

## THE SECOND CHAPTER - SMṚTI SOURCES

### I. MANU SMṚTI

The scriptural writings are divided mainly into two sections i.e. śruti (the Veda-s) and Smṛti (codifications of dharma by saints<sup>395</sup>). According to some sources of interpretations, Smṛti-s also are of divine origin. These Smṛti-s are otherwise known as dharmasāstra-s,<sup>396</sup> as they codify the rules of dharma which is comprehensive term for all rules of righteous conduct in every sphere of human activities. Dharma regulates the rights and duties of every individual in order to ensure peace and happiness for all, by harmonizing the interests of the individuals and society. These Smṛti-s mainly prescribe the rules and regulations to everyone on the guidelines of śruti.<sup>397</sup> The Veda-s are considered supreme as they take care of entire world.<sup>398</sup> In Bhāratīya tradition, there are sixteen Smṛti-s prominently identified.<sup>399</sup> Another set of eighteen Smṛti-s were called upasmṛti-s, as they are subordinate to the major Smṛti-s.<sup>400</sup>

Of all the Smṛti-s, Manu-Smṛti is regarded as next in sanctity to the Veda-s.<sup>401</sup> It is the oldest of all the laws and its authorship is attributed to Maharṣi Manu.

<sup>395</sup> ऋषयः चक्रिरे धर्मं योऽनूचानः स नो महान् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५४)

<sup>396</sup> श्रुतिस्तु वेदो विज्ञेयः धर्मशास्त्रं तु वै स्मृतिः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१०)

<sup>397</sup> वर्णादिधर्मस्मरणं यत्र वेदविरोधकम्। कीर्तनं चार्थशास्त्राणां स्मृतिः सा च प्रकीर्तिता ॥ (शु.नी.-४-३-५४)

आर्षं धर्मोपदेशञ्च वेदशास्त्राविरोधिना। यस्तर्केणानुसन्धत्ते स धर्मं वेद नेतरः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-१०६)

<sup>398</sup> बिभर्ति सर्वभूतानि वेदशास्त्रं सनातनम्। तस्मादेतत् परं मन्ये यजन्तोरस्य साधनम् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-९९)

<sup>399</sup> मनुष्यमो वसिष्ठोऽत्रिर्दक्षो विष्णुस्तथाङ्गिराः। उशनावाक्पतिर्व्यासः आपस्तम्बः पराशरः ॥ (शि.र.-१-१-४०)

संवर्तश्चैव शङ्खश्च हारीतो लिखितस्तथा। एतैर्यानि प्रणीतानि धर्मशास्त्रामि वै पुरा ॥ (शि.र.-१-१-४१)

मन्वत्रिविष्णुहारीतयाज्ञवल्क्योशनोऽङ्गिराः। यमापस्तम्बसंवर्ताः कात्यायनबृहस्पती ॥ (या.स्मृ.-१-४)

पराशरव्यासशङ्खलिखिता दक्षगौतमौ। शतातपो वसिष्ठश्च धर्मशास्त्रप्रयोजकाः ॥ (या.स्मृ.-१-५)

<sup>400</sup> जाबालिर्नाचिकेतश्च स्कन्दो लौगाक्षिकश्यपौ। व्यासः सनत्कुमारश्च शन्तनुर्जनकस्तथा ॥ (शि.र.-१-१-४३)

क्रतुः कात्यायनश्चैव जातूकर्णः कपिञ्जलः। बोधायनश्च काणादो विश्वामित्रस्तथैव च ॥ (शि.र.-१-१-४४)

पैठीनसिर्गोभिलश्चेत्युपस्मृतिवाधायकाः। अष्टादशोपस्मृतयः कर्तृनामभिरङ्किताः ॥ (शि.र.-१-१-४५)

<sup>401</sup> यद्वै किञ्च मनुष्यवदत्तद्भेषजम् ॥ (तै.सं.-२-११-१०२)

मनुर्वै यत्किञ्चिदवदत्तद्भेषज्यायै ॥ (तै.ब्रा.-२३-१६-१७)

He was the most ancient and greatest of all lawgivers. Subsequent writers considered Maharṣi Manu as their authority and wrote their books after the same model.<sup>402</sup> The laws of Maharṣi Manu were held in such great veneration by the saintly writers of law-treatises that no part of their books contradicting Maharṣi Manu was regarded as an authority on the subject.

In the second chapter of Manu-Smṛti, one can find all the important rules and regulations concerned to education and general instructions. The following would give us an outline of educational ideas of Manu-Smṛti. In order to have comprehensive understanding about the views of Manu-Smṛti on education, many concerned subjects are also dealt with.

**Primary Motive:** In order to ensure that every human action results in good to him and fellow human beings, Manu-Smṛti declares that all desires of human beings should be controlled and regulated by rules which are compendiously called dharma. He could identify the root of all actions as desire. He remarks, “There is not a single action of man in this world which is free from desire. Everything a man does is the result of his desire.”<sup>403</sup> Man who follows morality for the sake of morality is rare to find. While highlighting the limitations of desires,<sup>404</sup> he advised the path of regulated fulfillment of the same.<sup>405</sup>

After having observed this nature of humans, he finds out the solutions.

