



RESEARCH ARTICLE

DIFFERENCE IN THE TEACHINGS OF THE GITA: A DECONSTRUCTIVE READING

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 20th February, 2021
Received in revised form
15th March, 2021
Accepted 18th April, 2021
Published online 30th May, 2021

Keywords:

Deconstruction, Deconstructive Reading,
Difference, Themes of the Gita,
Postmodern Spirituality.

ABSTRACT

Although a scripture related to Hinduism, scholars have studied the Gita in relation to different pursuits of inquiry from various theoretical perspectives. In this regard, this study intends to explore the verses in the Gita from deconstructive perspective and identify the occurrence of difference in it. For this I have introduced deconstruction and difference, and reviewed some studies guided by deconstructive reading. Although the Gita has been studied in relation to other disciplines like education, psychology, politics, environment and interspirituality, I have found no study until now guided by deconstructive reading. So I have employed deconstructive reading of the Gita as a method of textual analysis to identify difference as its theme and relate it to deconstruction. Thus I have explored the verses in the Gita grounded on deconstructive reading and concluded that the Gita contains difference as its verses designate contradictory and multiple meanings allowing their free play in the text. As this study has established the interrelation between the Gita and deconstruction, this paper justifies the significance of the Gita in the present-day postmodern context. This suggests the potentials of the Gita for the study of postmodern spirituality.

INTRODUCTION

The Gita is a scripture from Hinduism. As the scripture is full of wisdom, it has been translated into over 75 languages. It is widely popular in the world as a philosophical text. It is written in the form of a poetic dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna taking place in the battle field before the war starts. As the context of the dialogue in the Gita captures everyday life situation, it contains the subject matter of wider significance. Regarding the author and the date of the creation of the Gita, critics and commentators present various opinions. M. V. Nadkarni claims that "all available external evidence confirms the traditional view that the Gita first came out of the lips of Lord Krishna and was compiled later in verse form by Veda Vyasa as a part of the Mahabharata" (24). So Vyasa is commonly accepted as the composer of the Gita. On its date of publication Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan argues that "the Bhagavadgita is later than the great movement represented by the early Upanishads and earlier than the period of the development of the philosophic systems . . ." (5). So he concludes from the archaic construction and internal references of the Gita that "it is definitely a work of the pre-Christian era. Its date may be assigned to the fifth century B.C., though the text may have received many alterations in subsequent times" (5). The major themes commonly discussed in the Gita are: *yoga*, *jnana*, *karma*, *dhyana*, *bhakti*, and *sanyasa*. In this regard, Prabhupada contends that the subject of the Gita entails the comprehension of the *five basic truths*: *isvara* (the science of God); *jiva* (the constitutional position of the living entities);

prakriti (material nature); time (the duration of existence of the whole universe or the manifestation of material nature); and *karma* (activity [7]). Of all these, understanding the constitutive of living entities—the soul or self or *atma* and its immortality is a major concern of the Gita. All these themes, as the teachings of the Gita, are to guide the human beings to the way of salvation. For Ed Viswanathan there are four paths to it. They are: Jnana Yoga (path of knowledge); Karma Yoga (path of selfless action); Raja Yoga (path of breath control and pranayama); and Bhakti Yoga (path of devotion [298]). Similarly, there are three lines of perspectives to interpret the essence of the Gita; they are Dualist (*dvaita*); Non-dualist (*advaita*); and Qualified non-dualist (qualified non-*dvaita* [Nadkarni 45]). Apart from the themes and interpretations of the Gita as presented above, the Gita has also been studied in relation to the disciplines like education, management, psychology, politics and science. However, it has not been studied from the perspective of deconstruction. So this paper intends to explore the teachings of the Gita from the perspective of deconstruction. For this I have employed deconstructive reading as a method of analysis and the data have been derived from the verses in the Gita. With this I have come to the conclusion that the Gita contains difference.

