thinks, in terms of individual capacity, that this universe, which is manifested before us, is all in all. And so the scientist in the human society of the twentieth century calculates the beginning and end of the universe in his own way.

But what can the scientists know? Even Brahma himself was once bewildered, thinking himself the only one Brahma favored by the Lord, but later on, by the grace of the Lord, he came to know that there are innumerable more powerful Brahmas as well, in far bigger universes beyond this universe, and all of these universes combined together form *ekapad-vibhuti*, or one fourth of the manifestation of the Lord's creative energy. The other three fourths of His energy are displayed in the spiritual world, and so what can the tiny scientist with a tiny brain know of the Absolute Personality of Godhead, Lord Krsna? --*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2. 6. 37p



Tomorrow afternoon (Thursday) I'm leaving Govardhana for Delhi. Very early Saturday morning I am scheduled to fly out of India, port of disembarkation Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam.

In addition to writing these entries from Govardhana, I re-edited the 3-part Shalagram series. For reasons unnecessary to explain here I had been pressed for time in the days I uploaded that material to In2-MeC. I wrote the captions in haste; some were ungrammatical and some conveyed inaccurate information. Now many of the captions are much better reading.

Jokes

I was amused by some of the "vedikly acceptable jokes" my old pal HG Jayatirtha Carana Prabhu published in Newsletter #130 of the New Zealand Hare Krsna Spiritual Network website (www.hknet.org.nz/index.htm). So I'm offering a few of my own here that hopefully nobody's seen before.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), who wrote numerous stories set in India during the days of the British Raj, was in his heyday the highest-paid author in the world. For each word he wrote he received a shilling. (At that time a shilling was worth one-twentieth of a Pound Sterling, and the value of a Pound was fixed to a pound of silver.) Some waggish Oxford students decided to mock Kipling's success. They sent him a shilling with the message, "Please send us one of your words. " His reply to them was: "Thanks. "

Huey Long was a larger-than-life Louisiana politician during the Depression era. He was known and feared for his fiery oratory. But after he won the Senatorial race he was stunned to silence by a casual remark made by the mild-mannered Senator Carter Class, who said to Long, "The old Romans once elected a horse to their Senate. But this is the first time I've ever heard of part of a horse being elected. "

I really like these gems of tactful ambiguity. When asked to comment on some questionable performance, a famous Broadway composer had one stock comment that he would utter with disarming effusion: "Good isn't the word!" A famous novelist, when handed a book by some wannabe Hemingway eager for a pat on the back, would say, "Many thanks. I shall lose no time in reading it. " A famous orator was once approached by a young poet in search of a reputation. "Have you seen my *Descent into Hell*?" the young man asked the raconteur. "No," he replied, "but I should like to. "

A stage actor going through lean times in his career was invited to the home of a fan for dinner. He arrived glad to get a free meal, but discovered that the servings were very skimpy. When the table was cleared the host said benignly, "I hope you'll come and dine with us again. " "Happy to," the still-famished actor answered. "Let's start now. "

A ragged street beggar approached a smartly-uniformed army officer. "Sir, could you give an old soldier some help? I served in the army for four years. " The officer glared at him up and down. "You, an old soldier? I'll give you the chance to prove it. Attention! Eyes right! Eyes front! Now tell me what comes next!" "Present alms!" returned the man at once.

New Delhi, India
21 May 2004

Photos of IBSA

Yesterday was my last day at IBSA, so I'm publishing some "farewell for now" photos of the ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama.





With Dauji dasa Brahmachari.

New Salagram Sila Altar



My traveling altar now. That's Giriraja in the golden throne at the center of the photograph.



Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana. Natural smiling mouth, button nose and red lotus eyes--even with pupils!



Sri-Sri Laksmi-Sesasayi. The Sesa sila at the back, sort of globe-shaped with multiple heads at the top, was given to me in New Zealand by Sri Jayatirtha Carana Prabhu. He told me this sila comes from Damodara Kund in Upper Mustang.



Yajna-purusa: a Cakra sila upon which is mounted a very hungry eater-of-offerings sila.



Very small Nrsimha sila.



The next In2-MeC entry will be posted from Amsterdam.

*Amsterdam, the Netherlands
23 May 2004*



Gopastami Pastimes

On this day Radhika is able to join Krishna for His gostha lila (cowherding pastimes), disguised as a cowherd boy. How does She manage that?

On this day Krishna feels great separation from Sri Radhika in the morning. His friend Subala (who looks just like Radhika) decides to help Him out by saying, Just sit and wait here, Kanai! I will bring Your beloved here in no time! He hurries over to Yavata, the village where Sri Radhika lives (with Her husband), and knocks on the door of Her mother-in-law Jatila's house. Jatila opens the door and asks him: Subala, what do you want here?

Subala says: I'm looking for one of my calves! My friends saw it wandering around here somewhere! Can I look for it in your yard?

Jatila says: Well, I suppose so!

Subala slips inside the house and goes straight to Sri Radhika's quarters. Radhika is a little surprised when She sees Krishna's dear friend Subala inside Her room and She asks him: Subala! How is Kana (Krishna)? Can You help Me to meet Him somehow?

Subala says: Sure! Just put on my cowherd's dress and go straight out of the door! When You meet Jatila You just tell her: Thank you for letting Me search for My calf! I'm carrying it along under My scarf! In this way You can explain the big volume of Your breasts under Your cowherdboy-scarf!

Sri Radhika and Subala then exchange clothes and Radhika thus manages to escape from Jatila's vigilance, strictly following Subala's instructions. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: subala nyasta sarupya--Sri Radhika has invested Her own form in Subala. From this story we can understand for which purpose She has done this.

When Radhika, dressed as Subala, comes to Krishna, She decides to play a trick on Him. She pretends to be Subala and tells Krishna: Sorry, Kanai! I didn't manage to bring Sri Radhika to You! But don't worry anyway! I met Candravali on the way and she says that she's all ready for You, so if you want You can go to her! Krishna passes the test, though, and wails: Radhe! I only want You! How can I meet You somehow? Seeing how faithful Krishna is to Her, Sri Radhika becomes very pleased. She reveals Her real identity to Krishna and gives Him a warm embrace.



Past Life Recall?

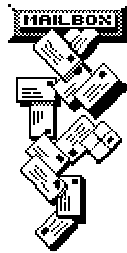
The *Edinburgh Evening News* of 22 January 2004 ran a story about a 29 year-old Swedish man named Jesper Bood who, while under hypnosis in Stockholm, remembered a previous life as a Scottish fisherman. This method of retrieving past-life memories is called hypnotic regression. It does not seem to have high standing

among serious researchers of reincarnation, because the hypnotic state of mind is too similar to the dream state. In dreams the mind free-associates impressions stored in the memory to create new mental images; in a mind under hypnotic trance the same sort of free association can be triggered by the hypnotist. Now, it must be said that police detectives will sometimes engage a hypnotist to bring the memories of a witness into sharper focus. Crimes have been solved as a result. But the suggestion given to a person under hypnosis that there is something more he can remember if he tries may touch off free association in the mind by which false memories are manufactured. It is therefore a mistake to uncritically accept any and all retrieved memories as valid. Usually it is very difficult if not impossible to investigate so-called past-life memories brought forth by hypnosis. They are too vague in details of "who what where when and how." But Jesper Bood's past-life memories are remarkable for their clarity, and richness of detail.

He says he was born in Dunbar, East Lothian, in 1852, as the son of John Smith and his wife Mary Craig Smith. His parents named him John Jr. (junior). Census records confirm these names. Under hypnosis Bood recalled his wife's name as Bessie or Betsy. Census records show that a fisherman named John Smith married a woman named Elizabeth. They lived in Public Road, Gateside, a village that no longer exists...though records agree that there used to be a village of that name in the area where Bood remembers it.

Roy Pugh is a historian of the Dunbar region. He was invited by a television company to examine the case. He was completely sceptical when he started, but after hearing Bood describe the Dunbar Parish Church, the Woodbush School (demolished in the 1950s), and an old fisherman's tavern that is now the Creel Restaurant, Pugh said,

I now know what it means to experience a shiver in this spine and a curious feeling in the hairs on the back of my neck.



Dear Suhotra Swami Maharaja,

Hare Krishna. PAMO. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Love your online journal. I appreciate your vast knowledge of the shastras and keen sense of humor. Also, your spiritual commentary on news events is refreshing.

I am writing today in regards to the performance of yajna here at our Gettysburg, PA center. We are doing daily Purusha-sukta homa as was done in Mayapur (not sure if this is still done there or not). We have been trying to find another nice procedure for daily yajna, but have not had much luck. I know you are very expert in these matters. Sri Sri Laxmi Vaikuntha-nath, Sri Sri Laxmi Narasimha, Sri Sri Krishna Balarama, and the following silas are kind enough to reside here:

2 Nrsimha silas
1 Dwarka sila
1 Vasudeva sila
40 other silas are at rest (trying to find new homes)

If you would be kind enough to share your daily homa, it would be very appreciated.
If not, I fully understand and hope that you can point us in the right direction.

Photos with captions follow.



This is a photo of the setup. The elements I use in offering homa for the pleasure of the Lord are compact and simplified. In the middle of the photo is a vedi constructed of 3 pieces: a base plate of brass, a copper kunda (available in Loi Bazaar), and a good strong 8-sided bell-metal plate that has a circular fire pit in the middle. As you see in the photo the fire pit is now stocked with bits of wood. Actually these are incense sticks broken to size. Bamboo is used for making joss sticks, and bamboo is one of the 7 kinds of woods recommended for yajnas. I've sprinkled camphor and ghee on to the sticks. To the north of the fire altar (from the Vedic point of view it is actually east but that's too confusing--take north in this picture to mean "in the direction above the vedi") is an incense holder in which 5 sticks of incense are burning. To the northeast is a silver plate bearing a brass ghee pot and the sacrificial ladel. To the southeast is a incense holder which, like the one to the north, also has a holder for a small ghee wick. I've put camphor into that holder. To the southwest is a copper acamana cup and spoon for myself, a silver acamana pot and spoon for

the fire, and a little silver kumbha (pot topped with coconut and five mango leaves). To the west is a brass bowl with extra camphor, should that be needed. To the northwest is a candle, standing by as the "garhapatya flame" or source of fire for the offering.



I ignite a piece of camphor and drop it into the camphor at the southeast of the vedi. I chant: om kravyadam agnim prahinomi duram yamarajyam gacchatu ripravahah. This mantra is for casting away the inauspicious aspect of fire.



I ignite another piece of camphor and drop it into the yajna fuel. I chant: om bhur bhuvah svar om. Then I chant om sri vaisnava namaagnaye and...



*...showing avahana-mudra, I chant iha
'gaccha iha 'gaccha.*



*Then, showing stapana-mudra, I chant iha
tistha iha tistha.*



*Showing sannidhapani-mudra, chanting iha
sannidehi iha sannidehi.*



Showing sannirudhana-mudra, chanting iha sannirudhyasva, iha sannirudhyasya.



Showing sakali-karani-mudra.



*Showing sammukhi-karani-mudra, chanting
iha sammukho bhava iha sammukho bhava.*



*Showing cakra mudra and chanting om
astraya phat!*



*Snapping fingers 8 times in 8 directions
around fire.*



Showing maha-mudra.



Showing pranama-mudra.



Showing hridaya-mudra, chanting klim-hridaya namah.



Showing sirsa-mudra, chanting krsnaya-sirse svaha.



Showing sikha-mudra, chanting govinda-sikhaya vasat.



Showing kavaca-mudra, chanting gopijana-kavaya hum.



Showing netra-mudra, chanting vallabhaya-netrabhyam vausat.



Showing cakra-mudra, chanting svaha-astraya phat.



Showing galini-mudra at heart.



Showing maha-mudra.



Showing pranama-mudra.



Now I worship the fire with mudra and water offerings. I chant etat-padyam om sri vaisnave namah and with the silver spoon offer a drop of water from the Lord's acamana pot onto the brass base place of the vedi. I meditate upon washing the lotus feet of Lord Vaisnava Agni.



I show the arghya-mudra and chant idam arghyam om sri vaisnave namah as I offer a drop and meditate upon offering Him scented water for washing His hands and face.



I show acamaniya-mudra, then chant idam acamaniyam om sri vaisnave namah as I offer a drop, meditating on refreshing the Lord's mouth by acamana.



I show the madhu-parka mudra, then chant esa madhuparka om sri vaisnave namah while offering a drop and meditating upon giving a sweet drink to the Lord.



I show the acamaniya-mudra again, and chant idam punaracamaniyam om sri vaisnave namah while offering a drop and meditating upon refreshing His mouth once more after He has taken a sweet drink.



Gandha-mudra, chant esa gandha om sri vaisnave namah, offer a drop, meditate upon applying scented oil and sandalwood pulp to the Lord's body.



Puspa-mudra, chant etat sacandana puspani om sri vaisnave namah, offer a drop, meditate upon offering flowers to the lotus feet of the Lord.



Malya-mudra, chant idam malyam om sri vaisnave namah, offer a drop, meditate upon garlanding the Lord.





Sarva-mudra, chant idam sarvam, offer a drop, meditate on the Lord kindly accepting my worship as complete although it is sadly so incomplete. Then I show pranama-mudra again and chant yat-pujanena vibudhah pitaror-iccatas ca tusta-bhavanti rsi-bhuta-saloka-palah sarve grahas-tarani soma-kujadi mukhya govindam adi purusam tam aham bhajami, a Pancaratrik verse that declares that worship of Govinda includes worship of forefathers, rishis, all living entities, the guardians of the directions, all the planetary deities, etc.



Purifying ghee pot with water.



Passing ghee pot through fire 3 times, starting from left to right each time.



Purifying sacrificial ladle with acamana water.



Passing the ladle through fire 3 times, starting from left to right.



Putting drops of water into right palm, turning palm sideways on the right side of the vedi so that the water sprinkles in a straight vertical line, I chant om ananta anumayasva.



Doing the same along along a horizontal line south of the vedi, I chant om acyuta anumasyasva.



And doing the same along a vertical line on the left side of the vedi, I chant om sarasvaty anumanyasva.

Then I take the silver coconut with 5 leaves off the top of the kumbha, dip a leaf in the water of the kumbha, and sprinkle the water around the vedi while chanting Om klim gopijanavallabhaya namah.



Now the yajna beings. Om bhur svaha idam visnave idam na mama; om bhuvah svaha idam acyutaya idam ma mama; om svar svaha idam narayanaya idam na mama; om bhur bhuvah svah svaha idam anantaya idam na mama. This is called the Vyasta Samasta Mahavyahrti homa. What should follow this are sixteen offerings that could, as you have been doing, be accompanied by chanting the sixteen prayers of the Purusa Sukta. Actually you can chant any sixteen prayers you like. You can take sixteen prayers from Bhagavad-gita, for example. In the yajna I do, I begin with four Vedic mantras--the first prayer of Purusa-sukta, then two mantras from Taittiriya Brahmana, then a Yajur-veda mantra--and then I chant the oblation mantra given in SB 6.19.8 twelve times, putting fire into the ghee after each time and chanting svaha. This Bhagavatam oblation mantra is a short form of a puja mantra given in the previous verse. In his purport to that verse, Srila Prabhupada states, "This mantra is very important. Anyone

engaged in Deity worship should chant this mantra, as quoted above, beginning with om namo bhagavate maha-purusaya."

Vyasta Samata Mahavyahrti homa is performed again, followed by Mula-Mantra-Gayatri homa: chanting aim guruva namah, klim gauraya namah, klim gopijanaballabaya namah, srin-klim radha-krsnabhyam namah, ksraum narasimhaya namah and om sudarsanaya namah, I offer ghee into the fire with each mantra. On days like ekadasi when it is nice to increase the service to the Lord, I chant each mantra 10 times with an offering each time.

After these mula-mantra/gayatri offerings I again do Maha Samasta Mahavyahrti homa. This is followed by Udicya Karma. The fire is "changed" from Vaisnava-agni to Vidhu-agni. This is done by showing the installation mudras and chanting the associated mantras (om vidhu namagnaye iha vaha iha vaha; iha tistha etc.). Then the nyasa mudras should be shown, and their mantras chanted (klim hrdaya namah; krsnaya svaha etc.).

Vaysta Samasta Mahavyahrti homa is to be performed again. Then prayascitta homa, consisting of offerings to these mantras:

om pahi no 'cyuta enase svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om pahi no visva vedase svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om yajnam pahi hare vibho svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om sarvam pahi sriyah pate svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om pahi no 'nanta ekaya pahi uta dvitriyaya pahi urjam tritriyaya pahi girbhis catasrbhih visno svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om purnar urja nivartasva punar visna isa ayusa punar nah pahi ahamasah svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om saha rayya nivartasva visno pinvasva dharaya visvapsnya visvatas pari svaha idam visnave idam na mama

om prajapateh visno na tvat etani anyo visva jatani pari ta babhuva yat kamas te junumas tanno 'stu vayagrha syama patayo rayinam svaha idam visvave idam na mama

Vyasta Samasta Mahavyahrti Homa again. Then Vaisnava homa, which I've condensed to the om ajnana timirandhandasya mantra (one ahuti or offering in the fire), the two Srila Prabhupada pranama mantras (two ahutis), the vanca-kalpa verse (one ahuti), the Panca-tattva mahamantra (one ahuti) and the Hare Krsna mahamantra (one ahuti).

Then I sprinkle a circle of water around the vedi from the silver kumba leaves, chanting Om klim gopijanavallabhaya namah; then I sprinkle water from the side of my palm on 3 sides of the fire, chanting (these mantras are a little different from the

first time around): om ananta anumamsthah, om acyuta anumamsthah, om sarasvati anumamsthah.

Then I rise to perform purna ahuti. I chant the namo brahmanya devaya verse and offer ghee into the fire: idam krsnaya idam na mama. Then showing the maha mudra and pranam mudra I recite the invocation to Sri Isopanisad (om purnam adaha purnam idam...).

The comes Vamadeva-gam. Still standing, I take up the silver kumbha and sprinkle water on the "northwest" side of the fire, chanting om bhur bhuvah svah kaya nas citra abhuvad uti sada vrdhah sakha kaya sacisthaya vrta. Again sprinkle in the same place, then chant om bhur bhuvah svah kas tva satyo madanam mamhistho matsad andhasah drda cidaruje vasu. Again sprinkle in the same place, then chant om bhur bhuvah svah abhi sunah sakhinam avita jaritnam satam bhavasya utaye.

Then I sprinkle the 10 directions around the fire. There are mantras to be chanted for each of these sprinkles:

*om dyauh santir antariksam santih pritivi santir apah santih
vayuh santis tejah santir osadhayah santir lokah santih
brahmana santih vaisnava cantih santir astu dhrtir astu*

om santir om santir om santih

Mantras for forgiveness of offenses follow. Then Prema-dhvani prayers (Jaya om visnupada paramahamsa...etc.).

At the end one should glorify Lord Vamanadeva. I chant the calayasi vikramane balim... prayer from Dasavatara-stotram (actually I chant the whole stotram because it is so auspicious, but the verse to Lord Vamana is needed to end the yajna. The reason is given in SB 8.23.31p.

*Amsterdam, the Netherlands
24 May 2004*

"Contradictory" Qualities

In the transcendental world there is nothing contradictory, whereas in the relative world everything has its opposite. In the relative world white is the opposite conception of black, but in the transcendental world there is no distinction between white and black. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1. 10. 19p)

Srila Prabhupada was meticulous. He put on his Vaisnava tilaka that way, artistically and methodically performing each function. He used his pen that way also. He took it out of his pen box, used it, and then returned it to the box on his desk. Prabhupada warned his servants never to touch anything or move anything on his desk.



His book writing was also like that. His standard was that each and every word out of tens of thousands of Sanskrit words in the verses of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* must have its own synonym. Prabhupada had a limited time for writing the *Bhagavatam* every day, yet he never diminished his standard that each word get its own synonym. Then he always gave the English translation, and then a purport. Whenever he saw the editors or publishers failing in this meticulous standard, he became very upset.

In general, he demanded his disciples be very careful in all their activities. Deity worship, for example, he only gradually introduced because of its meticulous demands. When a devotee who was worshiping the Deity inquired how to obtain *bhava*, or ecstatic attachment to the Lord, Prabhupada replied by stressing a meticulous following of the rules and regulations: the devotees should be punctual, clean, and give the Deity nice dresses and food.

Srila Prabhupada was particularly meticulous in handling finance for Krsna, especially in India. He personally looked into the accounting and saw down to the single rupee how his managers spent money.

Srila Prabhupada displayed his tolerance and lenience in accepting the sometimes inexpert offering of his disciples. He demonstrated this amply in the San Francisco Rathayatra in 1970 by accepting some unusual clothing which the devotees had sewn for him. Bhavananda had purchased imported silk, Nara-Narayana had purchased pearl buttons, and Dinadayadri and Citralekha had worked very meticulously on sewing Prabhupada a western-style cowboy shirt. The shirt had sewn pockets with pearl buttons on them. The *dhoti* was supposed to complete a matching set, along with a "Prabhupada hat" made for the occasion. When Prabhupada put on the *dhoti*, the cloth was so wide that the *dhoti* dragged on the ground. (This can be seen in a series of photos of Srila Prabhupada at the 1970 Rathayatra.) The cowboy shirt had its own unusual appearance, and as for the hat, it was too small and stuck up on the top of his head. Prabhupada tolerantly accepted and wore the clothes offered by his American boys and girls.



From *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 14. 32p: One should not at any time tolerate blasphemy and insults against Lord Visnu or His devotees. A devotee is generally very humble and meek, and he is reluctant to pick a quarrel with anyone. Nor does

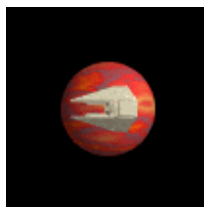
he envy anyone. However, a pure devotee immediately becomes fiery with anger when he sees that Lord Visnu or His devotee is insulted. This is the duty of a devotee. Although a devotee maintains an attitude of meekness and gentleness, it is a great fault on his part if he remains silent when the Lord or His devotee is blasphemed.

From the time the devotees first moved into the Berkeley temple, the neighbors caused trouble. The people living across the street from the temple made a large sign blaspheming the Hare Krsnas and hung it in front of their house.

When Prabhupada came to Berkeley for Rathayatra, the devotees became anxious. They tried to take Prabhupada down another street so that he would not see the sign, but road construction and a detour forced the devotees to take Prabhupada past the house. To keep Prabhupada from seeing the sign, the devotees began pointing to the opposite side of the street. "Prabhupada," they said, "look at the trees, aren't they nice?" Then Prabhupada happened to turn and he noticed the sign. He said it was nice, and that this was the only house in America with Krsna's name on the front.



More Billions for More Bafflement



Early this year I made a couple mentions of the two NASA "rovers" (robot vehicles) that are exploring the surface of Mars. The cost for putting these high-tech machines onto the surface of the Red Planet is astronomical, and predictably the result is that the information so collected raises at least as many new questions as it answers old questions. In March one of the rovers, *Spirit*, photographed a UFO that passed from

north to south across the Martian sky. Was it a meteor? Or one of seven Earthly spacecraft in orbit around Mars? Or something else?

Polly Police



A retired policeman went out of his Kiev flat, leaving his pet parrot alone. When he returned after a few minutes, he found three would-be thieves stretched out on the floor with their hands behind their heads. They explained that when they came into the flat, they heard a voice say, "Stop! I'll shoot! On the ground!" The parrot, which had lived with the policeman for a year, had never spoken before the incident. (This was reported in a newspaper called *Cegodnya*.)

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
25 May 2004

The Point of it All

The question of the meaning of human existence in the totality of Being, this fundamental question of philosophy, gains its true and practical importance through man's total discovery of death.

--Jacques Choron, *Death and Western Thought*, Collier Books 1963, pg. 27

"The totality of Being" means universal existence: the immeasurable expanse of time and space compared to which the human world is absurdly insignificant.

"Man's total discovery of death" means the recognition that in this world nobody, great or small, is immortal.

And so, philosophy is important and practical insofar as it addresses "the why" of our mortality in the midst of a universe that apparently cares not if we live or die.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 5. 5. 5:

parabhavas tavad abodha-jato yavan na jijnasata atma-tattvam
yavat kriyas tavad idam mano vai karmatmakam yena sarira-bandhah

As long as one does not inquire about the spiritual values of life, one is defeated and subjected to miseries arising from ignorance. Be it sinful or pious, *karma* has its resultant actions. If a person is engaged in any kind of *karma*, his mind is called *karmatmaka*, colored with fruitive activity. As long as the mind is impure,

consciousness is unclear, and as long as one is absorbed in fruitive activity, he has to accept a material body. "

Commenting on this verse in a 1976 lecture he gave in Vrndavana, Srila Prabhupada said:

In the Vedic civilization this material body is condemned everywhere. Material. *Sarira- bandhah*. They do not understand. So in the bondage state, whatever you are doing in so-called material progress, it is not progress. It is *parabhavas*, defeat. People are so busily engaged throughout day and night. They are making material progress, but it is not progress. It is gress. But they do not know it. Why? *Abodha-jato*, born rascal. Born rascal. If we say that you are all born rascals, they'll fight. But actually that is the fact. Born rascals, *abodha-jato*.

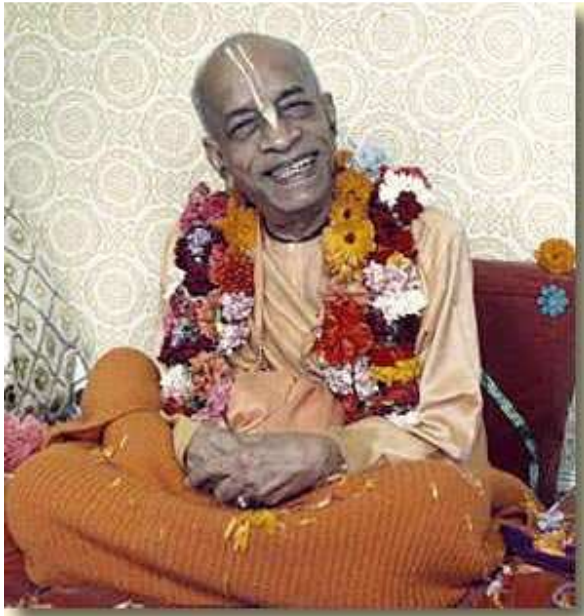
In his purport to this verse, Srila Prabhupada includes "pious activity" and "speculation" within the category of the defeated endeavors of the *abodha-jato*. So-called pious activity is a speculative attempt at solving life's problems while leaving aside total commitment to solving the problem of death by transcendental knowledge. The pious speculators take that commitment to transcendental knowledge to be less important and less practical than their own endeavors.

"We don't agree that chanting Hare Krsna is sufficient," a German devotee told me in 1998. By "we" he meant himself and his wife. He went on to say, "We think Srila Prabhupada must also share some fault for the child abuse in ISKCON, because of the way he set up the *gurukula* system. It's time for reform in this movement. It's time things are done differently, better. "

Ergo: Pious activities (like educating children nicely) are suffering in ISKCON because of too much concentration on chanting the holy name and following Srila Prabhupada. We should stop this "following" so much. Instead, we should take up mental speculation and mundane good works so as to improve the way we do things in this institution.

In a letter to Karandhara dated 72-12-22 Srila Prabhupada wrote of the danger of "missing the point," the point being that a devotee should be enthusiastically pleasing Krsna in his duty, never mind what that duty might be from the point of view of external estimation. When a devotee is so focused, his mind is freed of the coloring of *karma* (including mundane pious activities and mental speculation) and he ascends to the transcendental platform of life, which is the perfection of all endeavors.

Consider who Krsna is from the grim perspective--a perspective that Krsna Himself speaks about in *Bhagavad-gita*. He says, *mrtyuh sarva haras caham*. He says, *kalo 'smi loka-ksaya-krt pravreddho*. Compared to Him in these fearsome appearances, who are we with our plans for improving the world? Prabhupada compared the living entity to a fish caught in the net of a fisherman.



As soon as caught he's up in the net, "Fut! Fut! Fut! Fut! Fut!" He wants to get out. So that is our struggle for existence, how to get out. We do not know. So to get out of this, only the mercy of Krsna. . . He can do everything. He can immediately take out from this entanglement. Otherwise how he is Almighty? I cannot get out. The fish cannot get out, but the, if the fisherman wants, he can get him out immediately and throw in the water. Then he gets life again. Similarly, if we surrender to Krsna, He can get out immediately. And He says, *aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami ma sucah*. You simply surrender. As the fisherman is seeing, "Fut! Fut! Fut!" but if the fish surrenders. . . He wants to surrender, but he does not know

the language. Therefore he remains within the network. But if the fisherman likes, he can take it out and throw in the water. Similarly, if we surrender to Krsna. . . For that surrendering process this human life is meant. In other life, the fish cannot, but I can. That is the difference between the life of the fish and my life.

--Lecture on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 9 January 1975, Bombay

Krsna is all-devouring Death; Krsna is Time, the destroyer of all the worlds. We are caught within the net of His insurmountable energy. As long as we do not know the language by which to address the Lord and His energy, then our position is as hopeless as that of a fish caught in the net. Because speculative philosophers do not know the language of surrender to Lord Visvambhara (the maintainer of the universe and leader of all living entities), they describe the universe as being coldly indifferent to mankind's sorry plight. Only the devotees know the language by which we may surrender to the Lord and so get release from the net of *maya*: the language of *bhakti*.

But the *karmatmaka* mind pithily replies, "That's not enough. We should concoct--" Fut! "--decent works that contribute to society--" Fut! "--and in this way we should garner recognition--" Fut! "--and approval--" Fut! "--from the world community of morally upstanding people--" Fut! --"so that Hare Krsna will come to be uttered with the same non-sectarian sort of respect--" Fut! --"that names like Albert Schweizer, Mother Teresa, Mohandas Gandhi--" Fut! "--are uttered among the better class of society. " Fut!

The problem is that the world community of morally upstanding people, the better class of society, the Schweizers, Teresas and Gandhis, are all but so many flapping fish caught in the same net. How will gaining social status among this section of the dead and dying help you?

Okay, so here comes the "man proposes, God disposes" argument. "Yes, you're quite right in pointing out that our endeavors can be successful only by God's grace. Thank

you for that, you've helped us see the win-win way that our viewpoint can be explained. There's no need at all for friction to exist between your viewpoint and ours. Lord Krsna is the full and perfect revelation of the Godhead. All the aims of different religions, all the humanitarian welfare programs, all the progressive ideas for making this world a better place for our children's children to live in, should be offered to His lotus feet. Yes, we who have ambitions to build a house in which the whole world can live require a suitable universal God-concept that we can glorify, so that He may bless our endeavors with perfection. 'Man proposes, God disposes,' Srila Prabhupada used to say. That God is Krsna, no doubt. Let us praise Him and work for a change. "

But there are different modes to what man may propose and God may dispose. Srila Prabhupada makes clear the distinction in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 5. 14.

According to the modes of material nature, there are three kinds of relationships between human beings and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those who are in the modes of ignorance and passion are averse to the existence of God, or else they formally accept the existence of God in the capacity of an order supplier. Above them are those who are in the mode of goodness. This second class of men believe the Supreme Brahman to be impersonal. They accept the cult of *bhakti*, in which hearing of *krsna-katha* is the first item, as a means and not the end. Above them are those who are pure devotees. They are situated in the transcendental stage above the mode of material goodness. Such persons are decidedly convinced that the name, form, fame, qualities, etc. , of the Personality of Godhead are nondifferent from one another on the absolute plane. For them, hearing of the topics of Krsna is equal to meeting with Him face to face. According to this class of men, who are situated in pure devotional service to the Lord, the highest goal of human life is *purusartha*, devotional service to the Lord, the real mission of life. The impersonalists, because they engage in mental speculation and have no faith in the Personality of Godhead, have no business hearing the topics of Krsna. Such persons are pitiable for the first-class pure devotees of the Lord. The pitiable impersonalists pity those who are influenced by the modes of ignorance and passion, but the pure devotees of the Lord take pity on them both because both waste their most valuable time in the human form of life in false pursuits, sense enjoyment and mental speculative presentations of different theories and goals of life.

Prabhupada gave an example from his own early life of welfare workers using Krsna's name for humanitarian ends.

I remember, in Calcutta there was a very virulent type of plague epidemic in 1898. So Calcutta became devastated. All people practically left Calcutta. Daily hundreds and hundreds of people were dying. I was one year old or one and a half year old. I have seen what was happening, but there was plague epidemic. That I did not know. I, later on, I heard from my parents. So one *babaji*, he organized *sankirtan*, Hare Krsna *sankirtan*. When there was no other way, so he organized *sankirtan* all over Calcutta. And in the, in *sankirtan*, all people, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, everyone joined. And they were coming, they were going road to road, street to street, entering in every house. So that Mahatma Gandhi Road, 151, you have seen. The *sankirtan* party we received very nicely. There was light, and I was very small, I was also dancing, I can remember. Just like our small children sometimes dances. I remember. I could see only up to the knees of the persons who were joined. So the

plague subsided. This is a fact. Everyone who knows history of Calcutta, the plague was subsided by *sankirtan* movement.

Of course, we do not recommend that *sankirtan* should be used for some material purpose, that is *nama-aparadha*, *nama-aparadha*. Sankirtan, you can utilize *sankirtan* for some material purpose, but that is not allowed. That is *nama-aparadha*, because *nama*, the holy name of Krsna, and Krsna, they are identical. You cannot utilize Krsna for your personal, material benefit. That is *aparadha*. Krsna is the Lord. You cannot engage the Lord for your service. Similarly you cannot utilize the holy name of the Lord for some material purpose. That is not allowed. So anyway, because *ye yatha mam prapadyante*. If you wanted some material benefit by chanting Hare Krsna *mantra*, you'll get it, but that is *nama-aparadha*. You won't get the ecstasy of loving God. That is the aim of chanting Hare Krsna *mantra*: how you shall elevate yourself to the platform of loving God. That is required. *Sa vai pumsam paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhoksaje*. Not for utilizing the holy name for some material purpose. But this happened, we have got experience, I have heard, I have seen.

--Lecture on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 20 June 1973, Mayapur

Earlier there was mention of the *gurukula* system in ISKCON. This is usually a touchy point. I don't mean to suggest that those who are serious about providing a proper education for the children of devotees are engaged in mundane pious activity. I *do* mean to suggest that education becomes a mundane pious activity when it is turned into a "social issue" instead of the central point of the Krsna consciousness process--the same point at which the daily *Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita* class, *harinama sankirtana* and book distribution are aimed. This central point is addressed by the *parabhavas tavad abodha-jato* verse. But as I know from direct experience, there are persons involved in ISKCON education who see the schooling of devotee-children as a social issue, not a spiritual issue. They think that children should have an education that will give them a chance to succeed at life in the material world, should these children choose to not remain full-time devotees when they get older. They seem to think that the danger of abuse increases the more the child is urged to learn only about Krsna and to depend completely on Krsna, because that's not the "normal" way to school children. I've seen how these persons drop lessons in *Bhagavad-gita* from the curriculum and instead stress mundane fields of knowledge. But Srila Prabhupada said:

In every respect, we are simply dependent on the mercy of God. So why not become directly dependent? That is intelligence. That is intelligence. Therefore it is said, *abodha-jatah*. These rascals, who have no sense what is what, to understand, the atheist class of men, *abodha-jatah*, whatever they are doing, their so-called scientific advancement, material advancement, that is all their defeat, defeat, simply being defeated, simply creating problems.

Even those problems are not existing in the society of birds and bees. You'll see. There may be big fire, but the birds are dancing in the street. They have no problem. Because they are living under condition as they have been offered by God. Similarly, if we also live God conscious. . . *Atma-tattvam. Parabhavas tavad abodha-jato yavan na jijnasata atma-tattvam*. Your only business is to inquire about the soul, about the spirit soul. *Athato brahma-jijnasa*. This is the *Vedanta-sutra*. This human life is meant for only inquiring about the soul. That is the only business. And besides this,

whatever you are doing, you are simply being defeated, *abodha-jata*, because you are all fools and rascals. And so long we'll make program how to become happy materially, your mind being absorbed in material things, not in the spiritual matter, you'll have to accept another body. This is your problem.

--Lecture on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 19 January 1974, Hawaii

Finnish Finish

The BBC and AP (Associated Press) reported that a 60-year-old tax official died at his desk in a Helsinki office where 30 other people were at work. For 2 days nobody noticed this man was dead. Anita Wickstroem, the director of the office, told the press, "He was working alone and his friends and colleagues who used to have lunch or coffee with him were busy. "

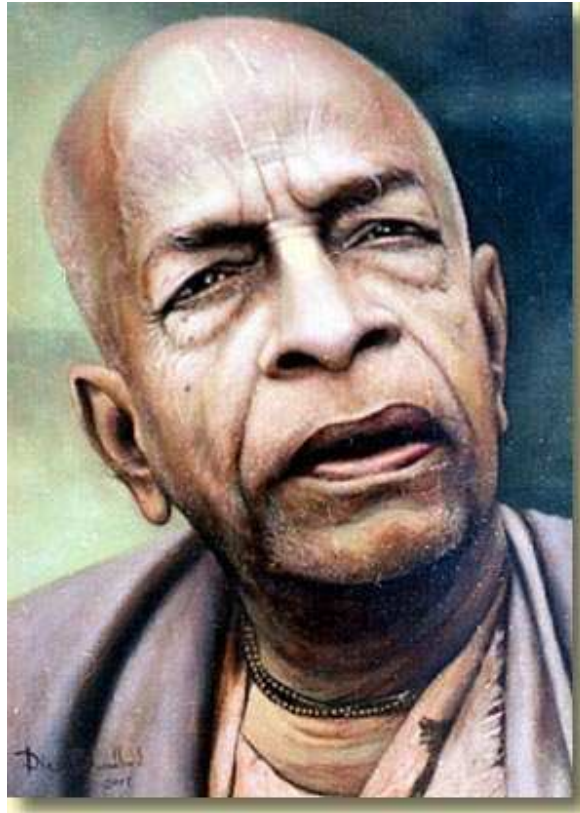
Low-tech Chips

A man in Kaiserslautern, Germany, brought back a computer he had purchased from a department store. He complained that the computer did not work. The store technician examined the machine and discovered the electronic innards were missing; in their place were small potatoes. Thinking some worker in the computer assembly factory had played a prank, the staff at the store gave the customer a new computer. A short time later he returned the second computer, saying that he didn't need it and would like to get his money back. It was discovered that the insides of this computer were also stuffed with little potatoes. The staff called the police and the man was arrested.

Preaching Polly

Yesterday a story was published here of a parrot who arrested 3 thieves in Kiev. Today we have a story about Solomon the Evangelical Parrot from Medicine Hat, Canada. His owner, Dale Doell, trained the African grey parrot to speak an extensive vocabulary of evangelical Christian preaching phrases, like "Repent now!" and "Are you ready to meet the Lord?" Doell would bring Solomon to faith gatherings where the parrot would address the enthusiastic crowd. But just before a scheduled appearance in Alberta, Solomon disappeared. Doell told the press that Satan must have terrorized the bird into leaving.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
26 May 2004



I can't resist trying to correlate his teachings with other philosophies and literatures. This undesirable, speculative tendency comes from eighteen years of American schooling.

Rabindranath Tagore, I find out, was also a "womanizer. " Nor does Swamiji like Hart Crane's "white wings of tumult" depiction of the bridge of consciousness. "It's not tumult," he says, and drops the subject. Emerson? "He may think like that, but who is he to say?" Whitman? "Sentimentalism. " Kahlil Gibran? "Pictures of naked people," he says, making a face. "Poets and artists are generally passionate. " William Blake? "More naked people. " But he approves Blake's verse:

God appears, and God is light
To those poor souls who dwell in night,
But doth a human form display
To those who dwell in realms of day.

.

"They say that when Ramakrishna saw money, his hand would curl away from it," Swamiji says, curling up his hand. "But a Vaishnava says, 'Oh, some money! Very good!'" Swamiji opens up his palm and smiles. "'I can use this money for Krishna. ' Yes, that is proper use of money. Everything belongs to Krishna. If we find money in the street, we should not let it lie or spend it on ourselves. We should return it to its rightful owner. That is the proper use of money. And when Krishna sees that we are

using money properly for His glorification, He sends more. After all, He is the husband of the goddess Lakshmi. Money is Lakshmi. "

--*The Hare Krishna Explosion* by Hayagriva Das, pgs. 38 and 45

Jagannatha Deities made by the Hand of Lord Caitanya Himself!



These Jagannath Deities were hand-fashioned by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu almost 500 years ago at Srirangam when He was staying at the family of Gopal Bhattar Goswami, the son of Vyenkata Bhattar of North Chitra street. You can visit the house today as it's looked after by the son of the late Rangaraj Bhattar, a family descendent whose family live just across the road these days. . . but to get a photo is extremely rare. You may have been there too, I don't know, but this is an excellent photo, better than many of the darshans that I've had as it is often quite dark in there.

--ys, Jaya Tirtha Carana dasa

**Gujarat doctors' panel tests sadhu's claim
that he hasn't taken food nor water for almost seventy years**



*This is not a photo of Prahlad Jani;
this is a "sadhu" from Nepal*

Prahlad Jani is a 76-year-old sadhu from the pilgrimage town of Ambaji in Gujarat. It was reported in several newspapers (*Melbourne Herald Sun*, *London Times*, *Hindustan Times*) and on the Sify Internet news service that he was examined by the Association of Physicians of Ahmedabad (APA) for 11 days. On 23 November 2003 he was released. Jani maintains that the goddess Ambaji visited him at age 8 and showed him the path of utter renunciation of bodily demands. Since that time he has dressed in the red cloth of a devotee of the goddess and lived in caves.

During the 11 days, his claim that he has not eaten any food nor drunk any water for 68 years was thoroughly tested by the APA, a panel of 40 physicians, at the Sterling Hospital in Ahmedabad. He was kept under constant video surveillance inside a glass-walled room. The strictly controlled medical study found that Jani not only did not eat anything for the 11 days he was in the hospital, he did not even take a drop of water. Most people can live for several weeks without eating but the average human being can survive only 3 or 4 days without water. For the period Jani was under observation he passed no stool or urine.

Said Dr. Sudhir V. Shah, the neurologist who oversaw the test, "The medical community does not have any scientific explanation. . . This is a one-of-a-kind case."

Prahlada Jani offered his own explanation. "I get *amrta* from the hole at the back of my palate. This enables me to go without food and water. I have never been sick all these years. "

Ghost caught on security videotape at Henry VIII's Hampton Court Palace



On 3 successive days in October 2003, alarms rang at about 1 PM near an exhibition hall at Hampton Court Palace in southwest London that indicated fire doors had been opened. On the first occasion, security vidcam footage showed the doors flying wide open for no apparent reason. On the second, a ghostly figure can be seen on the videotape, suddenly appearing and closing the doors. On the third, the doors open but as with the first occasion no figure appeared.

Not long before the anomalous alarms, an Australian tourist noted in the visitors' book that she thought she had seen a ghost in that area of Hampton Court Palace.

The huge Tudor palace, built in the 1520s on the River Thames, has been the scene of many dramatic events of British royalty. There are legends of some 30 ghosts that are supposed to haunt the place. Twelve days after giving birth to the future Edward VI, Henry VIII's third wife Jane Seymour died there in 1537. Her ghost is said to walk through one of the courtyards carrying a lighted candle. Her son had a nurse called Sibell Penn who was buried in Hampton Church in 1562. The church was pulled down in 1829 and the grave disturbed. An odd whirring noise began to be heard in the southwest wing of the palace around this time. Workmen traced the strange sound to a brick wall which they dismantled. A small room was uncovered containing an old spinning wheel like the one Penn used to use. When operated it made the same kind of whirring sound. The ghost of Henry VIII's fifth wife, Catherine Howard, has been seen running through what is called the Haunted Gallery uttering terrible cries.

The image shown in the vidcam footage of the second alarm is of a man in a long, fur-trimmed black cloak with a hood. He steps out of the shadows in the doorway. One of his hands reaches for the door handle to pull the door shut. The area around the figure seems blurred. His face appears unnaturally white compared with his outstretched hand.

"It was terribly spooky," says James Faukes, one of the palace security guards, about the image. "The face just didn't look human. My first reaction was that someone was having a laugh, no I asked my colleagues to take a look. We spoke to our costumed guides, but they don't own a costume like that worn by the figure. It is actually quite unnerving."

Poisonous Polly Passings



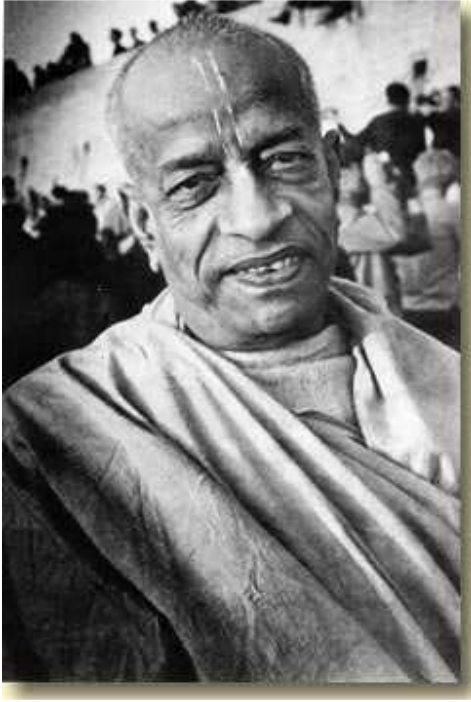
In recent days you've read here about a police parrot and a preacher parrot. Today we offer a more sobering parrot story. A man in Tegelen, the Netherlands, had been keeping dozens of pet parrots in his home. One day in November 2003 he phoned the local hospital for an ambulance, complaining that he felt ill. When the paramedics arrived they found him dead on the floor of his house, which reeked with foul gas passed by the birds, and with the stench of ammonia from their droppings. The police ruled that the man died of parrot-fume poisoning.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
27 May 2004

A man came to see Srila Prabhupada. His Divine Grace asked him, "What do you do?" The man replied, "I'm a mining engineer. " He had earned his degree after years of study. Prabhupada asked him, "What does it mean, mining engineer?" The man replied, "I go down into the earth two to four hundred feet and work there. " Srila Prabhupada was surprised. "This is the result of your education? You live like a mole or a worm deep under the ground?"

Once Srila Prabhupada was walking with some disciples along the Boston piers. This was the place where he first set foot in America. He said, "It does not matter that no one else may take up Krsna consciousness; you should stick to it even if nobody else takes it up. Just go on chanting, crying in the wilderness: Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. "

In one discussion Prabhupada had with his early followers, the name of Yogananda came up. This Yogananda was a Bengali who came to America in the 1920s and founded an organization called the Self Realization Fellowship. He died a good while ago, in the early 1950s, but right up to today many Western people continue to respect Yogananda as a genuine transcendentalist. So anyway, when this *yogi* came up in the discussion, Srila Prabhupada said, "Who is that Yogananda? He has written a book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*. He is writing about himself, but he is not writing about Krsna. *Guru* does not present himself, he presents Krsna. "



Another time a young visitor tried to show appreciation for spiritual India by remarking that he had read the autobiography of Mohandas Gandhi. "It was glorious," was the young man's opinion. Srila Prabhupada challenged, "What was glorious about it?" The young man thought for a moment and then replied that he was moved by the author's remorse for having once eaten meat--Gandhi wrote that afterward he felt a lamb was howling in his belly. Srila Prabhupada said, "Most of India is vegetarian; that is not glorious. " The young man fell silent, unable to say something more. "His autobiography is called *Experiment With the Truth*," Prabhupada continued. "But that is not the nature of truth. Truth is not to be found by someone's experimenting. It is *always* truth. "

One of Srila Prabhupada's first disciples proposed to write a book about His Divine Grace. The idea was that this biography would be published while His Divine Grace was still on

the planet. Prabhupada dismissed it, saying, "What is the use of people hearing about me? I am just an ordinary person. What benefit will they derive from hearing about me? Let them hear about Krsna. "

On the other hand, once a disciple of Srila Prabhupada asked him, "How is it that your secretaries and servants, those who come closest to Your Divine Grace, fall down?" He answered, "Because they think the spiritual master is an ordinary man. As soon as one thinks that, he is fallen. "

PAndava Nirjala EkAdasii

Monday 31 May 2004

During the hottest season (northern hemisphere), if one can perform upavasa without water one is performing a great feat. One may take only charanamrta and achman water. Bhima requested one vrata day by which he could obtain the fruits of all the other days of vrata that he was incapable of observing. Vyasadeva advised him to follow this difficult vrata. It is strongly recommended that if one has broked ekadasi vratas then by observing this one ekadasi with complete fast all others may be resolved.

One should worship the Lord in the evening by bathing him in milk. On the dvadasi one should give full pots of water to brahmanas and feed them before breaking one's fast.

SAMVATSARASYA YA MADHYE EKADASYO BHAVANTI HI TASAM PHALAM AVAPNOTI
PUTRA ME NA ATRA SAMSAYAH ITI MAM KESAVAH PRAHA SANKHA CAKRA
GADADHARAH

(HARI BHAKTI VILASA 15/25 from PADMA PURANA Vyasadeva speaks to Bhimasena)

Oh son, Lord Keshava, Who holds the club, disk, conch and lotus flower in His hand, personally told me that all of the merit achieved by fasting on whatever EkAdasis fall in one year can be attained by fasting on this one EkAdasii (nirjala EkAdasii). Of this, there is no doubt.

ATMADROHAH KRTASTES TU YAIR ESA NA HY UPOSITA PAPATMANO DURACARA
DUSTAS TE NA ATRA SAMSAH

(HARI BHAKTI VILASA 15/33 from PADMA PURANA Vyasadeva speaks to Bhimasena)

Anyone who does not fast on this particular EkAdasii (nirjala EkAdasii), they should be understood to be sinful, corrupted and suicidal person without a doubt.

The Story of PANDava Nirjala EkAdasii: PANDava Nirjala EkAdasii
Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii
from Brahma-vaivarta PurANA.

Once Bhimasena, the younger brother of Maharaja Yudhisthira, asked the great sage Shрила VyAsadeva, the grandfather of the PANDavas, if it is possible to return to the spiritual world without having observed all the rules and regulations of the EkAdasii fasts.

Bhimasena then spoke as follows, "Oh greatly intelligent and learned grandfather, my brother Yudhisthira, my dear mother Kunti, and my beloved wife Draupadi, as well as Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, fast completely on each EkAdasii and strictly follow all the rules, guidelines and regulative injunctions of that sacred day. Being very religious, they always tell me that I should also fast on that day too. But, Oh learned grandfather, I tell them that I cannot live without eating, because as the son of VAYudeva - Samanaprana, (the digestive air) hunger is unbearable to me. I can give widely in charity and worship Lord Keshava properly with all manner of wonderful upacharas (items), but I cannot be asked to fast on EkAdasii. Please tell me how I can obtain the same merits result without fasting. "

Hearing these words, the grandsire of Bhima, Srila VyAsadeva said, "If you want to go to the heavenly planets and avoid the hellish planets, you should indeed observe a fast on both the light and dark EkAdasiis. "

Bhima replied, "Oh great saintly intelligent grandfather, please listen to my plea. Oh greatest of munis, since I cannot live if I eat only once in a day, how can I possibly live if I fast completely? Within my stomach burns a special fire named Vrika, the fire of digestion. Agni the fire-god, descends from Lord Vishnu through Brahma, from Brahma to Angirasa, from Angirasa to Brihaspathi, and from Brihaspathi to Samyu, who was Agni" father. He is the gatekeeper in charge of Nairriti, the south-eastern direction. He is one of the eight material elements, and Parikshit MahArAja, he is very expert at examining things. He examined MahArAja Shibi once by turning into a dove (for further information on this incident see Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada's Srimad Bhagavatam commentary to 1:12:20. Purport.)

Agni is divided into three categories; DavAgni, the fire in wood, JatharAgni, the fire in the digestion in the stomach, and VadavAgni, the fire that creates fog when hot

and cold streams mix in for example the ocean. Another name for the fire of digestion is Vrika. It is this powerful fire that resided in Bhima's stomach.

Only when I eat to my full satisfaction does the fire in my stomach become satisfied. Oh great sage, I might possibly be able to fast only once, so I beg that you tell me of an EkAdasii that is worthy of my fasting and that includes all other EkAdasiis. I shall faithfully observe that fast and hopefully still become eligible for liberation's release.

Shrila VyAsadeva replied, Oh king, you have heard from me about the various kinds of occupational duties, such as elaborate Vedic ceremonies and pujas. In the Kali-yuga, however, no one will be able to observe all these occupational & functional duties properly. I shall therefore tell you how, at practically no expense, one can endure some small austerity and achieve the greatest benefit and resultant happiness. The essence of what is written in the Vedic literatures known as the PurANas is that one should not eat on either the dark or light fortnight EkAdasiis. "As stated in Srimad Bhagavatam (Mahabhagavat PurANam) 12:13:12 and 15.) the Bhagavat PurANam is itself the essence or cream of all VedAnta philosophy (sara-vedAnta-sAram), and the Srimad Bhagavatam's unequivocal message is that of full surrender to Lord Sri Krishna and the rendering of loving devotional service to Him. Observing EkAdasii strictly is a great aid in that process, and here Shrila VyAsadeva is simply stressing to Bhima the importance of the EkAdasii vratam. "One who fasts on EkAdasiis saved from going to the hellish planets. "

Hearing Shrila VyAsadeva's words, the son of VAYu, Bhimasena, the strongest of all warriors, became frightened and began to shake like a leaf on a banyan tree in a strong wind. The frightened Bhimasena then said, "Oh grandfather, what should I do? I am completely unable and ill equipped to fast twice in a month throughout the year! Please tell me of the one fasting day that will bestow the greatest benefit upon me!"

VyAsadeva replied, "Without drinking even water, you should fast on the EkAdasii that occurs during the light fortnight of the month of Jyeshtha (May-June) when the sun travels in the sign of Taurus (Vrishabh) and Gemini (Mithun), According to learned personalities, on this day one may bathe and perform Achamana for pratipokshana purification. But while performing Achamana one may drink only that amount of water equal to a drop of gold, or that amount it takes to immerse a single mustard seed. Only this amount of water should be placed in the right palm for sipping, which one should form to resemble a cow's ear. If one drinks more water than this, he might as well have drunk wine - despite the soaring heat of summer (in the northern hemisphere and cold in the southern hemisphere).

"One must certainly not eat anything, for if he does so he breaks his fast. This rigid fast is in effect from sunrise on the EkAdasii day to sunrise on the DwAdashii day. If a person endeavours to observe this great fast very strictly, he easily achieves the result of observing all twenty-four other EkAdasii fasts throughout the entire year.

"On DwAdashii the devotee should bathe early in the morning. Then, according to the prescribed rules, guidelines and regulative injunctions, and of course depending on his ability, he should give some gold and water to worthy brAhmaNas. Finally, he should cheerfully honour prasAdam with a brAhmaNa.

"Oh Bhimasena, one who can fast on this special EkAdasii in this manner reaps the benefit of having fasted on every EkAdasii during the year. There is no doubt of this, nor should there be. Oh Bhima, now hear the specific merit one gets by fasting on this EkAdasii. The Supreme Lord Keshava, who holds a conch, discus, club and lotus, personally told me, 'Everyone should take shelter of Me and follow My instructions.' Then He told me that one who fasts on this EkAdasii, without taking even drinking water or eating, becomes free of all sinful reactions, and that one who observes the difficult nirjala fast on Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii truly reaps the benefit of all other EkAdasii fasts.

"Oh Bhimasena, in the Kali-yuga, the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, when all the principles of the Vedas will have been destroyed or greatly minimised, and when there will be no proper charity or observance of the ancient Vedic principles and ceremonies, how will there be any means of purifying the self? But there is the opportunity to fast on EkAdasii and become free of all one's past sins.

"Oh son of Vayu, what more can I say to you? You should not eat during the EkAdasii that occur during the dark and light fortnights, and you should even give up drinking water (nir = no jalaa = water) on the particularly auspicious EkAdasii day of Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii. Oh Vrikodara (voracious eater), whoever fasts on this EkAdasii receives the merits of bathing in all the places of pilgrimage, giving all kinds of charities to worthy persons, and fasting on all the dark and light EkAdasii throughout the year, in one go. Of this there is no doubt.

Oh tiger among men, whoever fasts on this EkAdasii truly becomes a great person and achieves all manner of opulence and wealth, grains, strength, and health. And at the fearful moment of death, the terrible Yamadutas, whose complexions are yellow and black and who brandish huge maces and twirl mystic pasha ropes in the air for binding their victims, will refuse to approach him. Rather, such a faithful soul will at once be taken to the supreme abode of Lord Vishnu by the Vishnu-dutas, whose transcendently beautiful forms are clothed in gorgeous yellowish garments and who each hold a disk, club, conch and lotus in their four hands, resembling Lord Vishnu. It is to gain all these benefits that one should certainly fast on this very auspicious and important EkAdasii, even from water. "

When the other PANDavas heard about the benefits to be gained by following Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii, they resolved to observe it exactly as their grandfather Srila VyAsadeva had explained it to their brother, Bhimasena. All the PANDavas observed it by refraining from eating or drinking anything, and thus this day is also known as PANDava Nirjala DvAdashii (technically it is a Maha-DvAdashii).

Srila VyAsadeva continued, Oh Bhimasen, therefore you should observe this important fast to remove all your past sinful reactions. You should pray to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna in this way making your sankalpa declaration, 'Oh Lord of all the devas (demigods), Oh Supreme Personality of Godhead, today I shall observe EkAdasii without taking any water. Oh unlimited Anantadev, I shall break fast on the next day, DwAdashii.' Thereafter, to remove all his sins, the devotee should honour this EkAdasii fast with full faith in the Lord and with full control over his senses. Whether his sins are equal in volume to Mount Sumeru or to MandarAchala Hill, if he or she observes this EkAdasii, the sins that have been accumulated all become nullified and are burned to ashes. Such is the great power of this EkAdasii.

"Oh best of human beings, although a person should also give water and cows in charity during this EkAdasii, if for some reason or other he cannot, then he should give a qualified brAhmaNa some cloth or a pot filled with water. Indeed, the merit achieved by giving water alone equals that gained by giving gold ten million times a day.

"Oh Bhima, Lord Sri Krishna has said that whoever observes this EkAdasii should take a Holy bath, give charity to a worthy person, chant the Lord's Holy names on a japa-mAla, and perform some kind of recommended sacrifice, for by doing these things on this day one receives imperishable benefits. There is no need to perform any other kind of religious duty. Observance of this EkAdasii fast alone promotes one to the supreme abode of Sri Vishnu. Oh best of the Kurus, if one donates gold, cloth, or anything else on this day, the merit one obtains is imperishable.

"Remember, whosoever eats any grains on EkAdasii becomes contaminated by sin and verily eats only sin. In effect, he has already become a dog-eater, and after death he suffers a hellish existence. But he who observes this sacred Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii and gives something in charity certainly achieves liberation from the cycle of repeated birth and death and attains to the supreme abode. Observing this EkAdasii, which is merged with DwAdashii, frees one from the horrible sin of killing a brAhmaNa, drinking liquor and wine, becoming envious of one's spiritual master and ignoring his instructions, and continually telling lies.

"Furthermore, Oh best of beings (Jivottama), any man or woman who observes this fast properly and worships the Supreme Lord JalshAyi (He who sleeps on the water), and who on the next day satisfies a qualified brAhmaNa with nice sweets and a donation of cows and money - such a person certainly pleases the Supreme Lord Vasudeva, so much so that one hundred previous generations in his family undoubtedly go to the Supreme Lord's abode, even though they may have been very sinful, of bad character, and guilty of suicide, etc. Indeed, one who observes this amazing EkAdasii rides on a glorious celestial airplane (vimAna) to the Lord's abode.

"One who on this day gives a brAhmaNa a waterpot, an umbrella, or shoes surely goes to the heavenly planets. Indeed, he who simply hears these glories also attains to the transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord, Shri Vishnu. Whoever performs the Shraddha ceremony to the forefathers on the dark-moon day called amAvasya, particularly if it occurs at the time of a solar eclipse undoubtedly achieves great merit. But this same merit is achieved by him who simply hears this sacred narration - so powerful and so dear to the Lord is this EkAdasii.

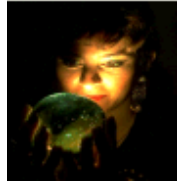
"One should clean his teeth properly and, without eating or drinking, observe this EkAdasii to please the Supreme Lord, Keshava. On the day after EkAdasii one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form as Trivikrama by offering Him water, flowers, incense, and a brightly burning lamp. Then the devotee should pray from the heart, 'Oh God of gods, Oh deliverer of everyone, Oh Hrishikesha, master of the senses, kindly bestow upon me the gift of liberation, though I can offer you nothing greater than this humble pot filled with water. ' Then the devotee should donate the waterpot to a brAhmaNa.

"Oh Bhimasena, after this EkAdasii fast and donating the recommended items according to his ability, the devotee should feed brAhmaNas and thereafter honour prasAdam silently. "

Shrila VyAsadeva concluded, "I strongly urge you to fast on this auspicious, purifying, sin-devouring DwAdashii in just the way I have outlined. Thus you will be completely freed of all sins and reach the supreme abode. "

Thus ends the narration of the glories of Jyeshtha-shukla EkAdasii, or Bhimaseni-nirjala EkAdasii, from the Brahma-vaivarta PurAN.

Illicit Sects



My son left and moved into a house with this fellow and another bloke. They would dress up in costumes like wolves and take my son on a leash to South Bank (in Brisbane). They drink blood and eat raw meat. My son lost a lot of weight.

--An Australian mother, complaining about a werewolf sect

Commenting on this case, David Ward, an Australian social worker, said:

This boy was going through normal adolescent stuff. They go through an identity crisis where they wonder who they are, and they're vulnerable. My concern is these kids believe they can turn into werewolves and start eating raw meat, which makes them sick.

A search of the Internet will reveal that there are numerous werewolf communities world-wide. Lycanthropy (the conviction that one is a werewolf) and shape-shifting delusions are not uncommon amongst sufferers from manic psychosis, depression and schizophrenia.

The Mattel toy company is marketing a new model of their famous Barbie doll. They call her Secret Spells Barbie. She is a "teen witch" patterned after characters in popular US TV programs like *Buffy*, *Sabrina*, and *Charmed*. Some Christian groups have expressed offense.

Barbie has always dressed like a harlot, and now she even casts spells, both going against God.

This is sick! What's next, a demon Ken doll?

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
28 May 2004

Worship by Mantra-mudra

There's been a request that I explain the *mantra-mudra puja* that I do for my *salagrama silas*. This constitutes the usual form of my daily worship. I offer *upacaras* like *snana* (bathing) and *dhupa-dipa-puspa* (incense, lamp and flower) in the form of *mantra* and *mudra*. But on days when I resume worship after an interruption (for example, after a long journey), and on special holy days like Ekadasi and Janmastami, I offer *dravya* (physical items). That takes more time to prepare and execute. Srila Prabhupada said that daily cooking and Deity worship should be completed within an hour's time. So generally I try to keep to that instruction by offering *mantra-mudra puja*.

