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Consciousness or Matter: Swami Prabhupada's Power of Skepticism in *Life Comes from Life*

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Abstract

This article examines and interprets the skeptical inquisitions of Swami Prabhupada about the matter as the source of creation in his Life Comes from Life. As a critique of dominant theories and presuppositions of science, the book establishes his belief that consciousness dwells in the creation, and it drives its entirety. Even matter and chemicals, which modern science supposes as the facts, come out of nature, and nature has its vibes in spirit. With the logics from the philosophy of the spiritual, Prabhupada establishes the validity that the materialist scientists are ignoramus because they could not form life and win death even though they are well equipped with the chemicals and labs. Besides, they formulate various but contradictory hypotheses in the different phases of their experiments. As hydrogen and oxygen simply do not formulate water, some human endeavor is required there. In the same way, guiding force is spirit or consciousness that drives the creation and life. In this regard, the dichotomy between spirit and matter, discussed in this work, remains a new revisiting. He puts strong skeptical inquisitions with his stands on the solid ground of philosophy of skepticism postulated by philosophers like, Arcesilaus, Pyrrho, Empiricus, and in some crucial points Descartes and Hume. To unveil these ideations, this paper implements a qualitative research approach and imperative method with the lens of the philosophy of skepticism as the theoretical tool.

Keywords: Consciousness, matter, Krishna consciousness, science, skepticism, spirit

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is to crystallize the dichotomy between matter and consciousness in Swami Prabhupada's *Life Comes from Life*. Swami claims that consciousness drives creation, nature and life. So matter just gives form and shapes, but the real essence is consciousness. In this regard, he has raised skeptical opinions towards modern scientific materialism and imputes that the scientists are missing the real links of creation because of their biasness and unverified speculations. He proposes the question that if the whole play of nature is just the manifestation of matter, then why the scientists are not able to solve the mystery of death, decay, and life. Thus, these inner realities are beyond their reach. While centralizing the propositions of spirit and consciousness as reality, he implements the paradigm of philosophy of skepticism formulated by philosophers like Arcesilaus, Pyrrho, Empiricus, and in some points Descartes and Hume. Thus, this fresh revisiting delves a new insight into Swami Prabhupada's philosophy about Krishna Consciousness in *Life Comes from Life*.

Swami Prabhupada is the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Through this society, he has formalized the Hare Krishna Movement, a movement of devotion to the Hindu Lord, Krishna. Graham M. Schweig highlights his spiritual intensity:

His movement arises from and represents an extraordinarily rich theological school and life practice of Krishna bhakti, which had developed in India over many centuries. The origins of this bhakti practice can be seen as going back as far as the sacred hymns of the Vedas, at least three thousand years ago, It is a tradition out of which emerges the famed sacred text, Bhagavad Gītā, possibly the most read scripture of world literature next to the Bible and the Qur'ān. It has truly been one of the most powerful forces in the world of religion, and certainly one of the most compelling among the traditions of sacred India.(2)

Swami Prabhupada's spiritual movement has its footing in the world of religious philosophy. *Life Comes from Life* is a book based on conversations he had with his disciples in 1973 while he was in Los Angeles. This book cajoles and charms the reader with new perceptions and understanding with its lucidity in philosophical thoughts against any kind of dogmatism. So, a new interpretation never fails to enjoy its fragrance and aroma.

Review of Literature

Swami Prabhupada has become a figure of attraction from the moment he established ISKCON. His mission for the world, Philip Goldberg writes, “ was to promulgate the teachings

of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, . . . and centered on exuberant devotion to Lord Krishna, the *avatar* whose story. . . is recounted in *Shrimad Bhagavatam* and the epic *Mahabharata*”(178). In a very succinct way, Goldberg has stated the gist of Swami’s mission. So, Krishna Consciousness becomes the cosmic consciousness for him. This is the point why he has become so skeptic to the materialist. His philosophy has not confined to a part of the world. Michael Grant clarifies that his pervasive religious philosophy of Krishna consciousness has become pervasive. He writes, “In the mid-seventies, Prabhupāda’s translating and publishing intensified dramatically. Scholars all over the world showered favorable reviews on his books, and practically all the universities and colleges in America accepted them as standard texts” (6-7). That’s why; *Life Comes from Life* also consolidates Swami’s philosophy about the world and life. Thus, it demands a systematic exploration and interpretations.

