Gītā & Philosophy
(With Gitarthasangrahaksha of Yamunacharya)

Vedanta Vachaspati, Darshanacharya
Prof. Chakravarthy Ananthacharya

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Prof. C. Ananthacharya
FOREWORD

By His Holiness

Sri Sri Rangapriya Sri Pada Sri Srih

श्रीरङ्गप्रीय श्री पदः श्री श्रीः

With Narayanasmaranas, we commend this scholarly work on Indian Philosophy and Bhagavadgita to all the members of the fraternity of culture.

It deserves special commendation on many grounds:

1. It is authored by a highly cultured person endowed with sweetness and light.

2. It is written by an eminent scholar with a deep and extensive knowledge of Indian Philosophy and offered by him to the world in his advanced age when his study of the subject had become ripe. The erudite scholar has also been an excellent teacher, popular with his students and his numerous lectures on Indian Philosophy have attracted a large number of cultured audience. The present book may be called "THE LIFE BLOOD OF A MASTER-SPRIT".

He hails from a family of erudite scholars.

3. In his study of the subject, he has been seeing things without a coloured glass and has the boldness to call a pin a pin and a spade - a spade.

4. The book covers all the salient features of the subject with an addition of brief expositions of allied matters on philosophy and religion.
5. He has not made any observations on the subject without supporting it with quotations from vast and varied sources accepted as authentic.

Commencing his work with a brief description of Philosophy in general, he comes to the study of Indian Philosophy with its distinctive features and then takes up the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavadgita which form the triple authority for the Vedanta Philosophy and religion.

Though our philosophy and religion rest on the above threefold authority, the author's choice of Bhagavad Gita for a detailed study can be justified on the following grounds:

1) The Bhagavad Gita is the sweet and sappy essence of the Upanishads - the milk of the Upanishadic cow, milked by the most talented cow-herd boy, Sri Krishna, for the good of all blessed JIVAS, keeping the devoted and heroic Arjuna as the calf.

2) Though all the three books give a universal philosophy supported by both reason and experience, experience has an upper hand in the Upanishads and reason has greater weight in the Brahmasutras, whereas the Bhagavad Gita has a harmonious blending of both reason and experience.

3) The Bhagavad Gita, true to its name, (the song of the Lord) is unparalleled both as a wisdom book and as a poem appealing to intellectuals and devotees, the learned and the laymen.
The learned author discusses the contents of all the chapters of the Gita, after a note on the age and authorship and the occasion for the presentation of the teaching of the Gita. Instead of blindly following any particular sect of thought such as the dvaita or advaita or vishishtadvaita he appreciates plausible points in all schools and has advanced independent views also. Nevertheless he is mostly in favour of the advaita and the Vishishadvaita schools quoting profusely from Acharyas Shankara and Ramanuja and their predecessors and followers.

The supplementary notes on subjects like Tyaga, Yoga, Karma, Dharma, Philosophy and religion and Puranas and Itihasas and Aagamas and Smritis and Devatas and Quotations from Upanishads contain valuable matters for an understanding of the philosophy of the Gita.

In his critical study of the Indian Philosophy and religion the learned author has made certain observations with which we do not agree.

He has made scathing attacks on the ritual of image - worship in our religion and has declared that the above practice is against vedic religion and the opinions of acharyas Shankara and Ramanuja.

Against this view we observe that the very word "IMAGE WORSHIP" is alien to our religion. God alone is worship-worthy and not the image.

But images like the sun, and the fire and the Saligrama and Shivalinga and the Vigrahas of Vishnu and Shiva may
be used as mediums for worshipping Him, as recommended in the sastras. The worship is addressed to God indwelling the images and not to the image itself.

Every sensible person who talks is an image-worshipper because his speech is nothing but an image of the sense in his mind. For men with extraordinary powers it may be possible to do away with image-worship in the form of talking. Similarly for spiritual giants it is possible to reach God through meditation and other yogic methods without the medium of images. Sastras recommend worship of God through images to ordinary persons only “प्रतिमास्वत्तपत्तिबुज्जनाम्”. Because such persons form the majority in the world the method of worship through mediums should not be condemned. If the flag of his nation can inspire a citizen of that nation with nationalism couldn’t an image of God, well-understood and properly worshipped inspire a devotee to spiritualism? The sastras declare that missiles like Chakra and Shanka in the hand of divine images stand for the principles of universal time and universal mind.

i) “आद्यक्ष्य स्वरूपं कर्णामुखम्बिलं सूर्य: काल्पेतम्”
ii) “यदायतं जगच्छिं काल्चक्तं च शाश्वतम्”
iii) “भूतानि स्वायुः रहकृतियुगं शान्तेन शाश्वेतं च”

विष्णू: पादादिकेशान्तस्तुत्वित by Shankara
पोद्धार्युधस्तुतित by Vedanta Deshika
यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका, also see अस्त्रभूषणाध्याय in Vishnupurana
With this understanding, if God is worshipped through properly consecrated images, the worshipper is bound to be elevated to spiritual heights. If the worship of an image of Kali could inspire even spiritual giants like Sri Ramakrishna Parama Hamsa to reach God, could it not inspire ordinary persons to spirituality, enabling them to practise higher worship?

The method of worshipping God through images is recommended in Puranas, and Aagamas and some Smritis and is not condemned by the Vedas. The Vedas advocate the worship of God through images like the sun and the fire.

“उत्तैनं गोपा अदृश्यात्रूशहार्यः” (Sri Rudra)

“अम्ब्रये जनिविदेस्वाहा” (Taittiriya Ekagni Kanda)

The Agamas recommend the worship of divinity through special manifestations of spiritual powers like the Saligrama and Shivalinga and consecrated images in addition to the Sun and the fire. So the method of worshipping God through icons recommended by spiritual giants should not be spoken ill of, stigmatising it as unvedic. The Vedas say that God has no “प्रतिमा” which means that he is unequalled and not that he cannot be worshipped through the medium of some apt images.

The learned author of this book declares that acharyas like Shankara and Ramanuja are not in favour of Vignaha Pooja. This is contrary to fact because it is well known that Sri Ramanuja has defended with all the fire and
strength of his soul the authenticity of Sri Pancha Ratra Agama which abounds in recommendation of the worship of God through many images, though meditation of God through Yoga is recommended in its Yoga Pada. Sri Shankara has condemned only those portions of that Agama, which he considers as Unvedic. He does not oppose those portions of Aagama which deal with the five fold worship of Vasudeva through his images. “तमिल्यं भूतं परमेश्वरं भगवनं अभिगमनोपादानेज्या स्वाध्याययोगे: वर्षशत्रिष्ठव क्षीणकलेशो भगवन्तमेव प्रतिपद्यते ----- यद्यपि तस्य भगवतो अभिगमनादन्दक्षणमाराधनमजस्मन्यचित्ततयाभिरेते, तदपि न प्रतिषिध्यते” (Vedanta Sutra Bhashya 2-2-42, also see Sri Bhashya of Ramanuja on this Adhikarana)

The author says that the Sutra “अप्रतीकालम्बनान्यतीति बादरायणः” 4-3-15 in the Vedanta Sutras has condemned image worship. We observe that the Sutra as interpreted by Acharyas condemns the worship of images only without touching the indwelling deity and does not speak ill of worshipping Brahman through the medium of symbols and images.

2) The author observes (page 10) that Sri Shankara makes a doubtful statement on the theory of incarnation of the Lord. “देहवानित्व लक्ष्यते” but in the introduction to this Gita Bhashya the revered acharya declares as a well known fact that Lord Narayana incarnated as the son of Devaki by Vasudeva for the protection of
Dharma, जगतः स्थिति परिपिलाविष्णुः स आदिकर्ता नारायणाः ब्रह्माः विष्णु: --- देवक्या वसुदेवात् अंशेन किल संबोध्वृः. His statement देववाचिव लक्ष्यते’’ means that the Lord is free from bodily imperfections even in his incarnation as declared by the Vedic Purusha Sukta ‘‘अजातमाः ब्रह्मा विजायते’’ and there is no doubtful expression of the Acharyan on the theory of incarnation.

3) In his introduction to the study of Bhagavad Gita the author says that the act of fighting as the chief commanders of the army of Kauravas knowing fully well that Duryodhana was wicked to the marrow of his bone, doesn’t speak well of justice on the part of the Acharyas Bhisma and Drona. We observe that the two acharyas have themselves given the reason for their above act in the Mahabharata war. ‘‘अर्थस्य पुरुषो दासः’’. Both of them were paid servants of Duryodhana. Moreover Bhishma had avowed the defence of the Kuru throne and the Pandavas had been sided by Panchalas and Matsyas who were the deadly enemies of the Kuru throne and so he was constrained to fight against them. He also kept his vow that he would not kill the Pandavas who were righteous persons and were also his grandsons. When both Druyodhana and Dharmaraja seek his blessings for victory he gives the said blessings to the latter only, though
he promises physical help to Duryodhana. There were very heroic and wicked persons in the armies of both Pandavas and Kauravas. It was the design of the Lord, that the heroic and wicked warriors of the Pandava army should be killed by Bhishma and Drona and the heroic and wicked warriors of the Kaurava army should be killed by the Pandava heros.

Acharya Drona inspite of his other virtues had partiality towards his only son Ashwathama. That made him take the side of Duryodhana who had already booked the services of Ashwathama. The cunning king of Kauravas exploited this weak point of Drona. Nevertheless Drona bestows his blessings for victory on Dharmaraja only.

4) Panditaratnam Vidvan Ananthacharyya rightly declares that God is one and the only one in the Upanishadhic Philosophy. It is an unimpeachable truth that the supreme, the paramount Truth called Brahman is a single principle called by very many names.

"एक सदिव्रा बहुधा वदति" ; "एक सन्ते बहुधा कल्पयति" ;
"यो देवानां नामधा एक एव"

But from this it does not follow that other deities do not exist. Major Upanishads like Taittiriya and Kena testify this fact in clear cut terms. The Taittiriya Upanishad declares from house top that deities like wind God, the
sun, the fire and Indra, the king of Gods, are working under his discipline ‘‘भीषास्माद्वात: पतेते, भीषोदेति सूर्यः, भीषास्मादनिशवेद्वृक्ष्’’

The Kena declares that the Gods Vayu, Agni and Indra are superior to other Gods because they have touched the Supreme Brahman which is nearest and dearest. तस्माद्वात: एते अतितरामिव अन्त्यानू देवानू यदलिर्वषु युरिष्ठ: ते होनेनेदिष्टं पस्याशर्।

The author says that religions like Shaivism and Vaishnavism which speak of Shiva or Vishnu as the supreme God contradict the Upanishadic truth that Brahman alone is supreme. This is not correct because Shiva and Vishnu are different aspects and manifestations of the same truth. The worship of either of them leads to the same supreme light when the Sadhana becomes ripe. The Vaishnava mystics called Alwars refer to Vishnu as "Param Jyoti Govinda" (Govinda the Supreme light) and the Shaiva mystics called Nayanmars refer to Shiva as Maasatta Jyothi (the immutable eternal light) सहस्त्रेऽ महाप्रये कृष्णेन सह सोदते।“सहस्त्रेऽ महाप्रये शिवेन सह सोदते”。 The Yogi finds enjoyment with lord Krishna (Shiva) in the thousand petalled lotus - declares Mahayoga Samhita testifying the truth that both Vaishnavism and Shaivism reach the same goal. If fanatics have abused these systems, it is no fault of the systems in their pure and original form.

The learned author thinks that the worship of Sakti (the Supreme being as mother) has no sanction from the
Vedas. "The Veda does not refer to God in the female form" he alleges. But we have to note that God being all powerful (परास्य शक्तिविविधतेऽपूर्वे- Upanishad) can assume any form for the sake of his devotee. The devotee may worship God in various relations of love such as father, mother, friend or master of finally he realises God as his very self.

‘आत्मेत्येव तूपगृहान्ति’ (Brahmasutra)

We were desirous of telling these and few more observations to the learned author himself but before we could do so, he had attained the feet of the Lord. May his blessed soul rest there in peace.

NARAYANA! NARAYANA! NARAYANA!

May this excellent work find wide publicity in the circle of both the learned and the laymen serving as an intellectual feast to them. Our blessings to all the students and disciples and friends and admirers of the author who have worked and will be working for the publication and propagation of this work.

Narayanasmaranams
श्री श्री राजपिप्रिय श्रीपाद श्री श्री:

Ashtanga Yoga Vijnana Mandiram
Bangalore
Phalguna Suddha Poomima
9-3-2001
श्रीअनन्तार्यस्मरणम्
पद्यम्

१. अनन्तायों बुधः श्रेष्ठः दीर्घदशी सहुश्रुतः।
चक्रवर्ती विना राज्यं विद्याक्षेत्रे जयत्यसौ।

२. वेदवेदान्ततत्त्वज्ञः न्यायशास्त्रविशारदः।
वामी विचारशीलः शिष्यपूज्यो जयत्यसौ।

३. शास्त्रार्थमाधिनं वन्दे अनन्तार्यमहं नदम।
यो ज्ञानजलदानेन सुरत्पितासीज्ञासूनू।

४. धीशक्टिस्थिते शाश्वतः गायत्रीमजपतसुधी।
येन देहान्तपर्यंतं सुप्रसन्ना मतिस्सत।

५. स्त्रीपुं भेदं विना योढसौ शास्त्रं वेदांश्रपाठयत।
विद्यार्जनफलं होवं भेददृष्टिनिवारणम्।

६. इति निदर्शयनु लोके प्राणिनां भिन्नचेतसाम।
जयत्यनन्तायों वयों मेतन्त्रवसिष्थियो गुरु।

७. स्वगोपवं न हि तस्य सक्ति:
विद्याविनोदे खर्चु नित्यरक्ति।
शिष्यप्रबोधे किंतु तस्य व्यक्ति:
स्वप्रत्ययोः भूम्यमहती च शक्ति।
Grateful thanks to the Guru
Vidwan Sri Anantacharya by a student

It is interesting to know how Ananthcharya, a poor boy with an inquisitive mind and a zest for learning developed into an erudite scholar daring the innumerable hurdles that life threw at him from time to time. His Sanskrit learning and deep understanding of the shastras gave him the confidence and courage to face the tough situations.
Ananthachar was a gold medalist. Thanks to the quality gold he was presented with (unlike the present day gold medals which are only gold plated) when he topped the Tarkashastra Vidwats examinations; the young scholar had to sell the precious metal (medal) to meet the expenses of his father's last rites. But for the piece of yellow metal in his possession the sad and untimely demise of his father would have landed Mr. Ananthachar in financial problems also. He remembered this sad event of his early life with all the accompanying details. A sense of relief was invariably present there, whenever he recounted and related this episode.

Prof. Ananthachar as he later came to be known, obtained Vidwats in two branches viz., Sahitya (literature) and Tarka (Indian Logic). Apart from this he also equipped himself with many other things like learning Hindi, English etc. on his own. It helped him earn a decent living and opened up new vistas of the modern world as well. In this respect Prof. Ananthachar was distinctly different from many other Sanskrit scholars. Many of his contemporaries though eminent in Sanskrit learning remained totally shut up to modern languages, specially English. Besides Sahitya and Tarka, Prof. Ananthachar was well trained in Vyakarana the shastra that provides for all higher Sanskrit learning and Vedanta, the summit of Indian philosophical studies. He enjoyed teaching grammar and wrote short guides to Panini's grammar for the benefit of students and beginners. As the adage goes काणाद पाणिनीयं च सर्वशास्त्रोपकारकम् (a knowledge of logic and grammar is inevitable to gain entry into any other shastra), Prof. Ananthachar's knowledge of व्याकरणशास्त्र
and तर्कशास्त्र immensely helped him in his understanding of ancient Indian learning. Both the theist and the heretic were equally impressed by his objective analysis of shastras.

He taught the Upanishads, Brahmāsūtras and the Bhagavad gita, the three foundational works of Vedantic philosophy (a major branch of the Indian philosophical tree) without mixing theological or popular beliefs. He insisted that religion and philosophy were two separate entities and that they can never be brought together with any benefit. He also delivered a series of lectures on Patanjali's Yogasutra.

I had the good fortune of being taught by him. He was not a votary of personal god or God whom normally people worship attributing a form. I was not fully convinced of this stand taken by him. Once I argued with him, relentlessly on this point which may be summed up as under.

Sir, you consider भगवद्गीता as one of the corner stones of Indian Philosophical structure. There कर्म, ज्ञान and भक्ति are mentioned as the three approaches for a seeker to realise his roots. You also agree with the macro cosom and micro cosom aspects of this existence. The micro cannot "relate" itself or "feel closer" to the macro without perceiving the macro in a familiar or acceptable form because man is both emotional and intellectual simultaneously. Considering this compelling need of the humanity for a (personal god) the Bhagavadgita, not only develops this concept but offers the choice in the "form" of Krishna. How can you reject the concept of इंद्रदेव in toto?
But Prof. Ananthacahr did not buy my argument. I insisted that if it is not accepted, then the teachings such as मथि प्रोतमिदं सर्वं सुते मणिगणा इव; मामेकं शरणं व्रज; अहं त्वं सर्वपापेभ्यो पोक्षष्यामि मा शुच:, मत्तः परतरं नास्ति cannot be explained properly. Since I could not convince him, we agreed to disagree and put an end to the argument.

However Prof. Ananthacahr was a ready reckoner for me. Working in NMKRV College for women, Jayanagar, just a few minutes walk from his residence, I always turned to him to clarify my doubts, be it in sahitya, vyakarana, tarka or vedanta. I was encouraged to go to him because after almost every meeting he would say "keep coming it is nice to discuss shastra. I cannot read or watch TV, because of my poor eye sight".

He was a great admirer of the Sanskrit language and literature. The latter, vast, variegated and valuable deserves a lifetime application indeed.

The rich literature consisting of poetry, humanities, physical sciences, spiritual sciences, art and architecture provided intellectual delight to him.

Sri Vedanta Deshika, Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada, Sri Ramanujacharya, Vachaspati Mishra and many other stalwarts he befriended drawn by the brilliance of their achievements. He studied their works over and over again and delivered series of lectures on them. The swelling strength of the listeners testified to his deep understanding and analytical presentation. Among the poets Kalidasa and Bharavi were his favourites.

Another work he had great respect for was दर्शनोदय
of लक्ष्मीपुरं श्रीनिवासाचार्य. दर्शनोदय is a fine compendium of all the major philosophical schools of India. He preserved a copy of this book as a reference work in his small but quality collection. The thirst for knowledge of our ancients made him feel proud of them. He was a connoisseur of Sanskrit poetry and philosophy.

As a teacher he helped the student community by editing a number of works with translations and notes. He did not disappoint those who came seeking knowledge from him. He was equally at ease with whatever text he taught, be it सिद्धांतकौमुदी, रसगंगाधरः, हर्षचरितम्, श्रीभाष्यम्, अद्वैतवेदान्तः, Tarka shastra or Yoga sutra. His memory power was commendable. He was bold in expressing his opinions. He never minced words while asked to give his views. He lead a disciplined life though dogged by diabetes and other ailments. He also prepared some ayurvedic medicines to fight his disease. He practiced prāṇāyāma and performed Gāyathri Japa regularly. I remember him saying that only Gayathri japa is enough for a brahmin. He did not believe in worship of any other form.

With a big family to support and his memory intact he continued teaching and delivering talks at various venues till the age of 83. He encashed his knowledge. He was a विद्याधिन in the true sense of the term.

Prof. Ananthachar was chiefly responsible for starting Sanskrit as a subject of study in the Vijaya College. He fought against the policy of discrimination towards the pūndits. Earlier, pūndits were given less salary
when compared to the MA graduates! Frankly speaking the knowledge of the MA graduates pales into insignificance in comparison with that of the pundits. Fighting against the ignorant rules and regulations prevalent then in the educational system he gained respectability for not only himself but for all the traditional scholars.

Prof. Ananthachar will always be remembered for his depth of learning and interpretational skills. Prof. Ananthachar belonged to the dying species of traditional scholars. In his sad demise the firmament of Sanskrit scholarship is rendered darker and gloomy.

I for one is the most affected. My loss is truly irrepairable. I have no one so close whom I can approach so easily as I did Prof. Ananthachar. The passing away of my guru has also ended a bright chapter in my life-book. He taught me veda and helped me gain an entry into the recitational aspect of vedic literature. I am grateful to him for this. May his soul rest in peace.

ॐ तत् सत

Dr. S. R. Leela

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3-3-2001
PROF. C. ANANTHACHARYA - A Profile

"A colossus among Vidwans, a towering lighthouse for those who are lost in the maze of theoretical arguments on philosophy, an intrepid thinker of rare perspicacity and conviction and above all an earnest spiritual seeker with disarming simplicity and personal integrity"..........

Many such tributes spring up spontaneously from the numerous students of our beloved father Sri C. Ananthacharya. While the profundity of his erudition evoked reverence, his extensive knowledge of a vast range of subjects from Tarka, Grammar, linguistics to literature and Vedantic commentaries on the Upanishads and Brahma Sutras overwhelmed us with amazement and admiration. Many are the young minds chiselled by him, many are the lives enriched by lively interaction with him during his scholarly expositions.

The most remarkable aspects of Sri C. Anantacharya as a person are his devotion to truth and his MEDHA SHAKTI which enabled him to quote from memory significant passages from the rich repertoire of his studies. As a Vidwan, the catholicity of his mind was his most prominent characteristic. He could present faithfully the salient features of Dwaita, Vishishtadwaita and Advaita schools of thought impartially, objectively and rationally. He led a very active life dedicated to scriptural study and sharing his insights, thus upholding the vedic Grihastha ideal: -

स्वाध्याय प्रवचनाध्यायं न प्रमदित्वम्

Puranas and conventional forms of worship have
their own relevance in social life, literature and arts, the Acharya would say, but Vedantins should make a sincere effort to incorporate spiritual sadhana into their lives and aspire for Advaitic realization.

My father was born on 2-7-1916 to Smt. Seethamma and Sri C. Varadachar as their second son, at Chikkaballapur in Karnataka State. His parents stayed in Chikkaballapur till he was six years old and then they migrated to Bangalore and lived in Balepet. This migration to the big city was a turning point in his life as he used to recall. We belong to Nallan Chakravarthy family originating from Karambur in Kanchipuram.

He joined Sultanpet Government Middle school. During this period, in an outbreak of violence related to Ganapathi Festival, he narrowly escaped being shot by a bullet. But, unfortunately, his friend died on the spot. He continued his study at Sri Chamarajendra Sanskrit College from 1928 - 1942. After fourteen years of study he obtained Vidvat in Tarka and Sahitya. Being a scholarship holder throughout he excelled academically by securing 1st rank in Tarka and was also awarded Gold medal as well as Karpoom Srinivasa Rao Prize. He did Visharada in Hindi. He was a good debater, composed poems spontaneously (Ashu Kavi) and received a large number of books as prizes which adorned his home library. He also won the first prize in the Anthyakshari Competition by reciting slokas for three days.

He started his career as a Lecturer in Sri Chamarajendra Sanskrit College where he had studied. Then he worked in the Bangalore High School as Sanskrit
and Hindi Teacher and later on in Bangalore High School Junior College and Vijaya College as Lecturer in Sanskrit. He was in the teaching profession for thirty two years. He was a strict and devoted teacher popularly known as C.A. among the student community. He captivated the students by his teaching enlivened by stories from Ramayana, Mahabharata etc.

He delivered lectures on a number of philosophical subjects like the Upanishads, Brahmasutra, Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali Yogasutra at Shankara Krupa and various other platforms for the last three decades. His lectures were popular and well attended. Though he was a follower of Ramanuja (Visistadwaitha) by birth, he believed in Shankara's philosophy (Advaita) which propagates that knowledge is supreme and it is the way to salvation.

He was a self-made man and had mastered English Language on his own. Being a linguist, apart from Sanskrit, he was well versed in Kannada, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. He also knew Pali, Ardhamagadhi, Arabic and Urdu. His mother tongue was Tamil.

He contributed articles to magazines like Sudharma, Prajamatha, Bulletin of Indian Institute of world culture, Adhyatma Prakashana etc., He was a voracious reader and spent most of his time in reading and writing. Many learned people visited our house to clarify their doubts in philosophical and other issues. He used to clear their doubts instantaneously.

Inspite of unfavourable situations and struggles, he was able to come up in life because he was endowed with
photographic memory as well as industrious nature. He had the courage and determination to overcome all obstacles in life to achieve his goal.

Five monks, who are the disciples of Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj of Swaminarayan sanstha came all the way from Gujarat and studied Sri Bhashya in the original Ramanuja Philosophy of Visistadvaita from Prof. C. Ananthacharya for 3 to 4 years. They were deeply impressed by the profundity of the Acharya's knowledge and his mastery of the Sanskrit language.

He gave prominence to education more than anything else in life. Particularly he believed in giving highest education to girls, so that they should stand on their own feet. He had a very rational and forward outlook when compared to the people of his generation.

In order to maintain good health he regularly did pranayama and Gayathrijapa. Though he was suffering from ill health during his last days, his mental faculty did not fail him and was able to dictate the book on "Geetha and Philosophy". Inspite of failing eye sight, he attended to proof reading of the book till he breathed his last on 9th December 2000. It is unfortunate that the book could not be published during his life time. We are only fulfilling his last ambition in bringing out the book posthumously.

He was a guiding factor in our life. We are feeling his absence every moment of our life. May his soul rest in peace.

Beloved daughter

1-10-2001

C. Mandakini
WORKS WRITTEN BY PROF. C. ANANTHACHARYA

1. Sri Harsha - Published by Mysore University.
2. Subhashita Manjari - Published by Kannada Sahitya Parishat.
4. History of Sanskrit Literature.
5. Mandaravathi - Short Stories in Sanskrit.
7. Shakuntalam in English.
8. Vikramorvashiyam in English.
9. Malavikagnimitram in English.
10. Sanskrit grammer which epitomises Siddhanta Kaumudi to suit the needs of modern students.
11. Philosophy of Upanishads.
12. Lagu Dhatu Manjari.
13. Ramanuja.
The following titles have been conferred on the Acharya

1. Vidya Bhushana
2. Pandita Prakasha
3. Pandita Ratna
4. Jnana Sindu Vedanta Visharad
5. Samskritha Vidya Sagara
6. Vedanta Vachaspathi
7. Darshanacharya

The Acharya was honoured By

1. The State Government of Karnataka
   - Rajyotsava award
2. Kanchikamakoti Peetham
3. Srirama Seva Samithi, Bangalore
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C. Mandakini

Publisher.
# Gita and Philosophy

*(With Gitarthasangraha Raksha of Yamunacharya)*

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GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

What is philosophy?