The *mantras*

There are 16 *upacaras* (items of offering), thus there are 16 offering *mantras*. Below is a list of 20 *mantras*. This list contains more than 16 only because there are some repetitions. What this list shows is the order in which the *upacaras* are offered during the *puja*; accordingly, *acamana* (purification of the mouth) is offered at 3 different times (after the first time the *acamana mantra* changes to *idam punaracamaniyam*, "I again offer *acamana*.") Also, at the end an offering of *sarvam* (all *upacaras*) is made to conclude the *puja* to each worshipable personality. In this way, though there are only 16 *upacaras*, in the course of my *puja* I am chanting 20 offering *mantras*.

1. *idam asanam*--offering a seat (all these *upacara mantras* are to be spoken together with the *mantra* that addresses the Deity, such as *klīm gopījanāballabhaya namah*).
2. *etat padyam*--offering water to the lotus feet
3. *idam arghyam*--offering water to the hands for washing
4. *idam acamaniyam*--offering *acamana*
5. *esa madhuparka*--offering a sweet drink
6. *idam punaracamaniyam*--offering *acamana* a second time
7. *idam snaniyam*--bathing
8. *idam sottariya vastram*--offering cloth
9. *imani abharanani*--offering ornaments
10. *esa gandhah*--offering sandalwood and scented oils and perfume
11. *esa dhupa*--offering incense

12. *esa dipa*--offering a lamp
13. *etani sacandana puspani*--offering flowers
14. *etani sacandana tulasi*--offering tulsi leaves
15. *idam naivedyah*--offering foodstuffs
16. *idam paniyajalam*--offering water to drink
17. *idam punaracamaniyam*--offering *acamana* a third time
18. *etat tambulam*--offering mouth freshener
19. *idam malyam*--offering garlands
20. *idam sarvam*--offering everything

Outline of the steps of worship

At the start, I do a preliminary *acamana*, chanting the *om apavitra* verse and doing *pranayama mudra*

I offer obeisances and wake Their Lordships

Offering prayers to the spiritual master (*Sri Guruvastakam* etc.) and Panca-tattva and Hare Krsna *mahamantras* I clean the altar, change the Deities' water, set up the *puja items*

Full *acamana* (*om kesavaya manah* etc.), *visnu smaranam*, *mangala santi*, *bhuta-suddhi*, obeisances, *om apavitra acamana* with *pranayama mudra*.

With *mantras* and sprinkling of water I draw a protective circle around the place of *puja*, show *khadga-mudra* for *dig-bandha* (closing the directions), and purify everything within the circle with *Nrsimha-mantra*.

Worship of Ananta-Nrsimha Deity and Nrsimha-sila (bathing, cloth, ornaments, *gandha*, throne, offering everything, chant *Nrsimha-gayatri*, *arati* of *dhupa-dipa-puspa* while chanting *Nrsimha* prayers. This is done with *mantra-mudra*.

Worship of Srila Prabhupada with all *upacaras* except *tulasi* and *mala* which will be presented later to HDG as *prasadam*. The whole worship is done with *mantra-mudra*.

Worship of Gauranga, 16 *upacaras* with *mantra-mudra*.

Worship of Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana *silas*. This is the main worship. 16 *upacaras* are offered. Most are *mantra-mudra* offerings except for *naivedya*. *Tulsi* and *puspa* offered to feet of SSJS *silas* during the offering of these *upacaras*; more *tulsis* and flowers are offered to all *silas* at the conclusion of the worship.

The *mudras*, as they are offered to Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana when the *upacara mantras* are chanted



Avahana or asana mudra, for offering a seat to the Lord.



Padya mudra.



Arghya mudra.



Acamaniya mudra.



Madhuparka mudra.



Punarakamaniya mudra.





I prepare the snana-vedi with a tulasi leaf and flower petals and then show cakra and dhenu mudras. Over the vedi I chant klim gopijanaballabhaya namah eight time, counting the mantra on my fingers. Then I show matsya mudra.



With avahana mudra I invite the silas to sit on the snana-vedi. I do not physically place Them on the vedi; I meditate on Their going there.



Showing snana mudras. The SSJS silas are bathed eight times by mudra-mantra. I chant a verse from the Sri Jagannatha-astakam for each bath.



I prepare the throne of SSJS for Their return after bathing as I prepared the snana-vedi.



Having returned to Their throne, They are dressed. Vastra mudra is shown.



Abharana mudra.



Gandha mudra.



Dhupa mudra.



Dipa mudra.



Puspa mudra.



Tulasi patra mudra (identical to puspa mudra).



Naivedya mudra.



After setting the offering plate (of banana, yoghurt and gur) before the silas, I place 3 drops of water into my right palm...



...show Ram-bija mudra and chant "Raam-Raam-Raam"...



...and then show Tham-bija mudra and chant "Tham-Tham-Tham." This procedure burns off impurities and nectarizes the offering.



Cakra and dhenu mudras, 8 times chanting Deity's mula-mantra, then matsya-mudra. Then I ring the bell, chant the offering prayers, first line of gayatri, and chant Purusa-sukta.



This is a general mudra. One could use it for any item. I show it when it is time to offer water after naivedya.



Punaracamaniya mudra.



The general mudra again, now shown for tambula.



Malya mudra.



Showing the sarva mudra, which is a gesture made with the right hand on both sides of the Deity, starting on the left.



Gayatri (mula-mantra for Deity).

Summary of the rest of the worship

I worship the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani, which stand next to SSJS, with *mantra-mudra* of *dhupa*, *dipa*, *puspa* and *mala*. Then I chant Her *gayatri* and offer prayers to SSJS and Srimati Radharana together.

I worship Sri-Sri Laksmi-Sesasayi by offering the same *mantra-mudras* as to SSJS. However I do not offer physical *naivedya*. Since SSJS are the main Deities, all other *silas* share the physical *naivedya* that They receive.

I worship Sri Giriraja by offering *mantra-mudras* for bathing, dressing, ornaments, *gandha*, garlands, flute and everything.



These pictures show the offering of *tulasi* that is made at the end, to all *silas*. I chant Tulasi prayers at this time. Her leaves are applied to each of the *silas*.





Here, *prasadam* from the *snana-vedi* and the *tulasi* offering is placed in a brass pot that is then offered to Srila Prabhupada and Sri Guruparampara. Garlands are offered by *mantra-mudra* to all *acaryas*.



After the *puja* I offer a fire *yajna*. But this, too, on most days I do by *mantra-mudra*. Instead of physically offering ghee into a fire, I offer the *Ram-bija mudra* and the *dipa mudra* to the *yajna-vedi*. The *Yajna-purusa silas* preside over the fire sacrifice. Actually, this *yajna* constitutes the specific worship for these two *silas*.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
29 May 2004

Readers who are especially interested in the *yajna* procedure that I published on 23 May should download that entry again. Some additions and corrections were since put in.

Be advised that the same may happen to yesterday's material about *mantra-mudra puja*. In2-MeC entries that feature a lot of photographs with accompanying text and captions are very demanding to produce. Often I write them in a hurry. After they are published, I notice omissions and errors while reading them online. That's why a day or so later the already-published text changes. But, you see, that's the great advantage of writing E-editions: I can go back and rE-edit! Hard-copy editions are as they are, mistakes and all, forever.

While we're on the subject of books in print, here are some In2-MeC recommendations.

Maya *The world as virtual reality* by Richard L. Thompson, Govardhan Hill
Publication 2003, 304 pgs. softbound, ISBN0963530909

. . . the brain has no location within the virtual space created by the VR [virtual reality] computer, but it is nonetheless able to interact with a virtual body that has a position in that space.

Sataputa Prabhu (Richard L. Thompson) constructs a metaphorical bridge between computer-generated virtual reality and that which goes under the name of "physical" or "objective" reality: the world around us. His thesis is that just as the brain of the experienter of virtual reality is not located within virtual space, similarly the consciousness of the experienter of physical reality is not located in physical space--or even mental space, since *both* mind and matter are aspects of physical reality. As philosopher Charles S. Peirce wrote, "Mind is matter seen from the inside, and matter is mind seen from the outside. " The experience of mind and matter constitute Maya, a veil of illusion that obscures the Ground Reality to which our consciousness belongs.

Sadaputa Prabhu argues that paranormal phenomena--psychokinesis, visions, hallucinations, visitations, near death experiences, poltergeists, apports, non-traditional healing--are evidence that from Ground Reality, consciousness interacts with the virtual program of the mental-physical world. It's this point that draws fire from modern Mayavadis. They have no problem with the thesis that the objective world is Maya. They often have no objection to the evidence of paranormal phenomena. But that Maya is grounded upon a higher reality--a capital-R Reality--makes "those who stick to Maya" (Srila Prabhupada's conversational definition of Mayavadis) uncomfortable. Barry Kavanagh reviewed *Maya--the world as virtual reality* in the February 2004 issue of a British magazine dedicated to the investigation of paranormal phenomena; his conclusion is:

Things may not be "as they seem," but I am not convinced this is a sign of mystic consciousness, generated from beyond the veil of illusion.

Mayavadis, with a mindset that most paranormalists certainly share, are entranced by the study of Maya, the world-illusion. They believe it is premature to conclude that the very existence of the world-illusion logically calls for the existence of a Reality beyond that illusion. "Evidence is needed for these [paranormal]

phenomena," writes Kavanagh, "before they are used as evidence for something else. " In other words: "Don't ask us to believe in Reality before we're done studying Maya. " The problem is, it is the nature of Maya to supply unlimited mystical bafflement for the Mayavadis to study. Their method of knowledge is a treadmill--endless information-gathering and theorizing that arrives at no certain conclusion. *That's Maya!* The key to the Mayavadis' unwillingness to surrender to Reality is their abiding trust in what they admit are untrustworthy: the mind, the senses, and sensory-mental data. They believe *a priori* that these are the only valid means by which knowledge can be obtained. If capital-R Reality is outside the purview of mind, senses and sensory-mental data, then Reality must ever be "unknowable. " If the only thing that can be known via mind, senses and sensory-mental data is Maya, then that is what Mayavadis resign themselves to study--even though it is illusion.

As they said in days of old:

Hunc mundum tipice laberinthus denotat ille

"Our world symbolically expresses this labyrinth. "

Archaeological Anomalies *Small artifacts* compiled by William Corliss, The Sourcebook Project 2003, 319 pgs. hardbound, ISBN (09)15554461

William Corliss has published a total of 39 books under the imprimature of The Sourcebook Project. His purpose is to reopen the questions--more or less *all* the questions--that are "answered" to the satisfaction of Western science. Corliss does this by putting into print his painstaking compilations of numerous cases of verified physical evidence that fall outside what I will call (with no apologies for the sarcasm) THEOSOPHS--The Established, Official Screed Of the Pompous Hierophants of Science.

Archaeological Anomalies--Small artifacts comes as volume 21 of the Catalogue of Anomalies series. As the subtitle tells us, this book is a detailed list of artifacts or things made by man. Included are the sorts of things that ancient people deliberately made--e. g. machinery, carvings, cloth--and things they left behind inadvertently, like footprints and bones. The book is concerned with small artifacts; an artifact like, say, the ruins of Mohenjo-Daro, an ancient city in Pakistan, is too large to be included. Large artifacts are covered in two earlier volumes of this series.

All the artifacts listed clash in some way with the world-view of "bona fide" archaeology. One example is Maya Blue pigment. This is a blue coloring used by the Maya civilization of Central America in murals and ceramics, a blue so brilliant that it still astonishes today, 15 centuries later. Modern analysis of the chemistry of Maya Blue reveals that it is "nanostructured", which means "structured at an extremely small level. "

Molecules of blue indigo dye were combined with polgorskite clay to create a chemical structure like a network of microscopic cages. Each cage-structure, formed of clay, houses particles of indigo. In this way the dye is protected and so prevented from fading. But in addition, nano-particles of metal were added to make the pigment even more brilliant than normal indigo blue.

Today nanotechnology is very "cutting edge science"; in terms of the modern archaeologist's idea of the world of 1500 years ago, Maya Blue is as startling as, say, finding a silicon microchip in the hardened ashes of Pompeii.

Other anomalies are:

- an iron pot that was found at Thomas, Oklahoma, in 1912--inside a chunk of coal estimated to be 312 million years old (archaeology admits no human beings on Earth at that time);
- a skillfully-crafted bone harpoon from West Africa dated at 80 thousand years (archaeology admits no human beings on Earth at that time who were big in the skillfull crafts department);
- Roman amphora (pottery of the Classical Age) found off of the coast of Brazil (archaeology says that the first Italian to sail into South American waters was Columbus, long after the Classical Age);
- a buckle from ancient China made of aluminum (an alloy that is supposed to be a modern invention);
- ancient pottery from Ecuador that is very like Jomon pottery of Japan (archaeology admits no prehistoric contact between Japan and the Americas).

These are only a few of many, many curious anomalies that Corliss has compiled from impeccable sources.

Fabulous Science by John Waller, OUP 2002, 308 pgs. hardbound, ISBN 0 19 280404 9

The previous book under review presents exceptions to THEOSOPHS; this book, *Fabulous Science*, investigates THEOSOPHS and finds it to be, in some way or other, flawed or even fraudulent. Three examples of many given:

Pasteur, while right in his hypothesis that micro-organisms were not spontaneously generated, did not actually have experimental results to support this. In fact he suppressed data that he *did* have that *didn't* support his hypothesis. This is not the way science is supposed to work.

Eddington's 1919 experiment that was hailed around the world as validating Einstein's theory of relativity actually did no such thing. Eddington massaged the data to make it fit the theory. (He was a great enthusiast of relativity and was of the opinion that only he and Einstein actually understood it.) Later experiments confirmed the theory, but it was Eddington that made relativity a household word. A case of propaganda masquerading as science with false credentials supplied by the scientific establishment.

The modern theory of evolution is credited to Charles Darwin. But before him there were many other evolutionists. The truth is that Darwin shaped his theory from their ideas. Lamarck was one such before-Darwin evolutionist. He held that when a living entity acquires a special trait--like a chimpanzee that learns to pull the stinger off the tail of a scorpion before eating it--that trait is passed biologically to succeeding generations. Thus the descendents of this chimp don't have to learn to pull off scorpion stingers because the trait is "in their blood. " Lamarckian evolution is discredited today. Indeed, students learn in school that Darwinian evolution *triumphed over* Lamarckian evolution. The subtext here is that the latter has become

saddled with a heavy load of political incorrectness since the Communist tyrant Josef Stalin made Larmarkianism a component of his version of Marxism-Leninism. But in fact Darwin's first book, *On the Origin of Species*, argued the very same idea--that a trait acquired by an animal will be inherited by its offspring. The messy reality of Darwin's work was later smoothed over to fit the myth of modern evolutionary theory.

Of Moths and Men *Intrigue, Tragedy and the Peppered Moth* by Judith Hooper, Fourth Estate 2003, 337 pgs. paperback, ISBN 1 84115 393 1

The concern of this book is similar to that of *Fabulous Science*, except that it focuses on one specific case of flawed and fraudulent science: industrial melanism. Melanism means "dark coloration. " At one time THEOSOPHS held that as cities became industrialized, the naturally light-colored peppered moth evolved a darker coloring. And so, compared to their countryside kin, city-dwelling peppered moths were "melanistic. " The reason was that because the surfaces outside (trees, leaves, walls) were covered by factory soot, moths of lighter color that alighted on such darkened surfaces were more prone to be spotted by enemies like insect-eating birds. So, by natural selection, darker moths prospered in the city and lighter ones disappeared--though in the unpolluted countryside, they could still be found in plenty. Beyond the city limits, natural selection worked against melanistic moths. I remember having to learn about industrial melanism in my high school biology days. The science textbooks I had to read were replete with neat illustrations of light and dark moths on soot-blackened tree trunks. *Of Moths and Men* shows that, from the very beginning, this bit of "science" was pure humbug. . . but only lately do scientists grudgingly admit it as such.

1953 was the year the industrial melanism scam began. That was when an amateur lepidopterist (butterfly collector) named HBP Kettlewell went public with his "discovery" that the peppered moth population in cities was darker than that in the country. He not only proposed the hypothesis of industrial melanism to explain his observations, he even had proof. But it was all bogus. Kettlewell's practice was to nail darker moths to trees to make sure people who wanted proof would observe these unfortunate insects getting eaten by birds.

Science fell in love with industrial melanism. It came to be taught in schools around the world. Finally the fraud was exposed by Theodore Sargeant, who himself was accused of being a fraud by diehard Kettlewell devotees.

As they said in days of old:

Tum podex carmen extulit horridulum

"The ass gave out a terrible song. "



*Amsterdam, the Netherlands
30 May 2004*

The Faith Science Reserves for Itself

From the Internet (Yahoo. com News Service), 28 May 2004:

Nasa Discovers Likely Youngest Planet

Marcia Dunn, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. --One of NASA's space telescopes has discovered what scientists believe may be the youngest planet ever spied--a celestial body that at 1 million years old or less is a cosmic toddler.



*On Yahoo News
where the article
appeared, this image
was captioned
"Reuters Photo"*

In its first major findings, announced Thursday, the Spitzer Space Telescope also has shown that protostars, or developing stars, "are as common as the cicadas in the trees here on the East Coast" and that the planetary construction zones around infant stars have considerable ice that could produce future oceans.

"Oh, my goodness, it knocked our socks off," University of Wisconsin astronomer Ed Churchwell said of the trio of discoveries.

Spitzer is an infrared telescope has been orbiting the sun and studying the universe since last summer. It did not actually "see" the toddler planet, but yielded evidence that enabled scientists to infer its existence.

The object is in the constellation Taurus, 420 light-years away--quite close by astronomy standards. It is believed to be on the inner edge of a planet-forming dusty disk that encircles a 1-million-year-old star.

University of Rochester astronomer Dan Watson said a sharply defined hole in the middle of the disk suggests that a planet created the opening. That gaseous planet would have been formed sometime since the star's formation.

By comparison, the Earth and the rest of the solar system are 4.5 billion years old. And up until now, the youngest planets observed around other stars were a few billion years old.

Astronomer Deborah Padgett at the Carnegie Institution of Washington cautioned that instead of a planet, the gap in the dusty disk could be caused by asteroid formation or a smaller unseen stellar companion. She said it is also possible that the heat and light of the star are forming the gap by blowing all the dusty material out.

However, she said that it is "very likely" a planet, and that additional research by Spitzer and future spacecraft should settle the debate.

There was more to the news report, but it added little to what is cited above.

Now let's deconstruct what we just read.

First the title: Nasa Discovers Likely Youngest Planet. The word *likely* means "possible", even "probable". "A good chance" that something is what we think it is.

Does this title tell us that it is possible NASA discovered the youngest planet? No. The title tells us with complete certainty that NASA has discovered a planet; what is *likely* is only that this planet is the youngest.

The youngest planet? Where, in the whole galaxy? In the whole universe? How in the hell does NASA know?

Never mind that for now. What is established by the title is that NASA has discovered a planet.

Going from the title to the first paragraph, we find the same information repeated with the addition that the planet was discovered by a space telescope, and that it may only be a million years old or less.

Next up is the color .jpg image titled "Reuters photo. " Wow. Does it mean that the space telescope took this photograph of the new planet? Skimming quickly through the rest of text of the article, we don't find any explanation for the image. Well then. . . let's go back and look at it closely. Hmmm. . . it doesn't look like a photograph. It's. . . I dunno. . . maybe a painting? It appears that the Reuters Photo caption is clickable, so let's see what happens. . . CLICK!



What you get when the image is clicked on

Okay, good, an enlargement of the image. It's clear that this is *definitely* no photograph! Just see, this enlargement comes with a caption:

The youngest planet ever detected--a baby less than one million years old--may be orbiting a young star in the constellation Taurus, scientists using NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope reported on May 27, 2004. In this artist's conception, the possible newfound planet spins through a clearing in a nearby star's dusty, planet-forming disc. The possible infant planet was spotted circling a star known as CoKu Tau 4, some 420 light-years away, according to astronomer Dan Watson of the University of Rochester, New York. FOR EDITORIAL USE ONLY NO SALES REUTERS/NASA/Handout

Whoa! This is the youngest planet ever detected, less than a million years old, that MAY be orbiting a young star? What the hell is that supposed to mean? Oh, and look at this, will you? IN THIS ARTIST'S CONCEPTION. Damn! Why'd they label the original image a photo then? And why do they keep calling it a "possible infant planet"?

All right, having finished with that "photo"--sheesh!--let's go back to the text of the article.

OK, now here's some scientist talking about protostars being as common as cicadas in the trees. And here's some other one saying his socks were knocked off. Then. . . HEY! WHAT THE #%\$ ARE THEY TRYING TO PULL HERE?

It did not actually "see" the toddler planet, but yielded evidence that enabled scientists to infer its existence.

Fiddlesticks and Hubble pix! So the photo that isn't a photo, turns out to be an artist's conception of something that the telescope DIDN'T EVEN SEE!

My sweet Lord.

Read a bit more and we learn that what the telescope did see is a star in the constellation Taurus. The scientists say this star is a million years old. The telescope did see a dusty disk around the star. The scientists call it a planet-forming disk. In this disk the telescope did see a hole.

There's this astronomer guy, Watson, who says the hole was made by a planet. A "gaseous planet. " Yeah, made of hot air, I bet.



Then there's this lady scientist Padgett who **c a u t i o n s** that-- get this, will you?--a planet may *not* have made the hole at all. She postulates three alternatives. Well, to tell you the truth, at this point I'm ready to postulate an alternative of my own. How about this: the ghost of Albert Einstein has assumed cosmic proportions out there in the constellation Taurus. He keeps puffing up and deflating a relativity balloon. Every time he puffs on it, the expanding curved space-time skin of the balloon puts a hole through the dusty disk.

Now scientists will say the chances of that are somewhere between fashionably slim and severely anorexic. But how do we establish the "chance" of the things *they* say? Padgett the lady scientist says the cause is "very likely" a planet. But she's spoken of three other possible causes too. So what's the deal? Is it like a 1 out of 4 chance that the hole was made by a planet, and a 3 out of 4 chance that it was made by the other causes? In the end Padgett seems to cop out: "future spacecraft will settle the debate. " Oh yeah. Future spacecraft that will travel to another star in the constellation Taurus.

In a book called *The End of Science*, John Horgan writes on page 18:

Humans, made of flesh and blood, may someday travel to other planets here in our solar system. But unless we find some way to transcend Einstein's prohibition against faster-than-light travel, chances are that we will never even attempt to visit another star, let alone another galaxy. A spaceship that can travel one million miles an hour, a velocity at least one order of magnitude greater than any current technology can attain, would still take almost 3000 years to reach our nearest stellar neighbor, Alpha Centauri.

There it is:

"Chances are that we will never even attempt to visit another star. "

Ergo: this article titled *NASA Discovers Likely Youngest Planet* is hogwash from beginning to end.

The title is hogwash. It tells you right to your face that NASA discovered a planet. What NASA discovered wasn't a freaking planet, it was a lousy hole in dust, for crying out loud! This makes as much sense as a guy walking along a dusty footpath, tripping over a hole in the ground, falling flat on his face, and then, with his nose still in the dust, shouting aloud, "Eureka! I just found. . . a. . . whole. . . OTHER. . . WORLD!" Screw your head back on, chumcha. All you found was a hole. A hole and some dust.

The picture is hogwash. They all but tell you to your face it's a photo of the new planet. Then you find out it's an artist's conception. Then you find out that what it shows, in all those nice colors and all, wasn't even seen!

The only practical use of that picture is to illustrate the cover of a science fiction novel.

The talk of the likeliness of the hole they did see being made by an unseen planet is also just hogwash. Likeliness means a good chance. Chance means odds: 2 to 1, 5 to 1, 10 to 1. In this little game of chance the scientists are inviting us to play, no odds can be verified.

"Hey, let's play dice. "

"What, betting real money?"

"Yeah, sure! Fifty bucks on the first throw!"

"OK, but are we playing with one die, or a pair? 'Cause if it's one, I got a 1 to 6 chance; if it's a pair, I got a 1 to 12 chance. "

"Well-ll-ll, the thing is, the dice I'm talking about, *you* can't see. True, I can't see 'em either, but because I'm a scientist and you're not, I can infer what numbers come up. "

"You can infer. . . ?"

"Yeah! Like. . . whatever I say the number is, that's the number. Get it?"

"What the. . . ?"

"And another thing, because I'm a scientist, I can at any time say the number is different from what I said it was. And you. . . *you* can't say anything. 'Cause *you're* not an expert. Like me. So. . . wanna play?"

NO THANKS!

The only way this so-called news report can be appreciated is through the eyes of faith.

I mean, we what have here before us in the form of this report is sheer religion.

And look. . . LOOK. . . what *this* religion--the one called science--gets away with!

The lady journalist who wrote the report is an "Aerospace Writer," which means she is a member of the cult.

Let's call it the Mystic Tube Cult, because they believe in visions that come through a mystic tube (telescope).

So here she is, a member of the Mystic Tube Cult, and her article is page one news around the world. Nobody says to *her*, "Uh. . . sorry, Miss, our policy is that we're a strictly secular news agency. Your article represents. . . ah. . . certain *beliefs* that are. . . simply. . . *unverifiable*. Now we *do* respect your beliefs, of course. You and your cohort are *welcome* to practice your faith among yourselves. But. . . we publish *facts* here, Miss. Not *beliefs*. "

Nobody complains (except me here on In2-MeC!) that the title of her article makes a claim tantamount to

Mystic Tube Reveals the Face of God in Constellation Taurus!

Nobody complains that the image published in her article is tantamount to an image of a face captioned

The Face of God Photographed Through the Mystic Tube!

Nobody complains as, later in the article, what gradually becomes clear is tantamount to it becoming clear that no face of God is actually visible in constellation Taurus, it was only "inferred" to be there; and that the "photo" is really just an artist's conception of the face that is not visible.

Nobody complains. Why? Because they *believe* in science.

But if a *religion* somehow did the same thing, announcing that the face of God--or hell, even a baby planet (I mean, *that* is far out too!)--is now visible in constellation Taurus, and if all the online news channels uncritically promoted the report all over the Internet, complete with bogus headline and "photo", there would be cries of outrage everywhere!

"I go on line to see the *news*, dammit! I don't wanna be *preached to* by some *kooks!*"

"Hasn't anyone told you people at Yahoo about *dangerous cults*? Why, there was a mass suicide a few years back by some wackos who wanted to hitch a ride on a comet! And now you got *these* wingnuts proclaiming the good news that a *baby planet* appeared in constellation Taurus! God, what's next?"

"I'm a Christian! This stuff is Satanic! I'm cancelling my Yahoo services! Repent! Jesus Saves!"

"Who *is* this person you got writing your news articles for you? Polly the Preaching Parrot from Medicine Hat?"

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
31 May 2004

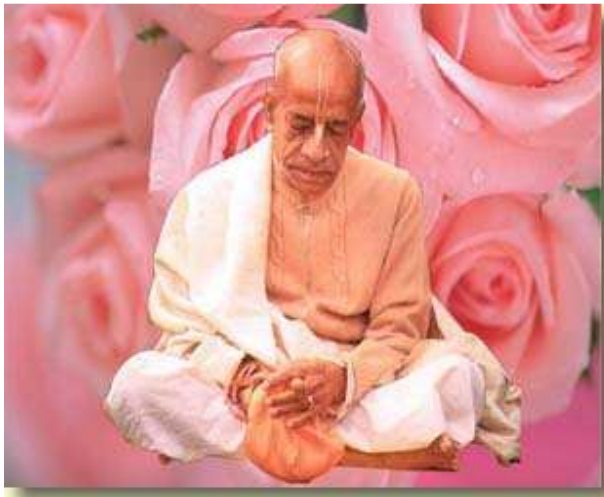
In the years that Srila Prabhupada, with the help of a few adventuresome Western disciples, pioneered ISKCON preaching in India, he saw that Indians were only willing

to offer his mission money and other such material assistance. They were reluctant to offer themselves to become full-time devotees. (I should mention that this is no longer the state of affairs. ISKCON temples in India are for the most part manned by Indian *brahmacaris*.) Srila Prabhupada said,

The young Indian ladies and gentlemen are not interested in Vedic culture, they are interested in becoming lawyers, doctors and engineers, going abroad and getting a job. Our government ministers beg for rice, money and alms. They should not beg; they should give. They should give Krsna.

If an engineer goes to New York and tries to get a job, nobody cares for him. There are millions of doctors, lawyers, engineers and physicists. But if one man comes, sits down and speaks on *Bhagavad-gita*, immediately one hundred men will sit down to hear and offer him all respect.

Anyone can become a spiritual master. It does not depend upon mundane scholarship or any other qualification.



In America, Srila Prabhupada's first field as a preacher was the state of Pennsylvania. There he met a Ramakrishna Mission "*sannyasi*" named Nikhilananda who, in the name of being a "*guru*" (teacher), had accepted an academic post in a university. This Nikhilananda was thoroughly Westernized and even tried to instruct Srila Prabhupada that it would be necessary for him to similarly adopt American ways if he at all hoped to make an impact on society. "You had better change your dress," he told His Divine Grace, "and learn to eat with knife and fork,

because these Western people are not going to take to such old-fashioned Indian customs." Srila Prabhupada's firm response was, "No. I will teach them how to eat with their hands."

We shouldn't think that the success of our preaching is only to be calculated in terms of number of devotees joined, books distributed, money collected, and the construction of opulent temples. Srila Prabhupada once expressed the goal of the ISKCON mission in this most instructive manner:

The success of my movement will be when my devotees are glorified and worshiped.

This glorification and worship of the devotees, Srila Prabhupada made clear, has to start *within* ISKCON itself. Outsiders will only take it up by following the example of the devotees themselves. If the devotees are not doing, why should anyone else? Therefore Prabhupada taught his disciples to offer their obeisances to one another in the morning. He said that a disciple, when greeting another first thing in the new day, should say:

My dear *prabhu*, please accept my most humble obeisances.

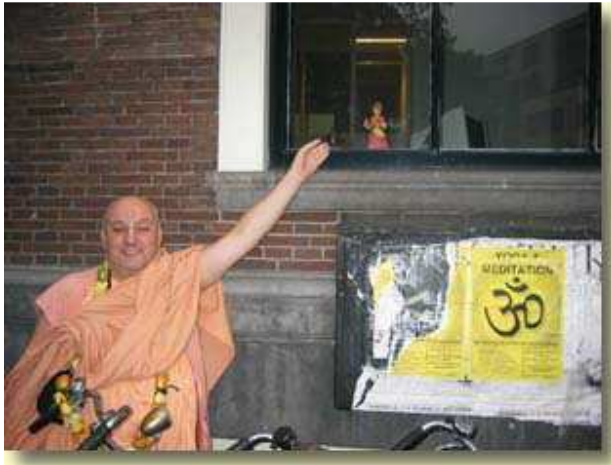
Not only that, Srila Prabhupada said this etiquette should be observed at the end of the day, before the devotees take rest.



Sunday feast program in Amsterdam temple.



After the program we took a walk in the part of town around the University of Amsterdam. That's Bhakta Michael on the left and Pandava Prabhu on the right.



Now this is interesting--in this window of the university theater house we spied this small Indian figurine that seems to be Srimati Radharani. Unfortunately Krsna isn't next to Her in His personal form, but He has made His presence apparent in the Om symbol on the wall outside.



This morning disciples Dharmaksetra and Pitambhara arrived from Groningen with their 3-month-old son Jagannatha Varsneya. I am looking at the astrology reading they had done for him. I did a numerology reading; the two readings matched! The boy is very spiritually-natured, energetic, and will be successful in life.



Hero-Citizen Cow!

A New Zealand lady dairy farmer named Kim Riley, 43, was tending a herd of cows last February when she was swept away by the floodwaters of the Manawatu River that flows through her land. One of the cows that was also caught in the flood helped the woman get back to dry land. The woman told the press she would henceforward take special care of this cow, called only by the number "569," who saved her from drowning.

She should start by giving the cow a nice name like Surabhi or Kamadhenu.



A few days back I wrote about the case of Jesper Bood, a Swede whose apparent past-life memories recovered by hypnotic regression match up to the century-and-a-half old records of a Scottish fisherman. I mentioned that in general memories recovered by hypnosis are suspect at best; Bood's memories may be an exception.

Here's a summary of a news report from the dark side of the memory retrieval business. In February a lawsuit in Chicago was settled when two therapists, a hospital, and a clinic, agreed to pay 7.5 million dollars to a former patient, a 52-year-old woman named Elizabeth Gale. She had sued the therapists for brainwashing her by their method of memory retrieval therapy at the hospital and the clinic. The news report doesn't state whether Ms. Gale underwent hypnosis while being so treated, but it is a fact that hypnosis is a standard practice in such cases.

Lest the reader think that the two therapists were merely some smooth operators not really qualified, their names are Dr. Bennett Braun (a psychiatrist) and Roberta Sachs (a psychologist). Through the '80s and '90s Dr. Braun and his staff, to which Sachs belonged, were nationally recognized in the USA as experts in the treatment of multiple personality disorder and the uncovering of repressed memories of childhood abuse.

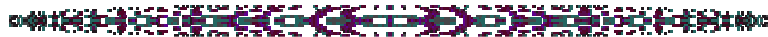
The "memories" they dredged up from Ms. Gale's subconscious had her convinced that she was a victim of a Satanic cult that used her body for breeding babies. The cult ritually sacrificed her children as soon as they were born. To spare her sanity,

her mind had supposedly repressed these traumatic impressions. With the "help" of Braun and Sachs, Ms. Gale able to "see" that her very ordinary life, in which she had been childless and troubled by mild depression, was actually a grotesque nightmare.

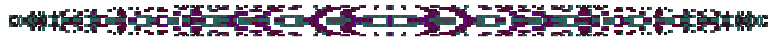
Braun and Sachs advised her that, in order to stay clear of the clutches of the cult and to recover from the trauma of the abuse she had suffered, she had to quit her job, change her name, abandon her family, sell her possessions and get a tubal ligation (a operation that made her incapable of bearing children). All this she did. In the meantime the two therapists were being handsomely rewarded by payments from Ms. Gale's medical insurance.

All bogus.

To settle a similar lawsuit in 1997, Braun and Sachs paid millions to another former patient, Patricia Burgus.



Harpeet Devi, a taxi driver in Bhatinda, India, once had to drive 56 kilometers (35 miles) backwards because his gearbox got stuck in reverse. He liked it so much he decided to always drive that way. For the past two years he's chauffeured his passengers at speeds up to 40 mph (25 mph) in reverse gear only. He's covered 12 000 km (7500 miles) going the wrong way. Now he has a vision of driving on a peace mission from India into Pakistan--backwards.



🙄 Oh no, not a parrot story again!

A man named Li Yong from Zhengzhou in the Chinese province of Henan strangled his pet parrot because it kept calling him names. He tried for eight months to teach the bird to say "hello" and "goodbye" but it refused to speak. Li Yong eventually lost his temper at the bird and called it an "idiot" and other such names. That's when the parrot started to speak--repeating the ill names back to its owner.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
3 June 2004

Through the next several In2-MeC entries I'll publish installments of a nice compilation about the qualities of a Vaisnava. It was assembled from Prabhupada source material by Sesa Dasa (ACBSP) in 1994.

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akṛta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosa, vadanya, mṛdu, sūci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, kṛṣṇaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna*

*mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, daksa, mauni*

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Krsna and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities--lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

-- CC. Madhya 22. 78-80

Merciful

"That is the way of Krsna consciousness. Pure devotees are so absorbed in thought of Krsna that they have no other engagement; although they may seem to think or act otherwise, they are always thinking of Krsna. The smile of such a Krsna conscious person is so attractive that simply by smiling he wins so many admirers, disciples, and followers. "

-- Purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 3. 22. 21

Humble

"Personally, I am nonentity; I have come here on the order of my spiritual master, and he has kindly sent all you boys to assist me. So whatever is being done, there is no credit for me, but all credit goes to my spiritual master; because he has arranged everything, and I am simply trying to abide by his order. "

-- Letter of October 16, 1968

Truthful

"Devotees always humbly offer respect to everyone, but when there is a discussion on a point of sastra, they do not observe the usual etiquette: satyam bruyat priyam bruyat. They speak only the satyam [truth], although it may not necessarily be priyam [pleasing]. "

-- Letter of August 9, 1976



Equal to Everyone

"Demons think of everyone as a friend or enemy, but Vaisnavas say that since everyone is a servant of the lord, everyone is on the same platform. Therefore a Vaisnava treats other living entities neither as friends nor as enemies, but instead tries to spread Krsna consciousness, teaching everyone that we are all one as servants of the Supreme Lord but are uselessly wasting our valuable lives by creating nations, communities and other groups of friends and enemies. "

-- Purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 7. 5. 12

Faultless

"One who has cultured himself that these different activities of the material world have nothing to do with him, his only business is to become Krsna conscious. Then it is to be understood that he has conquered death even in this present life. This sort of equilibrium in the transcendental stage of Krsna consciousness is called faultless. It is faultless life. "

-- Lecture on *Bhagavad-gita*, 5. 14-22

Another interesting recent book:

The Piltdown Forgery by JS Weiner, Oxford University Press 2003, paperback 212 pgs. , ISBN 0198607806

This is a reprint of the book that blew the lid off a case of major scientific fraud that Drutakarma and Sadaputa Prabhus mention at length in *Forbidden Archaeology*. For most of the first half of the twentieth century the Piltdown Man--the skull and jaw of an alleged extinct "missing link" between prehistoric apes and modern man--was for many scientists of the English-speaking world an important piece of evidence for evolution. In 1953 Joe Weiner, a South African anatomist, published *The Piltdown Forgery*, showing that the bones (which turned out to be a human skull and an orangutan jaw, both modern) were artificially stained to appear ancient. Someone had calculatingly planted them in a gravel pit, where they were unearthed in 1908. There are at least 27 suspects as to who might have perpetrated the Piltdown forgery. The most likely candidates are Dr. Martin Allister Hinton (1883-1961), Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum from 1936 to 1945, and Charles Panzetta Chatwin, a junior staff member of the British Museum.

Bergen, Norway, is the second largest city in the country. It is a harbor town on the west coast facing northernmost Scotland. The town is all astir about the *shabti*, ancient Egyptian stone figurines, on display in the museum. It appears that at night

the figures move around by themselves in their locked glass display case. Trails of dust in the case seem to trace their paths of movement.

This might be another case of fraud by museum staff. But the Egyptians did have a reputation throughout the world of old for their power to "charge" stone statues of their deities, so that they could talk, move about and perform wonders. I think this suggests something insightful about the process of Deity worship prior to Kali-yuga. It is said that in Dwapara-yuga--the age in which *arcana* is the prominent *dharm*--for Deities to talk, move about and to perform other wonders was not uncommon. The *brahmanas* serving in the temples were much more qualified then. Misra is a common *brahmana* name in India. Misra is also the name by which the Indians in olden times called Egypt. Once a *brahmana* of the Misra line told me his ancient forebearers were from Egypt. Anyway, I'm not trying to argue anything here. Just interesting thoughts. . .

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
4 June 2004

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akrta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosā, vadanya, mrdu, suci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, krsnaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna
mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, daksa, mauni*

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Krsna and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities--lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

-- CC. Madhya 22. 78-80

The explanation of these items continues from yesterday.

Magnanimous

"The spiritual master accepts the sinful activities of his disciples from the first initiation. I may give initiation very easily, but what can I do? I am prepared to go to hell for the service of Lord Caitanya. "

-- Letter of September 4, 1972

Mild

"You have written to say that I am 'hard as the thunderbolt and softer than a rose,' and it is quite right in the line of Krsna consciousness. "

-- Letter of October 13, 1967

Clean

"Brahminical life means to be very, very clean, inside and out: inside by chanting and hearing, and outside by bathing three times daily. . . . "

-- Letter of December 7, 1975



Srila Prabhupada at a preaching program in the early days in San Francisco, being introduced to the public by HG Jayananda Prabhu.

Without material possessions

"I have come to your country by aeroplane not to see your country. I have come for Krsna's business: to see if I can induce you to Krsna consciousness. Otherwise we have no concern with this aeroplane or motorcar or anything. We take advantage. Similarly, when we take advantage of this body for advancing in Krsna consciousness, then it is very nice. "

-- Lecture on *Bhagavad-gita*, 2.
11

everyone

Performs welfare work for

"Just see the example. I am not proud, but because I have got little taste for it, therefore I am preaching all over the world. I don't say I am perfect. I have got little taste of krsna-bhakti. So I have no distinction that 'This is Indian, this is American, this is African. ' Everyone, I am giving this harinama. "

-- Morning walk, Bombay, February 19, 1974



Sri Sanatana Gosvami surrenders to the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu for instruction in the transcendental science of bhakti-yoga.

TEXT 148

*vaidhi-bhakti-sadhanera kahilun vivarana
raganuga-bhaktira laksana suna, sanatana*

SYNONYMS

vaidhi-bhakti--of devotional service according to the regulative principles;
sadhanera--of the execution; *kahilun*--I have made; *vivarana*--description;
raganuga-bhaktira--of spontaneous devotional service; *laksana*--the symptoms;
suna--please hear; *sanatana*--O Sanatana.

TRANSLATION

"My dear Sanatana, I have now in detail described devotional service according to the regulative principles. Now hear from Me about spontaneous devotional service and its characteristics.

TEXT 149

ragatmika-bhakti----'mukhya' *vraja-vasi-jane*
tara anugata bhaktira 'raganuga'-name

SYNONYMS

ragatmika-bhakti--spontaneous devotional service; *mukhya*--preeminent; *vraja-vasi-jane*--in the inhabitants of Vraja, or Vrndavana; *tara*--that; *anugata*--following; *bhaktira*--of devotional service; *raganuga-name*--named raganuga or following after spontaneous devotional service.

TRANSLATION

"The original inhabitants of Vrndavana are attached to Krsna spontaneously in devotional service. Nothing can compare to such spontaneous devotional service, which is called *ragatmika bhakti*. When a devotee follows in the footsteps of the devotees of Vrndavana, his devotional service is called *raganuga bhakti*.

PURPORT

In his *Bhakti-sandarbha*, Jiva Gosvami states:

*tad evam tat-tad-abhimana-laksana-bhava-visesvena svabhavika-ragasya vaisistye
sati
tat-tad-raga-prayukta sravana-kirtana-smarana-pada-sevana-vandanatma-
nivedana-praya bhaktis
tesam ragatmika bhaktir ity ucyate. . . . tatas tadiyam ragam rucyanugacchanti sa
raganuga.*

When a pure devotee follows the footsteps of a devotee in Vrndavana, he develops *raganuga bhakti*.

TEXT 150

*iste svarasiki ragah
paramavistata bhavet
tanmayi ya bhaved bhaktih
satra ragatmikodita*

SYNONYMS

iste--unto the desired object of life; *svarasiki*--appropriate for one's own original aptitude of love; *ragah*--attachment; *parama-avistata*--absorption in the service of the Lord; *bhavet*--is; *tat-mayi*--consisting of that transcendental attachment; *ya*--which; *bhavet*--is; *bhaktih*--devotional service; *sa*--that; *atra*--here; *ragatmika-udita*--called *ragatmika*, or spontaneous devotional service.

TRANSLATION

"When one becomes attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his natural inclination to love is fully absorbed in thoughts of the Lord. That is called transcendental attachment, and devotional service according to that attachment is called *ragatmika*, or spontaneous devotional service. "

PURPORT

This verse is found in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 272).

TEXT 151

*iste 'gadha-trsna'----ragera svarupa-laksana
iste 'avistata'----ei tatastha-laksana*

SYNONYMS

iste--in the desired object, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *gadha-trsna*--deep attachment; *ragera*--of spontaneous love; *svarupa-laksana*--the primary symptom; *iste*--unto the Supreme; *avistata*--absorption; *ei*--this; *tatastha-laksana*--the marginal symptom.

TRANSLATION

"The primary characteristic of spontaneous love is deep attachment for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Absorption in Him is a marginal characteristic.

TEXT 152

*ragamayi-bhaktira haya 'ragatmika' nama
ta-ha suni' lubdha haya kona bhagyavan*

SYNONYMS

raga-mayi--consisting of attachment; *bhaktira*--of devotional service; *haya*--is; *ragatmika*--spontaneous love; *nama*--the name; *taha suni'*--hearing this; *lubdha*--covetous; *haya*--becomes; *kona bhagyavan*--some fortunate person.

TRANSLATION

"Thus devotional service which consists of *raga* [deep attachment] is called *ragatmika*, spontaneous loving service. If a devotee covets such a position, he is considered to be most fortunate.

TEXT 153

*lobhe vraja-vasira bhava kare anugati
sastra-yukti nahi mane----raganugara prakrti*

SYNONYMS

lobhe--in such covetousness; *vraja-vasira bhava*--in the moods of the inhabitants of Vrndavana, Vraja; *kare anugati*--follows; *sastra-yukti*--injunctions or reasonings of the sastras; *nahi mane*--does not abide by; *raganugara*--of spontaneous love; *prakrti*--the nature.

TRANSLATION

"If one follows in the footsteps of the inhabitants of Vrndavana out of such transcendental covetousness, he does not care for the injunctions or reasonings of *sastra*. That is the way of spontaneous love.

PURPORT

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura says that a devotee is attracted by the service of the inhabitants of Vrndavana—namely the cowherd men, Maharaja Nanda, mother Yasoda, Radharani, the *gopis*, and the cows and calves. An advanced devotee is attracted by the service rendered by an eternal servitor of the Lord. This attraction is called spontaneous attraction. Technically it is called *svarupa-upalabdhi*. This stage is not achieved in the beginning. In the beginning one has to render service strictly according to the regulative principles set forth by the revealed scriptures and spiritual master. By continuously rendering service through the process of *vaidhi bhakti*, one's natural inclination is gradually awakened. That is called spontaneous attraction, or *raganuga bhakti*.



An advanced devotee situated on the platform of spontaneity is already very expert in sastric instruction, logic and argument. When he comes to the point of eternal love for Krsna, no one can deviate him from that position, neither by argument nor by sastric evidence. An advanced devotee has realized his eternal relationship with the Lord, and consequently he does not accept the logic and arguments of others. Such an advanced devotee has nothing to do with the *sahajiyas*, who manufacture their own way and commit sins by indulging in illicit sex, intoxication and gambling, if not meat-eating. Sometimes the *sahajiyas* imitate advanced devotees and live in their own whimsical way, avoiding the principles set down in the revealed scriptures. Unless one follows the six Gosvamis—Sri Rupa, Sanatana, Raghunatha Bhatta, Sri Jiva, Gopala Bhatta and Raghunatha dasa—one cannot be a bona fide spontaneous lover of Krsna. In this connection, Srila Narottama

dasa Thakura says: *rupa-raghunatha-pade haibe akuti kabe hama bujhaba se yugala piriti*. The *sahajiyas'* understanding of the love affairs between Radha and Krsna is not bona fide because they do not follow the principles laid down by the six Gosvamis. Their illicit connection and their imitation of the dress of Rupa Gosvami as well as their avoidance of the prescribed methods of revealed scriptures will lead them to the lowest regions of hell. These imitative *sahajiyas* are cheated and unfortunate. They are not equal to advanced devotees (*paramahamsas*). Debauchees and *paramahamsas* are not on the same level.

*virajantim abhivyaktam
vraja-vasi-janadisu
ragatmikam anusrta
ya sa raganugocyate*

SYNONYMS

virajantim--shining intensely; *abhivyaktam*--fully expressed; *vraja-vasi-jana-adisu*--among the eternal inhabitants of Vrndavana; *ragatmika*--devotional service consisting of spontaneous love; *anusrta*--following; *ya*--which; *sa*--that; *raganuga*--devotional service following in the wake of spontaneous love; *ucyate*--is said.

TRANSLATION

"Devotional service in spontaneous love is vividly expressed and manifested by the inhabitants of Vrndavana. Devotional service that accords with their devotional service is called *raganuga bhakti*, or devotional service following in the wake of spontaneous loving service. '

PURPORT

This verse is found in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 270).

TEXT 155

*tat-tad-bha' vadi-madhurye
srute dhir yad apeksate
natra sastram na yuktim ca
tal lobhotpatti-laksanam*

SYNONYMS

tat-tat--respective; *bhava-adi-madhurye*--the sweetness of the loving moods (namely *santa-rasa*, *dasya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, *vatsalya-rasa* and *madhurya-rasa*) of the inhabitants of Vrndavana; *srute*--when heard; *dhir*--the intelligence; *yad*--which; *apeksate*--depends on; *na*--not; *atra*--here; *sastram*--revealed scriptures; *na*--not; *yuktim*--logic and argument; *ca*--also; *tat*--that; *lobha*--of covetousness to follow in the footsteps; *utpatti-laksanam*--the symptom of awakening.

TRANSLATION

"When an advanced realized devotee hears about the affairs of the devotees of Vrndavana--in the mellows of *santa*, *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya* and *madhurya*--he becomes inclined in that way, and his intelligence becomes attracted. Indeed, he begins to covet that particular type of devotion. When such covetousness is awakened, one's intelligence no longer depends on the instruction of *sastra*, revealed scripture, logic or argument. '

PURPORT

This verse is found in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 292).

TEXTS 156-157

*bahya, antara,----ihara dui ta' sadhana
'bahye' sadhaka-dehe kare sravana-kirtana*

*'mane' nija-siddha-deha kariya bhavana
ratri-dine kare vraje krsnera sevana*

SYNONYMS

bahya--externally; *antara*--internally; *ihara*--of this spontaneous love of Godhead; *dui*--two; *ta'*--indeed; *sadhana*--such processes of execution; *bahye*--externally; *sadhaka-dehe*--with the body of an advanced devotee; *kare*--does; *sravana-kirtana*--hearing and chanting; *mane*--the mind; *nija*--own; *siddha-deha*--eternal body or self-realized position; *kariya bhavana*--thinking of; *ratri-dine*--night and day; *kare*--executes; *vraje*--in Vrndavana; *krsnera*--of Lord Krsna; *sevana*--service.

TRANSLATION

"There are two processes by which one may execute this *raganuga bhakti*--external and internal. When self-realized, the advanced devotee externally remains like a neophyte and executes all the sastric injunctions, especially hearing and chanting. However, within his mind, in his original purified self-realized position, he serves Krsna in Vrndavana in his particular way. He serves Krsna twenty-four hours, all day and night.

TEXT 158

*seva sadhaka-rupena
siddha-rupena catra hi
tad-bhava-lipsuna karya
vraja-lokanusaratah*

SYNONYMS

seva--service; *sadhaka-rupena*--with the external body as a devotee practicing regulative devotional service; *siddha-rupena*--with a body suitable for eternal, self-realized service; *ca*--also; *atra*--in this connection; *hi*--certainly; *tat*--of that; *bhava*--the mood; *lipsuna*--desiring to obtain; *karya*--to be executed; *vraja-loka*--of the particular servant of Krsna in Vrndavana; *anusaratah*--by following in the footsteps.

TRANSLATION

"The advanced devotee who is inclined to spontaneous loving service should follow the activities of a particular associate of Krsna in Vrndavana. He should execute service externally as a regulative devotee as well as internally from his self-realized position. Thus he should perform devotional service both externally and internally. "

PURPORT

This verse is found in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 295).

TEXT 159

*nijabhista krsna-prestha pacheta' lagiya
nirantara seva kare antarmana hana*

SYNONYMS

nija-abhista--one's own choice; *krsna-prestha*--the servitor of Krsna; *pacheta'*
lagiya--following; *nirantara*--twenty-four hours a day; *seva*--service; *kare*--
executes; *antarmana*--within the mind; *hana*--being.

TRANSLATION

"Actually the inhabitants of Vrndavana are very dear to Krsna. If one wants to engage in spontaneous loving service, he must follow the inhabitants of Vrndavana and constantly engage in devotional service within his mind.

TEXT 160

*krsnam smaran janam casya
prestham nija-samihitam
tat-tat-katha-ratas casau
kuryad vasam vraje sada*

SYNONYMS

krsnam--Lord Krsna; *smaran*--thinking of; *janam*--a devotee; *ca*--and; *asya*--of His; *prestham*--very dear; *nija-samihitam*--chosen by oneself; *tat-tat-katha*--to those respective topics; *ratah*--attached; *ca*--and; *asau*--that; *kuryat*--should do; *vasam*--living; *vraje*--in Vrndavana; *sada*--always.

TRANSLATION

"The devotee should always think of Krsna within himself, and one should choose a very dear devotee who is a servitor of Krsna in Vrndavana. One should constantly engage in topics about that servitor and his loving relationship to Krsna, and one should live in Vrndavana. However, if one is physically unable to go to Vrndavana, he should mentally live there. "

PURPORT

This verse is found in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 294).

TEXT 161

*dasa-sakha-pitradi-preyasira gana
raga-marge nija-nija-bhavera ganana*

SYNONYMS

dasa--servants; sakha--friends; pitr-adi--parents; preyasira gana--conjugal lovers; raga-marge--on the path of spontaneous loving service; nija-nija--of one's own choice; bhavera--of the ecstasy; ganana--counting.

TRANSLATION

"Krsna has many types of devotees-some are servants, some are friends, some are parents, and some are conjugal lovers. Those who are situated in one of these attitudes of spontaneous love according to their choice are considered to be on the path of spontaneous loving service.

TEXT 162

*na karhicin mat-parah santa-rupe
nanksyanti no me 'nimiso ledhi hetih
yesam aham priya atma sutas ca
sakha guruh suhrdo daivam istam*

SYNONYMS

na--not; karhicit--at any time; mat-parah--devotees of Me; santa-rupe--O mother, the symbol of peacefulness; nanksyanti--will perish; no--nor; me--My; animisah--time; ledhi--licks up (destroys); hetih--weapon; yesam--of whom; aham--I; priyah--dear; atma--the Supersoul; sutas--the son; ca--and; sakha--friend; guruh--spiritual master; suhrdah--well-wisher; daivam--the Deity; istam--chosen.

TRANSLATION

"My dear mother, Devahuti! O emblem of peace! My weapon, the disc of time, never vanquishes those for whom I am very dear, for whom I am the Supersoul, the son, friend, spiritual master, well-wisher, worshipable Deity and desired goal. Since the devotees are always attached to Me, they are never vanquished by the agents of time. '

PURPORT

This was spoken by Kapiladeva to His mother Devahuti and is recorded in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3. 25. 38). Kapiladeva instructed His mother in *sankhya-yoga*, but the importance of *bhakti-yoga* is mentioned here. Later *sanhkya-yoga* was imitated by atheists, whose system was founded by a different Kapiladeva, Rsi Kapiladeva.

TEXT 163

*pati-putra-suhrd-bhratr-
pitravan mitravad dharim
ye dhyayanti sadodyuktas
tebhyo 'piha namo namah*

SYNONYMS

pati--a husband; *putra*--a son; *suhrt*--a friend; *bhratr*--a brother; *pitr*--a father; *vat*--like; *mitra*--an intimate friend; *vat*--like; *harim*--on the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ye*--all those who; *dhyayanti*--meditate; *sada*--always; *udyuktah*--full of eagerness; *tebhyah*--unto them; *api*--also; *iha*--here; *namah namah*--repeated respectful obeisances.

TRANSLATION

"Let me offer my respectful obeisances again and again to those who always eagerly meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a husband, son, friend, brother, father or intimate friend. "

PURPORT

This verse appears in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 308).

TEXT 164

ei mata kare yeba raganuga-bhakti
krsnera carane tanra upajaya 'priti'

SYNONYMS

ei mata--in this way; *kare*--executes; *yeba*--anyone who; *raganuga-bhakti*--spontaneous devotional service to Krsna; *krsnera carane*--to the lotus feet of Krsna; *tanra*--his; *upajaya*--awakens; *priti*--affection.

TRANSLATION

"If one engages in spontaneous loving service to the Lord, his affection at the lotus feet of Krsna gradually increases.

TEXT 165

priti-ankure 'rati', 'bhava'----haya dui nama
yaha haite vasa hana sri-bhagavan

SYNONYMS

priti-ankure--in the seed of affection; *rati*--attachment; *bhava*--emotion; *haya*--there are; *dui nama*--two names; *yaha haite*--from which; *vasa*--controlled; *hana*--is; *sri-bhagavan*--the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

"In the seed of affection, there is attachment which goes by two names, *rati* and *bhava*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead comes under the control of such attachment.

PURPORT



Sri Madhavendra Puri, the first acarya in the disciplic succession of spontaneous devotion, was the perfect example of devotion under rules and regulation. At the same time his heart, where he felt intense pangs of separation from Lord Krsna, was a temple of raganuga-bhakti. Lord Krsna personally came to visit Sri Madhadevendra Puri when he stayed in Vrajabhumi.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura comments on this verse. Externally a devotee performs all the items of devotional service--*sravana* and *kirtana*--in nine different ways, and within his mind he always thinks of his eternal relationship with Krsna and follows in the footsteps of the devotees of Vrndavana. If one engages himself in the service of Radha and Krsna in this way, he can transcend the regulative principles enjoined in the *sastras* and, through his spiritual master, fully engage in rendering spontaneous love to Krsna. In this way, he attains affection at the lotus feet of Krsna. Krsna actually comes under the control of such spontaneous feelings, and ultimately one can attain association with the Lord.

TEXT 166

*yaha haite pai krsnera prema-sevana
eita' kahilun 'abhidheya'-vivarana*

SYNONYMS

yaha haite--from which; *pai*--I can get; *krsnera*--of Lord Krsna; *prema-sevana*--affectionate service; *eita'*--this; *kahilun*--I have done; *abhidheya-vivarana*--description of the means (devotional service) in detail.

TRANSLATION

"That by which one can attain loving service to the Lord I have described in detail as the execution of devotional service called *abhidheya*.

TEXT 167

*abhidheya, sadhana-bhakti ebe kahilun sanatana
sanksepe kahilun, vistara na yaya varnana*

SYNONYMS

abhidheya--the means of obtaining the desired object; *sadhana-bhakti*--devotional service performed by means of the body and senses; *ebe*--now; *kahilun*--I have described; *sanatana*--My dear Sanatana; *sanksepe*--in short; *kahilun*--I have described; *vistara*--expansion; *na yaya*--is not possible; *varnana*--describing.

TRANSLATION

"My dear Sanatana, I have briefly described the process of devotional service in practice, which is the means for obtaining love of Krsna. It cannot be described broadly. "

TEXT 168

*abhidheya sadhana-bhakti sune yei jana
acirat paya sei krsna-prema-dhana*

SYNONYMS

abhidheya--necessary duty; *sadhana-bhakti*--devotional service in practice; *sune*--hears; *yei jana*--anyone who; *acirat*--very soon; *paya*--gets; *sei*--that person; *krsna-prema-dhana*--the treasure of love of Krsna.

TRANSLATION

Whoever hears the process of practical devotional service very soon attains shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna in love and affection.

TEXT 169

*sri-rupa-raghunatha-pade yara asa
caitanya-caritamrta kahe krsnadasa*

SYNONYMS

sri-rupa--Srila Rupa Gosvami; *raghunatha*--Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami; *pade*--at the lotus feet; *yara*--whose; *asa*--expectation; *caitanya-caritamrta*--the book named *Caitanya-caritamrta*; *kahe*--describes; *krsnadasa*--Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami.

TRANSLATION

Praying at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunatha, always desiring their mercy, I, Krsnadasa, narrate *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*, following in their footsteps.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports to *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila*, Twenty-second Chapter, describing the execution of devotional service.

And they wonder why terrorists disrupt their sense gratification. . .

If the wicked flourished, and thou suffer, be not discouraged; they are fatted for destruction, thou art dieted for health. -- Thomas Fuller (1608-1661)

From the Internet

USDA: Cattle Brains May Be Turned Into Biofuels

Mon May 17, 5:36 PM ET

By Richard Cowan

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Cattle brains and other remains that may carry the deadly mad cow disease would be turned into biofuels under a plan announced on Monday by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Cattle brains, skull, eyes, spinal column, small intestine and other parts suspected of harboring mad cow disease were banned from human consumption in December as a safety precaution, shortly after the discovery of the first case of mad cow disease in the United States.

Some consumer groups have called on the Bush administration to go a step further and ban these "specified risk materials" from swine, poultry and other animal feed made from ground-up cattle remains. All cattle parts already are banned from cattle feed to protect against the spread of mad cow disease.

The U. S. Food and Drug Administration is considering tougher regulations on animal feed since finding the brain-wasting disease in the United States. One month ago, an agency official said FDA was considering banning specified risk materials from poultry and swine feed.



Under the new USDA program, a \$50 million loan guarantee program would be set up to help small businesses in rural areas develop ways to turn cattle brains and other high-risk parts into a "bio-based source of energy. "

Bill Hagy, a deputy administrator at USDA's rural development agency, said the purpose of the pilot program was to gauge commercial interest and to solicit ideas for alternate energy uses for the cattle parts.

"There are incinerating facilities out there that possibility could, with some retooling, be able to accommodate the need," Hagy said.

But Hagy said he did not know whether the pilot program was aimed at finding new uses for the risky cattle parts if they are banned from all animal feed.

A spokeswoman for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association said her organization supports the USDA pilot program.

A wider ban on the high-risk cattle parts has been watched closely by the U. S. soybean futures market. With tight soy supplies in the United States, a significant change in animal feed rules could have a big impact on products that could be used as a substitute in animal feeds, such as soybean meal.

Currently, the carcasses of cattle slaughtered at U. S. packing plants are typically sent to a separate rendering plant to be made into food for other animals, cosmetics

or other materials. Last year, the United States slaughtered more than 35 million cattle.

*Radhadesh, Belgium
5 June 2004*

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akṛta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosa, vadanya, mṛdu, suci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, kṛṣṇaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna
mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, mauni*

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities--lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

-- CC. Madhya 22. 78-80

Peaceful

"It is all in Kṛṣṇa. You cannot find peace outside Kṛṣṇa activities, outside Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is not possible. "

-- Lecture on Bhagavad-gita, 6. 13-15

Surrendered to Kṛṣṇa

"I had immense opportunity to indulge in the four principles of sinful life because I was connected with a very aristocratic family. Kṛṣṇa always saved me, and throughout my whole life I do not know what is illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating, or gambling. So far my present life is concerned, I do not remember any part of my life when I was forgetful of Kṛṣṇa. "

-- Letter of June 21, 1970

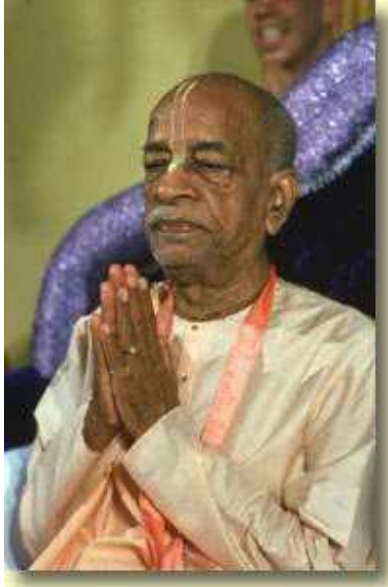
Desireless

"I have gone through variety of stages of life. So I have got full experience of this material world. I don't want it. That determination is there. Society, family, love,

friendship, these nonsense, everything -- out! I have tasted. I am no more interested with this material world. "

-- Room conversation, Bombay, April 16, 1977

Indifferent to material acquisition



"Vaisnava means one who is able to sit down anywhere, under any conditions, and be happy. He wants only a place to lay down, a little prasadam, and if there is a little service he can do, 'Gladly let me do it for Krsna. ' That's all. "

-- Letter of July 8, 1972

Fixed

"It is not very encouraging. Still, I am not a man to be disappointed. "

-- Letter of November 23, 1965

From *Jaiva Dharma* by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Now we request you, please be merciful and explain *raganuga-bhakti* to these two lowest of persons. "

The saintly babaji happily replied, "Lord Gauranga has accepted you two as His devotees. Therefore I cannot withhold anything from you. Please listen carefully, and I will explain *raganuga-bhakti* to you. Again and again I offer my respectful obeisances to Srila Rupa Gosvami, whom the Supreme Personality of Godhead rescued from the clutches of the *yavanas* and whom, at Prayaga-ksetra, the Lord taught the science of transcendental mellows. I surrender to the feet of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, whom the merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead rescued from the abyss of material life, placed in the hand of Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and gave the gift of all spiritual perfections.

