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Dr. Sunita Arya
Aradhana Mandloi
Dr. Kusum Joshi

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A DIVINE BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP: LORD KRISHNA'S TEACHINGS AS THE SUPREME LAW

Dr. Sunita Arya¹

Aradhana Mandloi²

Dr. Kusum Joshi³

ABSTRACT

The only thing that is common to the great epic Mahabharata & the scripture of great Hindu philosophical text Geeta is the principal and character Lord Krishna, around whose orbit, the divine teachings rotate as the planets revolve around the sun. The divine & universal principles, pronounced by the Almighty on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, encompass not only spiritual – references but reflect on comprehensive universal concept of governance with altogether new version of virtuousness & leadership. Krishna's principles, based on Dharma (righteous duty), Karma Yoga (selfless action), and the concept of Sthitaprajña (steadfast intellect), form a "Supreme Law." This new form of Law provides a perpetual & encompassing framework for administrative sincerity & optimistic leadership projecting His insight, as most befitting to all kinds of contemporary issues in political science & ethics.

Keywords: Strategic Brilliance, Steadfast Intellect, Rule of Law, Administrative Competence, Equity, Justice, and Good Conscience

¹ Principal, Department of Law, Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore. You may contact the author at the following email address: sunita_arya@pimrindore.ac.in

² 4th Year Law Student, B.B.A LL.B, Department of Law, Prestige Institute of Management and Research, Indore. You may contact the author at the following email address: aradhanamandloi@gmail.com

³ Head of Department, Indore Institute of Law. You may contact the author at the following email address: kusumjoshi1828@gmail.com

Introduction

Krishna as the Ideal Proclamation

“yatra yogeshvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanur-dharaḥ |”

“tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtīr dhruvā nītir matir mama | |⁴”

Virtues & Justice always follow where Krishna resides because, righteousness (Dharma) is maintained & prevailed only with Krishna’s proper handling of Governance Code sometimes, to the extent of rebellious actions to put an end to the unrighteousness (Adharma). Known as “Master of all Mystics”, Krishna’s character, depicts the unmatched intelligence with positivity and unique resourcefulness with a high level of composure. His legendary role as Arjun’s charioteer exemplifies, his balancing expertise to integrate the divine knowledge with mundane affairs (Karma Yoga). The verse assures shri (opulence), vijaya (victory), and bhuti (extraordinary power) where Krishna’s ideology is implemented, emphasizing that governance in accordance with his wisdom leads to prosperity and success.

Bhagwan Krishna’s life is an example of a combination of Enlightenment & Vision. His dedication to uphold the morality is made explicit by His efforts to dispel the forces of unrighteousness by enforcing the rules of righteousness in Mahabharata, without engaging into the battle of Kingship⁵. The Bhagavad Gita, his direct speech, is the primary text for understanding his “Supreme Law.” It provides a roadmap for decision-making in a crisis, which is the very heart of successful governance. Though long overlooked by political philosophers, the Gita is now being recognized as an important text of Indian political philosophy⁶.

Identification and Statement of the Research Problem

The current research aims to fill a basic gap in the contemporary legal and leadership discourse, which is the increasing divide between law and morality in modern governance structures. Even though modern legal systems are very codified and rights-based, they are often ineffective in maintaining ethical integrity, internal accountability, and justice based on morality. This has led to growing worries like corruption, legal formalism, moral relativism in decision-making, and leadership based on power rather than responsibility.

⁴ Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 18, Verse 78

⁵ ICPR n.d.

⁶ Gray 2023

The research problem arises from the recognition that modern jurisprudence is based almost entirely on Positive Law, which is law based on the authority of the sovereign and statutory enactment, to the exclusion of any underlying moral foundations. By contrast, the teachings of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita offer a holistic approach in which Dharma (righteous duty), Karma Yoga (unselfish action), and Sthitaprajña (steadfast intellect) combine to constitute a “Supreme Law” that integrates morality, duty, and governance.

Therefore, the research problem can be formulated as follows:

Is it possible to interpret the philosophical paradigm of Lord Krishna as a normative paradigm of “Supreme Law” that can fill the gap between morality and modern legal-administrative systems?

