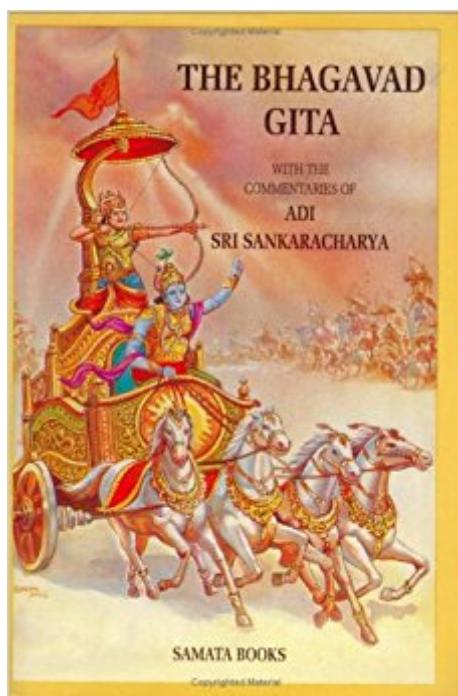


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# The Bhagavad Gita With The Commentary Of Sri Sankaracharya



## **Synopsis**

Adi Sankara's is the earliest extant commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. The text of the Gita as cited by him has come down to the centuries as the authentic text and this commentary of his proved to be of seminal value ever since. Later commentators may differ from him on textual and even metaphysical interpretation but the spiritual well being flowing into us on reading the Gita-Bhashya of Sankaracharya is universally acknowledged. One has only to read it to feel it. This Book contains the original Sanskrit text of the Gita in Devanagari followed by its translation as also the translation of Sanakara's Gita Bhashya by Alladi Mahadeva Sastri. The translation has stood the test of the time since its first publication in 1897, being the best available English translation of Sankaracharya's commentary. The learned translator has added in the form of foot-notes (marked A) explanations mostly extracted from Anandagiri's Tika which always is the clearest and most to the point and is almost indispensable for a proper understanding of some important portions of the Bhashya.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This particular Book translated by Alladi Mahadeva Sastri is so popular it has been reprinted ten times in a span of twenty years.

Alladi Mahadeva Sastri's translation has stood the test of the time since it's first publication in 1897, being the first available English translation of Sankaracharya's commentary. It has run into fifteen reprints and is still in great demand.

This translation is the best! Gem of a book! Brilliant Commentary by Shankaracharya and superb translation by Alladi Mahadeva Sastri. Must for English reading public who are serious about understanding the meaning of GITA

Being a child of the 60's, using the title of one of Bob Dylan's more gentle refrains is apt. I have always been a lover of Dylan's music and this particular song with on the one hand it's 'wildernesses' and 'sea of mud' and 'steel-eyed men' tell of the pain and isolation of living in the world compared with the promise of 'shelter from the storm'. And this has been what this little book has been to me for over half a life time. The Bhahagavad Gita itself is very short. Most of this version is the commentary of Shri Sankaracharya, an Indian teacher who brought the philosophy of 'advaita' to India and by it's practical and easily understood nature eventually over many centuries through its advocates, to the world. Advaita most simply put is the proposition that God is not different from us and in comprehending our own personal divinity we do, because the world is a unity, realize that I am no different from the substance in which I reside. Atman is no different from Brahman. For anyone interested in the Vedantic philosophy; a very practical philosophy that enables us to live in the world and know God; this is an excellent and easily understood translation. I use God in the sense of whatever is that Universal from which the whole of Creation most surely pours and into which, eventually it must return. I use the term God because I was raised as a Christian. Windows in the Sky, 'Buddha is that you?'

Undoubtedly the best English Translation of Shankracharya Bhashyam on Bhagavad Gita, I have read several other English Translation, but no other explains the way this book does.

The full title of this book is 'The Bhagavad Gita - With the Commentary of Sri Sankaracharya, Translated from the original Sanskrit into English by Alladi Mahadeva Sastry.' The book contains the Sanskrit text of the Gita in Devanagari script followed by its translation, and also the translation of Sankara's famous commentary or Bhashya. Although this book was first published in 1897, it still reads reasonably well. Trevor Leggett, in his superb study of the Gita - 'Realization of the Supreme Self - The Yoga-s of the Bhagavad Gita' (Kegan Paul International, 1995) - comments on the Bhashya: "Sankara explains the revelatory flashes of the Gita by putting them side by side with Upanishadic texts and with each other. He presents a system which is internally consistent, and which resolves the apparent contradictions of some of the texts" (page 7). The Sastry edition is sturdily bound in cloth, stitched, and for an Indian publication is reasonably well printed on good

paper. Although no-one today would probably want to sit down and read through the entire commentary, since a certain amount of the exposition is there to answer the objections of rival schools which no longer exist, much of what Sankara has to say is of abiding interest and his Bhashya belongs in the library of all serious students of Advaita Vedanta. Those who may be interested in finding a more recent translation, one that is fuller, in contemporary idiom, and far more clearly printed, might care to look at Swami Gambhirananda's 'Bhagavad Gita - With the Commentary of Sankaracharya' (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1995), an edition that is available through the Vedanta Press, CA. One of the more useful features of the Gambhirananda edition is that, unlike that of Sastry, it does not omit that part of the Bhashya which shows in what order the words of the Gita are to be construed, and which gives their various synonyms. The beginning student of Sanskrit will find this a very useful help in understanding the text. Another useful edition is the 'Srimad Bhagavad Gita Bhasya of Sri Samkaracarya' by Dr. A.G. Krishna Warrier (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, n.d.). This, besides giving the Devanagari of the Gita, also gives it for the Bhashya, along with excellent contemporary translations of both. Any of these three editions would serve the interested student. I keep my own copy of the Gambhirananda constantly at hand and often find myself referring to it.

This is a very old text and an essential version for one's library and study of the Gita. I often referred to this version whilst reading a most superb modern version ("The Living Gita- The complete Bhagavad Gita with commentary by Sri Swami Satchidananda") which I have and made comparisons. The commentary from the Sankaracharya in this older version of the Gita is wonderful and has essential perspective whilst the text is more old world it carries the weight and authority of the real meaning in its words. Highly recommended- a must have version.

One would not think at first that one could interpret the Bhagavad Gita in the sense of Shankara. The value of this commentary, I think, lies not primarily in its elucidation of the Gita, but more in giving the advaitic commentator a chance to deal with different aspects of advaita, which otherwise would not have surfaced, if not the Gita would have provided all these topics. An advaitin for himself would probably not need much more than the statement: Sarvam kalvidam brahma. Compared to the commentaries to the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad or to the Vedanta Sutras, one may have some doubts, whether the original Shankara was really the author of this commentary. The Dashnamis seem clear about it that Shankara was the author. In any case it's 100% advaita vedanta. The book is quite interesting to read, whether in this version from Samata Books or for instance the one from

Krishna Warrior.

If you are looking for an essential work in Indian philosophy, look no further. "The Bhagavad Gita with The Commentary of Sri Sankaracharya" is, bluntly put, a poetic parable about the conflict of a man and his path to wisdom. The book is a translation, from the ancient Indo-European language of Sanskrit, of The Bhagavad Gita, which is a discourse between Krishna (the creator of all) and Arjuna (his conflicted great nephew) about the path to self-realisation; and there is the commentary of Shankara which is a key to understanding the path and ultimately living it.

Excellent interpretation.

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