CHAPTER IV

LANGUAGE, STYLE AND KAVISAMAYA ETC. OF THE ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ

The language, style of writing, kavisamaya and characterisation etc. are considered as significant elements for assessing the literary beauty of a composition in the world of Sanskrit literature. Each of these elements has their individual contribution in this regard and that is why great poets give much emphasis to these areas with caution and care.

4.1 Language of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

The most striking feature of the language of the SBG is that it is adorned by simplicity and lucidity par excellence. As a work of high class philosophy, this work may be composed in a critical manner. But in practicality it appears to opposite. The apparently tough philosophical doctrines are expressed in the SBG almost in an uncomplicated way. Starting from the very first verse, the SBG has carried its narration with sweet sounding words and easy diction up to the end and that is one of the main reasons behind its worldwide popularity and appreciation. It is important to project here that because of its philosophical adherence some words in the SBG can entangle a wide range of meaning and intention under different dimensions. Moreover, the multiplicity of its sense sometimes comes up in connection with the insight of the reader and the observer. Sometimes this may generate difficulty in the process of understanding the actual sense of the verses of the work by the general
reader. People may get stuck to grasp the proper meaning of some of the philosophical ideas. But as a whole this piece of literature can be regarded as a composition with simple yet fine expressions. Moreover, the use of the metre Anuṣṭūpa has added an extra flavour in making the verses easily understandable and also in keeping the rhythm of the language as a whole.

The choice of words in the SBG can be regarded as one of the most important factors that can stand as a stamp of the richness of language of the work altogether. One peculiar feature of this poem is that the poet has used variety of words for expressing a particular sense in different context. In this way synonyms of many words come down to the readers and it can also prove our poet’s expertise over Sanskrit vocabulary. As for example, the term yuddha which means war is expressed in the present work through its synonyms like āhava, rāṇa, saṁkhya, saṁgrāma etc. Again, to express the meaning of knowledge he has used various synonymous words like prajñā, jñāna, gati, buddhi etc. Hence, it is quite clear

1 nīmītānī ca paśyāmi vipaśītāni keśava/
   na ca śreyo’nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanamāhaive// SBG., I.31
2 yadi māmapratikāramaśastraṁ śastrapāṇayāh/
   dhārtaraśtraṁ raṇe hanyustanme kṣematarāṁ bhavet// Ibid., I.46
3 evamuktavārjunaḥ saṁkhya erathopastha upāviśat/
   visṛjya saśaraṁ cāparāṁ śokasaṁvignamānasah// Ibid., I.47
4 atha cet tvamimaṁ dharmyaṁ saṁgrāmaṁ na karisyasi/
   tataḥ svadharmaṁ kṛtiṁ ca hitvā pāpamavāpśyasi// Ibid., II.33
5 yaṁ sarvtrānaṁbhisneḥastattat prāpya śubhāśubham/
   Nābhinandati na dvṛṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā// Ibid., II.57
6 āḥṛtaṁ jñānametena jñānino nityavairiṇā/
   kāmarupena kaunteya duśpūreṇānalaena ca// Ibid., III.39
7 kāmātmānaḥ svargaparā jnanakarmaphalapradānu/
   kriyāviśeṣahulāṁ bhogaiśvayagatīṁ prati// Ibid., II.43
8 vyavasyātmikā buddhirekeha kurunandana/
   Bahuśākkha hyanantāśca buddhayo’vyavasāyinām// Ibid., II.41
that the poet has brilliant command over vocabulary of Sanskrit language and by using this tool he has been able to give a poetic colour in the subject matter of this philosophical work. Moreover, such a variety of use of Sanskrit words keeps the reader away from getting reluctant to the use of same words which is very common in case of other philosophical compositions. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that there are various names in the SBG used for addressing Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. As the SBG is a discourse mainly between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, such words have created an extra charm in the body of the work. In course of the conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, it is noticed that in many places Śrīkṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna by different names and Arjuna is also seen to address his mentor by using various words in different context. It is also important to mention here that these proper names, in most cases remind the reader of various epithets connected to these two personalities in different sources. As for example, in the SBG the terms used for Lord Kṛṣṇa are acyuta, arisūdana, kamalapatrākṣa, keśava, keśiniśūdana, kṛṣṇa, govinda, janārdana, jagannivāsa, devadeva, devavara, parameśvara, puruṣottama, prabhu, bhagavān, mādhava, madhusūdana, vārṣṇeya, vāsudeva, viṣṇu, vedāntakṛta, hari, hrṣīkeśa etc. and for Arjuna the used terms are anagha, kapidhvaja, kaunteya, kurusattama, kurunandana, guḍākeśa, dhanañjaya, pāṇḍava, pārtha, puruṣavyāghra, puruṣarṣabha, bharata, bharatarṣabha, mahābāhu, savyasāci, bharatasattama etc. As it has already been notified that all these terms have their individual importance and also have strong contextual relevance, each and every name bears some sort of significance in their own way with the context and it is done purposefully according to the situation created in most of the cases. This can be explained with examples. The terms used for Lord Kṛṣṇa as parameśvara,
puruṣottama etc. relate the all pervading nature and the divine power of the God who has stood before Arjuna in the form of a simple human being. Similarly the terms used for Arjuna as puruṣavyāghra, puruṣarṣabha etc. relate the unique power of the third Pāṇḍava as a Kṣatriya. This technique followed by the poet has rendered a successful poetic sense in the mind of a reader and it has enhanced the charm of the language of the piece as a whole. Therefore, it can be said that the poet of the SBG is successful with regard to the use of language of his composition and the diction of the piece has added a vibrant colour in the poetic extravaganza of the piece. Moreover, the language used in the SBG possesses a special charm because of the rhythmic lore associated with every verse found here. It can be successfully called the ‘song of the lord’. There are many famous works composed in verse in the world literature and very few from those can be elevated to the status of song on the basis of the existence of their melodious rhythm. The SBG has topped the list in this venture and the language used here has a great role to play to take this work in the podium of classical Poetry with the attraction of song in the real sense of the term.