The research examines the possibility of using the doctrine of Dharma as a natural moral law, Karma Yoga as a selfless administration principle, and Sthitaprajña as a decision-making state, in order to fill the gap in modern jurisprudence and leadership paradigms.

Research Methodology

This study follows a qualitative, doctrinal, and philosophical research methodology. The research is basically theoretical and conceptual in nature.

Doctrinal Method

The research work is a critical analysis of the primary scriptural texts, particularly the Bhagavad Gita, which is a source of guiding principles on law, duty, justice, and leadership. The important doctrines of Dharma, Nishkama Karma, and Sthitaprajña are analyzed from the perspective of legal-ethical principles.

Philosophical and Conceptual Analysis

The lessons from Krishna are important in the backdrop of jurisprudential concepts, particularly for the Natural Law vs. Positive Law dichotomy. This particular research work conceptually helps in comparing the very principles of Dharma with contemporary legal concepts such as the Rule of Law, supremacy of the constitution, equity, justice, good conscience, and welfare state.

Comparative Approach

A structured comparison is drawn between:

- Dharma and modern Positive Law
- Duty-based ethics and rights-based legal systems
- Spiritual-moral sanctions and state-enforced legal sanctions

This comparative approach enables the positioning of Krishna’s “Supreme Law” in the context of contemporary jurisprudence and political philosophy.

Interdisciplinary Orientation

The study is interdisciplinary in nature, and it combines law, ethics, political philosophy, and leadership studies, connecting scriptural philosophy with modern administrative ethics, anti-corruption values, and leadership paradigms.

Analysis & Findings

The Supreme Pillars of Krishna's Law

“nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ”

“ubhayor api dṛṣṭo ’ntas tv anayos tattva-darsibhiḥ ||

7”

Krishna's teachings enunciate a brilliant Trinity of assimilation of Law, morality & duty as against legal machinery without morality.

Dharma: The Foundational Constitutional Principle

Dharma is a fundamental and ultimate principle that defines a leader’s obligation. It moves beyond simple law, encompassing morality, duty, and the cosmic order⁸ (ṛta).

The Mandate for Ethical Governance:

Krishna’s declaration of his purpose serves as the ultimate legislative mandate for all rulers: **the maintenance and restoration of the moral and legal order (Dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya).d**

⁷ Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 16

⁸ IJLMH n.d

*“Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati Bhārata,/Abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānam
sṛjāmyaham.*

*Paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām,/Dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi
yuge yuge.”⁹*

Dharma as Natural Law

Dharma reaches deep in the Universal Order asserting that law must be in tune with universal morality, justice & truth and this mandates the supremacy of law over ruler, establishing the ancient precedent for the modern **Rule of Law**¹⁰

The Concept of Dharma in Modern Legal Systems: Bridging Morality and Law¹¹

Dharma constitutes the core – values of Krishna’s teachings, turning it from social – concept to the **Supreme Law** – a inalienable moral & ethical framework which provide a sound footing to all earthly laws. Dharma when compared against the modern – day jurisprudence, it reflects a deeper divide and offers to remove the rough – spots in the right oriented legal system of current era.

It’s no less than a paradox that we all are living and governed by a maze of laws and a thicket of various regulations yet the mental peace always eludes us, because the laws have become *blasé* in their approach. Modern day legal system raises many sticking points, which find answers only in the Gita, which is not merely our holy scripture but a code of mouthful sayings of Lord Krishna, which only promise to make life idyllic. The Gita suggests a definite way out of solipsism, to make humanity, more humane.

A true concept of justice is essentially based not only on legal provisions and equality but more on professing the rectitude and code of ethical values, which find explicit mention in verses of the Gita. Amidst multitude of several verses, the most relevant to the present topic is found in Chapter 2, Verse 47 of the Gita, which is reproduced here –

“Karmanye Vadhikaraste Ma Phaleshu Kadachana ||”

⁹ Easwaran 2007, 4.7-8

¹⁰ DJMR 2023; IJLLR n.d.

¹¹ Sen, Amartya. 1999. "The Concept of Justice in Indian Thought." Journal of Indian Philosophy 27 (1-2): 1-19.

