

CHAPTER - VI

Philosophy In The Mahābhāgavata-Purāṇa

Vedānta Philosophy :-

In its eulogy the Ṛg Veda stated that the goddess had Herself told that She was the highest essence wherein all the creatures resided and wherefrom everything started (1.25). This statement is the Paraphrase of the aphorism No.2 viz. Janmādyasya yataḥ of Brahmasūtra 1.1.

In its eulogy the Sāma Veda has stated that by whom this universe has shone forth that is goddess Durgā in the form of the universe (1.27^{cd}). This statement echoes that found in Kathopanishad viz. Tasya Bhāsā Sarvamidaṁ Vibhāti II.2.15^d. It is also stated therein that the goddess Durgā is in the form of the universe. Thus pantheism is referred to.

Sage Veda Vyāsa came to know about the digitless essence of the goddess Durgā who was the highest Brahman from the Śruties (1.29). Thus it is stated that the goddess is Brahman itself and that Her essence happens to be digitless. Thus Her non-difference from digitless form of Brahman is shown here. Being of the nature of light of the goddess and Her residing in all creatures are referred to in 1.39. Thus Her omnipresence is stressed here. Moreover Her subtle incorporeal form is mentioned by stating that She assumed an independent figure.

The statement of Mahādeva that in the beginning there was Brahman alone and there was absence of the object emitting light (e.g. the Sun, the moon, the stars, and fire etc). The day and night, the directions, the sense objects (sound, touch etc) as well as any other kind of life were also absent (3.11.12). On the one hand, it appears to be the paraphrase of the statement 'Sadeva Somyedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam' (Chā.Up.6-2-1). The same idea with a little change is found in the Nāśadiya Sūkta Rg Veda 10.129.1-7.

The Stanzas 13 and 14 of Adhyaya 3 of the Mahābhāṣavata purāṇa describe the nature of the primordial nature as consisting of existence, intelligence and bliss, and of the nature of pure knowledge, eternal, indescribable and digitless, omnipresent, undisturbed, of eternally blissful nature, subtle and devoid of heavyness. Here the Purāṇakāra describes the Parā Prakṛti with the attributes which fittingly described Brahman in the Upaniṣadic passages.

This description of Parā Prakṛti is in sharp contrast with the description of Prakṛti as found in sāmkhya system and which is adopted at places even in the Upaniṣads. According to the Sāmkhya concept of prakṛti, prakṛti or nature is insentient, and of the nature of three guṇas (Triguṇātmikā) etc.

Thus the description of parā prakṛti contains the attributes normally describing Brahman in the Upaniṣads. The intention of the Purāṇakāra is to convey that Brahman and parā prakṛti are essentially the same. The Sāmkhya analysis mentions

two distinct principles, sentient puruṣa on the one hand and the insentient prakṛti on the other, which concept is the primary concept at the base of further Vedantic development. The Vedānta accepted the prakṛti puruṣa concept of Sāṃkhya. But Vedānta philosophy insisted upon the idea of the ultimate reality of Brahman giving a secondary place to the Prakṛti. The same ultimate Reality is named Brahman in the vedānta philosophy while it is called Śiva by the Śaivas, Viṣṇu by the Vaiṣṇavas, and Śakti by the Śāktas.

Jīvanmukti

Sege Vyāsa, on seeing the different forms assumed by the goddess realized that she was the highest Brahman and consequently became liberated while still alive (1.47). The idea of Jīvanmukti is referred to here which is a Vedantic feature.

When Lord Śiva was eulogized by Dakṣa, He with His own hands drew Dakṣa near Him and by the touch of Śiva the patriarch considered himself to be freed even while alive (10.96-97). The best of mountains viz. Himālaya after having heard the yogasāra thus from the mouth of goddess Pārvatī became freed while still alive (19.1). A man reciting this Pārvatīgītā devoutly on Aṣṭamī or Caturdaśī or Navamī becomes freed while still alive (19.8).

Importance of the Purification of mind in attaining knowledge of the Self :-

While teaching yogasāra to Himālaya, Devī stated that one desirous to obtain salvation should be ready to attain knowledge of the self incessantly after having performed the enjoined actions and after getting one's mind purified (15.67).

The performance of Niskāma karma effects cittasuddhi which gives rise to Ātmajñāna leading to Mokṣa. Thus Karmamārga is taught.

Upādeya Viṣayas :-

After having spread aversion (disgust i.e. Ghrṇā) everywhere even in the case of one's son and friend etc. one should firmly establish his mind in the Śāstras like Vedānta etc. (15.68).

Heya Viṣayas :-

One should abandon lust (Vāsanā) etc. and should give up violence. By so doing one knows the highest lore. There is no doubt about that (15.69).

The Nature of Mokṣa :-

When the Self (soul) is directly experienced, the salvation takes place at that very moment (15.70). What is Mokṣa is clearly stated here. It is the direct experience of the self i.e. Aparokṣātmānubhūti is Mokṣa.

Devotion to the goddess leads to Ātmānubhūti :-

Those who are devoid of devotion to the goddess for them this Ātmānubhūti is difficult to obtain. Therefore those desirous of obtaining salvation should carry on highest devotion of the goddess (15.71).

The Nature of Individual Self :-

On Himālaya's inquiry about the type of lore that leads to release as also about the nature of the individual self, the

goddess Pārvatī informed him that the individual self denoted by the word "I" is of the nature of consciousness, pure, one without a second and separate from intellect, vital airs, mind, body egoism and sense organs (16.3).