4.2 A Note on Sanskrit Style of Writing and its Analysis in the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

Every composition has its own writing style and get up and with that style, it is able to captivate the reader and can establish a unique position as well. This literary style makes a work perfect and fascinating one. Every famous writer is known by his own literary style. It is the writing style of the poet that earns enduring status and fame for him. In Sanskrit literature too the style of writing is one of the important key elements for creating a good Poetry. In this context the mostly used
Sanskrit term is *r̥tī* which is also regarded as the soul of Poetry by a group of rhetoricians. Scholars from the poetic field opine their views on style of writing according to their own perception or they have forwarded their opinion by following others. In this group some takes *r̥tī* as an indispensible element for Poetry and some again takes it an auxiliary one. Whatever may be the cause of variation of opinion, traditionally, the concept of *r̥tī* holds its high position in the discussions of almost all the great Sanskrit rhetoricians. It is said that the term *r̥tī* signifies the placement of the letters in a poetical composition. It is also said in the field of Sanskrit Rhetorics that the concept of *r̥tī* is compared to the right placement of the limbs in human body. As in the human body the correct placement of the physical parts like the nose, ear, lip etc. retains the beauty of the whole body and people come up to adore it, similarly the employment of a correct style in a poetic piece retains the poetic charm. In the field of Sanskrit Poetics, a vast field has been opened up by the discussion on the variety of *r̥tī*. It is very natural that the rhetoricians are not at all ready to form a unanimous decision in connection with the types of *r̥tī*. Thus along with the variation in the concept of *r̥tī*, divergent views regarding its variety also come up. The most striking feature of the division of *r̥tī* is that it is always seen to be associated with a particular place. Thus the name of the type called Vaidarbhī has been originated from Vidarbha – the famous place of Ancient India, the name of the type called Gauḍī is connected with the place called Gauḍa, the name of the type called Pāñcālī is associated with the place Pāñcāla – the place of Draupadī and also the name of the type called Lāṭī is associated with the place Lāṭa. It is interesting to

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9 R̥ṭir̥tmā kāvyasya// Kavlmksv., I.2.6
10 padasarṣaṁhataṁḥ r̥tih// Sahd., IX.1
11 r̥tayo’ vayavasaṁsthānaviśeṣavat, // Ibid., Vṛtti on I.3, p. 25
note that though the names of the ritis are connected to a specific country or place, it does not affect in construing the specific characteristics of the particular style and no specific line of demarcation can be drawn in lining up the characteristic features of each riti. It may be thought that sometimes a particular style of writing had been followed by the poets of a specific region and afterwards it was named after the region only. Bharata, however, has not incorporated any discourse in this topic. Bhāmaha has given only three verses where without giving any proper definition, he has just said about the two varieties of riti viz. Gauḍī and Vaidarbhī. Daṇḍin has used the term mārga i.e. path for riti and from his discussion on Vaidarbhī and Gauḍī it can be inferred that he is in favour of taking up these two varieties of poetic style.\textsuperscript{12} It is also worth mentioning here that Daṇḍin has considered the ten qualities enumerated by him as belonging to the Vaidarbha path and the opposite is found as the characteristics of the path called Gauḍī.\textsuperscript{13} Vāmana accepting riti as the soul of Poetry has stated that the arrangement of words is called riti,\textsuperscript{14} the soul of which is quality.\textsuperscript{15} It means the inclusion or exclusion of guṇa determines the style of Poetry and therefore the disposition of words is style which is based on quality. Bhojadeva has given clear views on riti and he furnishes the fact that the path made by the people of Vidarbha is called mārga in Poetics and it is also called riti as it is