The intellect of a human being, unlike that of animals, is evolving in its nature. After learning many branches of lore he is still not satisfied and wants to know what is beyond the terrestrial limitations. Curiosity to know more and more is the sign of imperfection of human knowledge. Anything beyond the limits of the world in which we live will be supersensory and it is very difficult to know these things beyond certain limits. This curiosity of inquiry made man stretch his faculty of intelligence to know the unknown. Moreover, he had certain problems which he could neither solve nor keep quiet without inquiry in order to get convincing and satisfactory solutions. Man was very curious to know what is death and whether man survives death in any other form. Nāciketa in Kaṭhopaniṣad raised this problem –

यें प्रेते निचिकित्सा मनृष्य अस्तीत्वे नायमस्तीति चैके ।

He asks Yama what happens after death. Some people say that death is not the termination of life and man survives death in some form or another. And Yama answered that death is not the termination of life. A living being is survived by his Ātmā.

आत्मा गुहाया निहितोऽस्य जन्तोः (कठ)
Upaniṣads have mentioned these problems. For e.g.: We can take श्रेताश्चतर उपानिषत् where these questions are put.

किं कारणं ब्रह्म? कुत:स्म जाता: ? जीवाम केन? क च संप्रतित्वः? अधिष्ठिता: केन सुखेतरे? वर्तामहे ब्रह्मचिदो व्यवस्थाम् (श्रेताश्चतर. १)

What is the cause of creation? Is Brahma the root cause? How were we born? How do we live in this world? Where do we go after death? Why mankind suffers many miseries? Have we any system to follow? These are the questions to be answered. The solutions for all these questions will form into philosophy. Even in other Upaniṣads we see great sages approaching the highly erudite scholars for their problems to be solved. There is also another question कुत आयाता:, कुत इत्य विस्रुति? Where did we come from? How the creation came into existence? Philosophy thus deals with अतीतिन्द्रियविज्ञान or supersensory matters and the findings...recorded in Upaniṣads are also प्रमाणातीत.

There is no yardstick with which the validity of solutions can be judged. And also the God whom we call with that name is absolutely different from the world created. All these questions haunt us and it is very difficult to ascertain answers for these questions.

Primitive man when he saw death of his beloved was shocked and he was unable to understand why a person who was hitherto active and alive became still and
dead. He went to the bank of a river where he saw a frog moving and a stone being stationary. He wanted to know the difference between the two. His deceased wife had her body intact. Yet she was not moving and was now equal to a lifeless object तृणकाहसमा. He guessed that प्राण the breathing of air, mobility असु, and मन: thinking power may be the cause of living. But none of these can be believed to be the cause of living. The internal organs of the body are interdependent, therefore none of them can be considered as the source of life. After a long period of evolution, during the vedic period itself man through long meditation realised that there is some power different from the body which he called Ātmā or the soul. To account for consciousness, animation and energy Ātmā is the answer since it contains all the three in one. The external air, entering the body becomes vitalised under the influence of Ātmā and is known as Prāṇa, the energised air. Thus human body is the combination of immortal Ātmā and the mortal body.

Thus there developed the lore of philosophy which reached greater and meticulous levels. Philosophy in India has developed into a technical branch of learning almost equal to science. Although it is supersensory, long period of meditation had opened the veil of secrecy and the sages came to know many things which of course caused astonishment. No other community has developed so profound a philosophy as Indians have. The Vedic Upaniṣads contain many such things and a reader is
convinced and satisfied with the discovery of reality about supersensory matters.

Indian philosophy comprises psychology (मनःशास्त्र) and epistemology (प्रमाणशास्त्र) where we find a profound study of the functions of आत्मा, प्राण, बुद्धि (intellect) मनः (Mind) अहं (Ego) and विचित्र (Reminiscence). Hence experiment, as in science, is not possible. But we have अनुभूति or flashes of thought which stand as reality. Broadly, the topics dealt with in Indian philosophy are सृष्टि, जीव, ब्रह्म, कर्म, उपासना, पुनर्जन्म, ज्ञान and मोक्ष.

The Vedas

The Vedas are the sources of Indian philosophy. Hence, a good knowledge of Vedic literature is indispensable for understanding Indian philosophy in its right perspective. The Vedas were originally only three. त्रयों धर्मधिमार्थं | एवं त्रयी धर्मं | इति वेदावर्तमाणि: त्रयी I are the references. Such quotations are plenty. अथवर्णवेद was perhaps added to the three later. The subject matter of अथवर्णवेद differs from those of the other three. शुक्लयजुर्वेद, the fifth was added by Yājnavalkya after a long meditation propitiating the Sun God.

आदित्याय इमानि शुक्लानि यजुःस्य याजुःवत्स्येन संपादिततामि (निरुक्त)

Each Veda had a large number of शाखाः. All of them are not available. We mention here only such शाखाः:
which are in currency today among Vedic students and scholars.

शाकल, बाष्कल belong to ऋब्रेद
काष्ण, माध्यमिन belong to शुक्लयजुर्वेद
कठ, कालाप, तैत्तरीय belong to कृष्णयजुर्वेद
कौशुम, राणायनिय are the branches of सामवेद.
शौमक and शैप्पलाद are the branches of अथर्ववेद

Each Veda is broadly divided into संहिता and ब्राह्मण.

In the आपस्तम्बधर्मसूत्र it is defined as मंत्रब्राह्मणयोः
वेद नामधेयम्। मंत्र means संहिता. While संहिता is metrical in
its composition, ब्राह्मणाः are in the form of prose. The
first three Vedas vary in स्वर or intonations. In संहिताभागः,
the first three Vedas have many hymns repeated. ऋक्संहिता,
for example contains ten मण्डलाः containing 10,552
mantras. The same text is partly found in Yajurveda and
Sāmaveda. ब्राह्मणभाग contains कर्मकाण्ड, आराण्यक and
उपनिषत। कर्मकाण्ड deals only with rituals, which are said
to be beneficial to the performer. In आराण्यक we see great
sages practising meditation peacefully in order to get some
divine flashes of thought. Upaniṣads contain the nutshell
of the highest philosophy of the land, which cannot be
found in the philosophy of any other community so far.
Vedānta in India developed itself as a complicated
technical branch of knowledge commanding both popularity and reverence. Even the west is astonished to find such noble thoughts far beyond the limitations of human intellectual capacity.

Chiefly, Vedas guide people in achieving dharma, artha, Kāma and Mokṣa, the four purposes of human life. If artha and Kāma are regulated by the injunctions of dharma man becomes liberated and his mortal life on the earth becomes a little significant. उपासना, कर्म, तपस् और ज्ञान are the four important matters discussed and elaborately explained in the Vedas. Gradually they found that उपासना and कर्म are of little use and hence they resorted to तपस् culminating in ज्ञान or realisation. Upaniṣads contain this Jñāna exclusively. Vedas are the ancient records of rich Indian heritage. We do not find any piece of literature earlier to the Vedas. Although there are controversies about the date of Vedic composition, it is undoubtedly the most ancient one and contains a treasure of knowledge. The word Veda itself denotes Jñāna.

According to tradition and the great sages of the past, Vedas are अपौरुषेय, impersonal. जैमिनि Says औत्तरतिकस्तु शब्दस्य नित्य संबन्ध: । Here, he says Sabda and artha both came into existence simultaneously and the relation between the two is eternal. All the sages have accepted this theory without any word of objection and consider every part of the Vedas to be as valid as the other. However, this is not accepted by the western scholars who
are very often carried away by the historical sense and the theory of evolution. They say that no literature ever existed earlier to 1500 BC. Moreover, we find in the Vedas themselves certain passages which contradict the dictum of जैमिनि. We give here certain quotations for this purpose.

यां ऋषयो मंत्रकुतो मनीषिणः। अन्वैच्छनू देवा: तपसा
श्रमेण। ततं देवीं वाचं हविषा यजामहे। (ब्राह्मण)

Here, it is clearly said that great sages have, through meditations, earned this treasure of knowledge.

नमो ऋविभ्यो मंत्रकृद्भ्यो मंत्रपतिभ्यः।
युगान्ते अन्ततिहितानू वेदानू सेतिहासनू महर्षियः।
लेभिरे तपसा पूर्वं अनुजाताः स्वयंभुवा। (यजुःब्रह्मण)

We have to pay homage to the great sages who have composed mantras and sponsored them. At the end of the yuga great sages permitted by स्वयंभू: or some divine personality reproduced the Vedas.

यो ब्रह्मण विद्धाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्र प्रहिणोति तस्मै।

Therefore, the Vedas may have divine source but ब्रह्मण means an enlightened sage who can grasp the idea and publish it successfully.

अजनू हवै पृष्ठीनू तपस्वयमानानू ब्रह्मा स्वयंभू: अभ्यानर्ष्ट।
ते ऋषयो अभवन्। ततौ ऋषीणं ऋषित्वम्। (आरण्यक)
Here it is clearly stated that some divine power helped the great sages in reaching such supersensory matters and they catered to it through the mantras. It is also noteworthy that every अनुवाक् or part of the Vedas has the name of the sage etc. This refers to मंत्रपति and मंत्रकृत्. The importance of the study of the Vedas is also explained as

य: तित्याज सरिवविदं सहायं न तस्य वाच्यपि भागो अस्ति।
यदि श्रुणोति अलंकं श्रुणोति नहि प्रवेद सुकृतस्य पन्थां इति।

(आरण्यक)

Whoever neglects the study of the Vedas, his words carry no value. Whatever he says may be ordinary in character without carrying any weight of meaning and he hardly knows what is a good word. We find the names of some kings and sages in the Upanishads like अश्वपति, केकय, etc

घोर आजीवसः देवकीपुत्रं कृष्णं उवाच।

This mantra is found in छान्दोग्य. All these contradict the version of अपौर्वेयत्व and अनादित्व.

Sanskrit was the spoken language during the period of the Vedas. We have unassailable evidences to prove this fact. Even to-day, most of the local languages make use of more than fifty percent of Sanskrit words in writing technical and scientific matters. Thus Sanskrit,
with its rich diction, served both the spoken and technical styles. The great sages were able to express abstract ideas of philosophy in this rich language fluently and exactly. The style of Rgveda exhibits a refined state of language which indicates the evolution of the language for more than a millennium.

The Sanskrit language used in the Vedas is आच्छेय or archaic. The language of later Sanskrit literature is quite different from the vedic language. A scholar of classical Sanskrit language cannot understand the vedic mantras easily. After the Vedas, with the passage of time, the Sanskrit language has evolved into the classical form. We find ungrammatical usages in the Vedas. However, Pāṇini has reserved a small portion of अष्टाध्यायी to interpret vedic grammar, explaining the usage of peculiar words. Large number of vedic words which are not intelligible are explained in निरूक्त by Yāskācārya of 700 B.C. Although the lexican is helpful in understanding vedic terminology, it is regrettable that all the words are not covered by निरूक्त and we have only 1750 words explained. We take the help of Sāyaṇabhaśya and other commentaries for understanding vedic words.

The Vedas are to be studied in three ways; पुरश्चरण recitation, अर्थज्ञान knowledge of the meaning and अनुष्ठान practically following what is said.

Our ancestors added value even to mere recitation with proper intonation and now we find many vedic
mantras being recited although their meaning is irrelevant to the occasion. अर्थज्ञान is considered better than mere recitation. In Yāśka’s निरुक्त the importance of understanding mantras is well advocated. स्थाणुर्य भारहारः किलाभूत्। अधीत्य वेदं न विजानाति योसर्थ। योसर्थज्ञतू सकलं भद्रमसूते नाकमेति ज्ञानविभूतपाप्मा। He says that understanding Vedamantra elevates man to swarga and he enjoys prosperity. अनुदान is practically following what one has been instructed to pave way for the progressive prospects.

उपनयन, a ceremony to initiate a boy of seven years into the study of the Vedas is performed.यज्ञोपवीत is worn for qualifying one for the purpose of शौतस्मार्त rituals. शौतस्मार्तकर्मनुष्ठान यौम्यतासिद्ध्यथः.

This ceremony also initiates the boy into ब्रह्मोपदेश when the sacred गायत्री मंत्र is preached. Gāyatrī is a prayer to remove the obstacles in the process of intellectual development. On the day of उपाकर्म after अध्ययन होम the boy is entrusted to a teacher for studies. He is sent to गुरुकुल for this purpose for a number of years. However for अयर्वेद there is another ceremony called शिरोद्रेत when एकर्ष, the sacred fire of that name is attended to.

क्रियावन्तः श्रौत्रियः ब्रह्मणिष्ठः स्वयं जुहत्त एकर्षमः, श्रद्धयनः। तेषां एवेता ब्रह्मणिष्ठं वदेत शिरोद्रेतं विधिवधैस्तु चीर्ममः। नैतत् अचीर्मने अविद्यते। (मुण्डक)
Traditionally the great sages and ācāryas assert that every part the of Vedas is Pramāṇa. However it is disputed. If there is any matter unrelated to philosophy or कर्मभाग they are not considered to be important. According to Bhagavadgītā

त्रिगुणविषया वेदा: निस्त्रृगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निद्र्द्वको नित्यसत्त्वस्य: नियोगक्षेम आत्मवानू ॥
यावानथ उदपाने सर्वत: संप्लुतोदके ।
तावनू सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानत: ॥

All the activities of man in the life are governed by the trinity called सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस्. सत्त्व is enlightenment.रज: encumbrance. तम: is delusion. Only such a thing which is beyond the त्रिगुण is considered as philosophy. Many legends, dialogues, gambling etc. found in Vedas are related only to worldly affairs. Such mantras reflect the then existing condition of the society. Therefore Jaimini says that only विधि and निषेध are प्रमाण. Upaniṣads say योगप्रत्यक्ष or flashes of thought of the great sages are highly valid. Although the Vedas contain many things, the learned brahmin should take only the philosophical part to improve himself and reach the stage of realisation of Ātmā.इद्र त the relation between man and woman, and योगक्षेम earning and preserving come under trinity. Therefore Gītā says one must be निद्र्द्व and नियोगक्षेम. The word नित्यसत्त्वस्य asks the man to develop सत्त्वगुण curbing the
other two so that he may become आत्मवान्. One more thing to be added here is that the killing of animals was in practice in those days in Yajña and other performances. We have enough statements in the Vedas itself to support this.

वायव्यः श्रेतं आलमेन् | means white goat is to be killed to propitiate the God Vāyu.

कपिलञ्जला आलमेन भूतिकामः | Kapinjalala birds should be offered to improve ones wealth.

In छान्दोग्य also it is stated अहिंसनू सर्वभूतानि अन्यत्र तीर्थेन्यः. We must not kill any animal except where vedic injunctions are found.

Some of the scholars try to explain this in a different way which shows that they are imposing their ideas on the vedic version. During the days of the Vedas Aryans were non-vegetarians and after centuries when they took to agriculture they gradually gave up non-vegetarian food replacing it with the vegetarian one.

We have given enough details about the Vedas. People are generally ignorant of vedic literature and its impact on our culture. Hence this effort has been made.

Upaniṣads

Upaniṣads form the last chapters of Brāhmaṇas with only one exception, that is इशावास्य which is the 40th chapter of वाजसनेय संहित of शुक्लयजुर्वेद. Later, large
number of Upaniṣads by unscrupulous authors have been added to the list of vedic Upaniṣads. They are today 220 in number. Shaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta are the three major religions of India with millions of followers who claim that the religion they accepted is superior. There was also bitter rivalry among such religions. All of them do not have vedic approval since the genuine Upaniṣads forming the last part of the Vedas declare that there is only one God whom they call as Brahma. The concept of God imparted by Upaniṣads is universal and not sectarian. The religions of India, with the earnest desire of getting vedic sanction, have written such Upaniṣads which are not authentic. Upaniṣads are called Vedānta, the end of the Vedas or the quintessence of vedic learning. There is of course a struggle to cite other Upaniṣads only in order to glorify their religion as vedic. Fortunately it has been possible for us to cullout only genuine Upaniṣads as they form the parts of the Vedas. It is noteworthy that Śankarācārya and Madhvācārya have commented only on ten Upaniṣads which are exclusively vedic and declare in unequivocal terms that God is one. एकमेव अत्तितीयम्।

Upaniṣads contain invaluable transcendental learning. They are the original source of Indian Philosophy. Although people respect the Upaniṣads they are not mentally prepared to follow the high ideals enshrined in the Upaniṣads, but follow a religion of their own which is full of superstitions or contradictions. In Upaniṣads we see great sages meditating in order to learn
the mysteries of nature leading to the realisation of the Supreme. According to मुण्डक

देवविद्ये वेदितव्ये इति हस्यतु ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैव अपरा
च | अथ परा यथा तदक्षरं अधिगम्यते |

Upaniṣads have classified learning into two chief divisions namely Parā and aparā. All the learning other than Brahmavidyā are considered aparā and secondary only. That learning which leads a man to realise the Supreme one is called पराविद्या.

Upaniṣads contain this पराविद्या while other parts of the Vedas contain अपराविद्या. According to Upaniṣadic verdict पराविद्या cannot be acquired through logic or by any other means. Only deep meditation with stabilized mind can bring to a man the eternal enlightenment called Anubhūti. Gītā says,

सुखं आत्मं तत्तत्त्बुद्धिग्राहं अतीतिन्द्रियंम् । (गीता) ।
ज्ञानप्रसादेन समाधिगम्य: ततस्तुतंपश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमाना: ।
दृष्टयते तु आग्रहया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभि: । (उपनिषत)

All these quotations confirm that buddhi freed from the deceptions of the world can alone visualise the great divinity. The lore of Upaniṣads can only be learnt through उपदेश from a preceptor who is श्रोत्रिय and ब्रह्मनिष्ठ, well studied and on the way of practice of yoga.
This will help the student only when he is taught by a competent pious preceptor.

Mundaka clearly advocated that तद्विज्ञानाय स: गुरूमेव अभिगच्छेत् and in the Upaniṣads we see students and sages approaching the great sages for this knowledge. Although later in the works of philosophy logic is used in a limited way, Upaniṣads have maintained their stand of keeping themselves away from logical scanning. The chief objects of Upaniṣads are जीव, परमात्मा and जगत्. The three belong to the philosophical realm. जीव and परमात्मा are supersensory while जगत् is the one where we live. Being born in the जगत् after undergoing untold miseries man earnestly yearns for freeing himself from these miseries and elevating the purified intellect to the higher planes. In order to understand जीव and परमात्मा one has to study Upaniṣads.

जगत् is the infrastructure where man undergoes all kinds of disadvantages. The Upaniṣads present God in two forms, सूक्ष्ण and निरुपण. One is having adjectives like सर्वज्ञ:, सर्वशक्तः, सर्वेष्ठरः and the other is only an absolute without any quality. The latter has been upheld by Śankarācārya on the basis of the अरूपवदेव तत् प्राधान्यात्. Other sects are inclined to worship सूक्ष्ण. In Upaniṣads,
we have reference to both these. While निर्गुण demands तत्त्वज्ञान and the practice of penance, संगुण advocates उपासना. The question of जीवात्मा and परमात्मा being one or separate is the controversy amongst the scholars which we can examine later.

कौषीतकि and ऐतरेय belong to ऋग्वेद.

ईशावास्य and बृहदारण्यक belong to शुक्लयजुर्वेद. कथ, तैत्रीय, श्रेत्राष्ट्र and मैत्रायण belong to कृष्णयजुर्वेद.

केन and छान्दोग्य are parts of सामवेद.

मुण्डक, माण्डूक्य and प्रश्न are the parts of अथर्ववेद.

Some scholars argue that whatever is not stated in the Vedas but whatever is not contradictory to vedic principles can be taken as Pramāṇa. Some go to the extent of saying that their quotations are from-सूप्तवेद or vedic parts which are not available today. Any person with a logical sense can understand the mischief played here. It is possible for the authors to bring any idea of their own under the cover of this argument. It is true that many parts of the Vedas are not available but it is not possible to take advantage of the absence of text to project their own philosophical ideas.
The literature on philosophy

We have already said about the vedic Upaniṣads which are called शौरीम्प्रस्थान. The second one is called दार्शनिकप्रस्थान or ब्रह्मसूत्र. This purely deals with ज्ञानकाण्ड and chiefly teaches पराविष्ठ्य which paves way for ultimate goal or आत्मदर्शन. There are four chapters with 555 sutras. Many ācāryas have written commentaries on ब्रह्मसूत्र substantiating their own favourable views and it has become very difficult for us to know exactly the opinion of the सूत्रकार. Śankara of course is an absolutist. Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha and Nimbārka are Vaiṣṇavas. श्रीकृष्णदिवाराज was a Śaiva. विज्ञानभिक्षु adopted सेन्द्रसांख्य. All these commentaries have given room for different Darśanas on Vedānta. Although all of them consider ब्रह्मसूत्र as unquestionable authority, they unscrupulously impose their own opinion on बादरायण, the author, causing confusion about reality.

The third one BhagavadGītā is called स्मार्तप्रस्थान. Although smrtis cannot be elevated to the standards of the Vedas, Gītā enjoys a distinguished position in philosophy because of the valuable and secular philosophy it contains. This closely concurs with Upaniṣadic doctrine. These three are called प्रस्थानत्रय, the major trio on which philosophy depends upon.
BHAGAVAD GĪṬĀ

We have already written a book called ‘Philosophy of Upaniṣads’ on the first two प्रस्थानs. Here we wish to bring out the essence of Bhagavad Gīṭā, the third प्रस्थान.

Introduction to Bhagavad Gīṭā

Bhagavad Gīṭā enjoys a great popularity not only in India but also abroad. Krṣṇa who is believed to be the incarnation of God has guided Arjuna who was in a dilemma and all that He said to Arjuna applies to the whole of mankind during certain critical circumstances. This book is part of Bhīṣma parva of the Mahābhārata. It contains eighteen chapters with seven hundred Ślokas. Sanjaya gives the commentary of the battle at Kurukṣetra between Kauravas and Pāndavas to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. In the course of his narration about the first day of the war he gives an account of how Arjuna became distressed and how he was guided by Krṣṇa. Although the major dialogue is between Krṣṇa and Arjuna this is emboxed in the talk of Sanjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Many critics raise certain questions about the propriety of place and precept. Was it possible for any one to give a long advice of seven hundred Ślokas in the battlefield standing in between armies ready to fight?

सेनयोसभ्योर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेत्यच्युत
The text clearly says that Arjuna was in the middle of the two armies facing each other ready to fight. Pāndavas had suffered humiliation in the hands of Kauravas. Bhīma and Arjuna were very serious of seeking vengeance and they were not for any kind of compromise. That being the mentality of Arjuna, how could he feel disheartened at the moment of the opportunity when he could retaliate and satisfy himself, is another question. Some people have made efforts to answer these problems to defend the greatness of Gītā. However without considering these aspects let us just take the essence of Gītā which is of helpful guidance and makes even an ordinary man understand philosophy very clearly.

While Upaniṣads and Brahmasūtras teach only निवृत्तिमार्ग, that is, withdrawing from the worldly affairs, Gītā teaches both प्रवृत्ति and निवृत्ति.

Śankara upholds the two ways enjoined in the Gītā. Bhagavad Gītā does not teach अहिंसा but one can use violence to curb the injustice or adharma. Arjuna was asked to fight as a Kṣatriya against all the evil forces so that he could establish Dharma. According to BhagavadGītā the fight was between देवी and आसुरी śaktis. The word धर्मक्षेत्रे qualifying कुर्ख्ये hints at this. We also have दैवासुरविभागयोग as part of BhagavadGītā. Krṣṇa had dedicated himself to the cause of Dharma, धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय and to eliminate adharma, अधर्मपरिहाराय.
If we could estimate the strength of the two armies Pândavas were numerically weak and had less great warriors. Naturally perhaps they would not have gained victory if they themselves had fought against Bhīṣma and Droṇa. Kṛṣṇa chose to help Pândavas only in order to save the right cause. The wonderful aspect of the assistance of Kṛṣṇa was that he without fighting and without any other help assisted Pândavas in such a manner so that in all the critical events they surmounted many of the disastrous events and ultimately gained victory. Kṛṣṇa’s behaviour throughout the eighteen days hints at how God can help for the establishment of Dharma and people devoted to Dharma.

At the end of every chapter we read the colophone गीतासु उपनिषतसु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे.

The Gītā is elevated to the level of Upaniṣads, Brahmasūtra and Yogaśāstra. While the first two impart the way to realise Ātmā and Brahma, Yoga tells about Sādhana or Upāya to reach the higher level. Mere knowledge without proper action cannot help the seeking of the truth. Philosophy is to be co-ordinated with समाधि and तपस्, while religion is related to rituals which are secondary. Gītā lays emphasis on both realisation and Sādhanā. Kṛṣṇa is called योगेश्वर.

He is the lord of our intellect and his grace makes one reach the divinity. ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते.
Arjuna fought many battles in the past and was successful. The demons known as पौलोपे and कालकेश्व were killed by him. The burning of Khândavavana was arranged by Arjuna against the will of Indra. He fought, single handed with Drupada, the King of Pāncāla. After defeat, Drupada in chains was brought by Arjuna who forced him to fall at the feet of Droṇa. He also fought with Śiva who was in the guise of a hunter and secured पाणितस्त्र from Śiva, who was pleased with the valour of Arjuna. He fought also a battle at Virātanagara when Kauravas had captured millions of cows of Virāta. At that time, while facing the same army of Bhīṣma and Droṇa, Arjuna did not have least hesitation and returned with cows victoriously. How such a great valiant warrior feels depressed at this time is quiet difficult to comprehend.

Bhīṣma was the grandfather of Duryodhana. He avowed the defence of कुरुसिंहासन. Pāndavas also belonged to Kuru family. Such being the case he sided Duryodhana knowing that he had offended and given trouble to Pāndavas continuously. Moreover he stood as the Commander-in-chief of Duryodhana’s army against Pāndavas. Although Bhīṣma is a very noble character, this act of his defending injustice is not appreciable.

Droṇa was not related to either Kauravas or Pāndavas in any way. He was the palace tutor who trained both the parties in archery and brought them up. Arjuna
was his pet disciple. A tutor is not obliged to fight on behalf of the master. Yet, he defended Duryodhana well knowing that the latter was a fraudulent man.

Vidura, although he was a minister to Dhrtarashtra, left the job and remained neutral. He appears to be the noblest character in Mahabhara.