Deconstructive Reading of a Text: A Review:

Deconstruction has been applied to different fields of study like education, literature, environment, culture, politics, etc. As Derrideans have employed deconstruction in analyzing and interpreting meanings of texts, it is called deconstructive reading which is rooted to Derrida's readings of classics as well as other texts. Regarding Derrida's practice of deconstructive reading, Gerasimos Kakoliris argues that it was concerned with deconstructing the "metaphysics of presence"

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which is a foundational meaning of a text (44). This foundational meaning as presence has had long tradition since Plato. So following Derrida, Kakoliris notes that in Western thoughts this foundational meaning has different names over time. For example, "For Plato, this foundation are [is] the 'Ideas', for Jean-Jacques Rousseau, it is the 'passions', while for Edmund Husserl it is 'pure consciousness'" (44). Javed Akhter applied deconstructive reading to the novel, *Waiting for Godot*, and found that the text lacks any fixity, singularity and unified meaning (44). Through the analysis of metaphysics of presence, the study was intended to identify aporia in the text, i. e. to justify a case of "a logical impassable, contradiction, doubt and a moment of undecidability" (54). Similarly, Hari Chandra Kamali's deconstructive reading of the novel, *Ghanchakkar*, justifies that it contains difference. In this reading he has identified major binary oppositions in the novel and analyzed them from the perspective of deconstruction [delete full stop here] and concluded that these binaries do not result in any definite meaning. This justifies the case of *differance* in the novel (58).

John D. Caputo applies deconstruction to the study of scriptures. On his reading of Christianity from the perspective of deconstruction, he finds Jesus Christ as a deconstructor (30). His interpretation shows that Jesus is a deconstructor and the message in Christianity contains difference. He further maintains that he "would deconstruct a very great deal of what people do in the name of Jesus, starting with the people who wield this question like a hammer to beat their enemies." So he hypothesizes that "the first thing that Jesus would deconstruct is WWJD itself, the whole 'industry', the whole commercial operation of spiritual and very real money-making Christian capitalists" (31). By this Caputo, as a Derridean, tries to capitulate that deconstruction is very essential in theological practices in order to purify itself and enhance its spiritual spirit. So he recommends a certain deconstructive reading of the scriptural texts. Similar to these deconstructive readings of Christianity, Anindya Sekhar Purakayastha and Subhendra Bhowmick employed deconstructive reading in the Hindu scripture, the *Mahabharata*, and justified that it contains deconstruction. For this they analyzed a story about Chirakari and his dilemma—to kill or not to kill his mother because, on the one hand, it is a serious sin according to ancient religious injunctions not to carry out one's father's order, and on the other hand, it is no less an offence to commit the sin of matricide (11). Thus, Chirakari's dilemma is the undecidable or aporia which does not produce any ultimate meaning; this episode deconstructs the meaning of the text itself, opening up multiple interpretations of the text, i. e. difference (11).

All these deconstructive readings aim to justify that the texts contain difference as their ultimate meaning, i.e. they lack definite meaning; they only contain contradictory meanings, undecidables and free plays of meanings. This has been explained by Kakoliris when he states that difference "encapsulates what finally emerges from the metaphysical texts through their deconstruction, namely, that despite the desperate efforts of their metaphysical authors to found and maintain meaning in presence, meaning is always already conditioned by difference and non-presence" (46-47). Following these practices of deconstructive reading, this paper has read the scripture, the Gita as it has not been studied from the perspective of deconstruction. All the readings of the Gita until now have assigned its definite meaning and some of them have linked the meanings to other disciplines, e. g. education

(Ghimire 11-12; Jamwal 66-69; and Sahnil and Rao 716); psychology (Dillbeck 103; Deo 152-53; and Verma and Singh 520); politics (Tiwari et al. 5; Mahadevan 14-15; and Satpathy 452); environment (Pramanik and Sarkar 252 and Hum 74); management (Rastogi and Pati 13); Interspirituality (Kourie 248 and Shivadurga and Gupta 186); and philosophy (Ghimire 321; and Bhandari 7).