"However, before I describe *raganuga-bhakti*, I shall first describe the nature of *ragatmika-bhakti*.

Vrajanatha: Please tell what the word '*raga*' means. I wish to understand that first.

Babaji: Materialists fall in love with the objects of the material senses. This love may be called '*raga*'. In this way the eyes become excited when they see beauty and other attractive qualities. In this way one is attracted to the material sense objects and the mind develops '*raga*' or love for them. When that love (*raga*) is placed in Lord Krishna as its only object, that is called '*raga-bhakti*'. Srila Rupa Gosvami explains that when love is focused on a single object of desire, that is called '*raga*'. When this kind of love exists in devotional service, then the devotional service is called '*ragatmika-bhakti*'. In brief, when there is a love-filled thirst to attain Lord

Krishna, that is called *ragatmika-bhakti*. As long as this *raga* has not manifested itself, one is enjoined to follow *vidhi-bhakti*, following the rules and regulations of scripture. Awe, fear and faith are the three aspects of *vaidhi-bhakti*. An intense desire to meet Lord Krishna and associate with Him in His pastimes is the main feature of *ragatmika-bhakti*.

Vrajanatha: Who is qualified to perform *raga-bhakti*?

Babaji: A person whose faith rests in the rules of the scriptures is qualified to engage in *vaidhi-bhakti*. A person whose faith rests in an intense desire to attain Lord Krishna is qualified to engage in *ragatmika-bhakti*. Manifested according to their different *rasas* (relationships with Lord Krishna), Lord Krishna's personal associates in the spiritual world of Vraja with strong faith engage in *ragatmika-bhakti*. A person who has a strong desire to love Lord Krishna as the residents of Vraja in the spiritual world do, is qualified to engage in *raganuga bhakti*.

Vrajanatha: What are the qualities of this strong desire?

Babaji: One quality is that when one hears about the sweetness of the love and other emotions manifested by the residents of Vraja in the spiritual world, one yearns to go there. When a person qualified to engage in *vaidhi-bhakti* hears the descriptions of Lord Krishna, he calmly thinks about these descriptions, using his intelligence, logic, and the evidence of scripture. However, when a person following the path of *raganuga-bhakti* hears these descriptions, he does not carefully consider them in terms of intelligence, logic and scripture. Instead he is overcome with the desire to love Krishna as the residents of Vraja do.

Vrajanatha: What are the activities of *raganuga-bhakti*?

Babaji: The devotee engaged in *raganuga-bhakti* yearns to become one of the residents of Vraja in the spiritual world and there serve Lord Krishna directly. He always thinks of that desire. He likes to talk with other devotees about the pastimes of his beloved Krishna. He resides in Vraja, either with his external body, or within his thoughts. Yearning to attain the spiritual love that they possess, he becomes a follower of the people of Vraja. He always serves the Lord in two ways. Externally he performs *sadhana-bhakti*. Internally he thinks of his original spiritual form and in that form he serves the Lord.

Vrajanatha: What is the connection between *raganuga-bhakti* and the different limbs of *vaidhi-bhakti*?

Babaji: A person engaged in *raganuga-bhakti* also performs the different activities of *sadhana-bhakti*, such as hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord. However, within his heart he is a follower of the people of Vraja. In this way he tastes the nectar of always serving the Lord. At the same time he serves in this way within his heart, he engages in the activities of *sadhana-bhakti* with his external body.

Vrajanatha: How is *raganuga-bhakti* glorious?

Babaji: By engaging in *raganuga-bhakti* one quickly attains what takes a long time to attain by performing *sadhana-bhakti*. *Vaidhi-bhakti* is weak, but *raganuga-bhakti* is

both independent and very powerful. By following in the footsteps of the people of Vraja, one attains *raga*. That *raga* naturally pushes one to engage in the devotional activities of hearing, chanting and remembering the Lord's glories, serving His lotus feet, bowing down before Him, and surrendering everything to Him. When the heart is free of the three material modes, one naturally desires to follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja. Therefore the attraction to *raganuga-bhakti*, or the intense desire to attain *raganuga-bhakti* is the inspiration that pushes one to true spiritual life. As there are many different kinds of *ragatmika-bhakti*, so there are also many different kinds of *raganuga-bhakti*.

Radhadesh, Belgium
6 June 2004

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akṛta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosa, vadanya, mṛdu, suci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, kṛṣṇaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna
mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, mauni*

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities--lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

-- CC. Madhya 22. 78-80

Controls six bad qualities

"Therefore Rupa Goswami has introduced this system of regulative principles which I have taught you also. These regulative principles, such as rising before 4 A. M. for *mangala-arati*, chanting sixteen rounds minimum on beads daily, reading books, going for the street *sankirtana*, preaching to anyone and everyone, offering the *prasada*, like that, these principles of devotional service are there to safeguard us from *maya*'s attack by keeping us always enthusiastic. If we strictly observe these principles, we shall remain always enthusiastic. These are the sources and the maintainers of our enthusiasm to serve Kṛṣṇa. "

-- Letter of December 31, 1972

Eats only as much as required

"Everything should be regulated in devotional service. Just like eating. Eating is necessary to remain fit, but too much eating means disease and too little eating means starving. "

-- Letter of November 16, 1970

Without inebriation

"If we try for the very best for Krsna, then we make rapid advancement in Krsna consciousness. But not that we become foolhardy. No, discretion is the better part of valor; so if we keep a cool head then we can try for such big, big things and meet with all success. "

-- Letter of December 5, 1971



Respectful

"Yes, everyone one of us should be ideal to the other so everyone can get impetus to make progress more and more. "

-- Letter of November 23, 1965

Without false prestige

"If you are working for Krsna, it is Krsna's desire if you be successful or not successful. That means don't think that because you are Krsna consciousness, you will always be successful. No. It doesn't matter. Even if you are unsuccessful, you must know it firmly that without Krsna's desire, nothing can happen. "

-- Lecture on *Bhagavad-gita*, 4. 22

Radhadesh, Belgium
7 June 2004

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akrta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosā, vadanya, mṛdu, suci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, kṛṣṇaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna
mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, mauni*

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--CC. *Madhya* 22. 78-80

Grave

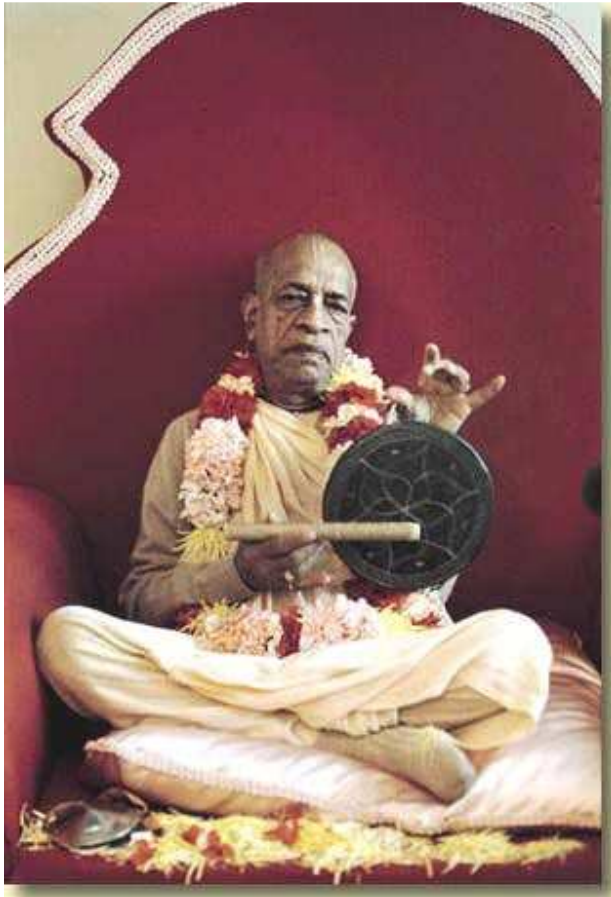
"It is said by Vaisnava authorities that even the most intelligent person cannot understand the plans and activities of a pure devotee. "

--Purport to *Bhagavad-gita*, 9. 28

Compassionate

"I was sitting alone in Vrndavana, writing. My Godbrother insisted to me, 'Bhaktivedanta Prabhu, you must do it. Without accepting the renounced order of life, nobody can become a preacher. ' So he insisted. Not he insisted: practically my spiritual master insisted through him. He wanted me to become a preacher; so he forced me through this Godbrother; 'You accept. ' So, unwillingly I accepted. '

--Lecture on Disappearance Day of Kesava Maharaja, October 21, 1968



A friend

"Convey my ardent affection and blessings for all the boys and girls. I am very much hopeful of my movement. Please keep steady, follow all my instructions scrupulously, chant Hare Krsna and Krsna will give you all strength. "

--Letter of July 24, 1967

A poet

"And then, in 1936 . . . during this Vyasa-puja day, whatever I studied about our relationship with my guru maharaja, I expressed in this poetry, and since that day my Godbrothers used to call me 'poet'. And Guru Maharaja also very much appreciated this poetry . . . So anyway, this poetry is 'Adore, adore ye all this happy day, Blessed than heaven, sweeter than May. ' So I heard that the month of May is very pleasing in the Western countries, so I compared the happiness of this

day with May Day . . . 'When he appeared at Puri, the holy place, my lord and master, His Divine Grace. '"

--Lecture on the Disappearance day of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, Hyderabad, December 10, 1976

Expert

Srila Prabhupada: "A devotee is expert. This means that he is willing to do anything. He does not say because he is a *brahmana* he cannot do a menial task. "

--From *Vaisnava Behavior and The Twenty-six Qualities of a Devotee* By Satsvarupa dasa Goswami, page 197

What is metalogic?

In ISKCON, devotees engage in metalogic every day, although if they are asked to define metalogic, most will not know what to say.

When we attend *Bhagavatam* class in the morning or *Gita* class in the evening, what we hear is an explanation of the meaning (logic) of a Sanskrit verse. That explanation, however, is not in Sanskrit. If a resolution would be passed that all *Bhagavatam* and *Gita* classes must be held in Sanskrit language only, very, very few ISKCON devotees would be able to understand what was taught in those classes.

In the original language of the BBT editions of these books, Srila Prabhupada's explanation (his Bhaktivedanta Purports) of the Sanskrit is in English. Thus English is the language that tells us what the Sanskrit is saying. A language that explains another language is called a metalanguage. And the meaning, the philosophy, the logic, that we learn from that explanation is the metalogic.

Metalanguage is language *about* language. Metalogic is logic *about* logic.

Here's an example from arithmetic. "Two plus two equals four" is arithmetic; "two plus two equals five" is meta-arithmetic. How is that? In arithmetic, two plus two does not equal five. Thus that statement cannot be called arithmetic. But the same statement *can* be used to teach us *about* arithmetic: *why* this statement cannot exist in arithmetic. Hence two plus two equals five is meta-arithmetic.

Here's something interesting from the Internet about Sanskrit:

Words in Sanskrit are instances of pre-defined classes, a concept that drives object oriented programming [OOP] today. For example, in English 'cow' is a just a sound assigned to mean a particular animal. But if you drill down the word 'gau'--Sanskrit for 'cow'--you will arrive at a broad class 'gam' which means 'to move. From these derive 'gamanam', 'gatih' etc which are variations of 'movement'. All words have this OOP approach, except that defined classes in Sanskrit are so exhaustive that they cover the material and abstract --indeed cosmic--experiences known to man. So in Sanskrit the connection is more than etymological.

It was Panini who formalised Sanskrit's grammar and usage about 2500 years ago. No new 'classes' have needed to be added to it since then. "Panini should be thought of as the forerunner of the modern formal language theory used to specify computer languages," say J J O'Connor and E F Robertson. Their article also quotes: "Sanskrit's potential for scientific use was greatly enhanced as a result of the thorough systemisation of its grammar by Panini. . . . On the basis of just under 4000 sutras [rules expressed as aphorisms], he built virtually the whole structure of the Sanskrit language, whose general 'shape' hardly changed for the next two thousand years. "

And so computer programmers today are seriously considering Sanskrit as the language of choice for programming. Getting back to the point of metalanguage and metalogic, this appreciation of the precise logic of Sanskrit has come about from *outside* the language itself. Computer programmers were not using Sanskrit to begin with. Their need for a high-precision language brought them, through discourse in other languages (natural languages like English and artificial "machine languages"), to Sanskrit's door.

Now that we have an idea what metalanguage and metalogic are, I want to plunge into the depths of "logical incompleteness. "

There are different systems of logic. A particular system will function on the basis of a particular body of axioms. In In2-MeC of 17 May, I explained what an axiom is. Euclidean geometry is a system of logic based on axioms that apply to 2-dimensional space. They do not work in terms of curved space.

The logic of Euclidean geometry is "complete. " That means that all truths that this geometry has in its power to tell us are derived from its axioms. To get a handle on why the word "complete" is used, think of a board game like checkers which is played according to a few simple rules. If we were to interrupt a checkers game halfway through the play, we would find the positions of the pieces--i. e. where on the board the black pieces are vis-a-vis where the red ones are--to be explainable from the rules. Hence the logic of checkers is complete. If the logic were incomplete, we would be unable to trace the mid-play configuration of pieces on the board back to the starting layout by deducing from the rules. We'd take a hard look at the pieces, we'd study the rulebook, then scratch our heads and muse, "I'm missing something here. "

An example of a logically "incomplete" board game is Go, the most popular game in Japan. Go's rules are so simple a child can learn them easily. Yet the permutations of play are so complex that it is said no two Go games are ever the same.

In 1931 Kurt Gödel demonstrated his incompleteness theorem, which rocked the world of Western logic and mathematics. That world hasn't recovered to this day; it would be good if devotees could understand why. What Gödel proved is quite simple, really, though it is hard to explain in a way that is easy to follow. At the heart of his theorem is the unarguable assertion that no axiom can be proved inside its own system of logic. Axioms are "givens. " They are not supposed to be proved; they are supposed to be *used* to prove other things. In the In2-MeC entry of 17 May I told about the Euclidean axiom, that the sum of the angles of any triangle (as long as it is a 2-D triangle) is 180 degrees of arc, or exactly half a circle. Within the rules of Euclidean geometry, this cannot be proved.

Gödel's theorem starts with that assertion--that an axiom can't be proved within the system of logic that the axiom is part of--and comes to a devastating conclusion about all systems of logic that are complex enough to include arithmetic. I'll quote a mathematician named Rudy Rucker, who's rendered Gödel's theorem into the least-puzzling explanation that I've yet seen.

The proof of Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem is so simple, and so sneaky, that it is almost embarrassing to relate. His basic procedure is as follows:

Someone introduces Gödel to a UTM, a machine that is supposed to be a Universal Truth Machine, capable of correctly answering any question at all.

Gödel asks for the program and the circuit design of the UTM. The program may be complicated, but it can only be finitely long. Call the program P(UTM) for Program of the Universal Truth Machine.

Smiling a little, Gödel writes out the following sentence: "The machine constructed on the basis of the program P(UTM) will never say that this sentence is true. " Call this sentence G for Gödel. Note that G is equivalent to: "UTM will never say G is true. "

Now Gödel laughs his high laugh and asks UTM whether G is true or not.

If UTM says G is true, then "UTM will never say G is true" is false. If "UTM will never say G is true" is false, then G is false (since G = "UTM will never say G is true"). So if UTM says G is true, then G is in fact false, and UTM has made a false statement. So UTM will never say that G is true, since UTM makes only true statements.

We have established that UTM will never say G is true. So "UTM will never say G is true" is in fact a true statement. So G is true (since G = "UTM will never say G is true"). "I know a truth that UTM can never utter," Gödel says. "I know that G is true. UTM is not truly universal. "

Think about it--it grows on you . . .

With his great mathematical and logical genius, Gödel was able to find a way (for any given P(UTM)) actually to write down a complicated polynomial equation that has a solution if and only if G is true. So G is not at all some vague or non-mathematical sentence. G is a specific mathematical problem that we know the answer to, even though UTM does not! So UTM does not, and cannot, embody a best and final theory of mathematics . . .

What Gödel showed, in essence, is that following Truth means to be led outside the logical box within which our discussion of Truth began. Truth leads us from logic to metalogic to meta-metalogic. . . Ultimately Truth is transcendental. A conscious person with awakened intelligence can appreciate that Truth is different from all logical systems that sooner or later end up chasing their own tails.

The philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness acknowledges the same. Hence there are two levels of *bhakti*: *vaidhi*, which is "logic-based" in that it refers to *logos*, the scriptural "word" (Greek *logos*--from which we get the word logic--means "word"); and *raga*, which is consciousness-based in that it refers to the spontaneous attraction of the devotee to Sri Kṛṣṇa, the object of His devotee's ecstatic love.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
8 June 2004

A Vaisnava is. . .

*krpalu, akṛta-droha, satya-sara, sama
nidosa, vadanya, mrdu, suci, akincana
sarvopakaraka, santa, kṛṣṇaika-sarana
akama, aniha, sthira, vijita-sad-guna
mita-bhuk, apramatta, manada, amani
gambhira, karuna, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, mauni*

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and

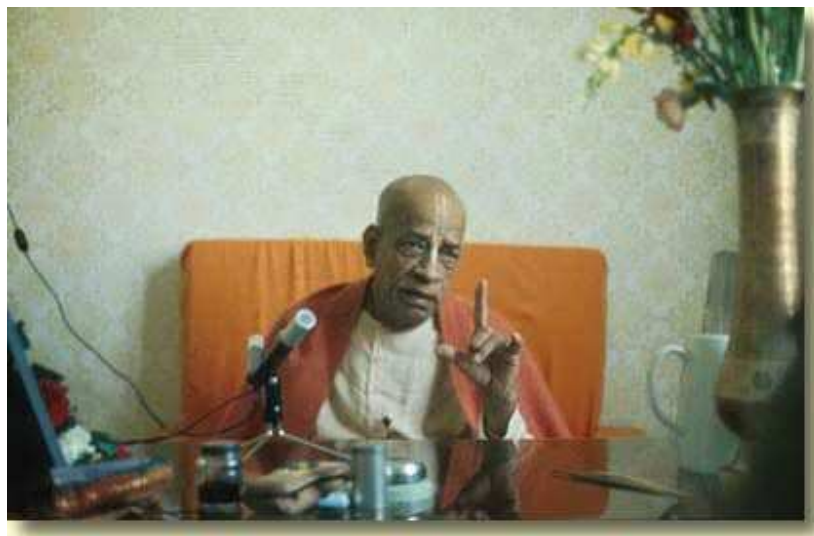
are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities--lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

-- CC. Madhya 22. 78-80

Silent

"Devotee: "What does it mean that the devotee sometimes speaks and sometimes is silent?" Srila Prabhupada: "It means he is not obliged. "

--From *Vaisnava Behavior and The Twenty-Six Qualities of a Devotee*, by Satsvarupa dasa Goswami, page 199



Srila Prabhupada is. . .

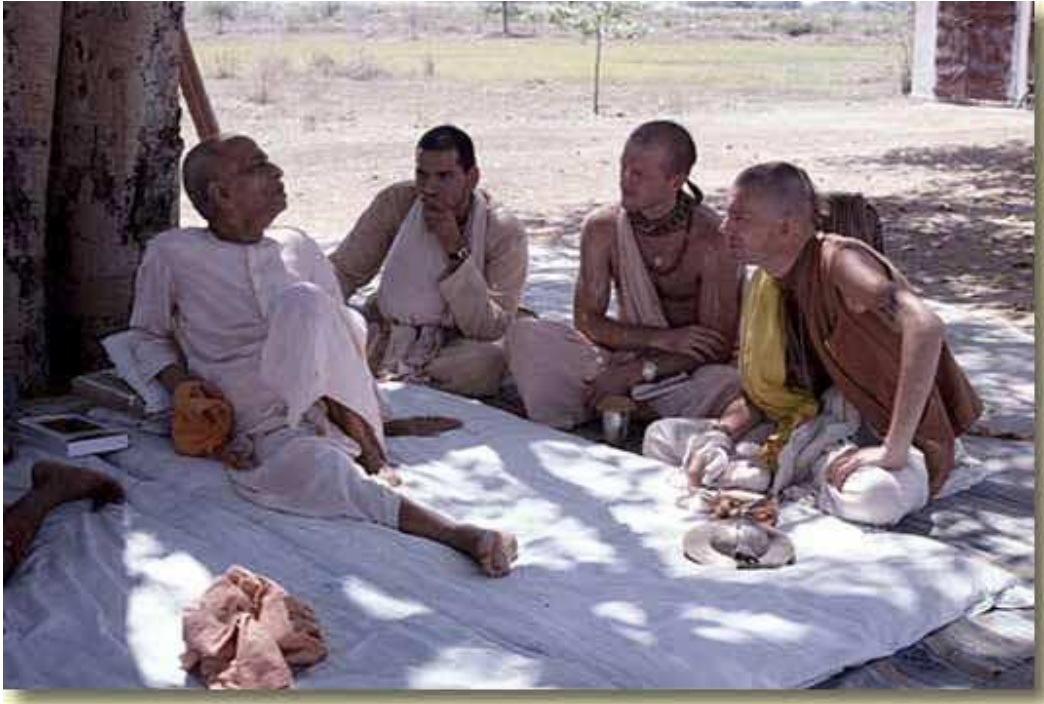
*kecit kevalaya bhaktya
vasudeva-parayanah
agham dhunvanti kartsnyena
niharam iva bhaskarah*

Only a real person who has adopted complete, unalloyed devotional service to Krsna can uproot the weeds of sinful actions with no possibility that they will revive. He can do this simply by discharging devotional service, just as the sun can immediately dissipate fog by its rays.

-- *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 1. 15

During a room conversation in 1976, Srila Prabhupada was instructing his disciples in the logic of the lame man and the blind man: " *Andha-pangu-nyaya*. . . both of them are useless separately, and when they combine in Krsna consciousness, they are all useful. It is a very good example. And there is another example, that of a piece of

wire falling, rotting, and a piece of bamboo, rotting, and a piece of squash skin rotting. And one gentleman collected them. He nicely trimmed the piece of wire and dried the squash, the outer portion, and took the bamboo and nicely cut it and joined the string and this became a sitar: 'Ting, ting, ting.' So it is the intelligent person who joins all these things and makes it very useful. These are examples. The bamboo alone is useless, and a small piece of wire, useless, and a thrown out squash skin, useless, but if you can join them together, . . . you can 'ting, ting.' Similarly, *andha-pangu-nyaya*, here is a lame man, here is a blind man. All right, combine together and use them. That is wanted. "



Understanding that these instructions perfectly coincided with Srila Prabhupada's own actions, his disciples immediately responded, "We were all useless in the West, but you have come and then engaged us. " In humility Srila Prabhupada replied, "It is Krsna's desire. Nobody is useless. I was also useless. I could not do in India alone anything. Two useless makes useful. "

Srila Prabhupada should be recognized and honored because he is a *mahatma*. His Krsna consciousness is so deep and broad that he possesses the ability to engage everybody and everything in the service of Lord Krsna.

Again the sitar provides a useful analogy for understanding the qualities of Srila Prabhupada. There are two types of strings on a sitar: main strings and sympathetic strings. The unique quality of a main string is its ability to create resonance, and increase the intensity of sound by setting off vibrations in the sympathetic strings. The vibration of the main strings contain such a wide range of sound that all the sympathetic strings respond even though set to different intonations.

Similarly, Srila Prabhupada's Krsna consciousness resonates so fully that people from different cultures, religions, races, social and economic classes, and psycho-

physiological natures can all easily take to Krsna consciousness. That he created a house in which the whole world can live is not sentimental glorification of Srila Prabhupada but a practical assessment of his ability to influence others.

Srila Prabhupada should be recognized and honored because he is a true friend to everyone. Perfectly following in the footsteps of the previous acaryas, Srila Prabhupada exhibits compassion on a level equaled only by the six Goswamis of Vrndavana.

The six Goswamis are glorified by Srinivasa Acarya:

*krsnot kirtana-gana nartana-parau premamrtambho-nidhi
dhiradhira-jana-priyau priya-karau nirmatsarau pujitau
sri-caitanya-krpa-bharau bhuvi bhuvo bharavahantarakau
vande rupa-sanatanau raghu-yugau sri-jiva-gopalakau*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the six Gosvamis, namely Sri Rupa Gosvami, Sri Sanatana Gosvami, Sri Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami, Sri Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, Sri Jiva Gosvami, and Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, who are always engaged in chanting the holy name of Krsna and dancing. They are just like the ocean of love of God, and they are popular both with the gentle and with the ruffians because they are not envious of anyone. Whatever they do, they are all-pleasing to everyone, and they are fully blessed by Lord Caitanya. Thus they are engaged in missionary activities meant to deliver all the conditioned souls in the material universe.

At a very advanced age, Srila Prabhupada gave up his peaceful life in Vrndavana and traveled alone to America. His mission was to fulfill the order of his spiritual master to spread Krsna consciousness, love of God, to the English-speaking people of the world. In accomplishing this arduous task, not only did Srila Prabhupada dance and chant with his young followers, giving them the highest goal of life, but he personally cared for them. He gave them shelter from the turbulent troubles of material life by providing good counsel on virtually every aspect of their lives, material and spiritual.

As time passed and his preaching movement grew, Srila Prabhupada was never too busy to be personally concerned for anyone, be he a devotee or non-devotee. On morning walks he would greet non-devotees with "Hello" or "Good morning" so as to make them feel comfortable. He was always concerned about the arrangements for visitors to his temples, personally inquiring about their comfort or instructing that the devotees be prepared to greet guests twenty-four hours a day with hot prasadam. He wrote thousands of letters, which provided individual instructions and guidance in the lives of his thousands of disciples and followers.



Srila Prabhupada tirelessly traveled, circling the globe thirteen times in twelve years, to give all living beings the opportunity to receive Lord Caitanya's message of deliverance. Although constantly traveling, Srila Prabhupada would rise early each morning and work throughout the night translating the Srimad-Bhagavatam and Caitanya-caritamṛta, books which will continue to give humanity true knowledge of God, the self, and the nature of this material world for thousands of years to come.

For these and countless other reasons, members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness request the entire world to join in honoring Srila Prabhupada during his Centennial Celebration. It is a chance for all of us to better understand who is Srila Prabhupada.

Milestones in the life of Srila Prabhupada

1896 Srila Prabhupada appeared in Calcutta. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura sends to the West the first book on genuine Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy.

1901 Srila Prabhupada began Rathayatra festivals

1902 Srila Prabhupada began worshiping Radha-Kṛṣṇa

1916 Student of Philosophy at Scottish Churches' College

1918 Entered married life (gṛhastha āśrama)

1920 Appeared in BA exam

1921 Appointed assistant manager of Bose Laboratory. Joined Gandhi's movement

1922 Met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, who ordered him to preach in English in the West

1925 Visited Vṛndavana for the first time

1928 Assisted in establishing Allahabad center of Gaudiya Matha

1932 Initiated by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

1934 Helped establish Gowalia Tank center of Gaudiya Matha

1935 Instructed by his spiritual master on publishing books and constructing temples

1936 Final order from his spiritual master to preach in the West

- 1939 Honored with the title "Bhaktivedanta" by society of Gaudiya Vaisnavas
- 1944 Started Back to Godhead Magazine
- 1953 Started League of Devotees in Jhansi. Initiated his first disciple, Acarya Prabhakar
- 1954 Retired from family life, adopting vanaprastha (retired) order of life
- 1959 Accepted renounced order of life (sannyasa)
- 1960 Published first book, Easy Journey to Other Planets
- 1962 Published Volume 1 of First Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam
- 1965 Journeyed to USA in order to fulfill the order of his spiritual master
- 1966 Established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness
- 1967 Completed translation and commentary of Bhagavad-gita As It Is
- 1968 Bhagavad-gita As It Is published by Macmillan Company
- 1972 Established the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust for publishing his books
- 1975 Completed translation of and published Sri Caitanya-caritamrta in 17 volumes
- 1976 Established the Bhaktivedanta Institute for scientific preaching
- 1977 Disappearance from this mortal world
- 1986 Inauguration of the Samadhi Memorial at Vrndavana
- 1995 Inauguration of the Puspa Samadhi Memorial at Mayapura
- 1996 Centennial Celebration

Today's photos of Salagrama silas

This morning, having returned to Bhakta Michael's flat from our Radhadesa weekend, I did an elaborate *puja* for the Salagrama silas in my care. The photos show Them decorated with *chandana*. Patita Pavana Sri Jagannatha is decorated according to the natural contours of His lotus eyes and jolly smile.





*Amsterdam, the Netherlands
9 June 2004*

Narayana Upanisad



*om atha puruso ha vai narayano 'kamayata prajah srjeyeti
narayanat prano jayate
manah sarvendriyani ca kham vayur jyotir apah
prthivi visvasya dharini narayanad brahma jayate
narayanad rudro jayate
narayanad indro jayate
narayanad prajapatih prajayante
narayanad dvadasaditya rudra vasavah sarvani
chandagmsi
narayanad eva samutpadyante
narayanad pravartante
narayane praliyante
ya evam veda
ity upanisat etad rg-veda-siro 'dhite // 1 //*

Narayana is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He desired, "I shall create children". From Narayana the life breath, mind, all the senses, ether, air, fire, water, and earth, which maintains the universe, were born. From Narayana Brahma was born. From Narayana Siva was born. From Narayana Indra was born. From Narayana Prajapati was born. From Narayana the twelve Adityas, the Rudras, the Vasus, and all the Vedic hymns were born. From Narayana they were manifested. Into Narayana they again enter, says the Upanisad. This is the crown of the Rg Veda.

*om atha nityo narayanah
brahma narayanah
sivas ca narayanah
sakras ca narayanah
kalas ca narayanah
disas ca narayanah
vidisas ca narayanah
urdhvas ca narayanah
adhas ca narayanah
antar bahis ca narayanah
narayana evedag sarvam
yad bhutam yac ca bhavyam
niskalanko niranjano nirvikalpo nirakhyatah
suddho deva eko narayanah
na dvitiyo 'sti kascit(e)
sa visnur eva bhavati sa visnur eva bhavati
ya evam veda
ity upanisat
etad yajur-veda-siro 'dhite // 2 //*

Narayana is eternal. Narayana is Brahma. Narayana is the universe. Narayana is Indra. Narayana is time. Narayana is the primary directions. Narayana is the secondary directions. Narayana is above. Narayana is below. Narayana is within and without. Narayana is everything, whatever was and whatever will be. Narayana is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one without a second, free of all impurity, untouched by matter, liberated, pure, beyond the power of material words to describe. One who understands Him in this way becomes like Lord Visnu. He becomes like Lord Visnu, says the Upanisad. This is the crown of the Yajur Veda.

*om ity agre vyaharet(e)
nama iti pascat(e)
narayanayety uparistat(e)
om ity ekaksaram
nama iti dve aksare
narayanayeti pancaksarani
etad vai narayanasayastaksaram padam
yo ha vai narayanasyastaksaram padam adhyeti
anapabruvah sarvam ayureti
vindate prajapatyagm rayas posam gaupatyam
tato 'mrtatvam asnute tato 'mrtatva asnuta iti
ya evam veda
ity upanisat
etat sama-veda-siro 'dhite // 3 //*

First one pronounces the letter "Om". Then one pronounces the word "namah", then one pronounces the word "Narayanaya". "Om" has one syllable. "Namah" has two syllables. "Narayanaya" has five syllables. This is the eight syllable mantra of Lord Narayana. One who respectfully recites this eight syllable mantra of Lord Narayana attains long life. He has good children, royal opulence, and wealth of many cows, he becomes immortal, says the Upanisad. This is the crown of the Sama Veda.

*om pratyag anandam brahma purusam pranava svarupam
akara ukara makara iti
tanekadha sametad om iti
yam uktva mucyate yogi
janma samsara bandhanat(e)
om namo narayanayeti mantropasakah
vaikuntha bhuvanam gamisyati
tad idam pundarikam vijnana ghanam
tasmad tadidabha matram
brahmany devakiputro
brahmany madhusudanah
brahmany pundarikakso
brahmany visnur acyuteti
sarvabhutastham ekam narayanam
karana rupam akaranam param brahma om
etad atharva-veda-siro 'dhite// 4 //*

The blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead appears as the sacred syllable Om, which consists of three letters: a, u and m. A yogi who once recites this sacred syllable Om is released from the bondage of repeated birth and death. A person who worships the Lord by reciting the mantra "Om namo narayanaya" will go to the spiritual world of Vaikuntha. Vaikuntha is a great lotus flower. It is filled with spiritual knowledge. It is splendid like a lightning flash. In that Vaikuntha resides the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the son of Devaki and the killer of the Madhu demon. Lord Narayana is the one Supreme Person who resides in the hearts of all living beings. He is the source of the purusa-avatars. No one is the source of Him. He is the Supreme. He appears as the sacred syllable Om. This is the crown of the Atharva Veda.

*om pratar adhiyano ratrikrtam papam nasayati
sayam adiyano divasa-krtam papam nasayati
madhyahna dinam adityabhimukho 'dhiyanah
panca maha patakopapatakat pramucyate
sarva veda parayana punyam labhate
narayana-sayujyam avapnoti
narayana-sayujyam avapnoti
ya evam veda
ity upanisat(e) // 5 //*

One who studies this Upanisad in the morning destroys the sins he committed in the previous night. One who studies this Upanisad in the evening destroys the sins he committed in the previous day. When one studies this Upanisad in the morning and evening his sins are sins no longer. One who faces the sun and studies this Upanisad at midday becomes free from the five great and petty sins. He attains the piety of following all the Vedas. He attains the liberation of meeting Lord Narayana. He attains the liberation of meeting Lord Narayana. In this way it is understood. Thus says the Upanisad.

*Prague, Czech Republic
11 June 2004*



Last goodbye to the Amsterdam devotees who saw me off at the bus station.

After a much-delayed arrival yesterday, I am settled in at Prahlada-Nrsimha's place. The reason for the delay was double trouble at the German-Czech border. First the German border police did a random "shakedown" of 8 or so passengers, out of about 40 total on the bus. Guess what? I was among those chosen for careful scrutiny in the back room of the customs office. But it amounted to nothing except an hour-and-a-half delay. Back on board the bus, we drove a few meters over the border to the Czech customs house. There the police brought sniffer dogs up to check all the

luggage. Two young women were caught with drugs. This meant we all had to wait a much longer time than on the German side. The chief inspector of police or whoever he was had to drive to the customs house from wherever he was to interrogate the girls and whatever else he had to do. In the end the bus drove off leaving the two unfortunate ladies behind.

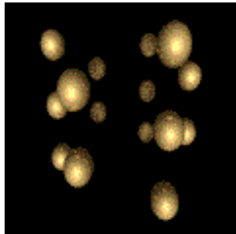
For all you hear about German efficiency and no-nonsense police work, the Czech way of not fooling around with random spot-checks, just immediately bringing in the dogs, was the tactic that got results. The Germans just wasted our time and found nothing. Besides that, they looked and acted like dopes. The Czech cops were all charm and smiles. But they knew exactly what they were doing.

Prague, Czech Republic
12 June 2004

Worry About Adam, Not the Atom

Part 1

The title to this essay is my paraphrase of a statement made by a noted American gentleman not long after the atomic bomb was dropped over Japan. At that time people all around the globe were anxious about the future of civilization in this new Atom Age. But it's not the atom that should worry us, the gentleman pointed out. The atom is merely Adam's plaything. It's what Adam is doing--*us*, the human race--that we should be worried about.



I hasten to make plain that my essay today isn't about atomic warfare. It's about science, specifically the science of atomic physics. And it's about that science as an all-too-human social construction, a *consensus reality* (a notion I've discussed at other times). The point of my title is that atoms are only what the family of Man, the Adams family, *supposes* atoms to be. That supposition is installed into our heads as an accepted, established, agreed-upon tenet of the paradigm.

Hey buddy, can you paradigm?

Before Thomas Kuhn published his influential *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962, the word "paradigm" was one of those obscure cognates from the Greek that seems to exist in the English language only to keep Webster's in business. Without intending to, Kuhn made "paradigm" the trendy relativistic *bon mot* that it is today.

John Horgan, in *The End of Science* (1997), quotes Kuhn as conceding that the word has become "hopelessly overused" and "out of control. " Kuhn blamed himself for not defining paradigm as crisply as he might have. It seems he basically meant two things: an archetypal scientific experiment that establishes something very important, and "the entire constellation of beliefs" that binds a scientific community together.

The "scientific revolutions" that Kuhn's book proposes to analyze are historic shifts of the paradigm. Horgan (pg. 43) explains:

Most scientists yield to a new paradigm reluctantly. They often do not understand it, and they have no objective rules by which to judge it. Different paradigms have no common standard for comparison; they are "incommensurable," to use Kuhn's word. Proponents of different paradigms can argue forever about resolving their differences because they invest basic terms--motion, particle, space, time--with different meanings. The conversion of scientists [from one paradigm to another] is thus both a subjective process and a political process.

Horgan (pgs. 42, 43-44) relates how Kuhn came to this realization, and introduces us to what Kuhn's insights into the paradigm shift say about so-called scientific progress.

He . . . traced his view of science to an epiphany he experienced in 1947, when he was working toward a doctorate in physics at Harvard. While reading Aristotle's *Physics*, Kuhn had become astonished at how "wrong" it was. How could someone who wrote so brilliantly on so many topics be so misguided when he came to physics?

Kuhn was pondering this mystery, staring out his dormitory window ("I can still see the vines and the shade two-thirds of the way down"), when suddenly Aristotle "made sense. " Kuhn realized that Aristotle invested basic concepts with different meanings than did modern physicists. Aristotle used the term *motion*, for example, to refer not just to change in position but to change in general--the reddening of the sun as well as its descent toward the horizon. Aristotle's physics, understood on its own terms, was simply different from, rather than inferior to, Newtonian physics.

.

A new paradigm may solve puzzles better than the old one does, and it may yield more practical applications. "But you cannot simply describe the other science as false," Kuhn said. Just because modern physics has spawned computers, nuclear power, and CD players does not mean it is truer, in an absolute sense, than Aristotle's physics. Similarly, Kuhn denied that science is constantly approaching the truth. At the end of *Structure* he asserted that science, like life on earth, does not evolve *toward* anything, but only *away* from something.

. . . Kuhn argued that our paradigms keep changing as our culture changes. "Different groups, and the same group at different times," Kuhn told me, "can have different experiences and therefore in some sense live in different worlds. " Obviously all humans share some responses to experience, simply because of their shared biological heritage, Kuhn added. But whatever is universal in human experience, whatever transcends culture and history, is also "ineffable," beyond the reach of language. Language, Kuhn said, "is not a universal tool. It's not the case that you can say anything in one language that you can say in another. "

Postmodernism: the thrill is gone

The *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* remains as controversial as it is influential; many in the scientific establishment have tried to dismiss it as "much ado about very little" (as *Scientific American* yawned in its review of Kuhn's book). *Structures* did rouse second thoughts in many minds about modern man's abiding faith in science. It's doubtful that Kuhn intended *Structure* to be a stimulus for postmodernism, but that's what it turned out to be.

Oh. . . and what is postmodernism, pray tell? Well, Western intellectuals look upon the twentieth century and see that around 1960--just about the same time Kuhn's book came out--there was a change in our attitude toward modernity. Before the '60's we took our modern culture very seriously, even religiously. We believed wholeheartedly in the promises of science, technology, and progress. But since the '60's and right up to the present, we've grown ironic. Sure, science, technology, progress, they're all still there. But they're no longer so holy to us. This is what postmodernism is about--a creeping recognition that the modern paradigm lacks significance. It's just planned obsolescence. So how can you care deeply about it? Here today, gone tomorrow.

Given that it is pretty much accepted everywhere today that this shift in the *Zeitgeist* has taken place, I'd agree that *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is on to something. I'd agree that the palpable passing of modernism into postmodernism demonstrates that our own paradigm of the present era is undergoing a revolution. Though I am no scientist, I find that I gravitate toward agreement with the many experts who observe that a vital root of the new paradigm is the atomic physics that dawned on the horizon of science at the end of the nineteenth century.

In his book *Quantum--A Guide for the Perplexed* (2003), Jim Al-Khalili writes (pgs. 28-29):

by the time the 19th century came to a close, there were so many issues to resolve and strange phenomena to explain that clearly something had to give. Physicists and chemists could not even agree on whether matter was ultimately composed of indivisible atoms or whether it was continuous and infinitely divisible. Nor could they decide on whether or not Newton's mechanics (equations that governed how macroscopic objects interacted and moved under the influence of forces) could be cast in terms of Maxwell's more fundamental theory of electromagnetism. . . . [R]elatively new fields of physics, such as thermodynamics and statistical mechanics, were generating heated debate. . . . Basically, physics was in a glorious mess.

Maxed-out Physics

A new direction was needed, and it came in December of 1900 when Max Planck presented a paper on black body radiation to the German Physical Society. Oh. . . and what is black body radiation, pray tell?

Well, suppose we have a small cube of solid iron that we heat with an intense flame. Before too long the cube will glow red-hot. That means it is emitting light and heat. If we take the flame away, the glow will quickly fade. That means the light emitted by the cube has become too weak for us to see. In its darkened state the cube would be called a black (i. e. giving off no visible light) body. Though the glow has faded, the cube will continue to radiate a great deal of heat for a long time. That's called black body radiation.

Planck's paper described the black body and its radiation in a new way: as vibration. There was no talk of atoms, since at that time the very concept of atoms was debatable. Rather, Planck spoke of "oscillators" in the black body that vibrated at a frequency that determined the "quanta" of heat energy coming off the body. Quanta is the plural form of quantum, defined as a discrete unit of energy. Discrete unit is another way of saying "distinct entity." Thus Planck described the heat coming off a black body not as a continuous wave, as might be expected. After all he had formulated heat as a vibration. Vibrations move as waves, right? Fine; but what Planck did was to give a new account of the structure of the wave. He said it is made up of many individual "jumps" of energy. Think of a marble rolling down a set of stairs--as it descends, it jumps. A black body gives up its heat energy in a similar fashion. But this wasn't just a dreamy idea. Planck had done experiments. His *quantum theory* explained black body radiation with predictable accuracy. In science, predictable accuracy is the nearest thing to truth itself.

Don't worry, this essay is not turning into a physics paper. My purpose is to trace out the philosophical consequences of quantum theory on the collective world-conception (the paradigm). But before we go into that, we should have a rudimentary understanding what quantum theory is. Just by considering Planck's explanation of black body radiation, you can already detect the key items of quantum theory that have seized the imagination of the modern world.

1) Planck's theory of black body radiation was, in his own words, "a purely formal assumption and I did not give it much thought except that, no matter what the cost, I must bring about a positive result." Years later, when quantum theory had matured into quantum mechanics (i. e. the scientific method of putting the theory to work), Niels Bohr made his oft-quoted declaration that quantum mechanics is not about what Nature *is*, it is about what we can *say* about Nature. This tells us nothing more of substance than what Max Planck said about the theory in its seed form. We like to think of physics as the "hardest of the hard sciences" because it brings into our hands the stuff of the world--good old solid, dependable matter and energy. But in quantum physics, matter and energy are translated into an idea. It's an idea that scientists are getting an amazing amount of work out of. But what's *going on* with matter and energy while they put out all that work is purely conceptual. A quantum of heat energy, for example, has never been seen. Nor will it *ever* be seen, because it is not something that happens, *it is an idea of something that happens*.

2) Planck's depiction of atoms as oscillators emitting frequencies of vibration in discrete units suggests the famous, paradoxical, wave-particle duality. Which must be the *one* thing that *everybody's* heard about quantum theory.


3) Many people use the phrase "quantum leap" in ordinary speech. But what is it? It's one of those little jumps of energy that make up the wave. . . or I should say the wavefunction--because if the "wave" is really the pattern of propagation of a bunch of jumps, then it can't be a real physical wave, can it? The wavefunction turns out to be the probability that there will be a jump in energy at a certain point in time. The jump is abrupt: energy at one level vanishes. At a new level, energy appears. Quantum units of energy do not "ascend" or "descend" along a gradual arc. They seem to jump out of physical reality and pop back into it at other points along the probability wave.

4) What follows from the three points above is an inkling of the perplexing gulf of difference that the arrival of quantum theory opened between the microworld (the world of atoms and subatomic units of energy) and the macroworld (the world as we humans perceive it with our organic senses.) As quantum theory developed into quantum mechanics, scientists were faced with much stranger events than the simple quantum leap. There's quantum nonlocality, for example, seen when two microparticles stay in synch even when separated from one other by a vast distance. What links them together? Scientists don't know. Whatever it is, nonlocality seems to function instantaneously, faster than the speed of light--which according to Einstein is impossible. But there you have it. What is clear is that such "spooky action at a distance," a regular feature of the microworld, is most irregular in the macroworld. Now, if *that* makes up *this*, then why are the two worlds so different?

After the quantum, what really "matters" anymore?

That's quite enough scientific detail. Now let's go back to the philosophical concept of the paradigm. Max Planck commented that "over the entrance to the temple of science are written the words: 'Ye must have faith. '" So when we consider the shift of the scientific paradigm, we are first and foremost considering a shift of faith.

What was the faith of science like before the arrival of quantum theory? Writing in *The End of Physics* (1993), David Lindley describes it thus (pg. 17):


Does this look like an atom to you? Welcome to the nineteenth century!

A hundred years ago, classical physics seemed to be approaching a state of perfection that offered to contain an explanation for every phenomenon in the natural world; but there were a couple flaws in classical physics, and out of those flaws sprang quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity. Classical physics was the physics of atoms perceived as miniature billiard balls, interacting with each other by means of tangible forces, such as electrical and magnetic attraction.

(The reader may have noted that Lindley's version of what nineteenth-century science was like is somewhat at odds with how Al-Khalili presented it earlier. That's a debate that is off the target of this essay.)

Classical physics means the physics begun by Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727). Newton's physics is an important component of the "modern" paradigm that gave us the Industrial Revolution and the great strides in technology that came after it. It is a paradigm of objective reality: that there is a concrete, physical world "out there," and it conforms to laws of nature that are wholly rational. The physics of that paradigm, and indeed the paradigm itself, are no doubt still with us. But in our postmodern present we sense an emptiness within this conception of the world. And for that sense we have a lot to owe to quantum physics. Lindley again:



... quantum mechanics turned the imaginary billiard balls into tiny, fizzy patches of uncertainty, and general relativity turned paper-flat space into curved space, and time into something variable and personal instead of universal and constant.

In *The Matter Myth* (1991), Paul Davies and John Gribben tell us more (pg. 8):

An extension of the quantum theory, known as quantum field theory, goes beyond even this; it paints a picture in which solid matter dissolves away, to be replaced by weird excitations and vibrations of invisible field energy. In this theory, little distinction remains between material substance and apparently empty space, which itself seethes with ephemeral quantum activity. . . . Quantum physics undermines materialism because it reveals that matter has far less 'substance' than we may believe.

The logic that is unfolding here draws us inexorably into the web of consciousness: because, if good old objective *science* tells us the external world is empty of substance and form, then where does the substance and form that we perceive around us actually exist? In the next part of this essay, we'll look at what some representatives of the new physics have to say about consciousness--and what they say about the physical and spiritual science of the Veda.

(PS: I can't guarantee that Part 2 will appear here tomorrow, as this kind of essay is a chore to write. . . but if not tomorrow, then Monday. . . I hope!)

Prague, Czech Republic
13 June 2004

Worry About Adam, Not the Atom

Part 2

Today we will see what some physicists have to say about consciousness vis-a-vis the quantum "immateriality" of the material world.

The view that consciousness, instead of being merely a detached receptor, is an active agent that shapes the way we perceive matter, is not only to be found in recent paperbacks, displayed on the Esotera shelf of your local Walden's bookshop, authored by New-Agey scientists famous for being famous like Fritjof Capra.

One of my favorite books elucidating this view, *Physics and Philosophy*, was written back in 1948 by Sir James Jeans. In the first half of the twentieth century Jeans was a big name in astrophysics. On page 145 he lists what he calls six important consequences of the discoveries of post-Newtonian physics.

(1) So far as the phenomena are concerned, the uniformity of nature disappears.

I'll just step in here a moment to note that by "the uniformity of nature," Jeans means the definition of nature as having an unvarying character that is of and by itself: that, objectively speaking, nature means this or that uniform set of qualities, always. The micro-phenomena observed by quantum physicists have at least as much to do with *our* act of observing them as they do with "the way things are out there. " At a fundamental level the act of observation brings consciousness into an involvement *with* nature. Thus the alleged uniformity of nature disappears as soon as we look at it. We cannot claim that what we observe is *simply* nature, *really* nature. . . just laying there, passively open to our powers of inspection. All we can say

positively is that we know what we perceive by our method of observation. We cannot determine where our perception ends and nature begins. We have no entrance into what nature is when we are not looking at it. In conclusion, the microworld--where scientists go to find the tiny building-blocks of our macroworld--is *appearance only*. Why that is will become clearer as we progress down Jeans' list.

(2) Precise knowledge of the outer world becomes impossible for us.

(3) The processes of nature cannot be adequately represented within a framework of space and time.

This point is a summary of an explanation given on page 144 of *Physics and Philosophy*, that the result of observing an atom, in Jeans' own words,

is practically a new atom.

This is because the scientific means of observing an atom is disruptive to its existence. We will naturally ask, "What separates the new, 'observed' atom from what was there before the act of observation began?" The answer--"a break in the continuity of the atom's motion"--is easy to say but rather challenging to comprehend. As far as physics can tell, that break is a break of *all* atomic motion, which is so fundamental it entails a break in the continuity of the atom itself. Recall the explanation of "the quantum leap" given yesterday. The only way we can observe an atom is to set off leaps of quanta from inside it, an act that appears to interrupt the atom's very existence as a physical entity. Except by dislocating an atom from the fabric of reality, the "motion" of an atom is completely closed to us. We can only assume that atoms "move" when we are not observing them. Thus the "motion" of an atom as we know it can't be represented within space and time like the motion of, say, a billiard ball rolling across the green felt of a pool table. At least, we don't *conceive* the rolling of a ball to mean that, at the instant it advances, it is replaced by a *new* ball at the next position! (We'll consider the Vedic version of this in Part Three.)

(4) The division between subject and object is no longer definite or precise; complete precision can only be regained by uniting subject and object into a single whole.

(5) So far as our knowledge is concerned, causality becomes meaningless.

This point refers to the quantum leap again, that the "motion" of an atom is a break in its very continuity as "a physical thing"--which, to begin with, is a most questionable way of describing the atom! If, when I push on a ball to set it rolling, the ball vanishes at the instant I touch it, to be replaced by another ball that vanishes, to be replaced by another ball that vanishes, and so on and so on, all along the path of its direction . . . then nothing of our common-sense understanding of causality remains.

(6) If we still wish to think of the happenings in the phenomenal world as governed by a causal law, we must suppose that these happenings are determined in some substratum of the world which lies beyond the world of phenomena, and so beyond our access.

We might ruminate on point 6 by asking the following questions: Where does an atom go when its existence is interrupted by "motion"? Where does its successor atom come from? What is the economy that insures that as an atom "moves", its interrupted existence is taken over by a new atom at the probable next location?

Perplexed yet?

The way that scientists have seen fit to relieve the perplexity of quantum mechanics is to factor in consciousness. Jeans introduces us to this on page 169 of *Physics and Philosophy*.

. . . Bohr was the first to point out. . . the clue to the whole situation [that] lets the secret out--different kinds of wavepacket ["wavepacket" is another way of talking about a quantum, or a micro-unit of energy] must not be supposed to represent different kinds of electrons, or electrons in different states, or electrons in different conditions [all ways of trying to explain what happens when an electron "moves"], but the different kinds of knowledge we can have about electrons.

This, in a nutshell, is the so-called Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics (Niels Bohr was from Copenhagen). What we know of atomic and subatomic motion says nothing about material nature itself. It says something only about the mind-picture installed in our heads *of* material nature.

Jeans again:

the waves of the wave mechanics [i. e. the "paths" along which quanta "move"] are now seen to represent our knowledge. . . [they are] mental constructs of our own. "

He goes on to explain that the plotting the "paths" of quanta like electrons obliged scientists to conceive of higher-dimensional space.

a single electron can also be represented in a space of three dimensions, but the waves of two electrons need a space of six dimensions, three for each electron, while the waves of a million electrons need a space of three million dimensions.

On page 171 of *Physics and Philosophy*, Jeans brings this logic to a startling conclusion.

If the waves of a free electron or photon represent human knowledge, what happens when there is no human knowledge to represent? For we must suppose that electrons were in existence while there was still no human consciousness to observe them, and that there are free electrons in Sirius where there are no physicists to observe them.

The simple and surprising answer would seem to be that when there is no human knowledge there are no waves; we must always remember that the waves are not part of nature, but of our efforts to understand nature. . . . Energy may be transferred from place to place, but the waves and the electric and magnetic forces are not part of the mechanism of transfer; they are part simply of our efforts to understand this mechanism and picture it to ourselves. Before man appeared on the

scene, there were neither waves nor electric nor magnetic forces; these were not made by God, but by Huyghens, Fresnel, Faraday and Maxwell.

The point he makes here becomes much clearer as, on pages 193-194, Jeans brings in the philosophy of the ancient world.

We may picture the world of reality as a deep-flowing stream; the world of appearance is its surface, below which we cannot see. Events deep down in the stream throw up bubbles and eddies on to the surface of the stream. These are the transfers of energy and radiation of our common life, which affect our senses and so activate our minds; below these lie deep waters which we can only know by inference. These bubbles and eddies show atomicity in the currents, but we know of no corresponding atomicity in the currents below.

Note it well--atoms as known to modern science belong to the realm of surface appearance, not deep reality. James Jeans continues:

This duality of appearance and reality pervades the history of philosophy, again dating back to Plato. In a famous parable, Plato depicts mankind as chained in a cave in such a way that they cannot see the busy life outside, but only the shadows--the appearances--which objects moving in the sunshine cast on the walls of the cave. For the captives in the cave, the shadows constitute the whole world of appearance--the phenomenal world--while the world of reality lies for ever beyond their ken.

Our phenomenal world consists of the activities of matter and photons; the theatre of this activity is space and time. Thus the walls of the cave in which we are imprisoned are space and time; the shadows of reality which we see projected on the walls by the sunshine outside are the material particles which we see moving against a background of space and time, while the reality outside the cave which produces these shadows is outside space and time.

As the new physics has shown, all earlier systems of physics, from the Newtonian mechanics down to the old quantum theory, fell into the error of identifying appearance with reality; they confined their attention to the walls of the cave, without even being conscious of a deeper reality beyond. The new quantum theory has shown that we must probe the deeper substratum of reality before we can understand the world of appearance, even to the extent of predicting the results of experiment.

For whatever happens in reality, there is no reason why the shadows on the wall should change in accordance with a causal law.

I'll step in to assure the reader that Jeans does not mean here that a cause *in the sense of a reality behind the appearance* is unreasonable. That would be in complete contradiction to what we read earlier and what we will read next. He is talking about a causal law, a fixed train of pushings, like a toppling line of dominos: that a particular physical event we are able observe is set into motion by a prior succession of physical events linked one to another by cause and effect. What science knows about quantum events does not logically give rise to such a mechanistic theory of causation. Back to Jeans.

There will be many different arrangements of the figures out in the sunshine; these many arrangements will be followed by new arrangements which will not only be different in themselves but are likely to produce different shadows on the wall. It is the same with happenings in the world of appearance; experiments that are precisely identical so far as the phenomena go may produce entirely different results. In this way phenomena disappears from the world of phenomena.

I want to close the door to any doubt that what we've read from Jeans til now amounts to a argument that the world is just an illusion. Not at all. On page 194 he writes, "The phenomena are seen to be just as much a part of the real world as the causes which produce them, being simply those parts of the real world which affect our senses. "

The problem is not that what appears to our senses is unreal, but that we are ignorant of what stands behind appearance. He makes that clear by citing Plato's cave analogy. We have seen that among the ingredients of appearance, the human mind is prominent. It is a mistake to conclude that Jeans is therefore arguing that human beings *create out of nothing* the world by their observation and speculation. As Jeans made clear earlier, the world is whatever it is, some process of energy transference. But the "mechanics" that scientists tell us the process follows belong to human knowledge. By bringing in Plato's cave analogy, Jeans forces us to see that such human-level knowledge of the process is enshrouded by ignorance. Complex scientific explanations of shadows, even though replete with highfalutin terms like "quanta", "wavepacket", "electron", "atom", even "higher dimensions", only serve to lock our attention to the shadows. Such shadow-knowledge fails to reveal the substance upon which the existence of shadow depends.

It is an eye-opening admission for a scientist to say, as Jeans does in the last-quoted paragraph from *Physics and Philosophy*, that experimental proofs never actually establish certainty in the material world. Therefore the famous "uncertainty principle" of physicist Werner Heisenberg, for which Jeans elsewhere in his book offers a detailed explanation that I think is out of place in this essay. Srila Prabhupada gives a pithy summation in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 24. 42: "Modern scientists have stopped their brainwork by discovering the theory of uncertainty. "

After discussing the appearance-reality dualism that philosophy has proposed since ancient times, James Jeans moves to another duality, on page 195.

In addition to the dualism of appearance and reality, many pictures of the world have exhibited a second dualism, that of mind and matter or of body and soul.

This also, so far as our knowledge carries us, started with Plato. We have seen how his picture of the world consists of forms, which exist only in our minds, and of sensible objects which, on Plato's view, display the imprint of the forms and so exemplify the qualities embodied in the forms. Plato maintained that the forms possessed a higher degree of reality than the material objects which exemplify them, so that the world was primarily a world of ideas and only secondarily a world of material objects.

Page 200:

. . . the physical theory of relativity has now shown that electric and magnetic forces are not real at all; they are merely mental constructs of our own, resulting from our rather misguided efforts to understand the motions of the particles. It is the same with the Newtonian force of gravitation, and with energy, momentum and other concepts which were introduced to help us understand the activities of the world--all prove to be mere mental constructs, and do not pass the test of objectivity. If the materialists are pressed to say how much of the world they now claim as material, their only possible answer would seem to be: Matter itself. Thus their whole philosophy is reduced to a tautology, for obviously matter must be material. But the fact that so much of what used to be thought to possess an objective physical existence now proves to consist only of subjective mental constructs must surely be counted a pronounced step in the direction of mentalism.

Page 202:

. . . the new quantum theory was brought into existence to make good the defects [of quantum theory before the contributions of Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schrodinger, Max Born and others during the 1920s]. It discovered what we believe to be the true pattern of events, with the wave-picture of matter as its pictorial representation. The particle-picture of radiation had already given place to a wave-picture; it now appeared that the particle-picture of matter must also be replaced by a wave picture. The result was complete agreement with experiment. In this progress towards the truth, let us notice that each step was from particles to waves, or from the material to the mental; the final picture consists wholly of waves, and its ingredients are wholly mental constructs.

Again, lest we think Jeans is contradicting things he said earlier, let us take careful note what he states next.

We must remember that this picture is not a picture of reality, it is a picture we draw to help us imagine the course of events in reality. Thus we are not entitled to argue that reality is like the ingredients of the picture, although there is a certain presumption that the two are not altogether dissimilar in their natures.

In other words, *the interpretation of the universe as a mental process* (as an oft-quoted phrase puts it, "as a great thought instead of a great machine") seems to best reflect *the nature of reality*. One of the most influential quantum physicists after Niels Bohr, John Archibald Wheeler, developed this theme from the '50s into the '90s. He condensed it into the aphorism, "the it from bit"--which means that "the its" (things) of our world of appearance are representations of root information, which in computerese is rendered as "bits" (*binary digits*). Hence truth in the higher sense cannot be the perception of "the its. " It must be the pure, original knowledge that gives appearance to "the its. " Commensurate with this knowledge is choice. That's why another significance of "the it from bit" is that a binary digit is a yes or no answer to a query. It follows that the world exists as an answer to a question . . . it is the object of a desire, in other words. It follows further that a change of desire elicits a change in the answer--hence a change in the world. In short, we participate in creation. (Prabhupada famously said, "Krsna doesn't create *maya*--you do!") Jeans put it this way on pages 215-216 of *Physics and Philosophy*:

. . . as we pass from the phenomenal world of space and time to [the] substratum, we seem, in some way we do not understand, to be passing from materialism to

mentalism, and so possibly also from matter to mind. It may be then that the spring of events in this substratum includes our own mental activities, so that the future course of events may depend in part on these mental activities.

"[T]he future course of events may depend *in part* on these mental activities" means we have free will, but it is limited.

The old physics showed us a universe which looked more like a prison than a dwelling-place. The new physics shows us a universe which looks as though it might conceivably form a suitable dwelling-place for free men, and not a mere shelter for brutes--a home in which it may at least be possible for us to mould events to our desires and live lives of endeavour and achievement.

The nature of reality may be, Jeans is suggesting, that a free man--a liberated person--can change the world for the better *by his very desire*.

Yes indeed.

*tomara iccha-matre habe brahmanda-mocana
sarva mukta karite krsnera nahi kichu srama*

Because of your honest desire, all living entities within the universe will be delivered, for Krsna does not have to do anything to deliver all the living entities of the universe.

--Lord Caitanya to Sri Vasudeva Datta, *Cc Madhya* 15. 171

On page 203 of *Physics and Philosophy*, James Jeans explains how the so-called observer principle in quantum physics suggests a universal, absolute mind (Paramatma).

. . . some answer must be found to the problem of how objects can continue to exist when they are not being perceived by any human mind. There must, as Berkeley says, be 'some other mind in which they exist.' Some will wish to describe this, with Berkeley, as the mind of God; others with Hegel as a universal or Absolute mind in which all our individual minds are comprised. The new quantum mechanics may perhaps give a hint, although nothing more than a hint, as to how this can be.

It doesn't seem that James Jeans was aware of Vedic wisdom; in *Physics and Philosophy* he looks toward the ancient Greek philosopher Plato for guidance. In Plato's writings we find quite a few ideas that closely resemble Vedic teachings. Furthermore, some of the leading lights of atomic physics were directly inspired by the Vedas. In an essay he wrote in 1925, Erwin Schrodinger formulated the quantum mechanical account of the linkage of the human mind to the appearance of the world in this way.

This life of yours which you are living is not merely a piece of this entire existence, but is in a certain sense the "whole"; only this whole is not so constituted that it can be surveyed at one single glance. This, as we know, is what the Brahmins express in that sacred, mystic formula which is yet really so simple and so clear: *tat tvam asi*, this is you.