\textsuperscript{12} Astyaneko girāṁ mārgaṁ sūkṣmabhedaṁ parasparam/
Tatra vaidarbhagauḍiyau varṇyete prasphuṭāntarau// Kavd., I.40
\textsuperscript{13} śleṣaḥ prasādaḥ samatā mādhuryaṁ sukumāratāḥ/
arthavyaktirudratvamojaḥkāntisamādhayaḥ/
iti vaidarbhamārgasya prāṇa daśa guṇāṁ śmṛtāḥ/
esāṁ viparyayaḥ prāyo dṛṣya goddess rauvarmanī// Ibid., I.41, 42
\textsuperscript{14} viśiṣṭā padaracanā ritiḥ// Kavlmksv., I.2.7
\textsuperscript{15} viśeṣo guṇātmā// Ibid., I.2.8

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produced from the root ṛṇi the meaning of which is to go. Hence, it may be said clearly that the terms mārga and ṛṇi can be taken as synonyms and they reveal the same sense in the field of Poetics which can be equated with style. Here, it is worth mentioning that Bhojadeva has included ṛṇi in the list of his twenty four śabdālaṃkāras. He has not projected ṛṇi as a separate element of Poetry. According to Viśvanātha Kavirāja ṛṇi or the arrangement of words remains favourable for sentiments. The concept of ṛṇi has great importance in the field of Sanskrit Poetry. Because if the thoughts of the poet are not projected through the right placement of the words and if, the necessary terms are displaced, it would obviously harm the process of relishing the sentiment. In this way it would bring disregard for the concerned composition.

The get up of the verses of the SBG makes us feel that this work is composed in Vaidarbhī style. It has already been pointed out earlier that though the main theme of the book is to impart the strong massage of selecting the right and wrong in human life and thereby to make Arjuna follow the path of the battle, the words of the Lord do not project the issue of the battle in a prominent way. The narration of the battle, rather, stays in the backseat of the subject matter and what comes in the forefront is to discuss the way of achieving the eternal peace and harmony for the humanity. The SBG is full of instructions, advices and motivational talks about right action, right knowledge, the nature of soul and above all the nature of the Supreme

16 vaidarbhādikṛtaḥ panthāḥ kāvya mārga iti smṛtaḥ/ rīṇ gatāviti dhātoḥ sā vyuṭpattyā rīṭirucyaṭe// Saras., II.27
17 jāṭirgatī rīṭivrtyticchāyāmudroktiyuktayaḥ/ ….caturvinsatirityuktāḥ śabdālaṃkārājātyayaḥ// Ibid., II.3, 4, 5
18 upakraṅṭi rasādināṁ…// Sahd., IX.1
Reality. The immediate impression on this book appears as that of a scripture in this regard. On the basis of the division of Sanskrit Poetry as laid down by Rājaśekhara, the SBG can be accommodated in the realm of śāstrakāvya i.e. an amalgamation of matters both belonging to the categories of scripture and Poetry. In this connection we can compare this with the famous Sanskrit Poetry the Bhaṭṭikāvya of the poet Bhaṭṭi. This is one of the famous Sanskrit śāstrakāvyas\(^{19}\) which is composed for pertaining the knowledge of Sanskrit Grammar through the style of pure Poetry.\(^{20}\) In most of the places the verses are composed here with words that projects various grammatical usage administered by the rules of Pāṇini. As for example, the verse where the usage of the suffix called _BACKSLASH_{iṣṇuc} is illustrated can be cited here.

\[
\text{nirākariṣṇu varttiṣṇu vardhiṣṇu parito raṇam/}
\]

\[
\text{utpatiṣṇu sahiṣṇu ca ceratuḥ kharadūṣṇau //}^{21}
\]

With such notion the salient feature of a śāstrakāvya can be traced very easily in the SBG. The deliberation of high flowing thoughts is not a feature of the śāstrakāvya only. Even there are some purely poetical creations in Sanskrit literature which though do not belong to the head śāstrakāvya can show many scriptural stature. In such type of Poetry again many expressions are endowed with very difficult style which a general reader may not grasp immediately. In this regard we

\(^{19}\) Vide, Basu, Prasun, Saṃskṛṭa Sāhitya Sambhāra, Vol. IV, Navapatra Prakashan, Calcutta, 1979, p.1