Deconstructive Reading as a Method: Deconstruction is a practice of reading a text as conceptualized and employed by Derrida. He used deconstruction as a strategy to demonstrate how a text lacks a unified meaning as intended by authors. However, he did not define it; he believed that deconstruction happens in every text and event but it cannot be limited to any definitive closure as every text is self-deconstructive. There are, however, some efforts to define deconstruction. In this regard, M. H. Abrams argues that deconstruction is "a theory and practice of reading which claims to 'subvert' or 'undermine' the assumption that the system of language provides grounds that are adequate to establish the boundaries, the coherence or unity, and the determinate meaning of a text (225). As stated by Abrams, deconstruction is both a theory and a practice which is concerned with reading a text and proving that it does not have any definite meaning. This, however, does not mean that deconstruction means destroying the values of a text, rather it means to suggest that a text can have "an indefinite array of multiplex, incompatible, and undecidable possibilities" of meanings (225). Thus, deconstructive reading is guided by the theory of deconstruction which, according to M. A. R. Habib,

will be a multifaceted project: in general, it will attempt to display logocentric operations in the text, by focusing on a close reading of the text's language, its use of presuppositions or transcendental signifieds, its reliance on binary oppositions, its self-contradictions, its *aporiai* or points of conceptual impasse, and the ways in which it effects closure and resists free play. (654).

Here Habib mentions some specific activities that happen in a deconstructive reading of a text. The first thing is to identify how a text operates through binary oppositions to establish a definite meaning, and then to demonstrate how the definite meaning gets deconstructed due to its self contradictory meanings as aporias or impasse. This suggests that a text lacks its definitive meaning as suggested by logocentrism and leaves space for free play of meanings. Thus a deconstructive reading as a method of reading a text operates on the binary oppositions used to create definite meaning and deconstructs them to justify that the text rather contains free play of meanings as difference. In the practice of deconstruction difference is the most crucial construct that needs to be understood and employed. Deconstruction became a distinct critical practice because of Derrida's conception of difference which Jonathan D. Culler explicates: "The verb *differer* means to differ and to defer. *Differance* sounds exactly the same as *difference*, but the ending 'ance' which is used to produce verbal nouns, makes it a new form which means 'difference-differing-deferring.' *Differance*, thus, designates both a 'passive' difference already in place as the condition of signification and an act of differing which produces differences" (97). Thus, the term 'difference' does not refer to any definite meaning because 'difference' in difference is both 'differing' and 'deferring'. In other words, the meaning that difference designates contains both active and passive

spacing—the sign designates a meaning through its difference but it is only for a moment; the definite meaning is postponed endlessly due to the indefinite deferral of the meaning. So there is always a play of meanings in a text as difference.

Guided by the afore-mentioned theoretical discussion on the constructs of difference, I have deduced the main constructs of difference as follows: “to differ and to defer” (Culler 97); “a structure and a movement that cannot be conceived on the basis of the opposition presence/absence”, “the systematic play of differences, of traces of differences, of the spacing by which elements relate to one another” (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97); “always already conditioned by difference and non presence” (Kakoliries 47); “the ‘undecidable’ logic of supplementarity [that] constitutes the conjunctive logic of ‘both... and,’” (Kakoliries 59); “quasi-transcendental logic” (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394); “the middle voice or ‘in-between’ undecidable term” (Poovy 107); concerned with the issues like ‘justice’, ‘the other’, and ‘responsibility’ (Farahani 2495; Stocker 143; Higgs 170); “a sacred reality”, “undeconstructible” (Tacey 3); “a deconstructive belief in the undecidable and unpredictable character of incoming” (Kearney 304); “difference as the ‘undecidables’” (Lane 74); “quasi-transcendental, or the repetition of the transcendental in the empirical”, “a return of the religious in global civilization” (Tacey 4); “the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical” (Chin-Yi 5); “its [text’s] self contradictions, its *aporiai* or points of conceptual impasse” (Habib 654); “the difference that the same contains” (Stocker 178); and “opening up the possibilities of indefinite meanings” (Buchanan 115). All these constructs signal to what Derrida commented on difference: “It is ‘neither a word nor a concept’” (Derrida qtd. in Nuyen).

