

# Jaiṡa Dharma

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Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

# Chapter Nine

## Nitya-dharma and Material Science and Civilization

The materialists are, however, ~~unaware of this fact.~~

→ ज्ञानेते.  
सुपेति

Bewitched by Śrī Viṣṇu's illusory potency, Māyā, they perform multifarious  
mundane activities, which are later utilized by the Vaiṣṇavas in the  
devotional service of the Lord.

In this way the entire world is actually the unwitting servitor of the  
Vaiṣṇavas."

Digambara, "What is this Māyā of Śrī Viṣṇu?"

Advaita dāsa, “In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Caṇḍī-māhātmya, 81.40, māyā is described with these words:”

yogamāyā hareḥ śaktir yayā sammohitam jagat

“Yogamāyā is the potency of Śrī Viṣṇu by which the whole world is bewildered.”

Digambara, “Who is that personality known as Mā Nistāriṇī?”

Advaita dāsa, “She is this Māyā of Śrī Viṣṇu, also known as Viṣṇu-māyā.”

At this point, Digambara opened his hand-written manuscript on Lantra and said, "Here, read! My Mā Nistāriṇī is addressed as Caitanya-rūpiṇī, embodying spiritual consciousness; Icchāmāyī, fully independent; Trigunatita, transcendental to the material modes; and Trigūṇa-dhāriṇī, the controller of the material modes."

The one you call Visnu-māyā, is not beyond the scope of the three material modes of nature.

Then how can you equate her with my Mā Nistāriṇī who is so transcendently described?

I can see plainly that you Vaiṣṇavas are fanatical in terms of this topic and I strongly detest it."

Advaita dāsa, “My dear brother, Digambara! Please do not get upset.

As you have come to see me and we are meeting after a long separation, I would like you to be content and happy.

Why do you surmise that the name (Viṣṇu-māyā) is demeaning in some way?

Śrī Viṣṇu is the embodiment of the absolute spiritual consciousness; He is the Supreme Lord of all Lords and everything is His energy—His Māyā.

Energy is not an independently existing entity; it is the inherent characteristic of an object.

Therefore, it is a philosophical error to describe energy as the source and fountainhead of everything, for energy cannot exist without a source.

Therefore, first, an absolute spiritual subject has to be established.

“In the Vedānta commentaries, we find: ...śakti-śaktimatayor abhedah...  
‘The potency and the potent are one.’”

Energy is not an independent entity, rather the Śāktimān-puruṣa, the Supreme Being, is the possessor and source of all energy.

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Māyā is His intrinsic nature and subservient to His desires as the Śāktimān-puruṣa.

Therefore, it is not fallacious to describe Māya as Caitanya-rūpīṇi, Icchāmāyī, or Trigunatita, because Māyā manifests and acts under the orders of the transcendental Śaktimān-puruṣa.

In this way, she is non-different from the Śaktimān-puruṣa.

“Icchā, desire, and caitanya, consciousness, are attributes of the Śaktimān-puruṣa. Śakti, or Māyā, does not possess independent icchā, she works under the direction and will of the Śaktimān-puruṣa.

For example, a person is endowed with the śakti, energy, to walk and move about.



However, this śakti is only set in motion if the person desires to do so.

Thus, it is only a figure of speech to say, 'Śakti walks.'

What is actually meant is that the possessor of śakti—the puruṣa—is  
walking.

Similarly, Bhagavān is the controller and possessor of His singular energy,  
Śakti.

However, that singular energy manifests in unlimited variety.

In transcendental spiritual activities, she is known as the cit-śakti and in material affairs as the acit-śakti, or Māyā. In the Vedas, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, 6.8, we find:

parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate

“The absolute energies of the Supreme Brahman are multifarious in nature.”

“Triguna-dhāriṇī Śakti, whom you have just referred to, is actually mundane energy.”

Material creation and annihilation are part of her activities.

The purāṇas and tantras define this energy as Viṣṇu-māyā, Mahā-māyā, Māyā, etc.

Allegorically, she is said to be the mother of the trinity—Brahma, Viṣṇu and Mahesvara.

Also, she slays the fearsome demons, Śumbha and Niśumbha, and performs many other similarly wonderful activities as recorded in the scriptures.

“The jīvas are forced to remain her captives as long as they are engrossed in matter.”

Nevertheless, when they are enlightened with the transcendental knowledge of their true spiritual identities, they sever the shackles of Maya and win freedom.

If one submits to the Lord's transcendental cit-śakti, one will eternally experience supramundane ecstasy.

Digambara, "Are you, or are you not, under a particular energy?"

Advaita dāsa, "Yes, we are jīva-śakti. We have escaped from the influence of the illusory material māyā-śakti and taken shelter under the control of the transcendental absolute cit-śakti."

Digambara, “That makes you śaktas, the worshippers of śakti, too.”

Advaita dāsa, “Yes, of course, Vaiṣṇavas are the real śaktas.”

We are under the patronage of Śrī Rādhikā, the embodiment of the cit-śakti.

We worship Kṛṣṇa, but under Śrī Rādhikā’s loving guardianship.

Hence, who can claim to be more authentic śaktas than us?

We do not see any differences between a true śakta and a Vaiṣṇava.

However, those who worship only the māyā-śakti without taking complete shelter within the spiritual cit-śakti are admittedly to some extent śaktas, but cannot be considered Vaiṣṇavas.

Ultimately, they are gross materialists.

Durgādevī has made the following statement as recorded in the Nārada-Pancarātra:

tava vakṣasi rādhā'ham rae vṛndāvane

“In my original form as cit-svarūpa, the embodiment of the spiritual potency, I, as Śrī Rādhikā—the antaraṅga-śakti, the internal energy—reside in the forests of Vṛndāvana-dhāma, embellishing Your [Kṛṣṇa's] divine bosom.”

“Unequivocally, the words of Durgā-devī proclaim that śakti is a singular energy and potency, not a plurality”

There is an ultimate unity between Her original form as the cit-svarūpa, Śrī Rādhikā, and Her mundane form, the śakti-māyā jaḍa-svarūpa, the embodiment of the material energy.

Thus, in Her pure state, bereft of the three material modes, Viṣṇu-māyā is the cit-śakti and in Her mundane condition, when She is in touch with the three material modes, She is the jaḍa-śakti, material energy.”

Digambara, “You mentioned earlier that we are jīva-śakti, please explain.”

Advaita dāsa, “The Supreme Lord says in the Bhagavad-gītā 7.4-5:



bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuh kham mano buddhir eva ca  
ahaṅkāra itīyaṁ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā

apareyaṁ itas tv anyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parāṁ  
jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho yayedam dhāryate jagat

“Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego—all together  
these eight comprise My separated material energies. Yet, besides this  
inferior nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine,  
which comprises all living entities who are struggling with the material  
nature and are sustaining the universe.’”

“Digambara, do you know the glorious position of the Bhagavad-gītā?”

It is the essence of all scriptures and offers the conclusion to every debate.

Thus, we can conclude from this statement that besides this jaḍa-śakti there is the existence of the jīva, which is different in constitution.

The jīva-śakti is another of the Supreme Lord’s energies—superior to the material energy and yet inferior to the cit-śakti—known by the sages as the taṭasthā-śakti, the marginal potency.

Hence, the living entity is a unique form of the śakti of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Digambara, “Kālidāsa, have you ever read the Bhagavad-gītā?”

Advaita dāsa, “Yes, in fact, I read it long ago.”

Digambara, “What is the standard of its philosophical truth?”

Advaita dāsa, “My dear brother, a person endlessly praises the sweet taste of molasses only so long as he has not tasted pure crystal sugar.”