\(^{20}\) rāmakathāmārīta pāṇinīyasutraṇam udaharanakavyam cikirsuh….., Mallinātha’s commentary on Bhaṭṭikāvya, I.1, ed. by Gurunathavidyanidhi Bhattacharja with the commentaries of Mallinātha, Bharatamallika, Vidyānidhi Vidyānanda & Vidyāśāgara, Chatra Pushtakalaya, Calcutta, 1936, p.1

\(^{21}\) Bhaṭṭikāvya, V.1
can quote some excerpts from the *Naiśadhacarita* of Śrīharṣa, which falls under the
group of the renowned five Mahākāvyas in Sanskrit literature. This work though
does not fall under the category of a śāstrākāvyā directly, even then the poet, here,
himself says that he has composed the piece purposefully in a difficult way so that
only the learned can grasp delight from it.22

But in the SBG the striking quality of its expression is that here the
philosophical thoughts are also projected in a very lucid manner. The poet, here, is
seen to use sweet and soft words in the verses in various types of discussion. This
obviously brings the quality called Mādhurya where no compounds or short
compounded sentences are generally employed. The prominent characteristic feature
of the verses of the SBG is that the relish of sentiment is nowhere hindered because
of the use of uncompounded word or sometimes small unit of compounded
expression. Some verses here remind us of some poetical expressions found in the
famous Sanskrit drama the *Prabodhacandrodaya* of Śrīkṛṣṇamiśra where the
sentiment called Śānta also acts as the predominant one.23 Here also the mystic and
philosophical concept of Īśvara has been projected with the help of literary
expression in different way. Thus it is stated in this drama that as the rise of blue
cloud cannot affect the quality of the sky anyway, similarly the apprehension of the
*vikāra* cannot affect Īśvara. In the SBG in almost all the places such type of

22 *granthagranthiriha kvacit kvacidapi nyāśi prayatnānmayā*
prājñānamanyamanā haṭṭhena paṭhiṭī māʾsmin khalaḥ khelatu/ *Naiśadhacarita,*
XXII.152

23 śāntaḥ jyotiḥ kathamanuditānandānityaprakāśān
viśvotpattau vrajatī vikṛtiḥniśkalaḥ nirmalaṁ ca/
tadvānīlotpaladalaraucāmambuḥāvvāvalināṁ
prādurbhāve bhavati nabhasāḥ kīḍṛśo vā vikāraḥ // *Prabodhacandrodaya,* VI.23
narration is projected. Again the successful use of euphonic combination by the poet in the verses here has created a special charm which also shows its impact in projecting the style of writing. Thus with the right placement of the words that are filled up with the literary quality called Mādhurya, this book can be said to be styled in Vāidarbhī. This style is characterised by all the literary qualities. The definition of Vāidarbhī as laid down by Vāmana establishes this in a clear way. With same kind of opinion Bhojadeva has said that this quality possesses the taste of all the qualities, it bears no compound and it is endowed with the pleasure like a lute. From all these definitions it is clear that Vāidarbhī is characterised by almost all the poetic qualities and it is generally featured with the help of rhythmic words which often results in some effect of musical note. Viśvanātha Kavirāja has said that a composition with sweet sounding syllables and without any compounds or less compounds is called to be styled in vaidarbhīrti. The above mentioned definitions by different rhetoricians on Vāidarbhī style make it very clear that the verses of the SBG is composed with this very style, known for its smoothness in Sanskrit literature. It is also true that in the verses focusing on the direct description of the battle, one can sense the quality called Oja which will be shown in the next chapter. This literary quality stays in the delineation of the heroic sentiment. Moreover, the quality called Prasāda which has been described as the one that fills the heart

24 samagraguṇopetā vaidarbhī/ Kavlmksv., I.2.11
25 tatrāsamāsā niḥśeṣaśeṣādiṇaṃgumphitā/
   vipāṇcśvarasaubhāgyā vaidarbhī rītirīṣyate// Saras., II.29
26 mādhuryavyaḥjakairvarṇai raçaṇā lalitātmikā/
   avrūḍhirpaṛṭīrtvā vaidarbhī rītirīṣyate// Sahd., IX.2, 3
27 dīptyāṭmavistṛterheturojo vīrarasasthitih// Kavp., VIII.69
instantly as the dry fuel catches the fire\textsuperscript{28} is connected to all types of sentiment and in this way it can be an ingredient of the style called Vaidarbhī also. This quality is also found in the verses of the SBG. So it is clear that the verses of the SBG are basically adorned by the qualities called Mādhurya and Prasāda, though in some of the verses the Oja makes a tint. The existence of very short compounded words in some of the expressions has supported this view only. With such qualities the verses of the SBG remain rhythmic and attractive too. Besides, when the difficult philosophical theories are projected through the sweet sounding words in the verses of the SBG, it becomes easy to memorise and understand them. Thus the standard of the book has been elevated to a higher position than the other philosophical works written in \textit{sūtra} style or in prose. Again the allover reading of the verses becomes very enjoyable and pleasing as it does not involve much labour. Words with softer sounds produce sweetness that is capable to create melody and harmony in the heart of the readers as it is done through the play of a soft music. Thus the unity between the words and their meaning can be sensed in the verses of the SBG which appears to be a major factor of the \textit{rīti} called Vaidarbhī. It brings clarity in sensing the essence of the concerned literary piece. Such clarity in the expressions is very common in the works of the great Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa who is depicted as the master of the Vaidarbhī style. Scholars even tell that the poet Bhaṭṭi is also a poet of this style. So there is no harm in establishing Vedavyāsa as a poet of Vaidarbhī style on the basis of his SBG.