Identification of Difference in the Teachings of the Gita:

Guided by the constructs of deconstruction discussed above, I have analyzed the verses across different chapters in the Gita and justified how they refer to difference as a theme. In what follows, the data have been taken from the text, *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, by Prabhupada and analyzed them guided by these constructs of difference to identify and justify that the Gita contains difference. In chapter 1 of the Gita the term *varna-sankara* (“unwanted population”; 1.40; Prabhupada 60) can be compared with the case of “the other” which goes against the center or presence the study of which is the main concern of deconstruction as it leads to the case of difference (Farahani 2495; Stocker 143; Higgs 170). In chapter 2 of the Gita I have found some binary oppositions that lead to the case of the undecidable logic of supplementarity as they do not present any center of meaning (Kakoliries 59). Such oppositions are: *sukha-dukha dah* (“not disturbed by happiness and distress”; 2.14); *samaduhkha-sukham* (“steady in both happiness and distress, steady in both”; 2.15); *asatah* (“of the non-existence”) and *satah* (“of the eternal”; 2.16); *sukha-dukhka samekritva laabhalaabhaujayaajayau* (“equanimity in happiness and distress, profit and loss, and victory and defeat”; 2.38); *naabhinandati na dvesti* (“neither praising nor despising”; 2.57). The meanings of *sata* (truth) and *atma* (soul) as the never-changing existence (2.16, 20) are close to Tacey’s conception of difference as a sacred reality and the undeconstructible (3). Similarly, the term *nirdvandvah* (“without dualities”; 2.45) is exactly the same as the quasi-transcendental logic of difference (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394). In the verse (2.48) *yoga* is defined as the state of equipoised (*samah bhutva*) and equanimity (*sangam tyaktva*) of success

and failure, i. e. the ability to see the same in the difference (Stocker 178) which also refer to the meaning of difference.

The term *prajna pratishtha* (“fixed in perfect knowledge or consciousness”; 2.57) designates the similar meaning with the deconstructive belief (Kearney 304). Thus chapter 2 of the Gita contains some verses which justify the occurrence of difference. In the beginning of chapter 3 of the Gita, Arjuna’s question (3.2) states that Lord Krishna’s earlier teaching (chapter 2) was equivocal or confusing (*vyamisreneva vakyena*), so he has requested Lord Krishna to make it clear. This implies that the teaching of Lord Krishna differs and defers, creating a free play of meaning (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97), or this is the case of the self-contradiction, *aporiai* and conceptual impasse in the discourse. This is the most obvious occurrence of difference in the Gita. In chapter 4 of the Gita Lord Krishna affirms that the Lord will manifest whenever and wherever there is increase in irreligious practice (4.7), and establish the religion (4.8). This declaration actually goes along with the presumption made by Tacey regarding the return of the religious in the global civilization (4) and the possibility of the incoming (Kearney 304). Furthermore, it is also concerned with the issue of establishing justice for the other (Farahani 2495; Higgs 170; Stocker 143). Similarly, the expressions *dvandvatito* (“surpassing duality”) and *samah siddhav asiddhau* (“steady in both success and failure”; 4.42) refer to the case of the quasi-transcendental logic and the conjunctive logic of ‘both . . . and’ (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394; Kakoliries 59). Similarly, the transcendental position that helps one to see “inaction (*akarma*) in action (*karma*)” and “action in inaction” (4.18; Prabhupada 217) can also be achieved through the practice of the deconstructive belief (Kearney 304) as it discovers the same in the difference and vice versa (Stocker 178).

