

Evolutionary History of the Bhagavad Gita
by *Potluri Rao In Seattle* ©2018 (CC BY 4.0)

Undoubtedly, the Bhagavad Gita (Gita) is the greatest book ever written. It is a true classic; no one really reads it, and everyone talks about it. It is true even with the greatest minds of Hindus, including Adi Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva.

The beauty of the Gita is that it can be interpreted in many ways, always to expound righteousness. The Indian subcontinent went through many changes over centuries and each generation gave a new interpretation to the same Gita to match the prevailing social conditions. Constant interpretations make it Great.

The Gita looks different to different people depending on their enlightenment. It is a mirror to reflect one's own enlightenment. Adi Shankara gave his interpretation of the Gita. Ramanuja and Madhva gave their interpretations that disagreed with Adi Shankara. The most recent interpretations are by Mahatma Gandhi and former president of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

To a student of modern science of Newton and Einstein, the Gita offers yet another interpretation. It is a logic of discovery. Modern science is based on hypothesis testing, which is different from the logic of Deduction and Induction. The Gita was the first treatise on the Logic of Hypothesis Testing. It invented the concept of Science.

What follows is an analysis of archeological evidence to understand why and how the Gita invented its logic of discovery. Reading the Gita tells us nothing. We have to see what was behind the words, which can be obtained only by studying its evolutionary history. We need scientific tools to excavate the logic of the Gita.

To grasp the logic of the Gita we need to start at the beginning and arrange events in a proper time sequence. First and foremost, we have to shed religious sentiments.

The genesis of the Gita was a scholarly work by a professor Vasudeva Krishna (600 BCE). The names Vasudeva and Krishna were immortalized in the epic Mahabharata, composed only recently. (See "The Cultural Heritage of India," Ramakrishna Mission, Vol 4, 1956, pg 37, 42.)

The original Rig Veda, dated around 2,000 BCE, was the earliest extant source of Hindu heritage. It started the Indian Scientific Movement. It was a textbook on logic at a Hindu University, established four thousand years ago, devoted to logic. The original

Bhagavad Gita was also a textbook on logic at the University. The extant versions of the Rig Veda and Gita are the vandalized versions, devoid of logic and reason. The originals are now lost.

The original Rig Veda was intellectually very demanding, accessible only to the students at the University. It was a treatise on logic. It was converted into Mantra (sloka, verse) by people, who were ignorant of logic, who had nothing to do with the University. A book of Mantras was called a Samhita. The extant Rig Veda is a Samhita (verse), not the original treatise on logic. The Samhita was never a part of the University.

For day to day use by less skilled people a prose version, called Brahmana, was developed. It required only basic reading skills.

People who recited Brahmana, for a fee, were called Brahmin. They needed only basic reading skills. They never had intellect or logic. Logic was beyond their comprehension. They were a closed society of closed minds. They had their own religious schools based on ignorance. The Samhita and Brahmana were textbooks at the religious schools. They were manuals to train people to extract fees.

The students at the Hindu University were scholars with intellect. They mastered logic. They were in pursuit of knowledge, not money. They were an open society of open minds. Anyone with intellect could become a student at the University.

The Samhita and Brahmana were not textbooks at the University. They were commercial products used by Brahmin to extract fees from innocent people. They were books at the religious schools of ignorance, not at the University.

Around 800 BCE, many different systems of logic, called Upanishads, were developed at the University.

Around 700 BCE, the faculty of the University systematized a knowledge acquisition process in a scientific manner and composed the Brahma Sutra (Logic of Brahman). The Brahma Sutra was the essence of Upanishads. It was the Hindu Scientific Method, called Hinduism. It invented the concept of Brahman the true Knowledge.

Around 600 BCE, professor Vasudeva Krishna wrote a Bhasya (commentary, interpretation) on the Brahma Sutra. He had many students who elaborated on his Bhasya. The Gita invented the concept of Sruti the Science God, a logical extension of Brahman the true Knowledge. It was later popularized as the Order in the Universe. It was the foundation of the Newtonian Physics.

The original Rig Veda, Brahma Sutra, and Gita were textbooks on logic at the University. Vasudeva Krishna, Mahavira, Siddhartha, and Ajatashatru were the distinguished professors of the University. They wrote their own Bhasya on the Brahma Sutra that were used as textbooks on logic at the University.

Brahmin never had intellect or logic. They never studied at the University. The Brahma Sutra was beyond their comprehension. They invented gods to extort fees. They versified the Rig Veda to a worship manual of gods. They invented Brahmana.

A new branch of knowledge, called Agama (Social Science), was introduced to try to answer the question, "What is God?" The question was not new, it had been tossed around. A systematic approach to answer the question as a social issue was new.

What are the qualifications of a god to deserve worship? God was social engineering to maintain social stability. It had nothing to do with logic. It must meet two basic conditions: (1) Punish bad behavior and reward good behavior (*Dusta sikshana sista rakshana*) to maintain social order, and (2) Adapt to changing social conditions (*Dharma samstapanardhaya sambhava yuge yuge*) to permit step-wise social progression.