It lays – down an important lesson, asking the people that “they have right to perform their duties but are not entitled to the fruits of their action.” This doctrine is popularly known as Karam – Yoga. The concept of justice as enshrined in the Gita is not merely abidance of rules or submission to authority but is more of an integration with ethical values, i.e., Dharma.

Lord Krishna pronounces that Renunciation & Self – restraint are the gold standards against which the Justice is measured. Dharma to prevail must remain aloof from the vices like individual favour or fear, bias or pressure, craving or cupidity. Lord Krishna explains that, when a person discharges his duties, keeping in mind, the above said values, then; only, the pristine form of justice follows, bringing immaculate gems of righteousness, equality & fairness.

The imprint of Dharma’ doctrine of justice is also visible across many of our Constitutional provisions like Equality, Non – Discrimination and Fundamental Duties which resonate fully with the Gita. Thus, adherence of ethical values of aloofness & objectivity as taught by Gita, in implementation of modern law, can help bridge the gap.

The Jurisprudence of Dharma vs. Positive Law

The sole basis on which our entire legal – mechanism, revolves is the premise that law flows from the sovereign authority whereas the Dharma as advocated by Krishna is totally poles apart.

Feature	Dharma (Righteous Law)	Positive Law (Modern Code)
Foundation	Moral, Ethical, Cosmic Order (<i>Rta</i>)	Sovereign's Will, Legislative Enactment
Focus	Duty-centric (Obligations, <i>Svadharmā</i>)	Rights-centric (Individual Entitlements)
Source	Revelation (<i>Śruti</i>), Tradition (<i>Smṛiti</i>), Conscience	Constitution, Statutes, Judicial Precedent
Sanction	Spiritual and Social (Karma, Moral consequences)	State Enforcement (Fines, Imprisonment)
Scope	All-encompassing (Law + Morality + Custom)	Specific (Rules for external conduct)

The Role of Dharma as Natural Law

Re – examining the concept, Dharma draws coherent similarities with the philosophical school of **Natural Law**. It proclaims that there exists a universal code of virtuousness, rooted alike in the universe and human conscience which should act as touchstone for any fair appraisal of laws enforced through enactment.

- a. **Universal Mandate:** Krishna's appeal for the creation of Dharma is a mandate for justice that **transcends the arbitrariness of law**. This notion that the law rules the king, and not the reverse (**Dharma is the controller of the king**) – is the ancient equivalent of the contemporary "Rule of Law" and "Constitutional Supremacy."
- b. **Welfare and Universal Good:** The meaning of Dharma is "that which upholds, sustains, and nourishes" (Dhr̥). It aims for the well-being and progress of all beings (Loka Samgraha). This philosophy underpins the modern concept of the **Welfare State** and the constitutional inclusion of ethical goals like the **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs)** in countries like India (e.g., environmental protection, social justice).

Bridging the Gap: Integrating Ethics in Law

The central theme of Krishna's Supreme Law lies in the basic principle that **law & morality are inseparable**. Dharma directly hits over modern legal system with strong appeal how the modern day legal enactments can be assessed on the parameters of morality.

- a. **Mens Rea (Guilty Mind):** The quintessential twin elements of Dharma , i.e., righteous behavior and bonafide, are well applied in legal maxim mens – rea in criminal branch of law. The motive behind an action is of prime importance in assessing guilt, indicating a lingering sense of morality in addition to the physical act.
- b. **Judicial Review and Conscience:** In cases of uncertainty, or when a positive law is deemed to be unjust, courts rely on the principles of "**equity, justice, and good conscience**." This practice is essentially the invocation of Dharma—the universal moral law—to correct the limitations or injustices of a specific statute.
- c. **Duty-Based Environmental Law:** Modern environmental jurisprudence, which seeks to protect the planet for future generations, reflects a **Dharma-based obligation** toward

nature. It views the earth not as a resource to be exploited (a right), but as a sacred entity to be sustained (a duty).

- d. Dharma's Relevance:** The idea of Dharma offers a new philosophical landscape to our modern day legal – framework and suggests that, a law in true spirit comes to fulfillment when morality or conscience is assimilated with technical standards. Lord Krishna's authority bears attestation to the concept that the greatest political success is achieved when the general administration of public – affairs is attended with self – sacrificing & devoted services for the sake of supreme moral code of values.