Balarama was the elder brother of Krsna. He was considered as the Avatara of Visnu by Vedantadesika and other scholars. The duty of Abhataras is to support only Dharma. Such being the case Balarama taught Dhuryodhana and worked in favour of Kauravas all through his life. Krsna cunningly made Balarama absent from the scene of war. In BhagavadGita Krsna says:

अजोधिन सत्त्वव्यायत्म भूतानां ईश्वरोदपि सन्।
प्रकृति स्वां अवश्यं संभवामि आत्ममायया॥

(गीता)

The Supreme one assumes the form of a human being by the help of Prakriti or Purushottam, his own creation, through Maya or a super power. He admits that he is originally unborn, immutable and the lord of the cosmos. This theory of Avatara is not referred to either in Upanishads or in Brahmasastra. Sankara also in his introduction writes, भगवान् स्वमायया देहवानू इव लोकानुग्रहं कूर्तिन्तव लक्ष्यते।
Here Krṣṇa has come down to the earth as if he wanted to help others who are right. Krṣṇa has no purpose of his own in coming down to earth in any form. Gītā appears to be very simple in composition and any reader knowing Sanskrit may have some idea of his own, but there is necessity to understand the philosophy embedded in Gītā in a solemn way which requires extensive study of philosophical works and rich experience. Although Vaiśṇavas claim that the Gītā is Vaiśṇava since Krṣṇa is the preceptor, we do not see any sectarian view advocated in Gītā. Everywhere we see that God is universal and one. Plurality of gods is not accepted. In this way Gītā is highly appreciable and reflects only the universal philosophy of the other two works of philosophy. Gītā combines not only philosophy but also enunciates the yoga process. The advice to Arjuna contains highly valuable issues and also Krṣṇa asks Arjuna after completing his counsel to think over the matter deeply before acting. Here he has not compelled Arjuna to follow his advice.

Yāmunācārya, the predecessor of Rāmānuja, wrote works on आगमप्रामाण्य, सिद्धन्त्रय and गीतार्थसंग्रह. We quote here from the last one.

स्वधर्मज्ञानवैराग्य साध्यभक्त्येक गोचरः ।
नारायण: परंब्रह्म गीतानास्त्रेः समीरितः ॥

परंब्रह्म can be realised only through undivided concentration in the form of भक्ति which can be achieved
only through discharging one’s own duties without expectations and quietistic outlook. Every one is expected to do his own duty since he can not do the duties of others. Four Varṇas, four Āśramas, teachers, students, wife, husband, son and ruler etc. should do their own duties satisfactorily without violating the norms of Dharma.

This is indispensable for the upliftment of Ātmā to the transcendental level.

अस्थानस्नेहकारणय धर्माधर्म भिवाकुल ।
पार्थ प्रपन्नमुदिश्य शास्त्रावतरणं कृतम ॥

Arjuna is feeling pity and affection to the undeserving. He is also doubtful whether what he is doing is dharma or adharma. His mind is totally upset by sentimental outlook and the dilemma regarding the propriety of action. He surrendered himself to Krṣṇa and asked him to solve his problems. Here we have to explain what is undeserving attachment. It is not necessary to consider how we are related and attached to a person when we are judging his activities as to whether they are just or unjust. Even father or other close relatives should not be exempted from punishment if they are wrong. The army of enemies may consist of close relatives of Arjuna but for a Kṣatriya it is his pious duty to punish every one if they go wrong irrespective of their relation to him. Therefore we find in BhagvadGītā, युध्यस्व विगतज्ञः ।

जेतासि रघु सपत्लानु ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व ॥
Hence BhagavadGītā teaches only such हिंसा which is meant for elimination of unsocial and harmful persons in order to save the righteous people.

Date: It is unfortunate that we are unable to determine the date of so great a work. According to Indian almanac Pancānga, 5102 years had passed in Kaliyuga i.e. 3102 BC is the beginning of Kaliyuga, when Janamejaya was ruling India. He is the great grandson of Arjuna. Thus we can find out the date of Mahābhārata war as 3162 BC. Krṣṇa approached Duryodhana to give ultimatum in Kārtiκa month. कौमुदे मासि रेवत्यां. Actually the war took place in the month of November. Bhīṣma lived fifty eight days after he fell down.

परिवृत्तोहि भगवान् सहस्रांशु: दिवाकर: ।
अष्ट्री पद्माशारं राज्यः शायनस्य गताहि मे ॥

This puts the date as 16th November when Bhīṣma fell down. Gītā was taught in Bhīṣmaparva. However, historians have a different view.

The count of Yuga cannot be brought within the frame of Christian era. They say that Mahābhārata is later to Rāmāyana and 500 B.C. may be the earliest limit.
Summary of Gītā

Chapter - 1

This is the preamble to the dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. The word धर्मक्षेत्रे means that the युद्ध is exclusively meant for establishing dharma and the fight is between virtuous forces against evil forces. Duryodhana was guilty and had a very strong army when compared to the army of Pāndavas. He is doubtful of his victory. He says,

अपर्यासं तद्स्मांकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्यासं न्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥

He expresses fear of doubt about the adequacy of his army in achieving the victory over the other. Although Bhīṣma was Commander-in-Chief, he feels that the army of Pāndavas under the governance of Bhīma could win over him. Since Kṛṣṇa is standing in support of Pāndavas, Bhīṣma feels that, in spite of his dominating valour, he cannot win over Pāndavas.

Then Kṛṣṇa made the chariot of Arjuna stand between the two armies facing each other. After facing the enemy ranks Arjuna saw आचार्यामातुलान्यातुः पुन्त्रायौत्रा न्नखी स्तथा । All of them being related to him in one way or the other, he thought, how could he kill these close relatives, which was considered a sinful act. He behaved
like a coward and uttered in a dejected voice that he was ready to be killed by the enemies. He felt very much disheartened at the situation where he had to commit grave sins which have no remedy. He refused to fight and said to Krṣṇa the same thing.

This chapter is called अर्जुनविषादयोग. It contains Fortyseven Ślokas.

Chapter - 2

When Krṣṇa found Arjuna disheartened and depressed, he wondered at his behaviour. He did not expect a great warrior of world wide fame to feel so much cowardly at the sight of his own relatives standing in a row to fight. He asked Arjuna why he developed such a vitiated mind at the moment when he was called for to accomplish the duties of a Kṣatriya, and has become cowardly and ignoble. His mind became highly weakened.

Arjuna answered in a dejected way,"How can I kill my teacher and grandfather and enjoy the kingdom stained with blood? We do not know which of the two armies is going to win. I am shocked and am unable to decide what I should do in this context. I implore you to guide me in a proper way so that I may not tread a path of sin". Krṣṇa laughed at Arjuna's mental attitude. It was unbecoming for a warrior like Arjuna to speak such words. He was showing mercy to undeserving people. Moreover, Arjuna, unusually, believed that what he knew was right. This is called प्रज्ञावाद.
Krṣṇa says that life and death are common among people. He explains that Ātmā is immortal and associated with mortal body making man live and function. It is आत्मशरीरवियोग separation of Ātmā from the body which is called death. All animals including man assume another body after death. Five elements amidst which he lives cause cold and heat to the body as well as happiness and sorrow to the mind. If a man treads ups and downs in life with balance of mind then alone he can discharge his duties to his own satisfaction. An immortal thing cannot have both being and non being, but perishable articles in the world are liable to existence and non existence. Ātmā never meets destruction and nor can it be killed by others. It is unborn, has no beginning and never dies although the body meets death. If any one can realise this truth of immortality of Ātmā, he need not regret for fighting against enemies.

Birth, death and rebirth are unavoidable. Ātmā is unmanifest, unimaginable and immutable. People on hearing about the state of Ātmā feel very much astonished since they have not heard of it. These are the lines which explain the indestructibility of Ātmā which is also highlighted in Upaniṣads.

Now Krṣṇa lays emphasis on the duty of persons of the Kṣatriya order. The ruler is meant for protecting the weak from the aggression of the strong and defending the country from enemies. If he fails to punish the guilty
he earns disaffection and loses popularity. He must see that people unfailingly follow the limits of the norms of dharma. In fighting against enemies a kṣatriya loses nothing. If he is killed, he goes to heaven. If he is victorious, he enjoys the kingship.

Krṣṇa says to Arjuna “If you beat retreat you are going out of the way and people will talk ill of you. After earning great fame it is not right on your part to invite censure from all the quarters. They will consider you a coward who fled the battlefield out of fear. You have to set your frame of mind to receive happiness and misery, victory and defeat, profit and loss equally without any perturbation. This is both jñāna and karma. These are the two ways open to you. Knowing the Kṣatriya dharma very well and acting accordingly is karmayoga. A man should have determination while discharging duties. Many people have a flickering mind and are unable to arrive at a decision. Some people indulging in the karma prescribed by the Vedas perform them with the desire of getting some unknown happiness in heaven. If they indulge in such pleasures which are not everlasting, they cannot have a firm decision in the duties they are assigned to discharge.

The Vedas are vast and contain many things other than philosophy. If a man wants to be free from these dualities and earnestly desires to realise Ātmā, he must develop सत्त्वगुण and need not worry about anything else but the path of realisation. We have to select only such parts from the Vedas, which are related to realisation.
When we see a well full of water, although it serves many purposes, we use it only for the immediate purpose and not for all the purposes it can serve. The results of Vedic rituals are evanescent. The temptation for heaven and other pleasures mar the path of salvation. In life every man is expected to discharge only his duties without expecting anything in return.

Oh! Arjuna, you keep doing your duties with a firm resolution and without any attachment. If you enjoy equanimity of mind you should be indifferent to success or failure. It is called Yoga. Of course, it is clear that jñāna is more effective than duty. The activities of man are secondary when compared to knowledge. Merit and sin both are to be avoided with discriminatory knowledge. Enjoying balance of mind under critical circumstances is called Yoga. Great men of profound erudition will perform all kinds of rituals without any expectations and qualify themselves for highest beatitude. When your intellect gets rid of the dirt of vāsanā, then you are not affected by what you have heard of and will be disinterested in hearing new ideas. Your mind has become very much puzzled on hearing the opinions of many. But you must have a decision of your own undisturbed by an array of opinions."

Now Krṣṇa dwells upon describing how a स्थितप्रज्ज्ञ or a man of matured mind would be. It is very difficult for us to give the correct import of the word स्थितप्रज्ज्ञ. We define it as state of mind of a sage who, by practice of
yoga, warded off vāsanā and attained maturity of mind empowering it to visualise the divine effulgence. Arjuna puts the questions to know the state of स्थितप्रज्ञ. How does he talk? What are his conditions? How does he sit? What is the course of his conduct? These are the major questions put forth. In the Ślokas from 55 to 72 we have the स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षण which discloses steps of attaining perfect समाधि in meditation. First of all the स्थितप्रज्ञ must have renounced all the pleasures of the world. He must not be shaken by the exciting emotions like indulgence, fear or anger. He must not yearn for happiness or get disturbed by temptations. He is indifferent everywhere unmindful of what is good or bad. He is neither disturbed by miseries nor likes to enjoy pleasures. The tortoise when it is above water withdraws all its limbs into the shell and is safe. Similarly, it is essential that we must withdraw our senses from the tempting objects. Unless the senses are kept under effective control it is not possible to advance in the field of meditation.

Senses are so powerful that they forcibly drag a man into the ditch. In spite of sincere efforts one may fail to regulate them. When a man thinks of tempting vices his attachment grows. Attachment breeds sensual desire. If he is disappointed he is disturbed by anger that makes him loose his sense of discretion. This is the root cause as to why a man goes down and down.

If the senses are under perfect control his intellect
becomes cleared of all the three guṇas, the knowledge becomes absolutely pure to visualise the divine power. Without Yoga or meditation, one cannot attain the higher plane of thought. Tranquility can be gained only through constant practice of meditation. Mind should control senses. On the contrary, if the mind is subordinated to the powerful senses, a man, like a boat caught in the whirlwind, becomes ruined. Therefore, wisdom will be established only when all the senses are under control.

When all the animals are in ignorance or delusion, a sage remains in the light of knowledge. The ocean cannot become full despite incessant flow of water from hundreds of rivers. Similarly, more we enjoy the pleasure more will be our lust for the same. We have a saying in Mahābhārata –

न जातु कामः कामानां उपभोगे न शाम्यति ।
हविषा कृष्णवत्सेऽ सः भूयोर्पि अभिवर्धते ॥

Like the burning fire becomes more ablaze by pouring ghee into it, Kāma aggravates more and more after enjoying the same.

This state of samādhi (when he has crossed all barriers) is called ब्राह्मस्थिति, the state when he can visualise the ultimate supreme luminary. After remaining in this state till death the great sage attains ब्रह्मनिर्वाण or final emancipation.
Yāmunācārya gives the essence of the second chapter:

नित्यात्मसंगकर्मोहागोचरासांख्ययोगधीः ।
द्वितीयो स्थिरत्वीलुक्त्याप्रोक्तातत्मोहह्यांत्ये ॥

Jñāna and Karma both cover the explanation about the immortality of Ātmā and action without expectation and renunciation of all temptations. This is the definition of स्थिरत्वः. This is explained to dispel the delusion of Arjuna and make his doubts cleared.

The study of vedānta helps in energizing the mind. Then alone can one discharge his duties satisfactorily.

This chapter is called सांख्ययोग. It contains Seventy two Ślokas.

Chapter - 3

This is called Karma yoga. Here we find a systematic analysis of the activities of man in his life. We can classify this as follows:

1. Śāriram karma - we put efforts to answer the basic needs of life.

2. We also do work for earning wealth and other benefits of worldly existence.

3. Morality and vices - The social order can be kept peaceful if people follow the principles of morality.
Man very often misuses his faculties and indulges in various kinds of vices such as drinking, gambling, crime etc.

Law is man-made and is very often violated by the rich and powerful people. If properly implemented, law plays a more significant role in keeping the society free from violence and other crimes.

Vaidika karma- This can be divided into two categories -

1. Yajña and other rituals and 2. Adhyātma or philosophical way. In yajña, when people act according to the Karma kānda of the Vedas, they are after alaukika phala or heaven.

However Adhyātma takes them to the ultimate goal of emancipation.

All these divisions of Karmakānda have been discussed here in a reasonable way. Man is gifted with the faculties of understanding the world. They are meant for answering the daily needs of human life, but the same have been abused by man very often. This is styled in the Vedas as Puṇya and Pāpa. According to philosophy, Puṇya and Pāpa are such karmas which give man rebirth and happiness or sorrow.

Arjuna asks Krṣṇa how he advises him to discharge the duties of Yuddha when he knows that Jñāna is better than karma, for which Krṣṇa answers as follows-
"There are two ways open to people, one is Jñānamārga and the other is karmamārga." We discuss about Jñāna later as it is complicated and difficult to understand and now take up karma in detail.

गहना कर्मणो गति:, the course of karma is very complicated.

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्थ्या: प्रकृतेज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृति यान्ति भूतानि निग्रह: कि करिष्यति ॥

Here prakṛti means the vāsanā that continues from the past birth to the present birth. This is the influence of vidyā and karma of an individual. Vāsanā is responsible for inborn character which is unchangeable. Qualities of a man developed due to environment may be modified but not the instinctive characters. The word Jñānavānapi is noteworthy. Even a person with deep erudition cannot over come his idiosyncrasies. All the men and animals are influenced by vāsanā and any punishment or advice cannot set them right. Thus vāsanā very often eclipses the intellect. It fails to see reason and follows blindly the path of its own. The same has been said in Mahābhārata.

जन्मान्तरसहस्रेभ्योपर्वदिन्यां भाविता पुरा ।
तामेव भजते जन्तु: उपदेशो निरर्थक: ॥ (महाभारत)

This clearly says that any advice or counsel to a gambler or a drunkard is a waste since he is in the grip of vāsanā. We see today many learned scholars blindly addicted to dogmatic dictates of their religion. We see
very often a double character, a highly learned man being a drunkard or a chain smoker. The aptitude of a man towards any branch of learning is also shaped by this vāsanā. For our good or bad karma, this vāsanā, which is the activity of the mind and Ahamkāra in combination, is responsible and can be attenuated only through deep penance. Logical sense and wisdom are crippled by the vāsanā engulfing psychic matters.

Generally people cannot lead their life without karma or action. The deeds performed by them automatically fall into good or bad categories. Therefore man should perform such deeds which control the influence of Rajoguṇa and Tamoguṇa which constitute vāsanā. Then alone he can free himself from bad deeds. If the intellect becomes purified of these influences, man can visualise very clearly the presence of divinity in himself by taking to the life of a recluse. One cannot attain success without following the ideologies of sanyāsa.

One cannot be satisfied with the sense that he has done nothing since he does the work automatically. A man is compelled to do many deeds by Guṇatraya although he is unwilling to do them. Very often people may apparently control their senses, but their mind is contaminated by the onslaught of thoughts of pleasure dragging them down. Therefore it is essential that one should control the senses before resorting to the practice of meditation. One is expected to do the duties which he
is bound to do. Not attending to duty or improper discharge of duty, both are undesirable. After creating the people, Brahma also assigned duties to them. When a man does his duty without attachment, the duties help him to purify his mind and elevate it to a higher state of stability.

The following is what is called Brahmācakra. The indestructible Brahma brought out the Vedas which teach us about the karma. Karma is responsible for yajña or our dedication to divine powers, which in turn brings rain and the growth of food to animals.

Here karma occupies a very important role. If a man is ignorant of this, his living on the earth is a waste. Ātmajñāna makes him understand this cakra and one who has realised Ātmā is not in any way committed to the fruits of karma.

Krṣṇa says, “Arjuna, therefore you have to do this work without expectation and you must realise that karma is very much helpful in the process of living. If karma is performed in a disinterested manner, as great men do, people follow them. Therefore although I need not do any karma I attend to it to set an example to others. Very often masses in their ignorance do many things against the principles of philosophy. Even the preceptor cannot modify them. Hence, the learned man should mix with them and act according to what they perform. One is
expected to do his own duty as a teacher, as a lawyer etc. He should not interfere in such duties which he does not know. This is how he can help the nation and the society.

Why do people commit sins is the question. The only answer is that man’s indulgence in worldly pleasures which results from Rajas and Tamas is responsible. Fire is covered by smoke, mirror is covered by dust and foetus is covered by skin. Similarly the pure knowledge of man is crippled by this inimical indulgence in the external world. According to Gītā, five senses, mind, chitta and Ahaṁkāra are the location where kāma rests and covers the intellect. Therefore Arjuna is asked to control the senses first of all. Senses are controlled by mind and the latter should be controlled by buddhi or intellect. Ātmā is above buddhi and only by realising that can one remove the indulgence in worldly pleasures and purify his thoughts.

Yāmunācārya says:

असक्त्या लोकरक्षायें गुणेष्वारोप्यकर्तृतां ||
सर्वेऽव्र वा न्याय्योक्ता तृतीये कर्मकार्यता &&

All activities of man are due to sattva, rajas and tamas. Ātmā is neither kartā nor bhoktā. Without attachment and realising that Guṇas are responsible for our good or bad deeds one must try to suppress these three Guṇas through meditation.
This chapter is called कर्मयोग. It contains Forty three Ślokas.

Chapter - 4

This adhyāya or chapter also tells us more about karma. Krṣṇa says that it is a very ancient concept going by the name of yoga. He also regrets that it became obsolete after a long passage of time. The same yoga is being taught to Arjuna since he is interested. Krṣṇa says that he passed through many births and this statement gives room to doubt about his incarnation. But the same thing has been contradicted in another śloka:

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा: मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ||
परं भावमजानन्तो मभ लोकमहेश्वरम् ||

We are unable to come to a conclusion about the theory of incarnation. If we consider vibhūtiyoga in the tenth chapter, we can satisfy ourselves by saying that every human being has physical and divine aspects. If the divine aspect in a man is extraordinary and unlimited, he may be called God in the form of human being. He tells here clearly that such men come to earth only to bring resurrection of dharma and protect the righteous people. Therefore, the birth and activity of an incarnated person is divine. People who surrender themselves to God by means of meditation and knowledge, of course, become one with him. They may adopt different ways to reach him. He does not mind which way they tread upon. Those
who perform Vedic karmas reap the benefits very quickly by the grace of the deities.

Here, in order to explain what is svadharma, Krṣṇa gives the classification of the people into four groups called Cāturvarṇya- brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra. This classification exists since the time of the Vedas. We have reference to it in caturtha brāhmaṇa- first chapter of Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. Puruṣa sūkta also speaks of it. In Aranyakas, it is said

ऋग्भो जातं वैश्यं वर्णयाह: ।
यजुःवेदं शात्रियस्य आहुयोऽनिम्।
सामवेदो ब्राह्मणानां प्रसूति : ॥

In the 18th chapter of Bhagavad Gītā the same thing is mentioned once again.

Now a days, generally people speak of the removal of caste system and emphasise on secularism. But they are not strictly following what they say. Also, it is not possible to do it. They are highly hypocritical in practice. Moreover Guna vibhāga and karma vibhāga are the two factors that classify these four groups and they are not in any way discriminatory. We have this sloka from the 18th chapter:

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।
कर्माणि प्रविष्कल्लानि स्वभावप्रभवेयैः: ॥
Here svabhāva is noteworthy. Those who are interested in education and other activities of culture are called brāhmanas.

शमो दमस्थपशौचं क्षान्तिराजं भोवच ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्मस्वभावजम् ॥

Tranquility, control of senses, meditation, cleanliness, forbearance, upright conduct, knowledge and belief in the Supreme power are said to be the characteristic of a group called brāhmaṇas.

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दिक्ष्यं युद्धे चाष्ठ्यायपल्यतवम् ।
दानमीशधर्मवास्त्रः क्षत्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥

Valour, bravery, dominating spirit, competence, not fleeing from battle-field, charity and ruling are the features of kṣatriyas.

कृषिगोरक्षवाणिः वैश्यकर्मस्वभावजम् ।

Agriculture, animal husbandry and trade are the duties of a vaiśya.

परिचयात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ।

Śūdra is a labourer without education or less education.

Even today we have these four groups of people in our society. All the people do not have the same talent or aptitude for the work they may undertake. Therefore a
man without education helplessly becomes a labourer or a trader. A physically strong man with a good knowledge of how to control the country can become a ruler. Those inclined only towards learning, justice etc. may be called brāhmaṇas. People have mistaken that some groups of people have monopolised over these things. They should realise that it is the other way. Those who learn and become masters belong to the first group irrespective of their caste. Similarly we can explain the other groups. Some people are gifted with extraordinary talent which can be changed neither by the society nor by the government. Unfortunately, today people are divided into hundreds of subcastes. They vociferously blame the four divisions of the Vedaś and reservation is based only on caste ignoring the merit. Those who speak nothing of hundreds of classifications into sub-castes, which have no sanction of ancient texts, remark that the four groups divide people and are against integration.

Krṣṇa says although he is the creator, it is his māyā that discharges divine desire. Neither karma nor phala applies to him. Of course, people have not exactly understood what karma is. We have three kinds of karma. First of all, karma the duty, the second one is vikarma what is prohibited and the third one is akarma or not doing any work. We have to understand the implications of these three. One can feel that he has done nothing even if he is discharging series of activities provided he does it without
expectation. A man of such a mentality is wise and a yogi. He can discharge every duty without encumberances.

Such a person will have all his accumulated past karma burnt to ashes by his transcendental knowledge. If one is contented and does not expect anything he can remain totally aloof even when he attends to duties. Without ambition and with a controlled mind he can be free from evils. Without ambition to own anything, he must feel satisfied with whatever he gets and have peace of mind in success and failure. He who has no attachment and whose mind is always focussed on divinity and discharges karma only for the service of others will have no sin or merit. He must consider everything in the world as replete with Brahma.

People of course perform yajña having some deities as their benefactors, but it is Brahma who is to be adored through any activity. Krṣṇa tells Arjuna now about the process of meditation. All the senses and matters like śabda etc., all the activities of senses and living body are kept under effective control during meditation. Yajña is not merely offering oblations to the sacred fire. We have five kinds of yajña. First is Dravya yajña- where materials are offered in the sacrifice. Second is Tapo yajña - practising long periods of meditation sacrificing physical pleasures. Third is Yoga yajña - all the duties performed must be dedicated to God. Svadyāya yajña- studies to expand our knowledge. Fifth is Jñāna yajña- reaching the level of transcendence.
Control of breathing in a systematic way is called Praṇāyāma. All of this are admirable in the path of divinity and they can shake off all the impurities. Those who fail to perform yajña will neither fare in this world nor in the other world. All these yajñas are in one way or the other nothing but devotion to supreme being. Among these Jñāna yajña is the greatest. All that we do should ultimately culminate in achieving transcendental knowledge. You can approach the great sages to achieve this end. You must be humble, question them and serve them to get such precept. After reaching the stage of transcendental level, you achieve the final goal. All the moha or vāsanā is removed. You can see Brahma everywhere. Once you attain this pinnacle of knowledge nothing can affect you in the worldly activities. Fire aflame can reduce the heaps of fuel into ashes. Similarly all the karmas of the past are reduced to ashes by realisation. There is nothing in the world which can equal what is called TatvaJñāna or Parāvidyā which, however, cannot be achieved, easily. It is meditation that confers upon you the state of ecstasy after a considerably long period of time. This realisation cannot be achieved without assiduity. Man achieves tranquility by this TatvaJñāna. An ignorant and unfathful person with doubts cannot progress in this direction. Finally, one who has freed himself from the effects of karma through meditation and cleared all his doubts by Tatvajñāna can realise the Supreme one.
Finally, Krṣṇa concludes saying that Arjuna should give up doubt about dharma and adharma through pure knowledge and be firm about the duty that demands him to attend to.

प्रसंगात्स्वस्वभावोक्तिः कर्मणोकर्मतास्य च ।
भेदः ज्ञानस्य माहत्व्यं चतुर्थाध्यायं उच्यते ॥

(यामुनाचार्य)

In the context of Karma the nature of human being and aptitude for karma is explained. Even after doing karma one can be free from Pāpa and Puṇya through tattvajñān. Krṣṇa says, "Arjuna, You have not understood the difference between dharma and adharma. It is imperative on your part to know it clearly".

This adhyāya is called ज्ञानकर्मसन्यासयोग . It contains Forty two Ślokas.

Chapter - 5

Once again in this chapter karma is clarified. Krṣṇa states that a person should discharge all the duties promptly. One of the ways of doing karma is for personal prosperity, the second one is the same discharge of duty without any expectation. The third one is avoidance of all evil deeds. We have the same clearly stated in the Eighteenth chapter:

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं सन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
Some of the saints clearly declare that sanyāsa will be accomplished only when the karmas with certain ambitions are avoided.

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागः प्राहुस्त्यागः विचक्षणः ॥

Other scholars lay emphasis on disinterested way of doing karma.

त्याज्यं दोषविद्ये कर्म प्राहुर्मीषि: ॥

Another set of the learned opine that evil deeds should be kept away.

यज्ञादानतप: कर्म नैत्याज्यं कार्यमेवतत् ॥

One should perform yajña, charity and meditation along with other duties.

On hearing these opinions Arjuna becomes very much confused and asks Krṣṇa to clarify his stand on karma. In reply Krṣṇa tells about ‘Karma Sanyāsa’, renouncing all the karma and performance of karma in a proper way. He explains this apparent contradiction further. He says that ‘karma yoga’ is better than ‘karma sanyāsa’. Here yoga means using karma for the realisation of God.

