

## Geographical reflections in the Bhagavad Gita: Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

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### Abstract

*Bhagavad Gita with reference to geographical reflection and environmental education for sustainability of modern world. The study is concentrated to reinterpretation of passages of Bhagavad Gita with reverence to geographical knowledge and insights for ecology, economy and societal sustainability. The method of the study is narrative by using qualitative approaches. The findings of the study clearly reveal that the insights of Bhagavad Gita is essential, important and useful for modern world in order to develop ethical and moral grounds for deep ecology i.e. co-existence of soil (mother earth), soul (spiritual value for connecting human action to universe) and society (equidistance of cultural values and traditions for the principle of live and late live).*

*Key Words: Light of tower, cosmology, spiritual life, soul ecology, Brahma Vidhya*

### Introduction

Interconnectedness of man with nature aiming to understand humanity's residence on the earth. In geography, the *geo-* refers to the biological idea of mother Earth, Gaia, and *graphy* to a cultural connotation referring to subjective meaning of place with human interference and connectedness (e.g. love) space transfers to place (Singh, 2017). This was a kind of *deep* geography, where historical-cultural-ecological-landscape concerns altogether make a sense of meaning and understanding in the present era of global understanding. The messages of geography in Bhagavad Gita is being accepted as a light-tower for ecology, soul and society awareness that commonly envisioned in the frame of *sacred ecology*. This paper is an attempt to discuss the insights of Bhagavad Gita in geographical study and also point out the main lessons of the same text to modern world in order to develop ethical and moral grounds for deep ecology i.e. co-existence of soil (mother earth), soul (spiritual value for connecting human action to universe) and society (equidistance of cultural values and traditions for the principle of live and late live). The paper is framed on the basis of reinterpretation of text, passages and Shloka of Bhagavad Gita with reference to geographical

reflection and environmental education for sustainability of modern world. Therefore, the method of the paper is narrative adopting qualitative approaches. At the moment, paper is limited to extract the meaning and purposes of Bhagavad Gita text and passages.

## **Geographical Horizon of Bhagavad Gita**

Bhagavad Gita is Brahma Vidhya (Universal Science) which deals of truth, beauty, and love as the eternal characters and constitute Sanatana Dharma (the eternal law of life). The colophon of the Bhagavad Gita reads:

**ब्रह्मविद्यायां योशास्त्रे कृष्णार्जुनसंवादः ।**

Brahma Vidhya is the rational basis in which man is reasoning creature and nothing irrational in this world. Yogashastra is the ethical discipline. It is the dialogues of high and low minds (teacher-student) of the human soul, and god of all creatures. Sir Charles Wilkins beautifully wrote the deep insights and broader implication of Bhagavad Gita as:

*When the British Empire is lost to memory, when its sources of prosperity and wealth are sunk in oblivion, this book (Bhagavad Gita) will remain to inspire the millions of human beings and giving them comfort and joy (cf. Radhakrishnan, The Convocation Speech at TU, B.S. 2020 Kartik, 21).*

Similarly, Kragh, (2004) mentioned that Bhagavad Gita is a beautiful text of classical poetry, a masterpiece of ancient literature which an exposition of *Brahma Vidhya* (Science of the Absolute), as some dazzled interpreters proclaim, means to return the understanding of science to the most primitive notion of scientificity. Many passages in the Bhagavad Gita teach the themes related to universe (Brahma), ecology (world), human emotion (psychology) and matter of scientific curiosity in teacher -student (*Guru-Sishya Parampra* ) relationship (Reddy, 2012). In 28<sup>th</sup> Shloka of first Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita Arjun (student) said to Krsna (teacher) that he felt the limbs of his body quivering and his mouth drying up when he observed battle field of the Kurukshetra.

दृष्टेयं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुत्थितम् । सीदन्ति मम गात्रा मुखं च परिशुष्यति ॥२८॥

This Shloka indicates that Arjun wanted to know the proper way what to be done in his future walk in life. He (Arjun) believed that his teacher (Krsna) directed him properly.

After the knowledge given by the Krsna about *Tattwa* (elements) *Tattwa Vidhya* (Knowledge of the principles of Existence), soul and matter in perspective of human model in a very strange way about today's cosmology. Then in 73<sup>rd</sup> Shloka of 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Arjun said my dear Krsna, O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by your mercy. I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to your instruction.

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत । स्थितोस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥७३॥

This version clearly reflects that Bhagavad Gita is not only the science of earth and man but also the light tower for human beings to understand the nature and culture with spiritual values in broader perspective.

