

The Simultaneous Presence of God, The World and the Soul [jīva]

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Just as the sun, its radiance and its rays exist simultaneously, only are three modes of being of the sun itself – just as Bhagavān, Paramātmā-Viṣṇu and the formless Brahma exist simultaneously as three modes of being [of the Absolute] – the shaping power or māyā as such has three different modes of being, namely: 1) *yogamāyā or svarūpa-śakti*; in her fullness she is Bhagavān’s Own power that distinguishes Him, 2) *taṭastha-śakti or jīvamāyā*, a power belonging to the Paramātmā and 3) *mahāmāyā*, a power belonging to the Paramātmā (the Paramātmā is equipped with svarupa-shakti as well, but not in its complete fullness and intensity – as is the case with Bhagavān). The formless Brahma is of no interest in this context, as it is the mode of being of the Absolute which neither expresses liveliness (*līlā*) nor *śakti*. For the sake of understanding, these three modes of being of the *one* shaping power are now characterized as three *śakti*-s, just as the power of the magnet has a positive, a negative and a neutral mode of being with different effects.

Thus, all three: God, the world and the soul [jīva] are without beginning, coexisting since eternity. This does not mean that the world, i.e. a specific system of worlds or a universe [brahmāṇḍa] is eternal. There are countless universes, systems of worlds, existing simultaneously; countless universes appear, countless universes disappear, but māyā-śakti, from which they emanate, is eternal.

All universes never come to an end at the same time. Our world, i.e. the universe or cosmos we are present in now, comes to an end – but this does not mean the end of the world as such. [...]

One system of worlds or a brahmāṇḍa lasts a lifetime of a Brahmā, i.e. 311 040 000 000 000 human years. After this period of time prakṛti returns to its origin, mahāmāyā, and Brahmā [the shaper of the cosmos in question] goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

At the end of a day of Brahmā, i.e. after 4 320 000 000 years, the earth together with bhuvar and svarga disappears and Brahmā begins his rest by Garbhodaka-Śāyī-Viṣṇu for the same amount of time.

According to this calculation our present earth is now [1955] 1 972 949 055 years old. If we reduce this sum from the time that constitutes a day of Brahmā, we will get the number of years still remaining for our earth.

The world as such (not our present world), however, is eternal in the sense that there are innumerable cosmos that exist, appear and disappear in every moment. And all this is caused by a single glance from Kāraṇa-Viṣṇu, a glance which, so to say, purely incidentally falls on mahāmāyā. It is called God's – in the form of Paramātmā or Viṣṇu – vyāvahārika-līlā (the līlā of seeming reality, the outer līlā, cf. the *Bhāgavata-Mahātmyam*); līlā, because, just as in play, it takes place without any effort from Viṣṇu's side. Viṣṇu has no direct connection with the developing world; the Paramātmā permeates it as a mere observer, without being in the least affected by it.

When it is said that *Bhagavān* is the shaper of the world etc., it is only in the sense that Viṣṇu-Paramātmā is one of Bhagavān's modes of being and not separate from Him. In the proper sense, Bhagavān as such has no connection with neither

mahāmāyā nor jīva-śakti or taṭasthā-śakti, from which the individual ātmā-s, who rove about in the world, originates. From Bhagavān's Own svarūpa-śakti originates only the eternal pāriṣada-s, who play together with Him in His true and proper līlā, the vāstavī-līlā (cf. the *Bhāgavata-Mahātmyam*).