Stanzas 3 to 6 of the 16th Adhyaya contain the description of the nature of the individual self which is the reflection of the description of the self as found in the Upaniṣads. The lore is the meditation i.e. pondering over the self as pure, free from disease, and devoid of birth and death etc. (16.4). The self is devoid of the limiting adjuncts (Upādhi) viz. intellect etc. and is considered to be of the nature of consciousness and bliss and it is characterized by reality, knowledge and is complete, radiant and blissful (16.5). The self is one only, without a second pervading all the bodies, and the highest which makes body etc. shine by its own lustre (16.6).

The Real Cause of Transmigratory Existence :-

The goddess Pārvatī advised Himālaya to give up considering of the non-self, body etc. as the self, since that sort of consideration is the cause of the forms viz. likes (Rāga) and dislikes (Dveṣa) etc. (16.8). The real cause of transmigratory existence is the consideration of non-self as the self (anātmani ātma-buddhi) producing defective action and thereby leading to Saṁsāra.

The Means to abandon the likes and dislikes producing inauspicious unseen :-

Himālaya asked the goddess Pārvatī to explain to him, how attachment and jealousy which produce inauspicious unseen can be abandoned (16.10). He also inquired of Her as to how the people tolerate those who commit ungrateful deeds and asked Her why there should be no likes and dislikes towards them (16.11).

The goddess Pārvatī replied that on pondering over the matter regarding the ungrateful deed done by one towards another there is no scope for the rise of jealousy at all (16.12). The body which is made up of the five gross elements is burnt by fire or is eaten up by Jackals. The individual self itself is already free (16.13). The individual self is pure, self-sufficient, and of the nature of existence, intelligence and bliss. Even when the body is cut to pieces there is no harm to individual self which is neither born nor dies and is unsullied and not the sufferer of pain (16.14^{cd}-15). On pondering over the real nature of the self which is neither slain nor slayer the jealousy obstructing salvation should be given up. Compare Bhagavadgītā (=BG) II.20,21,24.

Just as when the houses are on fire a person residing in another house is seen somewhere from the sky in the same way a killer if he thinks to kill and a slain one thinks to be slain both of them are deluded in their minds. This one neither kills nor is slain (16.16-17).

Note the parallelism of the ideas about the nature of the individual self expressed in the above noted stanzas¹(14^{cd}-17) of Mahābh.Pu. with those expressed in the BG.II.20,21,24. The parallelism is striking and thorough. Certain quarter lines and certain phraseology are similar and are occasionally non-different.

After having known one's own self thus, one should give up jealousy and be happy. The agony of the mind has its root in jealousy. Jealousy leads to the pounding in the transigratory existence (16.18). Jealousy obstructs liberation and hence one should avoid it diligently (16.19^{ab}).

Thereupon Himālaya poses a question to the goddess as follows. As already described by the goddess there is no harm to the body nor to the individual self which is the highest of all and so the two are not the sufferers of pain (16.19^{cd}-20^{ab}).

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- 1 Vide :- Ātmā Śuddhaḥ sveyam̐pūrṇaḥ saccidānandavigrahaḥ || 16.14^{cd}
na jāyate na mriyate nirlepo na ca duḥkṣaḥbhāk |
vicehidyamāne dehepi nēpakero'sye jāyate || 16.15
Yathā gehāntarasthasya nabhasaḥ kvāpi lakṣyate |
Gṛheṣu dehyamāneṣu girirāje tāthaiiva hi || 16.16
Hantā cenmanyate hantuṁ katas'cenmanyate hataḥ |
Pāvubhau bhrāntaḥrḍeyau nāyaṁ hanti na hanyate || 16.17
Of:- na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ |
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre || II.20
Vedāvināśīnaṁ nityaṁ
ya enamejamevyaṁ |
katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha
kaṁ ghātayati hanti kaṁ || II.21
Acchedyo'yaṁadāhyo'yamakledyo'so'sya eva ca
nityaḥ sarvaśataḥ sthānuracelo'yaṁ sanātanaḥ || II.24

Who is the Real Sufferer in the transmigratory existence ? :-

Consequently Ātmālaya desired to know from the goddess who the other one is there in the body who experiences misery which is directly felt (16.20^{cd}-21^{ab}). This question regarding the experiencer of misery apart from body and self is the basic question.

The Embodied Self Deluded by the Supernatural Power of Devī
- the Real Sufferer :-

The goddess Pārvatī replied that there is no misery on the part of the body nor on the part of the individual self who is the higher self. Still the embodied self (Jīva) who is unsullied (Nirlepa) is deluded by Her supernatural power (Māyā) (16.22). Jīva thinks that he is happy, he is unhappy and hankers after happiness only. This is the supernatural power (Māyā) which is beginningless nescience (Avidyā) which deludes the world (16.23). The Jīva (Embodied Self) is connected with Māyā as soon as he is born and thereby continues to be a transmigratory being with the complexes of likes and dislikes (16.24). Thus the workings of Māyā start from the time of birth and continue with the complexes of likes and dislikes in unending transmigratory existence.

How does the pure Self attain Jīvahood ? :-

The individual Self after having attained the mind which is characteristic of itself (Cvaliṅgam) and in which desires (Vāsanās) abide remains in this transmigratory world helplessly (Aveśah) (16.25). The attaining of Jīvahood is on account of the

self's attaining the mind in which desires abide.²

The above statement is beautifully explained by an appropriate example stated in the next stanza. Just as a pure crystal (Sphatika) in proximity of a red flower appears to be red, but there is no reddish colour in reality (16.26). Similar is the state of affairs in the case of the individual self on account of its proximity with the intellect (Buddhi), the sense organs (Indriyas) etc. The mind, the intellect and the egoism are the co-workers of the embodied self (16.27).