### **Bhagavad Gita as a universal science (Cosmology)**

Bhagavad Gita is a cosmology based on the human model, and the structure of the universe is exposed through a cosmogony which is the fundamental base to the current scientific cosmogony. It insights the order of cosmic emanation in the two visions is diametrically opposite, because the which appeared first in the universe, in the Hindu view, as well as what appeared last is the opposite of what emerged according to scientific emanation. For example, in the order of evolution of the *Tattwas*, the Primordial Matter (*Prakrti*) unfolded first in the intellect (*Mahat*), then in Egoism (Nelson, 2000).

The asceticism of the Bhagavad Gita *is* to be combined as in the model of Arjuna the warrior, whom instructs not to abandon his duty-with a kind of consecrated activity in the world. This is, of course, the famous *karma-yoga* of the Bhagavad Gita. One is to remain in one's work, abandoning egoism, desire, and attachment, acting for the sake of duty or as a form of devotional offering to the divine.

Dabas and Singh, (2016) discussed the ideal of desireless action for which the text is well-known. This notion of consecrated action is connected in an

ecologically interesting way with the reinterpretation of the ancient Vedic sacrifice (*yajna*) and the closely related awareness of the need to maintain good relationships with the Vedic Gods, the *devas*, many of whom are associated with natural phenomena. Therefore, for the Bhagavad Gita admirer, if any subject turns out to be different from its message remarked that Hindu mythology is virtually a large scientific discovery. Hindu deities such as Shiva and Vishnu continuously dance the creation and destruction of universe. The relevance for life is inherent in the Hindu religion with its pantheon of Gods. The Hindu view is God-filled space of an animate universe. Initiated in the historical past, the Vedic, Puranic literature and treatises fully describe the sense of respect for nature and attempt to make awareness of the crisis calling for profound changes in the way human beings relate to the natural world (cf. *Sri Dattatreya's 24 gurus*) (Haigh,2006).

Some Bhagavad Gita teachings are similar to the teachings of positive psychology of western concept. However, Bhagavad Gita is a revered text in Hindu society since ancient times, it has been a guide for people for thousands of years but in recent years, people seem to have stopped reading it and blindly believe its distorted versions that are advocated by a few people with vested interests. There are many examples from the Bhagavad Gita, which may prove effective in community building resilience (CBR) in human-nature disasters. Gita teaches people to treat pleasure and pain, success and failure alike and suggests that failure is also a step in one's progress. It also teaches people to focus on their actions and not on the results, for there are other factors that affect the results. There are many such profound thoughts and words of wisdom in Bhagavad Gita that have broader ethical guide to ecology of soil, ecology of soul and ecology of society, and the earlier the positive interventions are introduced more effective however, much research work is needed in those areas (Dilip et al., 2014) .

The first reference of cosmic evolution is given in the *Purushasukta* of the *Rig Veda* (RgV) that explains that in the beginning came the golden germ (*hiranyagarbha*), i.e. the primal seed (RgV 10.121.1). The other Vedic sources refer that the first seed was the sound, known as Om -kara a combination of **A**, **U**, **M**, the primeval sound from which the world and other planets came into existence (cf. Fig. 1). Thus, Om (*Pranav* in Vedic terms) becomes the medium by which every eternal (inner) soul connects itself with the Creator of the cosmos.

The principal *Upanishads* set forth Om as the object of profound religious meditation, the highest spiritual efficacy being attributed not only to the whole word but also to the three sounds **A** (*a-k\_ra*), **U** (*u-k\_ra*), **M** (*ma-k\_ra*), of which it consists. *A-k\_ra* means form or shape like earth, trees, or any other object. *U-k\_ra*

means formless or shapeless like water, air or fire). *Ma-k\_ra* means neither shape nor shapeless (but still exists) like the dark matter in the Universe. When we combine all three syllables we get *AUM* (Om) which is a combination of *A-k\_ra*, *U-k\_ra*, and *Ma-k\_ra* (Figure-1).