It seems Schrodinger understood *tat tvam asi* in the advaitist sense of Sankaracarya. As a counter to that we have a letter of 68-03-12 in which Srila Prabhupada wrote:

Tattvam asi means you are that. You are that, means you are also Brahman. That means qualitatively you are one with the Supreme Absolute. The Mayavadi philosophers interpret this Tattvam asi that the living entity is the same Supreme Absolute Truth. They do not make any difference of quality and quantity, but Vaisnava philosophers are very accurate in their estimation of the Absolute Truth. Therefore, we interpret this Vedic verse as Tattvam asi means that the living entity is qualitatively one, as much as a particle of gold is also gold.

The Oxford historian Felipe Fernandez-Armesto suggests that the influence of Eastern philosophy upon atomic physics was not inconsiderable. This from *Truth--A History* (1997, pg. 212):

The man who led American A-bomb research, J. Robert Oppenheimer, became a spokesman for the [eastward] tendency, seeking in Hindu writings 'one world . . . vast domains of mystery, if not unknowable, imperfectly known, open', in contrast to the project of which he had formed a part--to rule knowledge by dividing it. He looked to Indian philosophies and disciplines of contemplation and meditation to induce peaceful habits, in contrast with the aggression and power-hunger characteristic of western history, which seemed to him to have culminated in the ultimate abuse: the bomb he helped to build.

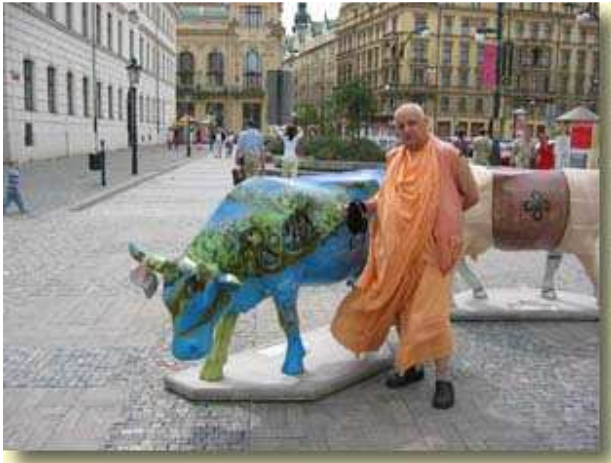
In the next passage, Fernandez-Armesto begins by telling us of Niels Bohr's fascination with the ancient Chinese symbol of Tao (pgs 212-213).

The circle, divided into interpenetrated moieties by a wave-like double curve, seemed to him to prefigure his own scientific thinking and, in particular, his key notion of 'complementarity', which resolved one of the baffling contradictions thrown up by experiments with light. The wave-like and particle-like properties of the light we experience, Bohr reasoned, are both contrary and complementary. Now western scientific thought, after its brief period of acknowledged supremacy, was recolonized by concepts from Hindu, Taoist and Buddhist traditions. The identity of mass and energy seemed to be pre-expressed in the Taoist doctrine of a single cosmic force of which all observable phenomena are effects. The restless, random world of quantum mechanics seemed like the 'cosmic dance' of Shiva.

In the final Part Three, I'll look back at Parts One and Two through *sastra caksusa*.



Prague, Czech Republic
14 June 2004



On exhibit here and there around central Prague are some sculpturer's cow creations. This one reminded me of the universal form of Dharma.



Saturday 12 June: there is no experience quite like harinama sankirtana in the Golden City.



While I was in the city with the chanting party, Amaraprabhu dasa (right) arrived from Germany. Omkaranatha is on the left. Matajis Kalakantha (also just arrived from Germany) and Adhika Daya are behind.



Amaraprabhu offered a wonderful gift to Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarsana: a tiny Sudarsana sila mounted in a silver necklace!



Amara and Kalakantha remained in Prague until Monday morning. Before they returned to Germany we took this photo together.



Amaraprabhu is known in Central Europe for his elaborate arcana-seva and yajnas in the grand South Indian style...



**"After all, all living entities are part and parcel of Krsna,
and Krsna wants their welfare so that**

they may come back to home, back to Godhead."
(Lecture on Srimad-Bhagavatam, Mayapur 17 June 1973)

Taking Life's Final Exit

Mon Jun 14--Los Angeles Times to My Yahoo!

By Valerie Reitman Times Staff Writer

PHILADELPHIA My brother took more trains, planes and automobiles in the last week of his life than he had taken in months, perhaps years. Those journeys were all the more surprising because they occurred in an intensive-care unit at the end of his three-year battle with bone marrow cancer.

Bedridden after being rushed to the hospital for what would be the final eight days of his life, Kenny casually mentioned that he was visiting Detroit. It was a rather odd place for him to be traveling even if only in his imagination because the hospital was near home in suburban Philadelphia and he didn't have any ties to the Motor City.

But it was near a border, a border he seemed intent on crossing, be it real or metaphoric.

"How far is it to Canada?" he wanted to know. "Where's the map?"

Though very weak, Kenny, 45, intermittently recognized and chatted lucidly with family gathered by his bedside. But he would drop in news of his varied travels: He had gone skiing one afternoon in Australia, he told us, stopped by North Carolina another day, and more than once had been "stuck in passport control."

At first, our family dismissed these journeys as confusion; we would laugh through our tears about the various places and modes of transport he had been taking. It must be the painkillers, we thought. Or maybe hypoxia, the oxygen deprivation in the blood that often contributes to delirium in sick people. Or that the cancer now was destroying his mind, just as it had racked his body.

But then our cousin Lynne mentioned that her parents had done a lot of similar traveling in the last days of their cancer battles. Uncle Larry (Lynne's father) had insisted that his passport and fanny pack be kept by his bedside; he was intent on keeping an imaginary 3 p.m. appointment with the emperor of Japan, where I was living then and where he had hoped to visit. He too had asked for a map of Japan. Aunt Lois, who had died four years before, had talked about needing to catch a train, asking Lynne to buy her a ticket.

There seemed to be a pattern. A nearby bookstore turned up a 1992 title that offered some clues: "Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs and Communications of the Dying."

Its chapter titles were uncanny: "Where's the Map?" and "I'm Getting Ready To Leave." Authors Patricia Kelley and Maggie Callanan, longtime Washington, D.C.-area hospice nurses, had heard similar talk so often from their dying patients--conveying this sense of moving from one place to another, of being in transition--that they

concluded it must be a special language the dying have to communicate what is happening to them.

"It would be easy to say it's just coincidence, but when you see it over and over, there has to be something there," Kelley said in a telephone interview. "I do think people experience something we can't describe."

The authors termed the phenomenon "nearing death awareness"--a state they think reveals what dying might be like and what a person needs to die peacefully.

It has some similarities with the more widely known near-death experiences reported by some patients who are resuscitated on operating tables or at the scenes of accidents. They report seeing a bright light at the end of a tunnel, with people and events of their lives flashing as if in a kaleidoscope.

In contrast, however, those dying slowly often talk of preparing for a trip or of trying to finish something, Kelley and Callanan found, perhaps using language pertaining to their professions or hobbies. One dying man who liked to sail, for instance, talked about the ebbing of the tides; a watchmaker mentioned that the clock was not ticking fast enough; a carpenter described details of completing an imaginary house.

The observations built on an earlier four-year study by physicians Karlis Osis and Erlendur Haraldsson, in which hundreds of physicians and nurses observed 50,000 dying patients from India and the U.S. In both cultures, patients commonly reported deathbed visions of movement toward something and of being greeted by deceased loved ones who were helping them to "cross over" in their last moments.

Several healthcare workers and bereaved families interviewed for this article also witnessed similar phenomena. A few days before Jennifer Lee Foster, 26, of Millbrook, N.Y., died of leukemia, she told her relatives she had seen a young neighborhood boy who had been killed years earlier in an auto accident. The boy said, " 'How you doing, Jen? I was waiting to say hi to you,' " recalls her mother, Jean DiMarco, of Millbrook.

Kathy Pollard, educational director at Hospice of the Valley in Phoenix, said that she had seen dying patients countless times shaking their heads "yes" or "no" and making motions with their hands as they talk with deceased people.

Loved ones shouldn't argue, but simply affirm what the person is saying or inquire about what they're seeing or doing, Pollard says. One sweet old lady put her hand up and touched Pollard's cheek one day, and said, "Oh, my dear isn't the train we're on beautiful?"

"Are you on a train?" Pollard asked.

"Yes, I am," the woman replied.

"Oh, where are you going?" Pollard asked.

The old woman's eyes closed. "I'm on the way to South Dakota."

"And what will happen when you get there?" Pollard replied.

"Well, my dear," the old lady answered, "then the journey will be over."

Just before Pollard's own father died two years ago after a stroke and a fall in a nursing home, he kept saying, "Ma, Ma, open the door." Pollard leaned in close and whispered, "You can open the door, Dad."

Says Pollard, "We believe the patient is on the journey and they are going to make the decision when the train stops or when to open the door [and die]. We reassure the patient that he or she's going to be OK, and say things like, 'Dad, you've been a great father-- I'll miss you like crazy, but you're going to be OK.' "

As Kenny did, the dying frequently mention being "stuck" or "held up"--which Kelley and Callanan say may indicate something is keeping them from letting go--such as concern about how a spouse or children will cope or the need to take care of something undone or to see a loved one. A young man dying of AIDS (news - web sites) told Kelley about his father being "in the way." They had long been estranged, and the young man was hoping (for naught) that his dad might visit.

The phenomenon isn't universal. Some are too sick; others can't talk. Moreover, a person's behavior in death will typically be much like it was in life--a very private person isn't likely to become talkative on his deathbed. And not everyone who speaks of wanting to go home or take a journey is talking about death.

An elderly woman in her 80s pleaded with Sara Perry, a social worker at Montgomery Hospice inpatient program in Maryland, to take her home. Perry told her soothingly that "sometimes when people are as sick as you and they talk about going home, they are really talking about going to heaven." The woman shot back, "Listen, honey, I'm talking about going home to my apartment."

Why dying people speak of taking journeys is anyone's guess. Drugs don't seem to play much of a role, hospice workers say, because the phenomenon occurs both in those who are taking painkillers and those who aren't. If anything, they say, the more drugs one takes, the less likely any conversations.

Others speculate that the dying may be experiencing visions similar to those in a dream. "The mind has its own set of analgesics," said sociologist Robert Fulton, a University of Minnesota professor emeritus and a pioneer in the study of death and bereavement in the 1960s. "The mind is well capable of drugging itself. In a dream, there might be the euphoria of meeting a dead friend and having a conversation. The brain is kind of cleaning itself up, like a computer downloading."

The dreams are reinforced by images of immortality, and of heaven and hell or reincarnation, embraced throughout history as well as in modern life. Kelley speculates that the dying recognize "that they're going from one world to another one" or the feeling that they're "going somewhere."

Perhaps the travels are due to a "freeing up" of the spirit once the dying person has accepted that death is imminent, said Dr. William Lamers, who set up the second hospice in the U.S., in Marin County in the 1970s. This brings about a phenomenon

he has witnessed again and again: The dying person, if in a comfortable setting and in little pain, is at peace with his or her condition and takes interest in the well-being of the survivors, who often aren't nearly as comfortable with the imminent death.

That can be particularly true with dying children, says Betty Ferrell, a nurse and research scientist at City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, who has worked with the dying for 25 years. The child might say that angels came to visit and beckoned him to come. But rather than finding it comforting that the child isn't afraid, parents get upset, and say, " 'Oh no, you're staying right here with me,'" Ferrell says. (Ferrell directs a new national program to help nurses better understand and care for dying patients, using "Final Gifts" as a text.)

Then there are those who believe that maybe--just maybe--the dying really are going on journeys or being visited by their deceased loved ones. Author-hospice nurse Callanan sees no harm, and maybe some consolation, in such credence.

For my family, just knowing that so many others had taken such "journeys" on their deathbeds gave us comfort, as we passed around "Final Gifts" during long hours at the hospital. We came to believe that Kenny had reconciled himself to dying. A strapping 6-foot-3 electrical engineer who hadn't taken a sick day in more than 20 years at the steel mill he helped run, Kenny had vowed that he had "no doubt he'd beat this thing," even though multiple myeloma is virtually incurable and most patients live three to five years at most.

The most promising treatment--a stem-cell transplant followed by a bone marrow transplant from our brother Bob, an exact match--didn't work, and our hopes for a long remission faded. Drug after drug failed, and tumors on his spine threatened paralysis. A month before his death, his local oncologist--handing his wife, Cyndie, and son, Zach, a box of tissues as he matter-of-factly delivered the news--advised that the most humane thing would be to stop treatment.

Still, Kenny wouldn't give up and asked his main oncologist in Philadelphia to try something else, telling him that he knew he was going to die eventually, but intended to live a few more years rather than a few more weeks. The doctor complied with another experimental drug. Kenny grew weaker, however, until he could barely walk and couldn't climb the stairs to bed.

Once settled into the ICU with oxygen, he was more comfortable--and began to accept the reality. "It seems like my body's telling me something. Everything seems to be shutting down."

The death-related imagery soon started popping up, what Callanan termed "previews of coming attractions." Kenny thought he had seen towels labeled "hospice" as he came into the hospital. One day, he told his teenage children there were buzzards in the hospital room corner. When they told him that wasn't true, he replied calmly, "It's only natural," indicating to us that he didn't find this image of death at all macabre.

He mentioned being visited by "John," but couldn't tell us who John was except to deny it was anyone we suggested. Only weeks after his funeral did we figure out that he probably meant our brother Chris' father-in-law, whom he didn't know well, but whose wake he had attended months earlier.

Three nights before he died, he told daughter Jessica, 16, to "get my shoes, Jess. We need to get on the boat." Did he mean the small catamaran he sometimes sailed with our father, we asked. "No, it's a big boat," he retorted, seeming indignant that we couldn't see what he could. "Where's my green duffel?" he said. "I need to pack."

When a nurse popped in later, he inquired in earnest, "Do we change buses here?"

I stayed with him through that night, and he asked out of the blue, "Is the viewing today?" Do you want a viewing, I asked, knowing how much he hated them and preferred cremation. "Well, you don't know whether to have one or not," he replied. "I guess you could have one and I don't have to be there."

I reread aloud to him the beautiful letters Zach, Louise and Jess had written, thanking him for being such a wonderful father and telling him how much they loved him. More than likely, it was concern for them that was keeping him from letting go.

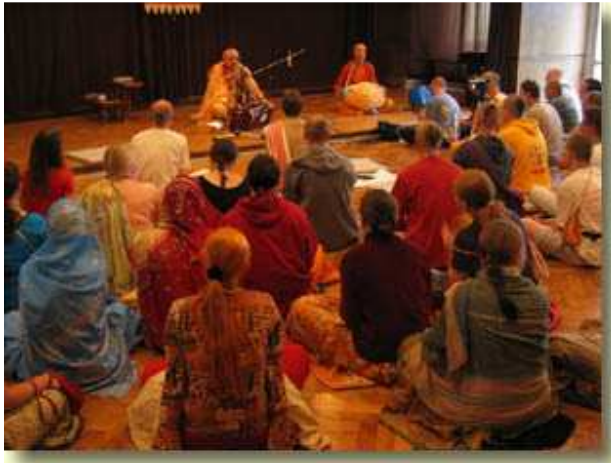
"Losing you is going to be really hard, but you need to stop suffering," Jessica wrote. "And don't feel bad that you're going to be leaving us, OK? I love you so much, Daddy. I will miss you so much. You will always live on in spirit. Goodbye, Daddy. Your daughter forever with love, Jessica." And she drew five stick figures, with a caption, "We will always be a happy family."

He started to cry. "Oh Val, what am I going to do?" But a half-minute later, it was as if, mercifully, he was somewhere well beyond the gravity of it all. He stopped crying and asked quizzically, "Val, where are we?"

Is there anything he wanted me to tell his wife and kids for him, I asked, a redundant question because he had often told them how much he loved them.

"No," he replied, "I'll write on the plane."

Prague, Czech Republic
15 June 2004



Sunday feast program in a public hall.



Class in the Prague temple.



With my Godbrother Manidhara Prabhu, his wife and daughter, and other nice devotees.

*Prague, Czech Republic
16 June 2004*

Worry About Adam, Not the Atom

Part 3

In Part 1 I wrote:

...in quantum physics, matter and energy are translated into an idea. It's an idea that scientists are getting an amazing amount of work out of. But what's *going on* with matter and energy while they puts out all that work is purely conceptual. A quantum of heat energy, for example, has never been seen. Nor will it *ever* be seen, because it is not something that happens, *it is an idea of something that happens.*

Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.3.31:

*yatha nabhasi meghaugho
renur va parthivo 'nile
evam drastari drsyatvam
aropitam abuddhibhih*

Clouds and dust are carried by the air, but less intelligent persons say that the sky is cloudy and the air is dirty. Similarly, they also implant material bodily conceptions on the spirit self.

Srila Prabhupada points out in his purport:

It is further confirmed herein that with our material eyes and senses we cannot see the Lord, who is all spirit. We cannot even detect the spiritual spark which exists within the material body of the living being. We look to the outward covering of the body or subtle mind of the living being, but we cannot see the spiritual spark within the body. So we have to accept the living being's presence by the presence of his gross body. ... The clouds in the sky and the blue of the sky are better appreciated in this connection. Although the bluish tint of the sky and the sky itself are different, we conceive of the color of the sky as blue. But that is a general conception for the laymen only.

Credit must be given to the founders of quantum physics. They were philosophers of acute discernment. They had a grasp of the principle Srila Prabhupada speaks of above, that "the bluish tint of the sky and the sky itself are different." The nature of their observations of the microworld obliged them to admit that what they were seeing was, so to speak, only "the bluish tint of the sky." Atoms, electrons, waves--all that amounts to the bluish tint. It is for this reason that James Jeans stated, "Precise knowledge of the outer world becomes impossible for us", "The division

between subject and object is no longer definite or precise", and, "So far as our knowledge is concerned, causality becomes meaningless."

Physicists who think deeply about what they are doing tell us that quantum physics is an allegory of a subject, not the subject itself. The dictionary defines allegory as "a literary, dramatic, or pictorial device in which characters and events stand for abstract ideas, principles, or forces, so that the literal sense has or suggests a parallel, deeper symbolic sense." The characters of the allegory called quantum physics are atoms, electrons, protons, neutrons, photons and so many other subatomic particles. The events are the wavefunction, the quantum leap, quantum nonlocality, quantum tunneling, etc.

But all that is but surface appearance, as James Jeans explained in the quotations presented in Part 2 of this essay. What appears on the surface of the data screen of the physicists' senses is mostly only the numerical values of instrument readings and other such indirect, machine-produced imagery. Atoms, electrons and so on, being too tiny, are never directly observed. Thus these characters and the actions they perform are inventions of the human mind to explain something that is perceived only analogously.

With all this going on, the physicists are made acutely aware of the role that human consciousness plays in observation. And so the winding trail of our reflections on how quantum physics works brings us back to the *Bhagavatam* verse quoted above. What is to be known (the "bit" from which the "it" comes) is actually nonmaterial, having the nature of pure consciousness. Materiality is an obstruction of *our* knowledge of *that* knowledge, just as clouds and dust are obstructions of our knowledge of the sky. We make a mistake when we say, "The air is dusty" or "The sky is cloudy." Similarly it is a mistake to say, "Existence is in the last analysis just atoms, electrons, etc." The sages of the new physics know this much. What they see of the microworld is just appearance; what *is* is something else entirely, beyond their powers of observation and inference, beyond the reach of mechanistic laws of causation.

Moment-to-moment manifestation

Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.7.49

*kalena hy ogha-vegana
bhutanam prabhavapyayau
nityav api na drsyete
atmano 'gner yatharcisam*

The flames of a fire appear and disappear at every moment, and yet this creation and destruction is not noticed by the ordinary observer. Similarly, the mighty waves of time flow constantly, like the powerful currents of a river, and imperceptibly cause the birth, growth and death of innumerable material bodies. And yet the soul, who is thus constantly forced to change his position, cannot perceive the actions of time.

Srila Prabhupada, 4 March 1975 in Dallas:

The body is destroyed. It is being destroyed every moment. From scientific point of view we are changing our blood corpuscle and another body like the, what is called, film. One after another picture, one after, one after, one after, and when they are displayed, it appears one. But it is not one. There are so many pictures. They put into the machine, and when they work together, it appears that the man within the picture is moving. Actually, that movement is combination of many pictures.

In the microworld, the "motion" of a unit of energy along the surface of space and time is not motion as we know it. To understand motion at the quantum level we have to translate it into probability: that there is a chance the unit of energy may "go" from here to there, or from here to different place. As John D. Barrow explains in *Impossibility--The Limits of Science and the Science of Limits* (1998, pg. 24), there is

an appreciable probability for it to be found in a state of motion that is impossible according to Newton's laws. Such states are frequently observed.

This impossible motion that physicists frequently observe speaks for the disappearance (destruction) of the energy unit at one point and its reappearance (reconstitution) at the next point. Now you, dear reader, may have heard about the many-worlds interpretation of quantum physics. It was proposed by an American physicist, Hugh Everett, in 1957. In brief, his interpretation entails a bizarre scenario in which the entire universe divides instant by instant into two universes.

In quantum physics, what happens next in our world is a question of chance, like the flip of a coin. But rather than only one choice happening, both happen because the universe instantaneously divides, like a cosmic amoeba, into two. One universe is the head of the coin, the other is the tail. In each of these universes the question of "What happens next?" is answered in the same way: each universe splits off into two more; and each of those into two more, on and on without end. And so it follows that there are infinite universes parallel to ours, each in its own reality; and in each one, you and I are living out possibilities that could have happened but didn't happen in this universe. Parallel reality is the logical consequence of quantum "motion." In one way, the theory of parallel reality shows that quantum theory, even though it "works," extends into absurdity. But in another way it shows the sense of Srila Prabhupada's comparing the instant-by-instant state of our body to the successive frames of a motion picture film.

The many-worlds interpretation--which is still very much a part of today's physics--came about simply because scientists tend to be atheistic. They find it hard to accept that, just as in a film, there is a script and direction for what happens in the universe. The reason for scientists why something happens is chance: either/or.

As we have seen, events in the microworld are described in quantum physics as occurring along a wave of probability. Located at each point along the wave is a "bit"--the potential yes/no answer to the question, "Is the unit of energy here?" Quantum theory demands that the yes/no question be answered by an act of observation. Otherwise it cannot be answered. Though the theory has incredible predictive power, its logic runs into philosophical paradox. Even when we are not observing it, the world seems to run onward in time, things happening one after another. The many-worlds interpretation is an attempt to account for that. The decision whether "either" happens or "or" happens is thus not left suspended in some

ghostly state until we arrive with our powers of observation. *Both* happen--automatically, mechanistically--because the universe is constantly dividing!

Time, space, energy, information

Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.11.4:

*sa kalah paramanur vai
yo bhunkte paramanutam
sato 'visesa-bhug yas tu
sa kalah paramo mahan*

Atomic time is measured according to its covering a particular atomic space. That time which covers the unmanifest aggregate of atoms is called the great time.

In physics we find a concept known as Sprenger's triangle, named after a Swiss physicist, Daniel Sprenger. At one corner of the triangle is time (t), at another is energy (E), and at the third is information (I). As explained by Barrow in *Impossibility* (pgs. 146-147),

Any two of the three attributes can be traded in for the other two. Any point in the triangle represents a particular mixture of the three ingredients needed to accomplish a given task.

In Srila Prabhupada's purport to the verse just cited, we find a connection drawn between time, space (energy being the force needed to move from one point in space to another over a specific time), and information (which reveals position, direction and speed, implicit in the manifestation of planets spoken of here).

Time and space are two correlative terms. Time is measured in terms of its covering a certain space of atoms. Standard time is calculated in terms of the movement of the sun. The time covered by the sun in passing over an atom is calculated as atomic time. The greatest time of all covers the entire existence of the nondual manifestation. All the planets rotate and cover space, and space is calculated in terms of atoms. Each planet has its particular orbit for rotating, in which it moves without deviation, and similarly the sun has its orbit. The complete calculation of the time of creation, maintenance and dissolution, measured in terms of the circulation of the total planetary systems until the end of creation, is known as the supreme *kala*.



Quantum physics employs a system of thought called *simultaneous logic* that correlates time, space, energy, and information. Because of that logic, one thing, such as a photon (a unit of light energy), can be polarized in two directions; one thing, an electron, can be understood to be in many places at once. Simultaneous logic is pictorially displayed by the famous two face/one vase diagram. In Bhagavata terms, simultaneous logic operates in *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*, the doctrine of simultaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference.

Dr. Subhash Kak of Louisiana State University writes in *Vaisnava Metaphysics or a Science of Consciousness* (1997-8, pg. 2):

It is important to realize that quantum or *simultaneous* logic did not first arise in the human imagination with the development of quantum physics. Much of the ancient mystical writings are informed by it. For example, the story of Krsna dancing *simultaneously* with the *gopis* is in accordance with such a logic.

Though Bhagavata logic and quantum logic have their points of similarity, the physical cosmology in which they are put to work are not the same. Thus they differ in their descriptions of specific "things" like, for example, an atom. What separates the two cosmologies is that the *Bhagavatam* reveals the form of the universe in terms of higher-than-human information that comes down from ancient times, and moreover from a much vaster scale of cosmic time relative to Earth's; whereas the model of the physical universe of quantum physics is assembled from the experimental knowledge of human beings who live in the present Earth-scaled time of this Kali Yuga. Put simply, if we triangulate the two systems according to Sprenger's model, we'll see that the time corner and the information corner are different. And in the energy corner, we have to factor into our comparison that Krsna has absolute mastery over the material and spiritual energies; scientists, on the other hand, do not. While the logic of the two systems is similar, the results are sure to be different because the values the logic works with are different.

Adam, where's my atom?

At the end of the day, however, one important aspect of the physical universe is common to both: the invisibility of the atom. Modern science says that single atoms are smaller than the wavelength of light; even with the most powerful optical microscope, it is impossible to see them. Objects as small as a molecule--a particle formed of chemically combined atoms--can be seen with the help of enhanced optical microscopy. According to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3.11.5, a *trasarenu* or hexatom (a molecule of six atoms) is observable in *jala-arka*, light shining through a screen. Before dismissing this as impossible, we should remember that the science of the *Bhagavatam* predates the Age of Kali, which began 5000 years ago. The physical abilities of people before this age is described as far surpassing those of people today. It follows that they may have been able, with the help of a screen, to see a molecular particle.

There may be no connection at all, but this is too interesting not to mention. The first electron microscope, built by Ernst Ruska in 1931, made objects too small for the eye to see visible on a phosphor screen. An electron microscope uses electron waves, which are much narrower in length than light. For that very reason the human eye is unable to see directly images carried by electron waves. A screen of electron-sensitive material must be used to display the image. Nowadays electron microscopes are connected to CRT monitors.

Ernst Ruska's invention met a lot of skepticism from scientists. To be sure, he did receive the Nobel Prize for the new microscope--but not until 1986. Another great step in image magnification was the development of the Scanning Probe Microscope in 1981, which utilizes the principle of quantum tunneling. The first SPM, like the first electron microscope, stirred up a great deal of resistance in the scientific community. Today there are microscopes so powerful that they image a single atom. At least

that's the belief. In any case, the images produced by such instruments are indirect. It is a process of the intellect, not of direct sense perception, to identify an image on a CRT screen as an atom.

The point of this discussion on the atom's invisibility is that there's a great deal of uncertainty involved in coming to terms with what an atom really is. That's why this series of three articles is titled *Worry About Adam, not the Atom*. Because it's through Adam (the human scientist) that you and I, ordinary folks, receive our knowledge of atoms. Atomic knowledge means quantum physics. About quantum physics, Richard Feynman, Nobel prize winner and father of Quantum Electrodynamics, stated:

There was a time when the newspapers said that only twelve men understood the theory of relativity. I do not believe there was ever such a time. There might have been a time when only one man did, but he was the only guy who caught on, before he wrote his paper. But after people read the paper, a lot of people understood the theory of relativity in some way or other, certainly more than twelve. On the other hand, I think I can safely say that nobody understands quantum mechanics.

Can we say that modern science has proved or disproved the physics and cosmology of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*? Possibly the biggest name in astrophysics today is Stephen Hawking. As quoted by Kitty Ferguson in *The Fire in the Equations*, 1994, pg. 21, he says that quantum theory is about "what we do not know and cannot predict." Ferguson furthermore notes, "It is generally agreed that in science nothing can ever be 'proved.'" (pg. 26). About what he called "knowledge concerning the universe as a whole," the great mathematician-philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote, "the proposed proofs that, in virtue of the laws of logic such and such things *must* exist and such and such others cannot, are not capable of surviving a critical scrutiny." (*Problems of Philosophy*, 1912, pg. 82)

MacNewsletter physics

It is curious, then, to read the following in the newsletter printed by an ISKCON temple in Europe and sent out to its congregation:

Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) have been long disproved by science.

In fairness to the author of this gem of wisdom, but also to sharpen my own arguments regarding his claim to know what is proven by science, I'll quote the whole paragraph in which the sentence is found.

The trance of Vyasa has been painstakingly analyzed by Srila Jiva Gosvami in the first part of his magnum opus, *Bhagavata-sandarbha* (*Tattva-sandarbha* 39-48). He uses it as a hermeneutical tool: by understanding so to speak the heart of Vyasa, his motivation for writing the *Bhagavatam*, one can also understand obscure details of the text. When reading, I also try to follow the twists and turns of the narrative with this in mind. How does this particular detail reflect more light on the glory of the Lord, and how does it help the suffering entities? For example, the second and third cantos contain several descriptions of creation, some--at least to my limited understanding--contradictory. Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) are also long since disproved by science. However, the motive of

Vyasa in including such material is not to give us a primer in physics, it is to help the suffering living entities. These paragraphs describe how matter appears and becomes variegated and thus--of one works backward from the end--how to end involvement in matter. Not only that, they also show how Krishna is involved in every step of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this world, while all the time remaining separate from it.

There is much in this passage that is excellent, but one can argue--as I believe Srila Prabhupada would if he read this--that it is rendered meaningless in its entirety by the sentence I quoted to start with, "Many of these descriptions..." etc.

So everything is there in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. That is the topmost knowledge. That is transcendental knowledge. That is not material knowledge. Material knowledge, if you write some book, it has no meaning, because it is defective. But *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is not ordinary knowledge. It is transcendental knowledge. There is no defect. Our this mundane brain is defective. We can't... Just like our scientist, Svarupa Damodara. He was speaking that they make experiment in the laboratory according to formula, but still, there is some mistake. Still, there is some mistake. Practically, scientific advancement, scientific knowledge means to find out mistakes. What you were are speaking? What is the exact language you told?

Svarupa Damodara: I said there is always some statistical factor, which is called error. (laughter) Error is always slipping in.

Prabhupada: So nobody can be perfect. Therefore all these so-called perfect leaders, they should close their business. (laughter) It is already experimental, all nonsense. Come to Hare Krsna mantra and chant.

One could say the author of the newsletter article is simply not so convinced about everything that is in the *Bhagavatam*, that's all. He does write that he sees contradictions in the different accounts of creation "at least according to my limited understanding." All right; he's being honest there. Give him credit. But we have to stick to his words, and the problem is he doesn't stop with a confession of his own limited understanding. He calls upon the authority of science to argue that the atomic theory of the *Bhagavatam* is "long since disproved", as are "many" other descriptions.

After I read this article, I thought about it for a few days. During that time I happened to read a news report on Yahoo.com. Seems the MacDonald's hamburger chain is ticked off by a popular documentary film called *Super Size Me*. The film-maker recorded himself eating nothing but MacDonald's fast food (burgers and fries) for a month. As a result he became overweight and unhealthy. The report explained that in recent years MacDonald's has become sensitive to criticism about the unhealthiness of a burgers-and-fries diet, so it's added several healthy items to its menu. (I've seen myself in India that McDonald's promotes a vegetarian sandwich--alongside the MacBurgers, MacChicken, etc.) Therefore MacDonalds takes umbrage at *Super Size Me*. It's the film-maker's fault that he got fat and sick, the defense goes. Our menu is variegated. You have a choice of healthier items, if you want them.

Prominent among the mind's functions is the drawing of relations between various data. And so it happened that my mind placed the Yahoo new report about

MacDonald's trouble with the *Super Size Me* film next to the newsletter paragraph. I began to see a similarity. The newsletter offers a menu for all tastes. Oh, you're a devotee? You have full faith in Krsna? Here, we at ISKCON MacNewsletter have something you'll enjoy! We call it: the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight!

The *Bhagavatam* shows how Krishna is involved in every step of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this world. Yummy!

And if your faith is still grounded in modern science, if you approach religious scriptures skeptically, well, we're not going to shove the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight down your throat. Take this: the MacScience Beef Bomb!

Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) have been long disproved by science. Mmmm-MMMMMHHH!

Ah-ah-ah, now: just lifting the old nasal orifice 45 degrees and sniffing, "That's NOT a serious response," won't do. My response is no doubt picturesque, but it's as serious as a heart attack. Neither the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight nor the MacScience Beef Bomb will be accepted by a serious devotee, because both are coming off the same griddle and are fried up by the same cook. In other words, the frame of reference out of which "both sides of the story" are coming is the mundane, relative frame. In this frame, all tastes, all points of view--theistic or atheistic--are placed on the same level. You can take your choice. That's called intellectual freedom *in the material world*.

The new *upadhis*: liberal and conservative

This relativistic frame of "free discourse" in which proponents of the "liberal and conservative viewpoints" are invited to exchange their ideas in an atmosphere of dry intellectualism has indeed entered ISKCON. It has been nicely analyzed at the ISKCON Culture Journal website (<http://siddhanta.com/archives/culture/000042.html>). I'll quote some highlights here.

It is a curiosity that those who have adopted new and apparently unauthorized views since Srila Prabhupada's departure, now label anyone who doesn't join their newfound faith (or embrace the practical deviations that must follow from it) as "old-fashioned," "conservative," "fundamentalist," etc.

...[G]iven the general tenor of the preponderance of evidence we've all heard from *guru/sadhu/sastra/itihasa*, we've hardly an explicit and logically consistent injunction for the liberal interpretation... Hence it cannot be objective either. Yet objective authority is precisely what is required to unify the radical diverse opinions typical of present day ISKCON. We need ground rules, and they are already plentifully available, should we decide to listen to them as much as Srila Prabhupada advised us to.

Therefore, it is essential and only natural to resort to what the *Bhagavatam* itself holds up as a fourth *pramana--itihasa* (i.e., tradition)--in order to resolve the conflicting and relative exchange of personal views that will otherwise go on endlessly. This is a no-brainer, I think. The main problem seems to be that those

who feel their personal preferences threatened by this recourse will refuse to acknowledge its validity and worth.

...[F]or definite (if yet unknown) reasons, someone feels it necessary to relativize Srila Prabhupada's instructions as merely "the conservative view," as if anyone ever had--or could possibly sustain--such dubious propositions in Srila Prabhupada's presence. I think the guidance of those who received the most personal training by Srila Prabhupada is invaluable in regard to such practical disputes, because the instructions his Divine grace gave them was not only usually practical in nature, but also undeniably objective for anyone who accepts Srila Prabhupada's authority.

...[T]his appeal to newfangled *upadhis*. When did Srila Prabhupada ever teach anyone about the "conservative" or "liberal" approaches to his instructions on Krsna consciousness?

Tell us, please. The subtext above is that anyone is free to choose either one at whim, as if some sort of transcendently accredited and recognized option was our established standard.

Frankly, that smells. It seems more like a pernicious social agenda aimed at undermining much of what Srila Prabhupada worked hard to establish, perpetrated by those whose stubborn material attachments have gradually corroded their faith, largely as the result of indiscriminate association. Those so involved can be encouraged to reconsider the precise nature of their adopted beliefs, along with the constitutional prejudices that nurtured them.

Throughout the entire Gita (even in his final conclusions) Krsna consistently reiterates that one must follow the objective and explicit injunctions defining and governing everyone's prescribed duties. These were never questioned by our previous *acaryas*, who except in rare cases of extremely exalted souls, followed Krsna's rules faithfully and in due humility. So there is a pre-existing consensus; I'm sorry to suggest that it simply isn't we who get to arbitrate such things as much as we might like--or feel qualified--to do.

One instruction Lord Krsna gives, which I think is very relevant to the topic, is that His devotees are to practice austerity of the mind (*Bg.* 17.16). "Satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one's existence are the austerities of the mind." In the purport Srila Prabhupada writes that in essence, austerity of the mind is to detach it from sense gratification. Sense gratification means to enjoy different material tastes. When we embrace in our mind different focal points of the materialistic account of the world, we are not practicing austerity of the mind. This may not be deliberate. We may reach out to science because we are mentally unsettled and don't know where else to turn.

From the ISKCON Culture Journal again
(<http://siddhanta.com/archives/culture/000029.html>):

Science is such an influential, integral part of mainstream Western culture that when all else fails, we fall back on the ways we are most familiar with--even if those ways are highly questionable.

Historically and culturally, we seek to understand our world through science. Very briefly, science fundamentally involves the study of a real-world process, a model of the real world process that professes to resemble in form the real-world process, some predictions derived from the model, and test data to validate the model. As a byproduct, the scientific method has produced the technological advancement which has more or less convinced the world that scientific reasoning and methodologies are a sound and sure way to understand our universe.

For circumstantial and cultural reasons, we have varying degrees of trust (mostly favorable) that science can discover things about our universe that, when known, will reveal the means to attain our desires. Coping with the complexities, ambiguities and pressures of today's way of life is something many of us desire, so in good faith we turn to science to help us solve our personal and societal problems.

Hey buddy, can you paradigm? (reprise)

Getting back to the point of the MacNewsletter's claim that science has disproved many descriptions in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, I have a strong inkling that the author is himself pretty uninformed about the new physics. His idea of the atom, I'll bet, comes out of the 19th century, when physicists believed atoms to be solid little balls of matter situated objectively in the world external to us. How else could he be so sure of himself?

Dr. Subash Kak, writing in the same article I quote from above, observes on page 4,

Although the quantum revolution in science took place more than seventy years ago, its ideas, as mentioned before, are not well understood by psychologists or scholars of religion who continue to use classical logic almost exclusively.

Sometimes members of ISKCON trained in the way of religious studies cite a book by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in which he seems to give credence to some Western accounts of the history of religion. The idea is that he was taking a preaching initiative by making the Bhagavata philosophy more accessible to those trained in the Western way. That may be, but that book was published decades before the new physics. As I explained in Part 1 of this essay, the new physics is a fundamental root to the shift in the paradigm that Western culture is now undergoing.

Now we have come full circle, back to the paradigm. This brings up yet one more curiosity of the MacNewsletter paragraph. The author writes, "by understanding so to speak the heart of Vyasa, his motivation for writing the *Bhagavatam*, one can also understand obscure details of the text. When reading, I also try to follow the twists and turns of the narrative with this in mind." What the author wants to explain here, it seems to me, is that he tries to enter Srila Vyasadeva's paradigm while reading the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Then why does he a few sentences later say that science has disproved much of what Srila Vyasadeva wrote in the *Bhagavatam*? When in 1947 Thomas Kuhn had his revelation of how the paradigm shifts, he understood that Aristotle's physics were not wrong, they were just different. Quantum physics seems to support much the same view in its uncertainty principle: that an experiment may prove a certain thing in one instance; yet in the next instance it may prove its opposite. We cannot make arguments of "rightness" nor "wrongness" from such experimental proofs.

I would suggest that the MacNewsletter author invest some time in familiarizing himself with the philosophical issues that have arisen out of new physics. He will learn that we cannot speak of the atoms of modern science apart from the Adams--the scientists--who freely admit that they are constructions of their minds; that the evidence for the existence of atoms is only appearance; and that there is a deeper level of knowledge to which at present scientists have no access.

Scientific theories are supposed to be *descriptions* of reality; they do not constitute that reality. ... The problem is, how do we know that today's description of the Solar System is *right*? However certain we are that the present picture describes how the universe *actually* is, we cannot rule out the possibility that some new and better way of looking at things, utterly unimaginable to us now, will be discovered in the future.

If history is anything to go by, nature has a nasty habit of deceiving us about what is real and what is invented by human beings. The apparent motion of the stars, reflecting the real motion of the earth, is only one of a long list of examples in which scientists have been led astray by taking nature too much at face value.

--Paul Davies and John Gribben, *The Matter Myth*, 1991, pgs. 33-34, 35

Prabhupada: So nobody can be perfect. Therefore all these so-called perfect leaders, they should close their business. (laughter) It is already experimental, all nonsense. Come to Hare Krsna mantra and chant.

Addendum from the Internet

Boisvert's Paradox of Life and Death

As far as we know, Wilfrid Boisvert is the originator of this paradox.

Problem:

When do we die? In the past, the present, or the future?

Not in the past, as we are still living in the present.

Not in the present, as we are still living in the present. No one can be both dead and living at the same time.

Not in the future, as the future has yet to come.

Solution:

The present has a $1/64,000$ of a second duration. After each such period, we make an instantaneous leap into the next period. There can be no motion and therefore no change during any of these periods.

To die is to fail to make this instantaneous atomic leap into the next such period. We therefore die precisely between the present and the future.

If quantum mechanics had been understood in the past, no paradoxes of motion would ever have surfaced.

Prague, Czech Republic
16 June 2004

Worry About Adam, Not the Atom

Part 3

In Part 1 I wrote:

...in quantum physics, matter and energy are translated into an idea. It's an idea that scientists are getting an amazing amount of work out of. But what's *going on* with matter and energy while they puts out all that work is purely conceptual. A quantum of heat energy, for example, has never been seen. Nor will it *ever* be seen, because it is not something that happens, *it is an idea of something that happens*.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.3.31:

*yatha nabhasi meghaugho
renur va parthivo 'nile
evam drastari drsyatvam
aropitam abuddhibhih*

Clouds and dust are carried by the air, but less intelligent persons say that the sky is cloudy and the air is dirty. Similarly, they also implant material bodily conceptions on the spirit self.

Srila Prabhupada points out in his purport:

It is further confirmed herein that with our material eyes and senses we cannot see the Lord, who is all spirit. We cannot even detect the spiritual spark which exists within the material body of the living being. We look to the outward covering of the body or subtle mind of the living being, but we cannot see the spiritual spark within the body. So we have to accept the living being's presence by the presence of his gross body. ... The clouds in the sky and the blue of the sky are better appreciated in this connection. Although the bluish tint of the sky and the sky itself are different, we conceive of the color of the sky as blue. But that is a general conception for the laymen only.

Credit must be given to the founders of quantum physics. They were philosophers of acute discernment. They had a grasp of the principle Srila Prabhupada speaks of above, that "the bluish tint of the sky and the sky itself are different." The nature of their observations of the microworld obliged them to admit that what they were seeing was, so to speak, only "the bluish tint of the sky." Atoms, electrons, waves--all that amounts to the bluish tint. It is for this reason that James Jeans stated, "Precise knowledge of the outer world becomes impossible for us", "The division between subject and object is no longer definite or precise", and, "So far as our knowledge is concerned, causality becomes meaningless."

Physicists who think deeply about what they are doing tell us that quantum physics is an allegory of a subject, not the subject itself. The dictionary defines allegory as "a literary, dramatic, or pictorial device in which characters and events stand for abstract ideas, principles, or forces, so that the literal sense has or suggests a parallel, deeper symbolic sense." The characters of the allegory called quantum physics are atoms, electrons, protons, neutrons, photons and so many other subatomic particles. The events are the wavefunction, the quantum leap, quantum nonlocality, quantum tunneling, etc.

But all that is but surface appearance, as James Jeans explained in the quotations presented in Part 2 of this essay. What appears on the surface of the data screen of the physicists' senses is mostly only the numerical values of instrument readings and other such indirect, machine-produced imagery. Atoms, electrons and so on, being too tiny, are never directly observed. Thus these characters and the actions they perform are inventions of the human mind to explain something that is perceived only analogously.

With all this going on, the physicists are made acutely aware of the role that human consciousness plays in observation. And so the winding trail of our reflections on how quantum physics works brings us back to the *Bhagavatam* verse quoted above. What is to be known (the "bit" from which the "it" comes) is actually nonmaterial, having the nature of pure consciousness. Materiality is an obstruction of *our* knowledge of *that* knowledge, just as clouds and dust are obstructions of our knowledge of the sky. We make a mistake when we say, "The air is dusty" or "The sky is cloudy." Similarly it is a mistake to say, "Existence is in the last analysis just atoms, electrons, etc." The sages of the new physics know this much. What they see of the microworld is just appearance; what *is* is something else entirely, beyond their powers of observation and inference, beyond the reach of mechanistic laws of causation.

Moment-to-moment manifestation

Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.7.49

*kalena hy ogha-vegena
bhutanam prabhavapyayau
nityav api na drsyete
atmano 'gner yatharcisam*

The flames of a fire appear and disappear at every moment, and yet this creation and destruction is not noticed by the ordinary observer. Similarly, the mighty waves of time flow constantly, like the powerful currents of a river, and imperceptibly cause the birth, growth and death of innumerable material bodies. And yet the soul, who is thus constantly forced to change his position, cannot perceive the actions of time.

Srila Prabhupada, 4 March 1975 in Dallas:

The body is destroyed. It is being destroyed every moment. From scientific point of view we are changing our blood corpuscle and another body like the, what is called, film. One after another picture, one after, one after, one after, and when they are displayed, it appears one. But it is not one. There are so many pictures. They put

into the machine, and when they work together, it appears that the man within the picture is moving. Actually, that movement is combination of many pictures.

In the microworld, the "motion" of a unit of energy along the surface of space and time is not motion as we know it. To understand motion at the quantum level we have to translate it into probability: that there is a chance the unit of energy may "go" from here to there, or from here to different place. As John D. Barrow explains in *Impossibility--The Limits of Science and the Science of Limits* (1998, pg. 24), there is

an appreciable probability for it to be found in a state of motion that is impossible according to Newton's laws. Such states are frequently observed.

This impossible motion that physicists frequently observe speaks for the disappearance (destruction) of the energy unit at one point and its reappearance (reconstitution) at the next point. Now you, dear reader, may have heard about the many-worlds interpretation of quantum physics. It was proposed by an American physicist, Hugh Everett, in 1957. In brief, his interpretation entails a bizarre scenario in which the entire universe divides instant by instant into two universes.

In quantum physics, what happens next in our world is a question of chance, like the flip of a coin. But rather than only one choice happening, both happen because the universe instantaneously divides, like a cosmic amoeba, into two. One universe is the head of the coin, the other is the tail. In each of these universes the question of "What happens next?" is answered in the same way: each universe splits off into two more; and each of those into two more, on and on without end. And so it follows that there are infinite universes parallel to ours, each in its own reality; and in each one, you and I are living out possibilities that could have happened but didn't happen in this universe. Parallel reality is the logical consequence of quantum "motion." In one way, the theory of parallel reality shows that quantum theory, even though it "works," extends into absurdity. But in another way it shows the sense of Srila Prabhupada's comparing the instant-by-instant state of our body to the successive frames of a motion picture film.

The many-worlds interpretation--which is still very much a part of today's physics--came about simply because scientists tend to be atheistic. They find it hard to accept that, just as in a film, there is a script and direction for what happens in the universe. The reason for scientists why something happens is chance: either/or.

As we have seen, events in the microworld are described in quantum physics as occurring along a wave of probability. Located at each point along the wave is a "bit"--the potential yes/no answer to the question, "Is the unit of energy here?" Quantum theory demands that the yes/no question be answered by an act of observation. Otherwise it cannot be answered. Though the theory has incredible predictive power, its logic runs into philosophical paradox. Even when we are not observing it, the world seems to run onward in time, things happening one after another. The many-worlds interpretation is an attempt to account for that. The decision whether "either" happens or "or" happens is thus not left suspended in some ghostly state until we arrive with our powers of observation. *Both* happen--automatically, mechanistically--because the universe is constantly dividing!

Time, space, energy, information

Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.11.4:

*sa kalah paramanur vai
yo bhunkte paramanutam
sato 'visesa-bhug yas tu
sa kalah paramo mahan*

Atomic time is measured according to its covering a particular atomic space. That time which covers the unmanifest aggregate of atoms is called the great time.

In physics we find a concept known as Sprenger's triangle, named after a Swiss physicist, Daniel Sprenger. At one corner of the triangle is time (t), at another is energy (E), and at the third is information (I). As explained by Barrow in *Impossibility* (pgs. 146-147),

Any two of the three attributes can be traded in for the other two. Any point in the triangle represents a particular mixture of the three ingredients needed to accomplish a given task.

In Srila Prabhupada's purport to the verse just cited, we find a connection drawn between time, space (energy being the force needed to move from one point in space to another over a specific time), and information (which reveals position, direction and speed, implicit in the manifestation of planets spoken of here).

Time and space are two correlative terms. Time is measured in terms of its covering a certain space of atoms. Standard time is calculated in terms of the movement of the sun. The time covered by the sun in passing over an atom is calculated as atomic time. The greatest time of all covers the entire existence of the nondual manifestation. All the planets rotate and cover space, and space is calculated in terms of atoms. Each planet has its particular orbit for rotating, in which it moves without deviation, and similarly the sun has its orbit. The complete calculation of the time of creation, maintenance and dissolution, measured in terms of the circulation of the total planetary systems until the end of creation, is known as the supreme *kala*.



Quantum physics employs a system of thought called *simultaneous logic* that correlates time, space, energy, and information. Because of that logic, one thing, such as a photon (a unit of light energy), can be polarized in two directions; one thing, an electron, can be understood to be in many places at once. Simultaneous logic is pictorially displayed by the famous two face/one vase diagram. In Bhagavata terms, simultaneous logic operates in *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*, the doctrine of simultaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference.

Dr. Subhash Kak of Louisiana State University writes in *Vaisnava Metaphysics or a Science of Consciousness* (1997-8, pg. 2):

It is important to realize that quantum or *simultaneous* logic did not first arise in the human imagination with the development of quantum physics. Much of the ancient mystical writings are informed by it. For example, the story of Krsna dancing *simultaneously* with the *gopis* is in accordance with such a logic.

Though Bhagavata logic and quantum logic have their points of similarity, the physical cosmology in which they are put to work are not the same. Thus they differ in their descriptions of specific "things" like, for example, an atom. What separates the two cosmologies is that the *Bhagavatam* reveals the form of the universe in terms of higher-than-human information that comes down from ancient times, and moreover from a much vaster scale of cosmic time relative to Earth's; whereas the model of the physical universe of quantum physics is assembled from the experimental knowledge of human beings who live in the present Earth-scaled time of this Kali Yuga. Put simply, if we triangulate the two systems according to Sprenger's model, we'll see that the time corner and the information corner are different. And in the energy corner, we have to factor into our comparison that Krsna has absolute mastery over the material and spiritual energies; scientists, on the other hand, do not. While the logic of the two systems is similar, the results are sure to be different because the values the logic works with are different.

Adam, where's my atom?

At the end of the day, however, one important aspect of the physical universe is common to both: the invisibility of the atom. Modern science says that single atoms are smaller than the wavelength of light; even with the most powerful optical microscope, it is impossible to see them. Objects as small as a molecule--a particle formed of chemically combined atoms--can be seen with the help of enhanced optical microscopy. According to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3.11.5, a *trasarenu* or hexatom (a molecule of six atoms) is observable in *jala-arka*, light shining through a screen. Before dismissing this as impossible, we should remember that the science of the *Bhagavatam* predates the Age of Kali, which began 5000 years ago. The physical abilities of people before this age is described as far surpassing those of people today. It follows that they may have been able, with the help of a screen, to see a molecular particle.

There may be no connection at all, but this is too interesting not to mention. The first electron microscope, built by Ernst Ruska in 1931, made objects too small for the eye to see visible on a phosphor screen. An electron microscope uses electron waves, which are much narrower in length than light. For that very reason the human eye is unable to see directly images carried by electron waves. A screen of electron-sensitive material must be used to display the image. Nowadays electron microscopes are connected to CRT monitors.

Ernst Ruska's invention met a lot of skepticism from scientists. To be sure, he did receive the Nobel Prize for the new microscope--but not until 1986. Another great step in image magnification was the development of the Scanning Probe Microscope in 1981, which utilizes the principle of quantum tunneling. The first SPM, like the first electron microscope, stirred up a great deal of resistance in the scientific community. Today there are microscopes so powerful that they image a single atom. At least that's the belief. In any case, the images produced by such instruments are indirect. It is a process of the intellect, not of direct sense perception, to identify an image on a CRT screen as an atom.

The point of this discussion on the atom's invisibility is that there's a great deal of uncertainty involved in coming to terms with what an atom really is. That's why this series of three articles is titled *Worry About Adam, not the Atom*. Because it's through Adam (the human scientist) that you and I, ordinary folks, receive our

knowledge of atoms. Atomic knowledge means quantum physics. About quantum physics, Richard Feynman, Nobel prize winner and father of Quantum Electrodynamics, stated:

There was a time when the newspapers said that only twelve men understood the theory of relativity. I do not believe there was ever such a time. There might have been a time when only one man did, but he was the only guy who caught on, before he wrote his paper. But after people read the paper, a lot of people understood the theory of relativity in some way or other, certainly more than twelve. On the other hand, I think I can safely say that nobody understands quantum mechanics.

Can we say that modern science has proved or disproved the physics and cosmology of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*? Possibly the biggest name in astrophysics today is Stephen Hawking. As quoted by Kitty Ferguson in *The Fire in the Equations*, 1994, pg. 21, he says that quantum theory is about "what we do not know and cannot predict." Ferguson furthermore notes, "It is generally agreed that in science nothing can ever be 'proved.'" (pg. 26). About what he called "knowledge concerning the universe as a whole," the great mathematician-philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote, "the proposed proofs that, in virtue of the laws of logic such and such things *must* exist and such and such others cannot, are not capable of surviving a critical scrutiny." (*Problems of Philosophy*, 1912, pg. 82)

MacNewsletter physics

It is curious, then, to read the following in the newsletter printed by an ISKCON temple in Europe and sent out to its congregation:

Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) have been long disproved by science.

In fairness to the author of this gem of wisdom, but also to sharpen my own arguments regarding his claim to know what is proven by science, I'll quote the whole paragraph in which the sentence is found.

The trance of Vyasa has been painstakingly analyzed by Srila Jiva Gosvami in the first part of his magnum opus, *Bhagavata-sandarbha* (*Tattva-sandarbha* 39-48). He uses it as a hermeneutical tool: by understanding so to speak the heart of Vyasa, his motivation for writing the *Bhagavatam*, one can also understand obscure details of the text. When reading, I also try to follow the twists and turns of the narrative with this in mind. How does this particular detail reflect more light on the glory of the Lord, and how does it help the suffering entities? For example, the second and third cantos contain several descriptions of creation, some--at least to my limited understanding--contradictory. Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) are also long since disproved by science. However, the motive of Vyasa in including such material is not to give us a primer in physics, it is to help the suffering living entities. These paragraphs describe how matter appears and becomes variegated and thus--of one works backward from the end--how to end involvement in matter. Not only that, they also show how Krishna is involved in every step of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this world, while all the time remaining separate from it.

There is much in this passage that is excellent, but one can argue--as I believe Srila Prabhupada would if he read this--that it is rendered meaningless in its entirety by the sentence I quoted to start with, "Many of these descriptions..." etc.

So everything is there in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. That is the topmost knowledge. That is transcendental knowledge. That is not material knowledge. Material knowledge, if you write some book, it has no meaning, because it is defective. But *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is not ordinary knowledge. It is transcendental knowledge. There is no defect. Our this mundane brain is defective. We can't... Just like our scientist, Svarupa Damodara. He was speaking that they make experiment in the laboratory according to formula, but still, there is some mistake. Still, there is some mistake. Practically, scientific advancement, scientific knowledge means to find out mistakes. What you were are speaking? What is the exact language you told?

Svarupa Damodara: I said there is always some statistical factor, which is called error. (laughter) Error is always slipping in.

Prabhupada: So nobody can be perfect. Therefore all these so-called perfect leaders, they should close their business. (laughter) It is already experimental, all nonsense. Come to Hare Krsna mantra and chant.

One could say the author of the newsletter article is simply not so convinced about everything that is in the *Bhagavatam*, that's all. He does write that he sees contradictions in the different accounts of creation "at least according to my limited understanding." All right; he's being honest there. Give him credit. But we have to stick to his words, and the problem is he doesn't stop with a confession of his own limited understanding. He calls upon the authority of science to argue that the atomic theory of the *Bhagavatam* is "long since disproved", as are "many" other descriptions.

After I read this article, I thought about it for a few days. During that time I happened to read a news report on Yahoo.com. Seems the MacDonald's hamburger chain is ticked off by a popular documentary film called *Super Size Me*. The film-maker recorded himself eating nothing but MacDonald's fast food (burgers and fries) for a month. As a result he became overweight and unhealthy. The report explained that in recent years MacDonald's has become sensitive to criticism about the unhealthiness of a burgers-and-fries diet, so it's added several healthy items to its menu. (I've seen myself in India that McDonald's promotes a vegetarian sandwich--alongside the MacBurgers, MacChicken, etc.) Therefore MacDonalds takes umbrage at *Super Size Me*. It's the film-maker's fault that he got fat and sick, the defense goes. Our menu is variegated. You have a choice of healthier items, if you want them.

Prominent among the mind's functions is the drawing of relations between various data. And so it happened that my mind placed the Yahoo new report about MacDonald's trouble with the *Super Size Me* film next to the newsletter paragraph. I began to see a similarity. The newsletter offers a menu for all tastes. Oh, you're a devotee? You have full faith in Krsna? Here, we at ISKCON MacNewsletter have something you'll enjoy! We call it: the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight!

The *Bhagavatam* shows how Krishna is involved in every step of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this world. Yummy!

And if your faith is still grounded in modern science, if you approach religious scriptures skeptically, well, we're not going to shove the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight down your throat. Take this: the MacScience Beef Bomb!

Many of these descriptions (such as the atomic theory of the third canto) have been long disproved by science. Mmmm-MMMMMHHH!

Ah-ah-ah, now: just lifting the old nasal orifice 45 degrees and sniffing, "That's NOT a serious response," won't do. My response is no doubt picturesque, but it's as serious as a heart attack. Neither the MacShraddha All-Veg Delight nor the MacScience Beef Bomb will be accepted by a serious devotee, because both are coming off the same griddle and are fried up by the same cook. In other words, the frame of reference out of which "both sides of the story" are coming is the mundane, relative frame. In this frame, all tastes, all points of view--theistic or atheistic--are placed on the same level. You can take your choice. That's called intellectual freedom *in the material world*.

The new *upadhis*: liberal and conservative

This relativistic frame of "free discourse" in which proponents of the "liberal and conservative viewpoints" are invited to exchange their ideas in an atmosphere of dry intellectualism has indeed entered ISKCON. It has been nicely analyzed at the ISKCON Culture Journal website (<http://siddhanta.com/archives/culture/000042.html>). I'll quote some highlights here.

It is a curiosity that those who have adopted new and apparently unauthorized views since Srila Prabhupada's departure, now label anyone who doesn't join their newfound faith (or embrace the practical deviations that must follow from it) as "old-fashioned," "conservative," "fundamentalist," etc.

...[G]iven the general tenor of the preponderance of evidence we've all heard from *guru/sadhu/sastra/itihasa*, we've hardly an explicit and logically consistent injunction for the liberal interpretation... Hence it cannot be objective either. Yet objective authority is precisely what is required to unify the radical diverse opinions typical of present day ISKCON. We need ground rules, and they are already plentifully available, should we decide to listen to them as much as Srila Prabhupada advised us to.

Therefore, it is essential and only natural to resort to what the *Bhagavatam* itself holds up as a fourth *pramana--itihasa* (i.e., tradition)--in order to resolve the conflicting and relative exchange of personal views that will otherwise go on endlessly. This is a no-brainer, I think. The main problem seems to be that those who feel their personal preferences threatened by this recourse will refuse to acknowledge its validity and worth.

...[F]or definite (if yet unknown) reasons, someone feels it necessary to relativize Srila Prabhupada's instructions as merely "the conservative view," as if anyone ever had--or could possibly sustain--such dubious propositions in Srila Prabhupada's presence. I think the guidance of those who received the most personal training by Srila Prabhupada is invaluable in regard to such practical disputes, because the

instructions his Divine grace gave them was not only usually practical in nature, but also undeniably objective for anyone who accepts Srila Prabhupada's authority.

...[T]his appeal to newfangled *upadhis*. When did Srila Prabhupada ever teach anyone about the "conservative" or "liberal" approaches to his instructions on Krsna consciousness?

Tell us, please. The subtext above is that anyone is free to choose either one at whim, as if some sort of transcendently accredited and recognized option was our established standard.

Frankly, that smells. It seems more like a pernicious social agenda aimed at undermining much of what Srila Prabhupada worked hard to establish, perpetrated by those whose stubborn material attachments have gradually corroded their faith, largely as the result of indiscriminate association. Those so involved can be encouraged to reconsider the precise nature of their adopted beliefs, along with the constitutional prejudices that nurtured them.

Throughout the entire Gita (even in his final conclusions) Krsna consistently reiterates that one must follow the objective and explicit injunctions defining and governing everyone's prescribed duties. These were never questioned by our previous *acaryas*, who except in rare cases of extremely exalted souls, followed Krsna's rules faithfully and in due humility. So there is a pre-existing consensus; I'm sorry to suggest that it simply isn't we who get to arbitrate such things as much as we might like--or feel qualified--to do.

One instruction Lord Krsna gives, which I think is very relevant to the topic, is that His devotees are to practice austerity of the mind (*Bg.* 17.16). "Satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one's existence are the austerities of the mind." In the purport Srila Prabhupada writes that in essence, austerity of the mind is to detach it from sense gratification. Sense gratification means to enjoy different material tastes. When we embrace in our mind different focal points of the materialistic account of the world, we are not practicing austerity of the mind. This may not be deliberate. We may reach out to science because we are mentally unsettled and don't know where else to turn.

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Science is such an influential, integral part of mainstream Western culture that when all else fails, we fall back on the ways we are most familiar with--even if those ways are highly questionable.

Historically and culturally, we seek to understand our world through science. Very briefly, science fundamentally involves the study of a real-world process, a model of the real world process that professes to resemble in form the real-world process, some predictions derived from the model, and test data to validate the model. As a byproduct, the scientific method has produced the technological advancement which has more or less convinced the world that scientific reasoning and methodologies are a sound and sure way to understand our universe.

For circumstantial and cultural reasons, we have varying degrees of trust (mostly favorable) that science can discover things about our universe that, when known, will reveal the means to attain our desires. Coping with the complexities, ambiguities and pressures of today's way of life is something many of us desire, so in good faith we turn to science to help us solve our personal and societal problems.

Hey buddy, can you paradigm? (reprise)

Getting back to the point of the MacNewsletter's claim that science has disproved many descriptions in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, I have a strong inkling that the author is himself pretty uninformed about the new physics. His idea of the atom, I'll bet, comes out of the 19th century, when physicists believed atoms to be solid little balls of matter situated objectively in the world external to us. How else could he be so sure of himself?

Dr. Subash Kak, writing in the same article I quote from above, observes on page 4,

Although the quantum revolution in science took place more than seventy years ago, its ideas, as mentioned before, are not well understood by psychologists or scholars of religion who continue to use classical logic almost exclusively.

Sometimes members of ISKCON trained in the way of religious studies cite a book by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in which he seems to give credence to some Western accounts of the history of religion. The idea is that he was taking a preaching initiative by making the Bhagavata philosophy more accessible to those trained in the Western way. That may be, but that book was published decades before the new physics. As I explained in Part 1 of this essay, the new physics is a fundamental root to the shift in the paradigm that Western culture is now undergoing.

