

Hindu versus Christian Perspectives on Victory, God's Will and Love: A Comparative Study

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Received: 06/ 2022 / Accepted: 02/ 2023 / Published: 06/ 2023 <https://doi.org/10.26436/hjuoz.2023.11.2.914>

ABSTRACT:

This research paper investigates two literary texts, one is an ancient Indian epic *Bhagavad Gita (The Song of the Lord)* anonymously written between (500 -200 BC) while the second is a historical novel *Manuscript Found in Accra* by *Paulo Coelho*. Though the two texts may vary in their genre and their religious tradition, they still share significant features. The first is related to the setting. The first shared feature is army preparation for a war which is going to happen soon based on the setting of both texts. The second feature, in common with the two texts, is in connection with their narrative structures. Both texts are based on a question-answer dialogue, a discourse between two parties of characters. The third significant characteristic shared by the two texts is in connection with their core religious, spiritual, and philosophical themes. Arjuna, in *Bhagavad Gita*, and the people of Jerusalem, in *Manuscript Found in Accra*, agitatedly ask their spiritual leaders, Krishna, in the first text, and the Copt, in the second, religious and ethical questions. These questions evidently refer to key subjects which are victory in a military combat, God's will and volition and love between man and God and among human beings. While analyzing these themes, the discussion thoroughly probes through the two texts' religious contexts: the Hindu theologian tradition and Biblical teachings. The aim is to meticulously examine the points of disparity between the Hindu versus the Christian understanding of victory in the battlefield, God's will and love, which are the core themes in this analysis.

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita. Manuscript Found in Accra, victory, defeat, love, God's will, surrender, and reincarnation.

1-Introduction

1.1 Selection of Texts:

As briefly indicated in the abstract, the research examines closely Bhagavad Gita and Manuscript Found in Accra to scrutinize their religious dialogues and thematic aspects in connection with victory versus defeat in a military combat, God's plan versus man's aspiration and God's divine love versus human's love. Though the two texts are of different genres (the first is an epic while the second is a novel) they are works of narrative, hence, they lend a fertile ground for comparative literary inquiry. Gerard Prince in *A Dictionary of Narratology* (2003) defines narrative as:

The representation (as product and process, object and act, structure and structuration) of one or more real of fictive events connected by one, two or several (more or less overt) narrators to one, two or several (more or less overt) narrates (Prince, p58) .

In both selected works, there is a narrator, or a speaker who is a high religious figure, Krishan in Bhagavad Gita and the Copt in Manuscript Found in Accra. The speech of the spiritual leader is of a pivotal significance since it rests on the sacred books of Hinduism (the Vedas and Upanishad) and Christianity (the Old and the New Testaments). Further, the kernel thematic ideas around

which the dialogues, in the two texts, center are; victory, God's will and love. Owing to these literary and religious compelling features, the two texts are selected in a comparative framework of literary inquiry.

1.2 The Rationale of the Research:

The main reasons behind comparing Bhagavad Gita, an Indian epic, with Manuscript Found in Accra, a semi-historical novel, are owing first: to the derive to comprehensibly examine the religious dialogues in these two texts since they represent two different religions, cultures and historical periods. Comparing the religious discourses in texts produced by varied cultures is essential in obtaining a satisfactory comprehension of the religious, literary, linguistic and historical features of the compared texts. Hence, setting both Bhagavad Gita (a text whose language rests on the teachings of the Vedas) with Manuscript Found in Accra (where the religious language is based upon the Biblical verses) in a comparative framework renders the understanding of the two texts' religious, historical and literary contents lucid and unambiguous to the reader.

The second reason is that this comparison lends a promising possibility for analyzing the two selected works within the lenses of comparative world literature. It permits a wider scope of vivid critical inquiry into the religious and historical backgrounds of the texts that go

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back to many centuries in time. David Damrosch in his book *What is World Literature?* (2003) asserts that "World literature is a mode of reading, a form of detached engagement with worlds, beyond our own place and time" (Damrosch, p 282).

Therefore, the comparative analysis (conducted in this research) allows for a close and profound understanding of the key themes investigated. These themes are related to the Hindu versus Biblical understanding of victory and defeat in the battle, The Hindu religious perspective on God's intent as to be compared with the Biblical perspective on God's will and the Hindu concept of God's love to be set in comparison with the Biblical understanding of love. These aspects of resemblance and variance might not be possible to be identified and highlighted, with such clarity, if the two texts are analyzed separately. Thus, the comparison contributes, to a large extent, in building up a comprehensive argument about the teachings of the Vedas and of the Bible as these teachings are represented in *Bhagavad Gita* and *Manuscript Found in Accra*, respectively.