The description of a humble sage’s equal vision that finds equality among a *brahmana*, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste (5.18) goes along with the concept of a middle voice and justice to the other (Derrida, “Difference” 124; Poovy 107; Higgs 170). Furthermore, the qualities that describe a *brahavid* as a person who neither rejoices upon achieving something pleasant nor laments upon obtaining something unpleasant, who is self-intelligent, who is unbewildered, and who knows the science of God, who is already situated in transcendence” (5.20) go with the concept of a deconstructive belief and the quasi-transcendental logic (Kearney 304; Fritsch 25; Biesta 394). The state of *yogarudhasya* (“the state one has attained through the practice of yoga”; 6.3), as discussed in chapter 6 of the Gita, represents Chin-Yi’s concept of difference as the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical (5). Similarly, the state of tranquility of the mind that sees no difference in happiness and distress, heat and cold, honor and dishonor (6.7) also allude to the quasi-transcendental logic (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394). The expressions *sama-lostrasma-kanchanah* (“being equipoised to pebbles, stone, and gold” [6.8]) and *sama-buddhir visisyate* which means to suggest that “a person is considered still further advanced when he regards honest well-wishers, affectionate benefactors, the neutral, mediators, the envious, friends and enemies, the pious and the sinners all with an equal mind” (6.9) imply to the meaning of a deconstructive belief as difference (Kearney 304). The *yoga-yuktatma* (“the self-realized person”) who possesses *sarvatra samam* (“the quality to see equality everywhere even between the Supreme Lord and all beings”; [6.29, 32]) is similar with the argument of a

middle voice and the difference that the same contains (Derrida, "Differance" 124; Poovy 107; Stocker 178).

Lord Krishna actually represents the case of the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical (Chin-Yi 5) as he teaches Arjuna in chapter 7 that all the created beings—material and spiritual—are originated from him and dissolve into him at the end (7.6). In this case the material nature is Lord Krishna's empirical manifestation, whereas the spiritual nature is his transcendental manifestation. Thus, Lord Krishna represents the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical, i. e. we can find both material and spiritual natures in the Lord, so he can be called a *spiritual-materialist* or *spiritual scientist* who possesses the highest degree of 'spiritual intelligence.' In the verse (7.12) when Lord Krishna explains that all states of beings—goodness, passion or ignorance—are his manifestations, in that all belong to him and he belongs to them all; however, he reiterates that he is independent. This nature of the Lord justifies the undecidable logic of supplementarity as a feature of differance (Kakoliries 59).

In chapter 8 of the Gita I have found *Brahma* as a sacred reality, the undeconstructible as argued by Tacey (3) because Lord Krishna describes *Brahma* as the indestructible transcendental living entity (8.3). Similarly, he describes the nature of *Brahma* as *Adhyatma* which is similar to a deconstructive faith conceived by Kearney (304). Like the conception of *Brahma*, Tacey's conception of differance as a sacred reality, the undeconstructible (3), goes along with the Lord's description of the *Sanatana* which is "the unmanifest nature, which is eternal and is transcendental to this manifested and unmanifested matter" (8.20). The conception of *Sanatana* as the transcendental to the manifested and the unmanifested is similar to the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical in Chin-Yi's understanding of deconstruction (5). Thus chapter 8 of the Gita contains strong evidence of the occurrence of differance. By the expression *na nibadhnanti* in chapter 9 of the Gita Lord Krishna affirms that he is "detached from all these material activities," unbound by them; he also states that he is *udasina-vat* ("neutral") to any such things (9.9). These expressions made by Lord Krishna suggest that he is speaking a middle voice or these expressions are like the in-between undecidable terms (Poovy 107) because as Prabhupada explains, the Lord is "not situated in the dualities of this material world." He adds that the Lord is "transcendental to these dualities" (Prabhupada 411). Similarly, in the second line of the verse (9.15) Lord Krishna describes himself as *eketvena prithaktvena bahudha visvoto mukham* which means to say that he is "the one without a second, as diverse in many, and in the universal form" (9.15; Prabhupada 420). This verse contains the self-contradictory meaning as the Lord is both the unity and the diversity; however, the unity in the diversity is like a sacred reality, the undeconstructible (Tacey 3). Similarly, Lord Krishna's universal form, which cannot be conceived, refers to the case of indefiniteness of meaning as a feature of differance (Buchanan 115). Furthermore, his divergent forms with various manifestations as mentioned in the verses (9.16-19) suggest that his manifestations are indefinite like the meaning of differance (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97; Stocker 178). Acceptance of deconstruction and religion as interrelated and differance as a sacred reality refers to the possibilities of the incoming (Tacey 3; Kearney 304) which can be identified with the qualities that Lord Krishna has mentioned in the verses (10.4-5), or these are also the qualities of the one who holds