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{śuṣkendhanāgni vat svacchajalavatsahasaiva yah/ vyaṉnotyanyatprasādo’sau sarvatra vihitasthitiḥ/} \textit{Ibid., VIII.70, 71}
4.3 A Note on the kavisamaya of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

The term kavisamaya is an amalgamation of two terms viz. kavi and samaya and it is constructed on the basis of the expression kavināḥsamayaḥ which leads to a śaṣṭhītatpuruṣasamāsa. The term kavi here refers to the established writers of Sanskrit language who have already curved a niche in the field of poetical composition. The second term samaya relates the tradition or convention followed in the literary composition. Actually the word kavisamaya refers to poetic convention. It is a unique poetic device used by the great poets in their respective compositions. It is a traditional method of expression which is seen to be accepted in describing a particular object, any specific situation, a specified period or a time in a peculiar manner down the ages. A typical connection between two objects has been conventionally granted by the renowned poets in Sanskrit literature which subsequently got marked as standard for expression in this regard. This convention, with the passage of time has become almost a theory in connection with the description of that particular thing. As for example, though there does not remain any scientific connection, in the world of Sanskrit Poetry the colour white is associated with the description of fame, smile and success; colour black has been taken for describing the sky and sin, and the red colour is taken for the description of anger and affection.\(^{29}\) The mention of white and blue lotuses is also found while describing rivers and seas in Sanskrit Poetry. All these uses have turned to be poetic theory in the world of Sanskrit literature gradually. So it can be said that kavisamaya is the peculiar or special usage made by the Sanskrit poets in connection with some

\(^{29}\) mālīnyāṁ vyomāṇ pāpe, yaśasi dhavaḷatā vāryate hāsakīrtyo raktau ca krodhārāgau……., Sahd., VII.22
specific narration. In the great field of Sanskrit Rhetorics, this topic is noticeably untouched by many a good rhetoricians. Among those who have taken this topic in course of their discussion, we can pin-pointedly take the names of Rājaśekhara and Viśvanātha Kavirāja. Rājaśekhara has furnished a detailed account of kavisamaya in his Kāvyamīmāṁsā. Viśvanātha Kavirāja without giving any specific definition of kavisamaya has mentioned some of the types of kavisamaya only. He has said that the fault named khyātaviruddhatā becomes the merit of a poem in a well known poetic convention.30 Rājaśekhara has devoted three whole chapters on the issue of kavisamaya. He has opined that some unscriptural and unusual expressions which are traditionally used by the poets are called kavisamaya.31 He has further given explanation on the insertion of the two terms asāstrīya and alaukika which are included under the category of defects by the previous rhetoricians like Bhāmaha,32 Daṇḍin33 and Vāmana34 etc. Rājaśekhara has said that in ancient times the wise composed their pieces on the basis of their knowledge acquired from the study of the scriptures, Vedas etc. and also on the basis of their travelling experiences in different places of the world. The peculiar usages that these poets made in their works are named as kavisamaya which are still used in later period by the poets in

30 nirhetutā tu khyāte’rthe doṣataṁ naiva gacchati/
    kavīnāṁ samaye khyāte guṇāṁ khyātaviruddhatā//     Ibid., VII.22
31 aśāstrīyamalaукikāṁ ca paramparāyataṁ yamarthamupanibadhnaṁ kavyaṁ sa
    kavisamayaṁ, Kavms., Ch. XIV, p. 78
32 deśakālakalalokanyāgamavirodhi ca/
    pratijñāhetuḍṛṣṭāntahānāṁ duṣṭāṁ ca neṣyate//  Kavlmk., IV.2
33 deśakālakalalokanyāgamavirodhi ca/
    iti doṣā daśaivaite varjyāḥ kavyeṣu sūribhiḥ//  Kavd., III.126
34 deśakālasvabhāvaviruddhārthāṁ lokaviruddhāṁ//
    kalacaturvargasāstraviruddhārthāṁ vidyāviruddhāṁ//  Kavlmksv., II.2.23, 24
their works. So, the expressions which fall under the concept of \textit{kavisamaya} do not include any \textit{aśāstrīya} and \textit{alaukika} things which are to be abandoned in writings as they had received acceptance by the earlier poets. Almost all the poetic conventions are categorically explained by Rājaśekhara in his book. From this discussion it clearly comes out that \textit{kavisamaya} or poetical convention is the expression used by earlier poets for depicting an object or emotion to bring a thematic picture even for an abstract idea which subsequently has been admitted by the writers of the succeeding time and the process flows on because of its acceptability and suitability.