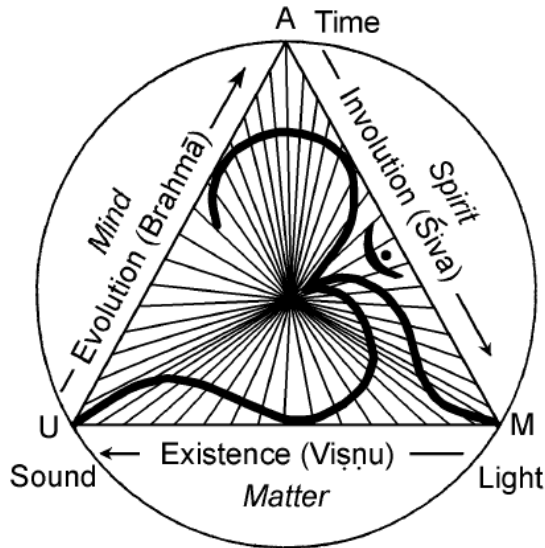


Figure-1: The Triad of Om kara

The ancient myths about creation, it seems that the presence of primordial water, in some reports it exists even before creation. The Earth was shapeless and empty, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters (*mayim*). God said, Let there be a firmament between the waters, and separate it from one another. God made the firmament and separated the waters that were under the firmament from those that were above. In the Vedic hymns, water (सलिलम् - *salilam*) appears in one of the best-known mythological hymns that is hymn of Creation (*Rg Veda*). There was darkness covered by darkness at the beginning, all this (world) was indistinguishable water (अप्रकेतम् सलिलम् सर्वमा इदम् - *apraketam salilam sarvamā idam*). The primordial waters are present in myths of the creation of other ancient peoples. Tales of Miletus imagined that water was the origin of all creation. Ancient traditions speak of the existence of the Cosmic Ocean before creation.

Now, the curious thing is that, with the increase of knowledge about the universe, it was discovered that water in the liquid state is a rarity in the cosmos.

Botelho (2020) pointing out the current research on exoplanets and he revealed so far that a planet needs to be in close proximity to its star, in such a way that temperature provides for the maintenance of liquid water, and this condition is rare in the universe which is why earth is a privileged. The above myths about primordial waters, at the time of creation, are examples of how the ancient revelations do not exceed the limits of the knowledge available at the time of their compositions. In order to cover up this speculative obsolescence, defenders of ancient cultures introduce *an esoteric* meaning for these primordial waters, claiming that they are symbols that represent Primordial Matter.

### **Evolution of material world**

If once analyzes the description of this Primordial Matter by esotericists, what s/he realizes that it is full of fantasy speculation. Likewise, the ancients were also able to perceive the process of developing something from a potential thing that is the egg becomes a bird, the seed develops into a plant, the bud becomes a flower, and the embryo develops into an adult creature and so on. Based on this idea, ancient Hindus created the presence of हिरण्यगर्भ - *Hiranyagarbha*, the Golden Embryo, in some creation myths. Then, some old speculations coincide with some current scientific discoveries, which lead some religious interpreters to proclaim the actuality of the old ideas, since this process of passing from the potential to the manifest is a universal law, which is perceived until by a child (Baggott, 2018).

As for the creation myths of the ancient Hindus, we are particularly interested here, which exposes creation based on an anthropocentric concept. This is the Hymn to *Purusha* (पुरुष सुक्त - *Purusha Sukta*), Hymn to the Cosmic Man. In this text, the universe is created from the Cosmic Man (*Purusha*), so the moon was born from his mind, the sun from his eyes, the gods *Indra* and *Agni* were born from his mouth and *Vāyu* from his breath. From his navel, the firmament came, from his head the sky was produced, from his feet, the earth; and the four cardinal points came from his ear. We can point out and analyze how this anthropocentric idea persists, with variations, in the cosmology of *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Sāmkhya* system, providing them with an anthropic character. This anthropocentric emphasis has led some authors to evaluate the cosmology of the *Sāmkhya* system as a psychological cosmology or a cosmological psychology.

The structure of the cosmos, which can be called the proto-*Sāmkhya* classification, is mentioned in *Bhagavad Gita* in 4<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter as ether, air, fire, water, earth, mind, intelligence, and false ego all together these eight constitute material energies.

भूमिरापोनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च । अहंकार इतीय मे भिन्ना प्रकृष्टधा ॥४॥

These eight *Tattwas* (Principles of Existence): Earth (*bhūmi*), water (*āpas*), fire (*anala*), air (*vāyu*), ether (sky or *kham*), mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and egoism (*ahamkāra*) are matter (*Prakrti*) which divided into eight parts. Unlike the cosmology of the developed *Sāmkhya* system, whose concern with the derivation of the *Tattwas* (Principles) from *Prakrti* (Primordial Matter) is emphatic, the latter verse mentions the division of *Prakrti* into eight *Tattwas*, but it is not mentioned that these eight *Tattwas* derive from *Prakrti* (Primordial Matter).