**Varna System:** He identifies four categories of people in line with Vedic concept of varṇa system. When people work considering the well-being of society, they form the elite class. They are self-motivators and given highest regard and responsibility too. Studying and teaching of the Veda-s, performance of the

<sup>402</sup> मनुस्मृतिविरुद्धा या सा स्मृतिर्न प्रशस्यते। वेदार्थोपनिबद्धत्वात् प्राधान्यं हि मनोः स्मृतेः ॥

यः कश्चित्कस्यचिद्धर्मो मनुना प्रतिपादितः। स सर्वोऽभिहितो वेदे सर्वज्ञानमयो हि सः ॥

<sup>403</sup> अकामस्य क्रिया काचित् दृश्यते नेह कर्हिचित्। यद्यद्धि कुरुते जन्तुः तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-४)

<sup>404</sup> न जातु कामः कामानाम् उपभोगेन शाम्यति। हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१४)

<sup>405</sup> संयमे यत्नमातिष्ठेत् विद्वान्यन्तेव वाजिनाम् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-८८)

ब्रह्मतेजोमयं दण्डमसृजत्पूर्वमीश्वरः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-७-१४)

sacrifices, officiating as priests at other men's sacrifices, gift-making and acceptance of gifts are the duties of Brāhmin-s.<sup>406</sup> By performing the prescribed austerities regularly with complete faith, anyone can attain the state of Brāhmin.<sup>407</sup> Maharṣi Manu was equally cautious about the regular chanting of Gāyatrī-mantra<sup>408</sup> and performance of panca-mahā-yajña.<sup>409</sup>

Those who work with the sense of duty consciousness, fall in second category. They need instructions from higher authorities. They are happy to abide by the rules. Kṣatriya-s are supposed to protect the society, make charity, conduct sacrifices and study the Veda-s.<sup>410</sup>

People of third category work for economical gains. Money drives them more than anything else. Vaiśya-s have to rear the cattle, get engaged in business, make charity, conduct austerities, and study the sacred books.<sup>411</sup>

Final category is formed by those who are driven by fear or punishments. Śūdra-s have to get engaged in service sector.<sup>412</sup> Particularly in Kaliyuga, people are, more often than not, driven by punishments and impositions.<sup>413</sup> The Veda-s also have this version of interpretation, but from other point of view.<sup>414</sup> It is

<sup>406</sup> अध्यापनम् अध्ययनं यजनं याजनं तथा। दानं प्रतिग्रहं चैव ब्राह्मणानाम् अकल्पयत्॥ (म.स्मृ.-१-८८)

वेदः कृत्स्नोऽधिगन्तव्यः स रहस्यो द्विजन्मना॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१६५)

वेदाभ्योसो हि विप्रस्य तपः परमिहोच्यते॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१६६)

<sup>407</sup> स्वाध्यायेन व्रतैः होमैः त्रैविद्येनेज्यया सुतैः। महायज्ञैश्च यज्ञैश्च ब्राह्मीयं क्रियते तनुः॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-२८)

वेदास्त्यागश्च यज्ञाश्च नियमाश्च तर्पांसि च। न विप्रदुष्टभावस्य सिद्धिं गच्छति कर्हिचित्॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-९७)

<sup>408</sup> जपेनैव तु संसिध्येत् ब्राह्मणो नात्र संशयः। कुर्यादन्यं न वा कुर्यात् मैत्रो ब्राह्मण उच्यते॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-८७)

एकाक्षरं परं ब्रह्म प्राणायामाः परं तपः। सावित्र्यास्तु परं नास्ति मौनात् सत्यं विशिष्यते॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-८३)

<sup>409</sup> अध्यापनं ब्रह्मयज्ञः पितृयज्ञस्तु तर्पणम्। होमो दैवो बलिर्भूतो नृयज्ञोऽतिथिपूजनम्॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-१०७)

<sup>410</sup> प्रजानां रक्षणं दानम् इज्याध्ययनमेव च। विषयेषु अप्रसक्तिश्च क्षत्रियस्य समासतः॥ (म.स्मृ.-१-८९)

<sup>411</sup> पशूनां रक्षणं दानम् इज्याध्ययनमेव च। वणिक्पथं कुसीदं च वैश्यस्य कृषिमेव च॥ (म.स्मृ.-१-९०)

<sup>412</sup> एकमेव तु शूद्रस्य प्रभुः कर्म समादिशत्। एतेषामेव वर्णानां शुश्रूषामनसूयया॥ (म.स्मृ.-१-९१)

<sup>413</sup> सर्वो दण्डजितो लोकः दुर्लभो हि शुचिः नरः। दण्डस्य हि भयात् सर्वं जगत् भोगाय कल्पते॥ (म.स्मृ.-७-२२)

<sup>414</sup> भीषास्माद्वातः पवते। भीषास्मादग्निश्चेन्द्रश्च। मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चम इति॥ (तै.उ.ब्र.)

obvious that people of this age can not work without desires.<sup>415</sup> All of these instructions evidently prove that even during the period of Maharṣi Manu, people started to become greedy; which resulted in composition of a precise code of conduct or constitution. The rules underwent a lot of changes in due course of time. Maharṣi Manu clearly stated the criteria according to which one can evaluate the standard of a person. A Brāhmin was evaluated by knowledge; a Kṣatriya by prowess or valour; a Vaiśya by economical strength; and Śūdra by birth.<sup>416</sup> These evaluation criteria help us understand the distinct difference between caste and varṇa system which are misunderstood or misinterpreted quite often by critics. Since these principles form the foundations of life and education, they have been focused upon and dealt with.

