

Moksha for Modiaain: A Study of B. P. Koirala's *Modiaain*

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Abstract

Bisheswor Prasad Koirala's *Modiaain* is a novella written on the war of Mahabharat, the 18 days fratricidal war between Kaurabh and Pandava, in Hindu mythology. The two supreme Hindu religious volumes, Mahabharat and SrimadBhagawat Gita, glorify the war and claim that it was fought for justice and righteousness led by the god, lord Krishna, himself. However, *Modiaain*, the title character whose husband fought the war from the Kaurabh's side, has her own interpretation of the war as she mentions it to the narrator. She finds the role of Lord Krishna controversial, in the war, as he incites Arjuna for the war to save humanity from irreligiosity. The paper studies the difference between the presentation of these holy text by the gods (Ved Vyas and Lord Krishna) and a common woman (Naari). Several incidents in the novel, as reported by Naari, exposes the effect of the war not only to the warriors but also to their families. Many of them died waiting and crying on the loss of their dear ones- and are still living as degenerated spirit hovering here and there around the battlefield. In its thorough analysis of the events, in the perspective of the renarrative of *Karma* and *Moksha*, the research locates the disparity and questions the mere promise and purpose of lord Krishna behind the war. Clearly, the article focuses on to draw out a new perspective to read and interpret the ideas of these holy texts- not to criticize them in a biased way.

Keywords: Karma, Moksha, Dharma, Mahabharat, Grand narrative, Kauraha, Pandava

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Introduction

Modiaain is a novella written by Bisheswor Prasad koirala. It was published in 1980 by SajhaPrakashan. The novel is based on the greatest war in Hindu mythology, the war of Mahabharata. It was typically taken as a "18 days fratricidal war between the son of Dhritarasta and those of his late younger brother, Panadava" (RK. Srinivasa,1986, 17). Though the war

typically fought among the cousins, nevertheless it took the life of many warriors within the family and also the relatives, kins, neighboring kings and their armies. It was the war of mass destruction in which “millions of people had perished” (Hassija, n.d.). The story of the novella revolves around the effect of these deaths on the living ones, particularly to the women of the dead soldiers/warriors. Among them, the central character of the story, Modiaain, a middle-aged woman who runs a hotel in Darvanga, is center of the major event happened in the story.

Modiaain, at the beginning of the narration, as the narrator witnesses, seems a normal woman like the other women in the locality. However, towards the end, the story unravels to surprising touch. Here, we come to know that she is not a normal woman, rather she is the ghost of Naari, a woman who died from the pangs of her husband's death in the war of Mahabharat.

Though the war took place thousands of years ago, the spirit of Naari was still there living in a human form at the place where her husband died. This incident poses some critical questions on the spirit of the war and the ideas witnessed in SrimadBhagawat Gita, and the sermons/ lecture/ moral lesson given by Lord Krishna to Arjun before the war. Both the war of Mahabharat and the Bhagawat Gita writes that the war of Mahabharat is the war of *Mukti/ Moksha* (salvation) through *Dharma*, which is only got out of the desireless action/ duty. The combo of duty, *Dharma* and *Moksha* are three main grand narratives the centers the periphery of the war. It is only because of these three guiding principles “the Kuru battlefield being doubled with the powerhouse of Dharma, and even trebled with the transcendent heaven of the Grace of Moksha, for that is the Lord Krishna culminating Magna Carta” (Shrinivasa, 1986, 118).

Of course, these three basic principles simply mean that accomplishing duty is the absolute dharma/ religious act for a person, and it is the only way to make life before and after death blissful. This is why, Arjuna must accomplish his duty by fighting the war and secure fortune in his favor- the throne of Hastenapur upon win and the status of god, moksha, upon loss. Not only Arjuna but also the entire Hindu civilization have faith on these words written and spoken by gods, respectively Vyas and Lord Krishna, of Hindu mythologies. However, this novella, which portrays the war of Mahabharata through the eye of a common woman, Naari, shows a different picture of the war than these religious texts. Naari and the other women, the wives of the warriors who died in the war of Mahabharata, who died due to pangs of their husbands' death do not acquire moksha as promised. They are still living as a ghost even today on the places where the body of their dead husbands lie.

The present condition of these women show that their soul is in the purgatory. They are not pure enough to acquire Moksha as said by the Lord Krishna before the war. However, the reasons are not clear. As written in Shrimad Bhagawat Gita, they do their duty by letting their husband participate in the war and consequently sacrifice their life for the so-called noble cause. Their death was due to war though they did not participate in it. It raises a lot of questions and invites a necessity of some critical analysis by offering us a chance to perceive the same glorious representation of the war from a perspective of a minority character, who are missed in the mainstream representation.