Now we have come full circle, back to the paradigm. This brings up yet one more curiosity of the MacNewsletter paragraph. The author writes, "by understanding so to speak the heart of Vyasa, his motivation for writing the *Bhagavatam*, one can also understand obscure details of the text. When reading, I also try to follow the twists and turns of the narrative with this in mind." What the author wants to explain here, it seems to me, is that he tries to enter Srila Vyasadeva's paradigm while reading the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Then why does he a few sentences later say that science has disproved much of what Srila Vyasadeva wrote in the *Bhagavatam*? When in 1947 Thomas Kuhn had his revelation of how the paradigm shifts, he understood that Aristotle's physics were not wrong, they were just different. Quantum physics seems to support much the same view in its uncertainty principle: that an experiment may prove a certain thing in one instance; yet in the next instance it may prove its opposite. We cannot make arguments of "rightness" nor "wrongness" from such experimental proofs.

I would suggest that the MacNewsletter author invest some time in familiarizing himself with the philosophical issues that have arisen out of new physics. He will learn that we cannot speak of the atoms of modern science apart from the Adams--the scientists--who freely admit that they are constructions of their minds; that the evidence for the existence of atoms is only appearance; and that there is a deeper level of knowledge to which at present scientists have no access.

Scientific theories are supposed to be *descriptions* of reality; they do not constitute that reality. ... The problem is, how do we know that today's description of the Solar System is *right*? However certain we are that the present picture describes how the universe *actually* is, we cannot rule out the possibility that some new and better way of looking at things, utterly unimaginable to us now, will be discovered in the future.

If history is anything to go by, nature has a nasty habit of deceiving us about what is real and what is invented by human beings. The apparent motion of the stars, reflecting the real motion of the earth, is only one of a long list of examples in which scientists have been led astray by taking nature too much at face value.

--Paul Davies and John Gribben, *The Matter Myth*, 1991, pgs. 33-34, 35

Prabhupada: So nobody can be perfect. Therefore all these so-called perfect leaders, they should close their business. (laughter) It is already experimental, all nonsense. Come to Hare Krsna mantra and chant.

Addendum from the Internet

Boisvert's Paradox of Life and Death

As far as we know, Wilfrid Boisvert is the originator of this paradox.

Problem:

When do we die? In the past, the present, or the future?

Not in the past, as we are still living in the present.

Not in the present, as we are still living in the present. No one can be both dead and living at the same time.

Not in the future, as the future has yet to come.

Solution:

The present has a $1/64,000$ of a second duration. After each such period, we make an instantaneous leap into the next period. There can be no motion and therefore no change during any of these periods.

To die is to fail to make this instantaneous atomic leap into the next such period. We therefore die precisely between the present and the future.

If quantum mechanics had been understood in the past, no paradoxes of motion would ever have surfaced.

Prague, Czech Republic
17 June 2004

For the next "while" (meaning that I'm not sure how long) In2-MeC will be more of a blog (*web log*) than a publishing outlet of articles like the *Worry About Adam, not the Atom* series. That is because I'm being urged to release the 2003 series on Psychology for publication in book form. These articles must be edited, so that work will occupy most of my writing time. Still, photo reports, tidbits of news from here and there, and blog type entries will continue to be featured here.

If you downloaded Part 3 of the *Adam/Atom* series before reading this, and if you are really interested in the topic, then you should go back to yesterday's In2-MeC and re-open the entry to download the final version. I have developed a unique writing style that often impels me to upload articles for publication that have not been carefully edited. That's because I find careful editing too tedious. Not only that: it seems that, because it was *me* who wrote these articles, I am somehow blind to the mistakes in them, at least before they are published. So there's not only the tedium factor, there's my writer's blind spot. After these articles are published on In2-MeC the mistakes leap off the screen at me. Then at last I'm stirred to go through the thing with a fine-toothed comb. In this way, I corrected *Adam/Atom* Part 3 during the first 24 hours of its life on-line.

If the reader is interested in reading more about what the *Bhagavatam* has to say about atoms, I recommend chapter 15 of Canto Eleven. This chapter tells how *yogis* may acquire mystic powers via meditation upon the Lord. We learn here that the eight mystic powers are sheltered in the Lord as His eternal associates. Verses 10 and 12 speak of powers that are to be gained when the *yogi* meditates upon the Lord in His smaller-than-the-smallest form at the heart of the atom. Verse 12 indicates that atom is a manifestation of the Lord's form as time. Hence the essential "stuff" of atomic and subatomic particles is *kala*. Regarding the counterintuitive nature of atomic motion that I explained in the *Adam/Atom* series, verse 14 and the purport explain that fruitive activities are sustained by the *mahat-tattva* like a row of jewels are sustained by a thread. Thus the workings of material actions and reactions are, on this view, a series of different states of energy, much like a series of images upon a strip of motion picture film.

Speaking of film, we've produced one ourselves here at In2-MeC. It is about modern science. To see it, go to the startpage (www.in2-mec.com) and click on this planet



which you will see rotating around baby Krsna: You have to wait a minute or so for it to download. When the movie starts, move your mouse pointer over the image. Things that are hidden will become visible! And remember, as with all of these In2-MeC animations, don't miss the sound. Enable your audio settings and be sure your speakers are turned on.

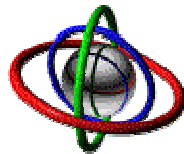
Finally, here's a very recent news report about atomic research. The word "teleport" means to transmit a material object from one location to another through the medium of *akasa*, much the way a television image is transmitted from broadcast station to the TV set in your home. In teleportation, instead of the transmission re-appearing only as an image on a 2-D screen, it re-appears in its original state, in its 3-D form as solid matter. This is the mystic power of *prapti*. This news report claims

scientists have achieved teleportation at the atomic level. It's possible, since the mystic powers accompany the Lord in His appearance within the atom.

Scientists Demonstrate Teleportation with Atoms

Wed Jun 16, 2:47 PM ET

By Patricia Reaney



LONDON (Reuters) - It is not quite the "Beam me up Scotty" teleportation of Star Trek, but teams of scientists said Wednesday they had made properties jump from one atom to another without using any physical link.

Physicists in the United States and Austria for the first time have teleported "quantum states" between separate atoms.

The breakthrough may not yet make it possible for people to disappear and reappear somewhere else, like actors in a science fiction television show. But it could help lead to "quantum computing" technology that would make superfast computers.

Quantum states include physical properties such as energy, motion and magnetic field.

"We've done it for the first time with massive particles, with atoms," Rainer Blatt, of the University of Innsbruck in Austria, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Two years ago scientists at the Australian National University announced they had teleported a laser beam of light from one spot to another in a split second.

Blatt and his colleagues and another team of scientists at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Boulder, Colorado, reported the first teleportation of atoms in two reports in the science journal Nature.

The basic theory of quantum teleportation was outlined in 1993 by physicist Charles Bennett and his colleagues.

Quantum computing requires manipulation of information contained in the quantum states of the atoms.

"Using teleportation as we've reported could allow logic operations to be performed much more quickly," physicist David Wineland, the leader of the NIST team, explained in a statement.

The research involved quantum entanglement -- in which the quantum states of two or more particles are linked without physical contact.

"There are quite a few implications . . . more on the scientific side," Blatt said. "We are far away from beamers, like beam me up Scotty," he added.

Prague, Czech Republic
18 June 2004

Yesterday I told you I don't have time during the present while for writing lengthy essays. Ah, but I neglected to say that I have a mine of old essays on my hard disk. Here is one--or the first half of one--that forms a chapter of a book I published a few years back called *Transcendental Personalism*.

The Secret That Rules All Things

Part 1

Part 2 of *The Secret that Rules All Things* will follow tomorrow!

Prague, Czech Republic
19 June 2004

The Secret That Rules All Things

Part 2

Behind a veil of fear

Takonin, Czech Republic
20 June 2004

I received this yesterday from Vidvan Gauranga, a young grhasta veteran of the ISKCON gurukula in Mayapur. He is a nice *pandita* and very engaged on the forefront of our movement's activities in Mayapur and Calcutta.

The following article by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura appears in 1999 year's issue of *The Sarasvata Gaudiya Vaisnava*, an annual journal of Sarasvata Gaudiya Vaisnava Association, Sridham Mayapur, Nadia, West Bengal, India. This Association was convened by HH Jayapataka Maharaja on behalf of Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust to help fulfill Srila Prabhupada's desires to help reunite the disciplic descendants of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. The Association also meets once a year and also holds joint Vyasa Puja celebrations of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

Especially at this time when several devotees do not mind associating with the nondevotees or do not mind learning our scriptures from them or with them, there are several very instructive points made by the great Simha Guru in this article to be considered. I have also considered the following article to be a sufficient rebuttal-in-anticipation to the speculative ideas of devotees such as Shukavak Das.

Even though the article is long, I hope that you would be happy to read this.
Therefore I have taken the opportunity to send it to so many senior devotees.

Your servant,
Vidvan Gauranga das

"Understanding the Writings of Bhaktivinoda Thakura"

By Prabhupada Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Thakura

[An article originally published in the December 1931 issue of the Harmonist magazine, under the title of "Thakura Bhaktivinoda"]

We avail of the opportunity offered by the advent of Thakura Bhaktivinoda to reflect on the right method of obtaining those benefits that have been made accessible to humanity by the grace of this great devotee of Krishna. Thakura Bhaktivinoda has been specifically kind to those unfortunate persons who are engrossed in mental speculation of all kinds. This is the prevalent malady of the present age. The other Acharyas who appeared before Thakura Bhaktivinoda did not address their discourses so directly to the empiric thinkers. They had been more merciful to those who are naturally disposed to listen to discourses on the Absolute without being dissuaded by the specious arguments of avowed opponents of Godhead. Srila Thakura Bhaktivinoda has taken the trouble of meeting the perverse arguments of mental speculations by the superior transcendental logic of the Absolute Truth. It is thus possible for the average modern readers to profit by the perusal of his writings. That day is not far distant when the priceless volumes penned by Thakura Bhaktivinoda will be reverently translated by the recipients of his grace into all the languages of the world.

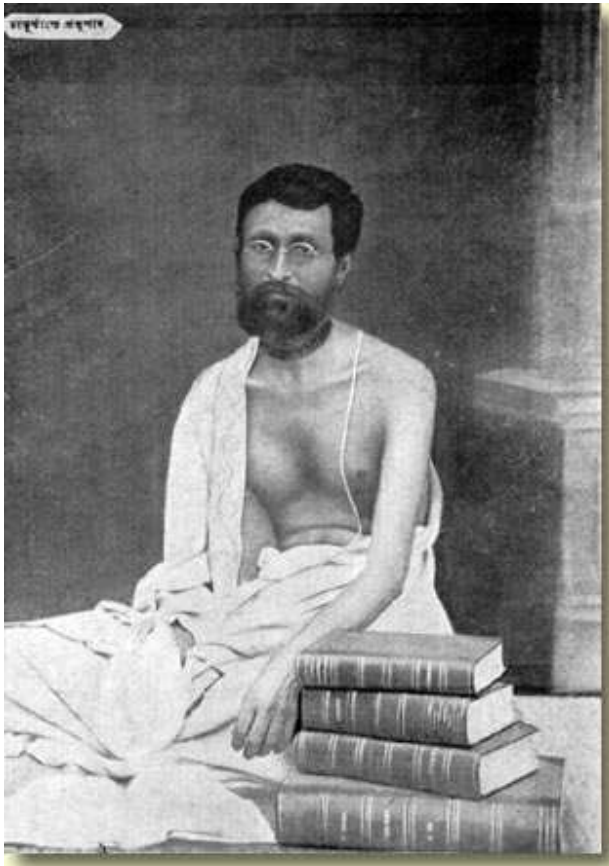
The writings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda provided the golden bridge by which the mental speculationists can safely cross the raging waters of fruitless empiric controversies that trouble the peace of those who choose to trust in their guidance for finding the truth. As soon as the sympathetic reader is in position to appreciate the sterling quality of Thakura Bhaktivinoda's philosophy, the entire vista of the revealed literature of the world will automatically open out to his reclaimed vision.

There have, however, already arisen serious misunderstandings regarding the proper interpretation of the life and teachings of Srila Thakura Bhaktivinoda. Those who suppose they understand the meaning of his message without securing the guiding grace of the acharya are disposed to unduly favor the method of empiric study of his writings. There are persons who have got by heart almost everything that he wrote without being able to catch the least particle of his meaning. Such study cannot benefit those who are not prepared to act up to the instructions lucidly conveyed by his words. There is no honest chance of missing the warnings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda. Those, therefore, who are misled by the perusal of his writings are led astray by their own obstinate perversity in sticking to the empiric course which they prefer to cherish against his explicit warnings. Let these unfortunate persons look more carefully into their own hearts for the cause of their misfortunes. The personal service of the pure devotee is essential for understanding of the words of Thakura Bhaktivinoda. The spiritual meaning of the words of Thakura Bhaktivinoda, has been

trying to draw the attention of all followers of Thakura Bhaktivinoda to this all important point of his teachings. It is not necessary to try to place ourselves on a footing of equality with Thakura Bhaktivinoda. We are not likely to benefit by mechanical imitation of any practices of Thakura Bhaktivinoda on the opportunist principle that they may be convenient for us to adopt. The guru is not an erring mortal whose activities can be understood by fallible reason of unreclaimed humanity. There is an eternally impassable line of demarcation between the savior and the saved. Those who are really saved can alone know this. Thakura Bhaktivinoda belongs to the category of the spiritual world teachers who eternally occupy the spiritual position.

The present editor has all along felt it his paramount duty to try to clear up the meaning of the life and teachings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda by the method of submissive listening to the transcendental sound from the lips of the pure devotee. The guru who realizes the transcendent meaning of all sounds, is in a position to serve the absolute by the direction of the absolute conveyed through every sound. The transcendental sound is Godhead, the mundane sound, is non-Godhead. All sound has got these opposite aptitudes. All sound reveals its divine face to the devotee and only presents its deluding aspect to the empiric pedant. The devotee talks apparently the same language as the deluded pedant who had got by heart the vocabulary of the scriptures. But notwithstanding apparent identity of performance, the one has no access to the reality while the other is absolutely free from all delusion.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura



Those who repeat the teachings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda from memory do not necessarily understand the meaning of the words they mechanically repeat. Those who pass an empiric examination regarding the contents of his writings are not necessarily also self-realized souls. They may not at all know the real meaning of the words they learnt by the method of empiric study. Take for example the name "Krishna." Every reader of Thakura Bhaktivinoda's work must be aware that the name manifests Himself on the lips of His serving devotees although He is inaccessible to our mundane senses. It is one thing to pass the examination by reproducing this true conclusion from the writings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda and quite another matter to realize the nature of the holy name of Krishna by the process conveyed by the words.

Thakura Bhaktivinoda did not want us to go to the clever mechanical

reciter of the mundane sound for obtaining access to the transcendental name of Krishna. Such a person may be fully equipped with all the written arguments in explanation of the nature of the divine name. But if we listen to all these arguments from the dead source, the words will only increase our delusion. The very same words coming from the devotee will have diametrically opposite effect. Our empiric judgment can never grasp the difference between the two performances.

The devotee is always right. The non-devotee in the shape of the empiric pedant is always and necessarily wrong. In the one case there is always present the substantive truth and nothing but substantive truth. In the other case there is present the apparent or misleading hypothesis and nothing but untruth. The wording may have the same external appearance on both cases. The identical verses of the scriptures recited by the devotee and the non-devotee, may be apparently misquoted by the devotee but the corresponding values of the two processes remain always categorically different. The devotee is right even when he apparently misquotes, the nondevotee is wrong even when he quotes correctly the very words, chapter and verse of the scriptures.

It is not empiric wisdom that this is the object of quest of the devotee. Those who read of scriptures for gathering empiric wisdom will be pursuing the wild-goosechase. There are not a few dupes of their empiric scriptural erudition. These dupes have their admiring under-dupes. But the mutual admiration society of dupes does not escape by the mere weight of their number, the misfortune due to the deliberate pursuit of the wrong course in accordance with the suggestions of our lower selves.

What are the scriptures? They are nothing but the record by the pure devotees of the divine message appearing on the lips of the pure devotees. The messages conveyed by the devotees are the same in all ages. The words of the devotees are ever identical with the scriptures. Any meaning of the scriptures that belittles the function of the devotee who is the original communicant of the divine message contradicts its own claim to be heard. Those who think that the Sanskrit language in its lexicographical sense is the language of the Divinity are as deluded as those who hold that the divine message is communicable through any other spoken dialects. All languages simultaneously express and hide the Absolute. The mundane face of all languages hides the Truth. The transcendental face of all sound expresses nothing but the Absolute. The pure devotee is the speaker of the transcendental language. The transcendental sound makes His appearance on the lips of His pure devotee. This is the direct, unambiguous appearance of the Divinity. On the lips of non-devotees the Absolute always appears in His deluding aspect. To the pure devotee the Absolute reveals Himself under all circumstances. To the conditioned soul, if he is disposed to listen in truly submissive spirit, the language of pure devotee can alone impart the knowledge of the Absolute. The conditioned soul mistakes the deluding for the real aspect when he chooses to lend his ear to the nondevotee. This is the reason why the conditioned soul is warned to avoid all association with nondevotees.

Thakura Bhaktivinoda is acknowledged by his all-sincere followers as possessing the above powers of the pure devotee of Godhead. His words have to be received from the lips of pure devotee. If his words are listened to from the lips of nondevotee they will certainly deceive. If his works are studied in the light of one's worldly experience, their meaning will refuse to disclose itself to such readers. His works belong to the class of eternal revealed literature of the world and must be approached for their right understanding through their exposition by the pure

devotee. If no help from the pure devotee is sought, the works of Thakura Bhaktivinoda will be grossly misunderstood by their readers. The attentive reader of those works will find that he is always directed to throw himself upon the mercy of the pure devotee if he is not to remain unwarrantably self-satisfied by the deluding results of his wrong method study.

The writings of Thakura Bhaktivinoda are valuable because they demolish all empiric objections against accepting the only method of approaching the Absolute in the right way. The person to whom the acharya is pleased to transmit his power is alone in a position to convey the divine message. They cannot and were never intended to give access to the Absolute without help from the pure devotee of Krishna. They direct the sincere inquirer of the truth, as all the revealed scriptures do, to pure devotee of Krishna to learn about Him by submitting to listen with open mind to the transcendental sound appearing on his lips. Before we open any of the books penned by Thakura Bhaktivinoda, we should do well to reflect a little on the attitude with which as the indispensable pre-requisite to approach the study. It is by neglecting to remember this fundamental principle that the empiric pedants find themselves so hopelessly puzzled in their vain endeavor to reconcile the statements of the different texts of the scriptures. The same difficulty is already in process of overtaking many of the so-called followers of Thakura Bhaktivinoda and for the same reason.

The person to whom the acharya is pleased to transmit his power is alone in a position to convey the divine message. This constitutes the underlying principle of the line of succession of the spiritual teachers. The acharya thus authorized has no other duty than that of delivering intact the message received from all his predecessors. There is no difference between the pronouncement of one acharya and another. All of them are perfect mediums for the appearance of the Divinity in the form of the transcendental name who is identical with His form, quality, activity and paraphernalia.



Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

The Divinity is absolute knowledge. Absolute knowledge has the character of indivisible unity. One particle of the absolute knowledge is capable of revealing all the potency of the Divinity. Those who want to understand the contents of the volumes penned by Thakura Bhaktivinoda by the piece-meal acquisitive method available to the mind on the mundane plane are bound to be self-deceived. Those who are sincere seekers of the truth are alone eligible to find Him and through the proper method of His quest.

In order to be put on the tract of the Absolute, listening to the words of the pure devotee is absolutely necessary. The spoken word of the devotee is the absolute. It is only the Absolute who can give Himself away to the constituents of His power. The Absolute appears to the listening ear of the conditioned soul in the form of the name on the lips of the sadhu. This is the key to the whole position. The works of

Thakura Bhaktivinoda direct the empiric pedant to discharge his wrong method and inclination on the threshold of the real quest of the Absolute. If the pedant still chooses to carry his errors into the realm of the Absolute Truth, he only marches by a deceptive by-path into the regions of darker ignorance by his arrogant study of the scriptures. The method offered by Thakura Bhaktivinoda is identical with the object of request. The method is not really grasped except by the grace of the pure devotee. The arguments, indeed, are these. But they can only corroborate, but can never be a substitute for, the words from the living source of the truth who is none other than the pure devotee of Krishna, the concrete Personal Absolute.

Thakura Bhaktivinoda's greatest gift to the world consists in this that he has brought about the appearance of those pure devotees who are at present, carrying on the movement of unalloyed devotion to the feet of Sri Krishna by their own wholetime spiritual service of the Divinity. The purity of the soul is only analogously describable by the resources of the mundane language. The highest ideal of empiric morality is no better than the grossest wickedness to the transcendental perfect purity of the bona fide devotee of the Absolute. The word "morality" itself is a mischievous misnomer when it is applied to any quality of the conditioned soul. The hypocritical contentment with a negative attitude is part and parcel of the principal of undiluted immorality.

Those who pretend to recognize the divine mission of Thakur Bhaktivinoda without aspiring to the unconditioned service of those pure souls who really follow the

teachings of the Thakura Bhaktivinoda by the method enjoined by the scriptures and explained by Thakura Bhaktivinoda in a way that is so eminently suited to the requirements of the sophisticated mentality of the present age, only deceive themselves and their willing victims by their hypocritical professions and performances. These persons must not be confounded with the bona fide member of the flock.

Thakura Bhaktivinoda has predicted the consummation of religious unity of the world by the appearance of the only universal church, which bears the eternal designation of the Brahma-sampradaya. He has given mankind the blessed assurance that all theistic churches will shortly merge in the one eternal spiritual community by the grace of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya. The spiritual community is not circumscribed by the conditions of time and space, race and nationality. Mankind has been looking forward to this far off divine event through the long ages. Thakura Bhaktivinoda has made the conception available in its practicable spiritual form to the open-minded empiricist who is prepared to undergo the process of enlightenment. The keystone of the arch has been laid which will afford the needed shelter to all awakened animation under its ample encircling arms. Those who would thoughtlessly allow their hollow pride of race, pseudo-knowledge or pseudo-virtue to stand in the way of this long hoped for consummation, would have to thank only themselves for not being incorporated in the spiritual society of all pure souls.

These plain words need not be misrepresented by arrogant persons who are full of the vanity of empiric ignorance as the pronouncement of aggressive sectarianism. The aggressive pronouncement of the concrete truth is the crying necessity of the moment for silencing the aggressive propaganda of specific untruth that is being carried on all over the world by the preachers of empiric contrivances for the amelioration of the hard lot of conditioned souls. The empiric propaganda clothes itself in the language of negative abstraction for deluding those who are engrossed in the selfish pursuit of worldly enjoyment. But there is positive and concrete function of the pure soul, which should not be perversely confounded with any utilitarian form of worldly activity. Mankind stands in need of that positive spiritual function of which the hypocritical impersonalists are in absolute ignorance. The positive function of the soul harmonizes the claims of extreme selfishness with those of extreme self-abnegation in the society of pure souls even in this mundane world. In each concrete realizable form the function is perfectly accessible to the empiric understanding. Its imperfect and misleading conception alone is available by the study of the scriptures to the conditioned soul that is not helped by the causeless grace of the pure devotee of Godhead.

[End]

*Takonin, Czech Republic
22 June 2004*

Compare the nectar. . .

**From the *Anubhasya* commentary of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati
Thakura**

to *Sri-Caitanya-caritamṛta* *Adi-līlā* 10. 135-136
translated by Punya-palaka dasa (ISKCON Prague)



Caitanya-carita-mahakavya, canto 13, 89-109: In Puri, there lived one pure-hearted, compassionate great soul named Sikhi Mahiti. He was a genuine servant of Lord Jagannatha, the ornament of Nilacala. He had a younger brother named Murari Mahiti, and their younger sister was Madhavi-devi who had a pure intelligence. Both his dear younger brother and younger sister were attracted to Sri Gaurasundara. Their natural clear good intelligence never allowed them to forget Him. Kṛṣṇa

who had come on the surface of this earth recently as Vṛndavana-candra and now in the form of Gaura-candra, made it a constant rule that this brother and sister felt a lot of auspicious love for Lord Gaura. They were exerting a great endeavor to make their elder brother, a loving servant of Jagannatha, the Lord of Puri, worship Sri Gaurasundara, but Sikhi Mahiti was not at all inclined to serve Lord Gaura.

Once, he fell asleep while thinking a lot about his younger relatives' suggestions. At the end of the night, he got startled--he saw in his dream how his brother and sister woke him up to bring him to see the lotus feet of Lord Gaura. When he saw this wonderful dream, he became both so thrilled and joyful that he was completely deranged by it. After he gradually opened his eyes, full of tears, he saw his younger brother and sister in front of him. Awaken, seeing the two great souls who had arrived, he embraced them in his ecstasy. All were amazed by the situation. Sikhi Mahiti began to narrate to them: "My dear brother, I had such a dream, please listen, it is very wonderful. The glory of Sri Saci-suta is so unlimited, only today have I become convinced of that. I saw how Gaurasundara, after taking darsana of the Lord of Nilacala, was repeatedly entering into Him and coming out of Him, and then again He was looking at Him--in this way He was extending His *līlā*. How amazing! Even now I see the Supreme Lord Gaurasundara in that situation. Are my eyes deceiving me? Alas, when this Gaurasundara, an unlimited ocean of mercy, saw me coming near to Lord Jagannatha, He first called my name and then He embraced me with His long, noble, beautiful arms. "



Sikhi, thus extremely delighted, was shedding tears profusely and his voice was faltering with love. Having said all that, he emerged from his ecstatic state. Murari and Madhavi, his younger brother and sister, heard his descriptions, and they suggested to go for a *darsana* of Jagannatha, with the aim to see their Lord. All three of them then went together in agreement for the *darsana* of Nilacala-pati. Murari and Madhavi were shedding tears of bliss, when they saw Lord Caitanya in the Jagamohana kirtana hall, but their elder brother Sikhi Mahiti saw the Lord exactly as previously in his dream, he saw Him everywhere in that very mood, and love bloomed in his heart. Mahavadanya Mahaprabhu also told him, "You are the elder brother of Murari!" and He embraced him by His arms. With intelligence now fixed in the service of Lord Gaura, Sikhi Mahiti also felt great happiness. In this way, forgetting everything while perceiving the aroma of the lotus feet of Sri Gaura, Sikhi Mahiti made Him his worshipping Deity and began to serve Him.

From Srila Prabhupada's purport to the above C. c. verse:

In the *Gaura-ganoddheda-dipika*, verse 189, it is said that Sikhi Mahiti was formerly an assistant of Srimati Radharani named Ragalekha. His sister Madhavi was also an assistant of Srimati Radharani and was named Kalakeli. Sikhi Mahiti, Madhavi and their brother Murari Mahiti were all unalloyed devotees of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu who could not forget Him for a moment of their lives. There is a book in the Oriya language called *Caitanya-carita-mahakavya* in which there are many narrations about Sikhi Mahiti. One narration concerns his seeing an ecstatic dream.

Sikhi Mahiti always engaged in serving the Lord in his mind. One night, while he was rendering such service, he fell asleep, and while he was asleep his brother and sister came to awaken him. At that time he was in full ecstasy because he was having a wonderful dream that Lord Caitanya, while visiting the temple of Jagannatha, was entering and again coming out of the body of Jagannatha and looking at the Jagannatha Deity. Thus as soon as he awakened he embraced his brother and sister and informed them, "My dear brother and sister, I have had a wonderful dream that I shall now explain to you. The activities of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the son of Mother Saci, are certainly most wonderful. I saw that Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, while visiting the temple of Jagannatha, was entering the body of Jagannatha and again coming out of His body. I am still seeing the same dream. Do you think I have become deranged? I am still seeing the same dream! And the most wonderful thing is that as soon as I came near Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He embraced me with His long arms. " As he spoke to his brother and sister in this way, Sikhi Mahiti's voice faltered, and there were tears in his eyes. Thus the brothers and sister went to the temple of Jagannatha, and there they saw Lord Caitanya in Jagamohana, looking at the beauty of Sri Jagannatha Deity just as in Sikhi Mahiti's dream. The Lord was so magnanimous that immediately He embraced Sikhi Mahiti, exclaiming, "You are the elder brother of Murari!" Being thus embraced, Sikhi Mahiti felt ecstatic transcendental bliss. Thus he and his brother and sister always engaged in rendering service to the Lord. Murari Mahiti, the youngest brother of Sikhi Mahiti, is described in the *Madhya-lila*, Chapter 10, verse 44.

Takonin, Czech Republic
23 June 2004

**From the *Anubhasya* commentary of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati
Thakura**

to *Sri-Caitanya-caritamrta* *Adi-lila* 11. 13

translated by Punya-palaka dasa (ISKCON Prague)

TEXT 13

Two devotees of Lord Caitanya named Sri Ramadasa and Gadadhara dasa always lived with Sri Virabhadra Goswami.

From Srila Prabhupada's Purport: The temple where Abhirama Thakura worshiped has a very old history. The Deity in the temple is known as Gopinatha. There are many sevaita families living near the temple. It is said that Abhirama Thakura had a whip and that whoever he touched with it would immediately become an elevated devotee of Krsna. Among his many disciples, Sriman Srinivasa Acarya was the most famous and the most dear, but it is doubtful that he was his initiated disciple. "



Anubhasya commentary: Inside the temple there is Sri Baladeva, Sri Madana-mohana (alone), on a 1 1/4 cubit high and 1 cubit wide slab of touchstone there is *vastra-harana-lila*, a *kadamba* tree, Yamuna, and along with the cowherd boys a form of Sri Gopinatha engraved--these are the worshipable Deities. Then there is a *murti* of Abhirama Thakura dancing in ecstasy, and on the throne there is a *murti* of Sri Vraja-vallabha (the Divine Couple). Besides that there is also Sri Salagrama and Sri Gopala-murti.

From the local sevaitas it is known that since the time of Abhirama Thakura it is a practice here that parboiled rice is being used for offerings but it remains bhoga until it is parched on hot sand. One more unprecedented practice here is that at the time of putting Thakura to rest, the temple doors remain open and he is being laid down in front of everyone's eyes. At present there is no mangala arati for Thakura being held early in the mornings.

Presently there are priests living around at some 36-37 houses. It is said that inside the temple there is an iron chest in which the famous Abhirama's whip "Sri-jaya-mangala" is being kept by the priests under a lock. It is 2 cubits long and wrapped with a silver (or golden) thread. At the time of big festivals all the priests agree to take the whip out of the chest. In the *Bhakti-ratna-kara* (the 4th wave) it is written about the whip that whoever was hit by it by Abhirama Thakura, that person's love of Krsna awoke. Once Srinivasa Acarya came to Abhirama's residence, and Abhirama Thakura touched his body with the whip three times. Then Abhirama's wife, the brahminical daughter Malini-devi, took Thakura by the hand and smilingly said, "Cool down, Thakura, Srinivasa is a greenhorn, if you keep touching him with your whip,

he will lose his composure. " . . . (Srinivasa Acarya was very dear to Abhirama, an object of his love and mercy, nevertheless he was probably not initiated by him, and thus he is counted as his half-disciple.)

Prague, Czech Republic
24 June 2004

**From the *Anubhasya* commentary of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati
Thakura
to *Sri-Caitanya-caritamrta* *Adi-lila* 11. 25
translated by Punya-palaka dasa (ISKCON Prague)**

Translation:



Lord Nityananda

Suryadasa Sarakhela and his younger brother Krsnadasa Sarakhela both possessed firm faith in Nityananda Prabhu. They were a reservoir of love of Godhead.

Srila Prabhupada's Purport:

In the *Bhakti-ratnakara*, Chapter Twelve, it is stated that a few miles from Navadvipa is a place called Saligrama that was the residence of Suryadasa Sarakhela. He was employed as a secretary of the Mohammedan government of that time, and thus he amassed a good fortune. Suryadasa had four brothers, all of whom were pure Vaisnavas. Vasudha and Jahnava were two daughters of Suryadasa Sarakhela.

Additionally, from the *Anubhasya* commentary:

Gaura-ganoddеса-dipika (65): "Lord Balarama's two wives, Srimati Varuni-devi and Srimati Revati-devi, appeared during Lord Caitanya's pastimes as Srimati Vasudha-devi and Srimati Jahnavi-devi, the two dear

wives of Lord Nityananda, and the daughters of the great personality Sri Suryadasa. Their father, Suryadasa, had previously been Maharaja Kakudmi. His bodily luster made him as effulgent as the sun. "

Change of situation does not free us

In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Mahajana Brahma speaks a famous verse that contains the phrase *sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van- manobhir*. Explaining this, Srila Prabhupada said:

You, whatever you are, have no need of change. It is very difficult to change position. Better remain in your position, but hear about Krsna.

Persons entrapped by difficulty naturally want freedom. It is the mission of every human being to liberate himself. But if in his obsession for freedom, a man exchanges one material situation for another, he'll find new difficulty. Shifting a heavy weight from one shoulder to another may bring temporary relief, but it does not free him from the burden.

It is not a "matter" of whether our material fortune is good or bad, nor whether our position is high or low. We must become free of the burden of matter. In the pure sound of Krsna's names and narrations, we experience the intensification of *our very being as liberated persons* in the association of the Supreme Liberated Person and his liberated associates.

Krsna effortlessly supports countless material worlds while enjoying His own divine bliss. He is so eager to share His own bliss with souls who approach Him in loving devotion that He assumes responsibility for their material welfare, preserving what they have and carrying what they lack. There are many pure devotees who serve within the matrix of a material body and mind. But they know no difficulty in this position--indeed, they wear their bodies as lightly as the Lord wears the universe. Kapiladeva compares them to drunken men who do not know whether they are wearing clothes or not. Internally they drink the nectar of *bhakti-rasa*, and externally they are maintained by the supreme controller of matter, time and the demigods.

Narada, in chapter six of the first canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, explains that as a pure devotee meditates upon the Lord in ecstatic love, His spiritual form emerges from the core of consciousness deep within the heart. Each of the devotee's senses is electrified by the Lord's presence, and with lives of their own, hearing, touch, vision, taste and smell rush to render Him service. Thus a devotee surpasses even the mode of goodness. His senses, intoxicated by direct contact with the personal form of Krsna, are never agitated in the proximity of material sense objects. His mind, completely satisfied in devotional service, has no interest in speculations about the spinning wheel of material fortune. As Narada points out, the Lord takes charge of the devotee's *karmic* destiny.

Prague, Czech Republic
25 June 2004

The bad habit of mental speculation

Srila Prabhupada explains another phrase from Brahma's famous verse thusly:

Brahma is the topmost living creature within this universe. He said, "A person must give up this nonsense habit of speculation": *jñāne prayasam udapasya*. One must become submissive. One should not pose that he knows something, that he can speculate, that he can invent. The so-called scientists are simply speculating and wasting labor. Nothing can be done by you. Everything is already arranged. You cannot change the law. You can simply see how it is working.

The agitated mind urges us to change our situation--in the universe, in society or at least within ourselves. Scripture compares the mind to the restless wind or to an impetuous, uncontrolled horse. Though the mind calls for change, change doesn't satisfy the mind. Change is taking place anyway-- life after life we change our cosmic, social and mental situations, sometimes getting the form of a Brahma, sometimes that of an ant. But throughout it all, the mind remains unsatisfied. Srila Prabhupada called this utopianism--a never-ending search for noplac, or Utopia (from Greek *ou*, "not" and *topos*, "a place"). Dissatisfaction of mind simply drives us onward in the cycle of birth and death.

It is the human habit to resort to speculation to relieve ourselves of utopian anxiety. Speculation generates "new discoveries," and new discoveries inflate pride in human progress. But pride stands behind the mind's utopian anxiety: "this situation I'm in now isn't good enough for me. " Thus new discoveries breed new anxieties. For example, Roentgen's discovery of X-rays in 1895 sparked a revolution in medical and dental diagnostics. Now we are told that every year an alarming number of people contract cancer from medical and dental X-rays.

Speculative knowledge is called *jnana*. This is a different *jnana* from that Lord Krsna taught to his disciples Arjuna and Uddhava. The Lord's system of *jnana-yoga* is not aimed at changing one's position. It teaches how the mind and senses are to be purified under the direction of the spiritual master. But as the Personified Vedas say (*Bhag.* 10. 87. 33), for one who abandons the lotus feet of his spiritual master, the attempt to pacify the mind is full of distress. He encounters many obstacles and is never successful. The attempt to pacify the mind by means other than the mercy of *guru* and Krsna is precisely the kind of *jnana* that Brahma orders us to stop. From the above words of Srila Prabhupada, this kind of *jnana* can be identified by five symptoms: 1) unsubmitiveness due to thinking one already has knowledge; 2) the habit to speculate; 3) the habit to invent something new; 4) the habit to change the law (*dharma*); 5) laborious wasting of time.

Prague, Czech Republic
26 June 2004

Dry knowledge and Vedic knowledge

The logic behind speculative *jnana* is very different from the real purpose of the Vedas taught by Brahma, who was entrusted by Lord Krsna to be the *guru* of all genuine Vedic *gurus*. The Vedic purpose is *ratir atman yato bhavet*, the cultivation of attraction to the Supreme Soul. Lord Krsna says that if someone masters Vedic knowledge but has no attraction to the Lord, he is like a man who keeps a cow that gives no milk. Thus speculative *jnana* is called *suska-jnana*, or dry knowledge.

The logic of *suska-jnana* reduces the Vedic teachings to impersonal axioms. Axioms are basic rules of thought that are not supposed to be questioned--they are simply "given," though the impersonalist admits no need for a personal Giver. The goal of this dry analysis is never *rasa*, which is irreducibly personal. Thus because from the start they favor an impersonal interpretation, *suska-jnanis* are unsubmitive to the goal advised by the greatest Vedic authorities, Lord Krsna and His son Brahma. As Srila Prabhupada points out, the *jnanis* think they know better.

Two phases of dry knowledge

There are two phases of *sukṣa-jñāna*: *purva* (the lower) and *uttara* (the higher). At the *purva* stage, *traī vidyā* (three-fold knowledge) is studied. *Traī vidyā* is variously explained as the three Vedas (*Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama*); as *manas* (mind), *prāṇa* (vital force) and *vāk* (Vedic sound vibration); as *adhidaivika*, *adhibautika* and *adhyātmika* (the three cosmic levels at which every material thing exists simultaneously); and as the *tri-varga* (the three material objectives of *dharma* or piety, *artha* or wealth, and *kāma* or sensual pleasure). In any case, *traī vidyā* pertains to the enjoyment of the three modes of nature: *traī-guṇya-viśaya veda*, as Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* 2. 45. The goal is to change position by moving upward into higher cosmic dimensions of sense enjoyment.

At the *uttara* stage, *traī vidyā* is reduced to impersonal Brahman, the ultimate axiom of *sukṣa-jñāna*. By Brahman, the *jñānis* mean the all- pervading spiritual effulgence called *brahmajyoti*. Like the rays of light streaming from the sun, the *brahmajyoti* emanates from Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form (though *jñānis* do not know that Kṛṣṇa is its source). If he is able to suppress the influence of the material mind and senses by *yoga*, the impersonalist experiences the Lord's opulence of knowledge as a flood of glaring light into which his individual identity merges. The goal here is to change position by becoming God.

Srila Prabhupada says a *jñāni* is prone to speculate. At the *purva* stage, *jñānis* speculate about material elevation through Vedic sacrificial rituals. At the *uttara* stage, the speculations of the *purva* stage are negated, and the *jñāni* speculates that he has become one with God, the impersonal absolute. Srila Prabhupada says the *jñānis* want to invent. They invent an impersonal conception of reality. Srila Prabhupada says the *jñānis* want to change the law. The supreme law or *dharma* according to Lord Kṛṣṇa is for the soul to surrender to Him in pure devotion. The *jñānis* try to change that to mean the merging of the soul into the impersonal absolute. Finally, Srila Prabhupada says the *jñānis* waste time laboriously. *Avyakta hi gatir duḥkham dehavadbhir avapyate*: "progress toward the impersonal goal is difficult for embodied souls. " (*Bg.* 12. 5) Even if a *sukṣa-jñāni* manages to attain the *brahmajyoti*, his persistent ignorance of the Supreme Person beyond the light leaves him spiritually unsatisfied. For want of *rasa*, his personal desires pull him back down into the world of time: *aruḥya kṛcchrena param padam tataḥ patanty adho 'nadṛta-yusmad-anghrayah*. (*Bhag.* 10. 2. 32)

Therefore Kṛṣṇa says that it takes many, many births for a *jñāni* to become *jñānavan*, truly wise--by knowing at last the Supreme Person to be everything, both at the *purva* and *uttara* stages. This change of heart comes when the *jñāni* is blessed by association with a *mahatma* who corrects his impersonal perspective. The *jñāni* learns from the *mahatma* that "I am Kṛṣṇa's", and stops speculating "I am God. " Thus he becomes a *mahatma* himself.

Dogs Play Cards in Casino Publicity Stunt

Thu Jun 24, 9:43 PM ET Add Strange News - AP to My Yahoo!

By JOHN CURRAN, Associated Press Writer



ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

- Some gamblers just don't know how to play their cards. Tiny Chip, for example. His three blackjack cards totaled 19, but he took a card anyway. It was a three of hearts, so he busted. Jack Attack had the same problem. Sitting pretty with 18, he still wanted another card. He got

a seven of diamond, busting with 25.

Then there was Lucky Louise. The dealer hadn't even gotten to her yet when she got up out of her seat, walked across the green felt table and stepped in the chip float, her bushy tail wagging.

Sands Casino Hotel workers used five live dogs to re-create artist C. M. Coolidge's famously lowbrow painting "Dogs Playing Poker" in a publicity stunt to drum up interest for a new table games pit.

"Sands Casino Hotel: Where the Big Dogs Play," read the sign in the pit, which has per-hand betting minimums of \$500 on weekends. Built to lure high-stakes players, the pit features roulette wheels, a craps table and six blackjack tables.

The crowd parted to make way for dog handlers as they ushered in the animals — dog "actors" who work in advertising, TV and movies — on leashes.

The dogs, who remained seated through most of the hand, barked to ask for cards. It was on command from the handlers, of course.

*Prague, Czech Republic
27 June 2004*

Smilin' Jag Welcomes You to In2-MeC!



The method of modern susksa-jnanis

The *jnanis* of Western civilization do not adhere to Vedic knowledge. But they do aim to change the position of man in the world through the cultivation of scientific and philosophical knowledge, and they consider mental speculation to be the *sine qua non* of that cultivation. Indeed, they believe the core essence of human consciousness is mental speculation. "Abstract, theoretical or scientific thinking, which we call reason, constitutes the main content, the nucleus of man's consciousness," said Dr. Assen Kojarov in his address to the 1973 World Congress of Philosophy.

Now, human speculation is not perfect. How is truth to be distinguished from error? "Sometimes there may be errors," writes Oxford mathematician Roger Penrose, "but the errors are correctable. What is important is the fact that there *is* an impersonal (ideal) standard against which the errors can be measured. " Penrose is saying our speculations must reduce to an impersonal truth. This is an axiom, a "given" given by nobody, a rule that should not be questioned.

Thus modern systems of knowledge are founded upon an ideology of impersonalism. An ideology is a set of axioms that we are barely conscious of. It silently directs our efforts to give shape and coherence to the world. Dry philosophers both East and West are directed by the same ideology. Another common feature is their false humility. The Eastern *jnani* seems to humble himself before the Vedic teachings, but his intent is to exploit Vedic knowledge for changing his position from man to God. The Western *jnani* seems to humble himself before the natural cosmos. But his intent is likewise to become God.

Francis Bacon was one of the first "modern" thinkers; though he lived four centuries ago (1561-1626), his writings on knowledge and how to get it are still celebrated today. In a book entitled *The Phaenomena of the Universe*, he argued that humility demands mankind to submissively peruse the "volume of the creation" with a mind well-purged of opinions, idols and false notions. Similarly, the learned T. H. Huxley (1825-1895) advised men to sit down before the fact of the natural world and humbly follow "wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. " This another axiom of the modern method of knowledge: a person can

know the truth only if he opens his mind. What is meant by opening the mind? Emptying it of personal values like good and evil, holy and unholy--thus reducing consciousness to a space that is to be occupied by material knowledge.

The conceit of the "open mind"

The mind must be opened because it has a big job to do. Like the mouth of a tremendous python, it has to swallow, bit by bit, the whole universe. The more it engorges the universe, the more the mind puffs up with "knowledge." A statement by astronomer and mathematician Pierre-Simon de Laplace (1749-1827) makes clear that this is indeed the agenda of the Western *jnani*:

A mind that in a given instance knew all the forces by which nature is animated and the position of all the bodies of which it is composed, if it were vast enough to include all these data within his analysis, could embrace in one single formula the movements of the largest bodies of the universe and of the smallest atoms; nothing would be uncertain for him; the future and the past would be equally before his eyes.

Clear enough: the mind should be "vast" so as to engulf "the movements of the largest bodies of the universe and of the smallest atoms." Thus science hopes to attain God-like knowledge and mastery over nature. But the data my mind swallows comes from *my* matrix of experience. The data your mind swallows comes from *your* matrix. Undoubtedly one person's experience of the universe is similar in many ways to another's. But significant differences always remain. No matter how humble we try to become before the creation, my data and yours can never be identical. No matter how much I try to purge my mind of opinions, idols and false notions, what I think about the cosmos and what you think about it will never be the same. As I write these words, I have before me the May 1997 edition of *Scientific American*. On page 14 is an article entitled "Vanishing World," about a debate between astronomers as to whether a planet discovered in 1989 orbiting the star 51 Pegasus is real or a mirage. Whose macrocosmic data is true and whose is false?

Prague, Czech Republic
28 June 2004

Is truth a judgment of society?

"Truth ultimately resides in the collective judgment of people who are committed to consensus and consistency," answers physics professor Alan Cromer in *Uncommon Sense*, a book about the scientific method. The axiom here is that man can never judge what is true at the macrocosmic level. Macrocosmic data must be reduced to the mesocosmic level. In other words, if we want knowledge of the universe, we have to humble ourselves before society. As Cromer argues, "Science, like democratic politics, is a social activity." He calls science "an extension of rhetoric." Only by the democratic exchange of viewpoints through the medium of language can we arrive at a unified understanding of our diverse experiences. Society crowns as the winner the best argument emerging from that exchange. But though the winning argument is crowned "truth," social judgment hardly insures that truth is crowned

the winning argument. History repeatedly shows the scientific community handing the crown to an untrue argument. Up until the year 1800, it was the collective judgment of scientists that rocks do not fall from the sky. In 1768, a good number of French villagers witnessed a meteor crash to earth in their locale. Where it landed, there, for all to see, was a rock from sky. But member of the French Academy of Sciences Antoine Lavoisier, having arrived four years later to investigate, argued that the stone was always on the ground, and that the villagers had only witnessed a thunderbolt strike it. The scientific community crowned his argument the winner.

Scientists want to lord it over material nature (to "swallow the universe"). What most commands the attention of a society seeking lordship? Power, not truth. An argument may have winning power simply because it confirms the prejudice of the majority ("rocks can't fall from the sky"). It may have winning power because the opposing arguments are even weaker. It may have winning power due to the ignorance of society, or because of vote-rigging and influence peddling.

Truth dispels ignorance. The scientific community is uncomfortably short of explanations that dispel ignorance. The British science journal *Focus* (August and September '96) published "one hundred greatest mysteries unanswerable in the world of science." Among them: Does God exist? What gives human beings their consciousness? What links humans to the cosmos? What is time? What is the universe made of? Where do the galaxies come from? Where do the oceans come from? How did life on earth begin? Why are heavy things hard to push? Exactly how do anaesthetics work? What is the ideal diet? Why does sex exist? Why do humans sleep? What exactly is complexity?

Social truth and social trust

In spite of such lapses in their own knowledge, the scientific community presumes to decide for the rest of the world what is and isn't valid knowledge: evolution is, creationism isn't; reductionism is, vitalism isn't; naturalism is, supernaturalism isn't. Yet the rest of the world isn't buying into scientific "truths" like it used to. For example, while scientists overwhelmingly agree that once a year the earth revolves around the sun, less than fifty percent of the adult population of the United States acknowledges that to be true. Recent books like Carl Sagan's *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (1996) evince the dismay of leading scientists at the common man's diminishing respect for so-called scientific facts.

It gets worse: this diminishing respect can be linked to a widespread suspicion that top scientists are involved in some kind of worldwide plot to deceive the public. Hollywood panders to this paranoia with hugely successful films and TV series (*The X-Files*, *Conspiracy Theory*, *Men in Black*). Is it all just showbiz and mass delusion? Well, even scientists testify there's something to worry about. In 1996, a nuclear physicist published a book documenting the existence of MJ-12, a secret council on UFOs formed in 1947 by top US scientists, government experts and military brass. Though the official dogma is that there is no such thing as flying saucers piloted by alien humanoids, MJ-12 may have accumulated physical evidence (even bodies) from UFO crashes. Also in 1996, a microbiologist published a book documenting how the official dogma about AIDS is a lie. There is no proof that the HIV virus causes AIDS; the author argues the HIV virus is blamed because other virus epidemics like polio were stopped by global vaccination--and the development of a vaccine against the virus a frightened global public *thinks* causes AIDS is sure to earn huge profits. His

book also accuses doctors who treat AIDS with the standard drugs--azidothymidine (ATZ), dideoxycytidine (ddC), and dideoxyinosine (ddI)--of poisoning their patients.

It is beside the point how factual such accusations really are. The point is that such accusations are the subject of movies, documentaries, news programs, network specials, newspaper stories, magazine covers, talk shows, seminars, Internet chatter and tabloid fantasies. This proves that society is far from convinced that science--at least the high-level government-funded kind of science--is open, democratic and thus "socially" truthful.

Even if the grand conspiracy theories are questionable, that does not make "normal" science trustworthy. In 1995, the British Library Science Reference and Information Service published a documented review of the social origins of fraud in science. Polls of the scientific community taken by *New Scientist* magazine (1976 and 1987), the *British Medical Journal* (1988), the Society of University Surgeons (1989), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1992), *American Scientist* magazine (1993), and the journal *Science, Technology and Human Values* (1994) report that cheating (falsification and manipulation of data) and plagiarism are alarmingly common among professionals. Five main causes of fraud were identified: personality factors, the pressure to publish, the academic rat race, commercialism, and pressure from sponsors. Without these five, there surely could be *no* social activity in science. Yet when asked, scientists admit each breeds ruthlessness, dishonesty and stonewalling.

Prague, Czech Republic
29 June 2004



Beyond "oneness"--the goal of many a frustrated intellectual--is the nectar of Sri Krsna's pastimes.

Microcosmic mysticism

Not only is human knowledge full of controversy, it is a never-ending torrent of information that grows more and more diverse every day. It is beyond the mental

capacity of an individual scientist to swallow it all. Even the entire scientific community can't make sense of it. This is a problem called "the fragmentation of knowledge. " No wonder some modern *jnanis* escape from scientific social activity into a mystical realm beyond debate, beyond language altogether. In a lecture delivered at the University of California in Santa Barbara, T. H. Huxley's famous grandson Aldous (1894-1963) said:

the enlightened individual goes beyond grammar. He has what may be called a 'grammar-transcending experience' which permits him to live in the divine continuum of the world and to see the one continually manifest in the many. The enlightened person is, so to speak, *after* the rise of language; he lives in language and then goes beyond it.

In Huxley's view, knowledge exchanged through the medium of language is unavoidably misleading. To get beyond error a person must leave behind language, which addresses only "the many" outside ourselves. We must reduce our search for knowledge to the unspoken "one" within the microcosm of our individual consciousness. Whatever is manifest as the many outside is only the one within. The mystic humbles himself before that one--his own self--knowing it to be the truth.

We've touched on three axioms of modern knowledge--1) the open individual mind can gradually swallow the universe; or 2) the open (i. e. democratic) collective mind of society can gradually swallow the universe; or 3) the enlightened mind can know itself as one with the universe.

There's little to see in the way of real humility in any one of these methods. Each is a statement of exaggerated faith in the power of the human mind. Each method turns out to be a mental concoction rooted in the false ego, which is a diseased spirit of "I" and "mine. " The first method tries to make the world "mine" by knowledge, and the second "ours" (which is just a collection of "mines"). The third tries to erase by knowledge the difference between "I" and "the world. " "As long as one is a servant of mental concoctions," Srila Prabhupada explains, "one cannot be completely free from the disease of 'I' and 'mine. '" The disease of I and mine is a disease of rebelliousness against Truth--the Supreme Person. It appears in consciousness as a spirit of false lordship over matter, and is the root cause of our material existence.

"Our world" is a world of mental speculation

The material creation is meant for rebellious souls who are not prepared to accept subordination under the Supreme Lord. This spirit of false lordship is called false ego. It is manifested in three modes of material nature, and it exists in mental speculation only.

We live in a world of mental speculation, says Srila Prabhupada in this segment of his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 5. 29. To be sure, he does *not* say the creation itself is nothing more than a state of my own mind. Energies like fire and water do exist in objective reality. But they do not exist in the way we think they do--as objects of our selfish happiness and distress. In the cold of winter, for example, the mind associates a fiery wood stove with happiness and the water of a river with distress. In the heat of summer the mind gives fire and water exactly opposite connotations. Such conceptions of fire and water *exist in mental speculation only*. Thus, as Srila Prabhupada explains in *Message of Godhead*, the world as we know it

"is simply subjective--that is, subject to our sense perceptions as they relate to our processes of thinking, feeling, and willing. "

The waves of thinking, feeling and willing

The three modes of nature ripple through our "I" and "mine" conceptions as the waves of thinking, feeling and willing. The world of mental speculation--which Srila Prabhupada terms "unreal reality"--manifests within those waves. For example, waves of thought flood the conception "this world is mine" with curiosity about the many possible ways to experience this world. Waves of feeling sort "my" sense impressions of the world into categories such as positive, negative, and ambiguous. The intelligence (*buddhi*) invents ways to help the senses come in contact with positive objects, avoid negative ones, and investigate ambiguous ones. Waves of will push "my" senses to do something about these feelings and plans. When we will something to happen, our sense of lordship over creation becomes frankly apparent.

Thinking, feeling and willing condition the soul to believe himself the controller of the laws that govern "his" world. For instance, as I write this sentence, I think that the room I'm in is hot and stuffy. I know that physical law dictates that a closed room under a bright summer sun will heat up. I feel I should change this situation by getting up and opening the window. And sure enough, willing this to be done, my body gets up, opens the window, and fresh air pours into the room. But this willpower over the laws of the cosmos is illusory, because I do not really know what the law is that I am trying to change.

The law is *karma*, and what I don't know is what sufferings and enjoyments I am destined to obtain by the work I now perform. I do know I am in this hot room and that I have an option of choice--I can just sit here and tolerate the heat, or I can do something. When I choose to do something, the matrix responds to my desire. I experience getting up, walking over a few steps, reaching out and turning a handle, and pulling the window frame open. But while this is going on, I cannot predict with certainty where material nature is leading me. I do not know whether *my goal*--to be relieved by fresh air--is really what is in store for me. The breeze may carry a foul stench, forcing me to shut the window immediately. Mosquitoes may fly in and distract me even more than the heat did. The effort of opening the window may trigger a heart attack. And finally, whatever option I choose within the matrix does not substantially change my situation. Whether I open the window or not, I do not change the law of *karma*. If I am destined to suffer in this room, I will suffer in this room, one way or another. As Srila Prabhupada said, "Everything is already arranged. You cannot change the law. You can simply see how it is working. "

Prague, Czech Republic
30 June 2004



Devotees sometimes inquire what happened to the previous Jagannatha silas I had been worshipping before my recent Salagram pilgrimage. This photo shows 2 of my former silas, now under the care of Premavanya Prabhu in the Ukraine. They look very happy, huh?

Intellectual rebellion against the Supreme Person

Modern civilization suffers from an unfortunate propensity to idolize the human mind. People tend to believe that famous scientists have some extraordinary power to sculpt a perfect model of the world from a block crystalline logic, this logical world being the pure form of reality. But because intellectuals are in difficulty, their so-called logical worlds are likewise full of difficulties. With a bit more sophistication, intellectuals just do what even lower creatures do: they mentally impose their own subjective values upon what their senses perceive. These values end in the physical affairs of eating, sleeping, mating and defending, which in turn end in death.

No, we do not "really" live within the logical worlds of dead or dying scientist and philosophers. We really live within the Supreme Person. *Purusa evedam sarvam*--"all this is He. " The true intellectual class, the *brahmanas*, are meant to instruct us in an exacting understanding of God as the origin and controller of the universe. Knowing Him in truth, we shall know Him as our only means to get free from the grip of death. But when intellectuals are infected with the disease of "I" and "mine", they act as agents of mystification. They concoct models of mind to take the place of the Supreme Person. Then, acting as priests, they conduct the rest of society in worshipping these models as idols.

Take for example the modern idol of space science. Merchants and workers of leading nations make offerings to this idol in the form of taxes collected by the administrators. This wealth is taken by clever rocket scientists who ceremoniously shoot it into the sky. The scientists sometimes defend this wasteful enterprise as being motivated by humility before the vast cosmos. But this humility is deceptive. The actual intent behind the worship of the idol of space science is the conquest of the universe. To conquer the universe, mankind has to somehow find a way to free himself from the authority of the Supreme Person, represented by the laws of material nature. This is impossible. But when an intellectual acts as an agent of mystification, he persuades society to believe the impossible: "Others dream dreams and ask why, I dream dreams and ask why not. "

Vedic histories record the account of one Trisankhu, a *sudra* who attempted to enter the celestial realm of svarga in his earthly physical body with the help of the brahmana Visvamrta, a master of mystic power. But Trisankhu was not successful; the laws of nature did not permit it. The law is that one can attain heaven in the next life by choosing to live a life of goodness on earth. *Urdhvam gacchanti sattva stha*, declares the *Bhagavad-gita*: after giving up the earthly body, a person in goodness goes upward to receive a superhuman body in the celestial world.

The future of bad science

Today's rocket scientists hope to do with machinery what Visvamrita could not do by mystic power. Allen Cromer has this sobering observation:

The idea that spaceships may someday trek from star to star makes great science fiction but bad science. The laws of physics and the properties of matter limit the speed of spaceships, making it impossible to travel between stars in any reasonable time. (*Uncommon Sense*, 1993, p. 184)

But bad science gets big money. Just as some scientists spend incredible sums of money on machines to conquer space, others spend money on the mechanical conquest of the microcosm, as popularized by films like *Robocop*, *Terminator* and *Johnny Memnonic*. The hope is the development of a human body and mind improved by computerized prostheses: limbs endowed with increased strength and speed; artificial eyes that see far beyond the visible spectrum; neural implants that enable direct mind-linkage with computer networks and instant downloading of data into the brain.

The scientific future of the mesocosm (human society) is *technopoly*, defined by communications theorist Neil Postman as "the submission of all forms of cultural life to the sovereignty of technique and technology. " Postman explains:

Technopoly is a state of culture. It is also a state of mind. It consists in the deification of technology, which means that the culture seeks its authorization in technology, finds its satisfaction in technology, and takes its orders from technology. This requires the development of a new kind of social order, and of necessity leads to the rapid dissolution of much that is associated with traditional beliefs. (Technopoly, 1992)

Scenarios of "a new kind of social order" have for many decades been a staple of science fiction. Probably the most celebrated works of this type are *Brave New*

World, 1984, and, written more recently, *This Perfect Day* (which depicts the world of tomorrow governed by a giant computer). Each book foresees a highly automated society wherein everybody has a job, crime is abolished, social roles are completely stereotyped--and human life has no meaning. As a character in *This Perfect Day* muses, "Machines are at home in the universe; people are aliens. "

Yes, we are spiritual aliens in a material universe. That is why, after all is said and done, we want out of here. Machines are at home here because the world functions under *karma*, the impersonal law of action and reaction. People naturally seek freedom from *karma*. As we learned in the first chapter, they try either to detach themselves from it, change it, or negate it. Western science is a program to change it. It hopes to rebuild the world--first with mental models, then with physical machinery. But that is an act of rebellion against Krsna's plan. It is impossible for humanity to free itself from the laws of material nature by rebellion. This rebellious spirit that is the disease of the soul, and its symptom is mental speculation.

Prague, Czech Republic
1 July 2004

I'm leaving Prague this morning for Preshov, Slovakia.



The Divine Couple, Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna.

No independence

A human being wants freedom from the laws of material nature because in essence he is not material. He is spirit soul. But there are two categories of soul--supreme and subordinate. We are in the subordinate category. For freedom from the laws of nature, we are ever-dependent upon Krsna, the Supreme Soul. As long we do not choose to take His shelter, our habit is to depend upon His external energy, matter. But dependence upon matter brings us under its control. Srila Prabhupada writes, "This material energy is also called Durga, which indicates that it is a force which is very difficult to surpass. No one can surpass the laws of Durga by any amount of childish plans. " In *Bhagavad-gita*, Lord Krsna declares that only when the subordinate person takes complete shelter of the Supreme can he cross beyond the difficulties of material existence.

It is wrong to think that higher knowledge is "secret, mysterious, cryptic and inaccessible. " Higher knowledge needs not at all to be mysterious. But our problem is that we confuse knowledge with speculation. For example, it is sheer speculation that mankind is destined to conquer the laws of nature; yet this is a guiding tenet of scientific progress. Old age, disease and death remain as problematic now as they were 2500 years ago when the Greeks began laying the foundations of Western science. So it is certainly secret, mysterious, cryptic and inaccessible how these problems will be one day solved by Western science. Mental models of a world perfected by scientific and technological progress Srila Prabhupada called "humbug with no clear explanation. "

The notion that the human mind can figure out a way to overcome the laws of nature is founded upon a notion that the mind is independent of the laws of nature. This is the so-called Cartesian assumption (named after Rene Descartes, "the father of modern philosophy," who believed the mind to be spirit, not matter; he argued that rational thought, when perfected, can make man master and possessor of material nature). This assumption is at the bottom of modern scientific and technical thought.

The problem of the human situation

Scientific and technical thinking "objectifies" problems. This simply means that all problems and their solutions are considered to be objects external to the mind. This is quite reasonable for problems in the commonplace (*laukika*) sphere of human life. For example, if one evening all the lights in my house go out, it is rational to assume that the problem and its solution are objectively electrical. It wouldn't be considered very rational to assume that the problem and solution are subjective--that is, within my mind: "The lights went off just after I had a nasty thought. I shall now think good thoughts to bring the lights back on. "

But when we think of solving the problem of the human situation, objectification won't work. I and my mind are part of the problem of the human situation, and so are you and your mind. Therefore the solution-- freedom--is not an object the mind will find "out there" in the external world. Nor can the mind model a theoretical solution that has any hope of success, since the mind itself is the problem. Our inner mental functions (thinking, feeling and willing), by which we try to solve objective problems, are the very cause of the bondage we human beings struggle to free ourselves from.

