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## SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN SELF-IDENTIFICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PURANIC VEDIC TREATISES

Spiritual comprehension of one's own place in this world, awareness of oneself, one's own mission by the human community and an individual human unit in particular, is of everlasting importance. Since the presence of self-identification is a kind of acquisition of the frame of the personality, the value guideline, the personality should first of all find answers to these questions and only then live in this world. But the rapid course of daily events, the existence in the plane of consumer values, constantly changing events does not allow a person to acquire a conscious state in the development of this issue.

The article aims to expand the boundaries of self-awareness as a person through the ancient Indian knowledge of man, his spiritual component, in terms of the ancient Puranas, Srimad-Bhagavatam – the quintessence of Vedic knowledge.

The study of the topic of self-identification of the human person in the spiritual aspect through the prism of ancient Eastern philosophical sources, since the truth should be sought in antiquity, contains the scientific significance of the work. It is obvious that the research and inventions of subsequent generations of philosophers formed the state of the worldview crisis of modern society. Any stable worldview presupposes the presence of a clear position on the issue of a person's self-identification; accordingly, the root of the problems should be sought in who the person believes himself to be. The Puranic scriptures consider the answer to this question to be meaningful, since depending on this, a life paradigm, a worldview perspective will be built.

The value of this study consists in studying the topic of self-identification, which is manifested in the modern world extremely vaguely or not at all studied, which gives rise to spiritual, personal and ideological crises. The special value of the work in the application of ancient oriental sacred texts for solving modern problems, this testifies to the practicality of the ancient texts of the ancient civilization of Bharata-Varsha.

The study of Puranic texts will allow us to correlate modern paradigms of the worldview with other points of view and take into account the importance of the spiritual platform of human nature, which means awareness of oneself as a soul.

**Key words:** self-identification, spirituality, Vedas, ancient Indian philosophy, worldview.

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### Пурандық ведалық трактаттар контексіндегі адамның өзін-өзі сәйкестендіруінің рухани аспектілері

Адамның осы әлемдегі өз орнын рухани ұғынуы, өзін-өзі, өзінің миссиясын адамзат қауымдастығы және жеке адам бірлігі ұғынуы мәңгі маңызды болып табылады. Өзін-өзі сәйкестендірудің болуы жеке тұлғаның шеңберін, құндылық бағдарын игерудің бір түрі болғандықтан, тұлға ең алдымен осы сұрақтарға жауап іздеп, содан кейін ғана осы дүниеде өмір сүруі керек. Бірақ күнделікті тіршіліктің жедел жүруі, тұтынушылық құндылықтар жазықтығында болуы, үнемі өзгеріп отыратын оқиғалар адамға бұл мәселені дамытуды саналы күйге ие болуға мүмкіндік бермейді.

Мақала адамның ежелгі үнділік білімі, оның рухани компоненті, тұлға ретінде өзін-өзі тану шекараларын ежелгі Пуранас, Шримад-Бхагаватам – ведалық білімнің квинтэссенциясы тұрғысынан кеңейтуге бағытталған.

Жұмыстың ғылыми маңызы ежелгі шығыс философиялық қайнар көздерінің призмасы арқылы адамның рухани аспектісінде өзін-өзі сәйкестендіру тақырыбын зерттеуде жатыр, өйткені шындықты ежелгі дәуірден іздеу керек. Философтардың кейінгі буындарының зерттеулері мен өнертабыстары қазіргі қоғамның дүниетанымдық дағдарыс жағдайын қалыптастырғаны анық. Кез келген тұрақты дүниетаным адамның өзін-өзі сәйкестендіру мәселесінде нақты ұстанымның болуын болжайды; сәйкесінше, проблемалардың түп-тамырын адам өзін кім деп санайтынынан

іздеу керек. Пуран жазбалары бұл сұрақтың жауабын мағыналы деп санайды, өйткені соған байланысты өмірлік парадигма, дүниетанымдық көзқарас құрылады.

Бұл зерттеудің құндылығы қазіргі әлемде рухани, жеке және идеологиялық дағдарыстарды тудыратын өте түсініксіз немесе мүлдем зерттелмеген көрінетін өзін-өзі сәйкестендіру тақырыбын оқуда жатыр. Ежелгі шығыстық қасиетті мәтіндерді заманауи мәселелерді шешуге қолданудағы жұмыстың ерекше құндылығы, бұл ежелгі Бхарата-Варша өркениетінің ежелгі мәтіндерінің практикалық екендігін көрсетеді.

Пуран мәтіндерін зерттеу бізге дүниетанымның заманауи парадигмаларын басқа көзқарастармен корреляциялауға мүмкіндік береді және адам табиғатының рухани платформасының маңыздылығын ескереді, бұл жанның өзін-өзі тануын білдіреді.