Many people take advantage of this precept and do nothing good or bad. This is condemned by Krṣṇa. No pretext will be reasonable to give up karma altogether. Therefore karma should be performed without attachment.
Here Sānkhya means Jñāna, yoga means karma. Śankarācārya explains that a mature and knowledgeable person need not indulge in karma and this karma sanyāsa and karma yoga applies to a person who has attained maturity of mind. Krṣṇa gives a precise explanation and brings out the difference between the two. It is possible for anyone to attend to his obligatory duties without any expectation. This discharge of legitimate karma purifies the mind and prepares him for the next higher plane of meditation. Although one does many duties, the sense of detachment frees him from the commitment of karma. Great sages perform karma bodily, mentally and intellectually and remain neutral like the drop of water on the lotus leaf. To attain tranquility, one should discharge duties without any ambition for wordly benefits. The same idea has been repeated in this chapter.

Now Krṣṇa tells about what is yoga which has many shades of meaning. A man who treats everything alike, adducing everything to the supreme being Brahma or the Supreme one, is nirdoṣa and sama, flawless and indiscriminatory. A realised soul makes no difference between things. He will have a firm mind without avidyā. Krṣṇa calls him ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा. All the wordly pleasures, if one considers seriously, are nothing but sources of misery. If anyone is successful in overcoming temptation even before his death, he is the achiever of a transcendental state. Whoever realises तत्त्वज्ञान through long meditation
is positively gifted with liberation. The great sage without any doubt, controlling himself and leading a rigid, disciplined life is sure to achieve emancipation. He must not be shaken by upsurging emotions that disturb his mind. Superior Ātmā helps the physical body to enjoy life and Brahma is the unrivalled overlord of everything.

कर्मयोगस्य सौकर्य शैष्ट्रो काशनतदिधिः

ब्रह्माज्ञानप्रकारश पद्माध्यय उच्च्यते ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

He emphasises that discharging karma is very easy and gives benefits for a short period. He also tells the way to attain Brahma.

This adhyāya is called कर्मसन्यासयोग. It Contains Twenty nine Ślokas.

Chapter - 6

This chapter deals with Dhyāna yoga or maturity in samādhi. Karma is bahīranga or external while Dhyāna and samādhi are antaranga or internal. If a man just gives abundant offering into sacred fire while performing the karma, he cannot gain the position of a sanyāsi or a recluse. Whoever performs duty disinterestedly, he is a real sanyāsi and yogi.

Krṣṇa makes no distinction between sanyāsa and yoga. No one can claim himself to be a sanyāsi if he has not given up his ambitions. One who is on the way to
achieve maturity in meditation also needs the performance of karma. But once he has reached the highest position, he can give up karma and achieve permanent tranquility. When the performer does not indulge in any of the temptations he is really a sanyāsi worth the name. One can elevate his Ātmā perpetually if he keeps his antahkarana or psychic matter under control. When an unrealised soul indulges in karma and phala he will create a barricade in the process of realisation.

A great sage must treat equally one and all under the impression that the supreme God is everywhere. Friends, wellwishers, enemies, virtuous people and the indifferent are viewed by a mature person equally. Unless we realise that Brahma himself is everywhere, it is not possible to have such a sense of equality. From 10th to 29 th Śloka, this chapter deals with the practice of yoga. A yogi must always keep his soul united with the Supreme one. This must be a matter of secret. He should continue all alone with all the senses well regulated.

To practise meditation, he must select a wholesome place and be seated firmly. He must be able to concentrate his mind on a single object for a considerable time. Body, head and neck must be erect. He should stare at the tip of the nose with both the eyes. He should not allow himself to be disturbed by external matters. He should remain peaceful without any fear of
samsāra and observe the discipline strictly. Then alone, is he called yogi. This condition positively assures peace and union with the supreme being.

One cannot become a yogi or sanyāsi unless he avoids overeating or absolute fast. He should not be asleep for longer hours and not keep awake more than needed. If he has controlled food and relaxation, regulates his duties then alone his yoga bears fruit and keeps him free from miseries. When he has power to visualise the supreme soul in his own body, he automatically becomes free from all miseries. A lamp kept in the place where there is no wind blowing remains still. This is the simile to explain the state of the concentrated mind.

Wherever the psychic matter is turned inwards, leaving all the world aside, he becomes capable of perceiving the Ātmā of his own. Once he realises Ātmā, his mind cannot addict to anything. He is not shaken by the onslaught of agonies. This is called freedom from wordly miseries. Therefore a seeker is advised to keep himself busy with yoga. After some period he must slowly and steadily come back to wakeful condition and it is possible only when mind is under perfect control. Naturally mind moves here and there like mercury but it is our duty to withdraw the mind from external matter. Then alone can one overcome the trinity of Guṇas.
Treating everyone alike, a yogi should cherish the thought that everywhere there is Brahma. Krṣṇa says, “Whoever feels my presence everywhere, cannot suffer any loss.” Answering one of the questions of Arjuna, Krṣṇa elucidates and tells that by nature the mind is oscillating but it is possible to control the mind by long practice and leading the life of detachment. Krṣṇa says that it is very difficult but there is no other alternative and attainment of the state of yoga is not possible if psychic matter is not under control. If yogi gives up his samādhi for want of stability, he will not be ruined but he will develop some spiritual upliftment in the next birth.

न हि कल्याणकृत् कष्टित्व दुर्गमिति तात गच्छति ।

If a man has performed meritorious deeds he will not go down. When you practise yoga and you are very near to maturity, you will be helped by God for the purpose of elevation. He must indefatigably endeavour to attain a higher and higher place. However the final stage can be reached only after many births. A man advanced in the field of yoga is greater than other sages practising meditation, greater than the persons with good knowledge and also greater than those who indulge in karma. Yoga surmounts all impediments effectively and makes one full of joy.

ज्ञानकर्मात्मिके निष्ठे योगलक्ष्ये सुसंस्कृते ।
आत्मानुभूतिसिध्यथे पूर्वषट्केन चोदिते ॥
Gītā is divided into three parts, each part containing six chapters. Here Yāmunācārya has summed up the idea of first six chapters.

Yoga gives room for Jñāna and Karma in the beginning stage and the result is आत्मानुभूति that is, realisation of soul.

योगाभ्यासविधियोंगी चतुर्थ योगसाधनं ।
योगसिद्धिच्छर्योगस्य पारम्यं षष्ठ उच्च्यते ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

This chapter tells about how man should advance in the field of meditation and that the person will be crowned with victory after reaching perfection.

This chapter is called ध्यायोग. It contains Forty seven Ślokas.

Chapter - 7

"Arjuna, if you dedicate yourself to God and practise meditation, undoubtedly you will be able to realise the greatest soul". Krṣṇa promises to explain jñāna and vijñāna (parā and apaṁrā vidyā). He says, "after knowing parāvidyā there will be nothing to be known. Thousands of people endeavour to attain maturity but very rarely does any of them meet success. The earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intellect, ahaṁkāra all these constitute my prakṛti but jīvātmā and paramātmā both can be visualised only through parāvidyā. Prakṛti is the
source of creation and prakṛti is subordinate to me and it functions only on account of my power.

O! Arjuna, there is nothing greater than Brahma. All the entities of cosmos are interwoven in my power. Anything extraordinary is nothing but my own prowess. The taste in water, light in the sun and moon, Omkāra in all the Vedas, sound in space, valour in men, good smell in the earth, burning ability in the fire, life in the animals, meditation of the sages, all these are my own prowess. I am the seed for all the animals and cosmos. I am the strength in strong men if it is free from indulgence. Ambition within the frame of dharma is divine.

There are sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika attitudes of mind. All of them are nothing but my own creation. The whole of cosmos is covered by this trinity and people become completely deluded. Therefore, they cannot approach me. Māyā is constituted of these three guṇas. It is very difficult to surmount this māyā without approaching the divine head. This māyā is divine creation and cannot be easily overcome. The sinners and low class men cannot reach me. Their intellect is blocked by this māyā and they are influenced by evil forces.

Among the devotees who propitiate me to reap benefits, there are many varieties. The first one propitiates me for the destruction of calamities. The second one seeks worldly prosperity. The third one is curious enough to know the Supreme being and the fourth one is the realised
soul. Among the four, I favour the one who has realised me after crossing many hurdles in the way. All the devotees, irrespective of their ambitions, are, of course, enjoying my grace. Yet the realised soul in samādhī is the most excellent one. It is not easy to realise the Supreme power and a man has to undertake countless troubles before he gains my grace".

Indians are known for worshipping hundreds of Gods, people select any one of them. Being devoted to the Gods, they follow certain rigid rules to appease those Gods. Whatever ideas we cherish at the time of death, the same continue in the other birth which is called vāsanā. Vāsanā shapes attitude and character. Krṣṇa says that even if any devotee feels being helped by gods, it is not due to the grace of demi-gods whom he worships, but it is Brahma who blesses them with prosperity. Any person worshipping many gods will have temporary benefit but is deprived of liberation. Parabrahma is unmanifested and formless, but people with scant knowledge think that Brahma appears before them in some form. Since they are ignorant of the Supreme being their devotion and śraddhā or assiduity will continue towards these demi-gods. Upaniṣads, Brahmasūtras and Gitā, all of them unanimously declare that there is only one God and plurality of Gods is inadmissible.

Krṣṇa says, "I know everything, but the animals in my creation including man do not know anything about
me. All the animals with intellectual sense are under the cover of ignorance and they entertain emotions and suffer a lot. If people sincerely try to attain realisation in order to get rid of old age and death, they are called blessed souls". Adhibhūta, Adhiyajña and Adhyātma, these three are to be known. Adhibhūta means the real knowledge of all the elements that help us to live. Adhiyajña means surrendering to the Supreme power. Adhyātma means the body belonging to divine jurisdiction.

स्वयाथात्मयं प्रकृत्यास्य तिरोधिश्वरणागतिः ।
भक्तिभेदः प्रकृतद्वस्य श्रैष्टचं समुम उच्यते ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

The reality of Supreme one is eclipsed by prakṛti. Consequently people understand only prakṛti to the exclusion of Brahma. The excellence of a matured devotion enables man to realise God.

This chapter is called ज्ञानविज्ञाययोग and contains Thirty two Ślokas.

Chapter - 8

The chapter opens with eight questions put by Arjuna. All these questions are meant for revealing the secrets of philosophy. In spite of being engaged in war, Arjuna wants, very seriously, the answers for these problematic questions.

1. किं तत् ब्रह्म? What is it that you call Brahma?
Ans. अक्षरं परमं ब्रह्म। That which is indestructible and supreme is called Brahma.

2. किं अध्यात्मं? What do you mean by the word Adhyātma?
Ans. स्वभावोध्यात्ममुच्यते। The human body with its natural characteristics is called Adhyātma.

3. किं कर्म? What is karma?
Ans. भूतभावोन्द्रवकरो विसर्ग: कर्मसंज्ञितः। Human births-present state, past state and future state, all these are the results of good and bad deeds of man.

4. अधिभूतं च किं? What are the elements that constitute human body?
Ans. क्षरो भाव:। All the human bodies are liable to birth and death and they are made of the five elements which are momentary.

5. अधिदेवं किं? What do you consider as divine one?
Ans. पुष्पशार्धिदेवतम्। Jīvātmā.

6. अधियज्ञ: कथं? What is Adhiyajña?
Ans. All our upāsanās to revoke the grace of the Supreme being is called Adhiyajña.

7. कोद्व देहस्मिन्? Who is inside the body?
Ans. अहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर। I myself stay in the body and help the body to function.
8. प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयो दसि नियतात्मभि: । How should our mind think of only the Supreme one when we are on the verge of death?

Ans. अन्तकाले च मामेव स्पर्शु मुक्तवाकलेवरम् ।
यः प्रयाति स मद्द्रावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥

The sages who have controlled their ambitions will have only flashes of the Supreme being. They continuously think of the Supreme being and ultimately become one with the cosmic power.

The main contents of philosophy are seen in these eight questions. Arjuna was asked to fight enemies bearing in mind that ‘I am not doing this.’ Long practice may help us in controlling the mind and focussing it on God. Here, Gītā gives the form or Svarūpa of God. He is the creator and he has no beginning. He is the smallest of the small and the biggest of the big, thus he is incomparable. He makes all arrangements to conduct life. His form is unimaginable. If one seriously continues the thought of divinity, surely he will be emancipated. The knowers of the Vedas explain Paramātmā as indestructible.

Sages give up all the pleasures in preference to the thinking of God. They also observe rigid life of discipline for this purpose. According to this, all the outlets of the body should be closed. The intellect should
be kept in Daharākāśa. Prāna must reach the head. This kind of yoga is advocated in this chapter.

Krṣṇa stresses the importance of Oṁkāra. Although Upaniṣads tell us about Turīyā beyond the purview of Oṁkāra, here, the recitation of Oṁkāra helps man to uplift the soul. Once a great sage reaches Brahma, he will be free from rebirth. All the lokas other than the Supreme one are temporary and the sage who does not reach the ultimate position will comeback to rebirth. The creation is said to be the activity of māyā that is governed by the Supreme one. All the animals are helpless and are involved in the cycle of birth and death. Animals very often come to the world and go back after X number of years. He who is beyond triguṇa will be free from birth and death and becomes one with the Supreme being. The great God will never appear, but his function is conspicuous. The great Almighty can be attained only by bhakti or devotion.

This chapter tells us about Devayāna and Pitryāna. These two are mentioned also in Pancāagnividyā of Chāndogya. Those who have performed karma travel through Pitryāna and come back after enjoying the fruits of their karma. A man who has realised Brahma will travel through Devayāna and never comes back. A man after realisation transcends all the knowledge of the Vedas, yajña, meditation, charity and any punyaphala.
Those who surrender themselves at the feet of the Supreme being will realise endless prowess and attain immortality. Vedya means what is worth knowing. Upādeya means the other things which are only the means for the attainment.

This chapter is called तारकब्रह्मयोग and contains Twenty eight Ślokas.

Chapter - 9

This chapter opens with the teaching of Rājavidyā and Rājaguhyā. Rājavidyā means parāvidyā or transcendental learning, Rājaguhyā means the mystery of knowing the supersensory branch of knowledge which is highly meticulous to be known. Also it is said ‘ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितम्’. Here jñāna is tatvajñāna. we have support for this in the following Śloka of Gītā:

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
पत्त्वज्ञानमितिप्रोक्तं अज्ञानं यत् अतो अन्यथा ॥

The realisation of the soul in the body and reality of the form of Brahma is called jñāna or supreme understanding. All the other kinds of knowledge are not helpful philosophically and they are called ajñāna, equivalent to avidyā. For a man in long meditation, this parāvidyā is not inaccessible. Without parājñāna, no one
can dream of upliftment of Ātmā to the supreme level. Many scholars have not understood this division of knowledge but they adopt something else that very often fails to reach the Supreme one.

In Gītā, the nature of parāvidyā is given. Krṣṇa says, "I, unknowingly cover the whole of the world. While everything depends upon me, I don't depend on anyone". The miraculous position of the Supreme is seen in both manifested and dormant states. This is very difficult to understand as the two are incomprehensible. Air depends upon space, similarly all the animals and the lifeless entities depend upon the Supreme power. "All the animals and the lifeless are governed by prakṛti and fail to realise me. The same set of things come up once again and also meet destruction later. The cycle of life and death goes on incessantly. Although māyā is the executive, the functions of māyā are governed by me and the cosmos undergoes radical changes. People of course, mistake me for an ordinary human being since they do not know my real form. Those who are enveloped in avidyā belong to evil forces called Āsurīsakti. All their ambitions and activities fail. They will have no proper knowledge. The great souls are under the perview of divine knowledge and are able to reach consummation in samādhi. This is called jñānayuddh".

The Supreme being is replete in all the activities of the world. He plays the role of father, mother, creator
and great grandfather. Oṁkāra is a word employed to identify the supreme divinity. He is the source. He nurses everyone. He stands as a witness for all that we do. We have to surrender at his feet. He is the source of birth, maintenance and destruction. It is the Supreme being that burns in the form of the sun. Rains are arranged by the Supreme power. People who have followed the Karma mārga attain certain higher places where they enjoy the fruits of their own deeds and come back to the earth. We come across a large number of people who depend upon different Gods. But they are in ignorance. To propitiate God rich offerings are unnecessary. He expects only sincere devotion not contaminated by vāsanā.

Krṣṇa asks Arjuna to surrender all his activities at the feet of the Supreme being. If one wants permanent relief from his deeds which may be good or bad, he must develop the mentality of detachment in his mortal life. The Supreme being treats everyone without hatred or favour. Even if a man treads the path of evil he can obtain the grace of God through sincere worship. The prime advice, here, is to surrender to Brahma disowning all the activities.

स्वमाहात्म्यं मनुष्यत्वेपरत्वं च महात्मनाम् ।
विशेषो नवमे योगः भक्तिरूपः प्रकृतिति ॥ (यामनाचार्य)

Krṣṇa tells the greatness of Supreme being. This chapter lays stress on mature devotion.
This chapter is called राजविद्याराजगुह्य योग. It has Thirtyfour Ślokas.

Chapter - 10

In this chapter Vibhūti and Yoga of Krṣṇa are explained. Vibhūti means extraordinary power of divinity, Yoga means omniscience. Even when God remains inactive, his prowess is spread everywhere in different forms. The sun’s presence in the sky is enough to cast bright light which is the vibhūti of the Sun. In this chapter particularly Bhagavatsvarūpa or the nature of Supreme power is well explained. He is earlier to all the Gods and sages. The creation has no beginning and he is the overlord of the cosmos. If any one inculcates this idea of greatness of the Supreme power, he attains the level of divinity. Intellect, knowledge bereft of delusion, sustenance, truth, control over senses, tranquility of mind, happiness, sorrow, existence, non-existence, danger, safety, non-violence, equality, concentration, meditation, charity, fame and disaffection, all these are the results of the presence of God in our body.

Every human being is the combination of human and divine parts. The body is prepared by the combination of five elements. This contains Ātmā and prāṇa on which man has no control and they are the gifts of God. Intellect, mind, memory and ego are of divine origin and man is given a limited liberty to use these internal psychic
matters. We have also five senses that supply matter to the internal intellect. Buddhi plays a key role in understanding the external world and always judges righteousness and irregularity. On account of this arrangement, we can say that the knowledge of matter is the field of buddhi. Mind is the hotbed of emotions. These emotions disturb our mind. Ahamkāra is ego out of which one reaps self centred benefits. Chitta is the stockhouse of all the past experiences. They emanate from chitta in the form of vāsanā which shapes the mentality of man. Even buddhi is eclipsed with this vāsanā and its observations are only worldly. Where a person has an intellect free from vāsanā, he evolves buddhi to the higher plane of thought. An Avatāra means a man with extraordinary power and we can bring Krṣṇa under this caption. All the feelings of the mind are the result of the influence of Ātmā on psychic matter. The power of Avatāra puruṣa is beyond the imagination of even the learned. Therefore, Krṣṇa felt the need of explaining Vibhūti and Yoga to Arjuna. The knowledge of the two makes the intellect transparent and reach higher planes.

Krṣṇa is the source of creation. It is he who makes the world move about. Krṣṇa says, "People who exclusively think of me are eligible to this stage of divinity". If any person with his incessant efforts becomes free from vāsanā, his buddhi will be pure as God helps him to improve the power radically. After the attainment of that stage, divine element itself voluntarily helps him
to remove ignorance and makes him eligible for esoteric thoughts. He is the Parabrahma, the excellent refuge, pure and super. Arjuna now realised the divine element of Kṛṣṇa and expects relief by his grace.

Kṛṣṇa now tells elaborately what is Vibhūti and Yoga. He says, "I am the soul and animation in all the animals". It is he who brings the catastrophe and he is the Sun of all the other bodies of the sky. He is Sāmaveda of all the Vedas and lord of all the demi-gods. He is like the mind dominating all the senses. The animation in the animals has its source in him. He is the Japayajña among Yajñas. He is the Himalaya of all the mountains. He is the source of perpetuating any progeny. He is the time factor. He is the whale to all the aquatic animals. He is the Ganges of all the rivers. He is the philosophical lore. He is the Akāra of all the alphabets. He acts as a destructive agent and causes Mahāpraḷaya or deluge. Fame, wealth, speech, memory, ingenuity, stability, forbearance are all covered by that divine power. He is the victory, determination, stamina, mortality among people. All have their source in Kṛṣṇa. He is the seed for everything. There is nothing in this world that is not covered by godly power. There is no end of his prowess.

श्रद्धाद्भूतिमतत्सत्वं श्रीमद्वृजितमेव चा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंदंशंभवम् ॥

Wherever you see something extraordinary, glorious and strong then it is nothing but divinity. A man
becomes great and distinguished because of this extraordinary power. It is to be noted that oratory, poetry and ingenuity cannot be earned through human efforts. They are only divine gifts to mankind. Krśna says that if you understand that the superior power pervades the whole of cosmos, it is enough.

स्वकल्याणगुणानत्यकृत्ततन स्वाधीनता मति: ।
भक्त्युर पति विवृद्ध्यर्थ विस्तीर्णादशमोदिता ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

How the divine power graces the mankind with extraordinary power is explained here. Whole of the cosmos owes its existence to the Supreme power.

This chapter is called विभूतियोग and it contains Forty two Ślokas.

Chapter - 11

Goudapāda analyses the activities of the world in this way. Sāmsiddhikam- whatever man achieves through his efforts. Civic amenities etc. can be included in this topic.

Svābhāvikam- nature of man which has come from the past birth. It is called vāsanā. Man becomes quite incorrigible due to this and he will have a way of his own.

Sahaja- This is the skill of birds and animals that are not trained for this purpose. Dogs swim, birds build beautiful nests etc., This is called अशिक्षितपुत्तव. 
Akrtam- Here we see many things that man cannot do. Rain, sunlight, birth and death, all come under the category of akṛta. Vibhūti comes under akṛta.

After hearing attentively about vibhūti, Arjuna developed a burning curiosity to behold the cosmic form of God. Viśvarūpa means विश्व रूपं यस्य सः.

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत् किषिदिद्विति धनञ्जय ।

This clearly says that everything in the cosmos is guided by this unimaginable and unknown superpower.

Arjuna says मोहोऽज्ञं विगतो मम ।

The ignorance or delusion of Arjuna was repelled by the words of advice by Krśṇa. Arjuna had already come to know the creation, its birth and end. Arjuna implored the God to show his real form, if possible, to be seen by him.

People have misunderstood this viśvarūpa. Krśṇa did not stand as a gigantic person, but he empowered Arjuna's eyes to see the whole of the cosmos in one spectrum.

दिविसूर्यसंहस्त्र स्वेतदुरुस्थिता ।

यदि भा: सदृशी सा स्त्यात् भासस्तस्त्य महात्मनः ॥

The radiation of the Almighty cannot be equalled even by the effulgence of thousand suns appearing at the same time.
I am reminded here of the Americans who conducted anushakti in North America in a place called Nevada. They also expressed the same: दिविसूर्यसहस्य.

Krṣṇa graced Arjuna with powerful eyes which could behold the viṣvarūpa of the Almighty.

दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे रूपमैश्वर्यम्।

In fact, Supreme Brahma has no form, but he is powerful enough to present himself in any form. Arjuna was shocked to see whole of the cosmos in one spectrum. He also shivered with fear. Yaṣodā also witnessed cosmos in the mouth of Krṣṇa. What we wish to say is that there is nothing in the world which is not covered by Brahma. If you take Puruṣasūkta, सहस्यनिरुप: सहस्यक्ष: सहस्यपात्। All the eyes and bodies are nothing but the manifestation of Prakṛti who is responsible for creation governed by the Almighty. मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम्।

In fact, 11th chapter reveals the miraculous form of Brahma in viṣvarūpa. Arjuna saw the whole of cosmos located in one body. Brahma is indestructible, ultimate and the source of the creation of cosmos. He is immutable and reestablishes dharma whenever it is sabotaged.

For the question of Arjuna, Krṣṇa answers that he is the Death-God who can swallow everything created. Krṣṇa gives warning to Arjuna, "If you do not fight due to the misunderstanding of reality, these Kauravas do die without your actions and you will earn a bad name.
All the Kurus have already been killed by divine decree. You should only be a nimitta". Generally, all the human beings who die will have diseases as nimitta. This idea is reflected in the above sentence.

Finally Krṣṇa tells Arjuna to rise to the occasion and enjoy the kingdom after killing the enemies.

Arjuna apologises for having behaved with Krṣṇa as if he was an ordinary mortal. Divine power is always hidden and its manifestation in any way cannot be understood exactly. Arjuna says, "I have not seen this form of you in my life."

Krṣṇa tells that any study of the Vedas, charities, karma and meditation will not enable the seeker to visualise such a grand form of God. Arjuna need not worry about it. His form is सुदृढ्दर्शः, not possible to visualise in any way. Undivided devotion only can take him to the level of divinity. ज्ञातुं दृष्टं प्रवेष्टं च। First of all, he realises the supreme God and visualises it and enters into it being identical with the Supreme power.

विश्वरूपाध्याय gives us a clear status of God. Now we have understood the relation between God and cosmos. The Almighty is free to assume any form without any affectation to him.

एकादशे स्वयाथात्म्यसाक्षात्कारावलोकनम्।
दत्तेमुक्तं विधिप्राप्यो भक्त्यैःकुपायता तथा॥ (यामुनाचार्य)
This chapter gives us the real svarūpa of God. One can enjoy the vision of God by meditation after attaining maturity.

This chapter is called विश्वरूपदर्शनयोग with Fifty five Ślokas.

Chapter - 12

In this adhyāya, Saguṇa Brahma and Nirguṇa Brahma both are enunciated. When Śankara embarked on the quest of super power, he wanted to know which was the greatest and unrivalled in the world. He gave unique importance to jñāna or consciousness. According to philosophy both Brahma and Jīvātmā are प्रज्ञान घन. All the activities of life are covered by jñāna inevitably. The contact of jñāna with viṣaya or matter is called sāṁsāra. Whether jñāna can remain alone isolated from viṣaya is discussed here. In suṣupti or delta sleep jñāna continues without matter. Similarly jñāna without matter is called Brahma. If we take any form of idol i.e. linga or sāligrāma, they are invariably the combination of jñāna with viṣaya and are called saguṇa. A devotee cannot concentrate his mind on pure jñāna. Therefore, as a beginning step, he should resort to pratīka upāsanā or saguṇa upāsanā. Krṣṇa tells that those who resort to saguṇopāsanā will also be eligible to emancipation. Nirguṇa upāsanā requires tattvajñāna which can ward off avidyā. But acquiring of tattvajñāna is very difficult.
Therefore Gītā gives us the opportunity to dedicate ourselves either to saguṇa or nirguṇa. A man is expected to discharge his legitimate duties, care for dharma exclusively, should have the balance of mind in happiness and sorrow and also surrender himself to the Supreme being. These four help anyone to attain higher planes of thought. Lord helps such people to reach the pinnacle of spiritual life. A man should exclusively focus his attention to realise the greatest.