Underlying the workings of the mind is the Supreme Person. He dwells within the heart of every living being, observing their intention towards His material energy. Almost all living entities in this world desire to be independent lords over matter. The real Lord permits His material energy of three modes to delude the materialistic souls with the waves of thinking, feeling and willing. Willing creates *karma*, sensory actions that are recorded by the demigods who facilitate the souls' experience of sensory actions. The *karmic* record of the human lifetime is most significant. It is evidence judged by the Supreme Person at the time of a person's death. He weighs that soul's good, bad and mixed actions, determining from this the appropriate next birth. The demigods reconfigure that soul's matrix of experience accordingly.

The living entity, thus taking another gross body, obtains a certain type of ear, eye, tongue, nose and sense of touch, which are grouped about the mind. He thus enjoys a particular set of sense objects. (*Bhagavad-gita* 15. 9)

Human "knowledge" that does not heed the Supreme Person and His law of *karma* leads the soul deeper and deeper into the ocean of birth and death. It is a myth that modern science leads to progress. It is really a form of ignorance that makes human life ever more difficult.

Martin, Slovakia
2 July 2004

What is real knowledge?

Lord Krsna gives a summary of the items of real knowledge in the thirteenth chapter of *Bhagavad-gita*, verses 8-12. There are twenty items. Of these, one--constant and unalloyed devotion to Krsna-- is "the most important point," in Srila Prabhupada's words. Devotion to Krsna, as explained before, begins with hearing and chanting His name and glories. When devotion is constant (*nityam*) and unalloyed (*avyabhicarini*), the functions of the senses and mind break all dependence upon matter and connect directly with transcendence.



The arca-vigraha form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead incarnates into stone, metal, wood, or paint according to specifications given in the Vedic scriptures. Thus we can see Him, touch Him and render Him service.

fashion the Deity from stone, metal, wood or paint according to specifications given in the Vedic scriptures. Thus, though our senses are dim to transcendence, we see can see Him, touch Him and render Him service.

For example, instead of being preoccupied with a "model of mind" manufactured by mental speculation, a pure devotee meditates on the transcendental form of the Lord. The form of Lord Krsna is never material. But as explained in the previous chapter, in order to maintain the living entities within material creation, He accepts the dress of the threefold cosmos. Similarly, so that we who live within creation may meditate upon Him, Krsna assumes a form *for us to maintain* through personal services like cooking, cleaning and decoration. This form is called the Deity (*arca-vigraha*). The devotees

"Matter" is transcendental

Someone might ask, "But how can something--this 'Deity'--be transcendental when all it is made from is stone, metal, wood or paint? These are just material ingredients existing well within our mundane experience. " Yet in the last analysis, whatever we call "material" transcends our experience. We do not experience from where matter originates, nor how the material world came to be structured as the matrix of our experience. If we think that we know all about the Deity from what we know about matter, we are being pretty silly. What do we know about matter anyway? As long as we depend upon the blunt instruments of the mind and senses for knowledge, we can know only our ignorance of matter. Several years ago two scientists published a book entitled *The Matter Myth*. The purport is the more science studies matter, the more matter vanishes. If that is all we can say about what matter *really* is, then certainly human knowledge about matter amounts to ignorance.

The Vedic sound transmits to our ears knowledge coming from beyond the limits of our mind and senses. This sound reveals that matter 1) is the energy of the Supreme Person; 2) can be experienced by us only because it is given shape by His divine form; 3) is meant to be engaged in His service. The transcendent source of matter becomes self-evident as soon as we stop thinking about matter in our ordinary, habitual, ignorant way and engage it in the service of Lord Krsna's personal form.

How we ordinarily think about matter is evident in our eating habits. From the instrumentalist point of view, any lump of matter that can be ingested and digested is classified as food. But this is animalistic. The Vedas warn of many types of "food"

not fit for human consumption--meat, fish and eggs, for example. For human beings, God provides six food groups--vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, milk and sugar. These are meant to be offered in sacrifice to the Deity. A human being should eat only the remnants of such offerings, called prasadam (the Lord's mercy). If he does not, then all that he eats, even if he is a vegetarian, submerges his consciousness within the waves of materialistic thinking, feeling and willing. He remains entrapped by the matrix of mundane experience life after life, unable to realize his original identity as a liberated associate of the Supreme Person.

*Preshov, Slovakia
3 July 2004*

A "catch-up" photo report . . .



Second initiation ceremony in Prague. The new dvijas are (left2right) Omkaranatha and Priyabhakta Prabhus and Mataji Rodasi dd.



Summer vacation traffic was so heavy on the motorway, we couldn't reach Preshov in one day. So we stayed overnight at a sankirtana flat in the town of Martin, Slovakia. Here I give morning Bhagavatam class.



The next day (2 July) we reached the ISKCON farm outside of Preshov. Here Sri-Sri Panca-tattva and Sri Laddu Gopal preside.

Life beyond the modes

Prasadam, chanting the holy name and Deity worship nourish a purified state of being, termed *vasudeva-sattva*, that surpasses the material mode of goodness. Material goodness is uncertain. People equate goodness with morality, but as the modern moral philosopher Francis Scheffler noted, morality "is an aspect of human psychology and social relations, and not a system of propositions"--which just means that people in material consciousness cannot fix morality to a permanent standard. People define moral behavior according to their state of mind and the state of their

society--and these states, of course, change with time. Beyond time-defined ethics is the eternal code of *yajna* or sacrifice, as found for example in the *Chandogya Upanisad*: *puruso vava yajnah*, "the entire life of a person is meant to be conducted as a sacrifice for the Supreme. " Lord Krsna warns those who do not follow the Vedic system of sacrifice that their human life is in vain. And those who do, achieve the supreme eternal atmosphere of pure goodness.

A soul situated in *vasudeva-sattva* is free of the disease of "I" and "mine. " Consequently he is not mystified by speculation about the macro-, meso- and microcosm. He knows all planets in the universe to be the property of Krsna. He knows that the sacrifices of human society are meant to be enjoyed by Krsna alone. He knows Krsna to be the indwelling friend within the heart of every individual. As Krsna confirms in *Bhagavad-gita* 5. 29, this knowledge delivers the soul from the threefold pangs of material life. As soon as he is freed from the pushings of the three modes, waves of transcendental attraction push the devoted soul towards Krsna.

Clearing consciousness of mental idolatry

Krsna consciousness is consciousness clear of the idolatry of the mind that has interrupted our individual connection to the Supreme Person. In clear consciousness, it is self-evident that the sound of the holy name, the sight of the Deity and the taste of His *prasadam* are in no way different from the pure spiritual form of God Himself. The proof is that these experiences initiate the flow of *rasa* within the heart. The ecstasy of *rasa* intensifies the soul's spiritual personhood, revealing the limitless depth of his intimate loving relationship with the Lord of his heart, Sri Krsna. This is why *bhakti*, personal devotional service to the Supreme Lord expressed as hearing and chanting His glories, serving His Deity form and accepting *prasadam*, is the most important item of transcendental knowledge.

But it must be admitted that a neophyte devotee lacks the spirit of selfless devotion seen in the *mahatmas*. He may operate less under *bhakti* and more under a mechanical sense of duty. He may serve God out of fear of death or disease. He may be trying to rectify his sins. He may be a victim of material loss or displacement, with no other place to go. He may be after recognition in the society of devotees. He may be arrogant. He may be seeking revenge against someone who offended him. He may be motivated by sexual frustration, antisocial rage or personal loathing. Or, as is often the case, he may find staying in a temple and doing a little service a very relaxed way to live.

A person with such motivations as these obviously has something else on his mind than simple Krsna consciousness: namely, mental idols installed on the altar of "I" and "mine"--the idolatry of material attachment. This checks a neophyte's progress, for as the *Bhagavatam* explains, one can chant the holy name with genuine feeling only when he is free of such attachment.

This is why the Lord recommends the nineteen other items of knowledge, so that a materially attached person can quickly overcome all difficulties on the path of pure devotion. The first of the nineteen is *amanitvam* or humility. This is not the false humility of the speculators. The goal of knowledge in the *Bhagavad-gita* is neither to "humbly" swallow up the material world nor to think myself one with everything. The goal is to become a pure devotee of Krsna. To achieve this, we must first acknowledge that we are His humble servants eternally.

That humility should be demonstrated practically. Thus another item of real knowledge is submission to a pure devotee spiritual master. The genuine spiritual master is no "agent of mystification. " He overturns our mental idols by teaching the items of genuine knowledge, among them nonviolence; tolerance; simplicity; cleanliness; steadiness; self- control; renunciation of the objects of sense gratification; absence of false ego; the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age and disease; detachment; even-mindedness amid pleasant and unpleasant events; accepting the importance of self-realization; and philosophical search for the Absolute Truth.

All the inconveniences we suffer in this world are due to choices we've made within the field of material activities. By his own example, the spiritual master ushers us into the field of spiritual activities, where we experience the liberation of consciousness from the deadening influence of matter. In the field of spiritual activities, "matter" is revealed to be spirit.

*Preshov, Slovakia
4 July 2004*

The pure land of Vrndavana is cooled by the presence of trees whose tender branches are laden with clusters of new buds and the most attractive flowers. These trees are flowing with honey and saturated with heavenly fragrances, and their trunks are entwined with vines decorated with clusters of fresh flowers.

The heart of Vrndavana resounds with the humming of swarming bees who have come to taste the nectar from the blossoming flowers, and with the cries of doves, parrots, sarikas, and cuckoos. Everywhere the peacocks dance.

Vrndavana is served by a soft, soothing breeze carrying a fine spray from the lapping waves of the Yamuna. That breeze, bearing the pollen dust from the interiors of fully blown lotuses, playfully shakes the garments of the *gopis*, whose minds then become agitated with desire for their Lord.



In the midst of Vrndavana stands a towering *kalpa-vrksa* tree, bestower of all desires, whose branches are cool, whose leaves are emerald, whose bouquets of buds are diamonds and pearls, and whose fruits are rubies. Served by the seasons personified, it produces all kinds of flowers simultaneously.

At the base of the nectar-showering *kalpa-vrksa* tree is an area that shines as brilliantly as the sun rising over a range of solid-gold mountains. Sparkling with inlaid jewels and glowing with heaps of

golden pollen, this place is completely freed from the waves of lamentation, illusion, death, hunger and thirst.

On the jewel-inlaid floor is an exquisite *asana* in the form of an eight-petaled lotus tinted the color of dawn. In the center, as resplendent as the rising sun, sits Lord Mukunda in a comfortable pose.

He shines like a brilliant dark sapphire, as deep black as lampblack, as dark as a mountain of monsoon clouds, as delicate as a blue lotus. Atop this wondrous form is a black mass of hair, thick, glossy and curled, and upon this sits a luminous peacock feather.

On His head rest ornaments of *parijata* blossoms attended eagerly by swarms of bees, and on His ears are fresh flowers. On the middle of His forehead, surrounded by stray locks of hair, shines vertical, bright yellow *tilaka* between a pair of long, creeper-like eyebrows. His face shines like the flawless moon of the autumn season, and His eyes are wide like lotus petals. His mirrorlike cheeks glitter with the rays from His jewelled, shark-shaped earrings. His beautiful nose points upward gracefully, and His tender smile, resembling the moon, a jasmine, or a *mandara* flower, illuminates all His features.

*Preshov, Slovakia
5 July 2004*

Are Academic Scholars like Snakes?

Part One: Assumptions that Go Nowhere

The day before yesterday one of my sannyasi Godbrothers sent me these thoughts about "mundane scholars. "

Mundane scholars may appear open minded as they are open to hearing all kinds of opinions. But actually they are close minded because they are closed to accepting any path as absolute. They are shut off from even the possibility of attaining the absolute truth, due to their conviction that such truth cannot exist. Although they may appear to be open minded, friendly, and sympathetic toward devotees, their congeniality remains only as long as a devotee panders to their relativistic mindset. As soon as a devotee presents Krsna consciousness as it is, as the absolute truth, then the open minded friendliness of mundane scholars ceases and is replaced with rabid disapproval. Thus devotees make friends with mundane scholars at great risk of compromising their own position by being bitten by the snake of relativism. For a mundane scholar, especially a student of Indology or Vaisnavism, is by definition a snake, for he deigns to speak on Krsna and Krsna consciousness without surrendering to Him. *avaishnava mukhodgirnam. . .*



Some snakes are fortunate to be instructed in transcendental knowledge by the most charming Devotee of all.

THEOSOPHS (THE Established, Official ScreeD Of the Pompous Hierophants of Science).

Some studies and perspectives of mundane scholars may be useful to devotees, who however to avoid being poisoned must be as expert as snake charmers in controlling snakes. Snakes are either controlled or they bite; a devotee who would deal with mundane scholars must similarly avoid being charmed by their mundane seeming reasonableness, and must rather be clever enough to charm mundane scholars into becoming genuine scholars of the absolute truth. To do so is a great preaching victory, but those insufficiently capable should avoid entering the fray.

Their apparent reasonableness and open mindedness is a sham masking their dogmatic and unreasonable refusal to accept any position as absolute.

Not long ago I published here in In2-MeC a review of several recent books that challenge the standard scientific *Weltanschauung* (worldview). In my comments I coined a term for that worldview:

A good friend of mine who is a regular reader of In2-MeC emailed that book review to his brother, who is an evolutionary scientist of some kind. The brother replied, among other things, that it is not helpful to lump scientists together under such a flippant, catch-all rubric as THEOSOPHS. Scientists, the brother maintained, are people like other people. They are a diverse lot with widely differing opinions.

But all scientists, whatever they may be and believe as individuals, are supposed to have at least one thing in common: that their enterprise "to know" (Latin *scire*, from which we get the word "science") firmly belongs to the Western tradition of rationalism. Academics in humanistic "soft-science" fields such as Indology likewise subscribe to that tradition.

So what do all professors of Western scholarship profess? What's the thread of thought common to all of them? *Certain assumptions about reality* constitute the common thread of thought that weave together all the sciences, hard and soft.

An assumption at the very heart of Western rationalism is that mathematics yields self-evident and certain truth. Hence a human intellect that is schooled to operate with mathematical rigor is not to be doubted. The proper arena of doubt is the world

beyond the intellect; it is by "attacking" the external world with rigorous analysis that we should conduct our search for knowledge. An intellect which does not adhere to the rigors of mathematical thought, which seeks truth by means other than analytical investigation of the external world, is irrational.

This is the philosophical centerpiece of Cartesianism, named after Rene Descartes (1596-1650), one of the principal architects of the modern scientific worldview. Writing in *The Tragedy of Reason* (1990, pg. 74), David Roohnik observes:

There is thus a quite literal type of schizophrenia in the world bequeathed to us by the Cartesians. It is, on the one hand, hyper-rational: it seeks to extend the pervue of mathematical physics throughout the universe. On the other hand, it relegates the world in which the physicist himself dwells [i. e. the identity-realm of our personal nature] to the junkpile of the irrational. We who know so much are prohibited from knowing ourselves.

After assuming what the only valid means to knowledge is, Western rationalism then imposes other assumptions upon the the external world. On pages 8-9 of a book entitled *The Fire in the Equations* (1994), Kitty Ferguson lists five such assumptions. These are:

- 1) the universe is rational (i. e. at its bedrock are laws understandable to human reason);
- 2) it is accessible to the senses;
- 3) it is contingent (i. e. its existence depends upon certain conditions);
- 4) it is objective (i. e. it is really "out there");
- 5) it is unified.

Some of these assumptions are in deep conflict with one another. But that's for later. The point we are concerned with now is a simple one: that to be a professional scholar in the Western sciences, one must load the program of these assumptions into the logical apparatus of one's mind. What these assumptions amount to is a conviction that it is possible, if we work at it, for human beings to know everything about the universe.

Yet at the same time it would certainly be wrong to argue that *every last scientist on the face of the earth* expects the scientific method to one day raise humanity to cosmic omniscience. In a 1992 interview, Paul Feyerabend, an influential Austrian philosopher of science with a background in physics, said:

You think that is one-day fly, this little bit of nothing, a human being--according to today's cosmology!--can figure it all out? This to me seems so crazy! It cannot possibly be true! What they figured out is one particular response to their actions, and this response gives this universe, and the reality that is behind this is laughing: "Ha ha! They think they have found me out!"

This big thing, out of which everything comes, you don't have the means. Your language has been created by dealing with things, chairs, and a few instruments. And just on this tiny earth! God is emanations, you know? And they come down and down and become more and more material. And down, down at the last emanation, you can see a little trace of it and guess at it.

On the other hand, one of the big voices for evolutionary science, the English biologist Richard Dawkins, emphatically disagrees with colleagues like Feyerabend. "Some people enjoy wallowing in a nonthreatening squalor of incomprehension. I want to understand, and understanding means to me scientific understanding!"

All right, then. We've just seen proof that scientists have starkly different opinions about where science is taking us. Diversity *ki jaya!* But wait a minute: does that really mean anything? After all, there's the saying:

Philosophers can be divided into two classes: those who believe that philosophers can be divided into two classes, and those who don't.

If a scientist is a scientist, he is in the same boat with other scientists even if he disagrees with them. The boat is the scientific method, which is geared to axiomatic, metaphysical assumptions. Take these assumptions away, and there would be no science left for Feyerabend and Dawkins to differ about.

So in science we have a method that purports to figure out the whole world, practiced by persons of different opinions as to whether that purport will ever be realized. To say the least, this seems a bit fuzzy. I think Werner Heisenberg, one of the leading lights of quantum physics, made the best sense out of the fuzz:

The exact sciences start from the assumption that in the end it will always be possible to understand nature, even in every new field of experience, but that we may make no *a priori* assumption as to the meaning of "understand".

Now, I hate to sound like I'm making a quantum leap in logic (vanishing from one point and reappearing out of nowhere at another point), but I think this supports what my Godbrother argued at the top of his essay:

Mundane scholars may appear open minded as they are open to hearing all kinds of opinions. But actually they are close minded because they are closed to accepting any path as absolute. They are shut off from even the possibility of attaining the absolute truth, due to their conviction that such truth cannot exist.

Let's try to understand this by teasing out the logical core of the statements of Heisenberg, Dawkins and Feyerabend.

Heisenberg's point is that while science is an expedition aimed at absolute knowledge, no scientist is permitted by science to proclaim before the expedition is over what that absolute knowledge will turn out be. He couldn't be a scientist if he did that.

For all Western scholars the question of what exactly lies at the end of the search for knowledge is open. That open-endedness is retained even as they argue about science as the means to that end.

Dawkins says, "It's one thing to say it's very difficult to know how the universe began, what initiated the Big Bang, what consciousness is. But if science has difficulty explaining something, there sure as hell is no one else who is going to explain it. "

Feyerabend seemed to be in disagreement, arguing, "People should not take it for granted when a scientist says, 'Everybody has to follow this way'". Still, Feyerabend affirmed that the techniques of science have their use in gaining knowledge, since they are "tools, and tools can be used in any way you see fit"; and he was adamant he was not anti-science, since he used those tools himself.

So what's to be ultimately understood by the use of these tools?

Dawkins says whatever it is, scientists can't explain it, at least right now; he's convinced that in the future nobody else but scientists will be able to explain it. Feyerabend allowed science some exploratory room at the lowest level of emanation, but he saw no hope that science will come to understand the origin of emanation.

Employing reductionism, which is essential to science, we may simplify what Heisenberg, Feyerabend and Dawkins have told us to this *sutra*: "We don't know. "

Moreover, *nobody* knows. "It cannot possibly be true", said Feyerabend, for a human being to attain absolute knowledge. "You don't have the means. " Here he was not talking only about Western scientific means. "Your language has been created by dealing with things. " All language, then, is mundane and oriented only to material objects. In seeming contrast, Dawkins holds out more hope than Feyerabend for science attaining absolute knowledge. But he admits science hasn't attained that knowledge now. He is positive nobody else will ever do it.

Dawkins and Feyerabend may disagree on so many other points, but they agree that science has not arrived at the absolute truth. Neither of them is certain that it ever will.

Let us return to the assumptions embedded in the scientific mindset and give them a more careful appraisal. We'll see that it's these assumptions that foil any hope of certainty. One is that the world can be known through the senses. Another is that the world is objectively real. But to say the world is objectively real is to say it is independent of and indifferent to sense perception. Since the time of Hume and Kant, Western philosophers and scientists have been wrestling with the question of whether the data received by our feeble and imperfect senses at all puts us in touch with the Ding-an-sicht, the world itself. As I showed in the 3-part article on atomic theory some days ago, many prominent quantum physicists do not believe that sense data is reality.

And so Heisenberg said that even if science manages one day to lay bare all of nature to scientific inspection, it is not certain what scientists will understand. The question will remain: is any of this nature we are perceiving with our senses actually real? Even if there is no more data anywhere in the universe to be discovered, that mountain of data amassed by science will not amount to an absolute truth that all scientists will be able to agree upon. This is because the only means to knowledge that scientists--indeed, all of Western man--trusts is: the untrustworthy senses.

In *Truth--A History* (1997, pg. 123), Oxford historian Filipe Fernandez-Armesto makes a few good points about Western man's reliance upon the senses for knowledge:

Dependence upon evidence of our senses seems ineluctable to modern westerners. In our jurisprudence, "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" is the evidence of our personal witness. Hearsay is not admitted, only facts impressed directly by observation or sensation. Though other societies may have preferred to rely on messages from a truth-world, conveyed by ordeals or oracles, our courts could hardly accept, as a defense against the charge of perjury, the claim that this world is illusory. Yet, on this scale, trust in our sensory receptors is a late and peculiar condition, of which most human societies, for most of history, seem to have been free.

For many Western people, then, if there is to be anything like absolute truth, it must be established by personal witness (direct observation of the senses), not by hearsay (spoken sound vibration). It's a bias peculiar to European-American civilization, and it is quite recent. This bias is rooted in a conviction that if truth emanates from a truth-world (e. g. Vaikuntha), that would mean this world we live in is illusory. And that just goes against a basic tenet of Western knowledge: that our world is objective and real. *Hence the insistence that truth be proven by sense perception is an a priori denial that a transcendental truth-world exists.*

The speculative argument of philosophers, "This world is real," "No, it is not real," is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, and unable to give it up.

--Srimad-Bhagavatam 11. 22. 34

Part Two, The Poison of Relativism, follows tomorrow.

Preshov, Slovakia
6 July 2004

Are Academic Scholars like Snakes?

Part Two: The Poison of Relativism

Science and all secular scholarship is pervaded by other atheistic assumptions. It's hard to find a "serious" book about any intellectual topic today that does not unquestioningly submit its readers to the doctrine of evolution. Evolutionism spawns an extremely warped, materialistic account of what religion is and how it came to be. Here's a quotation from a 1995 book entitled *Soul Searching* by Nicholas Humphrey:

No doubt our ancestors needed some rational skills to survive, but. . . the human brain evolved more as a religious than a rational organ. . . Rational science is a minority interest. . . It is likely therefore that the first human brains evolved to impose symbolic meaning on the external world, and the scientific virus later infected a minority of their descendents, where it now flourishes in nerve circuits that originally evolved to carry other ideas.

At first blush we might take what Nicholas Humphrey says as validation for a religious mindset. The human brain is really meant for generating religious thoughts! Scientific thinking is just an aberration of the brain function! Wow! Go get 'em, Bhakta Nick! But without the slightest pause for doubt he asserts that the brain *evolved*. Hence religion is merely a product of evolutionary biology. Awww. . . Bhakta Nick, you bloomed.

Of course there are those--even in and around ISKCON--who will argue that what Nicholas Humphrey states above is not necessarily atheistic. Lately even the Catholic Church agrees with evolution. "What if," the argument goes, "the actual state of affairs in this universe of ours is more Deistic than Theistic? In other words, suppose we put the theological accent on God (Krsna) as being disconnected and aloof from the material world. He's so transcendental that He doesn't involve himself in creation at all, except to lay down the ground rules of nature and to give an initial push to get things going. Thereafter, automatically, mechanistically, the universe comes into being and runs onward according to the impersonal laws that modern science has discovered. Ergo, man was not created, he evolved. Why can't *this* be the will of God (Krsna)? I mean, He can do anything He wants, right? And if man's brain is hard-wired by evolution for religion, that much the better!" So concludes the argument: "You can believe in evolution *and* believe in God. "

I'd want to know what is the exact advantage of this is. I predict, based upon a bit of personal experience, that answer will be something like this:

"Well, it saves you from having to be a fundamentalist. "

And what, pray tell, is a fundamentalist?

"Oh, anyone who literally believes without reservation any of the creation scenarios of the different scriptures of the world, which are all in contradiction with one another. The fundamentalist *rejects* science altogether and just accepts *everything* scripture says! He's out of step with today's world. And that, *that's* not a Good Thing. "

So what do you propose to do with the *Bhagavatam* descriptions of creation?

"Well, we'll just consider that allegorical, like the story of Maharaja Puranjana told to King Pracinabarhisat by Narada Muni. "

I see. The creation account becomes a pious myth, then.

"Yes, exactly. "

This brings us to the point made by my *sannyasi* Godbrother that mundane scholars are snakes who are so dangerous they can infect devotees with a poison that slackens their grasp of the absolute truth: "Their apparent reasonableness and open mindedness is a sham masking their dogmatic and unreasonable refusal to accept any position as absolute. "

It's a no-brainer that as soon as scripture is re-evaluated from the inherently uncertain standpoint of science--"this chapter I accept, but *that* chapter can't be

correct because it is 'disproven'--then the line drawn between what is "really true" and what is only "pious myth" will just waver ever more dizzily. It won't take long before *nobody knows* what scripture is really meant to teach us.

Therefore this itch that agitates certain minds to bend scripture to fit scientific theories is no itch for real knowledge. It's an itch to keep up with the times. Scientists themselves are busy scratching the same itch. "Science, like democratic politics, is a social activity," argues physicist Alan Cromer in *Uncommon Sense*. He calls science "an extension of rhetoric. " The hope is that by the democratic exchange of viewpoints through the medium of language we can arrive at unified knowledge. The trouble is that scientific knowledge is not unified; in fact, as we saw in Part One of this essay, scientists very often resent being classed as a group with a unified point of view. If science is a social activity, then like all things in mundane society, the information that is generated by that activity--information that is taught in schools as proven knowledge--is constantly being debated and altered. "Facts" fifty years old and less are at this moment being modified or replaced by "new discoveries. " Fifty years from now, many of these new discoveries will be similarly modified or discarded. The factors behind this constant updating of knowledge include lust for profit, fame, and adoration, a polluted desire to be right, ignorance, blind following, vanity, error, cultural bias, dogmatism, jealousy, corner-cutting and cheating as well as the more typical list of noble qualities ascribed to the scientific community. Scientists are only human, after all.

When theologians trade spiritual conviction for changing social fashions, the same sort of rapid-fire revolutions of "knowledge" take place in scriptural understanding. A while back a panel of up-to-date Christian theologians published a special edition of the New Testament. The passages spoken by Jesus Christ were printed in either red, gray, or black typeface as per a vote the panel had taken: red if the majority was of the opinion Christ did not speak those words, gray if the vote was tied, and black if the majority was of the opinion that he did speak those words.

For mundane scholars, though, that's a Good Thing. Why? Because then they have something to "discuss. " Note it well that such discussion is supposed to be conducted with as little conviction as possible. Oh, sure, you can be convinced that here and there in the scripture are glimmers of truth--perceived by *you* as an individual--but it's a total *faux pas* to have an *a priori* conviction that every word of scripture *tells the same non-negotiable truth to everybody*. Oh no! That's *absolutism*. That's *dangerous*! Why, it's. . . it's *police state mentality*!

In chapter 5 of *Truth--A History*, historian Fernandez-Armesto has some interesting things to say about how and what "truth" has come to mean today. The chapter is entitled "The Death of Conviction. "

In recent years, historians of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe have been fascinated by the deceptions to which evasive minds were driven by religious persecution. Crypto-Jews had to conceal their beliefs under inquisitorial interrogation, confessional minorities had to equivocate under torture during the conflicts of Catholics and Protestants.

. . . Today, equivocation has disappeared from the witness-stand. . . Equivocation was a necessary resource against interrogation in a world of strong convictions, when deponents were not in any serious doubt about the truth or falsehood of what

they said. It is no longer necessary because today, when you swear to tell the truth, I do not know what you mean by it, though if the scene is laid in court we all know what the court understands by truth and what evasions will be punished as perjury or contempt. I do not even know whether you recognize truth as a meaningful concept. Instead of equivocating, you can dodge the interrogator's probes by the relativist's evasion: "what is true for you is not true for me. " Or you can give him an answer true, you think, in a different sense from that of the truth he wants to hear; or you can offer truth of a different type, which you may choose to call a higher type; or you can console yourself that you are not lying to the judge--merely using a different language from him, or interpreting differently the words you have in common, or "deferring" or denying their meaning; or you can reject the distinction he assumes between truth and falsehood as invalid, or tendentious, or oppressive. You can say, as most interlocutors have said to me while I have been writing this book, "Truth? There is no such thing. " A character in a strip in *Radical American Comic* asks, "Hey God, what is Truth? Eh? "No idea," replies God. "Get lost. "

Truth-evaders of our time are really doing nothing new. Fernandez-Armesto says: ". . . all the ingredients of this modern substitute for equivocation were available in western tradition from the time of Plato. " In *The Tragedy of Reason* (1990, pgs. 94-95), David Roochnik tells us more about the philosophical conflict over truth that can be traced in the West back to the days of Plato:

The reason that this dispute is so old, so fundamental, is that it is between two of the most basically different and extreme views of the human world that can be held. Is the world made by human productive energy, or is it somehow structured by entities that exist independently of human choice? Is man the measure? If so, then the human world is subject to endless shifts and changes. Human freedom and the power to create become the most cherished of gifts. Or is the world constituted by a stable set of objective standards that somehow reside in the world outside of human agency and thus function as natural goals by which we can measure our activity?

It's a dispute, Roochnik says, between advocates of logos, an ultimate, non-negotiable reality behind the changing appearance of things, and the advocates of misology, the view that there is no definite purpose behind the world as we see it, because this world is an ongoing creative process in which we all take part.

It is instructive to take a closer look at Roochnik's terms--logos and misology--which come from ancient Greek philosophy. The primary definition of the Greek word logos is "word. " Thus logos occupies the same conceptual space as the Sanskrit word *śabda*, which likewise means "word" but is also the eternal Vedic vibration from which the world we perceive arose. *Śabda*, like logos, is transcendental sound vibration that gives the world its meaning. A misologist, in Vedic terms, is a *nastika*, a person who does not believe the world came to be by a divine order spoken in eternity.

Misology appears today in the philosophical evasion of the truth known as relativism, the theory that conceptions of truth and moral values are not absolute but are relative to the persons or groups holding them. In ancient Greece, a kind of relativism was propagated by the sophists, of whom Protagoras was the leading teacher. Against the sophists Socrates was the exponent of logos. Socrates summed up relativism thus: "things are for me such as they appear to me, and things are for you such as they appear to you. "

Plato records Socrates challenging Protagoras, "Do you really mean that? That my opinion is true by virtue of its being my opinion?"

"Indeed I do," Protagoras answered.

"My opinion," Socrates then asserted, "is that truth is absolute, not opinion, and that you, Protagoras, are absolutely in error. Since this is my opinion, then you must grant that it is true according to your philosophy. "

And Protagoras did agree with Socrates here. It's a little naive, though, to conclude that Protagoras accepted defeat by Socrates. Socrates certainly showed that relativism is self-contradictory; but, you see, self-contradiction may be the very reason why Protagoras agreed. The more contradictions the better for the relativist. Contradictions demonstrate, in the mind of the relativist, that truth is not universal. It is individual. Each individual swims like a goldfish in his own glass bowl of personal truth. Though Socrates intended to trounce Protagoras, he allowed space for relativism to continue to play when he told him, "Since this is my opinion, then you must grant that it is true according to your philosophy. " We can imagine a cynical smile breaking out on Protagoras' face. Behind the smile, perhaps, he was thinking, "By our agreement now, Socrates, we are confirming that truth is just an opinion that some men consider correct. "

It is doubtful that Socrates took much comfort in his opponent's agreement, for he confessed to experiencing "vexation and actual fear" during his dialogues with Protagoras. He said Protagoras "drags his arguments up and down because he is so stupid that he cannot be convinced and is hardly to be induced to give up any one of them".

That a proponent of logos finds relativism difficult to refute does not mean that the latter has real strength as a philosophical position. In fact it is a position of non-position that normal people can't live by. David Roochnik (*The Tragedy of Reason*, pg. 41) explains.

. . . relativism is untenable; it is a position that cannot be coherently held. It is a position whose consequences few, if any, can actually live. For the relativist, all value judgments are ultimately equal in the sense that none can muster a final defense of itself. This implies that if person A makes judgment P, and person B makes judgment R, and P is directly opposed to R, A (according to the relativist) must accord to B full equality with himself. . . . Such a view is at odds with the way people live.

Suppose A himself is an intellectual relativist. He is of the "opinion" that the automobile he purchased with his own money and legally registered in his name is his private property. Suppose B, whose mind usually dwells on matters less exalted than philosophy, is of the "opinion" that A's car is simply too cool for A to own; better B takes it from him. Do you think A, as he looked out the window of his house to see B forcing open the door of his car, would give much thought to the problem? "How can I claim absolute ownership of that car? How can I absolutely deny that B has a right to that car? Hmmm. . . maybe B and I ought to share it. " In a real-world situation, A wouldn't miss a beat before telephoning the police to report grand theft auto.

While it's very hard to picture A adhering to relativistic morality when faced with the practical situation of B stealing his car, it isn't hard to envision B resorting to relativism to defend himself when being interrogated by the police.

"Why did you steal A's car?"

"It's *not* his car!"

"Of course it is his car. He paid for it and he's the registered owner. "

"That has validity only under the laws of this police state!"

"Are you telling us you didn't steal his car?"

"I'm telling you that what you call stealing is a social construct that I do not accept!"

Suppose B belongs to a minority community that is acknowledged in society as having been historically oppressed. His relativistic arguments might generate political sympathy for his cause. A "Free B" movement might swell; defense funds might be raised; a high-priced Dream Team phalanx of lawyers might be assembled; and who knows? In today's relativistic climate, B might very well be found innocent.

Relativism is a theme of Mayavadi philosophy. Srila Prabhupada (Mauritius 3 October 1975):

Yatha mat tatha path ["Each man's opinion is his own path to the truth. "] This is going on. Everyone will say something, and it is all right. However nonsense it may be, it is all right. Even Gandhi followed that philosophy. Therefore he invented one, another philosophy, nonviolence, which is impossible. When Hindus approached him, that "You have got so much influence over the Mohammedans, so why not stop cow killing?" he said, "It is their religious principle. How can I interfere?" Just see.

Just see. Relativism is successful in the modern world not because it is convincing in its own right (in fact, it is a philosophy of lack of conviction). It is successful because people in general have lost sight of the Absolute Truth. It is successful because due to accepting bodily *upadhis*, people in general are divided into groups of conflicting interests. It is successful because people in general are trying to possess this world as their own. The absolute truth is that this world, at every level and nuance, is completely under the control of Krsna. And that, *that* is what people in general do not want to see.

Part 3, The Eternal Enemy, will follow soon.

Preshov, Slovakia
7 July 2004

Are Academic Scholars like Snakes?

Part Three: The Eternal Enemy

When one forgets his identity in deep sleep, he becomes absorbed in dreams, and he may think himself a different person or may think himself lost. But actually his identity is intact. This concept of being lost is due to false ego, and it continues as long as one is not awakened to the sense of his existence as an eternal servitor of the Lord. The Mayavadi philosophers' concept of becoming one with the Supreme Lord is another symptom of being lost in false ego. One may falsely claim that he is the Supreme Lord, but actually he is not. This is the last snare of *maya's* influence upon the living entity.

--*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 27. 15, purport

Devotee 1: One of our friends went to hear Chinmayananda, and he came back to the temple and he said, "Oh, he was speaking very nicely. "

Prabhupada: Hm.

Devotee 1: So one of our swamijis said, "What did he say?"

Prabhupada: Hm.

Devotee 1: "I do not know. "

Prabhupada: That is the disease.

Devotee 1: Yes.

Devotee 2: They just speak very big words so that the language looks very nice, but people don't understand a word what they are saying.

Prabhupada: (Prabhupada talks meaningless words, imitating the rascals; devotees laugh) They go on speaking like this. And people, "Oh, how amazing!" Simply give some grammatical form and talk all nonsense, people will appreciate. Jugglery. This is called jugglery. The Mayavadi *panditas* also do that.

--Morning walk, Hyderabad 24 April 1974

A mind steeped in Cartesian rationalism, certain that its university-certified powers of analysis are the only means to real knowledge. A mind zealous to unleash this knowledge upon its proper object, the external world, eradicating ignorance in every corner until that mind proudly ascends the shining throne of *maitre et proprietaire de la nature* (Descartes' own words: "master and proprietor of nature"). A mind without a shred of doubt about itself, without the slightest qualm about inner imperfections, mistakes, illusions, self-deceptions, nor about irrational monsters that at any moment may lunge from the murk of the subconscious to wrest control from reason's grasp.

Such is a mind lost in false ego.

A mind that, as it becomes inescapably evident its "knowledge" of the external world is but an assemblage of sensory and mental representations that may have nothing to do with reality at all, decides that if *it* can make no sense of the world, then there *can* be no sense in the world.

Such is a mind lost in false ego.

A mind that discovers an inverse, perverse absolute in senselessness: "I am absolutely free!" For even better than to become master and proprietor of nature is to become the irresponsible enjoyer of nature.

Such is a mind lost in false ego.

A mind that dresses up senselessness with misological rhetoric to appear as wisdom. A mind that, on the basis of that senseless wisdom, denies the existence of an absolute truth. A mind that uses the same misological rhetoric to deviously protect the one absolute it most cherishes: its own freedom.

Such is a mind lost in false ego.

A mind that fears no consequence of its actions due to the "knowledge" gained by rationalism that the field of activities (the world) is mere appearance with no substance; for in the end, the world will dissolve into the absolute senselessness of The Void.

Such is a mind lost in false ego.

Puffed-up Western rationalism is but an introductory phase of *nirvivesa* and *sunyavadi* philosophy, which is characterized by nonsensical relativistic talk. A Mayavadi, whether dressed like a Hindu *sadhu* or a Western scholar, is dangerous association for a devotee, *especially* when the Mayavadi comes to "discuss" topics of Sri Krsna and His philosophy.

So *avaishnava-mukhodgirna puta-hari-kathamrtam, sravanam na kartavyam*. And it is forbidden, "Don't hear. " Why? "*Hari-kathamrta, krsna-katha*, the message of God, the words of God, *Bhagavad-gita*? He may be anything, but the *katha* is the same; so what is the harm to hear from an *avaishnava*?"

Sanatana Gosvami gives the example: *sarpocchistha-payo yatha. Sarpocchista-payo yatha. Sarpocchistha*. . . Just like milk, everyone knows, a very nice food, most nutritious food, but if it is touched by the life of a serpent, immediately spoiled. Immediately. Another place, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *mayavadi-bhasya sunile haya sarva nasa*. If we hear Mayavadi-bhasya, commentaries by the Mayavadis, those who do not accept the Personality of Godhead. . . They are called Mayavadis. Mayavadi means they see everything *maya*. Even Krsna is *maya*. That is called Mayavadi.

--*Bhagavad-gita* lecture in Ahmedabad, 14 December 1972

Mayavadi philosophy is dangerous because its influence spreads in tandem with the eternal enemy of the soul, lust.

*svagamaih kalpitaś tvam ca
janan mad-vimukhan kuru
mam ca gopaya yena syat
srstir esottarottara*

Addressing Lord Siva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "Please make the general populace averse to Me by imagining your own interpretation of the Vedas. Also, cover Me in such a way that people will take more interest in advancing material civilization just to propagate a population bereft of spiritual knowledge. "

--*Padma-Purana* as quoted by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu,
C. c. Madhya 6. 181

The phrase, "advancing material civilization just to propagate a population bereft of spiritual knowledge", neatly summarizes modern Western culture. The bodily comforts, the sensual excitants, the mental titillations and diversions provided for by science and technology are stimuli for lust. There's just no denying it: in modern civilization, science and technology are more the servants of sexuality than any other human interest. Thus the largest Internet enterprise by far is pornography. The population born out of such artificially stimulated, wildly exaggerated lust is *varnasankara*, a herd of beasts in human form with practically no inclination to spiritual knowledge.

Predominant in the mentality of such a culture of widespread sense gratification is aversion to the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By such service, the fangs of the serpents of the lusty senses are broken. Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 1. 17:

The sense organs are certainly our greatest enemies, and they are therefore compared to venomous serpents. However, if a venomous serpent is bereft of its poison fangs, it is no longer fearful. Similarly, if the senses are engaged in the service of the Lord, there is no need to fear their activities. The devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement move within this material world, but because their senses are fully engaged in the service of the Lord, they are always aloof from the material world. They are always living in a transcendental position.

Mayavadi philosophy, whether in Hindu, Buddhist or Western garb, denies that God is a person. Hence He has no senses. The *raison d'être* of engaging our senses in the service of the Lord is that by His mercy we come in contact with His transcendental senses. This is so very evident in Deity worship, for example. By contacting the spiritual senses of the Lord, our material senses, dangerous as serpents, are purified. Their fangs of lust are broken, and we may live in a transcendental position even while carrying on in the material body. But when the heart is darkened by the Mayavadi contamination, service to the Lord is dampened while the fires of sensuality are stoked.

Mayavadi philosophy stimulates lust in another way:

Sukadeva Gosvami concludes this episode of *rasa-lila* by pointing out that if a person hears from the right source of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, who is Viṣṇu Himself, and the *gopis*, who are expansions of His energy, then he will be relieved of the most dangerous type of disease, namely lust. If one actually hears *rasa-lila*, he will

become completely freed from the lusty desire of sex life and elevated to the highest level of spiritual understanding. Generally, because they hear from Mayavadis and they themselves are Mayavadis, people become more and more implicated in sex life. The conditioned soul should hear the *rasa-lila* dance from an authorized spiritual master and be trained by him so that he can understand the whole situation; thus one can be elevated to the highest standard of spiritual life, otherwise one will be implicated. Material lust is a kind of heart disease, and to cure the material heart disease of the conditioned soul, it is recommended that one should hear, but not from the impersonalist rascals.

--*Krsna*, Chapter Thirty-two

The history of Gaudiya Vaisnavism in India has seen the rise of many *apasampradayas* like the Auls, Bauls, Ativadis, Smartas, Sahajiyas, Kartabhajas and so on. All of them are in some way compromised with Mayavadi philosophy. In and around ISKCON in recent decades, different schools of thought and practice have been springing up. The taint of Mayavada can be seen in many; and apropos to the theme of this essay, many--most, I would say--are tainted in particular by the Western scholarly version of Mayavada.

Krsna consciousness is not aimed at the end of knowledge in the Cartesian sense. It is aimed at the end of lust, which in turn spells the end of a most profound, inward and deep ignorance that a Cartesian is simply not equipped to deal with. Those who are unwilling to relinquish the Cartesian bias are invited by Srila Prabhupada to follow their path wholeheartedly: give up Krsna consciousness, do your business, earn money and enjoy.

Preshov, Slovakia
8 July 2004



An inexperienced boy may be struck with wonder by seeing the impersonal actions of electronics or many other wonderful things conducted by electrical energy, but an experienced man knows that behind the action is a living man who creates such energy. Similarly the so-called scholars and philosophers of the world may, by mental speculation, present so many utopian theories about the impersonal creation of the universe, but an intelligent devotee of the Lord, by studying the *Bhagavad-gita*, can know that behind the creation is the hand of the Supreme Lord, just as in the generating electrical powerhouse there is the resident engineer. The research scholar finds out the cause and the effect of everything, but research scholars as great as Brahma, Siva, Indra and many other demigods are

sometimes bewildered by seeing the wonderful creative energy of the Lord, so what to speak of the tiny mundane scholars dealing in petty things.

--*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2. 4. 6p

The man who tells you truth does not exist is asking you not to believe him. So don't.

--Roger Scruton, *Modern Philosophy*

The following letter is from the compilation *108 Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati-Gosvami-Prabhupader Patravali* (pratham skanda/Vol. 1) It is translated by Punyapalaka Prabhu of ISKCON Prague

What is to be learned in the life of a *sadhaka*

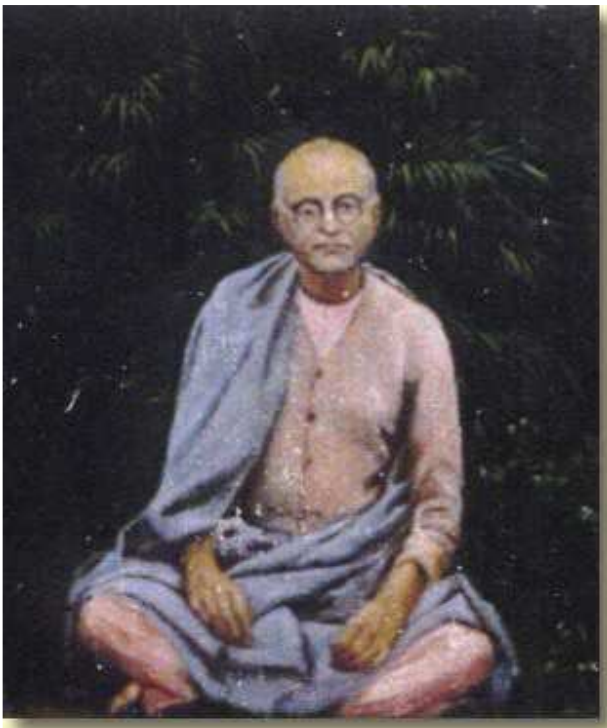
(*siddhanta* provides tools for removing lethargy - how to strengthen our worship - the common purpose of service to Krsna, service to devotees and chanting the holy name - the old histories can easily console us - how to get rid of the desire for mundane fame - what is to be accepted? - the means for *anartha-nivrtti* - following

the *mahajanas* - the behavior of a devotee in distress and troubles, in good and bad times)

sri sri gandharvika-giridharibhyam namah

Sri Caitanya Math, Sridham Mayapur
August 5, 1926

My dear ---



Having received your lengthy letter from the 21st day of the month of Asarh, I acquainted myself with your report. At that time I resided in Puri, in the Jagannatha-vallabha Math. Then I spent several days in Sri Bhuvanesvar and Cuttack, after which I moved to the Gaudiya Math. Today it has been some 10 to 12 days since I came here.

I understand that you were taking care of the Math in Varanasi by yourself, and that led you to writing such a letter.

krame krame paya loka bhava-sindhu-kula - "By and by you will be able to cross the ocean of material existence. " [Caitanya Mahaprabhu to Raghunatha dasa, *CC Madhya* 16. 237]

Everything auspicious comes through becoming hopeful and serving Krsna, serving devotees and chanting the holy name with great eagerness. If we always exert all kinds of endeavor for Krsna, we cannot be covered by various temptations of *maya*. Always engage in hearing and chanting, read the books of *mahajanas* and the Gaudiya literature, and if you thus acquire the *siddhanta*, your lethargy shall not stay.

Whenever there are devotees somewhere, talk with them about the Lord, and you will be able to realize how elevated worshiping Him is and at the same time how fallen and insignificant you are. You know that, *sarvottama apnake hin kori' mane* - "Although a pure devotee's standard is above all, he still considers himself to be in the lowest stage of life. " [*CC Madhya* 23. 26] Wish the best fortune on all your servants; that will make our worship stronger.

Although service to Krsna, service to devotees and chanting the holy name are three different activities, still the purpose of all three of them is one.

*nama sankirtanera dvara krsna o karsna-seva hoy
vaisnavera seva korile krsna kirtana o krsna-seva hoy
krsna-seva korilei nama-sankirtana vaisnava-seva hoy
tahara pramana ei - "sattvam visuddham vasudeva-sabditam"*

Through *nama-sankirtana* one serves both Krsna and devotees, while serving Vaisnavas one performs both *kirtana* and service to Krsna, and in serving Krsna both *nama-sankirtana* and service to Vaisnavas are included. The proof of that is this quotation: *sattvam visuddham vasudeva-sabditam* - "Worshiping Vasudeva is enacted on the platform of pure goodness. " [SB 4. 3. 23]

The recitation of *Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta* is a service to Krsna as well as chanting the holy name. The same is accomplished by reciting the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in the assembly of devotees. The Deity worship also includes these three kinds of duties. They are also nicely executed by singing devotional songs.

Learn from the ancient histories about the propitiousness of devotional service, in other words, know how favorable situations developed from unfavorable worldly interests. An unfavorable misfortune is made favorable by devotional service after some time. All objects in the whole manifested world are ingredients for serving Krsna. The intelligence turning away from service has a disastrous effect on our inclinations, engaging the objects for our enjoyment. As soon as we see, by awakening of transcendental knowledge, how everything in the world has its relationship with Krsna, we cannot be consumed by the poisonous fruits of fame.

Cancala jivana-srota pravahiya, kaler sagare dhae - "This flickering life is slowly drifting away, flowing onward into the ocean of time. " [Bhaktivinoda Thakura, *Sri Kalyana Kalpa-taru*, part 3, song 4] With this knowledge it is necessary to become permanently attached to the Lord's service. Thus it is my duty to willingly and happily accept whatever pleases Krsna. If Krsna feels happy when neglecting me, which makes me sad, then it is to be welcomed by me.

Tomara sevaya, duhkha hoya jato, sei to' parama sukha - "All the troubles encountered in Your service shall be the cause of great happiness," [Bhaktivinoda Thakura, *Saranagati*, part 2, song 8] - that is Vaisnava realization, that you try to follow. When we free ourselves, by serving Krsna, of all *anarthas*, it brings about the everlastingly auspicious result for us. The former behavior of Bilvamangala Thakura, talking of Sarvabhauma Bhattacarya, quibbling of Prakasananda - all of these *anarthas* eventually turned into Krsna's service. Therefore do not mind your previous *anarthas* at all. The present *anarthas* will have no power, if you take advantage of the power of hearing and chanting. Our life lasts a few days only, therefore endeavor sincerely to serve the Lord before death comes. Following *mahajanas* is the only bridge leading to our good fortune.

Consider the verse *aham tarisyami duranta-param* - "I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Krsna. This was approved by the previous *acaryas*, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramatma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. " [SB 11. 23. 57] I have read your letter to Sri Bhaktivilasa Thakura, and he expressed his satisfaction.

As the result of my previous misbehavior, I am sometimes well and sometimes my state turns bad. When I think I am OK, then I lose my interest in Krsna, and consequently I consider myself better than devotees, whom I consider inferior. Thus Krsna, having judged my condition, keeps me in various kinds of distress, painful discomfort and problems. At that time I try to understand the meaning of the verse *tat te 'nukampam* - "My dear Lord, one who constantly waits for Your causeless mercy to be bestowed upon him and who goes on suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds, offering You respectful obeisances from the core of his heart, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim. " [SB 10. 14. 8] People of the world, permanently maddened by pleasures independent of Krsna, want to quarrel with others. When I am busy serving Krsna, the whole world attacks me.

I hope you are well.

your ever well-wisher,
[*nityasirbadok*; literally "one who blesses eternally"]
Sri Siddhanta Sarasvati

Budapest, Hungary
9 July 2004

The journal will be interrupted over the weekend due to computer problems. Hare Krsna!

Timisoara, Romania
12 July 2004

An ecstatic weekend in Budapest! Beautiful Rathayatra festival. HH Sivarama Maharaja was there.

Photos will follow in a day or two.

Arrived in Timisoara today. Unfortunately I am ill...chest cold, sore throat. By the grace of the Timisoara temple, I have a brand new laptop to replace my old Dell Latitude, which succumbed to a number of problems.

It'll take a few days more to get everything running normally.

Hare Krsna!

Timisoara, Romania
14 July 2004

Budapest Rathayatra! 10 July 2004

Dinner for the Sponsors, 8 July

I arrived in Budapest on the afternoon of 8 July. The devotees requested I take part in the dinner for the sponsors of the Rathayatra Festival. HH Sivarama Maharaja normally would have been at the dinner too, but he was attending the Congress of World Religions at Barcelona, Spain.



Regular friends and supporters of ISKCON made up about eighty percent of the guests at the dinner program. The rest were first-time donors.



The Budapest devotees presented a very expert lineup of transcendental entertainment. This bhajan band was magnificent.



A classical Bharat Natyam performance by a

skillful Hungarian dancer.



I gave a short talk about the significance of Jaganatha Rathayatra in Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON movement.



A beautiful drama without words was performed to introduce the guests to the deep spiritual meaning of Rathayatra.

Rathayatra Day, 10 July



Sri-Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Baladeva-Subhadra-devi Ki Jaya!



Because HH Sivarama Maharaja was delayed, I gave the inauguration speech.





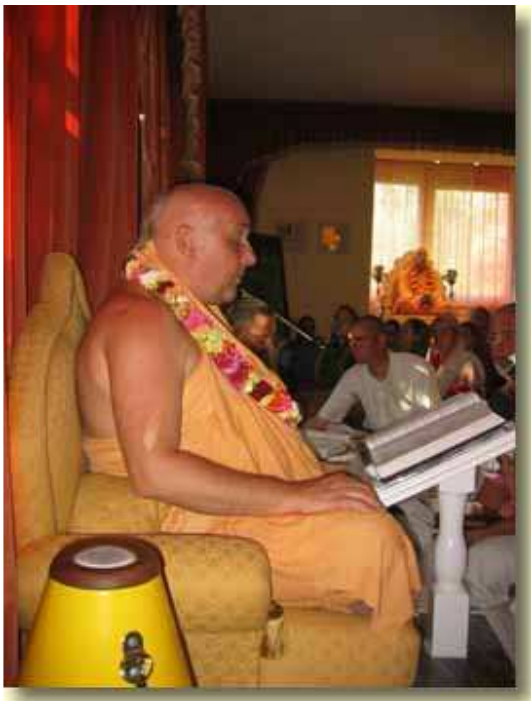
HH Sivarama Maharaja joined the procession about 45 minutes after the Rathayatra started.



Sadhu-sanga!



Maharaja kindly translated a talk I gave to the attendees assembled in the festival tent at the destination, a nice park alongside the Danube river.



I gave class at the Budapest temple...



...in service to Their Lordships Sri-Sri Nitai Vijaya-Gauranga.

*Timisoara, Romania
15 July 2004*

A Letter from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura
Translated by Punya-palaka Prabhu, ISKCON Prague

The Dispelling of Grief

(the worldly relationship between a father and a son is based on the material bodies - actually the soul of both of them is an eternal servant of Krsna and their eternal duty is service to the Lord - whenever a true devotee comes to this world as if due to his karma and accepts anybody's sonhood, after the predestined time he goes to the place that has been fixed for him - the living entity in his original form is a soul born from Nityananda Prabhu - a thorough liberation from missing a worldly mortal son by establishing Lord Visnu as the eternal son - the example of Srivasa)

sri sri guru-gaurangau jayatah

Sri Gaudiya Math, Calcutta
May 29, 1927

My dear -



This morning I came, along with Sriman Paramananda, from Puri to Sri Gaudiya Math. Just when I arrived at the station, I heard that, by the Lord's desire, Tota had left us and passed away. Tota was known as your son, otherwise he is a servant of Krsna. He had come to a house of devotees; you were serving him as devotee father and mother, for a short period he had to be accepting service, and after receiving that, he has departed. Tota had certainly received his body from you, but he is a living entity, a devotee of the Lord. His eternal duty is to serve the Lord. A devotee comes to this world as if due to his karma, and for the predestined time he lives in this atmosphere, afterwards he goes wherever Lord Baladeva sends him, according to his eligibility. Inside this Baladeva Maha-Laksmi is situated, inside Maha-Laksmi is the Supreme Lord -- therefore Tota has gone to serve the object of his worship.

Since he is a devotee living entity born from Nityananda Prabhu, thus if you learn how to put Lord Visnu in the position of a son, you will feel no lack any more. The Lord was there with Tota as Antaryami, and you were serving that Lord, so now continue serving Lord Baladeva. The material body has mixed with the stock of five elements. Tota's soul shall remain engaged in the service of the energy and the energetic. Your dear son has become separated from the association of his dear father. He is dear to God, so his engagement is to act as a Vaisnava, in the role so dear to the Lord. Because the Lord knows that you are not bound by *maya* as I am, He will give you His unlimited mercy and strength and will not let you become struck with grief, that is my conviction. Remember how the son of Srivasa was talking. Read the *Soka-satana* [chapter 3 of *Sri Sri Gita-mala* by Bhaktivinoda Thakura] and

the *Caitanya-bhagavata*. When Mahaprabhu took *sannyasa*, at that time He told His old mother, His wife Visnupriya and the inhabitants of Navadvipa that "I am only a human being, situated in various relationships with you. When I go away, establish all those relationships with Krsna instead of Me, and give Me the freedom to serve the Lord in seclusion. " Now without Tota, you have also gained a lot of time for serving the Lord. Whatever the Lord does is meant for our good. I am a conditioned soul, what more can I explain to you.

your ever well-wisher,
Sri Siddhanta Sarasvati

Timisoara, Romania
16 July 2004

I received this letter some days ago in response to the 3-part essay about mundane scholars as snakes.

Dear Maharaja,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

BRAVO BRAVO BRAVO. Yet another masterful unmasking of the demons.



My brother looks like a reasonable man, talks like a reasonable man, behaves like a reasonable man, encourages his children to be reasonable, is moral, conscientious, hard-working, modest, studious, thoughtful, considerate, a veritable pillar of the local community, BUT..... when it comes to the position of Krsna or God even, he is 100% not reasonable, not interested, not open-minded, not humble, not even intelligent.

I love the way Srila Bhaktisiddhanta dismisses such people in the forward to *Brahma Samhita*. (At least I think he is talking about such empirically-oriented metaphysical speculators)

People are so much apt to indulge in transitory speculations even when they are to educate themselves on a situation beyond their empiric area or experiencing jurisdiction. The esoteric aspect often knocks them to trace out immanence in their outward inspection of transitory

and transformable things. This impulse moves them to fix the position of the immanent to an indeterminate impersonal entity, no clue of which could be discerned by moving earth and heaven through their organic senses.

It really doesn't take much for them to reveal their true colours. As soon as they are confronted with Krsna Katha, the cordiality evaporates fast.

Timisoara, Romania
17 July 2004

A letter from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura
Translated by Punya-palaka Prabhu, ISKCON Prague

On distraction of the mind, offenses in discharging service, etc.

(the means of removing distraction of the mind - the Lord does not consider mundane purity and impurity - when will *sri-nami* manifest His form?)

sri sri krsna-caitanya-candro jayatotamam

Sri Mayapura
Padmanabha 15, 429 Gaurabda [1915 AD]

My dear -



I have received your letter dated Padmanabha 5. Due to the lack of time, I feared writing an extensive letter, but I can see how the delay prolongs, so I write in short. I was very happy to learn that you have come to the understanding that everything is auspicious when the holy name of Krsna is chanted with perseverance. Do not become slack in your chanting the holy name when material thoughts are coming at the time of chanting. Gradually, as a secondary result of chanting the holy name, such useless thoughts will be naturally removed, you do not have to be occupied with that. The result cannot be there right in the beginning. With the rise of great pleasure in Krsna's name, the allurements of material thoughts will diminish. How would the material thoughts look like without an eager acceptance of the holy name?

Foreign sugar or mixed ghee is impure, our native unadulterated sugar and unmixed ghee is pure. But both pure and impure things are material substances. If one does not offer

things with feelings in his heart, the Lord will not accept any thing, be it pure or impure. What is required is to perform service without offenses. If one serves *sri-nama*, the holy name, with his body, mind and words, then *sri-nami*, the possessor of the holy name, will reveal His all-auspicious form.

I hope your worship is going on nicely.

your ever well-wisher,
Sri Siddhanta Sarasvati

Timisoara, Romania
18 July 2004

Science Faction

O faithful multitude! What thy Guru hast wrought, believeth thou ought!

Hawking Changes His Mind on Black Holes

Fri Jul 16

By JANE WARDELL, Associated Press Writer

LONDON -- After almost 30 years of arguing that a black hole swallows up everything that falls into it, astrophysicist Stephen Hawking backpedaled Thursday. In doing so, he lost one of the most famous bets in recent scientific history.

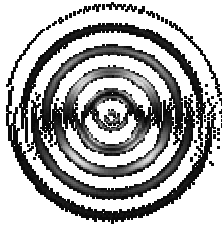
The world-famous author of a "Brief History of Time" said he and other scientists had gotten it wrong—the galactic traps may in fact allow information to escape.

"I've been thinking about this problem for the last 30 years, and I think I now have the answer to it," Hawking told the British Broadcasting Corp. 's "Newsnight" program.

"A black hole only appears to form but later opens up and releases information about what fell inside. So we can be sure of the past and predict the future. "

The findings, which Hawking is due to present at the 17th International Conference on General Relativity and Gravitation in Dublin, Ireland, on July 21, could help solve the "black hole information paradox," which is a crucial puzzle of modern physics.

Exactly what happens in a black hole—a region in space where matter is compressed to such an extent that not even light can escape from its immense gravitational pull—has long puzzled scientists.



Black holes occur when a massive star burns up its nuclear fuel and gravity forces it to collapse in on itself, and the enormous weight of the star's outer layers implodes its core. The crushing force of gravity prohibits nearly all light from escaping and nothing inside can be glimpsed from the outside.

The star virtually disappears from the universe into a point of infinite density, a place where the laws of general relativity that govern space and time break down.

Hawking has devoted most of his life to studying these questions.

Initially, cosmologists believed the holes were like a cosmic vacuum cleaner, sucking up everything in their path.

Hawking revolutionized the study of the holes when he demonstrated in 1976 that, under the strange rules of quantum physics, once black holes form they start to "evaporate" away, radiating energy and losing mass in the process.

Under this theory, black holes are not totally "black" because the vacuum of the imploding star lets out very tiny amounts of matter and energy in the form of photons, neutrinos and other subparticles.

By conjuring up this so-called "Hawking radiation," the Cambridge mathematician, who is paralyzed by amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also created one of the biggest conundrums in physics.

These particles, he said, contained no information about what has been occurring inside the black hole, or how it formed. Under his theory, once the black hole evaporates, all the information within would be lost.

But now, according to his latest revision, Hawking argues that eventually some of the information about the black hole can be determined from what it emits.

The information has important philosophical and practical consequences.

"We can never be sure of the past or predict the future precisely," he said. "A lot of people wanted to believe that information escaped from black holes but they didn't know how it could get out. "

Hawking did not elaborate on the BBC program how the information could be extracted from the black hole.

Curt Cutler, from the Albert Einstein Institute in Golm, Germany, which is chairing the meeting in Dublin, told New Scientist magazine that Hawking asked at the last minute for permission to address the conference.

"He sent a note saying 'I have solved the black hole information paradox and I want to talk about it,'" Cutler said.

If Hawking succeeds in making his case, he will lose a bet that he and theoretical physicist Kip Thorne of the California Institute of Technology made with John Preskill, also of Caltech.

The terms of the bet were that "information swallowed by a black hole is forever hidden and can never be revealed. "

Preskill bet against that theory.

The forfeit is an encyclopedia, from which Preskill can recover information at will.

"Scientists work hard," says expert

In2-MeC visited Dr. Don Key of the University of Vineland, who as a Professor of Religious Science regards himself as an authority in areas of mutual concern to science and religion. We asked his views on Professor Hawking's announcement.

"Well, the important thing is that science marches on, isn't it? In any case, I don't think that as religious people, you Krsna devotees need to concern yourself with such matters as black holes and the like. Best that be left to the experts, and you carry on with your own faith. "

But Dr. Key, we asked, why do you call "science" what Hawking's says, and what we say "faith"?

