



THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ AND PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE

The *Bhagavad Gītā* has a long history of translation into English. Charles Wilkins first translated the text into English in 1783. This translation went on to influence American Transcendentalists in the 1830s and 1840s such as Emerson and Thoreau. Transcendentalists viewed the *Bhagavad Gītā* as an exemplary work advocating the unity of the human soul and an “over-soul.” This interpretation, drawn from *advaita vedānta* (nondualist) interpretations of the text, is only one lens through which the *Bhagavad Gītā* has been interpreted. In this class, students will read selections of the *Bhagavad Gītā* in Sanskrit alongside two commentaries from opposing philosophical schools: Śaṅkara’s 7th/8th-century nondualist (*advaita vedānta*) commentary and Madhva’s 13th/14th-century dualist (*dvaita vedānta*) commentary.

Intermediate Sanskrit Part II
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