**Objectives Of Education:** Maharṣi Manu has hinted upon the products of education, analyzing which one can understand the objectives of education with better clarity. He proudly proclaims that people from other parts of the world would approach the native scholars for higher education in different disciplines.<sup>417</sup> While referring to the abilities acquired through the study of Veda-s and śāstra-s, he said, the scholar would be able to discharge the duties like generalship, sovereignty, the highest judgeship of the land and administration as a king of the whole world.<sup>418</sup> Hence, the education would be comprehensive during that time, in order to make antevāsi-s grow more vigorously. Integral education includes the highest objective of liberation too.<sup>419</sup>

**Syllabus:** The Veda-s were the primary parts of the study along with other śāstra-s.<sup>420</sup> Maharṣi Manu held the Veda-s at the highest regard as they are for the

<sup>415</sup> अकामस्य क्रिया काचित् दृश्यते नेह कर्हिचित्। यद्यद्धि कुरुते जन्तुः तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम्॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-४)

<sup>416</sup> विप्राणां ज्ञानतो ज्यैष्ठ्यं क्षत्रियाणां तु वीर्यतः। वैश्याणां धान्यधनतः शूद्राणामेव जन्मतः॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५५)

<sup>417</sup> एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः। स्वं स्वं चरित्रं शिक्षेरन् पृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-२०)

<sup>418</sup> सेनापत्यं च राज्यं च दण्डनेतृत्वमेव च। सर्वलोकाधिपत्यं च वेदशास्त्रविदहति॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-१००)

<sup>419</sup> तपो विद्या च विप्रस्य निःश्रेयसकरं परम्। तपसा किल्बिषं हन्ति विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-१०४)

<sup>420</sup> वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलं स्मृतिशीले च तद्वदाम्। आचारः चैव साधूनाम् आत्मनः तुष्टिरेव च॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-६)

welfare of the humanity as such.<sup>421</sup> Along with the chanting of the Veda-s, Maharśi Manu emphasizes upon the comprehension of the same.<sup>422</sup> Therefore, the study of the Veda-s was considered equal to the performance of austerities.<sup>423</sup> Above all, the antevāsī is given instructions on etiquette as soon as he begins formal education.<sup>424</sup> Due emphasis was laid on following non-violence, using polite words and practicing right code of conduct.<sup>425</sup>

**Antevāsī:** Unlike the other antevāsī-s, Brāhmin antevāsī was prescribed with more regulations. He shall kindle the fire at morning and evening, beg alms, lie on the bare ground and render service to his preceptor everyday.<sup>426</sup> After collecting the food by begging the alms, the antevāsī has to offer it to the ācārya.<sup>427</sup> The ācārya should redistribute the food among the antevāsī-s. This process evokes social awareness among the antevāsī community. After successful completion of education, he must pay him an honorarium according to his pecuniary circumstances.<sup>428</sup> (Maharśi Manu prohibited the system of collecting fees before the completion of education, either by fearing the dire consequences or by sensing such developments.) Naiṣṭhika-Brahmacāri (one who leads the life of celibacy) is given all the necessary guidelines like food, routine, obligations and so on.<sup>429</sup>

**Eligibility For Acquiring Knowledge:** Maharśi Manu seems to be very particular while stating the basic criteria for antevāsī. A number of rules were

श्रुताद्धि प्रज्ञोपजायते, प्रज्ञया योगः, योगादात्मवत्तेति विद्यासामर्थ्यम् ॥ (कौ.अ.)

<sup>421</sup> बिभर्ति सर्वभूतानि वेदशास्त्रं सनातनम्। तस्मादेतत् परं मन्ये यजन्तोरस्य साधनम् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-९९)

<sup>422</sup> वेदः कृत्नोऽधिगन्तव्यः स रहस्यो द्विजन्मना ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१६५)

<sup>423</sup> वेदाभ्योसो हि विप्रस्य तपः परमिहोच्यते ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१६६)

<sup>424</sup> उपनीय गुरुः शिष्यं शिक्षयेत् शौचमादितः। आचारमग्निकार्यं च सन्ध्योपासनमेव च ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-६९)

<sup>425</sup> अहिसयैव भूतानां कार्यं श्रेयोऽनुशासनम्। वाक् चैव मधुरा श्लक्षणा प्रयोज्या धर्ममिच्छता ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५९)

<sup>426</sup> अग्नीन्धनं भैक्षचर्याम् अधःशय्यां गुरोर्हितम्। आसमावर्तनात् कुर्यात् कृतोपनयनो द्विजः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१०८)