The SBG even primarily being a philosophical work does not lack in the use of \textit{kavisamaya} although in a meager volume. It is worth mentioning here that the concept of \textit{kavisamaya} has got its place in the technical meaning on the basis of the particular expressions of the great poets like Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Kālidāsa etc. The \textit{Rāmāyaṇa}, being the \textit{ādikāvyā} shows the first application of \textit{kavisamaya}. In a similar manner in the \textit{Mahābhārata} as well as in the SBG, some of the literary usages of the poet Vedavyāsa can be taken as the base of the technicalities of the concept of \textit{kavisamaya}. Such narrations are used in the SBG to fulfill the desired purpose of the poet as it does in other cases in Sanskrit literature. This is important to note here that in case of the expressions of the SBG where the tint of \textit{kavisamaya} can be traced, the inner essence remains purely philosophical. So it can be said that

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textit{Meghadūta, pūrvamegha}, 30
    \item \textit{Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa}, 50.16
\end{itemize}
in the SBG the poetic technique called *kavisamaya* is also used to give an idea of some philosophical thought or concept. As in the verse

\[\text{teśāmevānuṅkampārthamahamajñānajānī tamah/}\]

\[\text{nāśayāmyātmabhāvastho jñāṇadīpena bhāsvatā/}^{37}\]

it is said by the Lord that with the luster of knowledge which is taken as light, He could dispel the darkness of ignorance from the heart of His devotee. It is a poetic convention that the negative things like sin, defamation etc. are considered as evil things. These are often compared to the colour black.\(^{38}\) These things are desired by none as they bring nothing but cause harm to human life. Likewise, the ignorance of man cannot bring anything good, in spite, makes the life miserable as due to ignorance, he neither engages him in correct way to life nor he can acquire any reputation or fame in his entire life. So, ignorance is like a sin or defamation for one who is ignorant of anything. Darkness is often used as synonyms for black\(^{39}\) and therefore, it is justified saying here that in the present verse, conventional deliberation is conspicuously seen in the usage of the poet Vedavyāsa though such a narration is not mentioned in connection to the concept of *kavisamaya* offered by late rhetoricians. Thus this *śloka* conveys the view that when a devotee of Lord is in ignorance he cannot be correct and positive. That means he remains in the dark. Here, our poet has used the conventional concept in expressing the negativity of ignorance and he has also shown the common practice of comparing the idea of

\(^{37}\) SBG., X.11

\(^{38}\) ayaśasāḥ pāpaprabhṛteśca kārṣṇyāṁ…, Kavms., Ch. XV, p. 83

Once a man can acquire knowledge, he shines in the whole world which can bring fame etc. A common poetic convention is to associate fame, smile etc. with white colour, a colour that is pure and bright and without any scar. So clarity and transparency are the two features of the colour white. Similarly, everything can be easily accessible in light. Therefore, the connection between light and knowledge is correctly placed in this verse. This has been accepted by rhetoricians for expressing connection between other similar things in their own perception and observation. Again in the verses

* tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt prakāśakamanāmāmayam/

* sukhāsgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena cānagha//

* karmaṇaḥ sukṛtasyāhuḥ sāttvikāṁ nirmalāṁphalam//

the poet has put the adjective *nirmalattva* meaning freeness from blemishes, in connection with the delineation of the quality called *sattva*. The term *nirmalattva* also signifies illuminating quality. The practice of equating the adjective with the *guna* called *sattva* has become a common tradition in Sanskrit works.

