

well as consciousness are the primary concepts, ... our knowledge of the external world is the content of our consciousness, and... this consciousness therefore cannot be denied.” [2]

If we are to understand the mystery of consciousness, and the many other mysteries of life, it is clear that we cannot remain within the narrow confines of mechanical and molecular thinking. A broader perspective on reality is needed. Dr. Alexis Carrel, a French Nobel Laureate in medicine and physiology, expressed, “The second law of thermodynamics, the law of dissipation of free energy, indispensable at the molecular level, is useless at the psychological level, where the principles of least effort and of maximum pleasure are applied. The concepts of capillarity and of osmotic tension do not throw any light on problems pertaining to consciousness. It is nothing but word play to explain a psychological phenomenon in terms of cell physiology, or of quantum mechanics.” [3]

He further said, “There is strange disparity between the sciences of inert matter and those of life. Astronomy, mechanics and physics are based on concepts which can be expressed, tersely and elegantly, in mathematical language. Such is not the position of biological sciences. Those who investigate the phenomenon of life are as if lost in an extricable jungle. ... They are crushed under a mass of



Eugene Paul Wigner

facts, which they can describe but are incapable of defining in algebraic equations.” [4]

We would therefore like to introduce an alternative view – the Vedantic or Bhagavata Paradigm – of the basic principles underlying nature. We have referred to these basic principles as the absolute truth, or the ultimate cause of all phenomena. Even though most scientific theories deal in practice only with relative descriptions of nature, the goal of science has always been to seek out the ultimate principles underlying reality. Yet, certain far-reaching assumptions about these principles have provided the foundation for all modern scientific research.

The dominant scientific view of the past two hundred years has been that these ultimate principles consist of a few basic natural laws which can be expressed by mathematical formulas. As this view appears to be far too restrictive to account for the phenomena of life, we propose an alternative view which may provide a framework and an inspiration for further scientific research. This is essentially the view of the absolute truth as presented in the ancient Sanskrit text *Bhagavad-gita*. We would like to stress that this view is not being offered as a dogma or as a metaphysical explanatory device incapable of scientific test.

Although many of its features may appear difficult to verify empirically, others have very direct implications concerning what we may expect to observe. This view should serve as a stimulating challenge to the truly scientific spirit that wishes to go beyond the very restrictive framework imposed on our scientific understanding of nature for the past two hundred years.

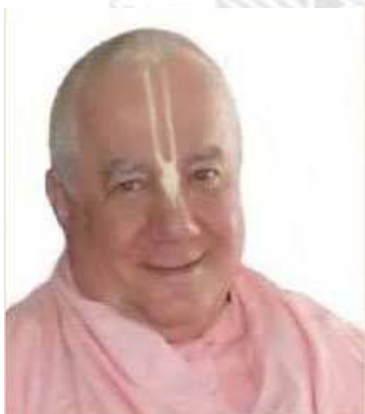
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2. Wigner, E.P. (1962). *Remarks on the Mind Body Question. The Scientist Speculates*, ed. Good. L.J., New York: Basic Books, p. 290.
3. Carrel, A. (1935). *Man, the Unknown*, p. 43.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE CONCEPT OF ITSELF

by

Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja, Ph.D.



The goal of knowledge is truth. According to the correspondence theory, truth is the correspondence of the concept to the object, and the object to the concept understood from an abstract perspective. But absolute comprehension embraces the totality of the movement of the Concept in its living dynamic development in

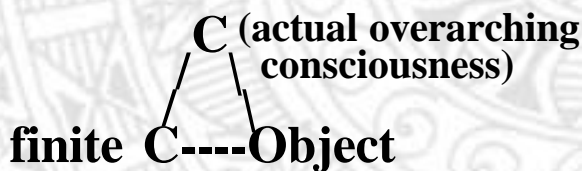
which its abstract moments are raised to their dialectical identity in difference of the Concept and its content. Progress toward this goal is unceasing and unsatisfied at any point along this developmental path until knowledge reaches truth.

Ordinary consciousness absorbed in natural life is unable on its own to go beyond its immediate existence. Only if it is somehow forced out of its complacency by something other than itself can it be raised beyond itself, such that this being torn from itself is its death — its negation. However, because consciousness is for itself its own Concept, it is immediately both Concept and object for itself. Thus its original immediacy (taken as object) is

overcome or negated by its own self. In this way it goes beyond or transcends its own immediate limited being. Therefore, by positing the singular individual, consciousness also posits an other-worldly beyond, which it may intuit from a spatial perspective as if they were existing alongside each other. Of course consciousness is not spatial and therefore such a perspective fails to grasp its true notion.

It is only when consciousness turns upon itself — suffers violence at its own hands, that the Concept of consciousness can grasp its own self and thereby establish its truth. The path by which this self-critique of consciousness is accomplished is the science of consciousness. Because it is accomplished by rational introspection and direct experience it is also called the phenomenology of consciousness.