Life Comes from Life so ravishingly strikes the foundation of materialist scientists by using the solid ground of skepticism. T. D. Singh clarifies:

The dialogues in *Life Comes from Life* may seem revolutionary, but then were not Newton, Pasteur and Einstein scientific revolutionaries? *Life Comes from Life* does not simply criticize those who support the theory that matter is the origin of life. Rather, this book encourages them to rededicate themselves to a more genuine and intense quest for truth and knowledge, and to thereby redirect their valuable intelligence, resources and work toward the true benefit of the world. (xii)

Sing’s review radiates how the book blends the multiple dimensions of knowledge claiming that one-sided perspective does not lead to the truth; rather without a clear perception, one is simply deluded. In this regard too, the book needs a systematic revisiting to pinpoint the skeptical perceptions that lead to the truth.

Swami Prabhupada and his works build the bridge between the east and west, and *Life Comes from Life* is one of them. Revisiting such work with a new perspective always qualifies knowledge. Highlighting the importance of this book and Swami’s works, Tamal Krishna Goswami writes:

As a translator and interpreter of Sanskrit and Bengali texts, Prabhupāda served as a medium between these distant authorities and his modern Western readership. As founder, prophet, and priest of a new religious movement, he saw his writings as more than exegesis, as blueprints for spiritual change, as cathartic agents meant to foment a revolution in consciousness. His purpose was to transplant an entire culture—root, trunk, branches, and all—into alien soil. He had to speak the language of a people vastly

disparate from the scripture's original recipients, without compromising fidelity to the tradition. (23)

The importance of such knowledge is a must in this world where the industrial magnate and the trappings of capitalism guide. Without the touch of humanistic and philanthropic attitudes, this prevailing galvanized capitalistic perception cannot be debunked. At the background of these references, the point of departure to this study is to prove how Swami Prabhupada has raised essential questions over the modern science's priority to matter and to unmask how this skeptical attitude unveils the essence of truth.

Statement of Problem and Research Questions

Life Comes from Life by Swami Prabhupada claims that matter and chemicals are not the sources of entirety of creation; rather consciousness is the source of creation. So, life is generated from life, not from matter. This book remains skeptical towards materialist scientists and gives interpretations to establish a philosophical thesis that spirit and consciousness drive matter. The book, in this regard, applies the skeptical inquisitions formulated by the skeptic philosophers like Arcesilaus, Pyrrho, Empiricus, and to some extent Descartes and Hume. To unveil these issues, this article answers the following questions: What are the skeptical inquisitions that Swami Prabhupada develops against materialist ideations of science in his *Life Comes from Life*? How does he establish his claim that life comes from life, but not from the matter?

When these questions find their solutions, the article meets its purpose to show the dichotomy between spirit and matter.

Methodology

This article implements the qualitative approach to the research. This approach, according to Merriam, enables us to understand people and their interpretations of experiences, about their perceptions while constructing worldviews and meanings about their experiences (5). In *Life Comes from Life*, Prabhupada deconstructs the assumption that life comes from matter being skeptical of materialists' perceptions of science. He constructs his views about life and the world. In this regard, qualitative is justifiable. To meet the purpose of this study, it applies the interpretive method while unveiling the concepts from the texts. The philosophy of skepticism becomes the major theoretical lens to expose the dichotomy between matter and spirit from *Life comes from Life*. Thus, the book becomes the source for the primary concepts;

its book reviews, criticisms and related ideas by various philosophers and scientists have been considered as the source of secondary concepts.