deconstructive belief (Kearney 304) because these qualities are the result of the traces of differences that can be understood and acquired only through the undecidable logic of supplementarity and the workings of deconstruction as the undecidables (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97; Kakoliries 59; Lane 74). Similarly, the multiple forms that Lord Krishna represents as mentioned in the verses (10.21-40) of the Gita can be implied to the case of differing and deferring nature of or the play of differences which again result in the case of indefinite meanings as differance (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97; Buchanan 115).

Lord Krishna's Universal Form, the opulences, as described in the verses (11.5-7, 10, 11, 16, 19, 20) justify that his forms and qualities have no limitations as they differ and defer on different occasions, constituting both a structure and a movement. So his Universal Form represents the case of differance (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97). Similarly, the *divyam cakshuh* ("the divine eyes"; 11.8) bestowed to Arjuna by the Lord can be compared with the concepts of the quasi-transcendental logic and the deconstructive belief in the undecidable (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394; Kearney 304) because it is this logic that can help one see aporia/differance which lies deep into a text. Actually we can see the way differance has "opened up new, exciting, and productive avenues of inquiry" beyond any limitation in a text (Corner 246). This can be observed in Lord Krishna's Universal Form as described in the verses (11.10-31; Prabhupada 496-509). Similar to Derrida's conception of the meaning of the term, differance, as "neither a word nor a concept" (Derrida qtd. in Nuyen 135), and Lane's discerning of differance as the undecidables (Prabhupada 74), the Universal Form of Lord Krishna is beyond conception and description. Observing this inconceivable and indescribable form and qualities of the Lord, Arjuna gets bewildered and baffled and pleads the Lord to tell him who he is: *akhyahi me ko bhavan ugra-rupo* ("please tell me who You are"; 11.31; Prabhupada 509). In the same way, the overt meaning in a text gets deferred and becomes undecidables which justifies the case of differance. In chapter 12 of the Gita the expressions *sarvatra sama-buddhayah* ("being equally disposed to everyone") and *sarva-bhuta-hite ratah* ("engaged in the welfare of all"; 12.4) refer to the case of justice to the other which is also concerned with differance (Farahani 2495; Stocker 143; Higgs). Similarly, the qualities that Lord Krishna has mentioned of his dearest devotees in the verses (12.13-20) allude to the qualities of differance, and they can be, in turn, defined as the qualities of a deconstructionist as well because both of them are undecidables in their nature and are founded on deconstructive belief (Lane 74; Kearney 304). In chapter 15 the symbol of *asvattha* ("a banyan tree"; 15.3) represents the case of differance. To this Prabhupada affirms, "The real form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world" (633). This nature of *asvattha* exactly captures the meaning of differance as discerned by Derrida when he declares that it is "neither a word nor a concept" (qtd. in Nuyen 135) because *asvattha* cannot be perceived exactly. To this, Prabhupada states: "No one can understand where it ends, where it begins, or where its foundation is." This is exactly what happens in the workings of deconstruction which results in differance which ultimately ends with the undecidables having infinite potentials. In this regard, Lane commends, "Undecidables' also reveal the workings of differance" (74). Thus, both *asvattha* and differance are undecidables in their nature. That is, differance exists in the Gita in the form of *asvattham*. The most sacred expression, *Om Tat Sat* ("evoking that eternal Supreme";