"Well, it has to do with teleology, really. I always say, 'If it's teleology, it's theology; if it's realology, it's science. ' Ha ha ha. "

By teleology, you mean the use of an ultimate purpose, plan and design when explaining natural phenomena.

"Yes, indeed. That's theology, then. Science presumes no such thing, an *a priori* imposition of purpose upon the universe. "

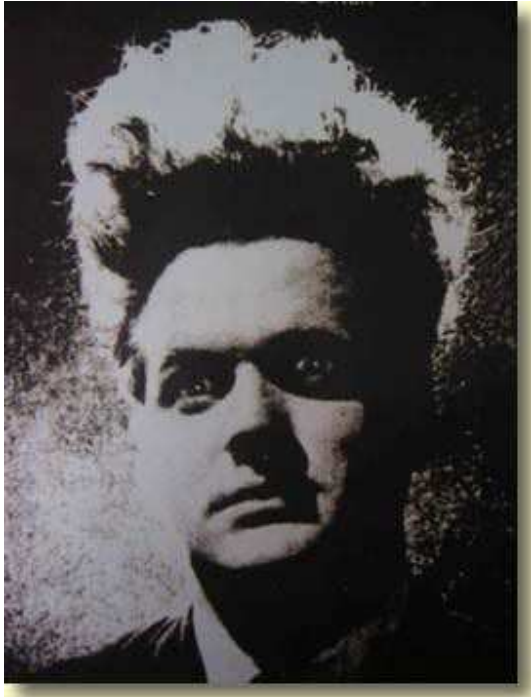
And what do you mean by realology?

"Well, ha ha ha, we really *don't* know what reality is, do we? Oh, you can *believe* you know, of course. That's religion: to believe what we don't know. Science investigates what we don't know and attempts to explain it from the real facts it assembles from that investigation. Therefore I would say that a scientist knows what is real--but, just as realistically, what he knows is limited and, unfortunately, not always perfect. Still, because scientists continue to investigate, scientific knowledge continues to improve. "

So, Dr. Key, you say that reality, or the state of being realistic, means to accept that human knowledge is limited and imperfect. But, you conclude, even as we allow for that limitation and imperfection, we should grant authority to scientists as being leaders of human knowledge. "

"Yes. I think that's a very reasonable way of putting it. "

When Professor Hawking changes his opinion about black holes, and announces that change by declaring "I have solved the black hole information paradox," which was a paradox only due to his hanging on for 30 years to his previous opinion, is that announcement of his having "solved" something honest?



Don Key, Professor of Religious Science at the University of Vineland.

First of all, I think you're being somewhat melodramatic. "

Dr. Key paused thoughtfully for a moment. "Yes, I think it is. Scientists work hard. We may not be able to follow clearly everything they do and tell us. But that's *reality*, you see. I just explained that. Human knowledge is by definition uncertain. So I think we've got to give credit to these men and women of the scientific community who bravely stick their necks out to at least *try* by the sweat of their brow to establish some borders of certainty within an uncertain field. "

But when they tell us that there are "certainties" in this uncertain field-- "certainties" which we cannot observe like black holes or evolution, yet "certainties" that are given such scientific importance that, if we do not accept them, we risk having epithets like "irrational" or "fundamentalist" hung around our necks. .

"All right, all right," Dr. Key interrupted with a bit of irritation. "I see your point.

We began to interrupt him, but he put up his hand.

"I'll take that back. Yes, you're right. If you don't accept scientific evolution and rather believe in scriptural creation, you do put yourself in 'the funny corner,' so to speak. But that's where our society has arrived at. It's not perfect. But it's better. When religious authorities were running things, a person would be burnt at the stake for not accepting Church dogma. "

That's the history of Western religion during a specific period, Dr. Key. It's not the history of all religion at all periods. The questions remain: is it honest for scientists, in their positions as respected authorities of knowledge, to present theories to the public as truths? If their field of knowledge is as limited, imperfect and uncertain as you say, Dr. Key, is it then honest for scientists to speak in any terms of certainty? Why call it science at all? Isn't it just belief? *Faith*?

"Well, I'll answer that by pointing out that at least according to our modern Western way of looking at things, there *is* a difference between science and religion. Science is *knowledge*, however imperfect; while religion is *faith*. We see a need for keeping

faith out of the practical affairs of running a society. Like public education, for example. But we don't see a need for keeping out science. That would be absurd, wouldn't it? Children should be schooled in *knowledge*. To that end, science must be granted authority in our society. "

So there should be separation of Church and state but not science and state.

Dr. Don Key's eyes flashed with a hint of anger. "Science is *practical*. Science is *progressive*. Science is *humanistic*. When religion--*faith*--assumes too much control in society, we run into horror stories well-accounted for in history. "

Hiroshima and Nagasaki aren't horror stories, Dr. Key? German science and technology during the Second World War aren't horror stories? The well-accounted destruction of nature brought on by scientific "progress" isn't a horror story? Chernobyl isn't a horror story? The loss of a moral compass, the loss of a sense of meaning and value of life in modern society, well-accounted to be linked to the predominance of scientific materialism over human affairs, isn't a horror story?

"Oh dear. I'm afraid this interview is over. "

Timisoara, Romania
19 July 2004

A Narrative of Prema-Bhakti from South India (A movie could be made of this story!)

Lord Tirunarayana Swami.



At Melkote in Karnataka, the great *acarya* of South Indian Sri Vaisnavism, Sripad Ramanuja, uncovered the Deity of Tirunarayana Swami, known also as Yadugiri and Yadavagiri. The history of this Deity goes back to the beginning of creation when Lord Narayana gave this *murti* to Brahmadeva for his daily *puja*. In turn Brahma gave the Deity to his son Sanat Kumara, who installed Him at the place now known as Melkote. Before the birth of Ramanujacarya (1017 AD) the Tirunarayana Deity was buried under the earth due to fear of Muslims and forgotten. When Ramanuja visited Melkote the Deity appeared to him in a dream and revealed His whereabouts. Under Ramanuja's order Lord Tirunarayana was recovered and His regular worship resumed. A grand temple was specially constructed for Him.

Later Tirunarayana Swami appeared again in Ramanuja's dream, this time to order him to recover His *utsava-murti*: the festival Deity, which is smaller than the *mula-murti* and is taken out of the temple for processions on holy festival days. It

turned out that years before the *Utsava-murti* has been plundered by an army of Muslim soldiers of the Delhi Sultan. They had carried the Deity off with them. With a party of disciples, Ramanuja set off to recover Him.

At Delhi the Sultan was most pleased to behold this effulgent *sannyasi* from the South who had come so far to recover the Deity. He informed Ramanuja that many Deities had been captured by his army. These were kept in a storeroom. He gave permission to Ramanuja to search the storeroom for the *utsava-murti*. Unfortunately the *murti* could not be found.

The Sultan then remembered that one Deity had been taken by his daughter, Princess Bibi Lachimar. She was extremely fond of this *murti* and kept it in her private quarters. Since at that time she was away, the Sultan escorted Ramanuja into her quarters where he beheld the *utsava-murti* of Lord Tirunarayana seated upon a couch. Ramanuja called to the Deity: "Sampat Kumara", which means "darling boy. " Before the eyes of the Sultan the *murti* jumped down from the couch, ran across the room, and climbed into the arms of His pure devotee! Completely stunned, the Sultan gave permission to Ramanuja to return to the south with the Deity.

Ramanuja sensed that when Princess Bibi returned, she would plead with her father to get the Deity back. So he and his disciples walked day and night without rest until they crossed the border of the Sultan's territories.

Sure enough, when she came to know what had happened, Bibi Lachimar could not live without her Sampat Kumara. The Sultan sent a regiment of soldiers after Ramanuja. In great anxiety his daughter insisted on personally accompanying the soldiers upon a royal palanquin. She was attended by one officer-soldier who was in love with her. But as all she could speak about was her Sampat Kumara, this officer became Krsna conscious by her association.

The regiment failed to catch Ramanuja before he crossed out of the Sultan's territory. Obligated to halt at the border with the soldiers, Princess Bibi threatened to give up her life and could not be consoled. But nothing could be done. One night she disappeared from the military camp. The officer who loved her followed her southward through the dense jungle. At last after much hardship they reached Melkote.

Sripad Ramanuja and his disciples were astonished to see the great devotion of the Muslim princess for Lord Sampat Kumara. She insisted to stay for the rest of her life in the vicinity of the temple where she could render service to her Lord. The officer-soldier who loved her stayed by her side. Although Muslims were generally not allowed to enter Hindu temples, Bibi was permitted because Ramanuja recognized her as a pure devotee.



After years of rendering loving devotional service to Lord Sampat

The temple at Melkote where Bibi Lachimar took shelter of the Lord

Kumara at Melkote, Princess Bibi left this world before everyone's eyes by getting merged into the Deity. The Vaisnavas understood that the Lord had accepted her as His consort. After that, down to this very day, her *murti* (Bibi Nachiar) is offered special worship. She is considered a manifestation of Laksmi.

The officer-soldier who loved Princess Bibi became a great Vaisnava saint. After her disappearance he went to Sri Rangam. There Lord Ranganatha informed him that he should go to Puri and take shelter of Lord Jagannatha, as it was as Jagannatha that the Lord grants special mercy to low and fallen souls like *mlecchas* and *yavanas*. So he did that and by the grace of Lord Jagannatha attained love of Godhead.



Lecture at Timisoara temple.

*Timisoara, Romania
20 July 2004*

Special Guest Essay: How to Think Like a Scientist

Dr. Don Key Returns to In2-MeC

Not wanting to become the cause of the loss to ISKCON of a valuable contact in the academic world, we at In2-MeC felt bad about the irritation we caused to Dr. Don Key when we interviewed him day before yesterday. Dr. Key, as the reader may recall, is Professor of Religious Sciences at the University of Vineland. We've asked Dr. Key to teach our In2-MeC readership a lesson on how scientists reason.



Dr. Don Key as seen on the campus of the University of Vineland

"Thank you. You know, a Krsna devotee told me not long ago that the logic I employ is bizarre. Well, I beg to disagree. It's not bizarre, it's different. It's the logic of science. I thought it might be useful to give a little seminar today on how that logic works. If you devotees could train yourselves to reason as we do, it might improve your relationship with the world of academia. Who knows? You might even rise above fundamentalism and come to a more open-minded understanding of the world we live in.

"There's a website called *Bad Astronomy* that's run by an astronomer named Phil Plait. His intention is to counter with scientific logic the unauthorized speculations that run rampant in the field of astronomy, particularly those speculations propagated by persons with an agenda to discredit mainstream science. Phil's website is quite interesting, and his arguments illustrate nicely the sort of logic I want to teach today. So I thought I'd refer to his work to get across to you the basic thought processes of scientific reasoning that you need to understand.



"We'll look at how Phil deals with a controversy that has sprung up around this photograph, which was taken by the Mars Orbiter Camera on board the Mars Global Surveyor. As you can see, the central feature of the photograph is a structure that looks for all the world like a giant earthworm. It's about a mile long and hundreds of feet wide. It appears to be cylindrical, glassy, translucent, to have a regular rib-like structure, and to be shiny compared to the rest of the photograph. It seems to be clinging to a canyon wall on the Martian surface.

"Now here's the controversy: some people suggest that this really is a photograph of a giant worm. Even Sir Arthur C. Clarke, the famous science fiction author and inventor of the telecommunications satellite, said as much in an interview with Louis Friedman of the Planetary Society. Others say if it's not a worm then it must be an artifact designed and constructed by a Martian intelligence. Phil Plait starts off by replying to these people, 'I'm guessing no. ' Beautifully put, Phil! By that remark, you've taught our readers the first rule in how to reason like a scientist: Start Off By Sounding Humble.

"'I'm guessing no' signals that Phil's not coming off as an absolutist. He's expressing his opinion, which is his solemn right in a democracy. Keep in mind the issue Phil is dealing with: a high-altitude photograph taken of the surface of planet Mars, 140 million miles from Earth. It's obvious you can't just jump in feet first proclaiming that the photo *proves* this or that. That's what the nutcases do--excuse the derogatory language! It may look like a worm, but it is highly unscientific to argue right off the bat that it *is* a worm.

"Actually, this photograph of Mars stands very well for all sense data. It's certainly true that science relies upon sense data as evidence. In the same way, sense data is evidence in the courtroom. It is the main proof of the inductive process of knowledge, you see. Induction means you *draw* a conclusion from 'the facts'--what your senses tell you--whereas deduction means you *receive* a conclusion from a self-evident authority, or from a self-evident process of reasoning like arithmetic: two plus two equals four. The essential difference is the *degree* of speculation. In deduction, ideally there is no speculation at all. Something understood deductively, ideally *can't be any other way*: "All men are mortal," for example. Therefore no scientists are off exploring the Amazon to discover the Fountain of Youth, a body of water around which we'd find people of perpetual youth. We *don't know* that there is no Fountain of Youth in the Amazon, but deduction rules it out. So why speculate about it? With induction, on the other hand, speculation is inherent. Just as in a police case: the detectives arrive at a scene of a crime where it isn't obvious who did what. The detectives have to assemble clues--sense data--at the scene and *speculate* what these clues have to say about the crime.

"And so it follows that this photograph from Mars is simply a clue. It establishes nothing with deductive certainty. The main task of the inductive speculator surrounding this clue is to try to eliminate *what could not have happened*. In an ordinary police case that would be helped along by digging up more and more clues. But since we're talking here about a photograph taken high above the surface of Mars, which is 140 million miles away from the nearest human investigator, there's not much we can do 'on the ground. '

"In science there are many similar problems. For example, the problem of consciousness. We have *prima facie* evidence that consciousness exists--each of us is conscious, of course--but *what is it?* And *where does it come from?* It's quite a strange situation that while nothing can be nearer to us than our own consciousness, the task before the scientist of finding out what consciousness is and where it comes from is quite like the task of finding out what this photograph from Mars really shows us. We haven't found a way to dig *into* consciousness to get to its root. Whatever we do in our investigation, we remain *conscious of*. You see? Just like, here we are looking at this photograph, wondering what it means. We can't dig into it to find out more. Whatever we may do, at the end of the day we'll still be here on Earth looking at this picture from Mars.

"Phil's admission from the start that he's guessing shows honesty. So friends, that's where you start when you want to sound like a scientist grappling with a hard problem. Be very reasonable. Don't shout from the getgo that you have The Answer.

"All right. Phil's guess is the photograph is not of a worm nor an artificial structure. Why? Now we come to rule two of how to reason like a scientist: Avoid Stating Your Axiomatic Assumptions. Phil only brushes up against one such axiomatic assumption

by mentioning in passing, "the lack of food for something this size precludes a natural biological origin for it. " Nicely put in scientific-sounding language, Phil! Reading that, most people won't even pause over the briefest thought that if the thing in the photo is a burrowing worm, it might find its nourishment in the minerals of the Martian soil. Never mind! Giant extraterrestrial worms are a staple of popular science fiction (Frank Herbert's *Dune* series of novels). It's just too far out. But you don't want to state that openly. Because if people think about it, they'll start asking themselves, 'Wait a sec--*why* is it too far out?'

"There *are* reasons why it's too far out. One, obviously, is that giant worms on Mars are a scientific impossibility! Here's another reason I'll call the problem of 'non-rational connectivity. ' Suppose the thing in the photograph--against all scientific probability--actually *is* a giant worm. What does that mean? See, that's exactly the problem. People will start to ask themselves: 'What the hell does that *mean*?' They'll consider how, years before it was discovered on Mars, a science fiction author intuited such an extraterrestrial life form. Does that *mean*, they'll ask themselves, there is a *connection* between the dreamy, fantasizing, *non-rational* side of human consciousness and the true nature of the universe?

"With regard to Mars, this problem of non-rational connectivity is not a new development. Mars is orbited by two small moons, Phobos and Deimos. They were officially discovered in August 1877 by the U. S. Naval observatory. These moons are extremely small. That is why they were hidden from astronomers for so long. The telescopes of the 1720s, just 150 years before their discovery, were too primitive to be able to spot these little Martian moons. Yet in Chapter III of *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift, which was published in 1726, we find this strange paragraph:

They have likewise discovered two lesser stars or satellites, which revolve about Mars; whereof the innermost is distant from the center of the primary planet exactly three of its diameters and the outermost, five; the former revolves in the space of ten hours, and the latter in twenty-one and a half.

"The actual facts regarding the Martian moons are as follows:

- a) The innermost one, Phobos is at 5,800 miles from Mars as opposed to 12,300 miles (3 diameters) as Swift said.
- b) The outermost one, Deimos, is at 14,600 miles from Mars as opposed to 20,500 miles (5 diameters).
- c) Phobos orbits around Mars in 7. 2 hours compared to the 10 hours which Swift wrote of.
- d) Deimos orbits around Mars in 33. 6 hours compared to his prediction of 21. 5 hours.

"There is no known way of inferring beforehand how many satellites a planet should have. So the mere guess that Mars had two is of itself quite amazing since the number of moons a planet may have will vary from none to a dozen or more.

"On top of that, the various measurements given above are not all that far out. There is no rule which science knows of to predict the distance of satellites from a planet by theory alone. The orbital times given are nothing short of staggering. Phobos orbits in 7.2 hours compared with the 10 hours which Swift wrote of. The time for Deimos's orbit is also not far wrong. Note that he predicted that the innermost one would be at a distance of 12,300 miles--which is very close to the distance of Deimos (the outermost), which orbits at 14,600 miles! His biggest error therefore lies in his prediction of the distance of Phobos.

"This isn't the only case of an accurate physical discovery coming from a non-rational insight. Friedrich Kekule was a chemist born in Darmstadt, Germany on September 7th, 1829. He began life as an architect, but became fascinated with how chemistry could be used to solve crime. So he turned to chemistry. He loved the theoretical work involved, and became fascinated with how molecules were connected together. One afternoon he was taking a bus in London when he fell asleep. Suddenly he had a clear dream in which he visualized how molecules connected together. He had another dream when he was studying benzene, which helped him realize that benzene formed a ring shape. His dreams helped guide his research and form the basis for modern organic chemistry.



If science admit that non-rational insights into Reality have validity, that admission connects validity to mythological literatures like Srimad-Bhagavatam!

"Such uncanny events are only grudgingly admitted by science. We pass them off as coincidences. We do *not* admit that such events have any kind of regularized validity as means of knowledge. The problem scientists have with these non-rational insights is the connectivity factor. If it turns out that the hidden nature of the universe is understandable through dreams and fantasy, then doesn't that connect to the 'revelations' found in what we scientists call mythological literature? Like your *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, for example, in which a sage named Vyasa went into mystic trance and envisioned capital-R Reality! The question, 'Is there a connection between mysticism and cosmology?', is obviously connected in turn to the question, 'Is there a God?'.

"If we scientists have to entertain such questions, we'll stray far off the course of the scientific method. Axiomatic to that method is the assumption the universe is more or less a mechanism open to human analysis. Thus the basic key to understanding this mechanism is physics, which we try to keep as rational as possible. Otherwise we lose control of what we are trying to accomplish in science--which, after all, is control over matter.

"And so--getting back to Phil Plait's exemplary line of reasoning--a scientist has to strive to keep the discussion of 'the way things really are' within the bounds of scientific controls. But the thing is, as soon as we start clearly pointing out those bounds, we call attention to the non-rational realm outside--the realm which Carl Sagan called 'the demon-haunted world.' So while striving to keep the discussion within the bounds of scientific controls, we shouldn't spell out the axiomatic assumptions of those controls. Phil's done that very well.

"What Phil does next is positively brilliant. Since the photograph is the only piece of evidence we have for solving the puzzle of what this so-called worm is, Phil

manipulates the photograph in different ways so as to argue that it does not show what it seems to show! This is rule three of how to reason like a scientist: When All Else Fails, Manipulate the Data.



"He presents us with these images of a crater. On the left is the original image, on the right is the same image reversed; flipped, as it were. Thus the right image looks like a dome. The left image looks like the *opposite* of a dome: a crater. Yet they are the same image!

"Why does Phil offer us the image of the crater and its reverse? Well, he says

about those who call the strange Martian object a worm or an artifact:

First off, they claim the object is convex, that is, popping out of the image as opposed to being a concave valley. However, I think this claim is false. To see why, look at the images above. They demonstrate an illusion where craters can look like domes if flipped upside-down.

"Most impressive! You see what Phil has done? He has cleverly introduced the idea that the 'worm' photograph has illusory characteristics *when in fact there was no such question of illusory characteristics at the beginning of the discussion!* After all, it is an official NASA photograph. No-one has suggested it is reversed. Neither is Phil suggesting it is reversed. He is suggesting that those who see it as a worm or an artifact are *seeing* it in reverse!

"He then provides us with a reversed image of the 'worm' and says:



Is it a worm or a valley? When I look at [this picture], the convex worm. . . becomes a concave valley. . . The transverse markings suddenly look a lot more like long hills. As far as I am concerned, this makes it pretty clear right away that. . . claims about this feature [being a worm or an artifact] are completely wrong. If it's not a convex tube, then everything else he says is perforce wrong.

"Frankly, ha ha ha, I have to admit that this reversed image of the 'worm' looks hardly different to me than the original. I don't see it as concave. But Phil's argument is persuasive enough to get me to call my way of seeing this reversed image into question. Of course, being a scientist myself, I'm thankful to him for that.

"I like how Phil reminds us of the 'Start Off BY Sounding Humble' principle of scientific reason by saying 'As far as I am concerned. . . ' See? He's expressing his opinion. But he goes on to strongly assert that if he is right, then his opponents must be *wrong*. Thus rule four of how to reason like a scientist: When The Time Is Ripe, Jump From 'Guessing' To 'Professing. '

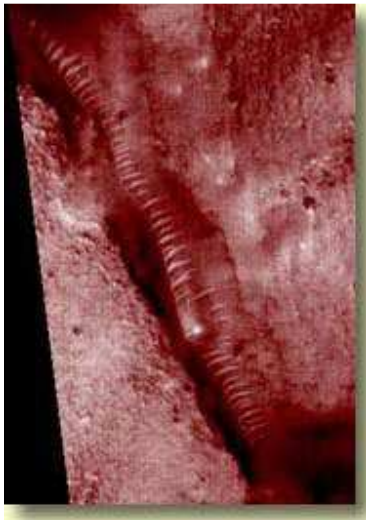
"Rule five is: Introduce Irrelevant Examples And Make Them Relevant! Phil draws our attention to this image from another region of Mars. He argues:



There are gullies all through this region, and they are consistent with flowing water. At the bottom appear to be more entrained dunes. The channel in which they sit is much more clearly a channel, and not a raised tube! So it looks like Mars can make features like this in channels. It's not a stretch at all to see that the same thing is happening in the valley claimed to be a giant worm.

"Personally, I don't see much connection between this photograph and the one of the 'worm,' but Phil is on a roll, and he's defending scientific reason, so more power to him!

"He's not done yet. He tints the 'worm' photo red and then argues:



I made the image red, and changed the contrast a little. Suddenly, the "glassy" appearance is gone, and it looks more like what it really is: a long winding channel with ridges. This in itself shows that the interpretation of glassiness depends on how the image is displayed, and not necessarily on any intrinsic shininess of the feature.

"An astonishing feat of science, Phil! And an illustration of the sixth rule of scientific reasoning: Fudge, Don't Budge!

"Rule seven is, State your Conclusions As *Proven Truth*. In other words, start off with humility, but by the end, throw all hesitancy to the winds and go for the big prize: Absolute Certainty! Here's how Phil winds up his presentation:

So what have I shown? Let's be clear:

- 1) This is not a raised tube, like a worm on the ground, but a channel. It's concave, not convex.
- 2) The ridges are in fact ridges, and not ribs or etchings. They are most likely sand dunes entrained by aerodynamic forces (that is, wind).
- 3) The glassiness is another illusion, created by the contrast level in the image.
- 4) This object, far from being inexplicable, is actually explainable as a gully perhaps carved by water flow. The ridges are wind-entrained dunes or possibly more solid erosion features from flowing water.



"And so ends my seminar on how to reason like a scientist. I'm not concerned whether the Mars photo I used in my presentation is of a worm or a gully. I simply wanted to demonstrate to you the method of reason we scientists apply to such evidence, whatever it may mean in reality. In2-MeC readers, I hope you will now have more appreciation for the hard work we do in arriving at our exacting explanations about the factual nature of our universe. Don't let your dogmatic leaders put words in

our mouths and accuse of things we do not do. Science can have a place of honor in *your* life too!"

Belgrade, Yugoslavia
22 July 2004

Yesterday Murari Krsna and Sri Caitanya Prabhus drove me from Timisoara down south to the border with Yugoslavia. It was about a one-hour drive. After a little bit of adventure with the border authorities, I crossed the frontier and was picked up by Naksatri Prabhu, who drove me to Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia. I'll be here til Saturday. Then it is off to Skopje, Macedonia. I'll published some photos before I leave Belgrade. Hare Krsna!

Belgrade, Yugoslavia
23 July 2004

3 Photos of my 3 days in Belgrade





*Skopje, Macedonia
25 July 2004*

After a hellishly long auto ride from Belgrade, I've arrived in Skopje with Naksatri Prabhu. The standard drive is 6 hours time, but now it is high tourist season. At the border there was a 3 kilometer long line of cars waiting to cross into Macedonia. Had Naksatri not spoken with a friendly border policeman who allowed us to drive ahead of the line, we would have waited at least 6 hours, maybe even 9, to cross. As it was, we had to wait 3 hours before Naksatri made contact with the policeman.

I'll stay here a few days and then it's off to Sofia, Bulgaria. We'll have some photos here of the ISKCON Skopje scene before I depart. Hare Krsna!



Britain Seeks to End National Booze Binge

Sat Jul 24, 5:54 AM ET

By JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press Writer

LONDON - The British have always liked their beer. Medieval English yeoman drank ale rather than water. Englishmen, Daniel Defoe noted in the 18th century, "seldom are good-natur'd, but in drink."

"An Englishman," he wrote, "will fairly Drink as much/As will maintain two families of Dutch."

Unimpressed, Prime Minister Tony Blair's government has vowed to crack down on the dark side of drinking, memorably summed up in the T-shirt slogan "A pint and a fight — a great British night."

Launching a five-year plan to curb anti-social behavior and crime in Britain, the government said this week that 44 percent of violent crime is fueled by booze, while alcohol-related mishaps account for 70 percent of hospital emergency-room cases at busy times. Booze fuels an epidemic of illness, accidents, violence, lost productivity and crime that costs the British economy \$37 billion a year, officials say.

Paradoxically, this means last call will be later than has traditionally been in the case.

Restrictive licensing laws require most pubs in England and Wales to close at 11 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 10:30 on Sundays—shocking many visitors looking for a night out on the town and often flushing a tide of unruly drunks onto streets, buses and subways before midnight.

Under new laws due to take effect next year, pubs and bars may apply to local authorities for permission to open any hours they like. That will reduce the number of people guzzling pints in the last minutes before closing time and encourage a more relaxed—more European—attitude to alcohol consumption, so the theory goes.

"I think it will make things better," said Jane Harman, 32, enjoying a lunchtime pint of cider in a London pub on Friday. "I used to live in Madrid, where bars are open until 2 or 3 in the morning, and I never saw any alcohol-related violence."

"One of the worst things in the world is when you have got 2-3,000 young people all thrown out of the clubs at the same time, in the streets, pushing and shoving and looking for a taxi," Home Office Minister Hazel Blears told the British Broadcasting Corp. on Thursday. "That's when you get the violence."

Restrictions on pub hours were introduced in the 1870s and were tightened during World War I to keep factory workers sober. The 11 o'clock closing time dates to 1964.

Most British have their own horror stories of post-closing encounters with beer-soaked mobs, or of late-night journeys home involving beery subway trains, vomit-soaked buses or urine-stained sidewalks.

Some fear longer drinking hours will simply mean more drunks and violence—a link the prime minister dismisses.

"It should be perfectly possible to have more flexible opening hours without people going on the rampage and beating people up," Blair told reporters at a press conference Thursday.

"The way of dealing with this, I think, is not to restrict opening hours but to make sure we come down really hard on this," he said.

Researchers say it is not how much Britons drink, but how they drink, that is the problem.

Britons drink more, on average, than Americans--the equivalent of 2.2 gallons of pure alcohol a year per person, compared to 1.8 gallons in the United States—but

less than people in Ireland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Germany, France and Portugal, according to the 2002 World Drink Trends survey.

But Britons are more likely than most other Europeans to drink in concentrated bursts.

"Getting drunk, that's the main problem in the U.K.," said Rebecca Smith of Edinburgh University, part of an international team that conducted a study of teen drinking in 35 countries for the World Health Organization in 2002. "In some other countries, they drink quite a lot but they don't get drunk."

And teenagers in Britain, where the legal drinking age is 18, appear to drink more regularly than most.

In the WHO study, more 15-year-olds in Wales and England reported drinking at least once a week than in any other country. When the same age group was asked whether they'd been drunk at least twice, British teens also came near the top.

The Home Office said a recent police sting operation targeting nearly 141 premises that sell alcohol found half were supplying booze to people under 18. As part of the summer crackdown, 686 had alcohol confiscated from them.

Some blame Britain's alcohol industry for aggressively marketing booze at the young. They point to the spread of cavernous, standing-room-only bars, the proliferation of vodka-based "alcopops" and ad campaigns promoting lager over the more traditional—and weaker—ale and bitter.

"The pub industry is creating more one-roomed big dens, especially in city centers," said Tony Jerome, spokesman for the Campaign for Real Ale, which seeks to preserve Britain's traditional beer culture. "There's always a lot of drinks promotions, a lot of people standing up, rather than sitting down in small rooms, which is the tradition in many pubs."

The government has pushed the industry to limit happy hours and two-for-one drink promotions, and is considering tightening rules for television advertising of booze.

"The industry have got to start taking a more responsible attitude," said Blears, the government minister. "They have got to get rid of these promotions which say 'All you can drink for 10 pounds,' or 'Girls drink free.' That's a recipe for disaster."

*Skopje, Macedonia
26 July 2004*

**An In2-MeC Exclusive--More Liberating Facts of Science
Taught by Dr. Don Key!
He's Back By Popular Demand with a Brand New Seminar:
Scientific Certainty
Part One**



Dr. Don Key, Professor of Religious Science, University of Vineland

The response to Dr. Key's seminar on how to think like a scientist was too overwhelming to ignore. In2-MeC is a website dedicated to serving the Vaisnavas. If the Vaisnavas insist on hearing more from a man who stands in intellectual disagreement with much of Vaisnava philosophy, then we have to be openminded and allow In2-MeC to be a platform of inter-philosophical discussion. Without further ado, I give you Dr. Key. Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend!

Dr. Don Key: Thank you very much. Yes, the avalanche of email that was favorable to my last seminar is quite amazing. I see from this that you devotees out there in Internetland are tired of blinkered fundamentalism. You want your eyes opened to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: the truth that science has to offer. I'm both deeply flattered and greatly inspired.

I'm calling this seminar *Scientific Certainty* because I want to get to the heart of a consistent criticism that comes from certain quarters within ISKCON: that science is without certainty. Or, to put it bluntly, that science is really a system of faith!

It's a shame to have to say it, but you ISKCON devotees are routinely poisoned against believing in your own senses. This is (what else can I call it) *cultic*. Here, I'll quote from a book written by one of the leading so-called philosophical lights in ISKCON. Its title is *Substance and Shadow*.

The origin of sense perception is summarized by Lord Krsna to Uddhava in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11. 24. 7, 8.

False ego, which is the cause of physical sensation, the senses and the mind, encompasses both spirit and matter and manifests in three varieties: in the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance.

From false ego in the mode of ignorance came the subtle physical perceptions, from which the gross elements were generated. From false ego in the mode of passion came the senses, and from false ego in the mode of goodness arose the eleven demigods.

The subject who witnesses the sense objects is the soul, always different from matter: *evam drasta tanoh prthak*. The soul is distinguished from matter by consciousness. Yet consciousness is bound to matter by the false ego. The false ego's ignorant mode takes charge of the perceptive power of consciousness. Due to ignorance, the five subtle sense perceptions (*panca-tanmatras*) appear within consciousness: sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. The same mode of ignorance further gives rise to the gross objects of sense perception (*mahabhutas*): earth, water, fire, air and ether. The senses are produced from the passionate mode of the false ego. From the mode of goodness come eleven demigods, five of whom manage the functions of the five perceptive senses (ear, tactile faculty, eye, tongue and nose). Another five demigods manage the working senses: mouth, hand, leg, genital and anus. The eleventh demigod manages the mind.



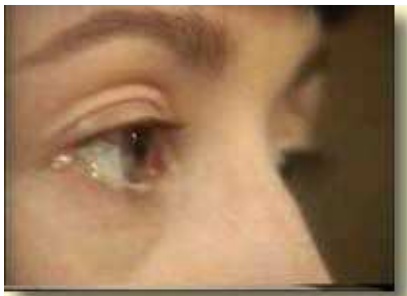
Deranged intellectuals are very capable, of course, of elaborately expounding upon the hallucinatory premises of their knowledge. In this case, the hallucinatory premise is the account of "creation" given in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Now, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* may be a good source of poetic accounts of the Vaisnava theology of intimate love of God. But as a handbook of science it is not at all useful. Worse, it has become a launching pad of

scurrilous attacks against the natural sources of reliable knowledge--our physical senses! In the above-quoted passage the author relegates the senses and their objects to the mode of ignorance. Moreover, this is the mode of ignorance of the false ego! Ergo, what we know of our world which comes to us through our senses is really just an amalgamation of ignorance and pride. If you are a free-thinker in ISKCON, that's what you have hanging over your head. You write in an ISKCON newsletter that modern science has disproved *Bhagavatam* atomic theory, and you're accused of being ignorant and puffed up! Well, as a man of science I'm telling you it is high time you break out of the medieval prisonhouse of this anti-sensory logic!

Today I shall start a very elaborate presentation about the *certain knowledge* that we get from our senses. I shall make this presentation in the light of the most up to date facts we scientists have at our disposal. I shall illustrate this presentation with cutting-edge computer graphics. I want you to be convinced!

There is no escaping the fact that we depend upon our senses for everything: for all that we know, and all that we do. But that doesn't mean that everything the senses tell us is true. This is why we need science: to discriminate between the reality and illusion of sensory information.

We are conditioned to believe that the world around us has an absolute material reality. Our entire civilization is built upon this viewpoint. All that we know about the external world is conveyed to us by five senses. The world we know of consists of what our eyes see, our ears hear, our noses smell, our tongues taste, and our skins feel. This physical world we've received from sense perception, this world we believe is solid reality, is shown to be something altogether else by the findings of modern science.



The world we know consists of what our eyes see. . .



. . . our ears hear. . .



. . . our noses smell. . .



. . . our tongues taste. . .



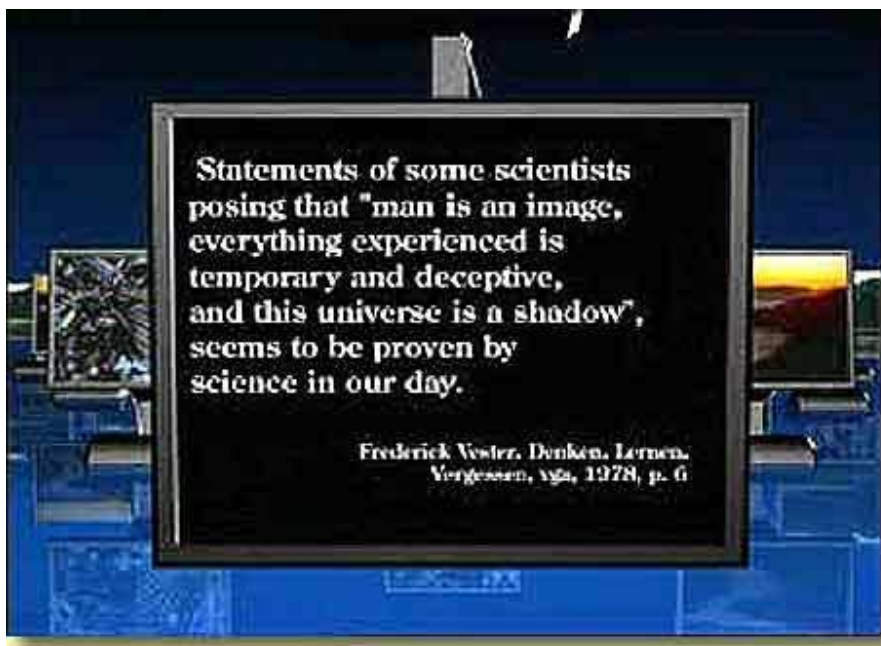
. . . and our skins feel.

Mankind is fully dependent upon these senses. And so it follows that mankind *only knows the external world according to the way these senses present it*. Yet scientific research upon these senses has revealed very different facts about what we call the external world.



Scientific research into sense perception has revealed a reality entirely different from what we accept as the "real" external world.

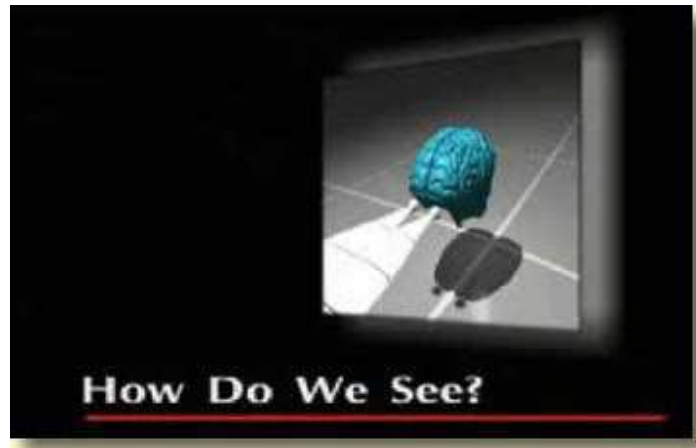
These facts have opened scientists' eyes to a very important secret about matter, the stuff that makes up the external world. Contemporary thinker Frederick Vester wrote:



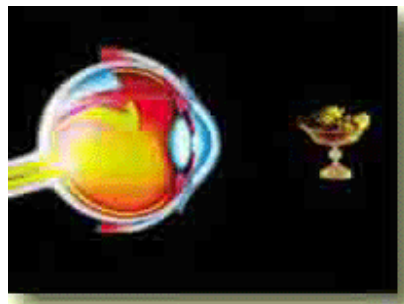
Scientific findings into sense perception are summarized thus by Frederick Vester in Denken, Lernen, Vergessen (1978).

The natural starting point of this presentation of scientific research into sense perception is the faculty of sight. From the conventions of human speech it is clear that we are very sight-oriented. When someone says something to us, and we grasp what he telling us, we often reply, "Yes, I see. " Yet he didn't show us anything to

see. He spoke some words to us. Still, we say "I see" because sight can stand for information that comes from our other senses. Sight stands for knowledge in general. So the points I make next about sight indicate points that can be made about all the senses.



Here is a visual image of a glass bowl of tasty-looking green grapes. In our conventional understanding of things, we accept with no fuss nor bother that this visual image is simply "out there" in front of us. But in fact, our visualization of this image is an extremely complicated process. What I want you to comprehend here above all is that it is an *internal* process!



The initial process of our seeing takes place inside the eyeball.

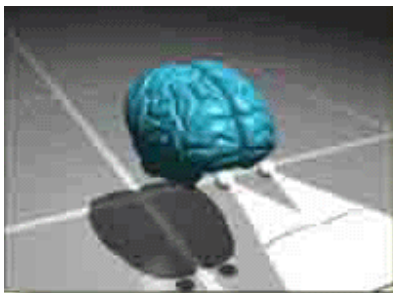
Photons (quantum units of light energy) pass through the lens of the eye, which refracts and focuses them against the retina at the back of the inner surface of the eyeball. The retina converts the impulses of the photons that strike against it into signals that are transmitted along the optic nerve. The optic nerve carries these signals to the brain.



The optic nerve carries the retinal signals. . .



. . . to the incredibly complex nerve center we call the brain.



The visual center of the brain is at the far back in an area of a few cubic centimeters. Optical signals in the form of neuro-electro-chemical firings pass through the whole brain to reach this center. When we say "I see," we are talking about the convergence of these firings in the visual center at the rear of the brain.

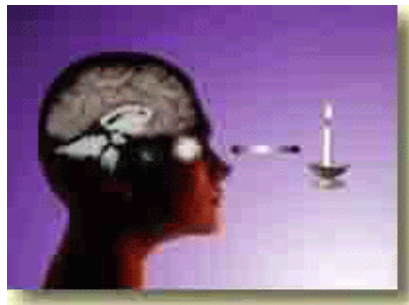
What we experience when we say, "I see those grapes," or "I see those adventurers in their river raft," *we do not experience "outside" in the external world.* We do not even experience it in the eye. Nor do we experience it in the optic nerve that runs from the eye to the brain. We experience it in a small dark place at the very back of the brain: our private neurological cinema, as it were.

If I haven't gotten your full attention yet, I want it now. What I have to tell you at this point is an extremely vital stepping-stone to the eventual conclusion that I will be coming to



in this seminar. The brain is completely sealed off from light. The interior of the brain is ever in total darkness.

This means the brain does not know what light is. Let me explain with this example. Suppose you see a candle in an otherwise utterly dark room. You experience the candle's light as penetrating and dispelling the darkness. Even so, the light of that candle does not penetrate your brain! Your experience of that glowing candle is taking place in the visual center at the rear of your brain, a place that is absolutely absent of even the slightest glimmer of light!



Part Two of Dr. Don Key's seminar will follow soon!

*Skopje, Macedonia
27 July 2004*

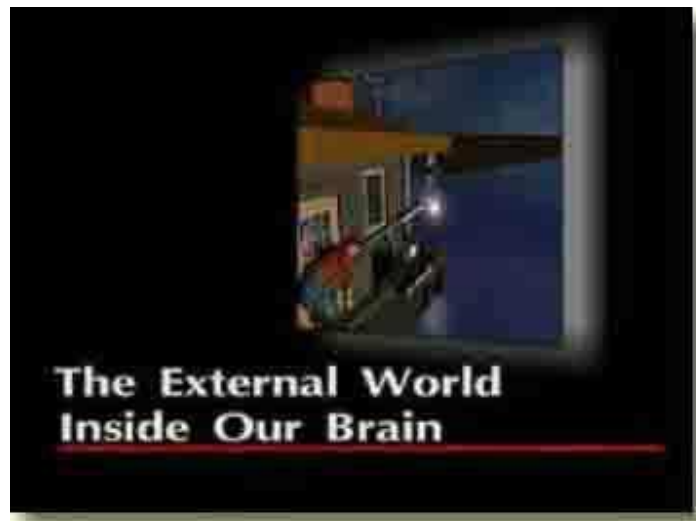
Scientific Certainty
A Seminar by Dr. Don Key
Part Two



*Dr. Don Key,
professor of
Religious Science at
the University of
Vineland.*

What is true for the visual experience is true for the other sensory experiences. What we hear, is heard inside the brain which is as soundless as a tomb. What we touch, is felt inside the brain which is numb to tactile stimulation. What we taste, is tasted inside the brain which has no gustatory sense. What we smell, is smelt within the brain which has no olfactory sense.

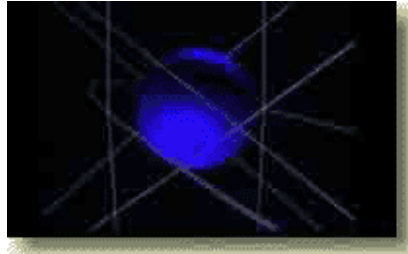
We are conditioned to believe that our experience of sound is an experience of something outside us that is audible. In the same way we think that skin sensations are experiences of external physical things, like the prick of a needle. A slice of pizza we take to be a factual material object that smells and tastes so good. But scientific research proves that these experiences occur within that incredibly complex nerve center we call the brain, which is ever locked away inside the skull, out of reach of the objects we suppose produce sound, touch, smell and taste. So now, to address the issue in all clarity, just what *do* we experience? At this point in my seminar I will say that we can scientifically *assume* we experience internal electrical copies of external phenomena. These copies are generated and retained by the organism of the brain. What data system the brain uses to produce, store and retrieve these copies is unknown to science. It is obviously a data system many times more powerful than the most powerful computer data system. It is a system powerful enough to mislead us into believing that our experiences of the copies of phenomena inside the brain are real instances of matter in the world outside.



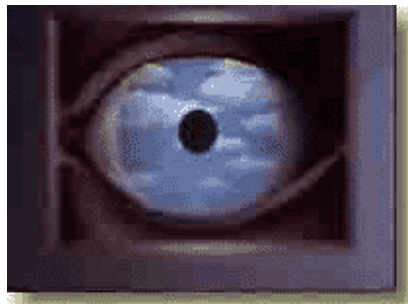
How then, do we get a sure grasp upon the "stuff" of the external world, matter? Start with the atom. A person educated at university will no doubt feel pride at an opportunity to scientifically explain an atom to someone not so educated as he. But where is that atom that he so loftily instructs is the building block of solid matter?

Where is the solid material planet Earth upon which he stands? Where are the starry heavens that extend above him for millions of light years into outer space?

What we can say with scientific certainty is: they exist in the gray matter of the brain.



If the gray matter that produces, stores and retrieves what we know to be atoms, the earth, and the starry heavens above was to be physically destroyed, then for all we know, atoms, the earth, and the starry heavens above would cease to exist! The "reality" from which we get access to these phenomena is only this: the brain's interpretation of electrical signals. That fact can't be argued. "But," you may retort, "the universe is obviously so expansive, covering inconceivable stretches of distance!" *That may be.* But what we are *sure of* is this: spatial distance is but the brain's interpretation of "telegraphy" coming down two optic nerves that run to the brain from each eye. Objects that seem far, far away from us are actually clusters of electrochemical energy projected through a network of nerve channels into the tiny visual center at the back of the brain.



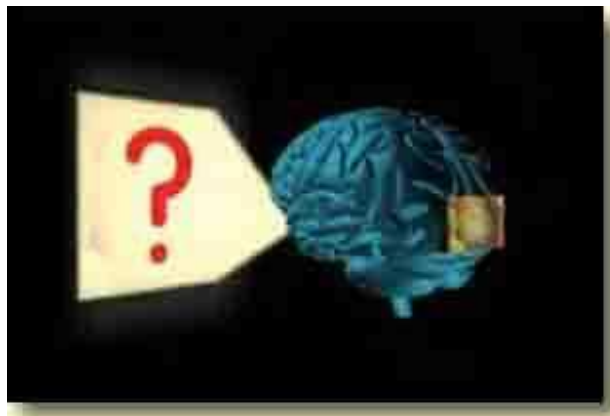
A person who uses a telescope--an instrument that he is convinced "proves" that outer space is indeed vast--is simply perceiving a tiny projection of energy inside his brain's visual center.



You sit comfortably in your room and watch television. *Maybe*. What is certain is that the room and the television are *inside of you*. Even your body is inside of you. You think the whole world is outside your window, *but that too is for certain just a projection inside your head, as much as what you see on television is.*



This brings us to a major philosophical question: does the world outside exist at all?



Part Three of Dr. Don Key's seminar will follow soon!

*Skopje, Macedonia
28 July 2004*

Scientific Certainty
A Seminar by Dr. Don Key
Part Three

At the end of yesterday's seminar, I stated that we are coming to a major philosophical question: does the world outside our brain exist at all? In today's seminar we will take that up. But I feel a need to start off by clearing something else up. I want to tell you more about neurotransmission first.



Dr. Don Key, Professor of Religious Science, University of Vineland

I've already alluded to neurotransmission a number of times. I told you about signals being sent to the brain from the eye, and about these signals converging in the visual center at the rear of the brain. I told you that our visual experience is the brain's interpretation of these signals. My presentation was simplistic because I wanted to get the ball rolling. Now it's time to get into a little more detail.

Scientists are certain that without neurotransmission there would be no awareness, perception nor movement in the body. There are two means by which nerve impulses are transmitted: electrical means, and chemical means. (Since the chemical means involves a transference of electric charge, it can be called electro-chemical). Electrical transmission is considered the more primitive system, but it is still essential to the human organism. In this seminar I will discuss only chemical neurotransmission because it is the system employed by the organism for sense perception and thinking.

Essential to neurotransmission are the synapses. A synapse is a junction in the nervous system. There are junctions between neurons (nerve cells), and there are junctions between a neuron and a gland or muscle cell, called effectors because they initiate work signaled by the neuron. I will discuss only the first kind of junction since we are concerned with perceptive and cognitive brain functions, not motor nor gland functions. I'll add for information that the chemical means of neurotransmission involves a different type of synapse from the electrical means. Here I'll only talk about the chemical synapse. I mentioned already that in a chemical synapse, what is transmitted is also an electrical charge. The difference is that in a chemical synapse, electrically charged ions flow across a chemical bond that specially forms between two cells to complete the junction. In an electric synapse, ions flow from cell to cell through channels called gap junctions. Since electric synapses are used in organic functions outside the topic of this seminar, that's all I will say about them.

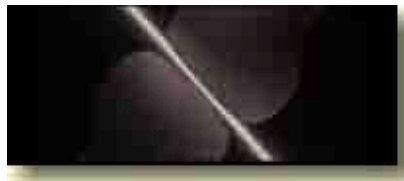
The five sense organs have receptor nerves that respond to data inputs from outside the body. These receptors organize the data before transmitting it onward to a data collector and regulator in the brain called the thalamus. This is a large mass of gray matter in the forebrain. The way data travels from each sense organ to the thalamus is called the sensory pathway. From nerve cell to nerve cell along the whole length of the pathway are the synapses. *At every synapse* data is reorganized in important ways. By the time it arrives at the thalamus, the data is far from being the original input that stimulated the receptors.

The thalamus transmits sensory data to appropriate areas of the cortex, the brain's wrinkled outer layer of gray matter. In these areas, data is processed and interpreted as experience. The thalamus is also where emotional and other responses to the data are regulated. Regarding the cortex, it is a "plastic" region of the brain. This means that, although specific areas of the cortex have been mapped by science as being the sites of specific processing and interpretation, this map can change. Other areas of the cortex are called association areas. Here data from the different senses is integrated. The result is what we call mental activity. It must be

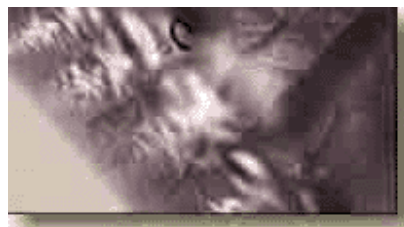
noted that researchers have not identified with precision how the brain collects messages from the sensory receptors, sifts them and arranges them to form a complete representation of the world and the individual's place in the world.

In any case, it is certain is that every step of the way, synaptic neurotransmission is involved. We know that what happens at the synapses shapes consciousness. For example, some hallucinogenic drugs that dramatically alter consciousness are known to change transmission at the synapses. But never mind the effect of drugs. As I pointed out, the synapses *themselves* greatly alter what is being transmitted from the senses before it reach the brain. This again raises the question of whether what we experience as "the world" inside our brain is a true representation of what is actually outside of us.

Here is a computer animation of a synapse performing neurotransmission. The gap between the two nerve endings is called the synaptic cleft. Of course, what you see here is greatly magnified. In reality, synapses are too small for the eye to see. The synaptic cleft is only about 0.02 microns wide.



The previous animation made neurotransmission look quite simple. In fact it is a bafflingly complicated process. At higher levels of magnification we can get between the synaptic cleft and see the process of neurotransmission much closer. What you see in the next animation displays just a fraction of the stupendous complexity of a single nerve cell. It looks like the surface of a distant planet! Beneath the "sea" of the surface membrane you can see tiny organs called synaptic vesicles. These release a chemical substance called a neurotransmitter. This diffuses in quantum units across the cleft, which here looks like a gap between two worlds. The chemical neurotransmitter binds to molecules on the membrane of the opposite nerve ending. Electrically charged ions can then cross the gap. This changes the electric charge of the opposite membrane. If the change is great enough, that excites the opposite nerve cell to generate a new nerve impulse. The crossing of the synaptic cleft shown here takes one-half a millisecond.



It is too easy to compare electronic digital data transmission to neurotransmission. The resemblance between them is superficial. Computer technology is well-understood, being a product of human design. Brain technology is understood only sketchily. Speaking of the hardware (or "wetware" as it is often termed), it is a case of "the more we learn, the more we need to know. " About the software we can say

next to nothing. We cannot even say whether the brain transmits data in binary numbers (in "on-off" pulses like Morse code, which is what modern computers do in a very sophisticated way). The data system of the brain, its values, its code, are unknown to us.

To put it in musical terms, each nerve cell performs an enormous "improvisation" upon the "theme" composed by the receptors in the sense organs. Neuron by neuron, improvisation by improvisation, data passes from the senses to the brain where it continues to be moved by neurons here and there. Finally it is blended with many other improvisations in a symphony of brain-experience. This final symphony is what know of as the world!

Now we can return to the question posed at the end of yesterday's seminar: does the world outside our brain exist at all?

The *certain answer* that science gives us is: **there is no way we can know that.**

In fact, scientific evidence can be used to make a strong argument that the answer is: **no.**



Does neurotransmission within the data processing and interpretation areas of the cortex *only* work with inputs coming from senses actively engaged with their objects? No. Each one of us is quite familiar with imagery created within the brain absent of any external stimulation. We experience such imagery every night in dreams.



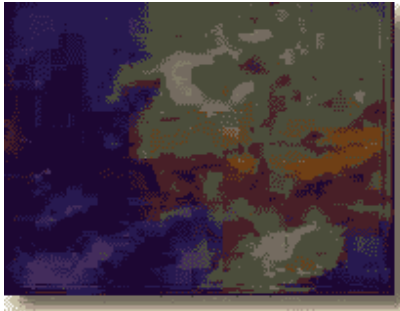
When we sleep, the functions of the sense organs are in suspension. But that does not mean we have no perceptions.



Though cut off from the external world, we perceive the brain-world and even perform activities there.

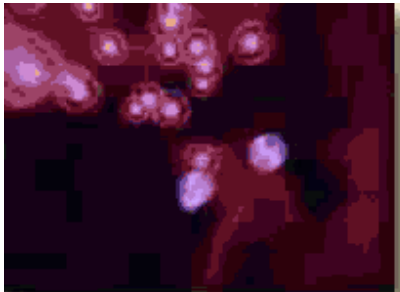
Is the brain imagery of dreams less real than the brain imagery we experience while awake? Subjectively, no. What we experience in a dream is just as real for us as what we experience in wakefulness.



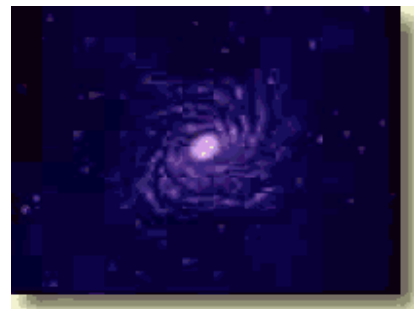


From the wakeful point of view, which we suppose is more objective than the dream-state, we look back upon our dreams and generally dismiss them as fantastic fabrications of the mind. A standard argument is that the dream-world is fleeting, illogical and without a reliable basis. Rarely if ever does anyone dream night after night of one stable setting in which the dreamer has a regular position in relation to other clearly-defined entities. Each night, most of us seem to dream of a very different world from the one we dreamt of the night before.

But we awake into the same world that was there when we got into bed. Therefore we can safely consider wakeful experiences to be real as compared to dreams.



This argument loses force when we take perspective into consideration. After all, we become dismissive of a dream only from the perspective of wakefulness.

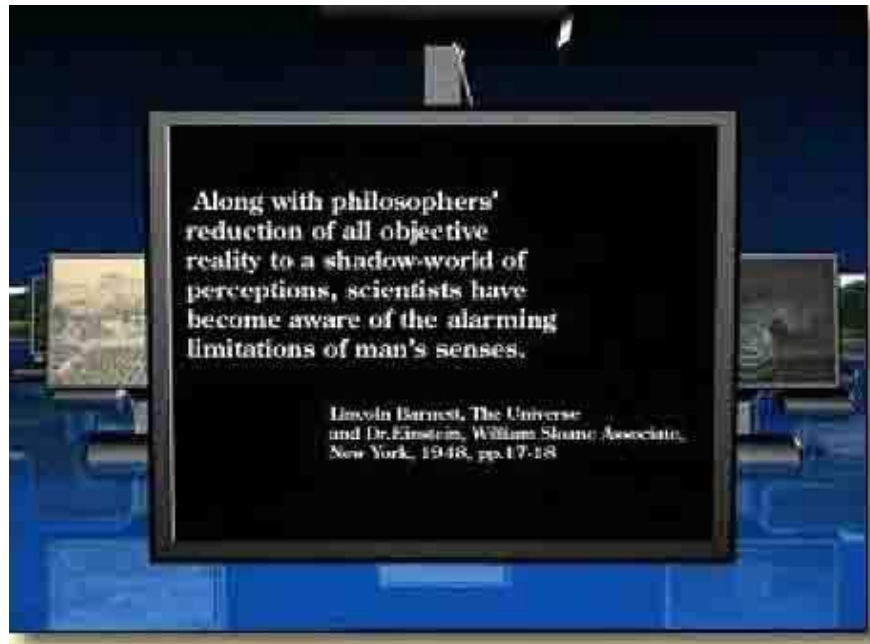


During the dream, it is real for us. Modern science has given us different perspectives from our "normal" one. Take your wakeful life on this planet and consider it from the macrocosmic perspective--from the standpoint of millions of light-years of universal space-time. Suddenly that life appears as fleeting as a dream. If you look at it from the microcosmic perspective--from the standpoint of the quantum wave-particles that make up what we perceive to be solid matter--suddenly that life loses its stable, logical foundation. Whatever perspective we adopt we cannot escape consciousness. As I have shown, our conscious experience happens inside the brain. All these perspectives are there and, practically speaking, *nowhere else*. This means they are as plastic as our cortical functions. Dreams bleed into wakefulness, wakefulness bleeds into dreams, logic bleeds into illogic and vice versa. The cosmic perspectives cannot be separated from the more mundane ones. And all of them cannot be separated from the brain.

Part Four of Dr. Don Key's seminar will follow soon!

*Timisoara, Romania
2 August 2004*

***Scientific Certainty*
A Seminar by Dr. Don Key
Part Four**



What we have learned so far in this seminar is that *the world is not matter, but is perceived*. On this point, science and philosophy converge. To illustrate what I mean by "the world is not material," I'll speak to you now about "the brain in the vat" and the "brain in the brain. "



Suppose we have discovered how to keep a brain alive inside a glass vat or aquarium. Suppose we have decoded the data system the brain uses to generate its electrical copy of the external world. Suppose we know how to connect a computer to the brain in the vat. We can then feed data into the brain's sensory pathways, and let the brain do the rest. It will process and interpret the data, generating within--for example--the fully realistic 3-D moving image of a bird in a tree complete with twittering song. It will even generate imagery of the person from whose head the brain was removed--an image of that person sitting and thinking with his brain, which is really inside a vat.

How do we know that we are all not brains in vats? We don't. (This is, as you must know, more or less the premise of the *Matrix* movie series.) In the same way, we do not know if there is a world outside our brain that corresponds to what we see, hear, smell, taste and touch. What science tells us for sure is that the world we *are* in touch with is *not material*. It is *a world of perceptions*.



Suppose we have discovered how to lengthen the spinal cord so that our own brain could be surgically removed from our skull and set down on a table in front of us. After we come out of anaesthesia, we would see our brain before us. We could even reach out and touch it. Again, that whole experience would actually be happening inside the brain, though we would be privy to seeing our own brain from the outside.

The brain, too, being "a physical thing" like all "physical things" we know, is an object of perception. Hence we can never be sure that it really exists as we think it does: as solid matter. We can only be sure that it exists as a thing we perceive. . . in other words, as *appearance only*. There *may* be a material world beyond our perceptions. It may even look exactly like the world we perceive within our brain. . . although, knowing what I do about neurotransmission, I doubt it. In any case, if there is a material world outside the brain, it is a metaphysical world that lies ever beyond our direct awareness.

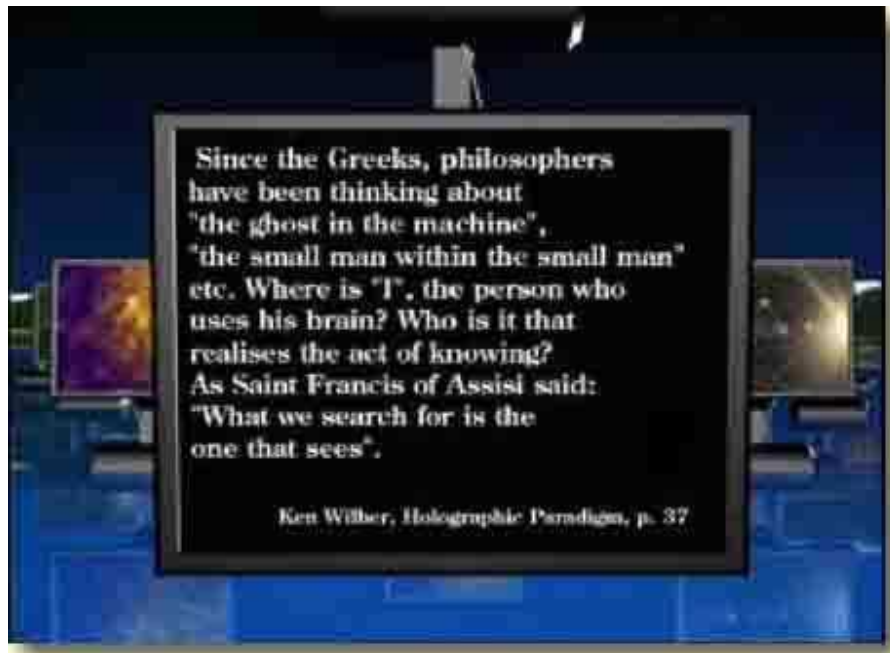


Yet I, Dr. Don Key, do truly *believe* there is a world outside my brain. And I freely admit that this is an article of faith. This is where religion is important, in my opinion. We *need* faith. We *need* to believe there is something more to this existence than just what is screened inside of our heads. Science can tell us something about what the apparent world is about. But the world beyond can only be accessed by *faith*.

The problem with some of you ISKCON devotees is that you believe in transcendental knowledge, which is a step beyond faith. You believe you know what the real form of the world outside is. You want to nail down every detail of the brain-world to an archetypical *absolute*. You want to say: the atom is really *this*. The form of the universe is really *this*. Creation really took place like *this*.

Well, you *can* think that way, can't you? Nobody can stop what goes on inside your heads. And science can't prove absolutely that you're wrong. But at the same time, you can't prove me absolutely wrong either. . . at least, not with proof that I am prepared to accept. You see, I think our senses describe shadow-patterns that are meant to be better understood through reason. If you call me a Platonist, I'll accept that label gracefully. In Platonism, capital-R reality is the most beautiful and best truth. That's what I like about the Vaisnava philosophy. With your concept of the all-attractive Sri Krsna, you are on to something. I freely admit that. See? I'm not simply a demoniac scientist! But between *that* highest, most beautiful and good truth

and *this* world inside our brain, there is room to explore. This exploration is there for reason in the company of faith to do.