The Philosophy of Skepticism

Skepticism, in simple terms, is a belief that there is no certainty of knowledge. Time and space, and objects confine our perceptions and ration. So, the truth is a relative process. Every phenomenal cause has its explanation, but the space and time dimensions debunk it because “man cannot know the truth about the riddles of nature and of the universe. In philosophy a view like this is called *skepticism*” (Gaarder 62). This unconformity about nature and the universe has its base on the aspect of doubt, yet this philosophy cannot be confined to this limit. It has a great significance in the arena of the schools of philosophy from antiquity to the present time.

Developed around the third century B.C., skepticism had its prescience in stoicism and cynicism. Richard Tarnas provides a summation of its basic tenets:

Skepticism represented by thinkers such as Pyrrho of Elis and Sextus Empiricus, who held that no truths could be known to be certain and that the only appropriate way philosophical stance was the complete suspension of judgement. Developing powerful arguments to refute all dogmatic claims to philosophical knowledge, Skeptics pointed out that any conflict between two apparent truths could be settled only by appeal to some further criterion; yet that criterion could itself be justified only by appeal to some further criterion, which would thereby require an infinite regress of such criteria, none foundational. (77)

Tarnas’ summation substantiates the beats of stoicism, yet one must not come to a hasty generalization that skepticism is a negative philosophy. It helps us to doubt and judge anything critically, but sometimes makes us cynical too. One has to handle it in a balanced way, being open to new ideas while simultaneously being critical as well.

The categorization of a skeptic is not simply a random guess. Persons from different fields pulverize it in their ways. Bertrand Russell provides a stratification of a skeptic from different arenas. He writes, “It should be observed that skepticism as a philosophy is not merely doubt, but what may be called dogmatic doubt. The man of science says ‘I think it is so- and- so, but I am not sure.’ The man of intellectual curiosity says ‘I don’t know how it is, but I hope to find out.’ The philosophical skeptic says ‘nobody knows, nobody ever can know’”(224). The most interesting thing is to reveal the skeptic dichotomy between the men of science and philosophy in Swami Prabhupada’s *Life Comes from Life*.

Skepticism is a critical faculty to question the existing validity of knowledge. In the dialogues of Plato, we can find the recurrent pattern of skepticism about how a person can acquire knowledge. His works like *Timaeus*, *Meno*, and *Republic* apply skepticism as a rhetorical tool to persuade the readers about certain foundation of knowledge. Similarly, Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* and *Posterior Analytics* also applies skepticism as a basis of enquiry. A level of skeptic faculty, in a sense, is necessary to reach the heart of matter. That's why; Descartes was right to say, "*Dubito ergo sum* (I doubt therefore I am)" (qtd. in Doren 204). Even one can get existence after doubting. The philosophy of skepticism, thus, proceeds with two questions: The first one is, how can an enquirer hold the irrefutable belief? Then, the second one unmasks, how can we empirically and logically arrive at a point where explanations and all justifications make a halt?

It was Arcesilaus (316-241 B.C.) who started this tradition of enquiry. He supported the dialectic process of knowledge formation. According to A. C. Grayling, Arcesilaus suggests that we must hold the biased belief without accepting either side of argument. There is no fixed criterion about truth that opens us the way to take the side of one argument (116). Because of these reasons, our reasoning results in the "suspension of belief" (Grayling 117) and we should guard actions that are guided by sense impressions. Our reasoning and our perceptions on which our actions rely proceed in the process of tension. To realize this conflict is the gateway for the belief.

Cameades (214-129 BC) supported and garnered Arcesilaus' ideations about the foundation of skepticism. But it was Pyrrho (369-270) who laid the solid foundation for this school of thought. He also visited India with Alexander the Great. So, he might have got acquainted with the Indian philosophy and its method of using paradox to describe the ultimate reality along with the critical insights of skepticism. The Vedic speculations about the creation and ultimate reality had the skeptical outlook. The Vedic hymns *Hiranyagarva* (the birth of God), *Nasadiya Sukta* (hymns of origins) and *Skhamba* (cosmic pillar) postulate strong skepticism that might have been a strong creative fervor for him. *Nasadiya Sukta* projects a strong skepticism about creation, "That out of which creation has arisen, whether it held it firm or it did not" (Rig Veda x. 129; Panikkar trans. 58). The creation is itself a mystery; nobody knows about. This might have become a solid ground for skepticism. In its culmination, Pyrrho puts the fundamentals of skepticism that Grayling clarifies:

This led him to adopt 'a most noble philosophy', consisting in 'agnosticism and suspension of judgement', saying that nothing is either just or unjust, nothing is

honourable or dishonourable, indeed that nothing really exists; and only custom and habits guide human affairs. Neither our experience nor our beliefs (our *dixai*) are true or false; there is no logical difference between them, and therefore they are undecidable. (120)

So, the confirmation about the truth is falsity; rather the truth of one time and space goes on changing because the perceiver, time the objects differ accordingly in the flux of time. Our sensory modalities differ accordingly in course of time. So it is impossible to claim that we know certainly about anything. Skeptic philosopher, Aenesidemus, who lived around the first century B.C., strongly supported this view. Fixing to a category of reality is a fallacy as beautifully expressed in *Kena Upanishad*, “It is not understood by those who understand it, it is understood by those who do not understand it” (2.3; Muller trans. 20). The depth of reality cannot be gauged. To confirm about truth is just knowing nothing about it. This is another strong point that leads Swami Prabhupada to be skeptic about science in his philosophical discussion of *Life Comes from Life*.

The skeptic theoretical dimension of Sextus Empiricus (160-210 CE) adds another but significant perspective to unveil Prabhupada’s skepticism in *Life Comes from Life*. Empiricus opines that skeptics have no any teachings, but they fix on their enquiries. They act by confirming the appearance of the things and their perception. They welcome traditions, customs, and the rules of nature without violating them. But their great skill is they do not claim that they know (cited in Grayling 123). This might be the virtue of living as a skeptic, but being too skeptical can be misleading and drive towards gullibility. The forthcoming sections consolidate all these ideations in Prabhupada’s *Life Comes from Life*.

***Life Comes from Life*: A Skeptical Outlook towards Materialist Ideation of Creation**

Life Comes from Life projects a skeptical tendency about the prevalence of matter in the creation, which has been advocated by modern science. It readily rejects this claim and even goes on to say that science theory of matter dominance is inscrutable. The dichotomy between spirit and matter has remained a very insolvable debate since the distant past. However, the changes in the hypotheses formulated by scientists at different ages, regarding the creation and ultimate reality have not been a meeting point. This is the gap from where Swami Prabhupada outbreaks his skeptical horizon about scientists as he explains the queries of Dr. Singh:

Dr. Singh: Scientists extend their knowledge about life on this planet, thinking that it must apply to life on other planets also.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. They are thinking foremost of their own selves. They are

thinking limitedly, in terms of their own circumstances. This is what we call “Dr. Frog’s philosophy.” . . . Our faculties, our experiences, and our powers of speculation are always limited. The speculations of the scientists only give rise to such frog philosophy. . . . You may talk about your experience, and I may talk about my experience. But why should I accept your experience? You may be a fool, so why should I also become a fool? You may be a frog, but suppose I am a whale. Why should I take your well as all in all? You have your method of acquiring scientific knowledge, and I have mine. (2-3)

He blames scientists’ materialism simply as relative knowledge. His series of questions strike at the heart of the matter that hypotheses of scientists are mere random guesses. That’s why; it goes on changing because from Thales to Hawking, scientists have changed their courses while refuting the previous speculations, formulating their own and supporting the previous one again. The explanations consolidate the skeptic ideations that the riddles of nature are beyond human’s grasp. In the above skeptical questions, Swami Prabhupada transforms the questions asked by Arcesilaus, Pyrrho and Empiricus into the modern context. The thirst of earlier philosophers would have been quenched by such skeptical queries. Roderick M. Chisholm States, “Where Sextus Empiricus was skeptical about the possibility of scientific knowledge but not about the possibility of our ordinary knowledge, many contemporary philosophers seem to think that there is an impressive amount of scientific knowledge but that no one in particular knows anything” (xii). This presupposes the fact that the essence of reality is always mysterious and only the customs and human affairs are guided in their nature’s course.