In the following verse i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> Shloka, it is mentioned that this is the lower matter (*prakrti*), the upper matter is जीवभूत - *jīvabhūta*, the element of life (Prabhupada(2000)).

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम । जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेद धार्यते जगत् ॥५॥

The curious thing is that this is the only passage where some *Tattwas* (Principles of Existence) are mentioned as components of *Prakrti* (Primordial Matter). It is a fact that the process of unfolding the upper *Tattwas* into lower *Tattwas*, in the most developed period of the *Sāmkhya* system. Therefore, Bhagavad Gita describes the origin of the other *Tattwas*: the five *Jnānendriyas* (organs of knowledge), the five *Karmendriyas* (organs of action) and the five *Tanmātras* (objects of the senses). The natural (praktical) origin of all *Tattwas* can only be deduced from the 10<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 9<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Bhagavad Gita as with *Purusha* as supervisor, the Primordial Matter (*Prakrti*) generates all things animate and inanimate.

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् । हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद् विपरिवर्तते ॥९०॥

The Supreme Godhead Krsna said that this material nature is one of my energies which is working under my direction, O son of Kunti, producing all moving and non-moving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

In order to cover up the gynecological ignorance of the Bhagavad Gita illustrates the word गर्भ - *garbha* by semen, seed or germ, instead of embryo or fetus. Some words derived from गर्भ - *garbha* are गर्भत्व *garbhatwa* pregnancy; गर्भवती - *garbhavatī* pregnant and गर्भवध - *garbhavadha* abortion, therefore all related to the embryo, and not to semen or seed. The Sanskrit words for semen or sperm are रेतस् - *retas* and रेत्र - *retram*, and for seed, the most common is बीज - *bīja*.

Gynecologically, as we all know, embryo (*garbha*) is not placed in the uterus (*yonī*), but the semen (*retam*) is put in the uterus. Then, admirers of Bhagavad Gita has to change the meaning of the word *garbha* to semen or seed, otherwise it would be comical (Malinar, 2007).

Bhagavad Gita further insights the essential elements in the creation and functioning of the universe, as well as the mind that are the त्रिगुणाः - *trigunāh*, the Three States of Matter (*Prakṛti*). Bhagavad Gita proclaims that there is no creature, either on Earth, or even in Heaven among the gods, that is free of these three states (*trigunas*) derived from Matter (*Prakṛti*).

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः । सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात् त्रिभिर्गुणै ॥ ४०॥  
(40<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter).

The relationship between *Prakṛti* and the *Tattwas* is vaguely described in the 27<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter as ;

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः । अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते

It is evident from the Shloka (3-27) that the relationship between matter (*Prakṛti*) and states (*Gunās*) is abundant. Actions, everywhere, are carried out by the states (*gunās*) of Matter (*Prakṛti*). We have to know that Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*) and Spirit (*Purusha*) are eternal, and also know that transformations (*vikāras*) and states (*Gunās*), too, arise from Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*) ( 19<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter).

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिमौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् । अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥१९॥

These three states (*trigunas*) are सत्त्वम् - *sattwam* (equilibrium); रजस् - *rajas* (movement) and तमस् - *tamas* (inertia), which are present and influence all levels and circumstances of the universe, life and behavior, whether physical, mental or moral. Unable to recognize the mind as the symbolic representation of the world, Bhagavad Gita and *Sāmkhya* ideas imagined that the body, thought, emotions, behavior and morals were the result of states (*gunās*) of matter at different levels of existence i.e. the physical, the mental and the moral. For these ancients, morality was not a value judgment, but a state of matter (*prakṛti*) acting in the mental world, neither the mind a creation of the developed brain (to know the history of brain evolution ( Cunnane, et.al., 2010). Thus, the physical body, the mind and morality are different states of Matter. For this reason, someone call the *Sāmkhya* system



*psychological cosmology or cosmological psychology* as it fuses physical body and mind in Matter (*Prakrti*).