For example, it is reasonable to conclude that if "the world" consists of just what we perceive, and our brains are also part of that perceived world, then we who perceive must exist in a way that is distinct from the world and even the brain. There must be a subtle, non-physical core self. Call it the soul, if you will. Along with St. Francis of Assisi, I call it "the one who sees. "

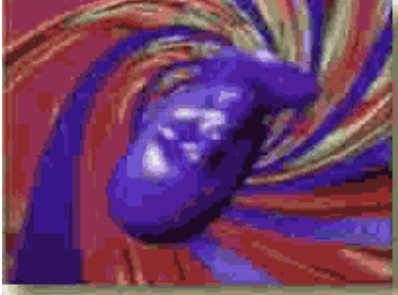
It is reasonable to conclude that if

"the world" consists of just what we perceive, and our brains are also part of that perceived world, then there must be a source of what we perceive. This source cannot logically be us. We are the *watchers*. We are not the *broadcasters*. We, the non-physical core self, are watching this world like someone watches TV. The TV program, which like the world is a perceptual appearance, is not sustained by the watcher. It is sustained by a broadcasting station in the far distance. The program--and I mean this more in the computer sense now, as the directive behind what we are seeing--is evidence of a superior intelligence, a *Programmer*, that guides the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, of all things.



But I believe--and so do the freethinkers inside of ISKCON--that it is unreasonable to argue that *sabda-pramana* (the evidence of scriptural sound) has all this worked out

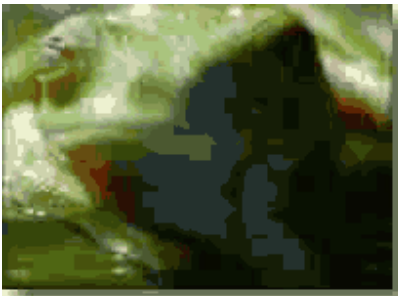
in detail. It is fundamentalism to adhere to specific scriptural descriptions of the world outside the brain, descriptions that most people cannot swallow. With the aid of textual criticism, scientific-minded people can see the touch of the human hand--and human weakness--in these scriptural assertions. We can't forget that scripture, like everything else, is a product of the brain. Those who combine faith with reason can accept scripture as *the best approximation* in this world of the will of the Programmer.



Dr. Don Key believes the Divine Plan of the world is mental speculation.

This world is mental. That is proven by science with considerable certainty. Since the Programmer is broadcasting this mental world to us, the ones who see, isn't it reasonable to conclude that He desires us to "speculate," to use that word that is so pejorative inside of ISKCON? Oh, I agree--we shouldn't speculate haphazardly. That's why we have science, to guide us in our speculations. And that's why we have faith, to set a limit on how far speculation can go before it becomes total fantasy. At a certain point, we can only *believe*.

For example, some of you worship Salagram silas. Fine: as long as you understand the stone to be an iconic *representation* of transcendence, that worship is perfectly reasonable. Scientists know that the Salagram stone is really a type of fossil that we call an ammonite. It is unreasonable to believe the literal scriptural account, that this stone is God Himself, carved by a species of tusked worm called Vrajakita that is totally unknown to science. Why fight it? Accept that science has disproven the Vrajakita story, and accept that what you are worshiping is merely a fossil. But don't stop! *Go on* worshiping the fossil! But feel humble compassion for yourself in your predicament of being locked inside your brain, worshiping a mental image of a fossil stone in an attempt to reach transcendence. *That* is reasonable.



The frog from God

Last week my wife brought home a frog that fell from the sky and landed on the windscreen of our car while she was waiting at red light. Sometimes things like this happen. Science acknowledges it. The poor frog was still stunned when she brought it in to the house. I quickly revived it with a small jolt of electricity (that's the secret of my hairstyle, by the way) and placed it in a terrarium. Together my wife and I feed the frog daily as an act of faith. Much to my wife's amusement I even offer the frog

incense. It's our Frog from God, I tell her.

By reason we should learn to see the Programmer behind everything, and we can start seeing Him in anything: fossils, frogs, doesn't matter. Yes: it doesn't matter, because nothing *is* matter, everything is mind! My wife sometimes tells me I go too far, seeing everything in terms of the mind, because my brain is conditioned by mundane science. I suppose she is right. She is right about most things. Not that I'm henpecked! My wife always says she couldn't bear to have a yes-man for a husband. Therefore when she says no, I am quick to agree.



Dr. Don Key, happily married to his wife Mollar for 6 years!

End of Seminar

Warning! Please Don't do this at Home!

Dr. Don Key is a qualified scientist who performs dangerous experiments upon himself by charging his central nervous system up with high-voltage electricity in order to decode the brain's data system. This is the reason why his hair stands up as it does. It has come to our attention that some devotees, being inordinately eager to emulate Don's philosophy and way of life, are performing such experiments with electricity at home. Please do not do this. It is very dangerous. Here is a photo of what happened to one devotee who tried for a "Don Key Do. "



*Timisoara, Romania
3 August 2004*

A "catch-up" photo report of my visit to ISKCON Sofia, Bulgaria 29 July-August 2

Lectures, Sila Worship, 2nd initiations, and presiding Deities





Sri-Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Baladeva-Subhadra Devi





Timisoara, Romania
5 August 2004

Mail Call!

A sannyasi Godbrother responded to 2 recent In2-MeC articles, one on atoms and another on scholars as snakes.

I just read in full those 2 articles you directed me to. 1st class.

Another point for the great sage [who wrote for the ISKCON MacNewsletter]: whatever definitions scientists may give for 'atom' probably don't apply to Vyasadeva's paramanu.

The original meaning of paramanu and atom was the same ('the smallest particle'), but what came to be called atom in western science was soon found not to be the smallest.

I replied thus:

Regarding the atom vs paramanu: quantum physics doesn't support any pictograph of atomic and subatomic particles. All those images of electrons spinning around an atomic nucleus like moons around a planet are rendered invalid by quantum "fuzziness. " An atom is a state of energy. Subatomic particles are likewise states of energy; they are only described as particles for convenience's sake. Given all that, I didn't take up the issue of the atom and its parts vs the indivisible paramanu

because it seems doubtful to me that the concept of "parts" of an atom can be taken very far. If it doesn't have a definite form, it can't have definite parts.

In the latest series [Dr. Don Key's seminar on Scientific Certainty], I write about the senses, their nerve pathways to the brain, and the brain's interpretation of sense data. It's interesting that neuroscience admits that at every synapse (junction between nerve endings) on the way to the brain--which means nerve cell by nerve cell--the "message" carried from the senses is reorganized so that by the time it reaches the brain it does not resemble what the senses inputted. Here too the point of "the world as we know it is just appearance" raises its head. What a scientist "sees" is really just the imagery in his own brain.

So philosophically speaking, the modern atom is just an intellectual image resulting from scientific speculation upon experimental data. But in a more objective way, the perceptions that go into supplying the data from which that intellectual image of the atom is drawn are also just appearance--what appears in the brain after a long journey of alteration and interpretation by the nervous system. And then even before that, there's the question of the limited and imperfect sense organs to begin with.

The paramanu revealed in the Bhagavatam is objective. The atom is subjective. This is my conclusion. I am very inclined to argue that our "modern" universe looks so different from the Vedic universe because we have Kali Yuga bodies which are congenitally defective when compared to the human bodies of earlier ages. Compared to Satya, Treta, and Dvarapara Yuga persons, we are like a race of thalidomide babies, born with major deformations in our senses, mind and intellect.

And thus those who try to argue pratyaksa over sabda (even within ISKCON) are like armless, legless, eyeless freaks of nature raving incoherently from slackened, drooling mouths.

That's why we have to hear from Srila Vyasadeva.

My sannyasi Godbrother answered:

Thank you for your further thoughts. It's great, esp the conclusion. Presumably you'll publish it on your blog.

- > And thus those who try to argue pratyaksa over sabda (even
- > within ISKCON) are like armless, legless, eyeless freaks of
- > nature raving incoherently from slackened, drooling mouths.
- >
- > That's why we have to hear from Srila Vyasadeva.

This should be posted in every room in every ISKCON temple.

A few years ago I was speaking with an Indian born neurosurgeon based in London. He told me that scientists don't actually know how the brain works. The generally accepted theory is of transference of impulses between neurons, but it's never been demonstrated.

And that man cuts open heads for a living. . .

A letter from a reader about Dr. Don Key's most recent seminar:

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Last week I started to write a letter to you praising your journal as a whole, but complaining about Dr. Don Key's presentation. As I was writing, a light went on in my head as I thought about what an ass this Don Key seems like, giving so much importance to sense inputs. Now, after reading the third part of this presentation, it's more obvious. Of what use is sense data in determining reality when the sense objects can't even be verified to be real themselves? That question was a big push in my philosophical inquiries about nine years ago. If Don Key hasn't considered this paradox, then he's more of an ass than I thought.

p. s. Thank you for sharing this journal. It's awesome

Our reply:

Hare Krsna! Thank you for your comments. I am glad you saw the real light of Dr. Don Key's seminar on sense perception. The paradox you observe is precisely the point of it. Much of the debate between different viewpoints (liberal versus conservative and so on) that devotees conduct on different websites is shipwrecked on the reef of this paradox. Personally, I hardly ever am interested to reply to the so-called "issues" that are raised in these debates. My standpoint is: you have to know what is real first before you go arguing that someone else is wrong in the way they see things.

This question came in from a Bhaktin the other day:

Now and then happiness seems to be just another emotion that comes and goes as all mood changes do. Evidently though, during the kirtan and puja and lectures in the lokal Nama Hatta, I am aware of being happy in a more genuine (lasting?) way. Could Your Holiness comment on this? all glories to the vaisnava's.

Reply:

Hare Krsna! Your query is answered by Lord Krsna Himself (Bg 10. 9):

*mac-citta mad-gata-prana
bodhayantah parasparam
kathayantas ca mam nityam
tusyanti ca ramanti ca*

The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about Me.

Here Krsna uses the word ramanti for happiness. He is speaking of transcendental happiness, which He equates with satisfaction (tustanti). When He speaks of material happiness in the Gita, He uses the word sukha which is a dualism of duhkha (suffering). Sukha is inseparable from duhkha. They are two sides of the same coin of material consciousness. Therefore we cannot remain materially happy for very

long. Because it is material, sukha degrades into dissatisfaction. But spiritual happiness is different. It is both a state of pleasure and satisfaction, a combination that never happens in material consciousness. How we may attain this transcendental happiness is clearly explained by the Lord in the above verse: 1) always think of Krsna, 2) devote your life to Him, 3) associate with devotees, 4) and in that association hear about and discuss Sri Krsna.

This letter came to In2-MeC from a lady reader addressed to Dr. Don Key's wife, Mollar.

Dear Molly,

As a fellow long-suffering wife, I appeal to you to stop the good Doctor from giving any further seminars for the time being.

My poor husband Tony hasn't been the same since Dr Don started his lectures series. Although never the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree, at least he didn't use to glow in the dark.

Now everything is Don this and Don that. Apparently I'm not real any more and there's no proof that I exist!



Mrs. Mollar Key answered this lady privately. We at In2-MeC do not have a copy of her answer. We think, though, that Molly must have cited her favorite saying: "In heaven everything is fine, you've got your good thing, I've got mine."

"Well", I said "How d'you think your dinner gets on the table every night?"

"That's not real either" he says.

But because he wants to 'pretend' to eat it, I have to cook anyway. Whatever next?

I gather the Doctor is well-known to that nice Mr. Swami, so perhaps you know him also. Please ask him to resume writing as he has such a beneficial effect on my poor Tony.

I hope your frog is well. It must be exciting for him to be out of his well.

My regards to the Doctor, and I hope he doesn't take this the wrong way.

*Timisoara, Romania
6 August 2004*

A Letter From Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura
translated by Punya Palaka Prabhu, ISKCON Prague

Instructions for one who chants the holy name and worships the Deities

(remembering the pastimes artificially - all perfection is there in the holy name - after the holy name brings about the appearance of the form, qualities and activities of the chanter in his transcendental *svarupa*, He manifests His own transcendental form, qualities, etc. - considering purity and impurity is mundane - transcendental discretion or judgment based on a service attitude beyond the modes is what a devotee should aspire for)

sri sri krsna-caitanya-candro vijayatotamam

Sridhama Mayapura, Nadia
8 Damodara, Sri Caitanyabda 429 [1915 AD]

My dear -

Having received your letter dated Damodara 2, I got acquainted with the news. I became overjoyed that your enthusiasm about chanting the holy name had increased. If in the course of your continued chanting all *anarthas* have been dispelled, in the holy name Himself the form, qualities and pastimes will automatically manifest. It is not possible to remember the form, qualities and pastimes by an artificial endeavor.

The *nama* and the *nami* are nondifferent truth. It will be realized in various ways when our *anarthas* cease to exist. If you chant the name of Krsna without offenses, you will be able to understand by yourself that from the name alone all perfection comes.

For one who chants the holy name, the aloofness of his gross and subtle body in his own self-conceit will gradually vanish, and his own *siddha-rupa* will manifest itself. When a person chants the holy name while situated in his *siddha-svarupa*, then he can get the transcendental vision of Krsna's form. Causing the actual form of the living entity to appear, the holy name awakens his attraction to Krsna's form. Causing the actual qualities of the living entity to appear, the holy name awakens his attraction to Krsna's qualities. Generating the actual activities of the living entity, the holy name awakens his attraction to Krsna's pastimes. Service to the holy name inevitably includes all that the chanter should do. How to serve the holy name by body, mind and words will be automatically manifested to you in your heart. One who chants the holy name can automatically realize in his heart all considerations regarding the truth of the holy name. By hearing and reading the scriptures and acting upon their message the actual form of the holy name is revealed. It is needless to write much in this regard. Everything will unfold for you in the course of your continued chanting.

Both purity and impurity are material considerations, but impurity relating to the Lord's service must be given up. In *sattva-guna* there is pure substance while in *rajas* and *tamo-guna* there is impurity involved. Through *sattva-guna* one should lose interest in *rajas* and *tamas*, in other words, one should become situated in *visuddha-sattva* and serve the Lord with such ingredients, knowing this mode to be pure. Things selected by an impure intelligence, or things originating from *rajas* and *tamo-guna* should not be offered to the Lord. Moreover, if a pure substance does not become transcendental (*nirguna*), then the Lord does not accept it; it depends on the mental disposition of the worshiper. Purity is certainly to be taken into consideration. When the transcendental intelligence is awakened, one can quit

considering purity and impurity because of having developed a transcendental discretion.

Here everything is fine. Please increase our happiness from time to time by letting us know how you are doing in your service. Sriman Bhaktivilasa Thakura Mahasaya is OK. We are gratified with getting news about his *bhajana* occasionally. . . . Read the *Sajjana-tosani*.

your ever well-wisher,
lowly (akincana) Sri Siddhanta Sarasvati

Timisoara, Romania
12 August 2004

SB 1.2.12

tac chraddadhana munayo jnana-vairagya-yuktaya
pasyanty atmani catmana bhaktya sruta-grhitaya

The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes that Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the *Vedanta-sruti*.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura:

Translation: The sages, or the chanters of the holy name (*kirtan-kari-gon*), endowed with firm faith in the transcendental truth, who have, by hearing from the scriptures, accumulated auspicious activities (*sukrti*) and attained the knowledge of the relationships (*sambandha*), and who are free from enjoying or renouncing the sense objects can, as a result of their service, constantly see in their pure hearts this Absolute Truth in the form of Paramatma.

Explanation: When the sages become fixed in *bhakti* in the form of faith in the transcendental worship of the Lord, brought about by refraining from studies of what is Brahman as well as renouncing the instant enjoyment of the fruits of one's activities or, in other words, giving up everything which is not connected with Krsna - which are concomitant factors of devotion to the Lord -, and when they thus take to devotional service based on hearing and reject any reasoning that is not supported by hearing, then they can see both Paramatma and Brahman in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Those who are without *bhakti* and follow the path of logic and reasoning, cannot see Paramatma and Brahman in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because of their lack of *bhakti* they are lacking in knowledge and renunciation and they have no faith. Therefore they are Mayavadis. Where there is a lack of knowledge and renunciation, there is unsteadiness and no faith in the service to the Supreme Person. The process of serving the worshipable object is a path based on hearing. Situated on this path of

bhakti, the pure living entity knows himself to be a devotee of the Lord, and he is constantly serving the Lord in his heart. The heart of a nondevotee is just a ground downtrodden by the enjoyments of the external world. The devotee's heart is a site of the eternal variegated pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. The nondevotee's heart is full of thoughts about the perishable or ever-changing external world. Since it is bound by the enjoyment of sense objects or of perishable truths, there is no faith there in one's own eternal form (*svārūpa*) dedicated to serving the Lord. Karmīs and Mayavādīs, being devoid of the knowledge of the Absolute Truth, are busy with enjoying or renouncing; one can see many kinds of nondevotees attached to sense enjoyment or giving it up. They are deprived of the eternal mellows of exchanges between the servant and the served. These can be understood by the disciple who has achieved the mercy of his spiritual master, a devotee on the path based on hearing, engaged in chanting the holy name, whereas the mundane nondevotees, bewildered by the false ego, will never understand them.

[Translated by Puṇya-pālaka Prabhū of ISKCON Prague]



Click on this web address. Be patient, it takes a little while to download.

<http://www.bullguard.com/badkarma/>

Timisoara, Romania
9 August 2004

In2-MeC is a "blog" (dumb made-up computerese neologism!). Hence as the "blogger" I'm expected to write something here every day for the "bloggees" (that's you, dear readers) to read. I've been lax in that duty lately, attending to other things.

One such thing is the technical outfitting of this new computer I have. I've been surfing the Net a lot, downloading various free utility and security programs. Then I try them out. About half the programs I tested, I kept. They are running on my computer now. Registry Commander, for example, which is an improvement over Microsoft's Regedit program.

Then there's a great little program called Slap...this runs alongside your firewall (and let me tell you, if you do more on the Net than simple email, you should firewall your computer--I have Sygate Personal Firewall installed). Your firewall program puts up a shield around your computer's ports so that while you are online, Net spooks can't access your computer, extract info from it and insert little adware and spyware programs of their own into your system. And by the way, along with the firewall shield you need an anti-virus shield too--I use Fprot for Windows. Anyway, I was talking about a program called Slap. The firewall provides defensive protection, but Slap is aggressive. If some Net spook starts scanning your ports, Sygate lets you know it's blocking the scan. So then you run Slap. It sends a message to the scanner. No doubt a lot people who use Slap set it up to send offensive insults, but on my computer Slap tells the scanners "Chant Hare Krishna."

The best source site I've found for such programs is Jeh's Freeware (<http://www.mnsi.net/~jhlavac/freeware/>). If any bloggees out there in Internetland know of a better site, drop me a line.

Now, regarding more direct Krsna conscious matters, there is an essay that presents useful sastraic references which is published at this address (just click on it and you'll go there):

<http://home.planet.nl/~dijk7364/intellect.pdf>

This seems to be an Internet address in the Netherlands. I wonder if any of my friends there knows who runs that website.

*Timisoara, Romania
12 August 2004*

Timisoara Transcendence





Initiation ceremony: Visnu-rahasya Prabhu receives his brahmana thread.



The Deities worshiped in ISKCON Timisoara, Romania.



Classes and programs in Timisoara. With me in both photos is HG Murari Krsna Prabhu, Professor of Computer Science at the Technical University of Timisoara. He is a great help to this In2-MeC website!



My Salagram silas as seen in the Timisoara temple.

Click on the webaddress below. This is a goodlooking site that nicely presents *Gita* philosophy. The persons behind the site seem circumspect about their identities.

http://s3.invisionfree.com/Kirtan_Forum/index.php?showtopic=6

*Prague, Czech Republic
16 August 2004*

On Saturday morning, Murari Krsna Prabhu drove me from Timisoara across Hungary to the Hungarian-Slovakian border. Saturday afternoon Raghunatha-priya Prabhu picked me up and drove me to Bratislava, capital of Slovakia. I stayed overnight in his apartment and gave the Sunday feast program in Govinda's restaurant in the city center. After that Raghunatha-priya drove me to Prague.

I am here to pick up a visa for the Ukraine. It's been a rather involved process this year to get that done. I applied for it over a month ago. This afternoon, I'm *supposed* to get this visa finally stamped into my passport. We'll see.

I'm not planning to stay in Prague long...in a couple days I should be off to Wroclaw, Poland. This weekend I am to take part in a Polish Yatra Festival at New Santipur, the ISKCON farm which is outside of Wroclaw. On Monday 23rd, if all has gone well with my visa today, I am to fly to Odessa in the Ukraine to take part in the yearly yatra festival there.



Let me share with my In2-MeC readers some emails I've received lately about HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja's health. The news is not pleasant. The GBC and his disciples

request devotees everywhere to pray for Maharaja's welfare; I hope the readers of In2-MeC will not fail to do so. HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja is my old friend from the BBT Library days. It is very painful for me to read of his health problems. But since his life is fully in Krsna's hands, I know that whatever happens, it is for the transcendental best. He is a great soul, situated above the distresses of the material body, so we should be confident that he is not really suffering.

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

I spoke this morning with HH BT Swami, and I have some unfortunate news from him. He discovered yesterday that he has Melanoma cancer. His tumor was very large, larger than they expected. The doctor suspected cancer, and then they confirmed it, and gave him the news yesterday. The doctor suspects that it has spread to other parts of his body. The cancer seems to be at an advanced stage. By material standards, they would give him a less than 50% chance of survival, even as low as 17-19%. But by Krsna's grace he can recover.

He is undergoing tests today, to see if indeed it has spread to other areas. He said that he has felt some gurgling sensation in his lungs, and some pain in his groin area, which are typical areas attacked by this cancer. We should know by tomorrow. Based on that information, he will decide what to do next. It is unusual that melanoma attacks black-bodied persons.

He feels a bit discouraged that his main means of association and interchange with vaisnavas, which is dancing, will most probably be permanently affected.

I told him that all of us will be praying for his recovery, and he asked me to post this on the GBC conference. Since he has made put much emphasis on prayer in his lectures and writings, we should all prayer ardently for his quick recovery.

Your servant,

Guru Prasad Swami

Below is a summary of Saturdays class that Maharaja gave. its written by youth devotee in this area--Gaura Vani Dasi--So far I haven't seen anything written about the class (I may have missed some emails though--so sorry if this info has been already summarized) so I thought it best to send this over now--to Gaura Dasi--if you are on this list, I hope its ok I forwarded this email over.

Haribol everyone,

Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja gave a darshan this morning at the preaching center in Silver Spring, Maryland. I was scheduled to work today, so I went over intending to stay for a little while then go off to my job. I got there in the middle of guru-puja and it

was too much to leave. Too important to step away from. After guru-puja, we assembled in his room upstairs. It was tight, maybe 40 devotees sitting and standing close together. About 15 more arrived over the course of the morning.

He started with singing Jaya Radha Madhava. Many of us were crying. Next, he gave us the medical rundown. The melanoma cancer is in stage 4, which is pretty high. The test results were given to another doctor and she said it was at the very least stage 4. The chance for survival is 7-19% at this level, this intensity. He's known about the tumor for about 20 years. They decided not to operate at that time because he would've lost most of the function of the left foot. Ten years ago there was a biopsy. Results said it was benign.

In Mayapur this spring, he started to feel some pain. Then swelling, more pain. He couldn't attend Detroit Rathayatra as a result. He sat on Jagannatha's cart for Gita Nagari Rathayatra. Normally he's the dancing dervish, as some of you well know. He then shared some themes from his 2004 Vyasa Puja offering to Srila Prabhupada. He saw so much suffering in the secular world and in ISKCON; broken marriages, abused children, devotees losing faith, leaders not being accountable, etc.

So he prayed to be an instrument for Krsna and Srila Prabhupada, to take on the suffering of others so they could be more purified, take on whatever is necessary to make a change in the society.

He emphasized how it's up to Krsna and Prabhupada. How he wants to be an instrument for change however that may take shape. He said "How can I continue living so well, travelling, taken care of in each place I visit, giving classes and seminars, etc, when we have devotees on welfare, who are losing faith, when some of our children leave and are upset and hurting, if I can lessen their pain so they can grow, let me take it."

He shared how he doesn't want the devotees to pray for him to stay, he wants them to pray to Krsna and Prabhupada to allow him to serve in the best possible way, be it leaving, staying, whatever. He smiled and laughed a few times, in that particular way of his, with his shoulders shaking a little and his head back.

Then came questions. This is a summary of a few questions. "Can you direct us (his disciples) where to go for siksa when you go, whenever that may occur?"

Reply: "That's a highly individual thing. There are many who are qualified; maybe an older godbrother, godsister, anyone. Better if you can receive guidance and help from many sources. Krsna can come in so many ways. It's not just you and your guru."

"How can we balance between the urgent necessity of practicing KC day to day and also dealing with everything else; job, family, business of living, etc.?"

Reply: "The two are not separate. We can adopt the mood of the paramour, who takes great care to make everything alright and nice with the husband but who also loves and cares for her beloved. Otherwise we can become schizophrenic, split. Take care of both."

In relation to this question, I've heard him say in the past that we need to take care of it all otherwise it's a problem. For example, make laxmi so you don't have to worry about laxmi. He was optimistic, with both a somber demeanor and then smiling and laughing a few times.

We are trying to get a transcription to share. Perhaps an audio weblink too.

your servant,

Gaura Vani dasi

*Prague, Czech Republic
17 August 2004*

From the Internet:

Anarchists' Convention Debates Voting

ATHENS, Ohio--A group of anarchists is taking an unusual step to make its political voice heard—going to the polls.

Anarchists generally pride themselves on their rejection of government and its authority. But a faction of them fed up with the war in Iraq say they plan to cast anti-Bush votes this fall.

The voting debate was just one of the topics explored at the three-day North American Anarchist Convergence, which brought about 175 participants to Ohio University.

Some attendees rejected the voting proposal.

"Ultimately, those who are voting are either bad anarchists or not anarchists at all," said Lawrence, a "Californian in his mid-40s" who declined to give his last name. "No one can represent my interests. We reject political professionals. "

Others said they are embracing their right to engage in the political process, and plan to vote for John Kerry, Ralph Nader or anyone who can underscore their opposition to the Bush administration.

Susan Heitker, 32, of Athens, believes that the U. S. government is neither legitimate nor democratic, but she still plans to vote.

"To me, at least, it's important to vote," she said. "There was a time when I was not going to vote, but I really dislike Bush. "

Howard Ehrlich, of Baltimore, also embraces his right to "engage the political system. "

"I will certainly vote against George Bush because he is leading the nation to further violence and eroding civil liberties," said Ehrlich, who is editor of Social Anarchism, a 3,000-circulation magazine.

What's interesting about anarchism from the Krsna conscious perspective is that it is a form of idealistic negationism, like Mayavadi philosophy. Even though he may try to deny it, a strict anarchist is defined by what he is against, not what he is for. As you can plainly see from the above news report, as soon as some anarchists came out *for* voting in the upcoming US election, other anarchists were denouncing them as bad anarchists or no anarchists at all.

On an anarchist website, I found the following attempt by an anarchist to refute the idea that anarchists are only "anti" and never "pro".

Is anarchism purely negative?

Caplan, consulting his American Heritage Dictionary, claims: "Anarchism is a negative; it holds that one thing, namely government, is bad and should be abolished. Aside from this defining tenet, it would be difficult to list any belief that all anarchists hold. "

The last sentence is ridiculous. If we look at the works of Tucker, Kropotkin, Proudhon and Bakunin (for example) we discover that we can, indeed list one more "belief that all anarchists hold. " This is opposition to exploitation, to usury (i. e. profits, interest and rent). For example, Tucker argued that "Liberty insists. . . [on] the abolition of the State and the abolition of usury; on no more government of man by man, and no more exploitation of man by man. " [cited in *Native American Anarchism--A Study of Left-Wing American Individualism* by Eunice Schuster, p. 140] Such a position is one that Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin would agree with.

In other words, anarchists hold two beliefs--opposition to government and opposition to exploitation. Any person which rejects either of these positions cannot be part of the anarchist movement. In other words, an anarchist must be against capitalism in order to be a true anarchist.

Moreover it is not at all difficult to find a more fundamental "defining tenet" of anarchism. We can do so merely by analysing the term "an-archy," which is composed of the Greek words an, meaning "no" or "without," and arche, meaning literally "a ruler," but more generally referring to the principle of rulership, i. e. hierarchical authority. Hence an anarchist is someone who advocates abolishing the principle of hierarchical authority--not just in government but in all institutions and social relations.

Now, if you look carefully at how the author of the above quotation attempts to prove that anarchists hold to positive rather than only negative ideals, you will see that every evidence he offers entails "opposition to" something (e. g. government and exploitation). He shows nowhere that anarchists are "for" anything. So although he starts off objecting to a definition of anarchy as being purely negative, his own arguments only reinforce such a definition.

Prabhupada had a word for this: utopianism. I've explained previously in In2-MeC that "utopia" comes from Greek; it means "no place. " Hence a negative idealist like an anarchist or Mayavadi, who defines his beliefs only in terms of what he or she is against, ends up nowhere.

Being utterly anti-government, anarchism ends up advocating a society in which no one has rights at all. . . and this in the name of complete freedom! If government is abolished, then there is no law. If there is no law, then someone can be enslaved, someone can be murdered, all without worries for the enslaver or the murderer. A criminal can do anything he wants, because there is no such thing as crime in anarchy.

Without law, people will form packs, like those in which wolves prey upon other animals. They will hunt the weak and unprotected. The stronger the mob, the stupider and more violent it will be.

In a world of anarchy consumer products could not be produced. Business could not be done. Without law to protect people's rights, who could do anything that resembles civilized human behavior? There would be no peace nor safety for anyone. In short, anarchy can never work. Anarchists are servants of deranged, impractical notions hatched from minds that are too disturbed by frustration with an imperfect society. They have a very slipshod grasp of the realities of human nature. Ultimately their vision of ideal freedom is a vision of complete animalism.

*Wroclaw, Poland
19 August 2004*

Many devotees try to argue with the sastras. Like we can accept 50% of Prabhupada's words. This text [7 July] I found very instructive as well as all texts on this page. It helps me a lot in my KC.

I wanted to ask Your Holiness if by chance you could kindly visit Slovenia. We would be very happy if this could happen by Lord Krishna's grace. As a member of Slovene National Council I just present the invitation in the name of all slovene devotees also. Thank you for all your inspiration.

Thank you for your kind observations. You are free to reproduce anything in In2-MeC that is helpful for your preaching. The warning at the bottom of each page that In2-MeC material may be reproduced only with permission is merely a formality.

Regarding my visiting Slovenia, I shall keep it in mind, though with my present schedule there is no time space open for many months to come.



*HH Bhakti-
tirtha Maharaja
with Nelson
Mandela*

A letter from HH Bhakti Caru Maharaja about HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja

I did not phone Bhakti Tirtha Maharaj yesterday, thinking that I would rather wait until he gets the pathologist's report. However, in the evening, I received a phone call from one of Maharaj's disciples, Citi-sakti devi dasi, who is a doctor herself. In a voice choked with emotion, she informed me that she just learned from one of her Godsisters in Washington that Maharaj's report says that his cancer is on level four plus. I did not know what that count meant, but I could understand that it must be quite ominous.

I immediately phoned Washington. Once again, I admired how wonderfully Maharaj has trained up his disciples. I know how a disciple generally feels at a time like this, naturally wanting his spiritual master to take rest without disturbance, but as soon the Mataji who answered the phone realized that I was on the line, she immediately informed Maharaj.

Maharaj was as jovial as ever. From his voice, one could never imagine that he is in such a critical health condition. He informed me that the report from the hospital was bad. He decided to take a second opinion and had a CAT scan. That report was even worse. However, he is taking everything in stride. He feels a profound serenity deep within himself.

That morning, he gave class to about one hundred devotees. He mentioned that he read out my posting to the GBC conference, and they appreciated it very much.

He started to tell me how fast everything is moving for him at this stage. He prayed for purification, but never did he imagine that it would happen in such a way. Some devotees told him to take back his prayer. However, he replied, "No, let it come the way Krsna wants."

He started to describe the critical condition of our movement. He told me about the book that Madhusudani Radha and her husband printed, consisting of writings by about fifteen scholarly persons with knowledge of Sanskrit (who at some point in time were involved with ISKCON). Although most were favorable to ISKCON, some of them proposed that Srila Prabhupada deviated from our previous acaryas and

pursued his own ideas to serve his purpose, diminished the position of a woman, displayed a racist attitude, and in order to establish himself, over-emphasized the status of a guru.

Maharaj continued, "So many people are becoming attracted to Narayana Maharaj. That shows that they are getting something from him that they are not getting in ISKCON. Why don't we create a loving and caring atmosphere? Then no one will want to go away. We are leading the movement rather mechanically, somehow managing to just maintain. We are not really putting our hearts into it.

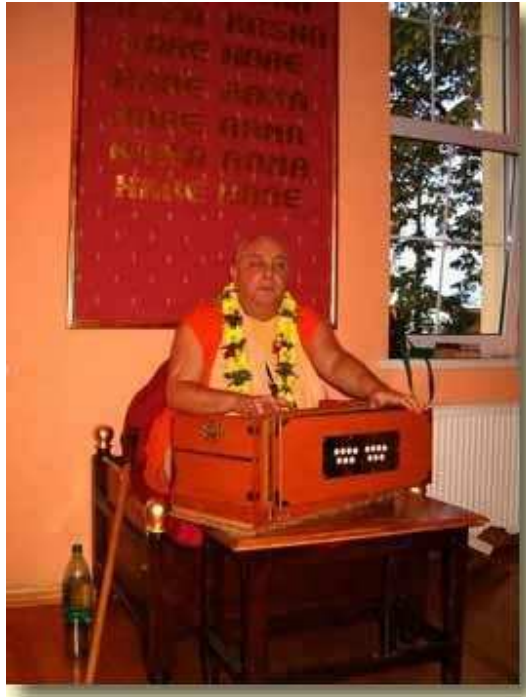
"I used to organize myself on a half-hour basis. But now, I am practically immobile. Even to go to the bathroom, I have to limp with my crutches. In this situation, I could become angry with Srila Prabhupada that 'Why did you put me in a situation like this? All my programs were set: so many lecture tours, seminars, workshops. The plane tickets were already purchased. Then all of a sudden!' But I am prepared to accept whatever Krsna wants. If he wants me to serve elsewhere, I am ready to go there."

Maharaj emphasized that the sufferings of so many devotees had become too much for him to bear. He was praying very intensely to Srila Prabhupada that he wants to become purified, become a better disciple, and help those who are struggling, at any cost.

We spoke for more than half an hour. I just wanted to share some of the wonderfully enlightening points that Maharaj shared with me. I found them to be extremely revealing. I am sure you will also feel the same. Moreover, it shows what a wonderful devotee Bhakti Tirtha Maharaj is. We can learn so much from his extremely advanced example.

He ended the conversation by saying, "I love you very much." I know that he will express the same love and care to all of you, also.

*Wroclaw, Poland
20 August 2004*



*Start of Bhagavad-gita class, ISKCON
Wroclaw, Poland, 19 August*

Not Black and White

A reader who recently discovered In2-MeC, and who is now going through all the back entries, sent me this article as his response to a book review I did on 29 May about the scientific scam known as industrial melanism. The article is written by Jerry A. Coyne, member of the Department of Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, 1101 E. 57 Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637, USA. Mr. Coyne reviews this book:

Melanism: Evolution in Action

by Michael E. N. Majerus
Oxford University Press, 1998, 338 pp.

Cautionary tale: the classic account of industrial melanism in the peppered moth now looks flawed.



From time to time, evolutionists re-examine a classic experimental study and find, to their horror, that it is flawed or downright wrong. We no longer use chromosomal polymorphism in *Drosophila pseudoobscura* to demonstrate heterozygous advantage, flower-colour variation in *Linanthus parryae* to illustrate random genetic drift, or the viceroy and monarch butterflies to exemplify Batesian mimicry. Until now, however, the prize horse in our stable of examples has been the evolution of 'industrial melanism' in the peppered moth, *Biston betularia*, presented by most teachers and

textbooks as the paradigm of natural selection and evolution occurring within a human lifetime. The re-examination of this tale is the centrepiece of Michael Majerus's book, *Melanism: Evolution in Action*. Depressingly, Majerus shows that this classic example is in bad shape, and, while not yet ready for the glue factory, needs serious attention.

According to the standard textbook litany, before the mid-nineteenth century, all *B. betularia* in England were white moths peppered with black spots, a form called *typica*. Between 1850 and 1920, *typica* was largely replaced by a pure black form (*carbonaria*) produced by a single dominant allele, the frequency of which rose to nearly 100% in some areas. After 1950, this trend reversed, making *carbonaria* rare and *typica* again common. These persistent and directional changes implied natural selection. In a series of studies, this conclusion was verified by several investigators, most prominently Bernard Kettlewell of Oxford.

According to these workers, the evolution of colour was caused by birds eating the moths most conspicuous on their normal resting site—tree trunks. The increase in black moths was attributed to pollution accompanying the rise of heavy industry. A combination of soot and acid rain darkened trees by first killing the lichens that festooned them and then blackening the naked trunks. The *typica* form, previously camouflaged on lichens, thus became conspicuous and heavily predated, while the less visible *carbonaria* enjoyed protection and increased in frequency. After the passage of the Clean Air Acts in the 1950s, trees regained their former appearance, reversing the selective advantage of the morphs. This conclusion was bolstered by a geographical correlation between pollution levels and morph frequencies (*carbonaria* was most common in industrial areas), and most prominently by Kettlewell's famous experiments which showed that, after releasing *typica* and *carbonaria* in both polluted and unpolluted woods, researchers recaptured many more of the cryptic than of the conspicuous form. The differential predation was supported by direct observation of birds eating moths placed on trees. Finally, Kettlewell demonstrated in the laboratory that each form had a behavioural preference to settle on backgrounds that matched its colour.

Criticisms of this story have circulated in samizdat for several years, but Majerus summarizes them for the first time in print in an absorbing two-chapter critique (coincidentally, a similar analysis [Sargent et al. , *Evol. Biol.* 30, 299-322; 1998] has just appeared). Majerus notes that the most serious problem is that *B. betularia* probably does not rest on tree trunks—exactly two moths have been seen in such a position in more than 40 years of intensive search. The natural resting spots are, in

fact, a mystery. This alone invalidates Kettlewell's release-recapture experiments, as moths were released by placing them directly onto tree trunks, where they are highly visible to bird predators. (Kettlewell also released his moths during the day, while they normally choose resting places at night.)

The story is further eroded by noting that the resurgence of *typica* occurred well before lichens recolonized the polluted trees, and that a parallel increase and decrease of the melanic form also occurred in industrial areas of the United States, where there was no change in the abundance of the lichens that supposedly play such an important role.

Finally, the results of Kettlewell's behavioural experiments were not replicated in later studies: moths have no tendency to choose matching backgrounds. Majerus finds many other flaws in the work, but they are too numerous to list here. I unearthed additional problems when, embarrassed at having taught the standard *Biston* story for years, I read Kettlewell's papers for the first time.

Majerus concludes, reasonably, that all we can deduce from this story is that it is a case of rapid evolution, probably involving pollution and bird predation. I would, however, replace "probably" with "perhaps". *B. betularia* shows the footprint of natural selection, but we have not yet seen the feet. Majerus finds some solace in his analysis, claiming that the true story is likely to be more complex and therefore more interesting, but one senses that he is making a virtue of necessity. My own reaction resembles the dismay attending my discovery, at the age of six, that it was my father and not Santa who brought the presents on Christmas Eve.

Occupying a quarter of the book, the *Biston* analysis is necessary reading for all evolutionists, as are the introductory chapters on the nature of melanism, its distribution among animals, and its proposed causes. Majerus, however, designed his book for both professional and lay readers, and this causes some unevenness in the material. The *Biston* story is sandwiched between less compelling chapters, including long sections on the basic principles of genetics and evolution, which can be skipped by evolutionists. Other discussions, involving melanism in ladybirds and other *Lepidoptera*, as well as the author's unpublished work on habitat selection, are full of technical details that will overwhelm the lay reader. Unfortunately, most of the work described is inconclusive; despite the widespread occurrence of melanism, its evolutionary significance is nearly always unknown.

What can one make of all this? Majerus concludes with the usual call for more research, but several lessons are already at hand. First, for the time being we must discard *Biston* as a well-understood example of natural selection in action, although it is clearly a case of evolution. There are many studies more appropriate for use in the classroom, including the classic work of Peter and Rosemary Grant on beak-size evolution in Galapagos finches. It is also worth pondering why there has been general and unquestioned acceptance of Kettlewell's work. Perhaps such powerful stories discourage close scrutiny. Moreover, in evolutionary biology there is little payoff in repeating other people's experiments, and, unlike molecular biology, our field is not self-correcting because few studies depend on the accuracy of earlier ones. Finally, teachers such as myself often neglect original papers in favour of shorter textbook summaries, which bleach the blemishes from complicated experiments.

It is clear that, as with most other work in evolutionary biology, understanding selection in *Biston* will require much more information about the animal's habits. Evolutionists may bridle at such a conclusion, because ecological data are very hard to gather. Nevertheless, there is no other way to unravel the forces changing a character. We must stop pretending that we understand the course of natural selection as soon as we have calculated the relative fitness of different traits.

Now let's see how the proud scholars of ancient religious history are earning their pay.

Scholars Disagree on Early Inhabitants

Wed Aug 18

By JOSEF FEDERMAN, Associated Press Writer

QUMRAN, West Bank--Rival groups of scholars excavating this dusty plateau overlooking the Dead Sea are arguing over who lived here in biblical times—ordinary farmers or the Essenes, a monastic sect seen by some as a link between Judaism and early Christianity.

The Essenes were the authors and collectors of the Dead Sea Scrolls, more than 1,000 ancient texts found a half century ago in the caves above Qumran, one of the most significant discoveries in the Holy Land.

But some Israeli archaeologists say the placement of the scrolls in the caves doesn't mean the Essenes lived at Qumran, arguing they have found evidence the plateau near the caves was a plantation inhabited by seasonal workers.

The dispute has been simmering for several years, with a majority of scholars backing the theory that the Essenes lived here, but the argument has gotten new impetus from recent excavations.

"The old consensus is not valid anymore," said Yizhar Hirschfeld, a professor of classical archaeology at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Yuval Peleg, who has been excavating at Qumran for 10 seasons with fellow archaeologist Itzhak Magen, said artifacts such as coins and pottery they have discovered indicate the ancient community at Qumran "lacks any uniqueness" that would indicate the presence of a sect of austere monks.

However, Randall Price, an adjunct professor at Trinity Southwest University in New Mexico, said his five-week dig at Qumran yielded "new evidence to support old ideas"—that a special Jewish sect lived at Qumran.

Price said he found animal bones carefully placed together, sometimes with pieces of pottery, in arrangements that "make it quite clear that this was a religious ritual. "

Price, an evangelical pastor, thinks the arranged bones could have resulted from a communal meal held by the inhabitants, which he suggests may have been a precursor for a ritual that later became the Christian Eucharist.

He also said a pot he found, roughly two feet tall and still intact, is the same type of pottery found in the nearby caves that held the Dead Sea Scrolls. That is further evidence of links between the Qumran inhabitants and the scrolls, he said.

Disputing the traditionalists, Hirschfeld contends that findings cited as evidence of a cult-like community at Qumran, such as ritual baths, were not unusual for the Second Temple period 2,000 years ago.

He said other finds indicate the scrolls were not written at Qumran and were probably hidden there by people from Jerusalem, some 20 miles away.

Stephen Pfann, one of the scholars deciphering the scrolls, said that over a period of about 900 years, starting in 750 B. C. , Qumran may have changed hands nearly a dozen times and that this could explain the conflicting evidence.

He said the Essenes apparently lived at Qumran during two periods, starting in about 130 B. C. and ending in A. D. 66. In between, they are believed to have spent some 25 years in Jerusalem, at the invitation of King Herod, and to have written some of the scrolls there, he said. During the Essenes' absence, date farmers apparently lived at Qumran, Pfann said.

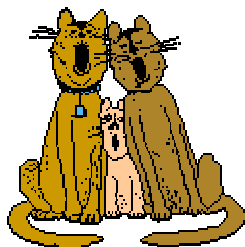
Hershel Shanks, editor of the Biblical Archaeology Review in Washington, considers the question of who lived at Qumran undecided, but he is among those who think the scrolls were written elsewhere.

"I personally find it hard to believe that it was a factory of scroll writing," he said. "The better case can be made that this was an Essene library from Jerusalem. "

Pfann, however, said several scribal tables and ink wells have been found in the ruins of Qumran, indicating scribes worked here and argued at least some of the scrolls must have been written here.

Restaurant for Cats Opens in New York

Wed Aug 18



NEW YORK - Dressed in a tuxedo, Simba sat at the front of one of Manhattan's newest dining establishments and nodded at people who greeted him. Then he yawned, began to roll on the floor and lick his paws. That's acceptable behavior at the Meow Mix Cafe, a new eatery designed especially for cats and their human owners.

Simba, an 8-month-old kitten, was joined by about two dozen other tabbies, Persians and Burmese for a feast at Tuesday's grand opening of the cafe, which is owned by the Meow Mix Company, a Secaucus, N. J. -based cat food maker.

"Why not take your cat out for dinner?" asked Simba's owner, Leah Thompson, 19. "There's always things for dogs, but never cats. "

The midtown restaurant serves Meow Mix packets for its feline customers with corresponding dishes to satisfy human palates. "Deep Sea Delight" mackerel for cats is paired with tuna rolls for cat owners; "Upstream Dream" salmon for felines corresponds with mini crab cakes for humans.

Meow Mix president and CEO Richard Thompson said the feline-friendly restaurant has two main rules: no dogs and no catnip, which must be checked at the door.

"Our goal is to keep cats happy," Thompson said. "The idea is that you can bring them and start socializing them. "

*Wroclaw, Poland
21 August 2004*

Did you know?

When famed evolutionist Richard Dawkins was asked in a television interview if there is any mutation observed in any species that is known to have added useful information to the genome (the set of chromosomes and genes in living cells, by which hereditary information is transmitted), Dawkins was stumped for an answer.

Charles Darwin did not know a thing about mutations within the genome, because science had not progressed that far during his time. In today's evolutionary theory, the hope is that accidental mutations within the genome sometimes result in useful new developments--the increase of positive genetic information, merely by chance--in a line of generation. By this process, species evolve into higher forms.

But Richard Dawkins was unable to offer a single proven example of this actually happening. What *is* observed is that mutations of the genome result in no useful new information. From such mutations come freaks of nature, like the cows with two heads that one can see on display on the Govardhana *parikrama* path in Vrndavana.



Dawkins explaining present-day evolutionary theory to a TV interviewer.



The interviewer asks Dawkins for an example of a mutation that produced useful new genetic information that resulted in hereditary improvements in a generational line of organisms.



Dawkins is stumped!

Source: *The Collapse of Darwinism*, a film by Harun Yahya.

*Wroclaw, Poland
22 August 2004*



Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai at Krsna-Balarama Mandira in Vrndaban, wearing sandalwood pulp on Their transcendental bodies to keep cool during the hot summer season.

A Letter from HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja to all Devotees

Dear Maharaja's and Prabhus,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All Glories to ISKCON Founder Acarya Srila Prabhupada.

Yesterday after a team of doctors reviewed all of my test results, the spokesperson informed me of the need for immediate amputation, chemotherapy, radiation, etc. He also stated that there is a need for another biopsy operation to take out some of the lymph nodes which seem to be also diseased by cancer. They could give no guarantees of the results of the treatment.

I asked if I did not follow through on their plan or did nothing, how long could I expect to live. The doctors reply was six months. In my mind I thought that is long time. Many things can happen in six months. Either I have all of this time to prepare for death or sufficient time to do all that is necessary, physically and spiritually, to turn this whole thing around and come out of it more improved physically and spiritually. It seems that my life has always been about extremes.

Presently I am being considered by NIH to see if I qualify for a very special treatment with some of the best doctors in the USA in the field. We have also began

to limit our choices to special cancer treatment centers in Mexico, Arizona, New York, Atlanta and India. Once I know exactly where I will go to be treated for some months I will update all of you.

I have a staff of devotee doctors and aides who will be assisting me in making the decisions. I feel all of your prayers will guide us in making the best decisions, which will allow whatever Srila Prabhupada and Krsna want to manifest. For now all I can say is that something extremely supernatural or super extraordinary is going on here.

I do not know what the conclusion will be, but I want to be around to see what it is. Ooops, I guess I will definitely be around since it is happening to me, whatever it is, most definitely it is bigger than myself. I am definitely changing bodies, the question is, "will I be changing both the physical and mental body?"

I feel Srila Prabhupada himself will make the decision.

Yours in the service to Srila Prabhupada
With Love
Bhakti Tirtha Swami



A Letter from HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja to Myself

My heartfelt feelings for Maharaja impelled me to send him an email. I mentioned our service to Srila Prabhupada together on the BBT Library Party in the mid-1970s. I asked him to kindly advise me from his state of heightened realization in Krsna consciousness. This is his well-wishing reply to me.

Dear Suhotra Swami,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All Glories to Srila Prabhupada.

How wonderful it was to receive your letter. I really like your example of how we were side by side in the womb in our service to Srila Prabhupada. This really shows how much we are spiritual brothers in a very awesome way. So many of these early experiences have created what we presently are. And so many of these early experiences have given us realizations as well as many wounds and scars, but ultimately all of these are opportunities for growth.

First let me apologise for much of my association in those earlier days or during those times. I was so karmakandic, self centered and self righteous. Somehow you seemed to tolerate me most of the time. I feel more thankful, that through all of these years (even though we did not have so much physical association) that you continued to see me as a friend. It was something special recently serving with you on the GBC executive board. It was also special, when you were elected as chairman; and you came around to most of the leaders in such a humble way asking for their blessings and support. Also the short conversation we had at the airport

where you informed me that you have been having many great challenges with depression that I could realise even more how sensitive and yes how serious a devotee you are.

I know by now you have analysed your depression in so many ways but I am sure that a major part of your depression is due to how sensitive you are. You are super-intelligent and super sensitive. This is your blessing and your curse. One of the suggestions that I would offer is to see your depression as a blessing. In one sense it is the other side of spiritual ecstasy. When one is really depressed, one is so fully absorbed in the depths of emptiness. This is the extreme intensity of mental culture but it is this extreme intensity of mental culture that is necessary to dive deeper to connecting more internally with Krsna. So you may want to accept a little more that you have been blessed with great intellectual and mental intensity which both can be fantastic assets in connecting deeper with Krsna.

Those of us who understand or have experience with very deep depression can have empathy and compassion for others suffering, far greater than what most people can understand. As preachers we have a duty to reach out, especially to facilitate and educate and uplift, while we help others to minimize their own sufferings. So just like you said in the ending of your letter ("so what can I say" – go for it!). Use all this intensity to connect more internally with so many great beings that are ready to connect with you. And of course use this intensity so that you can connect more with those physically around you who you can help. Krsna and Srila Prabhupada have no favorites. There is a tremendous great need now in the world as well as in our institution. So let us make ourselves available to fulfill that need. Or let us try our best to make ourselves available to fulfill that need.

Yours in the service to Srila Prabhupada.

With Love

Bhakti-Tirtha Swami

HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja is showing us all all how to face Death, which is always facing us whether we know it or not. In the material society, on the contrary, the nondevotees are most expert in ignoring the ever-present Reaper.

L. A. Cemetery Showing Movies at Mausoleum

Fri Aug 20

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES, Calif. -- Amid the mausoleums and headstones at Hollywood Forever Cemetery about 1,700 living guests have unfurled picnic blankets and set up beach chairs, erected makeshift coffee tables with flowers and candles, and unpacked dinners of sushi, fried chicken or pasta salad.

They're here for cinema cemetery-style, an experience shared with the graveyard's 88,000 long-term residents. Later, the night's film will start, projected on a mausoleum wall.

"It's the ultimate L. A. experience," film fan Mark Koberg said between mouthfuls of smoked turkey and arugula sandwiches, washed down with wine.

Six years ago the cemetery, which adjoins Paramount Studios' backlot, wouldn't have been as inviting.

Though at least a hundred Hollywood icons are laid to rest there—including actor Rudolph Valentino, "Ten Commandments" producer Cecil B. DeMille and Bugs Bunny voice Mel Blanc — the cemetery's own fame had faded. Its previous owners had run it into bankruptcy, and a 1994 earthquake left tombstones tilted and cracked, while El Nino rains flooded its lake.

Then in 1998, Tyler Cassity, a cemetery entrepreneur, bought the century-old graveyard for \$375,000. He operates seven cemeteries in California, Illinois and Missouri. His first charge in Hollywood, however, was revitalizing the cemetery--repaving roads, replacing broken stained glass inside mausoleums and righting monuments.

He also began showing movies. And he believes he's the only person in the country to combine classic movies and mausoleums.

"It makes sense when your neighbor is Paramount Studios," Cassity said. "To me it's dependent on the community around you and who is buried there. Is it memorializing them in some way? Showing movies in a cemetery where there weren't film stars—it wouldn't make sense. "



Classic Maya: chewing the chewed (punah punas carvita-carvananam) above the bones of celebrities who tried, and failed, to attain real happiness by enjoying that same old illusion.

has been surprisingly successful, and even as it has grown it has retained a small-group feel—visitors making friends and sharing food with their neighbors.

Cassity began by showing a Valentino film on the anniversary of the romantic hero's death, when 200 to 300 fans would come by to pay their respects. Then he was approached by John Wyatt, the founder of Cinespia, a Los Angeles film society dedicated to screening and preserving classic films. The society was growing too large to go to screenings as a group and was looking for a new home, one with history, Wyatt said.

Cassity said the partnership felt right: historic movies in a historic setting. Since then, Cinespia has made the 620-acre park its movie theater on summer weekends, and next year's season is already being planned.

Growing mainly via e-mail and word of mouth, the event (billed as an evening "below and above the

Wyatt, who chooses the films, says he likes bringing his favorite films to a wider audience, and Cassity attributes part of the series' success to a growing interest in death, pointing to the popularity of the TV show "Six Feet Under" and a recent reality series about a family-run mortuary.

Visitors do keep some distance during the evening events. They don't actually sit on graves, though a few family mausoleums ring the perimeter of the lawn where movies are shown, including those of actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and his father, who helped co-found United Artists.

The crowd of mostly 20- and 30-somethings, some in the movie and public relations industry themselves, seem to recognize they're in a special place. They pick up after themselves, and that's helped keep complaints to a minimum—only two so far.

Visitors say they come for various reasons. Sheila Boyd and Hopper Stone went to one recent screening on a date. Tiffany Borders arrived with a group of friends. Carmonique and Vincent Harris came after being told the experience was romantic.

Some guests acknowledged being a little "creeped out" by the cemetery. But, the time and the location didn't bother Russell Rabichev, who watched a movie one recent weekend.

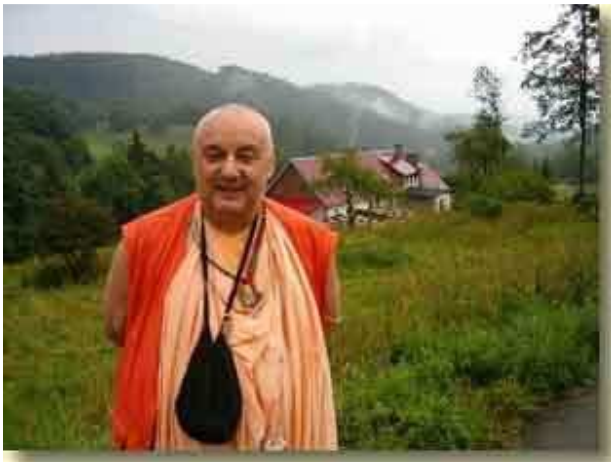
"After two minutes you forget it's a cemetery," he said.

Polish Yatra Festival New Santipur Farm





Soon after arriving in New Santipur on Saturday, I took lunch in Kisore Kisori Prabhu's farm-style pizza restaurant. His pizzas are very tasty, being baked in an authentic wood-fired oven.



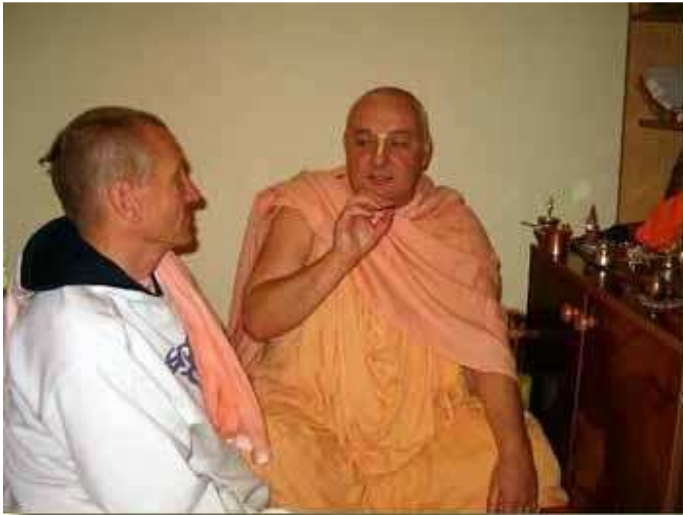
In the background is the New Santipur temple building. The festival was held in a large tent on a hilltop a good distance from here. Some 200 devotees attended!



With HH Jayapataka Maharaja.



My seminar was on the Bhagavatam philosophy of mind--its structure and functions. Dvarakadisa Prabhu translated. The seminar was one of the best attended during the whole program.



HG Pankajanghri Prabhu visits me for a darsana of my salagrama silas. I tell him about my recent trip to the Gandaki River in Nepal.



I greet HH Indradyumna Maharaja.



"Srila Prabhupada said that the happiness of discussing our philosophy is the same pleasure as the gopis have when they kiss Lord Krsna's lips. " HH Umapati Maharaja speaks from his many years of experience in serving Srila Prabhupada's mission. He is one of the very few disciples of Prabhupada from the 26 2nd Avenue days who is still active in his spiritual master's institution. A treasure of a Godbrother!

*Odessa, the Ukraine
25 August 2004*



I say goodbye to HH Indradyumna Maharaja and HG Krsnaksetra Prabhu before returning to Wroclaw on the afternoon of Sunday, 22 August.

ISKCON Ukraine Yatra Festival in Odessa 2004



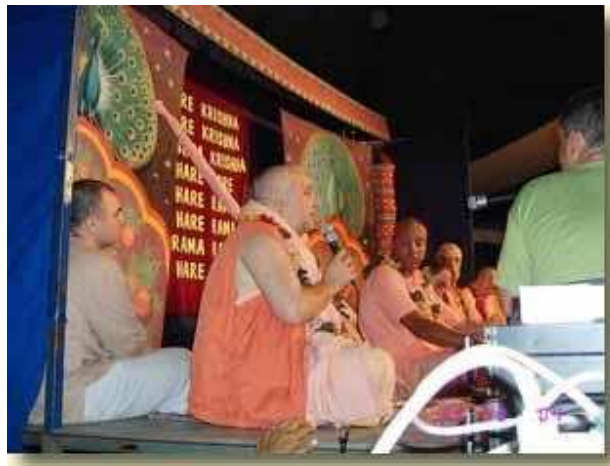
This year my seminar is on "the 5 essential processes of devotional service" as given in Cc Madhya-lila 24. 193.



HH Niranjana Maharaja, GBC for the Ukraine, conducts the opening night festivities (24 August).



Visible in this photo, from left to right, are myself, HH Devamrta Maharaja, HG Hari-Sauri Prabhu, HH Prahladananda Maharaja, HG Badha-hari Prabhu, Prabhavisnu Maharaja, and Niranjana Maharaja. Also present at the festival are HH Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja, HH Bhakti Madhava Visrama Maharaja, HH Bhakti Vijnana Maharaja, HG Purnacandra Prabhu, and Srimati Malati devi-dasi, who gave us news about HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja, who participated in the Odessa festival for the last 2 years, but was unable to attend this year because of his health.



HH Niranjana Maharaja asked me to say a few words on sadhu-sanga, which is the theme of the 2004 festival.



HG Badha-hari leads everyone in a sweet kirtana dedicated to HH Bhakti-tirtha Maharaja.



The presiding Deities of the Odessa festival, beautiful Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai.

*Odessa, the Ukraine
28 August 2004*

Blessed Odessa!



This morning (28 August) HG Hari Sauri Prabhu gave the Bhagavatam class.



Srila Prabhupada, Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai preside over the Odessa festivities.



The Vaisnava bazaar.



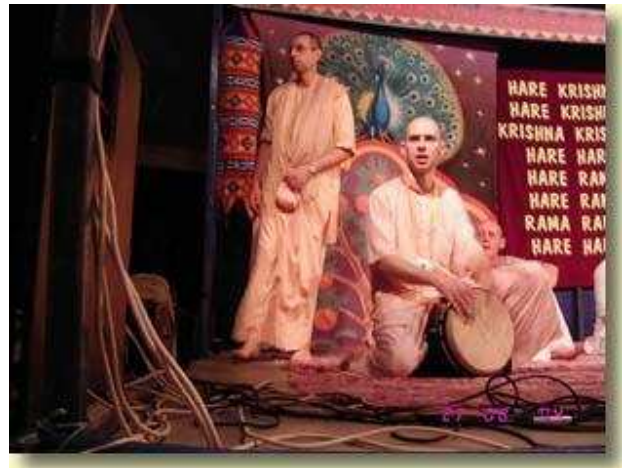
Outside, inside of the campsite hotel in which the devotees reside. The Odessa festival is held every year at the same Black Sea resort.



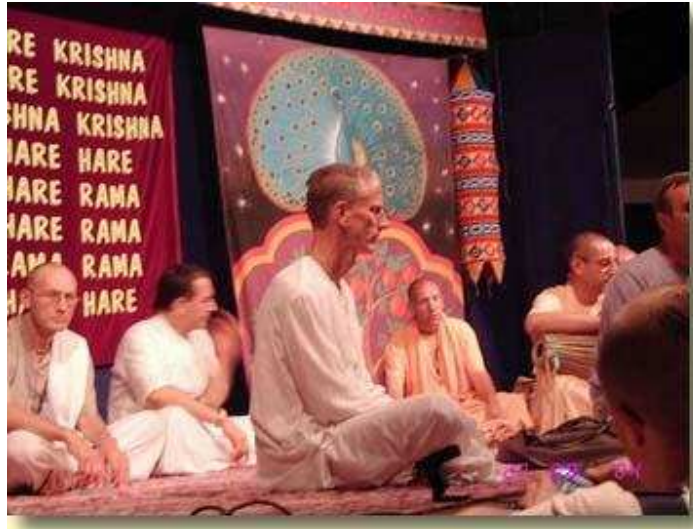
HH Bhakti Visrama Madhava Maharaja (left) confers with HH Devamrta Maharaja (right) at the top of a hotel staircase.



Seminars on various bhakti topics are held in different places through the day.



In the evening all devotees gather in the big tent for congregational chanting of the holy name.



Godbrothers from left to right: Adikarta Prabhu, Hari Sauri Prabhu, Yadubara Prabhu, Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja. Yadubara is here to make a film of this festival.



Sofia Rathayatra!

These photos were sent to In2-MeC by Paramjyoti das of ISKCON Sofia, Bulgaria.



HH Danavira Gosvami leading the processional kirtana.