**Түйін сөздер:** өзін-өзі сәйкестендіру, руханилық, ведалар, ежелгі үнді философиясы, дүниетаным.

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### **Духовные аспекты человеческой самоидентификации в контексте пуранических ведических трактатов**

Духовное осмысление собственного места в этом мире, осознание самое себя, собственной миссии человеческим сообществом и отдельно взятой человеческой единицей, в частности, имеет непреходяще важное значение. Так как наличие самоидентификации – это, своего рода, обретение каркаса личности, ценностного ориентира, то личности следует, в первую очередь, обрести ответы на данные вопросы и лишь затем «проживать жизнь». Но стремительный ход ежедневных событий, существование в плоскости потребительских ценностей, постоянно меняющихся событий не позволяют человеку обрести осознанное состояние для освоения данного вопроса.

В статье преследуется цель расширить границы осознания себя личностью посредством древнеиндийского знания о человеке, его духовной составляющей, в части древних Пуран, Шримад-Бхагаватам – квинтэссенции ведического знания.

Научная значимость работы заключается в исследовании темы самоидентификации человеческой личности в духовном аспекте через призму древневосточных философских источников, так как истину следует искать в древности. Очевидно, что изыскания и измышления последующих поколений философов сформировали состояние мировоззренческого кризиса современного общества. Любое устойчивое мировоззрение предполагает наличие внятной позиции в вопросе самоидентификации человека, соответственно корень проблем следует искать в том, кем полагает себя человек. Пуранические писания считают ответ на этот вопрос смыслообразующим, так как в зависимости от этого будут выстраиваться жизненная парадигма, мировоззренческий ракурс.

Ценность данного исследования состоит в изучении темы самоидентификации, что проявлено в современном мире крайне расплывчато, что, в свою очередь, порождает духовный, личностный и мировоззренческий кризисы. Особенная ценность работы заключается в применении древневосточных сакральных текстов для решения современных проблем, это свидетельствует о практичности текстов древней цивилизации Бхарата-Варша.

Изучение пуранических текстов позволит соотнести современные парадигмы мировоззрения с иными точками зрения и принять во внимание значимость духовной платформы человеческой природы, что означает осознание себя душой.

**Ключевые слова:** самоидентификация, духовность, веды, древнеиндийская философия, мировоззрение.

### **Introduction**

The value and importance of this topic can hardly be overestimated, since all subsequent development, the vector of a person's life directly depends on who he considers himself to be in this world. The problem of personal self-identification is posed by government officials at the political level. This testifies to the actual

presence of a problem in society, since ignorance of one's own nature by a person, a representative of society, a lack of understanding of his own way in life causes negative processes in society, social crises.

The object of research is the process of human self-identification, the subject is the substantiation of the spiritual component in this process through the prism of Vedic knowledge.

**The scientific hypothesis** is that only awareness of oneself by the soul and the presence of a serious spiritual life is the only correct version of human self-identification, which will fill a person's life with meaning. Since material values are temporary in nature and it is natural for a person to put them at the center of his own life, their loss leads to various kinds of crises.

### **Research methods**

When researching this topic, the methods of integrity, consistency, specific oriental approach, logical and historical unity were used. The study was conducted on the basis of ancient Indian sacred treatises, a critical analysis of the state of modern methods of self-identification. The scientific approach, for the most part, involves an appeal to modern sources when studying the topic, a different, non-standard approach is involved here, an appeal to the ancient philosophical annals, the Srimad-Bhagavatam, the Bhagavad-Gita, in general, to the texts of the Puranas.

The fundamental question in defining the self-identification of a human person is the question: "Who am I?" If we discard all social statuses and roles, then there are two basic answers, body or soul. The answer to it is essential, depending on the answer to it, there are two types of self-identification, two worldview positions. If one posits oneself as a body, then a materialistic worldview is built, if one is a soul, then a spiritual one.

### **The materialistic nature of human self-identification in modern society**

In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is said that modern materialists will not hesitate to object that it is not man's destiny to devote his whole life to theosophical and theological controversies. Modern man lives in the hope that scientific advances will allow him to live forever, which is why there are so many theories about how to prolong life. But humanity does not really care about what quality this life will be filled with. But the Srimad-Bhagavatam states that «the goal of life is not to achieve universally recognized economic or scientific and technological progress for the sake of food, drink, sex and entertainment, as the adepts of the philosophy of hedonism teach. In fact, the real goal of life is tapasya, purification, which helps to achieve eternity when his life in this material body comes to an end» (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009a: 161). Tapasya also means austerity, restriction, since unlimited gratification

of the senses, to an unconditional degree, provides disease, crises, depression and, ultimately, leads to degradation, which is observed in the current society.