In keeping with one's own actions they (Jīva and its co-workers) are the enjoyers of all sorts of sense objects, whether pleasurable or painful (16.28). Here the limiting adjuncts viz. Buddhi, sense organs, mind, egoism etc. are considered to be the enjoyers of fruits along with Jīva. Those (i.e. mind, intellect, egoism, Jīva etc.) only enjoy and not the individual Self which is unsullied, overlord and immutable (Avyaya). The embodied Self is born again along with those limiting adjuncts viz. mind, intellect, egoism etc. which are full of former desires at the time of creation and remains in this transmigratory world till the next universal destruction (16.29-30^{ab}).

Therefore a wise man should abandon infatuation (Moha) by pondering over knowledge and should be happy in the midst of desirable and undesirable happenings (16.30^{cd}-31^{ab}). The agony

2 Cf. Mana eva manuṣyāḥ kārṇam bandhaḥ okṣayoh |
 Bandhāye viṣayāsaṅgī mukteṁ nirviṣayam viduḥ ||
 Brāhmaṇīyopaniṣat 2
 Maitrāyaṇyupaniṣat 6.34.11.

(Tāpa) of the mind has its root in the body, the body is the cause of the transmigratory existence. The body is the result of actions and action is twofold (16.31^{cd}-32^{ab}).

The cause of Saṃsāra is the body which is the result of actions and which is the origin of mental agony. Compare Śāṅkara-bhāṣya on Brahmasūtra III.2.6 viz. Dehayogādvā Sōpi |
Sōpi tu jīvesya jñānaśvaretyatirobhāvo dehayogād dehendriya-
manobuddhiviśayavedanādiyogād bhavati

Law of Karma :-

In the case of an embodied Self there is the rise of pleasure and pain in keeping with the part of merit and demerit which cannot be overcome just like day and night (16.32^{cd} - 33^{ab}; also 42.32; 45; 47; 48^{cd}; 70). This is in short the enunciation of the irrevocable Law of Karma which is one of the two strongest pillars on which the Hindu Philosophy rests.

As explained by the goddess to Lord Brahmā, the anger of Lord Śambhu was only an efficient cause therein (in His losing fifth head). In reality the fruit of such an action was already decided (42.50-51).

One desirous of attaining heaven etc. after having performed meritorious deeds in accordance with the rites laid down and after having attained heaven again falls down impelled by the actions (16.33^{cdef}). Cf. BG, IX.21.

Abandonment of All Contacts - A Means of Obtaining the Highest Bliss :-

Hence after having come in contact with the good people and after having studied the lores, a wise one should expect to attain the highest happiness on abandoning all contacts (16.34).

Abandoning Sensual Pleasures and Engaging in the Worship of Devī Lead to End Saṁsāra :-

Himālaya was advised by Pārvatī to abandon sensual pleasures by pondering over the individual self in order to attain eternal prosperity and to engage in the devotion of the goddess giving rise to steady devotion towards Brahman (17.48^{cd}-49). As the body and the self are quite distinct, one should give up attachment to the body and sense organs etc. (17.50).

The worship of the goddess who happens to be of the nature of Brahman with concentration of the mind leads to end the Saṁsāra (17.51). The goddess Pārvatī enlightens Himālaya that her form worthy to be meditated upon by those desiring release is digitless (Niṣkala), subtle, beyond speech and extremely pure, attributeless, the highest light, all pervading and the cause of everything (18.4). Her form is absolute, supportless and of the form of existence, intelligence and bliss which should be meditated upon by aspirants desiring release for the sake of freedom from the bondage of the body (18.5).

Compare similar attributes describing Brahman in Muṇḍakopaniṣad and Svetāśvataropaniṣad :-

Yattadādreśyamagrāhyamagotramavernamacekṣuḥśrotreṁ
tadepāṇipādaṁ | Nityaṁ vibhuṁ sarvagataṁ susūkṣmaṁ

tadavyayam yadbhūṭayoniṁ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ || Muṇḍako°

I.1.6.

Niṣkalam niṣkriyam śāntam niravedyam nirañjanam |

Amṛtasya param setuṁ dagdhendhanamivānalam || Śvetāśvatéro° VI.19

Pantheism :-

The goddess Pārvatī by way of reply to Himālaya's inquiry regarding Her that gross form which when resorted to leads to release informed him that this whole universe was pervaded by Her gross form (18.25^{ab}).

Pantheism is a doctrine which considers the forces and laws of the Universe as God.

Brahmanhood, Eternity, Self-sufficiency and Inner Controllership of Devī :-

That which is decided to be self satisfied one in the Vedas, the Āgamas and in the Smṛties and which is decided to be Brahman in different philosophies like Vedānta etc. by manyfold means of proof is that great goddess Herself Who is eternal (43.27). She is eternal, possessing all the bodies, devoid of excessive happiness eternally, the resort of everyone and the highest (43.28^{ab}).

Just as the ganges merged into the ocean does not get separated from the sea, similarly those created from a part of Brahman do not get segregated from it (43.31). The goddess Herself is born as the universe, She Herself sustains it and She Herself destroys at the end. There is no other reason (43.32).