<sup>427</sup> समाहृत्य तु तद्भैक्ष्यं यावदन्नम् अमायया। निवेद्य गुरवेऽश्रीयात् आचम्य प्राङ्मुखः शुचिः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-५१)

<sup>428</sup> न पूर्वं गुरवे किञ्चित् उपकुर्वीत धर्मवित्। स्नास्यन्तु गुरुणाज्ञातः शक्त्या गुर्वर्थमाहरेत् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-२४६)

<sup>429</sup> म.स्मृ.-द्वितीयोध्यायः-२४२—२४९ ॥

codified, perhaps, to avoid the misuse of sacred knowledge and to attach highest significance to the knowledge gained. A humble, self-restrained, service-minded, qualified, religiously inclined and knowledge-seeking antevāsī should be taught by ācārya.<sup>430</sup> A ācārya must not impart knowledge unless the antevāsī is receptive.<sup>431</sup> Unqualified, envious antevāsī-s are not supposed to be instructed even in the face of crisis.<sup>432</sup> Maharśi Manu upholds the importance of service in acquiring knowledge.<sup>433</sup>

**Ācārya:** During the period of Maharśi Manu, the teaching profession had many grades like guru (who initiates with sacraments while providing food and education without any expectation),<sup>434</sup> ācārya (who initiates his antevāsī while teaching him the secret knowledge)<sup>435</sup> and upādhyāya (who teaches Veda-s and śāstra-s for the sake of money).<sup>436</sup> On the basis of the duties discharged with selflessness, commitment and love, Maharśi Manu graded them at various levels. Upādhyāya, ācārya, father and mother are accorded higher regards respectively.<sup>437</sup> While referring to the superiority of knowledge over mortal life, Maharśi Manu ascribed highest respect for ācārya.<sup>438</sup> Wisdom, rather than old age brings maturity

<sup>430</sup> ब्रह्माङ्गलिकृतोऽध्याप्यो लघुवासा जितेन्द्रियः ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-७०)

आचार्यपुत्रः शुश्रूषुः ज्ञानदो धार्मिकः शुचिः। आप्तः शक्तोऽर्थदः साधुः स्वोऽध्याप्या दश धर्मतः ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१०९)

यमेव तं शुचिं विद्यात् नियतब्रह्मचारिणम्। तस्मै मां ब्रूहि विप्राय निधिप्रायाप्रमादिने ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-११५)

<sup>431</sup> नापृष्टः कस्यचिद् ब्रूयात् न चान्यायेन पृच्छतः। जानन्नपि हि मेधावी जडवल्लोक आचरेत् ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-११०)

<sup>432</sup> धर्मार्थौ यत्र न स्यातां तां शुश्रूषा वापि तद्विदा। तत्र विद्या न वक्तव्या शुभं बीजमिवोषरे ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-११२)

आपद्यपि हि धोरायां न त्वेनामिरिणी वपेत् ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-११३)

विद्या ब्राह्मणमेत्याह शोवधिस्तेऽस्मि रक्ष माम्। असूयकाय मां मादाः तथा स्यां वीर्यवत्तया ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-११४)

<sup>433</sup> यथा खनन् खनित्रेण नरो वार्यधिगच्छति। एवं गुरुगतां विद्यां शुश्रूषुरधिगच्छति ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-२१८)

<sup>434</sup> निषेकादीनि कर्माणि यः करोति यथाविधि। सम्भावयति चान्नेन स विप्रो गुरुरुच्यते ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४२)

<sup>435</sup> उपनीय तु यः शिष्यं वेदमध्यापयेद्विजः। संकल्पं सरहस्यं च तमाचार्यं प्रचक्षते ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४०)

<sup>436</sup> एकदेशं तु वेदस्य वेदाङ्गान्यपि वा पुनः। योऽध्यापयति वृत्यर्थम् उपाध्यायः स उच्यते ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४१)

<sup>437</sup> उपाध्यायात् दश आचार्यः आचार्यात्तु शतं पिता। सहस्रं तु पितृन्माता गौरवादतिरिच्यते ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४५)

<sup>438</sup> कामान्माता पिता चैवं यदुत्पादयतो मिथः। सम्भूतिं तस्य तां विद्यात् यद्योनावभिजायते ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४७)

आचार्यस्त्वस्य यां जातिं विधिवद्वेदपारगः। उत्पादयति सावित्र्या सा सत्या साजरामरा ॥ (म.स्मू.-२-१४८)

and respect.<sup>439</sup> Those who help in expansion of knowledge are accorded the reverence equal to father.<sup>440</sup> Therefore, the learned scholars are considered equal to king, in terms of respect.<sup>441</sup> To maintain the humility, Brāhmin is supposed to shun the worldly honours.<sup>442</sup> The ācārya is not only expected to preach, but to practice in personal life.<sup>443</sup>

**Respect For Womanhood:** Maharṣi Manu mandates that the highest respect and regard must be extended and full protection should be given to women throughout their life.<sup>444</sup> However, some verses of Manu-Smṛti are criticized as being against women. In fact, Maharṣi Manu did not intend to subjugate or dominate them. The true meaning and purpose of such verses is that a woman requires and is entitled to protection in every stage of life. Correspondingly, it is the duty of the father, the husband and the sons to look after the daughter, the wife and the mother respectively.<sup>445</sup> For, they bring fortunes to the family. Maharṣi Manu considered men and women equally as none is lesser or greater than the other.<sup>446</sup> Marriage is the Vedic sacrament for woman.<sup>447</sup> To sum up, the high reverence and concern for womanhood that Maharṣi Manu had, will continue to inspire and guide future generations.

