

## The Bhagavad-Gītā: It's value to modern politics

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### Abstract

This sacred Sanskrit Epic is considered above all other Sanskrit compilations which convey the cult of Krishna. It is voluminous and there are addition to it by intellectuals of the later day after 300 B.C. Hinduism and the cult of Krishna very well explains what love is and what is not important is that it conveys good examples of Hindu way of Life. And also with sufficient advice to the modern society and the way of life, and narratives are given as examples, and they mention that knowledge, work and devotion are paths to salvation. Even Mahatma Gandhi who was the father of 'Avihinsa' had used Bhagavat Gīta as his Bible and followed some of the profound visions in it to the letter, in his world class political life. Correct as well as proper action is the most valuable lesson given in Bhagavat Geeta, and it is a very good advice conveyed to the present day politicians the world over. What is really advantages is that examples by way of narrations are given, which illustrates what has to be done and what should not be done by the chieftains of any country. Although this compilation is of many authors, all of them give valuable advice to the people in the present day society, along with those in politics. In the world today 'Dhammapada' is read and followed by people of all the countries, and it could be mentioned Bhagavat Geeta although consist of 70,000 stanzas also should be read not completely but even in parts so that what could be learnt may definitely be useful in the day today life not only of the politicians and the rulers but also for any of us in our day to day living and while following a life of virtue.

**Keywords:** Krishna, Arjuna, Modern Politics, Sanskrit epic, Cult.

### 1. Introduction

Bhagavad-Gītā is a renowned sacred Sanskrit epic. It is literally greatly valued among the intellectuals. They can use it to achieve own mission and develop their vision. It does not have everlasting knowledge and brain in it. Therefore, it is famous and second to none to any other book of Sanskrit literature. The Bhagavad Gītā is an encyclopedia of the religious world. The Bhagavad Gītā itself has taken the whole world in to it.

As William Theodore De Barry mentions in his *Hindu way of Life* on Page 276 "Bhagavad-Gītā "song of the lord" may be conceded the most typical expression of Hinduism as whole and an authoritative manual of the popular cult of Krishna in particular. Bhisma par van of the Mahābhārata (400 BCE)"<sup>1</sup> is the author of this work. It is a world, longest poem and it contains 70,000 verses. In later centuries some poems were added by various writers and this thesis was accepted by modern intellectuals. This is one of the "world's longest Poem (70, 0000 verses) composed somewhere between 300 BCE."<sup>2</sup> The Bhagavad-Gītā is considered as a most favorable expression of Hinduism and popularized the Krishna cult. It seems to me the reason is Brahmins have seen future danger some time earlier and it comes from Buddhism and Jainism as competitors.

William Theodore De Barry shows to us in his book of *The Hindu Way of Life* in 1958, Page 277 like this, "Hinduism was the worship of Krishna, which seems to have originated and spread in western and Central India among tribes such as

the Vishnu's, the Satvatas, the Abhiras and the yadavas. Krishna was associated with these tribes as their gods."<sup>3</sup> But according to modern writers this "poem was not sacrosanct, later poets were free to add lines, passages and even whole episode."<sup>4</sup> It's visible.

The central theme of this book seems, to me, to be excellent for the modern society today. The main characters of Bhagavad-Gītā are Arjuna and Krishna. Both characters are going through a tremendous change and these changes can relate in our life. This is the central theme of this book seems to me with the other illustration "Listen to opponents with a good faith. "Bhagavad - Gītā bigging to end whole story had dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. He (Arjuna) is a charioteer. Peter Heeds highlighted this way," As I mentioned above paragraph\* (Pl see above)

Some scholars believe that these various elements are done by different hands and are a composite of 70,000 or more stanzas and are accepted as the longest poem in the world. Sigiriya is a one of the World Heritage Sites of Sri Lanka. It has poems of which about 6000 up to now have been discovered. Those Graphics were written by people who came from various islands around 1100 CE.

"Arjuna, seeing that relatives and friends were ranged each other, was suddenly overcome by deep spiritual despondency."<sup>5</sup> Actually Arjuna wanted to go back home (withdraw from the battle), but Krishna did not allow him to do so. He stops him. Krishna mentioned to him, must do his duty in accordance with his class and he argues that death does not destroy the soul.

<sup>1</sup> Ainslie Thomas Embree, Stephen N. Hay, and William Theodore De Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition: Modern India and Pakistan* (Columbia University Press, 1988), 276.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Heeds, *Indian Religions: A Historical Reader of Spiritual Expression and Experience* (NYU Press, 2002), 147.

<sup>3</sup> Embree, Hay, and Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition*, 277.

<sup>4</sup> Heeds, *Indian Religions*, 147.

<sup>5</sup> Embree, Hay, and Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition*, 281.

To form this epic (story) the author used ethical, mental and - physical problems of life situations and then used them time to time to bring back as the ground message to the story. For example, beyond life and Death “After Arjuna tells Krishna that he refuses to fight and possibly kill his gurus and kinsmen, Krishna’s first response is to remind him that death itself is unreal. The atman or inner spirit never dies. This dweller in the body.”<sup>6</sup> Krishna wants to bring him back to a real life situation which would normally happen. Politicians have to face this type of problem. Krishna’s thinking pattern is deeply involved and established in Hinduism, philosophy and is practice based. As a combatant Arjuna has a duty to pay wage for war, and it would be shame for him to be going back home as his position and his responsibility can show from his own words. Krishna points out that knowledge, work and devotion are all paths to salvation and that the central value in life is that of loyalty to god. The same type of characters can be identified in the world war politics market.