If a man is unable to achieve concentration, then he should continue to practice for a long time. If this is also beyond his reach, then he must do virtuous deeds. Surrendering the benefits to the supreme being, he can also reject the results of his karma. Ordinary knowledge is required for this practice which should culminate in contemplation. The dedication should be followed by कर्मफलत्वाग, renouncing the benefits of karma which gives him tranquility.

Here Gītā tells the salient features of a person on the path of spiritual achievement. He must not hate anyone, must remain friendly and give up ego with firm mind unaffected by the ups and downs of life. He must surrender everything to the Supreme being with deep rooted faith and resolution. He must not feel disgusted with the environment nor cause others to feel disgusted. The excitements of mind like pleasure, anger, fear, repulsion should be avoided. He should not depend upon
anything. He must be spic and span in all walks of life. He must be efficient, indifferent to mortal worries without allowing his mind to be disturbed. He must not undertake any duties which bind him to the world. He must be in a position to give up every mundane benefit. He has neither enemies nor friends. He cares little for dignity and blame or praise. If any one strictly follows all these instructions, he would gain power of resistance to traverse the path of achievement.

भक्ते: श्रैण्यमुपायोक्ति: अशक्तस्यात्मानिष्टता ।
तत्रप्रकारास्त्वतिप्रीति: भक्तेवदृढ़दिशा उच्चते ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

If a person cannot directly entertain the thought of nirguna, he should resort to bhakti and other easier ways.

The essence of द्वितीयषट्क is given here. The real form of the Supreme being is accessible only when his devotion becomes ardent with jñāna and karma.

मध्यमे भगवतत्वाथात्मात्मावस्थितिसिद्धे ।
ञ्जनकमौभिनिर्विन्यों भक्तियोगः प्रकीर्तितः ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

This adhyāya is called भक्तियोगwith Twenty Ślokas.

Chapter - 13

In this chapter the nature of physical body and Ātmā, cleansing the dirt of ignorance about the reality,
how to realise Ātmā isolated from the body, how Ātmā can be understood separately, the cause why Ātmā comes into the physical body and the knowledge of the distinction between body and Ātmā are described. Kṣetra means gross body. Kṣetrajña means Ātmā who is jñānadātr. These two are discussed elaborately in this chapter. Krṣṇa emphasises that Ātmā inside the body is not different from Paramātma. Five major elements, ego, intellect, the unmanifest seed of creation, ten senses and objects thereupon, desires, happiness, suffering, hatred, assemblage, animation, stability all these constitute the physical body called kṣetra. One who earnestly desires to realise Ātmā must know in the beginning the difference between body and Ātmā and must also put endeavour to separate the two. The construction of the gross body is done by the five elements which are called bhūtamātra. The five senses and the motor senses serve in bringing the external matter to the fold of jñāna. Intellect, mind, ego and chitta, the store house of past experiences, are the four instruments to develop knowledge. Vāk or speech is one of the karmendriya and the ideas cherished by man are communicated through vāk. Therefore it stands as the liason between matter and intellect.

To understand the distinction between the two, one mortal and the other eternal, the seeker must cultivate certain habits in the field of morality and meditation. He must not be proud and hypocrite, must observe non
violence, tolerance, upright character, cleanliness, stability, control of all the tempting senses and do service to the preceptor. He must develop a kind of detachment to the tempting objects that embroil senses. He must also understand well as to how birth, death, old age and disease strike the body as enemies. He must develop a quietistic outlook with regard to his family and he must develop stability of mind. He must choose an isolated place for practising meditation and devotion. He must always think of the Ātmā in his body and seek reality so that avidyā may not overcome him. All the above are called jñāna.

Now we take up what is jñeya or the object of knowledge. Brahma has neither beginning nor end. It is not either सत् or असत्. It is difficult to understand as it is meticulous. It is he who makes everything function properly but has neither internal instruments like intellect and mind nor external instruments like senses. Without any external help he functions most satisfactorily and draws appreciation. He has wonderfully displayed the combination of conflicting activities just as he maintains the universe without involving himself in the creation. He is nirguṇa but employs triguṇas to enjoy the worldly pleasures. He is everywhere, outside and inside. He cannot be evaded but he is in every object. He is the greatest luminary and beyond the darkness of avidyā. We have here given jñāna, jñeya and jñānagamya. Jñāna means understanding the difference between Ātmā and body.
Jñeya is the Supreme power. Jñānagamya means evolving to that stage when the devotee reposes himself on the Supreme being to the exclusion of the mundane activities.

From the 19th śloka, Gītā brings sānkhya theory. Sānkhya started to discover the truth through logic and the results of logical deliberations were not according to the vedic verdict. Hence in vedānta sutra the commentators have pointed out where sānkhya differs from vedic verdict. Prakṛti and puruṣa are the major entities, both of them being eternal. The association of the two is samsāra while separation is considered as mokṣa. Sānkhya is adopted here. All the activities in our mortal world are governed by prakṛti and puruṣa has to do nothing but stand as a passive witness. The power generated by jīvatmā enlivens antahkaranas and they function within their jurisdiction. Puruṣa enjoys the external pleasures only when he is associated with prakṛti. He cannot do directly anything himself and needs a medium for his manifestation. If a person is reborn, it is on account of triguṇas and puruṣa is neutral. Puruṣa is witness and endorses all the activities, he nurtures body, he appears to be enjoying, he is the overlord of the cosmos. If any person practising meditation realises this fact, he becomes eligible for mokṣa. Some people rely upon dhyāna as the means of spiritual attainment. Some resort to karmayoga.

Many ignorant masses follow what the learned would
teach. All the products in the cosmos and animals are nothing but the combination of prakrti and puruṣa or Ātmā and body. He must treat everyone alike. If man indulges in pleasures he would kill his own Ātmā and never progresses in the path. If a person realises that prakriti is exclusively responsible for all the activities, he realises jīvātmā as neutral and puruṣa as different from पञ्जभूतात्मकप्रकृति. He has neither beginning, nor has adjectives. In spite of his location in the mortal body, he does nothing and remains indifferent. Ākaśa is encompassing whole of the cosmos and is also found in a pot. If the pot is broken, Ākaśa mixes with the outer Ākaśa. Similar is the condition of Ātmā. Brahmaśakti encompasses whole of the cosmos and ensures that the animals lead their life. The sun illuminates the whole of the world. Similarly Ātmajyoti covers whole of the body propelling the body to function itself.

देहस्वरूपमात्माप्रसिद्धेतु: आत्मविशोधनम् ।
बंधहेतुविवेक्षश्रयोदश उदीयते ॥
(यामुनाचार्य)

The nature of the gross body, plans to attain realisation, description of eternal Ātmā, causes of samsāra and distinction between God and world in general, Ātmā and body in particular are elucidated.

This chapter is called वेदात्मकन्त्रज्ञविभागयोग with Thirty four Ślokas.
Chapter - 14

In this chapter sattva, rajas and tamas are discussed. Among the Darśanas it is Sāṅkhya who first sponsored three Guṇas. While stating that prakṛti is the primordial cause of creation, he tells that prakṛti is constituted of these three Guṇas. The world contains a variety of things and people of different mentalities. Sattva stands for Prakāśa, piety and integrity. Rajas stands for man’s activities in life profitable or otherwise. Tamas is the source of ignorance, crime and moha, the delusion. Gītā says Prakāśa, pravrtti and moha are the three attitudes of these Guṇas respectively. We find degrees of comparison everywhere. One who toils for the good of nation in general is called Sāttvika, one who is on an average level with the sense of reciprocity is called Rājasa, one who indulges in carelessness, gambling, drinking and cheating others is called Tāmasa. We have all the three categories of men in the world. Kālidāsa says, त्रैगुण्योद्भवं अन्त्र लोकरीतं नानासं दृशयते | Even Bhagavad-Gītā points out, त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा: | Sāṅkhya however considers the three Guṇas as the root cause of creation. He has a theory of his own and declares that when all the three remain disproportionately combined, then alone they can create the world. If they are in equal status, there is no creation. गुणानां परमं साम्यं न दृष्टिपथं ऋच्छति | (वार्षिक)
When Sāttvaguna dominates the other two, man is considered to be on the progressive way. Yogaśāstra also follows the route of Sāṅkhya. Krṣna says that a good knowledge of all the three and their implications is essential to reach tatvajñāna. Brahma is the source of all the creation and other activities in the cosmos. Here Sāṅkhya differs since he attributes the causation of the cosmos to these three alone. Vedānta does not agree that acetana or a lifeless object can create this purposeful universe. The trinity or the three constitute prakṛti and they confine prakṛti into gross body. Sattva is in the form of light and it is free from grief. It helps a person to make radical progress in the realm of tatvajñāna. Rajas is associated with avariciousness and binds man to lóukikakarma and he is liable to rebirth. Ignorance, delusion, carelessness, indolence, oversleeping and other evils go with Tamas. Sattva gives tranquility while Rajas causes tension and excitement. Tamas keeps man in Āsuri state and he is unfit for spiritual progress. Greed, encumbrances, insolence, activities continuously performed all come under Rajoguṇa. Darkness, shirking from work, indifference, mistaken identity all these come to fore when man is grappled with Tamas. Virtuous deeds result in progress. However Rajas breeds sorrow, ignorance and other disadvantages. A man under the influence of Sāttvaguna reaches ways to success. All the activities under vṛttijñāna are nothing but the results of Rajoguṇa. Agency (kartrtva) is lying with triguṇa.
Ātmā is not in any way attached to these three. Brahma is beyond the reach of the three Guṇas. The seeker who realises that all the binding activities are only the products of trignon, is said to be tattvajñāni. Rajas and Tamas are considered as Avidyā or Vāsanā. Sattva takes man to the proximity of divinity. However, all the three are dropped before a man develops the sense of divinity. Man who is nearing the identity with Brahma will have equanimity of mind in ups and downs and he is called guṇātita. Even in Māndukya if we take akāra, ukāra and makāra or Om it represents trignon. Māndukya says अमात्रः चतुर्थः. What is beyond the three is प्रज्ञानघनं ब्रह्म

गुणन्धविधा तेषां कर्तुत्वं तत्त्विभर्नम्।
गतित्रयस्य कूलत्वं चतुर्दश उद्दीयिते ॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

The trignon bind man into gross body and he becomes active in the world only under the influence of trinity.

This chapter is called गुणन्धविभाग योग with Twenty seven Ślokas.

Chapter - 15

Human body is compared to Aśvattha tree. Krṣṇa says that the root of this tree is above the head and branches are below. What he means to say is that the hair is the root and legs are the branches.

This tree of mortal life will have three Guṇas or tempting objects in various forms. When the tree is cut
leaving the roots, it will regrow. But, when it is completely rooted out there will be no growth. Similarly, if we have कर्मशेष rebirth becomes unavoidable. If karma is entirely wiped out there will be no rebirth.

The word Aśvattha is explained as श्व: न भवति इति that is, temporary. A seeker should cut this संसारकृष्ण with his Yogīc power. He will then attain a place from which he need not return to the world.

The qualities of a person who seeks emancipation are as follows:

He will have no pride delusion, attachment and is freed from dualities like sukha duhkha etc. He learns the reality of Ātmā inside the body and reaches the place free from all kinds of miseries.

Brahma is self-refulgent. All other luminaries are indebted to the Supreme power for radiation. His अंश, a part, that is, Ātmā is located in the mortal body.

At the time of death all the Indriyās are withdrawn. However, the jīva, while leaving the body carries along with it the Vāsanā, like air sweeping the fragrance of flowers.

Ātmā without medium cannot have any contact with the outer world. All his activities are confined to अंतःकरण and बाह्यन्त्रिय. He himself is detached. Some of the Yogīs whose assiduity is unquestionable can realise the status of Ātmā in their body. Some Yogīs whose
meditation is immature are unable to reach the highest plane.

The sun and other luminaries have the power of illumination only by the influence of the Supreme Being. It is the Supreme power, which is present in the cultivated land that helps the growth of variety of vegetation. In the same way, Supreme power maintains life on the globe. It is the supreme being that is inside the stomach which digests the food and distributes the power potential to all the parts of the body. It is he who is present in all the animals and can be known only through the Vedas and vedānta.

There are two parts in the body. One is Jīvātmā and another is mortal body. Pure Brahma is different from the two. The one in the body is सोपाधिक and with appendage. Brahma is निरुपाधिक. Supreme power is beyond all the evanescent cosmos. This is the innate truth of philosophy and one becomes successful if he happens to realise the Supreme being.

अचिन्मिर्द्रिशुमद्वैतत्वपेशोत्तमः।
व्यापनाकोवणानात्वाम्यात्तर्तः अन्यः पश्चासोदितः॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

When Ātmā is associated with gross body it is called अचिन्मिर्द्रा. But the one which is isolated from the body and other matters is called Puruṣottama.

This chapter is called पुरुषोत्तमयोग with Twenty Ślokas.
Chapter - 16

Mental attitude varies from man to man. We see men with various and wonderful temperaments and in all the spheres of life differences of opinion breed conflict. This nature of human being is the consequence of Vāsanā or karma of the past birth. Generally we find three classifications of men Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. Sānkhyas explain these triguṇas as identical with prakṛti which is the primordial cause of creation, but the same triguṇas also indicate the degrees of human idiosyncrasies. A man who works for the good of others or masses caring very little for his own is called Sāttvika. A man who works to help others, carefully safeguarding his own interest is classified as Rājasa. One who unhesitatingly resorts to any foul play in order to fulfill his selfish ends is called Tāmasa.

In yogaŚāstra human beings are classified into five groups. One who is mentally retarded and defective and cannot do any responsible work is called मूढः.किंतु a man who is having a flickering mind and cannot take any decision. Gamblers, drunkards and others who are vicious come under this category. The third one is विक्षिप्त. He is peculiar because of dubious character. He may be highly learned knowing what is ideal and what is moral but he never practices it. He is also associated with many bad habits. Such people today are many. A good knowledge cannot make them modified. The fourth one is एकाय्य. These
people are free from all kinds of human weaknesses and try to tread upon virtuous path. They will have wonderful intuition for higher knowledge. Poets, orators, scientists come under this category because these accomplishments like poetry, oratory and extraordinary integrity cannot be achieved through human efforts alone. The last one is निरोध, a man who is on the path of meditation, contemplation and earnestly wishes to achieve higher spiritual progress.

In this chapter mankind is chiefly classified into daiva and asura. There are many virtues that contribute to the divine character innate in man, but a large number of people in politics, merchandise etc. belong to Āsuri order since they are exclusively selfish and deceive people for their enrichment.

Gitā tells about the following characteristics that are considered divine by nature.

अभयं – fearlessness, neither miseries of life nor death can confront them,

सत्त्वसंशुद्धि - keeping Sāttvaguṇa free from the influence of rajas and tamas,

ज्ञानयोगस्थितिः - achievement of तत्त्वज्ञान which helps the realisation of the Supreme being,

दानं – helping the poor and needy,

दम: – regulation of senses,
यज्ञः—Being aware of the Supreme power and think of the same constantly,
स्वाध्यायः—study to expand knowledge,
तपः—meditation,
आर्जवं—upright character
अहिसा—non-violence,
सत्यं—honouring the commitment,
अक्रोधः—never loosing temper in spite of provocation,
त्यागः—renunciation,
शांतिः—tranquility,
अपैशुनं—abstaining from carrying tales of others,
भूतेजु दया—compassion to animals,
अलोलुप्त्वं—free from addiction,
मार्दवं—mild attitude,
हः—feeling compunction,
अचापलं—without having any yearning for any kind of pleasure.

All these qualities subscribe to divine nature and such a man is considered qualified for spiritual progress.

Now we give the characteristic features of asura nature.

दम्भः—arrogance,
दर्पः—conceit,
अतिमानः—overconfidence,
क्रोध:  - short of temper,
पारस्यं — rude behavior,
अज्ञानं - ignorance.

These contribute to the Āsuri nature.

Of course Arjuna belongs to Daivī Svabhāva. We want to give more details of human beings in the grip of asura Svabhāva. They do not know how to function and what is to be abandoned. Neither they are clean nor they have good conduct. They change their mind every now and then. They believe that the world has just automatically come into existence. They do not believe in God. They say that Kāma itself is the aim of life. They do not care for Ātmā. They are less enlightened. They are like rowdies who work for destruction. They behave arrogantly, get illicit money to gratify the urges of their body. They are always very much worried and every minute they just indefatigably work for gaining happiness through the objects of pleasure. Their avariciousness knows no bounds. They resort to all kinds of foul play in order to get money. They think, "Now I have earned so much, I will add more. I have killed my enemy. I am the lord of the situation. I am the strongest. No one can attack me. I am rich. No one can equal me. I can do everything in this world and I am the Supreme in the field". Their mind is oscillating very often. They are guided by delusion. They talk very high of themselves and of their achievements. They are adamant. They care very little
for any thing beyond human intellect. Krṣṇa says, "very often they are incorrigible and they will remain in the lowest rung of the ladder. They never think of me".

We have three major evils that block our progress in the spiritual field. They are Kāma (greed), krodha (anger) and lobha (avariciousness). Any one who is not free from the onslaught of greed is absolutely not qualified to tread the path of spiritual progress.

In the matters of supersensory character, only Śāstra stands as a guide. If we do not follow the precept of Śāstras we cannot achieve the goal. Śāstra is the only source open to a man who seeks God's grace.

\[ \text{दे} \text{वासुरविभागोक्तिपूर्विका शास्त्रवृहत्} \]
\[ \text{तत्त्वानुसारनिर्देशमें षोडश उच्च्यते} \]
\[ \text{॥} \]
\[ \text{यामुनाचार्य} \]

The classification into daiva and asura, obedience to the injunctions of Śāstra and achievement of tatvaJñāna are the subject matters of the 16th chapter.

This chapter is called दैवासुरसंपद्धिभाग्योग with Twenty four Ślokas.

**Chapter - 17**

This chapter opens with the question of Arjuna who asks Krṣṇa, “Some people without obeying the injunctions of Śāstra worship with faith. What is the fate of such people and under what category of sattva, rajas and tamas are they?”
Here we discuss about the implications of श्रद्धा which is translated as faith. Faith means what is free from logical examination and just a belief. The masses of India blindly follow the faith and indulge in worshipping hundreds of Gods. Lack of thinking power is responsible for such an activity. However, it is not possible to completely dispense with श्रद्धा. Upaniṣads banned the entrance of logic into their field. Great sages practiced meditation. Whatever thoughts have flashed in their minds during meditation, they have recorded in the Upaniṣads. Therefore they are not verifiable and are taken for granted as valid statements. This is called योगिप्रत्यक्ष. Buddhism and Jainism which came into existence later opposed this view.

Here we have to step cautiously. श्रद्धा should have some limitations and we must not allow absurd thoughts to enter into the field of श्रद्धा and mislead people. Philosophy of India deals with supersensory matter which cannot be proved by any means known in the world.

अलौकिकं अतीत्रियं शब्दमात्रागम्यं विलक्षणं ब्रह्म

Unearthly, supersensory, knowable only through asceticism, absolutely different" is the dictum of upaniṣadic philosophy.

Therefore we have considered only thirteen upaniṣads as valid proof as they happen to be the part and parcel of the Vedas. Unscrupulous intellectuals
however composed many Upaniṣads of their own and wanted to enlist them along with the genuine ones.

We have the following procedure in Upaniṣads:

यदेव विद्यया श्रद्धया तपसा ब्रह्मचर्यया

These are the four features which are adopted. Good knowledge, faith, meditation and discipline are essential to understand things beyond the terrestrial limitations.

आगमेन अनुमानेन ध्यानाध्यायससेन च ।
त्रिधा प्रकट्ययनु प्राज्ञां लभते योगमुत्तमम् ॥

(न्यायकुसमांंजली - उदयन)

Udayana says that vedic verdict, logic and inner feeling of man are the three that help in realising the soul which is otherwise impossible to know. It is really astonishing to note that our great sages built up a scientific branch of philosophy which is beyond the reach of intellectual scrutiny. People of India are mad after Gods. Their intelligence is so poor that they cannot identify what is reasonable and reliable.

The श्रद्धा is of three kinds: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. Very often people are absorbed in श्रद्धा and they act according to it. Sāttvikas worship Gods. Rājasas worship demi gods and demons. Tāmasas worship vampire, deceased etc. in graveyards. This is not enjoined in Śāstras. Some people undertake rigorous penance
exerting their body for some purposes which is not approved by Śāstras.

Here we have to describe the three kinds of Food, Yajña, Tapas and Dāna.

Food – The food which increases the span of life, stamina, strength, health, happiness and is delicious is considered Sāttvika. Food that is highly pungent and salty, very hot and burning is Rājas. Food that is stale, pasturised, with foul smell and unholy is Tāmasa.

Yajña- Any yajña performed without expectations according to Śāstrik procedure is considered Sāttvika. The same with expectations and for show is Rājas. That which is not enjoined in Śāstras and which is performed without any procedure is called Tāmasa.

Tapas- The meditation is of three kinds. Worshipping gods, Brāhmanas and teachers, cleanliness, frankness, discipline and non-violence are considered as ‘physical meditation - शारीरिक तपः. Speaking truth sweetly without hurting and steady talk are called oral meditation- वाक्यायत्त स्थिरम् तपः. Purity, mildness, control of body these are called mental meditation - मानससंतपः. If meditation is practiced with all sincerity without any expectation it is called sāttvika. If meditation is practised for becoming famous, with vanity, it is called Rājas. If by absurdity and obstinacy one practices meditation putting ones own body into hardship or to destroy another person it is called Tāmasa.
Dāna-If we gift something valuable to the needy at the proper time without expecting any reciprocal help from him it is called Sāttvika. If we give something in return to the help rendered by one or in expectation of other’s help it is called Rājas. If we gift money to the undeserving it is called Tāmasa.

ओऽ ततृ सत् are the words used to denote Brahma, Yajña and the Vedas. Brāhmaṇas have this Omkāra as the primary object. Man should perform Yajña, Dāna, tapas and everything with sincerity and he should not be serious about what he reaps from any thing performed. If one is not devoted, whether it is homa, charity, meditation all will have no significance.

अशास्त्रमागुरं कृत्सं शास्त्रीयं गुणतः पृथक्।
लक्षण शास्त्रसिद्धस्य त्रिधा सममहोदितम्॥ (यामुनाचार्य)

Whatever we perform without caring for Śāstra is called āsura. The ordained work is meritorious. The division on the basis of sattva, rajas and tamas is also explained.

This chapter is called श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोग with Twenty eight Ślokas.

Chapter - 18

Arjuna wants to know the difference between Tyāga and Sanyāsa – Renunciation and recluse life.
There are many opinions about the utility of Karma in adhyātmajñāna. Karma is divided into five groups by Jaimini.

1. नित्य – what is to be performed everyday.
2. नैमित्तिक – which is performed only when there is a special occasion.
3. काम्य – when we expect benefits or prosperity.
4. निषिद्ध - what is prohibited.
5. प्रायश्चित्त – the process of expiation.

Among these Karmas, Krṣṇa lays stress on कर्मफलत्याग but not कर्मत्याग. All the variety of opinions culminate in this opinion. A grhaṣtha is expected to perform all his duties without expectations. But a sanyāsī need not even perform these.

As long as man is alive with gross body, it is not possible for him to give up any legitimate duty. Therefore, he is asked to attend to rituals as a matter of duty. Then alone the Karma helps in purifying the mind and preparing it for higher planes of thought.

The result of Karma are of three kinds. They are, What one likes, What one dislikes and The mixed one.

Krṣṇa specifically tells about the gross body, its instruments, activities and the final one that is the divine decree. Whatever work we do here physically, mentally or orally all the three come under this category. But
without the divine grace no effort of human beings will ever bear the fruit, दैवं चैवान्त्र पण्यम्.

If one does not think too high of himself and performs his duties with dedication and humility, he becomes detached and he is said to be on the path of divinity.

Now, we take up त्याग - Renunciation, ज्ञान - Knowledge, कर्म - Activity, कर्ता - Doer, बुद्धि - Intellect, धृति - Stability and सुख - Happiness.

All these have three stages: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tamasā.

त्याग - Renunciation

Sāttvika: Performing duty sincerely without expectations of any benefit and with the sense of detachment.

Rājasa: Who ever gives up the righteous duty fearing that it involves labour and exertion.

Tāmasa: The prescribed duties should be performed by everyone, but he gives up the legitimate duty out of ignorance.

ज्ञान- Knowledge (Consciousness)

Sāttvika: If a man observes Brahma in all the animate and inanimate objects as one.
Rājasa: If he visualises plurality and differences every where.

Tāmasa: If a man worships only a part of Brahma not knowing the whole of Brahma, he does not know what is reality and his performance will become infructuous.

कर्म - Activity

Sāttvika: When a person performs duty without attachment and without favour or hatred, being indifferent to the result.

Rājasa: Whenever a person takes a serious interest in Karma with some aspiration, ego and very often suffers exertion caused by doing Kārma.

Tāmasa: Without considering it earlier as to how to perform and what are all involved and performing it in a disorderly manner out of ignorance.

कर्ता- Doer

Sāttvika: Who is away from attachment, never feels high of himself and who has enough stability, enthusiasm and who's mind is absolutely undisturbed by success or failure.

Rājasa: Whoever indulges in achieving the fruit to the maximum, who is greedy, cares very little for other's troubles, who is himself impure and who is carried away either by unlimited delight or disappointment.
Tāmasa: Who is not concentrating, who is incompetent, adamant, fraudulent, full of vengeance, lethargic and depressed and always procrastinating the work indefinitely.

बुद्धि - Intellect

Sāttvika: Who knows clearly what is प्रवृत्तिधर्म and निन्वृत्तिधर्म, who also knows what is to be done and what is to be avoided. He who has the foresight of the dangers that may attack him and who knows about bondage and liberation.

Rājasa: When he does not understand the difference between dharma and adharma, legitimate duty and bad deeds.

Tāmasa: If one mistakes adharma for dharma and sees everything in an adverse way he is covered by ignorance.

धृति - Stability

Sāttvika: When one controls effectively mind, Prāṇa, senses and practises yoga in order to achieve these things.

Rājasa: Whoever resorts to dharma and Kāma indiscriminately and also yearns for rich benefits.

Tāmasa: Whenever a person dreams of fear, misery, is in deep distress and intoxicated.
सुख - Happiness

Sāttvika: Whatever is apparently unfavourable but results in a beneficial result. This state of happiness is the result of the purity of mind.

Rājasa: Whenever a person enjoys not knowing the consequences of all the pleasures available.

Tāmasa: Which appears to be pleasant at the beginning with subsequent miserable repercussions, which very much entices man and who later feels unable to get rid of the same in spite of knowing the same to be harmful. Lethargy, sleep and indifference are the other characteristics.