The ideations of Arcesilaus, Pyrrho and Empiricus on suspension of judgments and the fallacy of experience and rationality find their perfect metamorphoses in the queries of Swami Prabhupada. The skeptical outlook about the matter centralizes concept of science, and Swami comments on it with a very pungent blow in the following lines:

They haven't seen the whole surface of the moon. Suppose someone were to come here from another planet, drop into the Arabian Desert and then return home. Could he come to a complete conclusion about the nature of the whole earth? His knowledge would not be complete. . . . Even if, as on the sun, there is apparently no water, still there are living entities there. How does a cactus grow in the desert, apparently without water? . . .

Yes, because the atmosphere contains all the elements needed to sustain life: earth, water, fire, air and ether. In anything material, all these elements are present. For example, in my body there is water, although you cannot see it. Similarly, you don't see fire in my body, yet my body is warm. Where does this warmth come from? You don't see any

fire. Do you see any fire burning in my body? Then where does the warmth come from?
What is the answer? (3)

Swami Prabhupada makes a strong argument here. It powers an irrefutable logic because of the skepticism. By asking these undeniable questions, he is establishing the arguments of Pyrrho that truth does not have a single criterion to hold on. As the founder of ISKCON, Swami builds a solid ground based on skeptical tools because “‘skeptical’ came to mean one who doubts that certainty, knowledge, or perhaps even justified belief is possible” (Landesman and Meeks 1). He authorizes his belief without any claim that he knows unlike the scientists to whom he blames makes simply a hasty generalization and a fallacy. Like Descartes, he and his belief exist because he doubts. Swami Prabhupada speaks like doubting Descartes who wants to reduce every phenomenon to a minimum and wants to construct his own belief and truth. Swami engraves the path for Krishna consciousness with this strong skeptical outlook towards science.

He rejects matter as the source of reality, and wants to pull the overall reality into the Krishna consciousness and the transcendental dimension of knowledge. For him, Veda (knowledge) must be cognized in terms of *desa-kala-patra*. *Desa* signifies circumstances, *kala* stands for time and *patra* clarifies the object. These are the three-fold standpoints to acquire knowledge. His point becomes crucial in this context that matter cannot hold the *Desa* and *Kala* pattern of knowledge. He seriously castigates materialist scientists and their too much reliance on the future project, which is for him the missing links:

Karandara: They say that they are right on the verge of creating life.

SrilaPrabhupada. That's only a different way of saying the same thing: "In the future."

The scientists must admit that they still do not know the origin of life. Their claim that they will soon prove a chemical origin of life is something like paying someone with a postdated check. Suppose I give you a postdated check for ten thousand dollars but I actually have no money. What is the value of that check? Scientists are claiming that their science is wonderful, but when a practical example is wanted, they say they will provide it in the future. (9)

He strikes that even if all the scientists gather in the lab allocated with chemicals and appliances they need, they cannot create a human. They cannot win nature. With death, everything vanishes. For them, death is the process of destruction, but for Swami Prabhupada, death is a new beginning just like changing the compartments from this side to that. It is possible in the level of spiritualism, which deals with the here and now, paving the beautiful path for the

future to come. Swami's point about the complexity of the origin of life finds its justification in the claim of biologist W. H. Thrope, as he says, "We may be faced with a possibility that the origin of life, like the origin of the universe, becomes an impenetrable barrier to science and a block which resists all attempts to reduce biology to chemistry and physics" (qtd. in Singh xi). This is the crucial point Swami wants to expose and forward his claim that life does not come from matter as the scientists have claimed, but it originates from life itself.