1.3 The Methodology of the Research:

The research employs close-reading techniques and utilizes tactics of an in-depth literary analysis to examine particular details in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Manuscript Found in Accra* in order to build up a comprehensive understanding of the texts' literary, thematic and religious contents. Through a meticulous reading of the texts, special attention is given to the language of the works, the choice of certain allusions, adjectives, metaphors, scenes or stories and their religious connotations and background. Following this process, specific short passages and excerpts from the primary sources as well as secondary sources, particularly the Vedas and the Bible, are incorporated within the analysis to elucidate the core themes examined in the research and to fortify the argument with potent ideas and relevant points of critique.

1.4 Bhagavad Gita: Background about the Epic:

Bhagavad Gita is originally written in the Sanskrit language, it is the sixth book of a long Indian epic called *Mahabharata* which is divided into (18) books having around (100,000) of verse lines (Dutt, 1898, p. viii). This makes it the longest epic ever written in the human history. It is an ancient piece of verse that is dated around (500-200) BC. (Fosse, 2007, p. 13) a powerful text fertile with spiritual teachings, stories of ancient times, tales of wars and love, Indian proverbs and aphorism. The *Bhagavad Gita* comes as part of this epic, its length goes to (700) verse line (Fosse, 2007, p. 14). The research employs skills of close-reading techniques and utilizes tactics of an in-depth literary analysis to examine particular details in the selected works and build up an understanding of the texts' literary, thematic and religious contents. Following this process, specific short passages and excerpts from the primary sources as well as secondary sources are incorporated in the analysis to fortify the argument and to furnish it with varying relevant opinions and points of critique.

1.5 Plot Summary:

The central story of all the *Mahabharata* is a war between two families of cousins over the throne of the Hastinapura, a kingdom north of modern-day Delhi. The first family are the Pandavas, the sons of Pandu, whereas the second are the Kauravas, the descendants of Kuru. At first the kingdom was ruled by the Kauravas family, while the cousins of the two families were growing together amid atmosphere of peace and love. However, when the father Dhritarashtra died, his sons, due to jealousy and enmity, drove the Pandavas family out of the kingdom (Sivananada, 2000, p. xvii).

With the course of the years, the Pandavas formed marriage ties with their cousins and managed to return to the kingdom to share sovereignty with the Kauravas. But the events took turn to worse when, in a game of dice, Yudhishtira, the elder of the Pandavas, lost while Duryodhana, the elder of the Kauravas, won. The penalty the loser had to face was an exile for (13) years. Yudhishtira with his brothers had to yield and submissively left the kingdom. When the penalty period had passed, the sons of the Pandu returned to demand their share in the kingdom, Duryodhana fiercely denied them their rights (Fosse, 2007, pp. xiv-xv).

The *Bagavand Gita* is found here when the two families prepared armies and were about to clash in a deadly combat. The battle raged for eighteen days and ended with the victory of the Pandavas. All the Kauravas brothers died and many of the Pandavas family were slaughtered only five brothers, including prince Arjuna, and Krishna survived (Sivananada, 2000, p. xvii).

Bhaganad Gita is divided into (18) chapters, each includes a question Arjuna asks to his chariot leader Krishna and the detailed reply of the latter. The opening lines of the epic describes the armies of the two sides and the varying war preparations each had taken for the anticipated confrontation (Sivananada, 2000, p. xviii).

The epic portrays the great hero prince Arjuna driven in a chariot lead by Krishna to the dividing line between the two armies just before signaling the attack sign. Doubting achieving victory in this war and feeling sympathy towards his cousins, his enemy, Arjuna threw down his bow refusing to fight. Time stood still there while he and Krishna debated over victory and defeat, honor and shame, love and hate (Aurobindo, 1997, p. 15). The rest of the epic is about Krishna's thorough answers to Arjuna, these replies are fertile with spiritual and philosophical teachings from the Hindu theological tradition, Krishna's answers are embroidered with beautiful metaphors and allegories from nature and life (Aurobindo, 1997, p. xviii).