There is no animal or entity which is free from the influence of this trinity. We have already spoken about चाल्पर्वर्ण्य, the classification of people into four folds. Everyone should attend to his own duty sincerely, then alone he can accomplish all the obligations of mortal life.

Now we tell you about sanyāsa. One who has buddhi not addicting to anything, who has controlled all his senses, who is free from desires, that person can become a sanyāsī and he need not perform anything but should lead only a detached life.

A man who is successful in following all these instructions given above, he is in ज्ञाननिष्ठा and eligible for relief from mortality. He must make buddhi free from the influence of Vāsanā and keep himself restrained from
all the objects of temptation. He must choose a solitary corner, eat less and have an effective control on speech, body and mind. Constantly he should think of God with undisturbed concentration and renounce everything such as vanity, arrogance, anger and ownership if he yearns for spiritual progress. He must feel himself as Brahma. He has nothing to worry nor any desire for anything. He treats everything equal. Krśna says, "he can visualise me only through sincere devotion".

It is Lord Īswara who guides mankind in all these spheres of action. "Oh Arjuna, with an element of Āhamkāra or thinking of yourself too high, you are desisting from the war. But remember, Kṣatriya dharma compels you to act immediately. The only goal of all this upadeśa is to surrender at the feet of God".

ईश्वरे कर्तृताबुद्धि: सत्वोपादेयतान्तिमे ||
स्वकर्मपरिणामामश्च शास्त्रसारार्थ उच्चते || (यामुनाचार्य)

We must know that the sole guidance of mankind is by Superior Brahma only. One should do one's duty and the result of it will be spiritual progress.

प्रधान पुरुषव्यक्तस्वेषेषर विवेचनम् ||
कर्मधी: भक्ति: इत्यदि: पूर्वशेषोऽक्तिमोदित: || ४

Pradhāna and Puruṣa are not Gods. Supreme God is different from the two. Jñāna, bhakti and Karma are the means of attainment of Brahma.
Jñānayoga, Karmayoga and Bhaktiyoga all the three pave the way for mokṣa. Here all of them are given equal importance.

Whatever rituals ordained by the Vedas we perform everyday, should be dedicated to the Supreme one and culminate in the realisation of Ātmā.

He dispels all the ignorance and realises Ātmā through deep devotion.

All the three will result in the purification of the mind only when the devotee does not aspire for any benefit other than visualising Brahma.
All the three are directed to realise the Supreme God.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{ज्ञानीदुर परमेकान्ति तदायत्तात्मजीवन: } & \ 1 \\
\text{तत्संस्फोष्टायोक्षुब्धु:खस्ते} & \text{देकधी: } 29
\end{align*} \]

Here jñāna is praised. The achievement depends upon jñāna. Joining Brahma is the supreme goal of a devotee.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{भगवद्ध्यानयोगोक्तिवन्दनसुतुतिकीति: } & \ 1 \\
\text{लब्धात्मा तदायत्रा यनोबुद्धीन्द्रियक्रिय: } & \ 30
\end{align*} \]

Meditation of Bhagavan, prostration, devotional songs, reciting his name all these help the candidate to elevate himself to higher places.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{निजकर्मिनिदभक्त्यन्तु कुर्यात्मीत्येवकारित: } & \ 1 \\
\text{उपायतां परित्यज्य यस्येहैवेतु तामभी: } & \ 31
\end{align*} \]

Jñānayoga, Bhaktiyoga and Kārmayoga all should be identified with supreme God and one should remain only as a servant to that great divine power.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{एकांतायंत दास्यैकरतित्सपदमाप्नुयायात् } & \ 1 \\
\text{तत्प्रधानमिदं} & \text{शास्त्रं इति गीतार्थांग्रह: } 32
\end{align*} \]

Conclusion of 18th chapter, slokas 63 to 78

Krṣṇa asks Arjuna whether he heard all that he had said attentively. He also asks whether the dilemma of Arjuna about dharma and adharma is entirely wiped out.
What Kṛṣṇa taught is a mystery of ideas and a secret which people do not generally happen to know. Kṛṣṇa gives Arjuna liberty to act accordingly if he is convinced. The sole thing is nothing but dedication to Supreme power and surrendering himself at the feet of Supreme power. Whoever listens to this precept attentively will be free from all the evils and reaches the highest goal. Arjuna confesses,

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिलब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्याच्युत ।
स्थितोधस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

This is the result of the advice given by Kṛṣṇa. Moha means inability to understand what is dharma and what is adharma. Now his doubts have been cleared and Arjuna is ready to discharge his duty as a Kṣatriya. Kṛṣṇa is called Yogeśvara, that is, the Lord of all kinds of meditations. The sight of viṣvarūpa has thrilled Arjuna to a great extent. Vedavyāsa collected the precept and incorporated the same in Mahābhārata Bhīṣmaparva. If Arjuna represents the suffering mankind, Kṛṣṇa is the divine agent, coming to the rescue of Arjuna. श्री: the wealth, विजय success, भूति mental comfort all these can be achieved through Bhagavadgītā. Whatever we say in praise of the uniqueness of the message of Gītā, it is not an exaggeration. Among स्मार्तप्रस्थान Gītā plays a key role. Playing the role of the preceptor, it guides people in the path of progress.
This chapter is called मोक्षसंन्यासयोग with Seventy eight Ślokas.

Message of Gītā

We can consolidate the ideas of Gītā briefly as the sermon of great value. Arjuna became bewildered at the sight of the army of the enemies where there were many of his relatives and teachers. Krṣṇa replied that reestablishment of dharma was the major purpose for the achievement of which Arjuna was asked to fight unhesitatingly. As a Kṣatriya it was his duty to punish the guilty irrespective of the fact whether they were relatives or not. For this discharge of duty mental balance is essential and the same can be achieved through yoga or meditation. Incidentally many matters related to philosophy are brought out in Bhagavadgītā which endorses decent life in this world and later becoming identical with the Supreme being by way of Bhakti, Karma and jñāna. Krṣṇa lays stress on Tatvajñāna which alone can reduce all the heap of Kārma to ashes. After freeing Buddha from the influence of Vāsanā it is possible to visualise the greatest luminary known as Brahma. He says न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशम्.

He also tells us how a man is the combination of divine element and physical elements, दैव आसुर एव च. It is the divine element which helps him in reaching the
highest plane of thought beyond the mundane level. He also prescribes how a yogi should be.

We find reference to सांख्य, योग, अद्वैत and विशिष्टाद्वैत principles. Pauranic elements have also crept in a few chapters. The word भक्ति is used frequently. We have a meticulous analysis of ज्ञान the knowledge of distinction between body and soul, ज्ञेय the ultimate knowable Brahma and ज्ञानगम्य accessible to पराविद्या. Krṣṇa also says that निर्मुण is very difficult to be adored.
PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

Dharma

The word Dharma escapes exact explanation. It is used in different contexts with different meanings. Generally, we take it to mean philosophy and religion.

धर्मों विश्वस्य जगतः प्रतिष्ठा ।
धर्मेन पापं अपनुदति ।
लोकं धर्मिः प्रजा उपसर्गति ।
तस्मात् धर्मं गरमं वदन्ति ॥ (महानारायण उपनिषत्)

Dharma helps to keep the world in peace. Dharma wards off evils. People approach a man who follows Dharma in veneration. Therefore, Dharma is the most valuable one.

चोदना लक्षणः अर्थः धर्मः. This is the definition given by Jaimini. Here the word Dharma means only vedic rituals. यतः अभ्युदयनिष्ठे सत्यसिद्धि सः धर्मः. This is वैश्वेदिक सूत्रः. Prosperity and liberation both can be achieved only through Dharma. The same word is used in Bhagavadgītā in various contexts. We take here only सनातनधर्म, the name which applies to the philosophy handed over to us from the days immemorial. It is also divided into philosophy and religion about which we have spoken already briefly.
prasthanastram is the original source of Indian philosophy. They contain śrutis, darśanik and smārt prasthana. The verdict given in thirteen Upaniṣads which are parts of the Vedas are to be taken as unquestionable authority. This is called svāt: pramāṇa. Upaniṣads are called śrut prasthana.

The other Upaniṣads which are not parts of the Vedas may be accepted only after verification if they are in conformity with the main theme. Vedic Upaniṣads contain flashes of thoughts derived after deep meditation by great sages and cannot be verified by people who are unable to enter into yoga.

Brahmasūtra or Uttara mīmāṃsā is considered darśanik prasthana because it adopts both logic and śrutis. In explaining the problems of philosophy, Upaniṣads did not entertain logic. But later our great sages felt the need of applying logic also wherever it was possible. Therefore Uttara mīmāṃsā not only dwells on the statements of śrutis but also examines various problems of philosophy in the light of logical reasoning. सांख्य, योग, वैशेषिक, बौद्ध, जैन, पाश्चर्यम, पाशुपत all these schools of thought were thoroughly examined in the Brahmaṣūtra and they have refuted anti-vedic ideas found in these schools upholding only Upaniṣadic version as valid.

Bhagavadgītā is smṛti. It is elevated to the status of prasthanastram and considered as valid as Brahmaṣūtra. Gītā
is called स्मार्तप्रस्थान. Gītā contains the philosophy of Upaniṣads in general and adds the dharma of worldly duties to it. Arjuna is asked to discharge his duty with balance of mind and caring for dharmic principles. Incarnation of God is meant only for the reestablishment of faded Dharma.

Now we come to religion. We have the following literature which are considered परत: प्रमाण that means they are valid only after verification and subject to the condition that what they say should be in conformity with Upaniṣads. They are Vedāṅgas, Darṣanas, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Dharmaśāstras, Purāṇas, Āgamas and Tantras.

**Philosophy and religion**

Philosophy and religion are in some places incompatible in Hindu dharma. While philosophy dwells upon one God as the creator who has no form, religion brings out large number of gods who can not be relied upon either through logic or the Vedas and they are inconsistent. Masses follow religion because it is easily intelligible and it does not require any discipline of mind. Hundreds of Gods and temples are found in India and people are also mad after them. They are in the form of linga, sāligrāma and Pratīmā. God is also worshipped pompously. On the other hand philosophy depends upon yogipratyakṣa and its tenets are universal. It is very clear that the vedic Upaniṣads, Brahmaśūtra and bhāṣya do
not mention any gods whom we worship and the word bhakti is not found in the Vedas. People with deep rooted orthodox notions will be shocked to hear such thoughts. The orthodoxy made endeavours to establish the authority of Purāṇa, Āgama etc. But their authenticity is subject to verification.

मधुसूदन सरस्वती in his अद्वैतसिद्धि (page 745) says, विग्रहः भौतिकः सावधः अनित्यः साकारः यत्र विष्णुवादिरिध्यस्तः. An idol is made of stone, metal etc, an assemblage of parts, perishable, with form and where certain God is superimposed. This cannot be Brahma. Only Āgamas advocate the worship of idol.

अप्रतीकालम्बनान् नयतीति बादरायणः भयथा दोषात्
तत्क्रतुष्ट (४.३.१४ - ब्रह्मसूत्र) प्रतीकः is the symbolic representative of God, which is only a part of cosmos. Those who depend upon this are not eligible for Mokṣa. न प्रतीके नहिः सः (४.१.४ - ब्रह्मसूत्र) No god is in प्रतीक. Rāmānuja also endorses the same opinion in श्रीभाष्य . Similarly sāligrāma and linga are also considered as प्रतीक.

God has no gender. He is not married. He has created men and women for the perpetuation of the species. All the festivals, ekādashi etc. are the outcome of भागवतमत. Rituals, not mentioned in the Upaniṣads, are performed as part of religion.
In the commentary where smrtis contradict themselves explanation is given bringing compromise. During the period of the Vedas there was no idolatry. It came into currency only in the 1st century BC. Before the birth of Śankara there were large number of religious groups each relying upon Gods of their own choice and considered all others inferior. To elevate any God to the highest pedestal one has to admit plurality of gods which the Vedas opposed. Therefore, we wish to have only a secular philosophy in preference to sectarian religion.

**Karma and Jñāna**

In philosophy we have a heated controversy about the importance of jñāna and Karma. Jaimini tells us that Karma is the factor that causes rebirth, which can be avoided if karma is performed without expectation. Mandanamiśra and many others talk about ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चय that is, jñāna and Karma are equally important. However, Śankara lays emphasis on Tatvajñāna which alone, by way of removing avidyā, can achieve liberation. We have several means to approach the Supreme being. They are bhakti, Karma, pooja, good deeds etc. But Śankara does not deny the role of Karma in the field of philosophy. He says specifically that Karma and other means result in चित्तशुद्धि or purification of mind when alone Tatvajñāna
Chiṭṭṣuddhi or purification of mind when alone Tātvajñāna or parāvidyā emanates. This has been stated by Śankara frequently in his bhāṣya since it is mīśājñāna which keeps Brahma away from the knowledge of people. But the removal of mīśājñāna cannot be achieved without tattvajñāna.

Bhāmatī, endorsing the same opinion states, “कर्मणः विद्याय न सहकारित्वं किंतु विद्यात्पत्तौ” | Karma helps in the achievement of tattvajñāna but not directly - वाचस्पतिमिश्र. Sureśvara also in नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धि upholds this theory, नित्यनैमितिककर्मनृत्यानेन परिमार्जित रजस्तमोमलं प्रस्त्रमनाकुलं चितं प्रत्यक्षत्वव्रप्रवणं अवलिहं | (१-४८) Mind becomes purified by performing Karma and will be in a position to visualise Ātmā.

We have therefore brought a compromise between arguing opponents and state that we need Karma till tattvajñāna is achieved.

Bhakti

This is called Upāsanā in the Vedas. We don't find the word Bhakti either in vedic Upaniṣads or Brahmasūtras. Devotional literature is plenty in Sanskrit and Gitā lays stress on this particular aspect. When we say that there is one Almighty, people earnestly wish to achieve his grace for their welfare and they have no alternative than praising God in the form of devotional
literature. There are certain devotional songs containing strings of names like सहनाम eulogising God and mentioning God's activities in Purāṇas.

Dakṣiṇamūrtty Stotra contains highest philosophy. The authors of Dāsa Sāhitya and Ālwaṛs of Tamil Nadu have written devotional songs with the intention of earning the favour of God.

Here we must seriously deliberate over the efficacy of devotional literature and also about its propriety. Of course, sycophancy gives rich dividends when some person is praised. Does God need the eulogising to grace the people? A devotee should have real qualification to become one with God. God may not yield to sycophancy, he just tests the quality of man. ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं चेन मां उपवान्ति ते । I bestow such mentality.

Therefore in Yogasūtra they have laid stress on meditation and control of mind. Read these quotations.

निस्तुतिः निनिहंकारी निस्वधाकाराएव च ।
चलाचलनिनकेतश्यति यादृच्छिको भवेत् ॥

(गौडपादकारिका)

निराशिष्यं अनारम्भं निरन्निरक्कारां अस्तुतिः । अक्षीणं
क्षीणकर्मां तं देवा: ब्रह्माण्व विदु: ।

(महाभारत)
Here, stuti etc. are totally banned. Even in Upaniṣads it is said, य: एतं आत्मानं अनुविद्य प्रैति स ब्राृद्धः ।

Here आत्मदर्शन for mokṣa is advocated, but not prayer. Earning divine grace depends upon how much one has energized his mind through meditation.

मनसं निग्रहायत्तं अभयं सर्वयोगिनम् ॥
दु:खक्षयं प्रबोधश्वाश्या शांतिरेव च ॥ गौ - कारिका

Freedom from mortality, enlightenment, eternal tranquility all depend upon the concentration of the mind. This is perhaps the chief cause for Buddha to deny the existence of God and advocate meditation. God never helps man although people believe so. But he helps those who energize their mind by other means.

Śankara laid stress on तत्त्वज्ञान even dismissing claims of yoga. Other means to reach God are not ruled out but all the various ways help only purification of mind from वासना and pave way to acquire तत्त्वज्ञान which alone can dispel अविद्या or our mundane attachment.

निर्गुण cannot be achieved by any means other than तत्त्वज्ञान. उपासना refers only to सगुण. According to Brahmaṣūtra, God administers the rewards of पाप and पुण्य to animals. Hence, they experience both happiness and misery. Karmaphala must be experienced by all. No
concession is given. Hence, भक्ति etc cannot invoke the grace of God. He is always a neutral witness to what happens.

**Stuti**

Stuti is Prayer, Namaskāra is prostration. All of these are considered inefficient. However, many great commentators including Vyāsadeva have advocated Bhakti as being important in the attainment of liberation. We have the Yogasūtra, ईश्वरप्रणिधानातू वा.

People very often worship as gods those who are not definitely gods. For e.g. : Balarāma, Subhadrā, Yudhiṣṭira, Sanyāsins, Ājaneya. All these are not gods, but people worship them as divine personalities.

Rāmānuja specifically lays down that anything other than Brahma, अचिन्त्यक्षत्तमा should not be adored. We have the following extract from श्रीभाष्य.

चतुर्मुखवादीनां न शुभाश्रयता ।
आञ्जनास्तंबपर्यन्ता: जगदन्तवर्त्ववस्थिता: ।
प्राणिन: कर्मजनित संसारवशवर्तिन: ।
यतस्ततो न ते ध्याने ध्यानिनामुपकारका: ।
तस्मात्तदमलं ब्रहम निस्गदिव वोधवत् ॥
ततू शुभाश्रयं ध्यानयोगयमू - शौनक:

श्रीभाष्य - महासिद्धान्त
All gods other than Brahma cannot be the objects of contemplation.

Prayer, repetition of names, vision of idol, contemplation, service, external worship all are non-Vedic. Only the guidance of the Vedas can lead one to liberation.

Here it is clearly stated that Upāsanā of anyone other than Brahma is not helpful in achieving the goal.

What is aimed at getting nothing but Brahma, which develops detached outlook for everything other than the Supreme one and incomparable love, all these three constitute bhakti. In fact Rāmānuja dwells on parābhakti which is equated to Tatvajñāna of Śankara. Although
bhakti is not effective great men adopted it only because there was no other resource to gain the vision of Ātmā. Excessive stress is laid on the flawless devotion and of course Gītā frequently tells about the importance or unavoidability of bhakti. In छान्दोग्य we have this reference,

आहारशुद्धि सत्वशुद्धि: सत्वशुद्धौ ध्वासमृति:

स्मृतिलम्भे सर्वग्रन्थीनां विप्रमोक्षः।

Here smṛti means bhakti. Some of the followers of Rāmajuna argue that tampu involves elements of bhakti. However if मिथ्याज्ञान stands in the way of spiritual progress, then except तत्त्वज्ञान nothing else can remove मिथ्याज्ञान. Therefore, according to Śankara तत्त्वज्ञान alone can dispel मिथ्याज्ञान, since no other force can remove the mantle of मिथ्याज्ञान. In Brahmasya Bhāṣya, Śankara says that Saguṇabrahma is the object of Upāsanā whereas Nirguṇa is attainable only after the removal of मिथ्याज्ञान.

सूतकारोपिद्व परमार्थाभिप्रायेण तदन्यत्वं

इत्याह अप्रत्याख्यात कार्यप्रपश्च लोकवत्तु

लीलाकैवल्यं इत्याह सगुणेषु उपासनेषु युज्यते इति।

(ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्य - शंकर)
One thing we have to notice here is that any commentator who prefers one of the gods as superior to others cannot dispense with the claims of bhakti because they interpret avidyā as Karma, but not as मिथ्याज्ञान. Therefore, in religion and also in philosophy Bhakti becomes the common way in achieving liberation.

Saguṇa - Nirguṇa

In Vedic Upaniṣads, which are thirteen in number, Brahma is said to be the Supreme one and no other God is mentioned. The word Brahma means निरितिशय बृहत्वं which means incomparably the great. While describing Brahma, two methods are adopted.

निर्गुणब्रह्म :- In some places, it is described as निराकार the formless, अनामिक nameless, अज unborn and नित्य eternal. We have the following mantras substantiating this view.

In Mundaka we find यस्तदेवं अवर्ण अगोचर अचिन्त्यं

What cannot be pointed out, which has no lineage, which has no caste, which cannot be thought of.

In गार्गीब्राह्मण of बृहदारण्यक there are nearly thirty three words denoting निर्गुण. अस्थूलं, अनन्त, अहस्वं, अदीर्घ which is neither fat nor thin nor short nor long etc.

In कठ, we find this मंत्र. अशाब्दं, अस्पर्शं, अरूपं, अन्वयं, तथा अरसं नित्यं अगत्यवच्चयत् which has neither शब्द, रूप, रस, गन्ध, which is immutable and eternal.
In बृहदारण्यक, in two or three places, we find these verses.

अथ नेति नेति आदेशः अगृह्यो नहि गृहाते ।
अशीर्यो नहि शीर्यते असंगो न हि सज्जते ।

न व्यक्ते न शिष्यति ।

Brahma is neither corporal nor incorporeal. It cannot be grasped. It cannot be broken asunder. It has no attachment, it has no sorrow, it does not perish.

In Bhagavadgītā, we find these lines

सर्वभूतं सर्वभूतं चैव निगुणं गुणभोक्तः च ॥

It has no senses but functions without senses, it has no attachment but maintains the cosmos, it has no Guṇas but it enjoys all the sufferings and pleasures through सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस्. अनादिवंतात्, निगुणतवात्, परमात्मा अति अव्ययः. He has no beginning, no qualities and immutable.

Goudapāda says, अजं, अनित्रं, अस्वयं, अनामकं, अरूपकं. He has neither sleep nor dream, nor name, nor form, but eternal.

मण्डनमिश्र refers to Him in ब्रह्मसिद्धि as

अनभिहितशब्दसम्बन्धं निर्विशेषं ब्रह्म ॥
कथं एतत् निरदेश्येति विशेषनिवेश्येनेति ब्रूमः ॥
Brahma cannot be pointed out through words but it can be explained in a negative way. The same Brahma is called निरूपाधिक, निर्विषय, निर्विशेष.

This is known as व्यतिरेक दृष्टि, negative approach. निरूपाधिक means which is not inside the body and remains purely outside. निर्विषय means which is in the form of consciousness and cannot have any form of knowledge of matter external. निर्विशेष means which has no specialities to differentiate. For example सामान्यविशेषभाव generality and speciality govern the external world and Brahma is above it. Only Śankarācārya, Goudapāda and Mandanamisra have advocated this निर्गुणब्रह्म. Other Ācāryas are dead against it.

Here we have to understand what might be the opinion of Śankara in accepting such a God without any विशेषण. Brahma is in the form of consciousness only. सत्यंज्ञानमन्तः ब्रह्म is the version of चैत्यीय. This consciousness is invisible and encompasses whole of the cosmos in different capacities. Every man and animal has this consciousness which alone gives him life and energy. Therefore, although people are clearly aware of the position of consciousness and conduct transactions through वृत्तिज्ञान they do not happen to know its divine nature. Therefore, बृहदारण्यक in कहोऽह ब्रह्म says यत्साधकस्तु अपरोक्षातृ ब्रह्म. That means everyone is aware of his having
consciousness, but he fails to recognise its nature of divinity. Since this invisible consciousness cannot be divided and cannot be created or controlled by men, we have to admit its superiority over everything. There is nothing which can be placed above it and our daily transaction is conducted only through consciousness transmitted through cognitive agents in the body. This is the major cause for Śankara to assert that Jīvātmā and Brahma as one. He gives the apt example of घटाकाशा. The space is narrowed when it is inside a pot and it gets mixed with the outside space which is dimensionless. We can also give another example. Water also has pure state and mixed state. Similarly, consciousness in pure state is Brahma which has no quality. When it is in the body it has qualities owing to its appendage, the body.

Advaita is based on this principle since all the other things are unimportant. Śankara declares anything other than Brahma is मिथ्या or false. However he did not deny the daily transactions and we have to understand the word मिथ्या in right perspective as conceived by Śankara. Until we realise Brahma, this practical world is real.

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रतिभूतानि सानिशा पश्यतो मुने: ॥ (गीता)

When all the animals are in the darkness of avidyā or ignorance, the yogī visualises the light by Brahma. Here we can cite काकोलूक्तन्याय. When उलूक or owl cannot see,
the crow can see the light of the day. Similarly, for the realised soul the world is nothing whereas for the materialist the world is everything.

Once a man develops maturity of mind in realisation, the world vanishes from him. Goudapāda says, अद्वैतं परमार्थोऽहि द्वैतं तद्वेद उच्चते।

समुपव्रहः: - Now we discuss about Saguna Brahma. In Upaniṣads we have plenty of sentences where Brahma is described with many attributes.

सर्वं खल्चिदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शांतं उपासीत।

This is found in शापित्विभ्याय of छान्दोग्य. It says, you must think of Brahma as the creator and who maintains the cosmos and causes deluge. In another place, it says सर्वकामः, सर्वसः, सर्वगन्धः, सर्वमिदंअभ्यातः, अवाकी अनादाः.

He can give all the pleasures, he knows all the tastes and fragrance, he has encompassed the whole, he is silent and disinterested. We have similar examples in many places.

It is noteworthy that these adjectives are not hyperbolical but are facts. Moreover, they do not mean that Brahma has all these qualities, but, they believe that if he is all-powerful he must have all these qualifications. It is only the sages who have attributed these qualities which need not be there as we conceive.
In the third pada of third chapter of Brahmasthuna, the entire chapter is devoted to explain the Upāsanā of Brahma. संगुणोपासना is only penultimate to Tatvajñāna and helps the devotee to pave the way for his realisation. In devotional poetry we have exaggeration and the legends in the Purāṇas are not found in Upaniṣads.

Karma is material, Bhakti is sentimental, Yoga is mental and Jñāna is intellectual. The intellectual approach is hailed to be the best one. उपासनाश्रित धर्म: जाते ब्रह्मणि वर्तते। (गौडपादकारिका.)

Many ācāryas of different schools admit only Saguṇa and lay stress on Bhakti cult.

Aetiology - कार्यकारणभाव

We have to understand the process of Kārya the product and Kāraṇa the cause.

उत्पत्ति birth, आपि acquisition, विकृति transformation, संस्कृति refinement, these are the results of कारण. सिद्ध and साध्य are the two forms. सिद्ध is what is already there like mountains, oceans etc. साध्य is what is acquired through efforts. Some other details are given here. Kriyā is action, Kāraka is doer, Phala is the product, Upādana - the raw material, Kāraṇa- the tools, Prayojana - the purpose, Sampradāna - the consumer all these are governed by Aetiology.
To discuss the problem of creation, we have to examine how this aetiology can be applied. Wherever man produces with his labour something useful through his knowledge and discretion, it is easy to find out what is the cause and what is the product. But about the nature, planets and many other things there may be causes but they are unknown. Here the problem arises as to whether all the activities of nature which are helpful to the maintenance of the living and the lifeless has any cause or not.