The claim of Swami Prabhupada finds its resemblance with the concept of spirit expressed by Christ. In *the Holy Bible*, the dominance of spirit over matter has been frequently repeated. The crux of this concept rules when Christ says, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (John 3:6). The matter and spirit dichotomy finds a clear shift in most of the religious philosophies. Paramahansa Yogananda also provides the solid ground to the idea of Prabhupada. He shares his realization of cosmic consciousness that also provides the supremacy of spirit over matter. He writes:

An oceanic joy broke upon calm endless shores of my soul. The Spirit of God, I realized, is exhaustless Bliss; His body is countless tissues of light. A swelling glory within me began to envelop towns, continents, the earth, solar and stellar systems, tenuous nebulae, and floating universes. The entire cosmos, gently luminous, like a city seen afar at night, glimmered within the infinitude of my being. The sharply etched global outlines faded somewhat at the farthest edges; there I could see a mellow radiance, ever-undiminished.

It was indescribably subtle; the planetary pictures were formed of a grosser light. (152)

The above passage explains the intense power of spirit over body. Matter just fades away, but spirit or the cosmic consciousness radiates the creation. The ponderous glory is in spirit and thus becomes the source of entire manifestations.

The complexity of origination is a very complex phenomenon. It has dominated the intellectual, philosophical, and religious traditions since the distant past. About the essence of the creation, many theories have been formulated and collapsed with the arrival of the new one with a greater voice of skepticism. So, modalities go on changing, pattern transforms, and no fundamental explanation guides because this is the perpetual process. The fundamentals of skepticism rely on this solid ground. Swami Prabhupada unveils some crucial issues with convincing skeptical points to centralize his claim that life comes from life, not from the matter. His culmination of skepticism erupts on materialist scientists:

Srila Prabhupada. [Casting Dr. Singh in the role of a materialistic scientist]. All right, scientist, why is life not coming from matter now? You rascal. Why isn't life coming

from matter now? Actually such scientists are rascals. They childishly say that life came from matter, although they are not at all able to prove it. Our Krishna consciousness movement should expose all these rascals. They are only bluffing. Why don't they create life immediately? In the past, they say, life arose from matter; and they say that this will happen again in the future. They even say that they will create life from matter. What kind of theory is this? They have already commented that life began from matter. This refers to the past--"began." Then why do they now speak of the future? Is it not contradictory?

They are expecting the past to occur in the future. This is childish nonsense. (10)

Churning the materialist viewpoints, he wants to centralize that consciousness is the basic drive of creation. At the subatomic level, matter does not remain because "the atomic and subatomic world itself lies beyond our sensory perceptions" (Capra 60). It projects that spirit is the driving force of the universe because the materialist theory could not solve the complexity that lies in the subatomic world. To perceive the intangible world, a level of mystical insights foresees reality. Since the world integrates the tangible and intangible things, they can be only viewed with a new perception of oneness or unitariness. In the duel between matter and spirit, Prabhupada claims spirit or consciousness as the unitary force of nature. This claim solidifies when one muses on these views of Albert Einstein: "Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that spirit is manifested in the laws of the universe—a spirit vastly superior to that of man, and one in the face of which we, with our modes powers, must feel humbled"(qtd. in Singh xi-xii). This description has proved a materialist as an ignoramus one. The blow of skeptical outlook shakes the foundation of material scientific theory in this context.

With the power of skeptical questions, Swami Prabhupada's *Life Comes from Life* centralizes a new perception of dealing with the matter. Lepes talks that modern physics has a changed perception than the earlier one. She says, "Now physics views matter not so much as a gross, concrete separate entity measurable by senses but rather, as unmanifest flowing energy, interconnected with everything else, which dances to the laws of attraction and repulsion, creation and dissolution" (118). If so is the justification, Swami's skepticism has pinned out the essence of the dichotomy between the matter and consciousness or spirit. Nowadays with the prevailing concept of Quantum Physics, a new attitude has been developed with a new parlance in the connection between the theories of modern physics and eastern mysticism. Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics* and Philip Goldberg's *American Veda* have crystallized a new concept about the theory of unity and oneness at the subatomic level. All these points

garnish Prabhupada's skeptical perceptions.