### **Bhagavad Gita as life line for environmental protection and sustainability**

The insights of Bhagavad Gita direct us towards deep ecology for the environmental conservation and sustainability of world communities. Bhagavad Gita teaches us to respect all living things as the part and parcel of Lord Krsna and our moral duty is to be maintained co-existence of living creatures. Thus, Lord Dattatreya (Bhishnu) considers as the protector of the environment. This would help us to develop an ethic of the environment relevant to present needs. The key text regarding such moral ground to the ecological soundness and co-existence of living and non-living things in universe comes from the 7<sup>th</sup> Shloka of 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

**इहैकस्थं जगत् कृत्स्न पश्याच्च सचराचरम् । म म देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुच्छसि ॥७॥**

In this passage Krsna said that the universal form of world you can show whatever you now desire to see and whatever you may want to see in future. Everything moving and nonmoving (living and non-living things) is in one place. Dattatreya explains that he gained enlightenment by observing the world around him, where he found 24 gurus (Earth, wind, sky, water, fire, the Moon, the Sun, some pigeons, a python, the ocean, a honeybee, a beekeeper, an elephant, a deer, a fish, a reformed prostitute, a small squirrel, a child, a hawk, a young housewife, an archer, a snake, a spider, and a wasp) (Chetananada, 1988).

The teachings of Dattatreya's demonstrated an educational method based on intellectual problem solving. From such roots, Dattatreya emerged as a key figure in Hindu environmental education for sustainable development and worth attention by all of those who would teach environmental education in a multicultural context. This evinces that the Bhagavad Gita is regarded as the ultimate source, soul, and substance of everything. The message of this larger teachings of Bhagavad Gita is the main problems of environmental education for sustainable development are mental, not environmental. They arise from everything we conceive ourselves and our world to be and our views about how we should direct our lives. The challenge for environmental education for sustainable development is to make humans safe for the biosphere (Pokhrel, 2015). Thus, the world is sacred, by showing a way of interpreting that world that keeps its spiritual nature to the fore, and by teaching a way of life that prefers spiritual development to material or economic. Dattatreya's teaching also contain valuable messages for

modern world to focus environmental education for sustainable development and encourages all of us to reinvent ourselves as spiritual beings living within a sacred Earth. Therefore, the path of knowledge should offer a vision that extended to practical action as mentioned in Bhagavad Gita.

### **Lessons to modern world**

Bhagavad Gita, contains a trinity which is holistic and inclusive of ecology, spirituality and humanity as yajna, tapas and Dana. Yajna relates to human/nature relationships (soil), tapas relates to human/ divine relationships (soul) and Dana relates to human/human relationships (society).

### **Ecology of the soil**

Everything comes from the soil and returns to the soil. Soil is a metaphor for the entire natural system. Soil and we all are interconnected however, the sciences, technology, economics and philosophy in the past few centuries have elevated humankind to the ruling position and given humans higher status. Recently, there have been philosophers and scientists who have considered it right for humanity to go on a mission to conquer nature through technology, science, industry and trade. Humanity has been at war against nature during this industrial and technological age: poisoning the land with chemicals and pesticides in the name of increasing food production. Thus the challenge for humankind, in the twenty-first century, is to find humility to overcome the duality inherent in our disconnection from nature. Nature is not just out there, we are nature too. Nature shares its root meaning with the words; natal, nativity and native. Thus nature and humans are one. Therefore we need to understand that what we do to nature we do to ourselves. we have to recognize human rights, deep ecology which naturally leads to reverential ecology and spiritual ecology, and as such our relationship with nature must be embedded in an increasing awareness of the principles of nonviolence and reverence for life. Nature is not a dead object. Nature is alive. t James Lovelock timely introduced Gaia theory : the earth is a living organism. Similarly in Bhagavad Gita nature is intelligent and conscious; the elements earth, air, fire and water have divinity intrinsic to them. Consideration this, Hindu worship Indra, as he rain god, Vayu as the wind god, Agni as the fire goddess and Bhumi as the earth goddess. They also talk about the sun god, the moon goddess, the god of the Himalayas Shiva, the goddess of water Ganga. In essence god or gods are not separate from nature.

The current environmental movement is driven by fear of doom and disaster. That cannot be the right motivation for a truly sustainable future. Love and reverence for the earth will automatically result in sustainability, harmony and coherence. At present, we need to realize that harmony is the most fundamental principal of ecology.