Śiva-Śakti :-

The precise nature of the identity of Śiva-Śakti has been a matter of considerable metaphysical discussion. Ācāryas have maintained the non-duality of Śiva and Śakti. Śakti is distinguishable from Śiva only in theoretical and conventional analysis, but in realization she is identical with Śiva. Hence if Śiva is Sat (Being), Śakti is Sati (Being in itself as power). If Śiva is cit (consciousness) Śakti is citi (consciousness as power) and if Śiva is Ānanda (Bliss), Śakti is Paramānandasandoha-rūpā and Paramānanda-laharī (the very soul of ānanda and its wave). If Śiva is Brahman, She is Brahmayī. Should the relation be called Advaita or not ? We can only agree with Mahānirvāṇa Tantra which says, "some say it is Advaita, others dvaita; but in reality it is "dvaitādvaitavivertita" - neither the one nor the two." It is beyond the reach of measure and nothing numerical can pertain to it. Even the world-in-reality is Śiva-Śakti and it is not correct to think that the one is not the other.³

Sālokya Mukti :-

Those embodied selves who are meritorious and who have attained Sālokya are found in the world of Bhavānī (43.51).

Mukti is considered to be fourfold in Vedānta. 1 Sālokya 2 Sārūpya, 3 Sāmīpya and 4 Sēyujya. Each succeeding category is higher than the preceding one (81.12).

3 Vide Dr. Pushpendra Kumar, Introduction to the Mahbg. PP.23-24.

Bhagavadgītā and Mahābhāgavata :-

While Himālaya requested the goddess to show him Her real form (15.20), the goddess replied him that he should know Her to be constituted of all gods and added that she had bestowed a divine eye on him and advised him to see Her Sovereign form and to cut the doubt of his heart (15.21).

Cf. Divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ

Paśya me yogamaśvaraṁ (Bg.XI. 8^{cd}).

This shows deep influence of Śrīmad Bhāgavadgītā on Mahābhāgavata purāṇa from the point of view of ideas and expressions.

After imparting the highest knowledge to the best of mountains the goddess showed him Her divine Māheśvara form (15.22). Compare with Viśvarūpadarśana of BG. XI. 9-49.

As advised by Devī to Himālaya one should keep one's mind and vital airs busy remembering Her and one should constantly utter Her names, should be connected with Her, should speak about Her and to hear about Her qualities (15.60). The above mentioned stanza runs parallel to the following stanza from BG.

Manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṁ namoskuru |

Mamevaisyasi yuktvaivamātmānaṁ matparāyaṇaḥ || IX. 34.

While imparting the knowledge of yogasāra to Himālaya, Devī taught that release comes into existence from knowledge, devotion is the cause of knowledge, devotion comes into existence from righteousness (meritorious deeds). Sacrifices etc. are considered to be the meritorious deeds (15.63^{cd} - 64^{ab}). A similar beautiful series of causes and effects is found in the BG. :-

Annādbhāvanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍānnasambhavaḥ |
 Yajñād bhavati parjanyaḥ yajñāḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ || III.14
 Karma brahmodbhavam viddhi brahmākṣarasamudbhavam |
 Tasmāt sarvagatam brahma nityam yajñe pratiṣṭhitam || III.15

Devī further continued Her teaching to Himālaya stating that one desirous of attaining heaven etc. after having performed meritorious deeds in accordance with the rites laid down and after attaining heaven again falls down impelled by the actions (16.33^{cd,ef}). This idea appears to have been taken from BG.(IX.21):-
 Te tam bhuktvā svargalokaḥ viśālam

ksīṇe puṇye martyalokaḥ viśanti |
 Evaṁ treyīdhermamanuprapannā
 gatāgatam kāmakāmā labhante || IX.21

By way of reply to Himālaya's inquiry as to what sort of the form of the goddess should be meditated upon by those desiring release (18.2^{ab}), the goddess Pārvatī stated that someone amongst thousands of human beings tries to obtain release and among thousands of such aspirants, someone knows the goddess in reality (18.3). Here in Mabhg. 18.3^{ab} and 3^d the phraseology of BG. VII. 3^{ab} and 3^d is found imitated. The first line of Mabhg. is taken verbatim from Gītā.

Manuṣyāṇām sahasreṣu kaścidyatati siddhaye |
 Yatetāpī siddhānām kaścinmām vetti tattvataḥ || VII.3

Pārvatī while describing Her Vibhūties to Himālaya states that she is good intellect in the intelligent people, good smell in the earth, juice in waters and light in the moon (18.6). She is

austerity in those who practice austerity and she is the light of fire. Moreover she is the strength which is without passion and attachment etc. in the persons endowed with strength (18.7).

Some of the Vibhūties mentioned in Mabhg. Pu. 18.6-7 appear to have been adopted along with their phraseology from the BG. VII. 8^{ab}, 9, 11^{ab}. Compare :-

Puṇyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyāṁ ca tejaścāsmi vibhāvasau |
 Jīvanāṁ sarvabhūteṣu tapaścāsmi tapasviṣu || VII.9
 Raso'hamapsu kaunteya prabhāsmi śāśisūryayoḥ | VII. 8^{ab}
 Balaṁ balavatāṁ cāhaṁ kāmarāgavivarjitaṁ | VII. 11^{ab}

The goddess is lust that is non antagonistic to one's own duty (18.9^{ab}). Those other conditions of goodness, passion and darkness which have come into existence from the goddess are under Her control and are in Her (18.9^{cd} - 10^{ab}). The conception as well as the phraseology of the above mentioned Vibhūties are inherited by the Mabhg. Pu. from the BG. VII.11^{cd}, 12.