If the matter is not the source of life, Swami, then, provides a greater explanation in his eloquent style to prove that consciousness dwells in the creation. He claims that life comes from life. It is because of the cosmic consciousness that he names the Krishna consciousness. It drives the creation as the primal beat. This is the final and crux to justify his claims that life is the source of another life:

Living beings move from one bodily form to another. The forms already exist. The living entity simply transfers himself, just as a man transfers himself from one apartment to another. . . .according to his capacity for payment, or karma, he is able to occupy a higher-class apartment. Real evolution does not mean physical development, but development of consciousness. (45)

This remains the summation of the philosophy of transmigration of the soul that has been greatly expressed in the *Shankhya* philosophy expressed by Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita*. If Prabhupada believes this ideation, then he can never support materialism as the driving force of the creation. The whole system is the evolution of consciousness.

Modern science has faced a paradigmatic shift from Newtonian thesis. After the rise of modern physics, the framework of skepticism has securitized the previously established theories narrowly. Prof. Amit Goswami, a renowned theoretical physicist at the University of Oregon, provides the summation of the shift in the perception of modern physics. He opines that the time to see everything material is over because “ this Newtonian world view that has shaped our understanding for centuries is now giving way to show that consciousness, not matter, is the ground of all being” (qtd. in Goldberg 288). If this is reality of modern physics, Swami Prabhupada's conviction challenges a school of thought in the physics. In his *Life Comes from Life*, he also expresses a view similar to that of Prof.Goswami. At this juncture, his skepticism gives the conclusion. He concludes:

The scientists' mistake is that they are ignorant of the two energies--material and spiritual. They say that everything is material and that everything emanates from matter. The defect in their theories is that they begin from matter instead of spirit. Since matter comes from spirit, in a sense everything is spiritual. Spiritual energy is the source and can exist without the material energy. But the material energy has no existence without the spiritual energy. It is correct to say that darkness begins from light, not that light begins from darkness. Scientists think that consciousness comes from matter. Actually, consciousness always exists, but when it is covered or degraded by ignorance, it is a

form of unconsciousness. (59)

Consciousness prevails and dwells in the entirety of life and creation. The above logical description now solves the skeptical queries of Swami. He even does not ask the question in the above explanation. His thirst has been quenched with these ideations about consciousness. The matter is secondary; it decays, but consciousness just transforms from one form to another. Thus this is the play of consciousness. At this point, Prabhupada, with his skeptical insights to modern science of matter, has established his notion of Krishna Consciousness, and has come to the conclusion that consciousness comes before the matter does.

Conclusion

The spirits of skepticism postulated by the Greek and modern philosophers find their practical shape when Swami Prabhupada's *Life Comes from Life* makes a painstaking debate with a school of thought in science that centralizes the matter as the primal source of creation. Prabhupada handles the burden of skepticism in a very balanced way. He does not simply become too much cynical, nor just a gullible. *Life Comes from Life* lays solid ground for the idea that consciousness is the primal beat of creation and life, not the matter. Modern science brought a shift in the Newtonian concept of matter dominance hypothesis with the claim that at the subatomic level matter does not exist and goes on transformation. That's why; the whole creation is the play of consciousness that makes the manifestation happen by using the power of matter. The creation provides the vibes with the coalition of matter and consciousness, but consciousness prevails and dwells even in the matter. Therefore, it is primary. Swami Prabhupada becomes skeptical of the materialist scientists because they simply talk about the future, and so they are in missing links. *Life Comes from Life* strikes at the backbone of the materialists when they claim that life is the formation of chemicals. The crux of skepticism emerges when this work asks whether scientists can form life and surpass death by using the chemicals at the optimum level in the refined lab. It is beyond their reach. Materialists just juggle the words like hydrogen, photons, neutron, atom, plutonium and so on even without any meeting point among them. Besides, these chemicals come out of nature where the spirit and consciousness dwell. Thus, consciousness and the spirit are the sources of creation. In this way, the dichotomy between matter and consciousness has been solved in a very logical way with the power of skepticism. This is the final justification of Swami in the book when he claims that Krishna consciousness is the optimal way for blissful life by transcending the dualities, vicissitudes, and transitoriness of the world. This book always demands further research from the perspectives of Neo-Platonism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism.

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