I am not explaining every part of it and hope to discuss from its, “Value of to modern politics” as I understand Mahatma Gandhi used the Bhagavad-Gītā as a bible. Mahatma Gandhi is the father of the Ahiimsā and nonviolence movement and he was an Asian political veteran. There is no doubt because he used the Bhagavad Gītā as a second Bible. Not him only, “modern commentators like Ban kin Chandra Chatterjee, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and M K Gandhi turned the Gītā into Gospel of duty.”<sup>7</sup> Any level of politician at least can use it as a guide to either his political or personal life, a storage place of profound vision to his success.

According to these facts Arjuna later had a very correct decision before 300 BCE. Lord Krishna promoted or he marketed his idea to his colleague. Today world politicians always take world historical events as examples for today. Krishna has taken the correct decision at that time which is value to modern politics. Mahatmā Gandhi is a leader of nonviolence and treated Ahiimsā any life as sacred because he is a Hindu and follower of the Bhagavad Gītā. This is a very good example of the value and use of the Bhagavad Gita for modern cold world class politics.

There are two main characters and one of the characters is called Arjuna. “Arjuna is a warrior, about to join his brothers in a war between two branches of a royal family which would involve killing many of his friends and relations.”<sup>8</sup> This is the peak of the situation. He was unwilling to do his duty because he does not like destruction and killing. That is so; duty is equal to service to God. Do not accept things to do unwillingly. It’s a character by de-motivated retreating. There is a theory called motivation. This theory says human have been some time under physiological reasons de-motivated and another time motivated. But, it is difficult to keep a motivated mind long. It seems to us, the persistence of Sri Krishna was motivated by Arjuna and he decided come to fight. This factor is useful to modern politics. People should be correctly motivated and save them and not to be a police officer for them. People can enjoy Arjuna words. “Fight for their right as a matter of duty or run away from war and

accept defeat in the name of peace and nonviolence.”<sup>9</sup> This is a real case study for decision making for modern politicians. Action, it is the most valuable lesson to people given by the Bhagavad Gītā. If you do not grant it whole value and philosophy it is a step (going) down. The Bhagavad Gītā says lively action is the finest thing in the world. This is a lesson for some individuals and for politicians in the world and its current organizations. Arjuna was used as a puppet by the lineage heritage to bring ownership of state power defilement. Sometimes it’s like this, than no action or inaction. When you look at the world with open eyes you can see some are taking action partially to fetter the other party. But nothing is gained or lost. The best example is the Indian behavior in the Geneva conference last year. That way the Bhagavad Gītā is an excellent book that analyzed human mentality and behavior together. That philosophy or vision is proven day by day. There is no historical book valued as much as the Bhagava Gītā. Truth and value cannot hide. So that way Gita good for modern politics. It is always setting and supplying good examples.

I wish to mention another human factor and how it’s working with the people’s mind “ He wants to withdraw from the battle but Krishna teaches him that he, Arjuna, must do his duty in accordance with his class and he argue that death does not destroy the soul.”<sup>10</sup> There is a class consciousness in the world even before the historical Buddha. Its real example is Bhagavad Gītā. This consciousness can be seen among the animals. For them it is fear. Animals do not have a brain like us. With the wonderful brain we do animal’s jobs. The Bhagavad Gītā tried to change human behaviors in 1000 BCE. “Two branches of the royal family of Hastināpura. On the one side are the Kauravas, sons of Dhritarashtra, on the other the Pandavās, their cousins cheated their kingdom.”<sup>11</sup> This is not a remarkable thing in this century. Because it was happening, in Hastināpura a very, long time ago. Now it’s happening all over the world.

Bhagavad-Gītā is not a single author work. It is written in aesthetics language. There is a place call Sigiriya in Sri Lanka. It is a rock and World heritage site. There are more than 1500 poems written by various people from time to time. The Bhagavad Gītā has many criticisms, but politicians can learn unlimited valuable things and be successful politicians. The advice can be useful to a person in society. In this story Vishnu is the main god. Vishnu’s, Satvatas, Abhiras and Yadavas are tribes. Hindus worship Krishna, they love the Gods. I will end with this quote from the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna tells Arjuna, is the supreme secret. ‘Whatever happens on the battlefield, Arjuna is sure to attain the highest, because Krishna looks after those who are dear to him?’<sup>12</sup>The above mention facts reveal value of Bhagavad-Gītā’s and its value to modern politics.

## 2. References

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<sup>6</sup> Heehs, *Indian Religions*, 150.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Miroj Shakya, “Power Point Lecture Note on the Bhagavad Gita,” March 3, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Ramananda Prasad, *Song of God* (Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1996), xx.

<sup>10</sup> Shakya, “Power Point Lecture Note on the Bhagavad Gita.”

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