<sup>439</sup> यो वै युवाप्यधीयानः तं देवा स्थविरं विदुः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५६)

अनाकृष्टस्य विषयैर्विद्यानां पारदृश्वनः। तस्य धर्मरतेरासीत् वृद्धत्वं जरसा विना ॥ (र.वं.-१-२५)

श्रद्धधानः शुभां विद्याम् आददीतावरादपि। अन्त्यादपि परं धर्मं स्त्रीरत्नं दुष्कलादपि ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-२३८)

<sup>440</sup> ब्राह्मस्य जन्मनः कर्ता स्वधर्मस्य च शासिता। बालोऽपि विप्रो वृद्धस्य पिता भवति धर्मतः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५०)

<sup>441</sup> स्नातको नृपमानभाक् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१३९)

<sup>442</sup> सम्मानात् ब्राह्मणो नित्यम् उद्विजेत विषादिव। अमृतस्येव चाकांक्षेत् अवमानस्य सर्वदा ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१६२)

<sup>443</sup> ऋषयः चक्रिरे धर्मं योऽनूचानः स नो महान् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-१५४)

अज्ञेभ्यो ग्रन्थिनः श्रेष्ठाः ग्रन्थिभ्यो धारिणो वराः। धारिभ्यो ज्ञानिनः श्रेष्ठाः ज्ञानिभ्यो व्यवसायिनः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-१२-१०३)

<sup>444</sup> म.स्मृ.-तृतीयोध्यायः—५५; ५६; ५७; ५८; ५९; ६०; नवमः अध्यायः—५; ६; ७; ९; ११; १२; ४५; ४६; १०१; १०८ ॥

<sup>445</sup> पिता रक्षति कौमारे भर्ता रक्षति यौवने। रक्षन्ति स्थविरे पुत्राः न स्त्री स्वातन्त्र्यमर्हति ॥ (म.स्मृ.-९-३)

<sup>446</sup> द्विधा कृत्वात्मनो देहमर्धेन पुरुषोऽभवत्। अर्धेन नारी तस्यां स विराजमसृजत् प्रभुः ॥ (म.स्मृ.-१-३२)

<sup>447</sup> वैवाहिको विधिः स्त्रीणां संस्कारो वैदिकः स्मृतः। पतिसेवा गुरौ वासः गृहार्थोऽग्निपरिक्रिया ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-६७)

अमन्निका तु कार्येयं स्त्रीणामावृद्दशेषतः। संस्कारार्थं शरीरस्य यथाकालं यथाक्रमम् ॥ (म.स्मृ.-२-६६)

## **II. BHAGAVADGĪTĀ**

The Bhagavadgītā, which dwells particularly on the application of the upaniṣadic teachings to the practical life, marks the third stage of Vedānta - that of 'applied truths'.<sup>448</sup> It enunciates spiritual and moral disciplines for different types and grades of seekers and points out the way to confirm normal life to the highest ideal. Thus, the Upaniṣat-s, the Brahmasūtra-s and the Bhagavadgītā are the three norms or standard works of Vedānta, forming its triple basis (Prasthāna-traya). They are called the Śruti-prasthāna, the Nyāya-prasthāna and Smṛti-prasthāna respectively. Vedānta follows the course of the revelation (Śruti), reason (Nyāya), and the regulation of life (Smṛti). Hence, Bhagavadgītā was also studied under the section of Smṛti-s.

**Bhagavadgītā From Education Point Of View:** The message of Bhagavadgītā was given on the tumultuous battlefield of Kurukṣetra around five thousand years ago. Here, the antevāsī and the ācārya, Arjuna and Lord Kṛṣṇa are great warriors. And the practical ācārya, Lord Kṛṣṇa, was a man of compassion, and endowed with universal vision. From the traditional interpretations, he was considered to be the complete incarnation of the God almighty. Thus the Bhagavadgītā is a heroic message from the greatest ācārya of the world. It does not give any dogmas which are beyond questions. Rather, it invites questions and helps to realize the answer by oneself. Its universal application helps everyone to realize one's fullest possibilities. It deals with human problems in a human way. Therefore, it has tremendous appeal to people from different backgrounds. Since it addresses the fundamental questions concerned to life, world and God, it is a magnanimous work of excellence and a guide book for humanity to progress in the path of evolutionary advancement.

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<sup>448</sup> सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः। पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्॥ (शान्तिपाठः-भ.गी.)