Scientists do not admit anything where there is no accountability. If the cause is unknown, it is not possible to deny the cause. Here we have to use deductive logic in the form of inference. God is invisible and supersensory. How best we can understand him is the problem. All the elements of nature should have causes since they are products and evanescent. Anything which is a product and evanescent should have Kāraṇa and even men who use their discretion are only a part of creation. Hence they cannot be given the credit of creating this wonderful world. This is said in Brahmaṣṭra,

रचनानुपत्तेश्च नानुमानम् ।

(२-२-१)

Let us examine how man functions through his discretion. The thing he produces should have utility. Some products can be brought into existence by the labour of one individual. Buildings, bridges etc need a large number of men and time factor. Man needs internal instruments like hands, senses and also external
instruments, while nature like Brahma does not need any instrument to function. The elements of nature like air, water etc do tremendous beneficial as well as disastrous work without any instrument. Even an illusionary knowledge has its own cause which is called प्रतीयमान or appearance like horizon, reflection and seeing moon in double forms. This प्रतीयमान also has causes like certain mental and other defects.

There are varieties of illusions. When you see a rope, you mistake it for a snake. Here we have these causes like the analogy of serpent in rope, distance, remembrance and sometimes the defects of senses. The moon is not as small as he appears to be. It is the distance that makes the moon look small. When we are travelling, we see many things going behind fast. Here the action is mistaken. In mirage there is no object but there is only appearance. All these and many other illusions are explained in अध्यासभाष्य.

Here, there is one peculiarity. Jñāna and Viṣaya have no homogeneity in any way. Yet Jñāna that is Ātmā is mistaken for Viṣaya, the world. This is called Avidyā. Therefore Avidyā cannot be identified with illusion alone since that has wider province.

There are differences of opinion about the relation of Kārya with Kāraṇa. सत्कार्यवाद of सांख्य says that the basic material becomes transformed. This is called अवस्थाभेद, that is, the cotton becomes cloth. These are
the two stages of one material. Considering all this Naiyāyikas say the world must have a Kartā. Vaiśeṣika opines that atoms are the primordial causes. Sānkhya says त्रिगुणात्मकप्रकृति is the root cause. Mīmāṁsaka says the world is automatic. Even Goudapāda while discussing the cause of creation gives several opinions such as संक्ल्प the desire of God, क्रीडार्थ the play of God and भोगार्थ in order to make the animals experience the result of their कर्म. Vibhūti is the unlimited prowess of God. All these explanations invite certain arguments opposing them. Finally, Goudapāda concludes देवस्यैष स्वभावोऽयं आपकामस्य का स्मृता (गौडपादकारिका). He has endorsed the opinion of Mīmāṁsaka.

Birth, death and growth are not under human control. Rain, sunshine and many other things are helping animals on the earth. Man is not aware of the internal organs functioning constantly to keep him alive and functioning. कणाद says ईश्वरसिद्धि पुरुषयत्वे फल्यात्. Very often well planned projects fail where we see no reason. Man is gifted with consciousness, animation and energy. Consciousness helps him to know the outside world. Animation helps him to grow and feel pain and pleasure. Energy gives him the physical body. Man has no control on these three.

We have discussed all these things only to prove the existence of divine hand in creation and many other duties.
Here, we have proved that Kārya must have a Kāraṇa even if it is unknown. We can guess through available evidences the primordial cause which is Brahma. When it is difficult to establish one God, one wonders how our people worship hundreds of gods who have neither logical nor vedic support.

**Jñāna and Viṣaya**

**Knowledge and Matter**

Whole of the Indian philosophy stands on the infrastructure of knowledge as jñāna and matter as Viṣaya. Jñāna is divine because men cannot create it. But man is blessed with knowledge so that he may conduct his life in the world as long as he lives. Here we have the question whether knowledge can remain without Viṣaya. The answer is positive because in सुपुष्पित only jñāna remains without matter and शुद्धव्रह्म is only प्रज्ञानथन or ज्ञानस्वरूप without Viṣaya. Jīvātmā in the body will have contact with matter through अन्तःकरण, पर्यायदिय and वाक्. We have a division of स्वरूपज्ञान and वृत्तिज्ञान. Ātmā is called स्वरूपज्ञान and knowledge manifested through अन्तःकरण etc., is called वृत्तिज्ञान which is the primary source of संसार, कलेशा, जन्म, प्रवृत्ति and दोष.

In जागृति or wakeful condition, Knowledge is connected with Viṣaya and causes sukha and duḥkhha to अन्तःकरण. In dreams, jñāna itself plays the double role of
matter and knowledge. Both are absent in सुषुप्ति. In the process of yoga practice when man attains maturity he will have no connection with अन्तःकरण, इत्रिय and वाक् which are exclusively responsible for keeping jīvātmā in contact with the outside world. If these ten drop out only jīvātmā or स्वरूपज्ञान remains without any connection with the outer world. Goudapāda says,

आत्मतत्त्वविवृद्धेन न संकल्पयते यदा ।
अमनस्तान तदा याति ग्राह्याभावे तद्यथा हम् ॥

अमनस्तात means making mind inactive. ग्राह्याभाव means disconnection with matter. Therefore yogic practice is essential to wake our जीवात्मरूप from सविषयक्षण into निर्विषयक्षण severing our connection with अन्तःकरण, पश्चिमित्र and वाक्, which is the process for knowing matter.

Among buddhists the writers of darsanas discussed elaborately about jñāna and Viṣaya. वैभविक admits the existence of Jñāna and Viṣaya. योगाचार मaintains that jñāna alone is existing but not Viṣaya. सौत्रान्तिक says that Viṣaya can be inferred through jñāna. माध्यमिक does not believe in both jñāna and Viṣaya. This is called śūnyavāda.

If one wants to achieve maturity in the field of meditation he should be able to ward off the influence of
अन्तःकरण etc., Yogasūtra says चरितार्थानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः चितिशाक्तेः स्वसूपेन अवस्थितिविर्मोक्षः। (Last Sutra) वृत्तिज्ञान is considered avidyā. When स्वरूपज्ञान becomes strong enough it repels the influence of अविद्या. Then alone realisation of Ātmā becomes complete.

Devatās

Brahma is the supreme God and all the deities are subordinate to him. They are plenty in number and are mentioned in the Vedas here and there. इन्द्र, बृहस्पति, प्रजापति, वरुण, अग्नि etc., are found mentioned. We have a mantra in यजूर्वेदाणि which clearly states that devas are created by the Supreme one. ब्रह्म देवानू अजनयत्। ब्रह्मान् देवाः: त्रयः त्रिशत्। ब्रह्मानू इन्द्र प्रजापति। ब्रह्मानू ह विश्वा भूतानि। नावीव अन्तः समाहिता:।

This mantra clearly states that there are thirty three deities including Indra and Prājāpati.In Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, 3rd chapter 9th Brāhmaṇa, this matter is discussed. Śākalya questions Yājñavalkya about deities. After some discussion, Yājñavalkya concludes that there were only thirty three deities, which corroborate the number in Brāhmaṇa. There are अष्टी वसव:, एकादश रूपः:, द्वादश आदित्या:, इन्द्र:, प्रजापति:. The वसव:are द्रौ:, पृथ्वी:, वायु:, आप:, आदित्य:, चंद्रमा, नक्षत्राणि and अंतरिक्षम्; Space, earth, air, water, the sun, the moon, the stars and
atmospheric sky एकादशरुद्रा: the eleven rudras are ten Indriyas, sensory and motor included, plus mind. द्वादश आदित्या: the twelve Adityas are the twelve months of the year. Indra is called rain, Prājāpati is once again the power of maintaining entities in the creation.

By the above explanation in Upaniṣads it is clear that deities are not in the human form but they are potentialities of nature which are responsible for the welfare of created atmosphere. Rudra means one who makes others lament when he leaves the body. Āditya reduces the span of life, being the master of time factor. These Devatās are called ब्रह्मणो महिमान: or विभूतिय:. This is the answer given by Yājñavalkya to Sākalya.

Bādarāyaṇa opines that these deities have human form but Prabhākara Mīmāṃsaka boldly says विग्रहः हविरादान युगपत् कर्मसत्तिधि: । तृप्ति: चर्प्रदानं च देवतानां न विद्यते । Body, accepting oblations, being present in all the rituals at the same time, propitiation and granting of boon are not the duties of deities. Of course, many authors contradict this view. But there is one other explanation which we can accept partly. All the entities in the world have अधिष्ठातृदेवता, which means governing by divine power. For e.g., eyes are governed by the sun god, speech is governed by fire. Similarly, prthvī, planets etc., are governed by different deities. The earth, water and Tejas are called इमा: तिमोदेवता: in छान्दोग्य.
In Astrology prediction is based on nine planets. In the list of planets Rahu and Ketu, Moon and Sun are included. There are no planets by name Rahu and Ketu, which is proved beyond doubt. The Sun is classified as star, Moon is a satellite. The earth, although a planet, is not included in लम्बुण्डली by astrologers. Moreover, with all absurdity, they call Sani a lame 'nan and the son of the Sun. Budha was born illicitly of Tārā, the wife of Guru, by Candra who seduced her. Guru is called a Brāhmaṇa and Śani is called a Śudra. Learned men should examine all these aspects. When the knowledge had not advanced, they might have thought the same thing to be correct. But even after the discovery of reality, astrologers continue to adopt the same method which is totally horrible. I cannot understand how predictions based on wrong infrastructure become true. However, a large majority still reposes confidence in these astrological predictions. Of course, Astronomy and Mathematics are real and or equal to science. There are many other questions on Astrology the details of which are unnecessary here.

Singularity of God

How many Gods are there?
How many can we worship?
How far is it supported by Śāstras?

In matters of supersensory nature, nothing can be ascertained through the yardsticks we have. Therefore,
we rely upon the Upaniṣads. This field also has been trespassed by dishonest intellectuals who added some literature in the name of Upaniṣads to establish their own favourable Gods.

Fortunately, we have good evidence to cull out the genuine ones from the lot of two hundred and twenty Upaniṣads. Such Upaniṣads which are parts of the Vedas are considered genuine. Endorsing the same view directly or indirectly, Śankara and Madhvācārya have commented only on the same ten Upaniṣads belonging to the Vedas.

योगिप्रत्यक्ष is considered an evidence non-verifiable and taken for granted on this basis. If we consider the Upaniṣadic conviction that there is only one God whom they call by the name Brahma, the greatest or omnipotent, we do not find a second God in the Upaniṣads nor a wife to him. We give you here a few quotations to prove the matter.

सदेव सौम्य इदमग्रामसीतू एकमेव अद्वितीयम्। Earlier to creation there was only one Sat or being which was singular and second to none.

आत्मा वा इदं एक एव अग्र आसीत्। Here एक एव is noteworthy.

सुपर्ण विप्राः कवयो वचोभि: एकं संतं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति। (ऋक्क सहिता) The intellectuals consider one God as many. Here the word कल्पयन्ति means only speculated. एकं सत्
विरा बहुधा वदन्ति। (ऋक् संहिता) This also tells about the singularity.

We give some quotations from शंकरभाष्य.

ब्रह्मण: एकत्वात् एकरूपत्वाच्च ब्रह्मबहुत्वमपि वेदान्तेषु प्रतिपिपादयिष्ठैं इति वक्तुं न शक्यते। (३.३१) Brahma is one and he is having one form called consciousness. In philosophy we cannot find out any evidence to prove the plurality of Brahma.

न हि भेदोदपि वा अन्यादृशः संभवति बहुतरशुन्तिप्रसिद्ध एकेश्वरविरोधात्। (३.२.३५) We cannot give plurality since it is against the verdict of the Vedas.

अनेकेश्वर कल्पना आनर्थक्यं एकेन ईश्वरेण ईश्वरकार्यसिद्धेषु सिद्धांतहानि:। भगवानेव एकः वासुदेवः परमार्थः इत्यभ्युपगमात्। (२.२.४४) It is futile to speculate about many Gods. One God is capable of discharging all the duties of creation. If there is a second God the first has to be imperfect and incompetent. The verdict of Vedānta is lost. Therefore, we have to admit that there is only one God.

साचेवं वेदबाह्या ईश्वरकल्पना अनेकप्रकारा (२.२.३७) Any speculation of the plurality of gods is nothing but pure imagination and against the verdict of the Vedas.

तथा अन्यप्रतिषेधात् (३.२.३६) Brahma. The other God is not admitted.
The Supreme Being is one and has only one form. It is unknown and formless. People speculate falsely about the Supreme one as having many forms like the blind knowing the elephant partly by touch.

One Brahma, the immutable, is falsely speculated by the perverted as many like the blind knowing the elephant.

Rāmānuja likes to worship the same Brahma in the form of पुरुषोत्तम thus admitting one God.

“नि:समाभ्यधिकं अभ्यधत्तत्वं देवमौपनिषदी सरस्वती”

He is second to none nor there is anyone superior to him.
The only indisputable and unequivocal pramāṇa about the existence of God is Upaniṣads. Such being the case, people resort to worship hundreds of Gods with all seriousness. Let the people with wisdom deliberate over the matter. Unless they admit a large number of Gods, it is not possible to elevate any one of them to supremacy. The adjectives like सर्वशक्तिः, सर्वेष्ब्र: will be irrelevant.

Śvetāśwatara Upaniṣad

This Upaniṣad is not included within the ten and is not commented upon by the Ācāryas. We find Śankarabhāṣya on this, but this Śankara is not the same Śankarācārya. It is some one else by the same name. This belongs to कृष्णयजुर्वेद ब्रह्मण.

There are six chapters in this Upaniṣad. According to the twenty first mantra of sixth chapter, this is preached to a the class of recluses by श्रेताश्वतर, a great sage. The following is the मंत्र. “तपः प्रभावातु देवप्रसःदाच्च ब्रह्म ह श्रेताश्वतरोश्चविद्वान् अत्याश्रमिभ्य: परमं पवित्रं प्रोवाच सम्यक् ऋषिसिंहजुष्ठ्म”

This Upaniṣad contains many schools of thought and we find many मंत्रs of other Upaniṣads being repeated. This also explains सांख्य, योग, सामुण, निर्गुण, दैत and अदैत.

We do not find unanimity in the opinion of this Upaniṣad. This has helped the exponents of दैत like
Rāmānuja, Madhva and others who have profusely quoted from this Upaniṣad. It is, of course, difficult for us to determine the date of Sāṅkhya, but one thing can be said. Sāṅkhya is earlier to Buddha (500 B.C.) since the first teacher of सिद्धार्थ explained सांख्य to him.

The Upaniṣad begins with the following fundamental questions about philosophy and supersensory matters.

1. What is the primordial cause of cosmos?
2. Where do all the animals come from?
3. How is it that we are living?
4. Why do we suffer the most?
5. Is there any system?

Every thinking person will have these doubts while trying to understand the existence of God and the world where he is living.

There are several speculations about the primordial cause or creator of cosmos. But philosophy maintains that lifeless objects cannot accomplish a cosmos with design and purpose. Therefore they have taken Brahma as the cause since it constitutes not only the animating force but also energy and consciousness.

ते ध्यानयोगानुगता: अपश्यन् देवात्मशाक्ति स्वगुणे: निगृहाः।
य: कारणानि निरिवलानि तानि कालात्मयुक्तानि अधितिष्ठत्वेऽः।

(१५.२३) Through deep meditation, they were able to
visualise a divine power which is hidden by the trinity of सत्य, रजस्, तमस्. The same power governs all other causes mentioned by others and controls everything.

The answer to the second question is that we are parts of creation. We live only by the grace of that Supreme power. We die only to be reborn, if realisation is not achieved. All our miseries are due to our Karma only. There is a system in the world where we live. These are generally the answers for the above questions. These questions happen to be the key for opening the philosophical realm of knowledge.

We have the reference to सांख्य in the following मंत्र. अजामेकं लोहितशुक्लकृपणं बह्वी: प्रजा: सृज्ञानां सरुपा:।
अजो होको जुष्माणो अनुशेते जहात्येनां भुक्ताभोगां अजो अन्य:।

Here, प्रकृति with trinity creates everything. One of them i.e., जीव suffers after enjoying the pleasures of the mortal world. The other, the pure one, shines radiantly since it has renounced everything.

यो योनि योनि अधितिष्ठति एक: विश्वानिरूपाणि योनीस्तर्व:।
ऋषि प्रसूतं कपिलं य: तं अग्नि ज्ञाने: विवर्तितं जायमानं च पश्येत्।

Here, the word कपिल is taken for granted as the one who sponsored सांख्यदर्शन.

However, this is not consistent. सांख्य is later to the Vedas although it may be earliest among दर्शनाः.
Therefore the word कपिल found in the मंत्र may refer to some sage of the same name but not the author of सांख्य. This word कपिल is translated by commentators as pink colour.

दैति is found in the following mantra.

द्रा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिष्वजाते ।

tयोरत्त: पिपलं स्वाद्विति अनश्नून्य अन्य: अभिचाकशीति ।

There are two birds perching on the same tree. One of them is becoming weak after eating the fruits of the tree, whereas, the other shines radiantly since it has not consumed the fruit. This मंत्र metaphorically refers to the difference between जीवात्मा and परमात्मा.

पृथगात्मां प्रेमितारं च मल्वा जुज्ज: तत: तेन अमृतत्वं एति ।

(१.६) He who considers जीवात्मा different from the Supreme one attains immortality only by the grace of the other.

1.8 We have क्षर the world which is visible, अक्षर is जीवात्मा, one which is knowable and the other not visible. But both of them are being controlled by the Supreme one. जीवात्मा is helpless and compelled to experience the reward of Karma. However, he is freed only when he earns the grace of God.
1.9. There are two which are immortal; one is omniscient, another has knowledge narrowed. The Supreme one himself pervades the cosmos.

1.10. The perishable one is प्रकृति while जीवात्मा is imperishable. Both of them are under the subordination of the Supreme one, जीवात्मा should free himself from माया.

1.12. Brahma manifests itself in three ways as जीवात्मा, he who enjoys the pleasures of the world, the world is enjoyable, while he also keeps them under control.

1.13. Fire manifests only through fuel. It is neither visible nor non-existing. Similarly, Supreme one is invisible but existent. Yoga is explained in detail.

2.10 A man practicing yoga should select an even place free from pebbles, fire, sand, sound or watersheds. It should be pleasant to the mind. The eyes should not face light. The place may be a cave or a place where there is less air.

2.13. One who practises yoga will have a light body and sound health with appealing colour and melodious voice.

3.8. The mantra is taken from पुरुषसूक्त. Here, the sage attaining maturity says that he has realised the luminous Supreme Being who is beyond the mortal world. This is the only way for liberation.
3.9. There is none above him, nor is there a smaller or greater one. He has permeated the whole of the cosmos.

3.19. He has no hands or legs but he runs fast and is capable of grasping anything. He can see without eyes, he can hear without ears. The mantra means to say that the Supreme being does not need any instruments as man needs.

4.1. He has no colour, he has unlimited power. He is capable of withdrawing the cosmos into himself.

4.8. This mantra is taken from ऋक्संहिता. All the mantras have the single aim of explaining about the Supreme one. If a man does not realise him, what is the good of his being a sage or a practitioner.

4.18. When there was darkness earlier to creation, there was neither day nor night. Neither was there existent nor non-existent material. He was all alone in the form of consciousness prepared to do anything.

5.1. There are two branches of learning: प्रविष्ट and अप्रविष्ट. The former is eternal and the latter is evanescent .

6.18. The supreme one first of all created his agent as Brahma whom he taught all the Vedas. Now the Vedas help mankind to understand पराविष्ट.

6.19. He has no parts, is inactive, peaceful, flawless. He helps to reach अमृत or मौष.
6.22. This is the divine secret which is taught by divine personality. We should not teach this to one who is unfit for the purpose and preach only to such who ever has sincerity, devotion, assiduity and diligence. He is eligible for Vedānta.

Only important मंत्रs have been translated here so that readers can have a brief knowledge of this Upaniṣad.

Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad

This belongs to कृष्णयजुर्वेद. इयं ब्रह्मविद्या राजन् अस्माकं भगवता मैत्रिणा ख्याता। This sentence asserts that the great sage मैत्री has preached this ब्रह्मविद्या. There are seven प्रपाठकs in the Upaniṣad. शाखायण, a great sage and बृहदरथ a king both have talked about philosophy. There are many मंत्रs repeated from other Upaniṣads.

It also makes a reference to धुतनक्ष्त्र and hence historians have come to the conclusion that the Upaniṣad belongs to 2000 B.C.

It has referred to the king of lunar race. There is reference to सांख्य also and it refers to नट, an actor.

It advocates yoga including प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार etc. In one place we find the reference of त्रिमूर्ति which is out of place and gives room for the conjecture that this part might have been interpolated. Stress is laid on the practise of asceticism which alone can cut the the external relation,
the root cause of संसार. शुद्धचित्त can visualise the Supreme being while अशुद्धचित्त or चित्त not freed from वासना still sticks to the world.

Many other matters on philosophy found in other Upaniṣads are found repeated here.

Kouśītaki Upaniṣad

This belongs to ऋग्वेद. ‘वास्मे मनसि प्रतिषिद्धा’ is the शार्मिकता. This is in prose. There are four chapters. प्राणो ब्रह्मति स्म आह कौषीतिकिः। This indicates that कौषीतिकि was the आचार्य who taught this Upaniṣad. Devayāna and Pitryāna as described here are somewhat different from those found in other Upaniṣads.

In second chapter we have प्राणविद्या. पैलय, a sage taught प्राण as ब्रह्म. Some of the मंत्रs of this Upaniṣad have been discussed in ब्रह्मसूत्र. There is a legend of राजपथ, देवोदासी and इंद्र. Here it is clearly stated that प्राण and आत्मा are both identical and it is said, इंद्र मां प्राणं आत्मानं आयुः अमृतं इति उपास्व।’’

श्रेष्ठश्रेष्ठ, पैत्रायणि and कौषीतिकि Upaniṣads have not been commented upon by the Ācāryas since they are just repetitions of the same ideas that we find in other Upaniṣads. These three are found in parts of the Vedas and hence they are recognised.
There are hundreds of non-vedic Upaniṣads. If Orthodox people declare that each of them is as valid as the other, then they are answerable to the confusion of the conflicting ideas incorporated in those Upaniṣads. If we select one why we should reject the other is the Question which is not answerable. Therefore it is always safe to rely upon only Vedic Upaniṣads.
RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

Vedāṅgas

They are six in number and help in understanding the Vedas. Among those Kalpasūtras are important. They are divided into four groups. śruti, grha, dharma and śulba. We discuss here only about dharma. vasishtadharmasūtra belongs to ṛgveda, shaṅkalihita dharma to śuklyayuveda, aapastamba, bodhayana, hariṇyakṣeri and manva to kṛṣṇayuveda and gautamadharmasūtra to samveda.

These Dharmasūtras deal with Varṇāśrama dharma and the code of conduct of various rituals etc.

Darśanas

We have spoken already about the details of several Darśanas. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika belong to 500 B.C. They brought out first the process of logic. There are so many loopholes in the use of logic. Therefore they have classified logic into three groups - vāda, jalpa and vibhoota. vāda is meant for jñāsa, to understand the reality of objects. अविज्ञाततत्त्वे अर्थं कारणोपपत्ति: तत्वज्ञानार्थं उहः तर्कः I (nayyasūtra) When we wish to know the reality of something, reason is applied and research for discovering reality begins. This is healthy logic. But arguing for the sake of establishing something one believes in is called
is useless wrangling. When the sages felt the necessity of applying logic, they thought of explaining the process of logic in the form of these two Darśanas.

Next comes Śāṅkhya, which is the strongest among all the Darśanas. It laid more stress on reasoning and hence it had to adopt certain theories which were not admitted by the Vedas. Although it is highly appreciated in the circle of learned men, its non-Vedic ideas are refuted by Śankara and other commentators. Śāṅkhya depends more upon ज्ञान and its process of explanation is highly convincing. Yogadarśana mainly instructs people to practice meditation to maturity and achieve the aim. In Śāṅkhya we do not find any God mentioned while Yoga refers to Iśvara.

क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशये: अपरामृष्ट: पुरुषविशेष: ईश्वर:  
(योगसूत्र)

Yoga of course is desirable. However, Śankara does not approve of even yoga.

Pūrvamīmāmsa deals only with Karma and logic is totally absent. It depends upon the unquestionable authority of vedic verdict. Pūrvamīmāmsakas do not believe in God. They say man's birth and rebirth depend upon the nature of his Karma and hence once man frees himself from Karma he becomes liberated. They also say that even if God exists man cannot escape Karṇabandha.
There are several atheistic Darśanas called चावर्तक, बौद्ध and जैन. All of them are not approved because of their opposition to the Vedas.

Rāmāyaṇa

Rāmāyaṇa means रामस्य अयनं, the course of life led by Rāma. This is the first of the Kāvyas because it contains ornate style. This is called Ādikāvya and a model to all the later Kāvya literature. This is earlier to Mahābhārata and according to tradition it belongs to त्रेतायुग which we cannot accommodate within the frame of historical date. Vālmīki is said to be the Ādikavi of this magnum opus.

Rāmāyaṇa is considered the sacred work throughout India. It has also gone to Java, Sumatra and other countries. We have the following sloka about the Rāmāyaṇa:

वाल्मीकिकिरिसमभूता रामसागराधामिनी ।
पुनातु भुवनं पुण्यं रामायण महानदी ||

The river Rāmāyaṇa sprang from the mountain Vālmīki and joined the ocean Rāma. The great sage
Vālmīki while practicing meditation had an anthill covering his body and hence he is called वाल्मीकिः, वल्मीकात् आगतः. He lived on the bank of Tamasā and it is said that on seeing the pathetic condition of the female क्रौङ्ग bird after her mate was killed by a hunter Vālmīki developed a sort of pathos and uttered spontaneously,

मानिषाद प्रतिष्ठात्वं अगमः शाश्वतीः समाः।
यत्न्स्त्रभिनिन्दुनादेः काममोहितम्॥

The Śloka has two meanings. Not only it curses the hunter but also hails prosperity to Rāma who killed Rāvana, the काममोहित. Here Kāma means illicit love for another woman. Prema is different from Kāma. Kalidasa also observed,

निषादविद्वाण्डजदर्शनोत्थः श्लोकतः आपद्यत यस्य शोकः।

The compassion of Vālmīki at the sight of the lamenting female Krauncha bird became converted into śloka which later became the source of a great Kāvyā. It is said that karunarasa is प्रधान or important in whole of the Rāmāyaṇa. We have so many incidents in Rāmāyaṇa to prove it. One of them is the tragic death of Śravaṇa Kumāra which causes immense grief to his blind parents.