Cr. Dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmōsmi bharaterṣabha || VII.11^{cd}
 Ye caiva sāttvikā bhāvā rājasastāmasāśce ye |
 Matā eveti tānviddhi na tvehaṁ teṣu te mayi || VII.12

Goddess Pārvatī advises Himālaya to resort to any one of those Mahāvidyās by Kriyāyoge and assure him that he who has his mind and intellect set upon the goddess would surely attain Her (18.29). The second line i.e. 29^{cd} is for the most part similar to the line of the BG. VIII. 7^{cd}. Compare :-

Mayyarpitamānobuddhirmāmevaiśyasyasaṁśayaṁ || VIII.7^{cd}.

As taught by goddess Pārvatī to Himālaya, he who remembers

the goddess incessantly without distraction of the mind for ever to such a yogī endowed with devotion, She is the bestower of release (18.31 and 33). The line 31^{ab} appears to have been included in the Mabhg. Pu. from the BG. VIII 14^{ab}. Vide :-
 Ananyacetāḥ satataṁ yo mām smareti nityaśah | VIII.14^{ab}

He who after having remembered the goddess with devotion breathes his last, he is not troubled by the hosts of miseries of transmigratory existence at any time (18.32). This stanza 32 of Mabhg. Pu. echoes the same idea expressed in the BG. VIII. 5 and 13. Compare :-

Antakāle ca māmeva smaranmuktva kalevaram |
 Yaḥ prayāti sa modbhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatra saṁśayaḥ || VIII.5
 Omityekākṣaram brahma vyāharanmāmanusmaran |
 Yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham sa yāti paramāṁ gatim || VIII.13

Those devotees endowed with faith who sacrifice to the other gods, even they sacrifice to the goddess without doubt (18.35). The idea and the expression found in the above noted stanza 35 of Mabhg. seem to have been borrowed from the BG. IX.

23. Compare :-

Yēpyanyadevatābhaktā yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ |
 Te'pi māmeva Kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam || IX.23

Pārvatī taught Himālaya that by dedicating everything that one does, eats, offers as oblations and gives away by way of alms to the goddess one is freed from the bondage of actions (18.38). The above noted line 38^{ab} of Mabhg. Pu. appears to have been taken from the BG IX.27^{ab}. Compare :-

Yat karosi yadaśnāsi yajjuḥosi dadāsi yat |
Yattapasyasi Kaunteya tatkuruṣva medarpanam || IX.27

Those who with true devotion worship the goddess they are in Her and she is also in them (18.39^{ab}). The idea and the expression found in the above noted line 39^{ab} of Mabhg. Pu. seem to have been borrowed from the BG IX 29^{cd}. Compare :-

Ye bhojanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpyaḥam || IX.29^{cd}

There is no one who is liked or disliked by the goddess (18.39^{cd}) also (42.48^{ab}). The idea expressed in the above noted 18.39^{cd} and 42.48^{ab} appears to have been borrowed from the BG. IX.29^{ab}. Compare :-

Samohaṁ sarvabhūteṣu na me dvesyōsti na priyaḥ | IX.29^{ab}.

Even if a person with very bad behaviour worships the goddess with unswerving devotion, he also is freed from the sin and is released from the bondage of the birth (18.40). The idea and expression found in the above noted line 40^{ab} of Mabhg. Pu. seem to have been borrowed from the BG IX.30^{ab}. Compare :-

Api cet sudurācāro bhajate māmananyebhāk | IX. 30^{ab}

He (i.e. a person with bad behaviour) becomes a righteous one quickly and crosses the transmigratory existence gradually (18.41^{ab}). The first quarter of stanza 41 of Mabhg. Pu. noted above appears to have been borrowed from the BG IX.31^a. Compare :-

Kṣiprāṁ bhavati dharmātmā śśśvecchāntiṁ nigacchati | IX.31^{ab}

The goddess advised Himālaya to worship Her with highest devotion and assured him that she would save him definitely from the ocean of births (18.42). The idea expressed in the line 42^{ab} of Mabhg. Pu. noted above appears to have been imitated from the BG IX.34^{ab}. Compare :-

Manmānē bhava madbhakto madyējī mām namaskuru | IX.34^{ab}

That Bhavānī Bhūvaneśvarī, Who is one without a second, and Who is the best of all is the bestower of victory to the followers of the path of righteousness and is the destroyer of the sinners (42.66). The idea expressed in Mābhg. P.42.66 runs parallel to the BG. passage—Paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām | IV.8^{ab}.

Pratyabhijñā Philosophy :-

Goddess Maheśvarī is the dispenser of the creation, preservation and destruction of crores of insects residing in the different worlds (3.3). Thus Maheśvarī seems to be the citi śakti i.e. the power of sentiency or consciousness pervading all living beings.

In the Pratyabhijñā system of philosophy of Kashmir, the citi śakti is considered to be the highest principle. According to pratyabhijñā reality in its ultimate aspect is cit or parāśamvit⁴. The word cit is explained as consciousness which connotes subject object relation, knower-known duality. But cit is not relational. It is just the changeless principle of all changing experience. The ultimate Reality or Supreme self is the self sciring Itself. In the words of pratyabhijñā śāstra, it is, prakāśavimerśamaya. It is not simply prakāśa lying inert like a diamond, but surveys itself. This sciring or surveying of itself by Ultimate Reality is called Vimerśa.

4 Vide : Jaideva Singh, "Pratyabhijñāhrdayam" with English translation and notes, Motilal Banerasicass, Delhi, 1963, PP.4-6.