People with materialistic values are characterized by the idea of maximizing their life, they believe that there is only one life, so they strive for a comfortable existence. In fact, the idea of extending life expectancy alone does not guarantee the progress of the human community. In fact, this indicates that people who are exclusively engaged in improving the "animal" life, which is reduced to food, defense and mating, have only animal needs, and it cannot improve the quality of consciousness in modern society. It indicates that people who are exclusively engaged in improving the "animal" life, which is reduced to eating, breathing and mating, – have the same animal needs, which ultimately does not contribute to the improvement of the state of society.

Srimad-Bhagavatam also testifies to the fact that Andha-tamisra (feeling of death) formulates the principle that with the death of his body everything disappears, is annihilated. A similar paradigm is inherent in atheists, The materialists accept themselves as the body, therefore, with the death of the body, personality disappears. As a consequence, identification with the body gives rise to the idea of getting as much pleasure as possible from this life. The ideas of such people are as follows: «While you live, do not deny yourself luxury and wealth. Don't be embarrassed if you commit so-called sins. Eat as much as possible. You can beg, borrow, mortgage, steal, and do not think that later you will have to pay for it, throw all this nonsense out of your head, for you will disappear with the death of your body. Whatever one does in this life, he is not responsible for anything» (Srimad-Bhagavatam, 2013, p. 307).

«You should understand that this world is a place of suffering – duhalayam asasvatam, duhalayam is a place of suffering, asashvatam is transient. Material life is a life of suffering, and this world is transitory» (Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, A.C. 2014a, p. 32).

### **Spiritual comprehension of the phenomenon of self-identification**

A person, in an attempt to understand himself, obviously collides with his own body, therefore he is driven by bodily needs. How can you become aware of your spiritual component? What is the essential difference between body and spirit? The sacred texts of the Bhagavad-gita indicate that our body is

constantly undergoing changes, therefore it does not exist forever. While the eternal soul, regardless of the changes occurring in the gross body and psyche, always remains unchanged, it does not change its nature. This is the difference between body and soul. Man is able to come closer to understanding the nature of the Supreme carefully studying oneself: the individual living entity and the Supreme Lord are related as part and whole. The living entities are the supreme energy of God. (Bhagavad Gita 2017a, p. 100).

How is it possible to realize that the soul is you? Materialistic methods of comprehension are not suitable here, it is necessary to look for answers in spiritual sources.

Yam hi na vyathayanti ete purusam purushabha  
Sama-dukha-sukham dhiram with mrtatvaya kalpate

“Anyone who really wants to achieve the highest level of spiritual self-knowledge and is not affected by either joy or sorrow will certainly be liberated. One who is determined to attain perfection chooses sannyasa, the path of renunciation, which is full of difficulties. A person who overcomes these difficulties ultimately achieves an important goal of the spiritual path – realizes his spiritual nature” (Bhagavad-Gita 2017b, p. 99).

That which permeates the material body is indestructible. No one can destroy an immortal soul. The action of individual consciousness is possible only within the framework of this body. The sensations experienced by one body cannot be felt to the same extent by another. The reason is that there is a separate individual soul in every body. This is obvious, since each person has his own individual consciousness. A tiny spiritual spark is the driving force of the physical body, and then its influence spreads to the whole body. A tiny spiritual spark is the driving force of the material body, and its influence extends to the whole body. When the soul is cleansed of the contaminating influence of material air currents, it fully manifests its spiritual nature. (Bhagavad Gita 2017c, p. 99)

Srimad-Bhagavatam Song 2, Chapter 1, Text 4:

dehapatya-kalatradeshv  
atma-sainyeshv asatsv api  
tesham pramatto nidhanam  
pasyann api na pasyati

«People without atma-tattva do not think about the real problems of life, because they are too attached to such unreliable manifestations of life as

their own body, children and wife. Despite sufficient experience, they do not realize the inevitability of death» (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009b, p.18).

The material world is usually called the abode of death, in which every living being ultimately undergoes annihilation. In fact, the whole process of life can be reduced to a struggle with material nature, which brings death to all living beings. But throughout the history of mankind, people tend to believe that material science will ultimately lead them to immortality. This idea, which haunts the human community, is undoubtedly a great self-deception, the root of which is based in oblivion of the nature of the living soul. Actually, the living soul is not material nature. Since humanity is deprived of knowledge about the soul, people, in fact, are victims of their own ignorance and uselessly waste the priceless energy of human life in a futile search for immortality, which cannot be achieved in the material world.