Rāma lead an ideal life and is worth emulating. Rāma is known for obedience to his father. He was a
warrior with a record of events in his life. He chose Sugrīva for his help leaving Vāli, the stronger one. If he had chosen Vāli it was easy for him to overcome the enemy. But he cared more for dharma and not for selfish profit. He also gave refuge to Vibhīṣaṇa well knowing that he was enemy's brother. In Rāmāyaṇa, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa, Guha, Jatāyu, Śabarī, Vibhīṣaṇa and Hanumān are known for their deep devotion to Rāma and they adored him as their God. Rāma worships Śiva before resorting to the construction of a bridge on the ocean. Rāma is believed to be the incarnation of Viṣṇu but we have counter arguments in this respect. He says in one place.

आत्मानं मानुषः मन्ये रामं दशरथातमजं।

I am Rāma, a man, the son of Daśaratha. In Araṇyakānda when Sītā was kidnapped, Lakṣmaṇa while consoling his brother says that it was the result of the sinful action of the past birth. This too indicates Rāma's human origin. Of course, this man had extraordinary powers gifted by God which is called Vibhūti in Bhagavadgītā.

Rāmāyaṇa is undoubtedly earlier to Mahābhārata, since the whole story is found narrated in Vanaparva. In Rāmāyaṇa, no mention is made about either Mahābhārata or any of its characters. Rāmāyaṇa is a monumental work and the poet hopes that it will continue in the world for
ever. यावत् स्थास्यनि गिरयः सरित्षश महीतलेः । तावत् रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचलिष्यति । Rāmāyaṇa will stay forever among people. It is said that Brahma appeared before Vālmīki and directed him to write Rāmāyaṇa giving him the power to visualise full events related to Rāma’s life.

Rāmāyaṇa contains, as it is, seven Kāndas. But the seventh one is believed to be an interpolation. The number of 24,000 slokas given by Vālmīki end with the YuddhaKānda. In Balakānda we find certain legends unconnected with the main story which are also said to be interpolations. Moreover Rāmāyaṇa does not begin with तपस्वाध्यायनिर्लं, as believed by our orthodox people. It actually begins from the 5th canto सर्वपूर्वमियं होषा कृत्स्नाहास्सीत् वसुंधरा. Wonderfully enough we have in second and third cantos different contents of Rāmāyaṇa one referring to Uttara Kānda and the other omitting it.

Mahābhārata

This is the second great epic of India which is very popular. This book contains more interpolations than any other work. For example, the main story of a feud in Kuru family covers only 24,000 ślokas whereas the whole Mahābhārata contains 1,00,000 ślokas. The book is called Jaya. Harivamśa with 16,000 ślokas is said to be the supplement of the Mahābhārata. Although the story of Krṣṇa is independently found in Bhāgavata he plays an
important role in Mahābhārata, being helpful to Pāndavas. In महाभारत 76,000 ślokas contain a large number of stories, dharmaśāstra etc. It is very difficult for us to find out what is genuine and what is interpolation. Bhagavadgītā is also believed to be interpolated by some critics.

महाभारत is called Itihāsa. This work helps many prominent poets, like rainwater helping the animals. Vyāsa, the author, is praised in this manner.

नमस्तन्विविदे तस्मै व्यासाय कविवेधसे ।
चक्रे पुष्यं सरस्वत्या यो वर्षमिव भारतम् ॥

Vyāsa is considered as Brahma amongst poets. Brahma made India sacred by creating Saraswati river whereas Vyāsa made the literature of India sacred by his words in the form of Bhārata.

The characters of Mahābhārata are not completely idealistic or flawless. They are overcome with rajoguṇa. Although Yudhiṣṭira is hailed for his dharma and satya, his gambling with Duryodhana knowing well that the opposite will win is an unpardonable sin on his part. He stooped to betting his brothers and wife as slaves. He remained remarkably patient. Extreme patience is very often mistaken for weakness and cowardice. It is he who was the source of all the difficulties of the Pāndavas in
general. Dhuryodhana and his party were of course highly avaricious but they were happier than Pāṇḍavas.

The story of Mahābhārata is instructive and we have to learn lessons from it. One thing we have to appreciate is the story of Krṣṇa who stood for maintaining dharma and helped Pāṇḍavas to win the battle ultimately. In spite of being victorious we cannot say that Pāṇḍavas were happy.

The date of Mahābhārata is said to be 500 B.C. approximately. Pāṇini mentioned Vāsudeva, Arjuna and Yudhiṣṭhira, characters of this epic in his Aṣṭādhyāyī. His date is 500 B.C. Patanjali of 144 B.C. refers to Bhīma, Sahadeva and Nakula as descendents of Kuru family. He also refers to Mahābhārata war as धर्मेण स्म कुर्को युध्यन्ते in the commentary of Pāṇinisūtra 3.2.122. ऐतरेय ब्राह्मण refers to Janamejaya and Bharata as powerful kings. आश्वलायण गृहसूत्र of 350 B.C. mentions Mahābhārata. During the days of Mahābhārata, perhaps, there was polygamy. All these speak of Mahābhārata as belonging to a period earlier to 500 B.C. Traditionally some people, depending upon कल्याण: of Pancānga say 3102 B.C. was the date when Kaliyuga began and when Janamejaya was ruling. His ancestor Arjuna was eighty years earlier to this period and Krṣṇa belonged to the same period. Vyāsa, the author of the work is one of the members of kuru family.
Mahābhārata has tremendous influence on later literature. We have a large number of Sanskrit works which have drawn material from this work.

The two great epics are highly valuable for India in many respects. Common people happen to know the characters of these two great epics and use them in their daily talks. These epics have travelled abroad also. We can understand the state of civilization of that period and the condition of the society existing then. There may be a large number of improbable events but they do not come in the way of our understanding noble ideals and follow them. While Rāmāyaṇa took place in the eastern part of India the Mahābhārata took place in the middle and western part of India.

Dharmaśāstras

They are called स्मृतयः. However any literature on theology other than प्रस्थानत्व is styled smṛti, the validity of which can be determined only after verification. They are considered pramāṇa when they are strictly in conformity with the vedic versions. विरोधेत्वनपक्षस्यात् असतिह्वनुमानम् । (जैमिनिस्वृत्) If it contradicts the Vedas it should be rejected. However there is a long established convention and one can infer that it might have existed earlier.
We find contradictory ideas in smrtis, hence they cannot be held valid. This is well explained in commentaries with examples.

In याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति the following twenty Dharma śāstras are mentioned - मनु, अत्रि, विष्णु, हारि, याज्ञवल्क्य, उदाना:, शुक्र, अत्रिरा:, यम, आपस्तम्ब, संवर्त, कात्यायन, बृहस्पति, पारशर, व्यास, शाब्दिकित, दक्ष, गौतम, शातातप and वसिष्ठ।

In these twenty, Yājñavalkya also mentions himself. How consistent it is, we are unable to understand. We have ten more smrtis added from time to time by authors of vested interest. They contain certain modern matters like banning sahagamana and permitting re-conversion. Some of them also recommend second marriage to widows. We find no unanimity in the opinions expressed by these smrtis about the code of conduct. People are confused not knowing what to follow. Therefore some of the authors have prepared a digest of these smrtis compiling the information from different smrtis and manipulating the interpretation so that there may be conciliatory decision. We have the following works like चतुर्वर्गचिन्तामणि by हेमाद्रि, नर्धिष्ठिस्वरु by कमलकरभट्ट, स्मृतिचन्द्रिका by देवपपभट्ट and many others. Our
orthodox pandits consider all the smritis equally valid in spite of contradictory versions. They hardly realise that dharma cannot be stagnant and is changeable. This shows lack of rational thinking.

Dr. R. Shamashastri, curator, orient library, Mysore, in his introduction to स्मृतिचंद्रिका, आशौचकाण्ड observes.... "The pandits believe that all the shastras belong to one place and one time which is absurd. Smritis are as valid as they were at the time when they were written." When contradiction is obvious they need not be given validity to such parts. Many instructions in the smritis are outdated and highly repugnant. It is admitted by the learned that apy knowledge on the matter of dharma or science are liable to revision from time to time. This is not admitted by orthodoxy whose loyalty sabotages the process of rational thinking. Another absurdity is that they attribute the authorship of Dharmasastras directly to God. This is also in my opinion an unbelievable absurdity and they want to glorify these works in this manner.

The dates of smritis are not well known and many have not discussed about it. It appears that all the smritis were earlier to याज्ञवल्क्य, since they are found mentioned in that smrti. The date of याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति can not be ascertained since we have no clear evidence.
This stands important among other smrtis and it contains five chapters. Vijñāneśvara of 10th century A.D. has commented upon this and the name of, which is Mitākṣara. This became the basis for Hindu Law during British rule. The commentary is highly elaborate than the text. No other smrti has given such details of law as Mitākṣara did. This covers nearly 296 pages. Of course there are other chapters on आश्रमधर्म, वर्णधर्म, आशौच, प्रायम्बित्त etc.

Dharma is defined as अलौकिकिनेन श्रेयःसाधनत्वेन विहितत्त्वम्।

Dharma is prescribed as a means of achieving something divine. This definition is given by Gagabhatta, a mīmāṃsaka. Dharma is divided into 5 parts - वर्णधर्म, आश्रमधर्म, गुणधर्म, निमित्तधर्म, and साधारणधर्म. वर्णधर्म deals with the four वर्णs, आश्रमधर्म with four आश्रमs. गुणधर्म refers to the coronation of the king and his duties in his capacity as a king. निमित्तधर्म refers to both what man performs according to ordinance, and what he fails to do. साधारणधर्म generally refers to morality. We remember here the words of Jaimini चोदनालुक्कणे अर्थः धर्मः। What is prescribed by विधि is Dharma.
मनुस्मृति

We have to say many things about Manuṣmṛti. People very often hide the defects of this smṛti in bringing out the ideals of the same. Manuṣmṛti is very popular. Dr. Ambedkar once burnt the copies of Manuṣmṛti openly since he disagreed with some of its ideas. There are many things which are helpful and good which we cannot rule out. Manu gives the definition of dharma as

विद्वान्: सेवितोनित्यं सम्मक्कु अद्वेषरागिभि: ||
हुदयेन अभ्यनुसात्: य: तं धर्मं निबोधत ||

what is practised by the learned who are free from prejudice and favour and what is permitted by consciousness is called dharma.

Manu is also very liberal in his interpretation of dharma and gives margin to the followers. He says देशधर्म, कुलधर्म and कालधर्म are different. He also says, when something is not liked and something is not said, then an assembly of scholars with three or nine members should decide what is to be done.

Yet, we are unable to restrain ourselves from passing some critical remarks on some repugnant ideas of smṛti. Casteism is very much glorified. The punishment under the law differs from caste to caste. Women are treated like dependents. He advocates six marriages to a man whereas a women is not allowed to
remarry even when she becomes a widow at the age of eight. He also says that a wife can be abandoned after eight years if she does not bear children, after ten years if all the children die or after twelve years if all the children are female. Here the author lacks the knowledge of the responsibility of both husband and wife in begetting children. A woman alone can not be considered guilty when it is not committed by her intentionally. The readers can understand the impropriety of these things.

He also prescribes मांसश्राद्ध. Of course, we can say that during the period of Manu it must have been in currency and today it is outdated. All the other smrtis contain the same matter with a few changes.

**Purāṇas**

Purāṇa means the ancient one. We have voluminous literature in the name of Purāṇas. We have eighteen Purāṇas with 4,00,000 ślokas altogether. The definition of Purāṇa is given as follows:

सर्गश्च प्रतिसर्गश्च वंशो मन्वन्तराणि च।
वंशानुचरितं चेति पुराणं पद्धतिक्षणम्॥

Creation, deluge, cosmogony, cosmology, chronology and genealogy all are dealt in Purāṇas. But literally, it is not possible to prove this. Purāṇas are mentioned in the Vedas also which puzzles us since Purāṇas are established to be of a later literary period.
�तं ब्राह्मणानि इतिहासः पुराणानि कल्यं is found in brāhmaṇa. Some explain that the legendary part of the Vedas is called Purāṇa. Purāṇa is mentioned in गौतमधर्मसूत्र, आश्वत्तालयनसूत्र and शांतलयनसूत्र.

Kautilya (325 B.C.) advocates the narration of Purāṇas with the object of moralising people. Śankara has very rarely quoted Purāṇa ślokas not exactly in support of philosophical doctrine but about some other issues. On the other hand other Ācāryas have profusely quoted from Purāṇas only such ślokas which strengthen their favourable ideas. Although every one declares that all the Purāṇas are valid, they are very clever and partisan in quoting the Purāṇas only when they favour their ideas. According to general convention all the Purāṇas have been written by VedaVyāsa, but historians differ. Common authorship of the eighteen Purāṇas is unbelievable for ViṣṇuPurāṇa tells about twenty eight persons having the same name as VedaVyāsa and also there is a reference, पुराणसंहिताचक्रेवेदव्यासो महामुनि-. It is clear that Vyāsa wrote only one work Purāṇasamhita, which was earlier to 400 BC and later the same has been expanded and enlarged to eighteen Purāṇas.

More over, BhāgavataPurāṇa is peculiar among this. It is purely Vaiṣṇava and contains the ornate style of Kāvyā which we do not find in other Purāṇas. Besides, Rāmānuja, although a Vaiṣṇava, has not quoted a single
śloka from Bhāgavata. Madhvācārya quotes profusely from BhāgavataPurāṇa to establish his vaiṣṇavism. Many historians doubt that Bhāgavata might have been written by some one else. More over, in the 12th skandha it gives the list of Purāṇas and also the number of ślokas in each. सूतपुराणिक is said to have narrated Purāṇas to the residents of Naimiṣāranya. The authorship of Purāṇas is doubtful.

Purāṇas are categorised as smrtis. They contain both concocted legends and also some of the moral, philosophical, religious and other subjects. Some parts of Purāṇas have certainly helped historians to know about the ancient kingdoms after Janemejaya, 3102 BC and Chandragupta Maurya, 325 BC. Rāmānuja, in one statement says, इतिहासधर्मशास्त्रपुराणानि वेदोपबृहणानि, which means that these help in understanding the Vedas. However, the same Ācārya says in वेदार्थसंग्रह, "All Purāṇas other than vaiṣṇava are त्याज्या:

Viṣṇupurāṇa contains the lineage of the Kings of Maurya, Sunga, Kanvas and Shaka dynasties. Hence, it cannot be placed earlier to First century AD. Moreover, we find the reference to Yavana and Turushka which of course, bewilders us about the date.

The Purāṇas which have been divided by vaiṣṇavas as सात्त्विक, राजस and तामस are as follows.

सात्त्विक Purāṇas are विष्णु, भागवत, नारदीय, गृह, पद्म and वराह
राजस Purāṇas are ब्रह्म, ब्रह्माण्ड, ब्रह्मवैवर्त, मार्कण्डेय, भविष्य and वामन

तामस Purāṇas are शिव, लिंग, स्कन्द, अमित, मत्स्य and कूर्म

There are twenty other upapurāṇas which have been added later by intellectuals to bring out their own ideas. We have to say a word about Devībhāgavata which is recognised neither as one of the eighteen Purāṇas nor included in upapurāṇas. Evidently it is written by men of sākta cult who wanted to establish Goddess ṣakti as the Supreme one, challenging the ideas of Bhāgavata. The rivalry between the two cannot establish reality.

Viṣṇupurāṇa: There are 23,000 ślokas which contain episodes of Dhruva, Prahlāda, Yayāti and Śrī Krṣṇa. Rāmānuja has discussed many ślokas of ViṣṇuPurāṇa to support his theory. Parāśara narrates this Purāṇa to Maitreya. Jains are denounced in the third Amśa.

Bhāgavatapurāṇa: It contains 18,000 verses. दशमस्कन्द is very big containing two parts narrating the Krṣṇacarita in detail. This is believed to have been written before the period of Madhva probably in 11th Century AD. Vallabhācārya commented over this Purāṇa in support of his theory of पुष्टिमार्गः.
Näradiyapurāṇa: It contains 25,000 ślokas. Alberuni of 11th Century AD has referred to this Purāṇa in his travelogue. Vallabhasena of 12th Century AD has quoted from this Purāṇa. Danāsāgara, his work also describes 18 Purāṇas. This upholds Viṣṇu cult. Sanat Kumāra narrates this to Nārada.

Garudapurāṇa: It contains 19,000 ślokas. Viṣṇu is considered Supreme. It describes how a sinful man passes through a troublesome passage to naraka crossing Vaitarani, a river of blood.

Padmapurāṇa: It contains 55,000 ślokas. This is also dedicated to Viṣṇu. This contains the story of Śakuntala as adopted by Kalidasa which differs from the narration of the same in Mahābhārata. It has referred to Bhāgavata cult and also Jains.

Varāhapurāṇa: It contains 24,000 ślokas. Viṣṇu in the form of Varāha has narrated it. Hemadri of 13th Century AD refers to this Purāṇa. It gives an account of Nacīketa and describes Mathura and also hell and heaven in detail.

Brahmapurāṇa: There are 10,000 verses. The story of Krṣṇa, Pārvati, Mārkandeya etc. are found here. This is known as Ādipurāṇa. Brahma narrates it to Dakṣa. The name does not signify anything. It also gives an account of holy places in Orissa.
Brahmāndapurāṇa: There are 12,000 ślokas. अध्यात्मरामायण forms a part of this Purāṇa. This deals with समर्पीप, युग, य्रह and नक्ष्ट्र. The translation of this Purāṇa was popular in Java in 5th Century AD.

Brahmavaivartapurāṇa: There are 18,000 ślokas. This explains that cosmos is the transformation of Brahma. Krṣṇa's importance is stressed.

Mārkanḍeyapurāṇa: There are 9,000 ślokas. This has been translated into English, German and other languages. दुर्गासिंहशती is a part of this Purāṇa. Madālasā teaches Brahmavidyā to her son Alarka. This refers to Mahābhārata. There are legends about Sūrya, Agni and they describe creation and deluge (प्रलय).

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa: There are 14,500 ślokas. It contains prophesies of future. This describes many propitiatory rituals. This is highly dogmatic.

Vāmanapurāṇa: It contains 10,000 ślokas, tells about Vāmana avatāra. it is like Varāhapurāṇa in matter and manner.

Vāyupurāṇa: It has 24,000 ślokas. This Purāṇa is mentioned in शांतिनकायनसूत्र and शतपथब्राह्मण. Bhanabhassa of 7th Century AD refers to this Purāṇa. This mentions the Gupta Dynasty of 4th Century AD. This fanatically defends the supremacy of Śiva and also describes Viṣṇu and Pāṣupatayoga.
**Lingapurāṇa**: It has 11,000 ślokas. It considers Śiva as supreme and gives 28 incarnations of Śiva who tests the sincerity of the devotion of devotees. पशु-, पाश and पशुपति, the fundamental principles of śaivism are explained here.शतरुद्रीय is a part of it.

**Skandapurāṇa**: This is the biggest of all. There are 80100 ślokas. It describes the birth of Kumāra and killing of Tārāka which happens to be the plot of Kumārasambhava of Kalidasa. सूतसंहिता forms part of it. This is unrivalled among Śiva Purāṇas. Dharmaśastras are found repeated in toto.

**Agnipurāṇa**: There are 19,000 ślokas. The Purāṇa is narrated by Agni to Vaśiṣṭa. आम्बे हिपुराणे अस्मिन् सर्वा: विद्या: प्रदर्शिता. All branches of learning are dealt within this Purāṇa. The subject contains miscellaneous matters. We have incarnations of Viṣṇu, summary of two epics, temple architecture, astronomy, rhetorics, grammar, yoga, advaita philosophy and Bhagavadgītā. Some parts might have been interpolated.

**Matsyapurāṇa**: It has 14,000 ślokas. Manu and the Primordial fish are described here. This describes manes, (पितर:) and ceremonies. This contains the legend of त्रिपुरासुरसंहार and many things related to idolafry.
Kūrmapurāṇa: There are 17,000 ślokas. This gives importance to Śiva. It contains ईश्वरीगीता and व्यासगीता. This Purāṇa describes सप्तद्वीप and जम्बूद्वीप as being one. ब्राह्मी संहिता with 6,000 ślokas is important. Supremacy of Śiva, Pārvatī’s meditation, greatness of Kāśi and Prayāga are described.

Conclusion

Many Purāṇas supplied material to the later poets. Everywhere, in Purāṇas, we find the matter repeated and for teaching religion they have taken smṛtis and dharmaśāstras. Purāṇas certainly contain useful information but there are many dogmatic and unbelievable legends reaching the level of absurdity. They are sectarian and fanatic. Rational or critical approach is absent. If all the Purāṇas are equally authentic, as the Orthodox believe, there will be confusion of ideas as they contain conflicting matters. If we select only one of them to defend our favourite school, why the others are to be neglected is the unsolved problem.

Āgamas

The major communities of India are three - Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta. There are two Vaiṣṇava Āgamas - Pāncharātra and Vaikhānasa. Śaivāgamas are four. They are काम्यक, वातूल, माहेश्वर and पशुपत. Śaktāgamas are twenty eight in number.
In Vaiṣṇava Āgamas Viṣṇu is placed above all the other Gods. Without accepting the plurality of gods, this is not possible and it is against the verdict of the Vedas which declare there is one Supreme God called Brahma.

Pāḍarātreat mainly deals with the establishment of temples, idol worship and the procedure etc., elaborately. This is voluminous because here in this āgama nine parts are major. All the parts of Pāncarātra are not in accordance to vedic version. Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas have taken the help of Pāncarātra to establish the supremacy of Viṣṇu since they were disappointed as the vedic Upaniṣads do not advocate this. Many of the Vaiṣṇava conventions are found in Pāncarātra. सात्त्विक सन्हिता is given importance. There is one Bhāgavata Pantha, the followers of which inhabit the west coast. They follow Pāncarātra and Bhāgavatapurāṇa. The date of Pāncarātra can be assigned to 200 BC since we find the same referred to in shāntiparva of Mahābhārata in the portion of मोक्षधर्मपर्व.

Śaiva is divided into many classes. Nambiārs in Tamil Nadu are non brahmins and staunch Śaivas. There are gurukkals, a class of Brahmins, who worship at Śiva temples. Veeraśaiva comes under this category. We have कालामुखा:, महेश्वरा:, पाणपत: and कापालिका: who adopt वामाचार, an obnoxious way of worshipping Śiva. In Vaiṣṇava fortunately there is no वामाचार. All the Āgamas
worship Śiva and believe that Śiva is different from Rudra. We have elaborate account of Śaivadharma in these Āgamas. Śaivas are in majority in whole of India. We can mention here द्वादशान्योतिरिंग twelve important shrines of Śiva, who is worshipped in the form of Linga.

Śiva is mostly worshipped in the form of Linga which has no form of a human being. It can be equated with Śāliigrāma which is worshiped as Viṣṇu. According to philosophical explanation, here they take अष्टमूर्तितत्व अष्टमूर्तितत्व and explain that whole of cosmos contains seven important elements. Śiva is the controller of water, earth, air, space, the sun, the moon and the fire and Śiva himself is the combination of all. These constitute Brahmānda which is circular, अण्डाकार. Linga symbolizes this form of brahmānda and we worship him in this form. The invocation of Śakuntalā contains this information.

Śāktāgama and Tantrāṇi.

Śaktāgamas belong to tantra category. They are Twenty Eight in number. We have details of the worship of Śakti in these Āgamas. Kolluru Mookambika is worshipped according to vijayāgama, one of the Śāktāgamas. Śakti is the energy which is personified as a woman deity. Śakti, māyā and prakṛti are used by
Śankara as synonyms and they are sources of the creation. Brahma remains passive as he releases his own energy to create in the form of ūakti. In Upaniṣads Brahma, the primordial cause is described as one which has no gender and hence the worship of God in female form cannot be vedic. Although we find in Rgveda, some of the female deities like Usha, Indrani etc., they are not Brahma but subordinate powers employed to maintain the cosmos. But the system has come into vogue according to historians since 300 AD and the first ūakti is consecrated at Udyāna, a village in Assam. We have in ललितासहस्रनाम, उद्याणपीठनित्रयाये नमः,

Bengal, Assam and Nepal are renowned for Durga cult. Vaiṣṇodevi at Kashmir, Vajreshvari at Bombay, Santoshīmā in Maharashtra, Shivākāmi at Madras are well known as ūakti centres. According to scientific explanation energy is the root cause of all the entities in the world. We have the famous formula of Einstein $E=mc^2$. Śankara has corroborated in the statement शाक्त्यात्मकं कारणं कार्यात्मिका शक्ति: in सूत्रभाष्य.

In Amara we have

ब्राह्मी महेश्वरी चैव कौमारी वैष्णवी तथा ।
वाराही चैव चेन्द्राणी चामुण्डा सस्मात्तुका: ॥

which shows that the worship of ūakti in various forms was in currency since 100 BC. Sānkhyas say
prakrti is the root cause and prakrti is nothing but energy. All the Devatās, which are not Brahma exactly, are nothing but several potentialities of nature which are personified. For example: Lakṣmī is the personification of wealth, Saraswathī of learning, Pārvathī of energy. They are not exactly female personalities as exhibited by idols. In some places ṛṣhṭa-deva or governing demi-god is given as Vāyu for Prāṇa, the Sun for eyes, Fire for speech, Varuṇa for water etc. According to Jadunath Sorcor's history, the temple of Kāmakhyā at Assam was built in 1500 AD and 150 men were sacrificed. Bengal is known for Durga pooja. In Mahābhārata at Bhīṣmaparva Krṣṇa advises Arjuna to worship Durgā to gain victory in the impending war. She was also called Kāli, Kapālā, Chandī, Karāli, Vijayā etc.,

Banabhatta has described विन्ध्यवासिनी चण्डिकागृह in his Kādambarī. According to history from 6th century AD upto 10th century Durgā pūja in India had established itself. Baudhāṇas who do not believe in God worship Tārādevi in Tibet. Jains similarly worship Padmāvatī at Huncha near Tirtahalli. At Kashmir we find sixty four works on śakti cult most of which adopt वामाचार or obnoxious way of worshipping. अभिनवगुप्त has written देवीयामल, कुलचूर्दामणि, कुलोत्तर, कुलसार, मालिनीविजय etc. śakti worship has also crept into the lines of Upaniṣads
due to the votaries of śakti cult. For example कौलोपनिषत्, त्रिपुरतापनी उपनिषत्, देवी उपनिषत् etc.

Śiva and śakti both are said to be the fundamental causes of creation. The followers use mantra, yantra, mudrā and nyāsa. They also wear tri pundra of ashes. They do not care for castes. In SkāndaPurāṇa we have some indications. On the whole worship of God in the female form has no sanction of the Vedas. However, the votaries of śakti cult are unmindful of this.
### Transliteration Convention

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List of Books by Prof. C. Ananthachar

1. Shabda Manjari
2. Lagudatu Manjari
3. Sanskrit grammar
4. Philosophy of Upanishads

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