Cit scires itself as cidrūpinī śakti. This sciring itself as cidrūpinī śakti is Vimarsā. Therefore, Vimarsā has been named differently as parā śakti, parā Vāk, Svātantrya, Aisvarya, Kṛtyatva, Sphurattā, Sāra, Hṛdaya, Spanda.

Thus the Ultimate reality is not only universal consciousness but also universal Psychic Energy or power. This All - inclusive Universal consciousness is also called Anuttara i.e. the Reality than which there is nothing that may be called higher - the highest Reality, the Absolute. It is both transcendental (Viśvottīrṇa) and immanent (Viśvamāya).

The influence of pratyabhijñā philosophy on Mahābhāgavate Purāṇa :-

Even though the goddess Maheśvarī is formless or incorporeal, She assumes a body on account of Her sport (3.4^{ab}). She creates, preserves, and destroys this universe. In this manner the world is deluded by Her (3.4^{cd} - 5^{ab}).

Assuming the body on account of Her sport on the part of the goddess is in keeping with the pratyabhijñā theory of svātantrya of the supreme being.

As stated in pratyabhijñā, the Cit or Parāśamvit eventhough it is limitless in itself, it imposes limitations on itself by its own free will. This is the principle of Svatantrya which is a clear evidence of the influence of the pratyabhijñā system of Philosophy on the Mahābhāgavate Purāṇa. The Advaita Vedānta explains the world phenomenon by the theory of Vivarta while the Pratyabhijñā explains it by the theory of Svātantrya.

The sage Dadhīci in his attempt to convince Dakṣa, further stressed that Lord Mahēśa was the highest puruṣa who was without beginning and Satī was the Prakṛti endowed with three guṇas as well as the highest Prakṛti of the nature of consciousness (5.27).

The consciousness aspect of Prakṛti is a unique feature perhaps inherited from the Pratyabhijñā system of Philosophy.

The Didactic Sections of the Mahābhāgavata purāṇa :-

The Teaching of Yogasāra :-

While eulogizing the goddess, Himālaya praised Her as the Kālā of Kālā and consequently called Mahākālī and requested Her to teach him Brāhmvijñāna in order to enable him to swim the ocean in the form of endless transmigratory existence (15.56^{cd}-57).

The goddess thereafter taught him yoga sāra by the knowledge of which an embodied self becomes Brahman (15.58). The goddess advised Himālaya to receive Her mantras (sacred formulæ) from a competent preceptor and to resort to Her only by means of body, speech and mind with singularity of Purpose (15.59). Thus Devī taught Dīkṣā and Ekāntika Bhakti as a means to salvation.

She further stated that one should keep one's mind and vital airs busy remembering Her and one should constantly utter Her names, should be connected with Her, should speak about Her and to hear about Her qualities (15.60). The best of aspirants should be a solely devoted devotee of the goddess whose mind is attached to the joy of adoring the goddess and should be one who desires release (15.61). One should adore the goddess by means of all sacrifices, austerities and alms giving (15.63^{ab}).

Release comes into existence from knowledge, devotion is the cause of knowledge, devotion comes into existence from righteousness (meritorious deeds). Sacrifices etc. are considered to be the meritorious deeds (15.63^{cd} - 64^{ab}). Here a series of causes and effects is mentioned which beautifully brings out the resulting release from the observance of meritorious deeds. For a similar series compare BG III.14-15.

Hence after having clearly perceived the goddess by all the rites ordained, one should devoutly make an oblation to the goddess and should not think otherwise (15.66). Thus one desirous to obtain salvation should be ready to attain knowledge of the self incessantly after having performed the enjoined actions and after getting one's mind purified (15.67).

Upādeya viṣayas :-

After having spread aversion (disgust i.e. *Ghṛṇā*) everywhere even in the case of one's son and friend etc. one should firmly establish his mind in the *Śāstras* like *Veśānta* etc. (15.68).

Heya viṣayas :-

One should abandon lust (*Vāsanā*) etc. and should give up violence. By so doing one knows the highest lore. There is no doubt about that (15.69).

The Nature of Mokṣa :-

When the self (soul) is directly experienced, the salvation takes place at that very moment (15.70). What is Mokṣa is clearly stated here. It is the direct experience of the self i.e. *Aparokṣātmānubhūti* is Mokṣa.

Devotion to the goddess leads to Ātmānubhūti :-

Those who are devoid of devotion to the goddess for them this Ātmānubhūti is difficult to obtain. Therefore those desirous of obtaining salvation should carry on highest devotion of the goddess (15.71).

Bhagavatigītopeniṣad :-

Chapters 17 to 19 of the Mahābhāgavata Purāṇa deal with the essence of yoga and are called Bhagavatigītopeniṣad.

From the observance of the end of all miseries on separation from the body on the part of the embodied Self, Himālaya inferred that the body made up of five gross elements is the cause of miseries (17.1). On Himālaya's inquiring about the coming into existence of the body and the Self's performing meritorious deeds and attaining heaven after getting a body (17.2) and the Self's falling down on the earth as an embodied Self after getting its merit exhausted (17.3^{ab}) the goddess Pārvatī replied him that this embodied Self is bound by the five gross elements. As a result it is constituted of five gross elements (17.4). There the earth is predominant and the rest are co-ordinators. The embodied Self is of four types (17.5).

The Four Classes of born creatures :-

The embodied Selves are born from eggs, from perspirations, from waters and from the womb (i.e. viviparous).