The intermingling of river and ocean comes under the *kavisamaya*. The usage can be seen in the passages of the SBG also. In the verse

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40 SBG., XIV.6
41 Ibid., XIV.16
42 sattvaṁ laghu prakāśakam/ Sāṁkhya-kārikā, 13
43 prakṛṣṇa-kādravyakavisamayastu tadyathā kṣīrakṣaṁrasudrayoraikyaṁ, Kavms., XIV, p. 81
Arjuna after perceiving the universal form of Lord Kṛṣṇa said that as the water streams in the river rushing towards the sea to enter it, likewise, the heroes from the battle enter the blazing jaws of the Lord. Here, the poet has shown the union of river to the ocean which has been used by the later poets in their respective works.\textsuperscript{45} In this verse, the intention of the poet is to reveal the fact that the lord is the Ultimate reality. The existence of every entity begins at him and at the end everyone merge on Him just like the river, the main source of which is always a ocean and which always flows towards a ocean only. Thus the unison of river to the ocean can be regarded as a successful comparison, the inner essence of which is to impart the grave thought of Indian philosophy which can also be marked as a fine example of kavisamaya in this field.

In this way we can decipher the fact that the poetic convention is not absent in the SBG.

4.4 Characters of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

The two leading characters of the SBG are Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna between whom the main discourse has taken place. In the whole Mahābhārata Kṛṣṇa is drawn as a multi dimensional character. Though because of the role he played, it

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{44} SBG., XI.28
\textsuperscript{45} bhṛatsahāyah kāryāntaṁ kṣod्दṛyānapī gacchati/
saṁbhūyāṁbhodhimabhyyeti mahānadyā nagāpagaṁ/ Śiśupālavadha, II.100
\end{footnotesize}
earned Him the adjectives like politician, crooked personality, a planner and the like, yet His role in the whole epic has been given a strong emphasis and the highest prominence. It is said in the SBG itself that whenever virtue is perished and evil reigns, Lord incarnates Himself for the protection of the righteousness.\textsuperscript{46} The battle held between Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas is also only for the protection of virtue and nothing else. The Pāṇḍavas represent the good and the Kauravas are the symbols of the evil in the battle. In that stage of war when Arjuna declared his detachment towards the battle, Kṛṣṇa evoked him for fighting so that virtue can be established. He directed Arjuna to the right path of action, knowledge and devotion through which a man can be liberated from the material attraction. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Being. From the episode of viśvarūpadarśana, which forms the subject matter of the Eleventh Chapter of the SBG, it can be inferred that the Lord is the one and all. Every single entity is a part of Him and after destruction everything gets submerged in Him only. He looks everyone with the universal eye and whoever takes refuge in Him, Lord absolves him from all evil and sin. This part of the character of the Lord is most suitably projected through the verses of the SBG. Here Kṛṣṇa not only plays the role of the saviour but adjusted Himself as a benevolent friend, a wise counselor and a great refuge too. It is important to note here that in the Kuru- Pāṇḍava story, the participation of Kṛṣṇa for the establishment of virtue is not always projected in a direct way. Neither in the great battle He took any active part, rather, He acts as the charioteer of Arjuna only. He is nowhere depicted as the bearer of weapon for the battle. Instead, he initiated the peace process between the two contending parties to

\textsuperscript{46} yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata/
   abhyutthānamadharmaśya tadātmānam srjāmyaham//   SBG., IV.7
stop the upcoming battle. In the whole SBG the character of Krṣṇa is reflected as an adviser or counselor only, the prime motive of whom is to induce Arjuna to the right path of action i.e. to fight against the enemy as the Kṣatriya warrior.

The character of Arjuna, the third of the Paṇca-Pāṇḍavas is projected as the listener to the words of the Lord in the whole SBG. But it is interesting to note here that the whole kernel of Krṣṇa’s word comes up on the basis of the question Arjuna put forward. In the Mahābhārata, the character of Arjuna is set as the mighty warrior of the race with a heap of energy and enthusiasm for which the names like Dhanañjaya, Savyasācī etc. originated. But through the SBG the character of Arjuna is projected as a confused one. Having noticed his friends and relatives as enemy in the battle field, Arjuna arrives at a state of sorrow and melancholy. He felt so guilty that he could not even hold his bow and it slipped off from his hand. The sight of his elders in the opposite side made him tremble in fear and tears come through his eyes. At that moment he loses his power of judgment. Even being a staunch warrior in other battle, Arjuna now prefers to live a life of a beggar as he does not want to kill his own relatives and friends himself. In a general perspective such cowardly behaviour is not expected from the valourous personality like Arjuna. Most strikingly in this scene Arjuna even, without going in the battle, wants to tag himself as the looser. Here comes the verbal action of the Lord and as soon as Arjuna is under the control of his senses, he could take the firm decision of going for the battle. The illuminative speech of his charioteer Krṣṇa enlightened him and he gets back the sense of differentiating good and bad immediately. Actually the whole

\[ \text{gāṇḍīvāṁ saṁsrata hastāt tvai caiva paridahyate/} \\
\text{na ca śāknoṁyavasthātuṁ bhramaṁva ca me manah/} \quad \text{Ibid., I.30} \]
episode is the brain child of the Lord. Had this not happened to Arjuna before the war we would not have come across the mighty lessons from the mouth of Lord Kṛṣṇa. As the purpose of composing the SBG is to help a confused soul in taking right decision, the character of Arjuna is projected here in the similar with the character of a common man, perplexed as a victim of situation. Thus in the SBG, Arjuna represents a character of a confused person in the beginning but with the parallel impact of the advice of the Supreme Being the character is moulded to a very strong personality as it gains the lost spirit. Thus this character is rightly drawn by the poet and the poet is undoubtedly successful in describing the crisis the character faced in various stages.