Brahma was the creator who gave life, like a mother. Mothers could not punish a child. So Brahma was disqualified for worship.

Both Shiva and Vishnu, the gods invented by Brahmin, were qualified.

To make a long story short, Brahmin were split over which of the two gods was supreme and war broke out between the camps. They developed their own independent Agamas. Agamas were fictional stories of the Brahmin gods Shiva and Vishnu, who lived in a fictional Heaven, and had supernatural powers. They were fictional stories of fantasy worlds. They were religious schools of ignorance, devoid of logic and reason.

Professor Vasudeva Krishna was the first one ever to attempt to integrate Vedanta, Sankhya (Science), and Agama (Social Science) into a unified system. The Gita was a system of logic to synthesize all branches of knowledge to produce an intellectual Stew.

The Stew of professor Vasudeva Krishna was only an example to demonstrate the logical feasibility of combining several branches of knowledge into a unified system. The Gita was a logical process, to distill knowledge. It was a process, not a product. It was a logic of discovery.

The Gita introduced a new concept called Sruti the Science God (the Order in the Universe). It was a logical extension of Brahman the true Knowledge. All science is nothing but manifestations of the preexisting perpetual Order in the Universe.

Only students of logic could see the logic in the Gita. Brahmin were ignorant of logic. Logic was beyond their comprehension. They were functionally blind. They wanted to get rich by exploiting the popularity of the Gita. They were superb fiction writers. They appropriated the Gita as a Vishnu Agama. The original Gita of logic is now lost.

The Gita was an instant success with all branches of knowledge. As all branches of knowledge advanced with time, the same logic of discovery was used to produce new interpretations of the Gita. The substance of the Gita was its logic of discovery.

When intellectual leaders came up with a new idea, they produced their own interpretation of the Gita, using their magic ingredient. Gandhi successfully marketed the nonviolence movement with his own interpretation of the Gita. When India was looking for a high profile figure for president, they selected a professor of Oxford University who produced his interpretation of the Gita, dedicated to Gandhi.

Many religious schools were formed to cash in on the popularity of Krishna and the Gita. They were commercial enterprises, interested in getting rich. The Bhakti Group (brand name), in particular, was formed to sell merchandise to all castes. To get around social barriers, they encouraged people to have their own mini-temples at home. They marketed Bhakti brand standardized mini-temples, Murtis (idols), worship paraphernalia, and the Gita. Driven by profit motive their sales people fanned the country. It was a highly profitable growth industry that spread like wildfire.

Since Krishna of the Mahabharata met the basic conditions for god, he was eligible to become a god. The Bhakti Group invented God Gopala-Krishna in the Bhagavata Purana (500 CE) and God Radha-Krishna in the Brahma Vivarta Purana (700 CE). They rolled professor Vasudeva Krishna (600 BCE), Gopala-Krishna (500 CE), and Radha-Krishna (700 CE) into a single Murti (idol).

By 1,000 CE, the Bhakti Group realized that the composite God Krishna was not generating enough profit. They started a search for a new god. Since Rama met the basic conditions to be a god, he was eligible to become a god.

Rama was absent in Vedas, Panini, Upanishads, and Puranas. The almost-forgotten Valmiki Ramayana (400 BCE) received a new interest. The first chapter (Bala Kanda)

was revised and the last chapter (Uttara Kanda) was added, to bestow divinity on Rama as an incarnation of Vishnu. (Ramakrishna Mission, Vol 4, pg 43.)

The revised and enlarged Ramayana was translated by dozens, each with its own religious fervor and embellishments. The Tulsidas' translation (1,574 CE), in which both Rama and Sita worshiped Shiva and Parvati, won the popularity contest. Rama was firmly established as the new god, accepted by both the Vishnu and Shiva sects. The Bhakti Group used the same marketing channels to sell both Rama and Krishna with a new slogan: "Hare Rama, Hare Krishna."

Ramanuja (1,100 CE) and Madhva (1,200 CE) successfully marketed the idea of a Universal-God (Rama) by producing their own interpretations of the Gita. Their interpretations of the Gita (Dvaita, dual) were the exact opposite of that of Adi Shankara (Advaita, mono).

The Gita is Advaita to Adi Shankara, Vishista-Advaita to Ramanuja, and Dvaita to Madhva. It is the nonviolence movement to Gandhi. It is a logic of discovery to a student of modern science.

Undoubtedly, the original Gita was the greatest book on logic ever written. The extant version is not the original. The original was a treatise on logic at the Hindu University. Both the Hindu University and the original Gita are now lost.

Using scientific tools, we were able to excavate bits and pieces of the original Gita. The original Gita was the foundation of the modern scientific method of Newton and Einstein. Professor Vasudeva Krishna invented the concept of Science. Newton and Einstein perfected it.

Professor Vasudeva Krishna of the Hindu University had nothing to do with the fictional character Krishna of the fictional epic Mahabharata.

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