“Thus material life is a need only to satisfy one’s own senses. Spiritual life means striving to serve God. This is the difference between material and spiritual life” (Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, A.C. 2014b, p. 56).

### Higher spiritual perfection

Who can achieve the highest perfection? Only those who are on the platform of narayana-smrti, that is, they constantly remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Is it accessible to a human being? This is possible only by association with a pure devotee.

kim pramattasya bahubhih  
parokshair hayanair iha  
varam muhurtam videam  
ghatate sreyaase yatah

Thus, the most important goal of life is the acquisition of knowledge, eternity and bliss. People who are engaged only in satisfying animal needs, living according to the principle “we live once”, in fact, live their lives aimlessly. The Srimad-Bhagavatam talks about the meaning of bestowing life on a human being, a conditioned soul must achieve success in the spiritual realm, and the most accessible way leading to this is the prayer reading of the many holy names of God, which is observed in all religious traditions. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009c, pp. 32-33).

One should not unnecessarily increase one’s needs for material comforts. Man is constantly in

search of happiness, which is illusory. Man should not live like an animal. In this verse, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami states that the excess energy, which is more inherent in humans than in animals, should be used solely for self-realization. A progressive thought was also voiced that the development of civilization must be directed at restoring the lost relationship with God, which is possible only in the human form of life, since a person has reason and the ability to make a choice, a choice of oneself, one's own path. A person should realize the illusory nature of the surrounding material world, realizing that this is just another stay in a material body and try to put an end to the suffering of material existence. A person entangled in the net of material activity is captured by maya (illusion). So-called conveniences are not really conducive to the progress of civilization. On the contrary, they hinder him. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009d, p.77)

What does it mean to be in a transcendental position and be a perfect soul? The transcendental position means to be perfect, that is, to live in accordance with one's sanatana – dharma – the duty of the soul, to devote one's entire life to activities in the consciousness of the Lord.

This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita:  
Sve sve karmani abhiratah  
Samsiddhim labhate narah

“Every person is able to acquire perfection if he fulfills his duties, his duty.” Samsiddhi means perfection. (Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, A.C. 2014c, pp. 63-64)

The Bhagavad-gita confirms the idea that achieving absolute perfection means returning to one's home, to the spiritual world, to God. That is, realizing oneself not as a material body, but as a spiritual soul means achieving the perfection of life. The next stage is Samsiddhi – devotion to service with devotion. The nature of a living being is to serve, service as a process is a priori a natural state of a living being, but being under the influence of maya (illusion), that is, in a state conditioned by the body shell, such a soul prefers to serve an illusion, a substitution of values takes place. Our material body is perishable, and by changing it to another, we lose everything that is associated with our temporary body (wife, children, society and state). This phenomenon is called samsara – a certain sequence of birth, disease, old age and death. Humanity is trying in vain to solve these problems, believing that it is within its power. But in reality, this cannot be solved materially, such

as through science. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009d, p. 82)

sthitir vaikuntha-vijayah  
poshanam tad-anugraha  
manvantarani sad-dharma  
utayah karma-vasanah

Living beings are in the correct position, only accepting and obeying the laws of the universe, the laws of God. This position gives them the protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore they become peaceful. The existing laws of Manu are directing people's lives in the right direction.

One who follows all the rules and limitations of sad-dharma manifests intelligence that distinguishes man from lower beings, and therefore everyone should build his life in accordance with these rules. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2009e, p. 564)

The Vedas say that materialistic people, with disdain for spiritual knowledge, go astray. The quality of thinking is very important, what our thoughts are doing. It is known that an idly wobbling mind is the devil's forge, if a person cannot set the right direction for his thoughts, that is, he does not control his mind, as a result, he will begin to think about what will cause him in the future misfortunes. Materialists tend to always choose insignificant, secondary goals, he proceeds only from material gain, which in reality is immortal, unimportant and transient, and therefore does not bring true satisfaction.

Souls who identify with the body usually tend to view nature as a place for their own sense gratification, in other words, souls who are deluded by the external energy of God are reborn in this world again and again.