### **Ecology of the soul**

Bhagavad Gita insights human soul directly connects with nature i.e. Parramatman and Hindus believe *aham Brahmasmi, I am Brahman – pure consciousness*. It means individual soul is atman, the intimate being, and the word for the universal soul is Parramatman, the ultimate being or god and human individual is Nar and the universal being (or god) is Narayan. Hindu philosophy of life hinds that individual is released from his or her narrow identity or ego and is transformed into divine consciousness and united with god. The way to such an enlightened state is through self-knowledge, selfless service, and the surrender of the ego in favor of the understanding that *I am part of the whole* (Sarvapalavi, 1993). Each individual is an organ of the earth body and each individual is a member of the earth community. Unfortunately, we are weighed down by the burden of our narrow identities of nationality, race, religion, class, gender and similar other divisive concepts and mental constructs that should break out through universal love. We need to make a quantum leap by changing the letter ‘g’ to ‘c’ from it we get ecology and economy. The entire planet is our home where million species live as members of one household, one family, where all species are kith and kin. So home or eco is a place of relationships whereas I as a separate self or ego is a state of separation, disconnection and isolation. Individual or I is microcosm of the macrocosm, then we touch the mind of god; freed from narrow identities we become liberated from sorrow and separation, and free from fear and fragmentation. Therefore Gita teaches us that there is no need to separate caring for the soil from caring for the soul. We need to do both. The practice of the latter is called tapas, which means taking time for inner purity, meditation, spirituality and living a life of elegant simplicity. It is said that everyone should be the change if s/he wants to see in the world. It is learned from the Bhagavad Gita that there should be integrity between theory and practice, between word and action. Words gain power only when they are backed by a living example. Therefore, Bhagavad Gita teaches us to integrate into our day time for prayer, meditation, and solitude, study, and gardening, cooking and spinning; and have to be considered these activities as essential as negotiating with nature and soul of each individuals. Through this we can unite the care of the external world with the care of the internal world. The inner landscape of spirituality and the outer landscape of

sustainability are thus intricately linked. Present day individuals need to cultivate compassion, seek truth, and appreciate beauty and work towards self-realization. Then that of we can connect outer ecology with inner ecology. The contemporary environmental movement, in the main, follows the path of empirical science, rational thinking, data collection and external action. This is good as far as it goes but it doesn't go far enough. We need to include care of the soul as a part of care of the planet.

## **Ecology of Society**

Care for society is base one for the soil and the soul care. Now, we have two worlds, the developed world and the undeveloped world. The developed world is the world of industry, technology, free trade and consumerism which lifts the living standards of all people and the undeveloped world is the world of agriculture, rural life, local economy and low consumption which keeps people in poverty. The mission of mainstream economists and politicians is to industrialize the world, create economic globalization and allow the free market to solve the problem of underdevelopment. This materialism world has grown side by side with the growth of militarism. This state of affairs is hardly conducive to a vision of harmony, coherence and wellbeing. Therefore a strong social movement is needed to establish justice, equality, liberty and freedom; a movement that leads to the wellbeing of all. This cannot be done merely by social engineering or political maneuvering but can be done by a spiritual awakening and a new awareness about mutual care and selfless service. The Bhagavad Gita calls it Dana which means sharing, generosity, giving before taking and rising above self-interest. In a culture where self-interest is promoted as a paramount value, one would naturally ask why we should give up our self-interest. The Bhagavad Gita advocates struggle and action to learn the lessons of social ecology and strive to establish a new moral order of human dignity. So the way of the Gita is the way of a spiritual warrior, a peace warrior and an eco-warrior; what Gita calls a Karma yogi: one who is engaged constantly for the upliftment and wellbeing of the deprived and dispossessed but who acts without desiring the fruit of his or her own actions. The Bhagavad Gita insights that as the tree does not eat its own fruit and the river does not drink its own water, the Karma yogi should not seek any benefit of his or her own action. Rather he or she should offer their action for the benefit of others i.e. Dana. The trinity of the Bhagavad Gita is like the three legs of a stool: through *yajna* we replenish the soil, through *tapas* we replenish the soul and though *Dana* we replenish society. But they are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, we need to live a spiritual way of life that engages in the protection of the earth, enlightenment

of the self and restoration of social justice. This ancient trinity of Bhagavad Gita is as relevant today as it ever was.

## Conclusion

The understanding of Bhagavad Gita is essential for the present world for the self-realization to care of nature, soul and society in broader concept of spiritual life. Bhagavad Gita is right source of knowledge for theory and practice of universal science through Yajna Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. From this beautiful expression of God (Bhagavad Gita), each individual increasingly enlightened and enjoy life with a thrill at every moment learn the lessons of social ecology and strive to establish a new moral order of human dignity. A philosopher nicely concluded the gist of Bhagavad Gita told by the god as: *I was born in the darkest ignorance and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisance unto him.*

हरि ॐ तत्सत् ।

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