17.23) indicates the sacred reality or the indeconstructible with relation to difference (Tacey 3). My argument is that this *mantra*, *Om Tat Sat* (Everything in existence and non-existence is true.) represents the way Derrida discerned the meaning of difference—"neither a word nor a concept" (qtd. in Nuyen 115) which, however, refers to the sacred reality or the undeconstructible inherent in everything. Thus, like this *mantra*, difference is all-pervasive and all-inclusive; it accepts whatever is the outcome of deconstructive analysis as true.

The discussion on the meaning of renunciation in chapter 18 of the Gita (18.2-6) can be linked to the concern of difference with the issues of justice, the other and responsibility (Kearney 304; Farahani 2495; Stocker 143; Higgs 170). Lord Krishna suggests that the duties like sacrifice, charity and penance should not be abandoned as they purify even the great souls. He further suggests that in doing these duties one should remain detached without any expectation of result (18.5, 6). Such duties are responsibility that can maintain justice for the other. Performance of one's duties/action in the Gita has not been designated as right or wrong; it is accepted as the result of the five factors of action (18.14, 15). These perspectives on responsibility and action discussed in the Gita are similar to the quasi-transcendental logic of deconstruction (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394), i. e. the Gita contains difference.

The *sattvika jnana* ("knowledge in the mode of goodness"), the knowledge by which one undivided spiritual nature is seen in all living entities though they are divided into innumerable forms (18.20; Prabhupada 717) can be compared with deconstructive belief in difference as it looks for a sacred reality which is undeconstructible (Kearney 304; Tacey 3). The description of a *sattvik karta* ("a worker in the mode of goodness"; 18.26) as having the qualities like doing duties without association with the modes of material nature, without false, with good determination and enthusiasm, and without wavering in success or failure (18.26; Prabhupada 720) refers to a deconstructionist who works being guided by the quasi-transcendental logic accepting any result as difference (Fritsch 25; Biesta 394, Nuyen 135). On the whole, as difference suggests that there is no definite meaning in a text and that it opens up the free play of meanings (Derrida qtd. in Culler 97; Nuyen 135), this can be observed in the teaching of the Gita when Lord Krishna allows freedom to Arjuna to decide on his duty himself—*yathechasi tatha kuru* ("do what you wish to do"; 18.63) and in the next verse he suggests Arjuna to always think of him, become his devotee, worship him and offer his homage unto him because he is his very dear friend (18.65; Prabhupada 747, 749). This change of meaning as suggested by Lord Krishna to Arjuna opens up the free play of meanings in the Gita, i. e. difference. Thus, difference is so potential and empowering that it enables the practitioners to perform their duties successfully in a right way like Arjuna in the Gita.

Conclusion

Studies on the Gita have concluded that *jyana yoga* (wisdom), *karma yoga* (action), *bhakti yoga* (devotion) and *dhyana yoga* (meditation) are its major themes. Similarly, it has been interpreted from three perspectives—*advaitva* (monism and unified), *dvaitva* (binary and hierarchical), and *vishistha advaitva* (qualified monism and unified)—in terms of the relation between God, the Supersoul, and the souls, living beings. Besides, it has also been studied and interpreted in relation to other disciplines like education, psychology,

politics, philosophy, interspirituality and environmental sciences. All these studies have justified that the themes of the Gita can be related to different pursuits of inquiry. Exploring the meanings of different verses in the Gita, this paper concludes that they have contradictory and multiple meanings and they represent a case of undecidable and aporia, i. e. difference. Thus the theme of the Gita can be compared with difference as it is all-empowering and fulfilling in life. Furthermore, this study has opened up an avenue for further researches on the significance of the teachings of the Gita in relation to deconstruction and postmodern spirituality.

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