Such detailed replies are meant to be lessons to teach Arjuna about the need to surrender to perform his duty then surrendering the outcome to the divine will, cycles of life and death, love and hate, and self-control. In the end, Arjuna was convinced, he picked up his bow and prepared himself for the battle.

1.6 Manuscript Found in Accra: Background about the Novel:

Manuscript Found in Accra is a historical novel written originally in Portuguese language and translated into many languages including English (2013). The novel

opens with a preface in which Paulo Coelho gives historical information about a manuscript discovered by an English archeologist in Accra, the capital of Ghana, in 1974. This manuscript was written in three languages; Arabic, Hebrew and Latin. The carbon scan shows that it was written around 1307 relating to some events that took place much earlier in history in 1099.

Through employing the genre of historical fiction and dexterously using the manuscript as a foundation for his novel, Coelho brings to life the anguish the city Jerusalem lived through as it was about to confront the Crusaders at dawn. It is worth mentioning that the narrator here is digressing on purpose as the war is going to start the next day. This point is also stated by Maria Oliver in her research "In tune with wandering, the use of digression as an anti-narrative strategy blurs and deflects the story toward the intimacy of the everyday, and suggests a latent content beyond the text" (Oliver, 2021, p. 219) The novel is narrated by the third person narrator, an unnamed character in the story, assumingly one who survived the ruins of the war to write about it years later in the manuscript.

Manuscript found in Accra is one of the novels with no plot development, in the sense there are no "typical characters [...] and the delicate design of stories." (Zhang, 2006, p. 18). In the first few pages, an unknown narrator describes the disorder the city of Jerusalem is passing through preparing itself for a ferocious attack with the Crusaders on the eve of the 14th of July 1099. The rest of the novel is based on question-answer dialogue between the religious leader, the Copt, and the people of Jerusalem. The novel is divided into chapters (un-numbered), each is about a question asked by one of the residents of Jerusalem and addressed to the Copt. Those questions vary in their subjects, victory, defeat, God's will, love, happiness, duty and morality. It is relevant to mention that though the novel does not make a direct comment on the religious adherence of the Copt, the title "Copt" itself bears an evident reference to the Coptic Orthodox Church which denotes the Egyptian Christian National Church (Morgan, 2016, p. 3).

1.7 Plot Summary:

In the opening part of the novel, the narrator describes the young males of varying religions; Jewish, Christians and Muslims were tirelessly sharpening their swords, getting ready their weapons and digging the ditches and the tunnels in preparation for the next day combat. As for the elderly people they resorted to the temples, churches and mosques to pray and perform religious sermons. For women and children, they were given the option either to stay or to flee the city (Coelho and Costa, 2013, pp. 11-12).

Amid this state of chaos and terror, the Copt called for a meeting with the people of Jerusalem in the center of the city on the eve of that dramatic day. People of varying ages and class ask the Copt diverse questions related to; victory and defeat, duty and obligation, happiness and peace, love and duty and obligations (Coelho and Costa, 2013, pp. 20-27).

Through the dexterous use of logic, wisdom, religious teachings, Biblical allusions and nature metaphors, the Copt seeks to answer the various questions of the

agitated crowd. Most of the Copt's thorough replies and teachings were meant to pacify them and to bestow a sense of tranquility and calmness on their troubled psychology. He seemed to realize that it was the profound faith in God and in his benevolent will that people of Jerusalem needed most while confronting the terror at the gates of their city. In the final lines of the novel, the Copt calls people to go home to write about this meeting, to remember it, and to relate it to their children for future generations and for the history to record.

2. Hindu versus Christian Perspectives on Victory, God's Will and Love

2.1 Bhagavad Gita:

Bhagavad Gita is one of the most sacred books in the Hindu religious tradition among the *Vedas* and the *Upanishad*. It is a lengthy poem fertile with spiritual and philosophical teachings related to particular virtues such as; commitment to fulfil the duties, selflessness, purity, and the importance of renouncing the worldly pleasures for the sake of higher spiritual gains. Though it is a work about the Hindu philosophy, it "speaks to people everywhere-across the oceans, across the millennia, and across the boundaries of language, religion and culture" (Fosse, 2007, p. 26).

