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It has been quite an informative, enlightening and intellectually stimulating experience to go through the interpretation and commentary of the Bhagavat Gita by Malayaj Garga. A reading of Gita with the requisite concentration of mind is always an elevating experience. The author is a technocrat by academic background. He has not been a student of philosophy. He says in the introductory observations on 'the text and the context' of the commentary that the commentaries by the Masters, as he calls them, were simply daunting and beyond his comprehension. Starting with the text as such, he began to read and chant with a view to understand the context, the meaning, and the significance of what millions have treated as a sacred scripture. As the author mentioned to me in a meeting, the meaning and purpose of what Sri Krishna said began to slowly dawn on him intuitively. According to the author, that is why he has not tried to delve into Gita and interpret it through the eyes of other Masters. By no means does the author try to undervalue the commentaries by others, but for him the attitude and approach adopted by him 'as a student' has been a fruitful experience by the grace of his Gurudev. Thus he feels, it ought to be of use to others too who are not well up but are desirous of knowing the real purport of Gita's message. His presentation in his book of his understanding of Gita and his approach has been made in a way so as to facilitate an understanding what Sri Krishna means to convey to Arjuna.

The author seems to feel that his approach may help other seekers to adopt and live the 'Gita way'-- the effort of the author, he claims, has been 'to unveil the letter and spirit of the Holy Gita' without any interpolation or imposition of any ideological inclinations of his own. Moreover, to quote the author Malayaj Garga, "My commentary is in a lot of ways different from what has been said or written earlier; it brings together science, philosophy, metaphysics, logic, faith, devotion..... not as entirely unrelated and/ or antagonistic streams of

thought but as completely complementary and convergent thought processes....., it attempts to weave together the schools of 'Advait and Dwait'. He clearly clarifies and strongly asserts that the Gita does not propound the validity of caste on the basis of birth and any such interpretation is patently wrong and is simply misconceived. The author has certainly approached Gita in a scientific spirit with logical explanation as well appeal to the modern generation of seekers. The commendable holistic approach by Malayaj Garga lends significance to his commentary. Apart from providing some useful information for readers in the beginning, his notes to the slokas at times are extremely perceptive and insightful. His interpretations as to why and how a particular word has been used illumines meaningfully the purpose and the context of what Sri Krishna says.

As Malayaj Garga says, "The Holy Gita belongs to the whole of humanity. It is a logical and scientific exposition of 'The truth'." It is now commonly accepted ever by commentators of faiths and beliefs other than Hinduism, beginning from Edwin Arnold who called it *The Song Celestial* to umpteen other commentators and translators till to-day. Gita becomes a Universal Gospel and its message transcends frontiers of time and space. It is a guide to the predicament of man through ages. Arjuna thus symbolises man in confusion or despondency because of life's complexities, who has lost his capacity as how to confront realities of everyday life. It provides solace, and succour determination, courage and a sense of direction and peace. Bhagavat Gita is not a sectarian text. It reveals the Truth through personal interaction of Sri Krishna and Arjuna. There is nothing theological or parochial about it. Statesmen like Tilak, Aurobindo, Gandhi, Annie Besant and Dr. Bhagwandas among others have given their interpretations of Gita. Many Indian revolutionaries during the freedom struggle went to gallows with a copy of Gita in their hands. It has been translated practically in all languages of the world. Both new translations as well as commentaries by scholars, Indian but mostly western, are regularly being made available. This by itself bears testimony to the eternal significance of Gita. There have been quite a few critics too, but they hardly made any palpable impact anywhere in any manner on Gita's popularity and acceptance. Gita has now become even a text for good governance and effective management in universities and higher Institutions of learning across the world. Bhagawat Gita's perpetual and ever

fresh message has such a potential and capacity to resolve in dilemmas and intricacies of changing human condition that it has tended to become the integral part of intellectual emotional and spiritual aspects of human life, its well-being and fulfilment in a large part of the civilised world.

Malayaj Garga has enriched and made a distinctive contribution to the vast and expanding universe of Gita literature, and for this labour of love, he certainly merits our appreciation. This valuable treatise, beautifully printed and published, will be a worthwhile addition to any library. It is of great use to students of comparative religion, philosophy and humanities besides general readers. Malayaj Garga's ***The Holy Gita The Discourse Non Pareil***, should find place in universities and institutions of higher learning. The Government of India, especially the External Affairs Ministry, presents books to visiting dignitaries and to universities. Here possibly is an unparelled gift which embodies India's ancient wisdom that symbolises its tradition of harmony and is a worthy guide to modern man in everyday life.

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