Karma Yoga: The Principle of Selfless Administration

Karma Yoga propounds a theory a 'Nishkama Karma' where the actions are performed without any desire for personal gain, it draws analogy with Anasakti, these principles embody Indian model of Moral Elevation based on dutiful contentment rather than personal rewards.¹²

- a. Integrity and Non-Attachment :** Karma Yoga has its own set of norms for a true leader and it calls upon that administrative duties should be delinked from power and pelf and should be executed with the very spirit of responsibility. Such an approach directly negates the temptation for corrupt practices.¹³
- b. Excellence in Action :** The principle is concisely stated as: "Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam" (**Perfection in action is Yoga**) (Bhagwad Gita chapter 2 verse 50). This requires a very high level of administrative efficiency as a form of sacred service, inculcating a strong sense of purpose in the work force.¹⁴

Sthitaprajña: The Ideal Executive and Jurist

The **Sthitaprajña** (Steadfast Intellect), detailed in Bhagwad Gita chapter 2 verses 54-72, acts as a code of conscience for all the duties ranging from executive to judicial pronouncements.¹⁵

- a. Composure in Crisis:** The Sthitaprajña promotes equanimity, drawing a fine balance between enthralling with success and upsetting with failures. Such a neutrality in practice, is

¹² Mulla and Krishnan 2014

¹³ SAGE University n.d.

¹⁴ Scribd n.d.

¹⁵ ResearchGate n.d.

vital for unbiased decisions, free from subjectivity and any mass – agitation, often accompanied with delirium.

- b. Strategic Foresight and Emotional Intelligence:** Krishna’s consistent, tranquil behavior and ability to anticipate future challenges demonstrate this state, demonstrating that leadership must balance intellect with empathy.¹⁶

Relevance to Modern Jurisprudence and Leadership

Krishna's Supreme Law attempts to essay a broad framework for present – day governance particularly by bridging right – based law with duty based ethics.

Bridging Rights and Duties in Law

While modern law is primarily individually focused, Dharma is fundamentally responsibility focused, emphasizing obligations over privileges.¹⁷

Feature	Dharma (Krishna's Law)	Modern Positive Law
Foundation	Duty, Moral/Cosmic Order (<i>ṛta</i>)	Rights, Legislative Enactment
Focus	Loka Saṁgraha (Universal Welfare)	Individual Entitlements/Sanctions
Influence	Natural Law, Source of Moral Authority	Statutes, Codes, Judicial Precedent

The virtuous mandates of **Directive Principles of State Policy** now, incorporated in the Constitutions of many modern democracies, conveys a pledge to the Dharma – based ideal of the Welfare State.¹⁸

Furthermore, the judicial appeal to "**equity, justice, and good conscience**" serves as an invocation of Dharma to correct the limitations of technical statute.

¹⁶ ICPR n.d.; SAGE University n.d.

¹⁷ IJLMH n.d.

¹⁸ LawWeb n.d.

Ethical Leadership and Organizational Excellence

The principles of Karma Yoga and Sthitaprajña translate directly to managerial and administrative ethics:

- a. **Anti-Corruption:** Karma Yoga inculcates a spirit of professional – uprightnes, making the duty a sole reward and a powerful tool aimed – at eradication the corruption from public – domain.¹⁹
- b. **Transformational Leadership:** Krishna acted as an "unattached guide" and strategist, modeling the leader as a mentor who empowers others and identifies their true potential, which is the core of modern transformational leadership theory.²⁰

Conclusion: The Eternal Relevance of the Divine Blueprint

Lord Krishna's teachings serve as an example of all – embracing & sustaining leadership. His philosophy has revealed an altogether new recasting & reimagined version of governance which exhibits sorts of altruism (Karma Yoga), executed with unshakeable character (Sthitaprajña), and guided by the supreme, universal standard of ethics (Dharma).

The timeless Supreme – Law as conceptualized in Krishna's teachings, offers to set – up a non – compromising code of norms for carving – out a governance model based on integrity and righteousness. The final outcome for matters pertaining to polity therefore necessarily follows that, adherence to a code of upright, virtuous & righteous acts, provide a sound platform for an equitable, well – ordered & stable State.

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