Probably among the most significant subjects the epic adroitly deals with is the obligation of the individual to perform his duty without desiring any specific results, nor fearing unpleasant outcomes. Since the outcomes of all human actions are in the hands of the divine, one should surrender the fruits of his deeds to Him.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, in the scene of the battlefield and before the war breaks out, Arjuna approaches so closely the front line which divides the two sides, he keenly observes familiar faces among his foes; his uncles, cousins and revered teachers. Those are the kinsmen he has spent many years among and shared precious memories with. During this critical moment, Arjuna is caught up by hesitation and uncertainty as how to sever his blood ties. Hence, he pleads to Krishan, the chariot leader to advise him. According to the Hindu religious doctrine, Krishna is a personified image of God. (Vivekananda, 2005, 31) The bewildered prince earnestly pleads to him for an advice "Now I'm confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of miserly weakness [...] Please, instruct me." (Swami, 1972, p. 101).

Krishan, feeling the reluctance and perplexity of Arjuna, earnestly seeks to instruct him to the right course of action. C. Kourie in "Discerning the Mystical Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita and John of the Cross" emphatically clarifies that "The entire Gita is a treatise on discernment as Krishna leads Arjuna from despair to an understanding of the true nature of the self and, consequently, to the correct path of action" (Kourie, 2013, p. 255). Krishan begins his argument with the simple logic of dishonor in the battlefield. For the leader to retreat from the war even before it begins is a shameful act which can be interpreted as out of cowardice. No doubt, his enemy will describe Arjuna through ignoble terms as they "will think you [Arjuna] have left the

battlefield out of fear” and this definitely ruins the fighter’s reputation, while the generals, in Arjuna’s army, will surely regard his action as shameful and dishonorable. Hence, Arjuna’s name will be stained and “dishonor is worse than death” (Swami, 1972, p. 145). Sensing Arjuna is yielding to the argument, Krishan gradually leads him to more subtle Hindu philosophical notions of *dharma and Vairagya*, one’s role in life and the non-attachment, subsequently. In this life, each individual is responsible for a role or a duty to perform and should not escape from it since all human beings are parts of social and natural order and system (Rai, 2018, p. 24). Krishan clarifies, while one executes his duties, he needs to maintain a high sense of *Vairagya*, non-attachment, to the outcomes of the actions. Because the excessive attachment to worldly pleasures and sensual joys agitates the mind and this restless state of the mind is the root cause of all suffering (Mayur, 2019, p. 113). Thus, for Krishan, there should no joy in the delightful results nor disappointment over the unpleasant outcomes. Arjuna has to “give up all desires of the fruits of his works and become simply the desireless impartial doer” (Aurobindo, 1997, p. 303). Krishan urges the bewildered prince to remain unaffected by the outcomes of his work as “the lotus is unaffected by muddy water” (Swami, 1972, p. 155).

According to the Hindu theological tenet, the source of all misery in life is attachment which comes in three types; first, to material things of (possession and ownership), second to relationships (family and friends), and third to emotions and preferences (love versus hate, joy versus misery, peace versus fear...etc.). These three kinds of tendencies create a bondage that curb one from reaching *moksha*, liberation (Rambachan, 1984, pp. 184-185).

In order to understand liberation in this context, one needs to first comprehend the notion of reincarnation in Hinduism. It emphasizes that each human being has a soul, *atman*, that passes through numerous cycles of deaths and rebirths (Long, 2018, p. 7). In order to be liberated from this bondage, cycles, one has to firmly adhere himself to the practice of detachment. It is only when all the deeds one carries out are done with no desire for any outcome, but purely for the love of God, then liberation can be attained (Rambachan, 1984, p. 310).

The core idea in Krishna’s teaching is centered on remaining detached from the results of the action. Hence, no desire for; victory, pleasure, joy, gains nor fear any detestable consequence; defeat, loss, or sorrow. Following this manner, Arjuna’s prescribed duty is to fight in the battlefield and to desire no specific outcome “Do thou fight for the sake of fighting without considering happiness or distress, loss or gains, victory or defeat” (Swami, 1972, p. 150). Krishan is able to pierce through Arjuna’s motive behind withdrawing from the war. The prince wishes to spare the lives of his kinsmen and thus enjoy peace and happiness.

Conquering his enemy and winning his kingdom back are also other sources of pleasure and joy. The two ways create a bondage, an attachment to a particular outcome and a desire for happiness. Therefore, Krishna assiduously encourages Arjuna to steer away from the expectations of victory or the apprehension about defeat

“You have the right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of actions” (Swami, 1972, p. 165).