**Objectives Of Education:** It was Ācārya Śāṅkara who discovered the significance of Bhagavadgītā, wrote commentary on and considered it as one of the main streams of Vedānta. In the introduction to his commentary, he expounds the comprehensive view of human development. There are two-fold developments which are characterized by pravṛtti (outward action) and nivṛtti (inward contemplation) which are meant for abhyudaya (socio-economic welfare) and nīśreyasa (spiritual freedom).<sup>449</sup> The comprehensive wisdom of ancient sages has given us the golden mean which is the combination of action and meditation.<sup>450</sup> Both are equally required for human and social well-being. Attaching undue importance to pravṛtti and abhyudaya is the root-cause for the widespread value-erosion and increase of violence. Addition of second element (nivṛtti and nīśreyasa) would bring tremendous positive change in individual and social life. Thus the harmonious blend of pravṛtti and nivṛtti, of abhyudaya and nīśreyasa was the objective set to achieve.

**Bhagavadgītā - The Source Of Integral Human Psychology:** More often than not, education exclusively depends on the understanding of man. Since mind is the source of all our activities (and liberation)<sup>451</sup>, education and psychology are interdisciplinary subjects. Unlike the behaviorist psychology of the West, Bhagavadgītā analyses the human mind more fundamentally and from internal aspect, indeed. A little depth psychology came with Freud and McDougall who started to give new dimensions to the study. According to Bhagavadgītā, human mind is an integration of the three constituents (guṇa-s) i.e. satva, rajas and tamas.<sup>452</sup> Satva guṇa is characterized by purity, luminosity and non-violence. It brings happiness and

<sup>449</sup> द्विविधो हि वेदोक्तो धर्मः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो निवृत्तिलक्षणश्चेति। जगतः स्थितिकारणं प्राणिनां साक्षात् अभ्युदयनिश्रेयसहेतुः यः स धर्मो ब्राह्मणाद्यैः वर्णैः आश्रमिभिः च श्रेयोर्थेभिरनुष्ठीयमानः ॥ (भ.गी.-शा.भा.-उपोद्घातः)

<sup>450</sup> तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च। मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः मामेवैश्वस्यसंशयः ॥ (भ.गी.-८-७)

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि सन्न्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा। निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ (भ.गी.-३-३०)

<sup>451</sup> मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः। बन्धाय विषयासक्तिः मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥

<sup>452</sup> सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः। निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-५)

knowledge.<sup>453</sup> Rajas can be understood as the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst and attachment. It embodies by attachment to action.<sup>454</sup> A delusive attitude and ignorance come out of tamas.<sup>455</sup> One or the other of these three guṇa-s comes into dominance.<sup>456</sup> All the three are mixed up in nature and individual too. But, to gain better standards in evolutionary advancement, one should constantly endeavour to develop satva guṇa more and more.<sup>457</sup> (Lord Kṛṣṇa enlisted a number of divine qualities which are considered to be responsible for the development of satva guṇa. Meanwhile he has given a list of vices to be avoided)<sup>458</sup> Varṇa system was also dependant on this analysis.<sup>459</sup>

**Barriers Confronted In The Path of Progress:** Arjuna, being a great warrior and the best antevāsī of his master, was confronted with a number of common psychological problems like value-clash, ignoble attitude, loosing courage in the face of difficulties,<sup>460</sup> dejection, nervous breakdown,<sup>461</sup> grief over undeserving issues,<sup>462</sup> vindicating failure with wise logics, interest in critical philosophy of the Veda-s rather than finding its proper application,<sup>463</sup> fickleness of mind<sup>464</sup> and so on.

<sup>453</sup> तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात् प्रकाशकमनामयम्। सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चाघनम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-६)

<sup>454</sup> रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम्। तन्निबन्धाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-७)

<sup>455</sup> तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम्। प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिः तन्निबन्धाति भारत ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-८)

<sup>456</sup> सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत। ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-९)

सत्त्वात् सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च। प्रमादमोहौ तमसः भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-१०)

<sup>457</sup> ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः। जघन्यगुणवृत्तस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-१८)

<sup>458</sup> अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः। दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१६-१)

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम्। दयाभूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१६-२)

तेजः क्षमा धृतिश्चौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता। भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ (भ.गी.-१६-३)

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च। अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥ (भ.गी.-१६-४)

<sup>459</sup> चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागज्ञाः ॥ (भ.गी.-४-१३)

<sup>460</sup> कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम्। अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ (भ.गी.-२-२)

<sup>461</sup> क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते। क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्तवोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ (भ.गी.-२-३)

<sup>462</sup> अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे। गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ (भ.गी.-२-११)

<sup>463</sup> यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः। वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥ (भ.गी.-२-४२)

<sup>464</sup> चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम्। तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ (भ.गी.-६-३४)

Without addressing these primary questions which are commonly faced by everyone, there would be no further progress. Some weakness has come and obstructed the true form of Arjuna who was essentially strong. Hence Lord Kṛṣṇa gives a detailed answer which forms the fundamental principles of education policy.