Understanding Modiaain, the Central Female Character in the Novella

The story of the Modiaain is based on a real-life incident of a young boy, the narrator, when he was on a visit to Darbhanga with his intimate/ well-wisher, Misir Ji. The events in the story are historical- yet mysterious “occurred in *his* world of childhood empathy forty years ago” (2). This historical cum mysterious nature of the events are due to the mysterious character, Modiaain, and her story of the Hadaahaa that creates a surreal existence by casting the shadow of life in the Mahabharat era to the present. The effect of this mystery can be felt in the young narrator’s mind who keeps on analyzing his impression on Modiaain and the story she told him throughout the novella.

Modiaain is the title character in the story. Her name comes after the surname of her husband, Modi. She runs a hotel on one side of a big pond, Hadaahaa, facing the Darbhanga train station. With the very first encounter with her, the narrator young mind sensed a kind of mystery in her build. Modiaain has something extra on her physical shape which is not normal to the body of the women of that locality. The writer finds it hard to identify whether her body and face moderately young or aged or both. A kind of unclarity is seen in the narrator’s voice as he says “Whether she is really an adult and I feel like she is young or is she really young but seems like an adult. Whatever, she is the mixture of both youth and adulthood” (13).

The description from the narrator portrays some kind of abnormalities in the personality of Modiaain, which creates a kind of foreshadowing for Modiaain’s identity that the narrator reveals later. Foreshadowing is a literary technique that hint of the event that will come later in the story. According to Gary Saul Morson, foreshadowing is “an event that indicate (is the shadow of) another event to come” (48). As Morson said, the present description of Modiaain leads to the revelation of her identity soon in the story as she told the story/ history of the pond to the narrator.

Further, the way Modiaain describes the pond, Hadaahaa, also creates a kind of foreshadowing. Hadaahaa was there from the time of Mahabharata. On founding the bone (Haddi/ Haadin Nepali) of the dead warriors (from Mahabharata) there, the pond was named Hadaahaa. It is the center for bathing, and also conducting morning and evening activities by Hindus of the locality. As Misir Ji and the narrator are going to the pond for bathing, Modiaain warns them going against rather deep inside because the pond shows some magical witness and “a powerful deity lives there” (16).

The connection of Hadaahaa with the Mahabharata is only a part of the mystery; still, there has to come a lot as Modiaain establishes her own belonging to period. The mystery starts unravelling as she starts telling story of Mahabharata to the narrator. During the narration, the narrator remembers, “Modiaain mixed herself up with a woman from Indraprast” (39). She reveals that she is the ghost/ spirit of a Chhatriya girl, Nari. At that time, she was only eight/ nine years but still remembers how they have to pay the cost of that new kingdom. On losing the land, her father had to work as a lower-level security staff but had to return to Hastenapur when Duryodhana took over the kingdom during Pandava’s fourteen years of jungle life.

Though her family life was troublesome in Hastenapur, Naari life turned to blissful state. She turned to eighteen and had beauty like queen (42). It is the same beauty that she still possesses in her latest life as Modiaain. She was blessed to marry with a soldier from Kaurabha’s army and was happy to get a lovable in-laws. Before the war of Mahabharata, she was in love with her life because her in-

law's home "happiest place than a heaven" (46). However, the happiness was only for a moment. Soon they feel tensed as they heard the rumor of Duryodhana's misbehavior to the messenger sent by Pandava demanding their claim over their kingdom, Indraprast. The rumor was melancholic to the citizens, most importantly to the women, of Hastanapur (49). Nonetheless, people still have some hope- their last ray for the peace- since they have faith on Krishna who can stop the war and bring the same happiness to them as before.

Goodness or Greatness in God

Throughout the story, Modiaain seems to be critical regarding of Krishna. She believes it is Krishna who incites Arjun for the war. In the story, time and again, Modiaain raises question over Krishan role in the war of Bhahabharat. She knows the world appreciate Krishan as the best leader and a diplomat who can easily draw the people in his favour. If he wants, he can easily stop the war and save the life of many people both in and outside the battlefield. With the above reference, she seems to agree that Krishan is a great man- but by heart he is not good. Therefore, in her query about the narrator's future, when he says he want to be a great person, she asks him to be more specific- "what kind of great person you want to be" (17)?