Instances from the lives of ancient sages and mystics who renounced worldly pleasure gratifying no secular enjoyment are illustrated by Krishan to fortify his argument. Those sages were able to “became free from the cycle of birth and death” (Swami, 1972, p. 170). Being indifferent to pleasure and pain is their practice towards achieving a state of serenity and equilibrium of the mind.

The spiritual instructor, Krishna, comforts his agitated devotee, Arjuna, by clarifying to him the three paths to God. The first is the *Karma yoga*, the path of righteous deeds and virtuous actions, and the second is the *Jnani yoga*, the path of learning and acquiring knowledge about God. As for the third, it is the *Bhakti yoga*, Bhakti is an aphorism to refer to an intense love to God. It is the path of devotion and the profound love to God (Giridhari, 2012, pp. 9-10). When the prince fervently inquiries as to which one is the highest among the three, Krishan elucidates “Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become my devotee, offer obeisance to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me” (Swami, 1972, p. 596).

In these verse lines, Krishan relentlessly calls Arjuna into the path of the Bhakti yoga. This practice purifies one’s heart and soul as it clears away all fears, doubts and past sins, hence, it is the direct path to God. Another word to describe this type of practice is the mystic yoga. It denotes the one who is constantly dwelling on God with a heart melting with love. All his thoughts are centered on the Lord while his actions are faithfully carried out for the unalloyed love of Him “A search beginning, continuing, and ending in Love. One single moment of the madness of extreme love to God brings us eternal freedom” (Swami, 2020, p. 3) Krishan asserts that those who constantly nourish the seed of God’s love in their hearts, will surely be saved through union with God after death “To those who are serving me with love...they can come to Me” (Swami, 1972, p. 617).

The sentence “they can come to Me” indicate man’s ascending to God rather than God descending to him. The implied reference is the possibility of being united with Him. Therefore, it is essential for Arjuna to aspire for such a union through the path of pure devotion and a pure love to God. One of the cornerstones of *Gita*’s teachings is how to break the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, the *samsara*. Devotional service is the direct path as it is the all-consuming love that is offered pure and pristine to God. Only through this path that the attachment to the material world is shattered along with its cycle of birth, death and rebirth (Mermer, 2020, p. 11).

2.2 Manuscript Found in Accra:

The novel *Manuscript Found in Accra* opens with the scene of the people of Jerusalem gathering around their religious leader, the Copt, at the square center of the city to listen to his sermon. It is the 14th of July 1099, and the occurrence await is a mighty one. An unknown narrator describes the state of havoc the city is going through as the civilians along with the military groups are in heated preparations for a combat with the Crusaders who are

trooping at the gates of the city (Coelho and Costa, 2013, pp. 11-12). There is fear and apprehension among the crowd who are anxious to ask the Copt questions related to the expected outcome of the war and to their obscure destiny. Yakob, the narrator's neighbor, zealously requests the Copt to describe to the audience the state of defeat. Seeking to pacify the agitated listeners, the Copt employs a self-composed tone while utilizing images from nature to illustrate his points. He adroitly depicts a tree speaking to a dying leaf "That's the cycle of life. You may think you're going to die, but you live on in me. Its thanks to you that I'm alive, because I can breathe" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 20). The Copt's figurative language imitates, to a far extent, the language of the Bible with its forceful symbolic referentiality. The image of the tree is one of the prominent nature images in the Bible. The Book of Genesis (Ch. 2) speaks about the tree of knowledge in the midst of the garden of Eden (Faro, 2016, p. 1). Noah's olive twig which significantly testifies to the recession of the flood (Bell, p. 3) and Moses burning tree which is a manifesting of the divine presence of God in a form of a glorious bright burning tree (Adamo, 2017, p. 3). Nature images in the Bible accentuate both man's connection to nature and nature as the divine work of God, a manifestation of his ultimate might and beauty (Chwalkowski, 2016, p. 3).