**Three Virtues Of A Seeker:** In order to gain knowledge, there is a dire requirement to possess three major virtues viz. firm faith (śraddhā), complete concentration (tatparatā) and regulation of senses.<sup>465</sup> Believing the teachings of ācārya and śāstra is called śraddhā which is main source of gaining knowledge. The word 'śraddhā' encompasses wide range of virtues that include self-confidence, faith in truth, faith in fellow human beings, faith in values, and finally faith in God almighty.<sup>466</sup> It is a positive frame of mind.<sup>467</sup> Without this virtue, it is highly impossible to achieve any positive growth in terms of knowledge, peace and happiness.<sup>468</sup> The second element is concentration. No knowledge can be gained without concentrating our energies towards particular subject. The science of yoga and modern scientific discoveries prove that everyone has been endowed with the gift of tremendous mental power, concentrating which one can attain highest state of success. Regulation of senses is the third aspect. One cannot rise to knowledge until the sensory energies are disciplines.<sup>469</sup> Lord Kṛṣṇa elucidates on how a person finds self-destruction step by step without exercising sensory control.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः। ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिम् अचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ (भ.गी.-४-३९)

<sup>466</sup> श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ (भ.गी.-६-४७)

<sup>467</sup> आस्तिक्यबुद्धिः श्रद्धा ॥ (भ.गी.-शा.भा.)

<sup>468</sup> अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति। नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परः न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ (भ.गी.-४-४०)

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत्। असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्रेत्य नो इह ॥ (भ.गी.-१७-२८)

<sup>469</sup> तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत् मत्परः। वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ (भ.गी.-२-६१)

<sup>470</sup> ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते। सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ (भ.गी.-२-६२)

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः। स्मृतिभ्रंशात् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥ (भ.गी.-२-६३)

**Directions To Develop The Virtues:** The satva guṇa will be in accordance to the level of śraddhā which determines the true nature of an individual.<sup>471</sup> Therefore, to increase śraddhā it is necessary to develop satva guṇa. In the seventeenth chapter of Bhagavadgītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa stated many basic aspects (like śraddhā, food, charity, performance of rituals, austerities) from point of all the three guṇa-s. By following satva way of life, one can develop the śraddhā. Before giving guidelines for the development of other two aspects viz. concentration and regulation of senses, Lord Kṛṣṇa accepts the problem from reality point of view. Later he suggests to achieve through conscious practice and renunciation.<sup>472</sup> Things which are seemingly impossible become possible when they are worked out repeatedly. Because there are many things to attract the mind, it is equally important to develop detachment. That helps in focusing our energies. Maharṣi Patañjali, the famed author of Yoga sūtra-s, also expressed similar views.<sup>473</sup> Brining back the mind from other distractions is called pratyāhāra, in Yoga sūtra. Tremendous faith in the innate capacity of the mind has to be achieved. The wild mind can be trained and made our servant by faithful regular practice.<sup>474</sup> One can make the mind controlled, steady, stable and strong by *detached practice* which helps in controlling the mind and senses.

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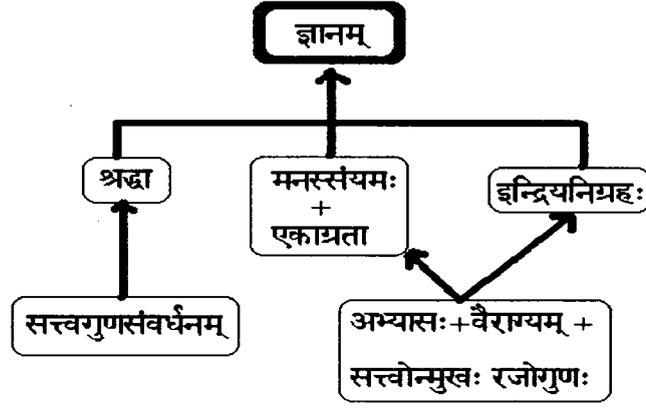
दीर्घेण कालेनानुष्ठातृणां कामोद्भवात् हीयमानविवेकविज्ञानहेतुकेन अधर्मेणाभिभूयमाने धर्मे प्रवर्धमाने चाधर्मे जगतः स्थितिं परिपालयिषुः स आदिकर्ता नारायणाख्यो विष्णुः भौमस्य ब्रह्मणः ब्राह्मणत्वस्य रक्षणार्थं देवक्यां वसुदेवात् कृष्णः किल सम्बभूव। ब्राह्मणत्वस्य हि रक्षणेन रक्षितः स्यात् वैदिको धर्मः तदधीनत्वात् वर्णाश्रमभेदानाम् ॥ (भ.गी.-शा.भा.-उपोद्घातः)

<sup>471</sup> सत्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत। श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषः यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥ (भ.गी.-१७-३)

<sup>472</sup> असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्। अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ (भ.गी.-६-३५)

<sup>473</sup> अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः ॥ (पात.यो.सू.-१-१२)

<sup>474</sup> अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना। परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ (भ.गी.-१४-५)



**Educational Insights In Bhagavadgītā:** While addressing the problems, Lord Kṛṣṇa adopts positive approach. He says that *the way you behave does not befit you.*<sup>475</sup> This positive approach would bring the best out of a person. It can also be an educational maxim for parents and ācārya-s with respect to children, and generally also for men and women when they deal with each other. It evokes the forgotten self-esteem of a person and prevents him doing something below his dignity. The temporary weakness, dejection and nervous breakdown cover the true personality like clouds covering the Sun. It is just a temporary aberration, a little cloud has come there and the sun has become dark. The Sun will shine again as soon as the clouds move away. This is the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa who shows the way to deal with human weakness. This is the process of positive reinforcement. The strong educational philosophy etched in these śloka-s (second and third śloka of second chapter of Bhagavadgītā) is meant to make heroes out of clay. The ‘*cando-attitude*’ promoted in Bhagavadgītā is the need of the hour. Awakening of human spirit is the essence of Bhagavadgītā.