By dividing the great person on various types, Modiaain seems to be raising questions over Krishna notorious role in the war. On one perspective, she seems to agree that he is a great person as society calls him to be. On the other side, she ironically raises the question of him to be a good person. If he were a good person, he would not let the thousands of people die in the war and thousands of another affect by it. Therefore, she immediately explains her belief to the narrator "Great people are of various types. Good people are of only one type. My child, you should not aim to be a great person, better should be a good person" (17). Here, she is inciting the narrator to change his aim from great to be a good man. Maybe, she means to say that all the great person may not be good.

The greatness and goodness in Krishna are associated with the belief of his incarnation as a god. The evidence is witnessed in many Hindu religious texts. Mahadeva Sastri, in *The Bhagavat Gita*, strongly reiterates the identity of Krishan as "the original creator Vishnu, known as Narayana, wishing to maintain order in the universe, incarnated himself as Krishan" (3). In Hinduism, Krishna is taken as a god, incarnation of the original creator, known as a supreme being who was reincarnated to preserve good in the human world by destroying the evil. A supreme quality of the god is that he/ she possesses goodness or virtue. However, Modiaain statement here ironical to Krishan's personality that though being god he lacks virtue or goodness. This lack of core quality within a god results in destruction. What's more, it would become even more complex to a normal person like the narrator; therefore, she deliberately repeats the idea to him (Lal, 2071).

Lacking the basic instinct what he is really for creates an irony in the personality of Krishna. In her study of irony, Virginia Miller (2019) defines irony as opposition between explicit and implicit and what is said and what is meant (33). The way Miller says Krishna role in the war of Mahabharata just gives an opposite meaning than expected by people and said by the religion's doctrines. The people, during the war of Mahabharata, knew that Krishna has the power of to stop the war. He was the last hope for them. If Krishan were good by heart, he would never let that war happen. A good person may not lie; he/she always do what is good for the society.

Modiaain finds irony in Krishna sense of doing good for the society. Her ideas raise a critical eye on SrimadBhagawat Gita and other religions text that justify Krishna as a god who “without any interest of his own, but with the sole intention of helping His creature he taught to Arjun (Sastri,1901, 4). Here lies the gap between Krishna representation and his activities/ role in the society. Doing good by inciting a calm warrior for fighting and killing innocents questions his image as a savior. Here, the destruction caused by the war downplays its reason that it is incessant for saving people and society from so called evil forces. Creating a grand narrative of evils and raging war against it is an exposed political diplomacy of the rulers since ancient time. As a supreme being and as a ruler Krishna interprets the evil in his own way and rages the war against it and tries to establish people’s faith over him (god) and religion. Moreover, his immature (rather selfish) assumption goes otherwise, like the ideas expressed by Michael Mann, his decision of war does not have a rational end or meet (2023). Nonetheless, the decision has some paradoxical outcomes- the death and destruction in the war and their effect aftermath make the society even more chaotic and devilish.

However, his role as a “peace messenger,” at the time when the Pandava were in favour of war, may establish his image as a peace-loving person. his attempt for saving humanity on the earth (Pen Bhakti, episode 64, 2020). Later, this benevolent character turns to be malevolent because, according to Naari, though outwardly he continuously talks for reconciliation in the palace, but he is inciting Pandava for war internally (53). In other words, he was not doing it for the humanity but for his own sake: either killing warriors in the name of saving religion or enthroning Pandava in Hastenapur. This very act shatters people faith on him. Though they believe that he is an incarnation of god and has the capacity of reconciling both parties, they doubt on his honesty for doing that because “he was Pandava’s relative and always do what benefit them” (52- 53).

Beyond the two palaces, there were other truths regarding the necessity of war, the role of Krishna and the role of Pandava and Kaurabha. Such ideas are not recorded in the holy books: Mahabharata and the Srimad Bhagavat Gita. These are the version recorded by god/ly figures, but it missed the truth seen by the people beyond the palaces. However, the story of Naari/ Modiaain, her family, and other people of the locality of that time had some different things to say regarding these issues. Evaluating their witness, we reach to the conclusion that Draupadi pro war mentality, due to her oath, draws Pandava for the war and as Krishan being pro Pandava support their decision though indirectly. This is how, he become the sole cause of mass destruction of people in that war. As being a god, even though he can fulfill his duty, of course, by killing only evil forces, like Duryodhana and other. But he did not do so. Rather encourage Arjun for the war of mass destruction in the name of Mokshay and Karma.