Another image from nature drawn by the Copt with a biblical allusion is of an innocent deer. A gazelle is peacefully eating the grass when it is abruptly attacked by a ferocious lion "The gazelle [...] is devoured by the lion. Isn't a matter of who is the strongest, but God's way of showing us the cycle of death and resurrection" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 20) Within this cycle, the Copt asserts, there are no winners nor losers, loss and gains are only stages the livings pass through. The kernel message the Copt seeks to highlight is the cycles of life, and of history. Nations throughout human history were engulfed in brutal conflicts and recurrently witnessed phases of winning and loss (Taylor, 1992, p. 83). There is deeper level of interpretation for the Copt's example of the gazelle, an interpretation that needs to be understood in the light of Yakob's question about the defeat. The Copt employs the image of the deer, in particular, to communicate a message that pertains actually to victory. In psalm (18:33), King David says "Make my feet like those of a deer and give me sure footing on high places (Prabhupada, 1982, p. 480) Hence, the Copt's description of the deer meant to invoke, in the minds of the listeners, Davide's prayer to God for steadfastness in the battlefield. Enthusiastically, the Copt elaborates by saying that even if a fighter dies at the war front, he is not defeated since "his soul will remain intact" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 21).

In another scene, a young boy, who is not permitted to fight due to his age, complains of his doubts being of no use to his city. The Copt fervently assures him of his vital role aptly portraying instances from nature "Ask the river: Do you feel useful [...] and the river will answer: I'm trying to be useful. I'm trying to be a river. Nothing in this world is useless in the eyes of God" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 45). Every living entity has a valid cause for its existence, and a decisive task to perform, the Copt affirms. Eventually when one fulfills his duty, then the

great reward is paradise. In this context, the Copt's speech comes so close to the teachings of St Paul to the Colossian Christians, when he advises them "Obey in all things your masters [...] not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God" (Prabhupada, 1982, p. 1037). Hence, the meaning the Copt intends to communicate to his attentively listening mob is the need of each individual to carry out his obligations sincerely since this is the only path to heaven. Drawing on logic of words of wisdom to calm the audience as they prepare for death, the Copt persuades the audience of the need to surrender to God's will "The person who accepts God's plan with humility and courage knows that he is on the right road" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 75).

Amid these heated circumstances, Jerusalem is passing through and while people are petrified with the coming combat with the Crusaders, talking about love may not sound appropriate and can even be viewed paradoxical. However, for the Copt, he surely finds it a theme that is worthy to talk about and a need for people at such a grilling time. When an elderly woman approaches the Copt and asks about love, the latter defines it as a force that transforms one's life and heals all the wounds. Though love, the Copt elucidates, is a necessity for all livings, it may sometimes bring sorrow, loss and pain. Still, one needs to continue believing in it "We need to love. Even if leads us to the land where the lakes are made of tears-that secret, mysterious place, the land of tears" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 81).

Varying images from nature; the flower, the bees, the river, and the clouds are dexterously utilized by the Copt's speech to describe the merits of love as the "richest thing in life" (Narendra, 2018, p. 2). The spiritual leader fervently urges people not to give up their search for love since it is the "The last key in the key ring that opens the door" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 84)

The Copt's elaboration on the virtues of love lends an explicit ground of resemblances to the Biblical great commandments and the teachings of Jesus, those that testify to the significance of love. In his letter to the Christians of Ephesus, the Apostle Paul accentuates the virtue of love and fidelity between the husband and the wife "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church" (Prabhupada, 1982, p. 1508) The love for the neighbor is one of the great commandments of Jesus when he instructed his disciples "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Prabhupada, 1982, p. 1321). It is within this Biblical frame of references that the Copt delivers his explanation on the importance of love and within the same context comes his final affirmation to the attentively listening crowd "Our great goal in life is to love" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 81).

Conclusion

From the previous thorough analysis of the two literary texts, *Bhagavad Gita* and *Manuscript Found in Accra*, it becomes evident that they demonstrate particular significant points of disparity. The two literary texts genuinely differ in their theological and religious understanding of key themes; victory in the battlefield, God's will and love.

Concerning the subject of victory, in *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna relentlessly instructs Arjuna to honor his name and title as the leader of the army and to fight his foes without desiring victory nor fearing the defeat. According to the Hindu theological doctrine desiring happiness or disliking loss are both sources of misery in life. *Vairagya*, non-attachment to any sort of feeling, is a virtue to be sought wholeheartedly by the true spiritual aspirant, like Arjuna. The teachings of the spiritual leader are firmly grounded on the Hindu tenet of conceiving life as source of misery, a chain of endless births and death and only through complete detachment that the path to liberation from this cycle will show clearly.