Reproduction of Viviparous creatures (human beings) :-

Reproduction of viviparous creatures especially human beings is described in great details. This shows deep and accurate knowledge of this science. The body of a Jarāyujā is produced by coming into contact of the Semen virile (Sukra) and blood (Śonita) (17.8^{ab}). That should be known as threefold in keeping with the

distinction of a man, a woman and a eunuch (Klīṭa) (17.8^{cd}). By the predominance of Semen virile, he (the embodied Self) becomes a man. On the predominance of blood it becomes a woman and a eunuch is born when both are in equilibrium (17.9).

By the force of one's own past actions the embodied Self accompanied by a digit of the mist (Nīhāra), after having fallen on the surface of the earth enters the rice-seeds (Vrīhi) (17.10). According to the Vedantic view as mentioned in the Brahmasūtra III.1.24 - "Anyādhiṣṭhiteṣu pūrvavedābhilāpāt", the Self comes down with rain instead of with the digit of mist. After having remained there for long and after having enjoyed its lot is eaten up and is turned into Semen virile in the body of a man. Along with that the embodied Self also enters into the Semen virile (17.11-12^{ab}).

The conceiving of a Woman :-

Thereafter on contact with a woman at the proper time, it enters along with semen virile the womb of the mother (17.12^{cd}-13^{ab}). Compare Brahmasūtra III.1.26 "Retaḥsigyogo' tha "

The proper time of a woman is from the fourth day to sixteenth day (17.13^{cd}-14^{ab}). On odd days a woman is born and on even days a man (17.14^{cd}-15^{ab}).

The scientific knowledge of Embryology :-

In 17.15^{cd} - 16^{ab}, it is stated that a woman who has bathed after menstruation and who is lustful gives birth to a child whose appearance resembles that of a man seen by the woman then and hence a woman should see the face of her husband.

From 17.16^{cd} to 29^{ab}, the gradual development of the embryo is described in details. The development of the embryo is described in brief in Śrīmedbhāgavata Purāṇa Skandha III Adhyaya 31 stanzas 1-4. However there are some differences in the two types of descriptions of the same found in both the Purāṇas. It appears that the above description in Mabhg. is an amplification of the same found in S'bh.

The Jīva's Dejection resulting from terrible Torture in the Embryo :-

The Jiva in the embryo is dejected on suffering terrible torture in keeping with his own actions (17.29^{cd}). The miseries experienced by the soul in the embryo are described in S'bh.

III.31.5-11.

The Soliloquy of the Jīva in the Embryo :-

After having remembered the actions performed in the previous body and after thinking Jīva himself talks painfully within his mind (17.30). After having experienced misery thus in case if he were to be born again on the earth, he thought that in former birth he had continued to make money by unfair means and had maintained his own family but he did not worship goddess Durgā who was the saviour from miserable condition (17.31 - 32^{ab}). So the Jīva decides that if he would be released from the miseries of this embryo, then he will not enjoy the sense objects and will worship Durgā Maheśvarī incessantly with devotion and with controlled mind (17.32^{cd}-33). The Jīva repents that swayed by the desires regarding a son, wife etc. his mind was attached to the Samsāra in vain and consequently he had harmed his own Self (17.34). Jiva feels that he experiences the fruit of that in the form of irresistible misery in the embryo and hence he will not enjoy the futile Samsāra again (17.35).

As stated in S'bh. III.31.12-21, Jīva repents for his past attachment to Samsara and decides to abandon it and to resort to Lord Viṣṇu to get rid of the Māyā (Super natural power) responsible for the bondage of Saṁsāra. He eulogizes Lord Viṣṇu in order to save himself from the experience of remaining in the embryo again. This passage is known as Garbhastuti in S'bh.

In this manner after having experienced miseries in many ways according to his own actions, Jīva comes out from the female organ generation (17.36) along with blood etc. Deluded by the Supernatural Power of Devī, the Jīva Forgets the Miseries of Being in the Embryo after Birth :-

After being born the Jīva forgets those miseries of remaining in the embryo and is deluded by the super-natural power of the goddess (17.38^{ab}). On attaining youth, the Jīva is accompanied by lust and anger and performs actions meritorious and otherwise for the sake of enjoyment of the body (17.41^{cd}-42). He fails to see the difference between the body and the spirit as also the diminishing longevity every moment (17.43). All sorts of happiness resulting from sense objects is comparable to a dream. In spite of that there is no decrease in the pride on the part of the embodied Self (17.44). The embodied Self deluded by Māyā fails to see this and sees only the objects of enjoyment as if they were eternal (17.45).

All of a sudden time consumes him at the end of longevity (17.46^{ab}). At the time of death ~~at~~ ^{the} Jīva realizes that his birth has become futile and in this way his other birth also becomes fruitless (17.47).

Abandoning Sensual Plessures and Engaging in the Worship of
Devī Lead to End Saṁsāra :-

After having abandoned sensual pleasures by pondering over the individual Self and with a desire to obtain eternal prosperity, one should be engaged in the worship of the goddess then only there will be the rise of steady devotion towards Brahman (17.48^{cd} - 49). After having thoroughly decided that the Self is separate from body etc., one should give up the attachment to the body etc., which is the result of wrong knowledge (17.50). Goddess Pārvatī advised Himālaya to worship the goddess that is of the nature of Brahman devoutly with concentration of mind in order to get rid of the miseries of Saṁsāra (17.51).

One Desirous of Release is Rare while a Knower of Devī is Repeat :-

Himālaya inquired of the goddess Pārvatī as to what sort of Her form should be meditated upon by those desiring release (18.2^{ab}).

To that goddess Pārvatī replied that some one amongst thousands of human beings tries to obtain release and among thousands of such aspirants someone knows the goddess in reality (18.3).