**The Art Of Acquiring Knowledge:** Lord Kṛṣṇa mentions three methods that help in gaining knowledge.<sup>476</sup> Antevāsī gains confidence of his master by prostrating to him. Prostration has got multiple advantages from the point of

<sup>475</sup> नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ॥ (भ.गी.-२-३)

<sup>476</sup> तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया। उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ (भ.गी.-४-३४)

antevāsī<sup>477</sup> and ācārya as well. It helps in building cordial relationship between the two. Antevāsī learns the virtue of humility and, on the other hand, ācārya becomes more responsible and concerned about his antevāsī. Arrogance has no value in the field of knowledge. The second method is to question constantly. (Refer *praśna vidhi and sevā vidhi* in first chapter) Third and most important method is to render service. It is a tremendous source of character development. Even while serving the old, one can learn the lessons of real life. Apart from these three sources, Lord Kṛṣṇa enlisted a number of qualities essentially required for earning knowledge.<sup>478</sup> When the antevāsī is inquisitive, it becomes the duty of his ācārya to make him learn by adopting any method.<sup>479</sup>

**Bhagavadgītā - The Repository Of Resources:** Many scholars maintain the view that the Bhagavadgītā is a complete work. It guides on various aspects like purification of thought<sup>480</sup> and mind,<sup>481</sup> austerities and charity,<sup>482</sup> impact of great personalities on society,<sup>483</sup> self-development,<sup>484</sup> karma philosophy,<sup>485</sup> detached involvement,<sup>486</sup> fusion of knowledge and experience,<sup>487</sup> combination of vision and

<sup>477</sup> देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम्। ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते॥ (भ.गी.-१७-१४)

<sup>478</sup> अमानित्वमदम्भित्वम् अहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम्। आचार्योपासनं शौचं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः॥ (भ.गी.-१३-७)

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च। जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधितुःखदोषानुदर्शनम्॥ (भ.गी.-१३-८)

असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु। नित्यञ्च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु॥ (भ.गी.-१३-९)

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणि। विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि॥ (भ.गी.-१३-१०)

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम्। एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदथोन्यथा॥ (भ.गी.-१३-११)

<sup>479</sup> तदग्रहणे ज्ञाते पुनः ग्राहयिष्यामि उपायान्तरेण इति प्रष्टुः अभिप्रायः। यत्नान्तरम् आस्थाय शिष्यः कृतार्थः कर्तव्यः इति आचार्यधर्मः प्रदर्शितो भवति॥ (शा.भा.-अवतरणिका)

<sup>480</sup> अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितञ्च यत्। स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते॥ (भ.गी.-१७-१५)

<sup>481</sup> मनः प्रसादस्सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः। भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत् तपो मानसमुच्यते॥ (भ.गी.-१७-१६)

<sup>482</sup> यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत्। यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम्॥ (भ.गी.-१८-५)

<sup>483</sup> यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठः तत्तदेवेतरो जनः। स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकः तदनुवर्तते॥ (भ.गी.-३-२१)

<sup>484</sup> उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्। आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुः आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः॥ (भ.गी.-६-५)

<sup>485</sup> कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन। मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूः मा ते सङ्गोस्त्वकर्मणि॥ (भ.गी.-२-४७)

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः॥ (भ.गी.-१८-४६)

<sup>486</sup> भ.गी.-२-४८; ३-९; ३-१९; ३-२५; ४-१३; ४-१४; ४-१५; ४-१८; ४-१९; ४-२०; ६-३५॥

action,<sup>488</sup> freedom to think and act,<sup>489</sup> caution in distributing knowledge,<sup>490</sup> benefit of education,<sup>491</sup> and so on. All these subjects have great impact on life and education as well. The beauty of Bhagavadgītā is that it guides people from all walks of life.



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<sup>487</sup> ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात्॥ (भ.गी.-९-१)

<sup>488</sup> यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः। तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिः ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम॥ (भ.गी.-१८-७८)

<sup>489</sup> इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्यात् गुह्यतरं मया। विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु॥ (भ.गी.-१८-६३)

<sup>490</sup> इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन। न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योभ्यसूयति॥ (भ.गी.-१८-६७)

<sup>491</sup> नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादात् मयाच्युत। स्थितोस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव॥ (भ.गी.-१८-७३)