In *Manuscript Found in Accra*, the Copt, similar to Krishna, fervently encourages the people of Jerusalem to honorably fight the invaders at the gates of the city. The soldier has to fearlessly confront his enemy and should strive to win over his foes. However, if he is defeated, then he should not lose his faith that in the next combat he may win. The Copt's instruction is not in the direction of abolishing all expectations, joyful one (victory) and the displeasing one (defeat), as in the case with Krishna's teachings. The reason is that the Copt's discourse is based on the Biblical stories of ancient kings as king David and king Solomon who fought many battles winning some and losing others. Hence, through utilizing Biblical allusions (David's prayers) and nature metaphors (a dead leaf), the Copt comforts the agitated crowd that if they are defeated in this battle, then they may win over their foes in the next one. Victory and defeat are complimentary parts of the "cycle of life" (Coelho and Costa, 2013, p. 20).

Surrendering to the will of God is another vital topic the two texts show disparity in their treatments of owing to their varying religious contexts. In *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna advises Arjuna to surrender to God's will along with all the desires and attachment, fears and apprehensions. Krishna's invitation to Arjuna to surrender his will implies a total annihilation of his volition. Instead, there should be a total acceptance to whatever befalls on him, God's will.

In *Manuscript Found in Accra*, the Copt clarifies to the audience the need to surrender to God's will since it is the "the right road" out of any danger or tremulations. Thus, it is the way to overcome difficulty not the aim itself, as with the teaching of Krishna. Further, the Copt makes no references to the need to annihilate one's will totally. But, he asserts that one should maintain faith when an unfavorable event occurs and accept God's plan.

Love is another significant subject the two literary texts highly emphasize, yet they show a prominent difference in their understanding of it. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the spiritual teacher, Krishna, refers to the mystic love, *bhakti yoga*. Pure feeling of devotion and immense emotions of love poured solely to God for the sake of God not for any worldly pleasures or gains. This kind of overwhelming powerful passion is the true path to secure union with the divine, according to the Hindu religious tradition. Krishna renders a thorough explanation on the bhakti path to direct Arjuna to it since it is the only way

among all the yogi practices and methods that breaks the cycle of birth and death and guarantee nirvana, heaven. In *Manuscript Found in Accra*, love is presented within a Biblical framework of referentiality. The Copt relentlessly assert to his listening mob that love is a powerful force that revive and nourish all that live. It is a need for human beings, vegetation (the sun loves the trees so it offers them light and warmth) and among animals. The religious leader accentuates the varying types of love; fidelity, fraternity, compassion and kindness. His words to a large extent represent those of Jesus as the latter highlights bounds of fraternity and brotherhood among people "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you (Prabhupada, 1982, p. 1398).

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مفهوم النصر وإرادة الله و المحبة لدى الهندوس و المسيحيين: دراسة مقارنة

الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى تحليل نصين ادبيين: الاول هو ملحمة هندية قديمة بعنوان بهاجافاد جيتا (أغنية الرب) كتبه مؤلف مجهول بين (500-200 قبل الميلاد)، بينما الثاني هو عبارة عن نص تاريخي تم العثور عليه في مدينة اكر و نشر على شكل رواية من تأليف الكاتب باولو كويلو عام 2013. على الرغم من ان النصين يختلفان من ناحية نوع النص و من ناحية التقاليد الدينية، الا انهما يتشابهان في عدة ميزات مهمة: الاولى تتعلق بهاجافاد جيتا، حيث يقف الأمير أرجونا الذي أعد جيشا كبيرا لغرض استعادة مملكته امام اعداد هائلة من جنوده وهو يتأهب لبدء الهجوم. بينما النص الثاني الذي عثر عليه في اكر يبين كيف ان مدينة القدس اعدت جيشا لمواجهة الصليبيين الذين يتجمعون على ابواب مدينة القدس. اما الميزة الثانية التي يشتركان بها النصين فهي تتعلق بالبنية السردية لهما، حيث يستند كلا النصين على اسلوب الحواربين طرفين من الشخصيات مدعوما بالاسئلة والاجوبة. أما السمة الثالثة المشتركة في النصين فهي التي تتعلق بالمواضيع الدينية والروحية والفلسفية الاساسية. فعلى سبيل المثال يسأل أرجونا في بهاجافاد جيتا واهل مدينة القدس عن حماس قادتهم الروحيين، كريشنا، في النص الأول والقبطي في النص الثاني اسئلة دينية واخلاقية. ومن الواضح ان هذه الاسئلة تشير الى المواضيع الرئيسية التي تتناول النصر في معركة عسكرية و ارادة الله و ارادته و المحبة بين الناس و الله. وفي ضوء هذه التحليلات فان هذه الدراسة تناقش بدقة السياقات الدينية للنصين وهما التقليد اللاهوتي الهندوسي و التعاليم الكتابية. والهدف من هذه المناقشة هو اجراء تحليل دقيق لنقاط الاختلاف بين الفهم الهندوسي و المسيحي للنصر في ساحة المعركة و ارادة الله و محبته.