Cf. BG VII.3. The first line of this Sloka is taken verbatim from BG VII.3^{ab}. The last half of the second line is also similar for the major part to the last half line of BG VII.3^d.

The Gross Forms of the Goddess useful to understand Her
Subtle Form :-

Without knowing the gross form of the goddess Her subtle form remains beyond understanding by seeing which one attains salvation (18.20^{cd} - 21^{ab}).

The Method of Kramikopāsana and Its Importance :-

The real method of worship of the goddess is by stages. In the beginning Her gross forms should be worshipped in keeping with the rites by Kriyā yoga and then gradually one should ponder over the highest immutable, subtle form of the goddess (18.21^{cd}-22). Goddess Pārvatī, advised Himālaya to resort to any one of the forms of Deśa Mahāvidyās by Kriyāyoga and assured him that he who had his mind and intellect set upon the goddess would surely attain Her (18.29).

The second line i.e. 29^{cd} is for the most part similar to the line of the BG VIII. 7^{cd}.

As taught by goddess Pārvatī to Himālaya, he who remembers the goddess incessantly without distraction of the mind for ever to such a yogī endowed with devotion, she is the bestower of release (18.31 and 33). The line 31^{ab} is verbatim the same as the BG VIII. 14^{ab}.

Remembering the Goddess at the time of Death Frees One from Saṁsāra:-

He who after having remembered the goddess with devotion breathes his last, he also is not troubled by the hosts of miseries of transmigratory existence at any time (18.32). This stanza 32 of Mābhg. echoes the same idea expressed in the BG VIII 5 and 13.

Sacrificing to Other Deities is sacrificing to Devī :-

Those devotees endowed with faith who sacrifice to the other gods, even they sacrifice to the goddess without doubt (18.35). The idea and the expression found in the above noted stanza 35 of Mābhg. seem to have been borrowed from the BG IX.23.

Dedicated Devotion to the Goddess gives rise to Release :-

By dedicating everything that one does, eats, offers as oblations and gives away by way of alms to the goddess one is freed from the bondage of actions (18.38). The above noted line 38^{ab} of Mabhg. appears to have been taken from the BG IX.27^{ab}.

Those who with true devotion worship the goddess they are in Her and She is also in them (18.39^{ab}). The idea and the expression found in the above noted line 39^{ab} of Mabhg. Pu. seem to have been borrowed from the BG IX.29^{cd}.

There is no one who is liked by or disliked by the goddess (18.39^{cd}). The idea expressed in the above noted line 39^{cd} appears to have been borrowed from the BG IX. 29^{ab}.

Even if a person with very bad behaviour worships the goddess with unswerving devotion, he also is freed from the sin and is released from the bondage of the birth (18.40). The idea and expression found in the above noted line 40^{ab} of Mabhg.Pu. seem to have been borrowed from the BG IX 30^{ab}. He (i.e. a person with bad behaviour) becomes a righteous one (Dharmātmā) quickly and crosses the transmigratory existence gradually. Release is easy to attain for those who are devoted to the goddess (18.41). The first quarter of stanza 41 of Mabhg.P. noted above appears to have been borrowed from the BG IX.31^a. The goddess advised Himālaya to worship Her with highest devotion and assured him that she would save him definitely from the ocean of births (18.42). The idea expressed in the line 42^{ab} of Mabhg.Pu. noted above appears to have been imitated from the BG IX.34^{ab}.

By setting one's mind upon the goddess, by offering sacrifices to Her by saluting Her and by dedicating oneself to Her one would definitely attain Her and would not be troubled by the miseries of transmigratory existence (18.43).

In Devīgītā Devī is all in all in the world ranking with Brahman. In the Mābhg. she is said to be having all the Vibhūtis as it is said in the Gītā about Kṛṣṇa. According to this Purāṇa, Śiva and Śakti are not different. Both are but named as Brahman. She is comprised of all the sacrifices. As stated by Dr. Pushpendra Kumer⁵ we can note that Bhakti, just like Vaiṣṇavism, is the main tenet of Śaktism in this Purāṇa. Bhāgavatāgītā of Mābhg. especially is a discourse on Bhaktiyoga, but the deity is said to be Parēśakti.

Phalaśruti of Bhāgavatīgītā :-

Adhyaya 19 stanzas 6 to 16 contain the Phalaśruti of Bhāgavatīgītā. He who recites this best yoga explained by Pārvatī to Himālaya, for him release becomes easy to attain (19.6). He who is ever engaged in the devotion of Durgā becomes fit to be worshipped by all gods and even the protectors of the Lokas viz. Indre etc. carry out his command (19.10). He himself attains a digit of divine power by the grace of the goddess. His sins like a brahmicide etc. are destroyed (19.11). He attains a son endowed with all virtues and long life. His enemies are destroyed and he

5 Vide : Dr. Pushpendra Kumer, Introduction to the Mābhg. P.30.

attains auspiciousness always (19.12). He who recites with devotion the Bhagavatīgītā on the Amāvāsyā day is freed from all sins and attains equality with goddess Durgā (19.13). He who recites the Bhagavatīgītā at midnight in proximity of a bilva tree to him goddess Durgā becomes visible before his eyes within a year (19.14). The merit that arises by the recitation of this Gītā is unique on the surface of the earth (19.15^{cd}). On this earth, there are a number of fruits of penance, of the performance of sacrifices, of alms giving and such other rites, but there is no counting of numbers of the fruits of the recitations of this Gītā (19.16) i.e. they are countless.