Along with these two principal characters in the SBG there are two other characters i.e. the characters of Sañjaya and Dhṛtarāṣṭra who remaining in the outer domain of the main theme, play their share in the evolution of the subject matter. Sañjaya is the narrator here who after getting the divine eyesight can see the happenings of far areas. He is engaged to narrate the situation of the battlefield to Dhṛtarāṣṭra who cannot see personally but who is supposed to know the happenings instantly. So the character of Dhṛtarāṣṭra is projected here as the listener to the words of Sañjaya. But in the hand of the poet this character gets a share in the way of being inclined to his sons and thereby expecting their victory in the battle. It is important to note here that though Sañjaya and Dhṛtarāṣṭra appear to play minor role in the SBG, it can be said that Sañjaya is lucky enough to hear the marvelous dialogue between Lord and Arjuna directly from the spot. The king Dhṛtarāṣṭra is another character in the piece. The name of Dhṛtarāṣṭra appears in the SBG only once but his existence is felt whenever the narration of Sañjaya is projected. Here in
this work, the king plays a dual character. On one hand he receives the messages or advices of the Lord while on the other hand he gets the information that his sons are going to be perished soon. It is not easy for a father to endure such a situation in general condition but this character is adjusted in this piece to establish the message that one who even indirectly joins the wicked is going to get his share of affliction. The Lord has given him the strength to listen to the happenings and bear with the pain and pangs of the guilt of his sons. From the epic story it is clear that Dhr̥tarāṣṭra is never seen to stop his sons from doing bad to Pāṇḍavas. Sometimes he is even seen to excite the situation which cannot be a justified role of a father anyway. He, though knew the outcome, has supported his son in every misdeed and as a result he gets his punishment through the words of the Lord that his beloved sons will not be any more in this world. So along with the Kauravas this character is also seen to get the result of his own deed. The blind king even loses the sight of his mind or intellect for which he is destined to hear about the ensuing death of his sons.

Besides these characters some other characters have been projected in the SBG though in a secondary way. Some of these characters are Duryodhana, Droṇa, Bhīśma, Bhīma, Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula, Sahadeva, Śikhaṇḍī, Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna, Virāta, Śātyaki, Drupada etc. In the Mahābhārata, the character of Duryodhana is portrayed as a man full of arrogation and over confidence which is well projected in the SBG also through the words of Sañjaya. In the SBG, the narration of Sañjaya starts with the reference to Duryodhana when the latter approaches Droṇa, the teacher.48 Duryodhana informs Droṇa that his pupil Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna i.e. the son of Drupada has

48 dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavāṇiṅkaṁ vyūḍhāṁ duryodhanastadā/ 
ācāeyamupasaṅgamyā rājā vacanamavavrīt// Ibid., I.2
organised the mighty army of Pāṇḍava. Here, the intention of Duryodhana is to remind his teacher from the fact that the son of Drupada will be the cause for Droṇa’s destruction as decided by the forecast. Duryodhana then tells about the great warriors who are present in Pāṇḍava part. After that he utters the names of the notable persons skilled in fighting who have come to the battle in support of him. Duryodhana is so confident about winning the battle that he even makes comparison between the troops. ⁴⁹ He believes that his troop escorted by Bhīṣma, the greatest warrior, is vast while the Pāṇḍavas have limited army, guarded by Bhīma. Hence, he is sure of his triumph in the battle. Here, the arrogant nature of Duryodhana is well expressed when he presumes his enemy as inferior to themselves.

Thus it can be seen that in the SBG the poet has drawn three layered character presentation. In the first layer the principal characters viz. that of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are projected with sufficient volume and importance. In the second layer the characters of Dhrītarāṣṭra and Saṅjaya are drawn for the right movement of the story. And in the third layer, in connection with the battlefield, the characters like Duryodhana, Bhīṣma etc. are projected with some of their prominent features related to battle.

⁴⁹ aparyāptaṁ tadasmākaṁ balaṁ bhīṣmbhirakṣitam/
paryāptaṁ tvidameteṣāṁ balaṁ bhīmabhirakṣitam/  
Ibid., II.10