الكلمات الدالة: بهاجافاد جيتا، مخطوطة وجدت في عكرا، النصر، الهزيمة، الحب، إرادة الله، الاستسلام، التناسخ.

تِيروانينا هيندوسييان بهرامبهر يا مهسيحييان سه بارهت سهركهفتني، ويستا خودي و نه فيني

پوخته:

نه في كولينه دوو دهقن نه دهبى شروفه دكهت، نيك داستانه كا كه فنا هيندييه باگافاد جيتا (سترا نا پهروه ريديگاري) بي سرناف د نافهرا سالين (500 - 200) پيش زابن (هاتيه نقيسان. يا دووي پومانه كا ميژووييه دهستنيسهك ل ناكارا هات ديتن و ل سالا 2013 وهك رومان هات به لاف كر ز لايي رومانيس باولو كوئيلوي فه. هه رجهنده نهو دوو دهق ز لايي زانره يي و نه ريتي تاينيفه د جياوازن، بهس د هندهك تايبه تمه ندييان دا وهكه فيي هه يه. يا نيك پيه وندي ب جهي و دهمي فه يا هه ي. د دهق باگافاد جيتا، شاراده نارجونا سوپا يه كيي ناماده دكهت بو بدهستنه نينا شاهنشينا خوه، بهرامبهر ژماره كا مزن يا راوه ستايه وچ نه مايه دي فرمانا هيرشكرني دهركهت. بهس د دهستنيسهك ل ناكارا هات ديتن، شاربي قودسي سوپا يه كيي ناماده كرى بو بهرنگار بونا سه ربازين خاچپه رستان نه وين دهروزي پاريزي دورپيچكرين. تايبه تمه ندييا دووي يا هه فبهش دناقهرا ههردو تيكتستانا، تهكنيكا فه گيراني هه. ههردو تيكتست لسه ربنه مايي پسيار و بهرسف هاتينه نقيساندن، ديالوگ دناقهرا دوو گروهين كه ركهتران دا دهيتنه نه نجامدان. ستيه تايبه تمه ندييا بهرچاف، هه بهشيا دناقهرا ههردو تيكتستان دا، گرديايه ب تهوهرين سهركي بين ههردو تيكتستان وهك تاين و روي و فه لسه في. نارجونا د باگافاد جيتا دا، و خه لك قودسي، د دهستنيسهك ل ناكارا هات ديتن دا، ب وهه پسيارين تاين و نه خلاقي ز سهركردين خوه بين روحي دكهت، كريشنا، و د تيكتستا دووي دا، قبكي. نه ف پسياره ب ناشركا نامازنه بو بابه ته كي سهركي وهك سهركهفتنا له شهكري د شهري دا و نيرادا خودي و خوشه ويستيني دناقهرا مروفا و خودي دا. دهما نه ف بابه ته دهيتنه شلوفه كر، گفتوگو يا فهكولين ب هويري دهيتنه نه نجامدان د چارچوفي بي ههردو تيكتستانا. نه ريتي نيلاهياتي بي هندوسي و فيركارين پهرتوكا پروز. نارمانج ژي نه وه هه لسه نگانندنه كا هوير بو خالين نه يه كسان دناقهرا هندوسان دا و بهرامبهر تيگه هه شتنا مهسيحيان بو بابه تين سهركهفتن د ميدانا شهري دا، نيرادا خودي و هه ژيكرن، كو تهوهرين سهركينه دشروه كرنا في فهكولين دا.

په يقين سهركهكي: باگافاد جيتا، دهستنيسهك ل ناكارا هات ديتن، سهركهفتن، شهكستن، هه ژيكرن، نيرادا خودي، تهسليم بوون، دووباره ژدايكبوون.