What is the only sure way to achieve true eternal life? It is about returning to the abode of God, to the spiritual world, where there are no various types of suffering inherent in the material world, for example, birth and death. Bodily conditioned souls who have lost their relationship with the Creator are in ignorance and therefore want immortality in this material world. Therefore, being under the influence of the powerful force of maya, those who identify themselves with the body of the soul can finally forget about returning home, back to Godhead. The material world pushes them towards the pursuit of sense gratification, thus, they uselessly waste the invaluable potential of human life. The existing laws and rules of Manu (the ancestors of humanity), established by them for all subsequent generations

and eras, are called sad-dharma – they are a kind of instruction for people who, in order to achieve the most important goal of life, must follow this guide. Therefore, the way of life of people should be built in accordance with the desire to return to the Lord, and then activity towards this goal is a correct way of life. Devoted people who live in accordance with these attitudes will gain the protection of the Lord, his instructions, but nondevotees who act arrogantly and in ignorance without any guidance in life may become entangled in the karmic consequences of their largely meaningless activities.

The Katha Upanishads and Shvetashvatara Upanishads state that one of the functions of God is to support the life of an infinite number of living beings, providing them with everything they need, taking into account the specific activities of each of them, as well as the consequences of this activity. And this is manifested in the presence of paramatma that pervades every living being.

nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam  
eco bahunam yo vidadhata kaman  
tam atma-stham ye 'nupasyanti dhira  
tesham shantih shashvati netaresam

Katha Upanishad, 2.2.13 (<https://www.oum.ru/yoga/vedicheskaya-kultura/katka-upanishada>)

Krishna revealed the wisdom of Vedic knowledge to Arjuna precisely for the purpose that all people could be able to use it. All Kurukshetras on the battlefield are actually eternal individual beings; they have never been born or died. The function of the eternal guardian of all living beings in the world, both conditioned by the bodily form of existence and liberated, according to the Vedic scriptures, is performed by God. Therefore, no living creature has and cannot have any reason for grief.

Thus, the Puranic texts assert that all living beings will retain their uniqueness, and also do not lose their individuality in the future. This is also stated in the Upanishads. Thus, the individuality referred to here has a spiritual basis. (Bhagavad Gita 2017d, p. 94)

## Discussion

The study of ancient philosophical treatises made it possible to reveal a critical analysis of the materialistic basis of human self-identification, its inconsistency, temporality, unreliability, and as a result, a number of social problems are revealed. Srimad-Bhagavatam and other Puranic texts indicate the absolute importance of the spiritual aspect of

human self-identification, and this fact does not lose its relevance in any era. Since human nature is spiritual, it would be wrong to say: “I am a doctor, man, woman, old, fat, thin,” etc., it would be more correct to say: “I am a soul possessing the qualities of sat, chit, ananda” that means eternity, truth, bliss.

## Conclusion and conclusions

According to the hypothesis of the article, only the awareness of oneself by the soul and the presence of a serious spiritual life is the only correct version of human self-identification, which fills a person's life with meaning. Since material values are temporary in nature and it is natural for a person to put them at the center of his own life, accordingly, their loss leads to various kinds of crises. And in reality, the entire modern situation in society, the ideological crisis, personality crises, the increase in mental deviations are proof of this. The fact is that in modern society the meaning of the terms “spiritual” and “spirituality” is distorted. Spirituality means being aware of oneself by the soul and, as a result, leading a spiritual lifestyle, achieving spiritual goals. A person who has realized himself as a soul experiences spiritual needs, has an urgent desire to satisfy them. The soul, being a part of the Absolute spirit, God, has a need to serve God by performing spiritual practices. According to Vedic knowledge, a person identified himself with the body and, accordingly, pursues bodily needs, which is the most important substitution in his life, and as a result, becomes the main cause of his problems. That is, there is a fundamental substitution and not of a secondary thing, but of understanding oneself, a kind of “bearing wall”, which gives rise to discord, the precariousness of existence, and the loss of self-identification.

A modern person, a scientist, an educated person neglects the ancient sources of knowledge, relying on his own statements, fabrications, assumptions, which ultimately led him to the current state of crisis. The mistake of modern people is that they are trying to change external circumstances, the political process, living conditions, the economy, while seriously changing their own qualities. In particular, ancient sources testify that a proud, envious person is not able to comprehend the truth, since he does not possess the quality of humble perception, does not know how to accept authority, and does not know how to distinguish truth from falsehood. That is, he is in an illusion, does not realize that he is imperfect, and, therefore, broadcasts imperfect, distorted knowledge, including about himself. That

is, attempts at self-identification without a spiritual aspect only indicate a delusion about oneself. That is, the soul dwells in oblivion about its nature, its task. Therefore, the ancient Indian scriptures, in particular, the Bhagavad-Gita, Srimad-Bhagavatam – the quintessence of Vedic knowledge give an exact assignment to human existence, the understanding

that he is a soul, dwelling in the changing conditions of this material world, the mission of serving God extends to it.

This knowledge is not esoteric, sentimental, the real purpose of writing this article is to study the problem of human self-identification through the prism of ancient, eastern, sacred sources.

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