As explained in the previous issue [Aug 2011] the Concept is the movement of conceptual thinking that sublates the dialectical relation between ego and its opposed object. For consciousness the original Concept of consciousness (in and for itself) suffers a diremption into abstract finite consciousness and object opposed to it, and then returns back into itself by sublating the distinction and regaining its original identity-in-difference. In this case the diagram of the Concept of consciousness would look like the following:



Generally the overarching consciousness is ignored but it is absolutely necessary in order to be conscious of the limitation of finite consciousness with respect to its object. In other words, while ordinary consciousness is perceived as identical with (absorbed in) its object [as in “I am my body”] there is nonetheless an awareness of the difference between consciousness and its object. This means that consciousness and its object are limited by each other. Beyond the limit of consciousness is the object, and if we go beyond the object we enter consciousness. We can represent this as C|O . The vertical bar represents the boundary or limit of each side, where one or the other ceases to be. What is generally ignored is that this opposition C|O is recognized or determined within the context or ground of consciousness itself. Failure to account for this is a *de facto* tacit admission of a Void or *Nichts* as the absolute in which consciousness and object are grounded. Materialism posits this ground as an indeterminate

impersonal matter, which is indistinguishable from the Void/ Nothingness. But the fact is that consciousness opposed to an object can not even be posited unless there is an overarching consciousness present to make such a determination or comparison. The further failure to account for the dialectical relation between finite consciousness and its object, and an attempt to account for everything in terms of the object alone also leads to materialism.

Thus the Concept of consciousness contains three moments:

- 1) Finite consciousness with its limit, i.e. an other.
- 2) The opposed object in itself and for consciousness.
- 3) Overarching consciousness in and for itself.

Finite consciousness, which in itself is the negation of consciousness, is negated by overarching consciousness. This negation of the boundary between consciousness and its object is the sublation of the C|O opposition within the unity of overarching consciousness. This negation of the negation is what establishes the being-for-itself of consciousness. The first negation establishes the being in itself of consciousness as finite consciousness.

To consider this further, being for consciousness implies that there is that which is distinct from consciousness and for it, and there is consciousness – a duality of two moments. Yet the duality is negated in the being for consciousness of the other, since “being for” implies possession or unity with the possessor. Similarly being for consciousness retains the sense of difference or negation between consciousness and what is for it, and at the same time negates the negation or difference to establish unity with itself. Therefore it is imperative to state the unity of being for consciousness as the negation of the negation rather than a simple or immediate positive unity so that the differentiation and sublation of that differentiation are explicitly accounted for, i.e. as a movement.

The true infinite contains the finite or other within itself in contrast with the spurious infinite that is merely opposed to or outside of the finite. The same holds true for the infinite overarching consciousness that contains the finite within itself. This only leads to self consciousness of the singular individual when considered in its particularity, not God.

The object is the in-itself that is beyond consciousness but is nevertheless also for consciousness. The being for consciousness of the object is called knowledge. The object that is in itself is considered as having genuine being and is thus considered truth by this consciousness. But more explicitly truth

is judged according to the adequacy with which knowledge corresponds to the object. If there is a discrepancy between knowledge and object we consider it necessary to make some adjustment to our knowledge in order to annul the difference. But a change in knowledge results in a change in the object as well. The culmination of the development of knowledge and its object is reached not as a static result but as a totality of the result along with its developmental achievement as the dynamic living truth.

The criterion of Truth

In trying to understand things scientifically, i.e. as they are in truth, along the way it is necessary to deal with apparent or appearing truth as phenomenal knowledge. Phenomenal knowledge means that the object only appears to knowledge. It appears because knowledge is considered different from the object when knowledge is subjective and opposed to the object as the objective. It is because of this difference that knowledge and its object are related phenomenally. This perspective seems to inherently prevent us from reaching Absolute Truth since the difference between knowledge and its object must be negated in order to arrive at Scientific knowledge of Truth. Only by taking up the labor of conceptual thinking, negating the unthinking indolence of unmediated certainty, one can gradually bridge that seemingly impassible gap.

How do we know that such scientific knowledge will arrive at the actual truth?

Knowledge of knowledge

The criterion of truth lies in consciousness itself since it contains both the object in itself as truth as well as the knowledge of the object. It has only to compare the two within itself to determine their correspondence.

Truth must be independent of consciousness or have its own



Hegel

being-in-itself. Generally it is assumed that Truth is an object for consciousness -- substance, but on its own or in itself Truth also includes consciousness (being for itself), so that it is both Subject as well as Substance and the task will be to find consciousness that is in and for itself. This must necessarily be other than one's particular consciousness, i.e. it must be objective consciousness.

The examination of immediate knowledge produces its own self critique leading to a knowledge of knowledge. Knowledge is studied as object of itself or as existing for knowledge. Its truth is the full articulate comprehension of its own movement.

Scientific thinking

The criterion of truth is found within consciousness itself. Knowledge of the in-itself for consciousness would be the essence or an abstract concept (small c), so that it would be necessary to see whether this concept and its object correspond. If however the essence is considered to be the actual objective Truth and the object in itself an abstract concept we would in either case still have the criterion of Truth within consciousness as the agreement of the two.

This equanimity toward what is object and what is subject will be important to maintain in order to detect the thought that arises from each side individually and as a relation. It will be important to stay within the movement of thought as it appears and avoid bringing in thoughts that do not arise directly out of necessity from the subject matter itself.