Reading Under Krishna’s Grand Narrative of Karmaand Moksha

Moksha and the *Karma* are the two grand narratives that Krishna uses against Arjun to convince him for the war. As emotion strikes him for seeing his kins, gurus and brothers in the war, Arjundecided not to engage himself in the act of sin of killing brothers (Pranbhupada, 2006, Text 37/38). His passion desire for a separate country vanished. He was swept in the true humanitarian orientation. As a human being he sees the value of life of another human beings, particularly, his own relatives killing whom after all affect their immediate family members but also the coming

generation. Arjun does not want to be remembered by as a destroyer of dynasty to acquire some “goodness of fortune” (Text 36).

When Arjun, time and again, poses some question against Krishna’s mission of destroying so-called “irreligiosity from the earth,” he uses *Duty*, *Dharma* and *Moksha* as an enchanting force to bind Arjun for the war (Sastri, 1901). The ideas are the core of Lord Krishna philosophy, which represent Geeta as a whole. In his review of Krishna Chaitanya’s *Mahabharata: A Literary Study*, K. R. Srinivasa justifies the use of karma and *Moksha* in Gita as “the Kuru battlefield being doubled with the powerhouse of Dharma, and even trebled with the transcendent heaven of the Grace of *Moksha*, for that is the Lord Krishna culminating Magna Carta” (1986, 118).

In a broader sense, Lord Krishna uses these two concepts such a broader and persuasive way to create a kind of ethical pressure to Arjuna to follow it. In other words, it is what resembles French scholar, Lyotard, concept of grand narrative (Lyotard, 1984). Here, the way Lyotard said Krishna uses karma and moksha as universal truth or moral necessity for the Hindus. First, he tries to persuade on the basis of the karma (duty) that a Kshatriya bound to do. In Hinduism, kshatriya is considered as cast of warriors. While counselling for the war, Krishna targets this identification of Arjuna and persuade him for the war. By birth, Arjuna was a kshatriya; therefore, he must follow the true code of a Kshatriya- that is to wage war against evil (Pen Bhakti, episode 73).

However, this attempt of Krishna is only drawing Arjun for the destruction. In the novella, Naari was listening everything Krishna said to Arjuna just before the war. She said that Krishna is inciting Arjuna for bringing an unnatural death (to the people) by calling it a karma/ duty (66). Arjun knows that being a warrior does not mean that he would rage a war against humanity. Before being a kshatriya, he was a human being, a prince, and so he thinks accordingly. He thought about the destruction of life of his fellow beings as well as all his innocent people who participate in the war. He sensed a humanity is in risk. Thus, he was not ready for his kind of *Duty/ Karma*. If being a kshatriya means killing the innocent, he would better live his life by begging than being a part of sin by killing his own family and society.

By associating *Karma* with war, Krishna marks two remarkable profits, personal and social, to Arjuna. Personally, it would do good for him because it would provide him a chance to rule this earth. Similarly, it would also do good for the society since society would always appreciate him for following the path of *Karma* by killing evils and making the society evil free. Krishna’s ideas of doing social good by killing people was beyond the understanding from a human being like Arjuna. With his human heart, he counted the loss of the human life that the war would bring. For him, there is no meaning of such a power which comes at the cost of life of many innocents. This humanitarian feelings in Arjuna obviously shows him disinterest in the war. Therefore, Krishna tries to deviate him with the feeling of probable losses in the war. He poses the idea of “desireless action”. That is, he asks Arjuna should focus on the war without thinking what profit and loss he would get from it” (Pen Bhakti, episode 73). It would obviously bring fortune in his life. So, Arjuna should not have a choice of not doing the *Karma/ Duty* which do good both for society and himself. If he did, it would deviate him from the path of *Karma* which ultimately degrade status in

front of his fellow beings, friends and families. Such a consequence would be disastrous for him not only for this life but also for after life since it blocks his path of salvation/ *Moksha*.

As the concept of *Karma* does not convince Arjuna solely for war, Krishna associates it with the idea of *Moksha*. If Arjuna is not lured to the result of the *Karma*, getting fame and wealth in this world, he must think about his afterlife fate. He connects *Moksha* with the idea of *Karma*, if you avoid karma, you do not get *Moksha*. Shatri reads Bhagavat Gita with the light of ancient Hindu epics Shrutu and Smriti. Expressing his ideas on the role of knowledge and *Karma* links then with the *Mokshya*. He says:

Against the foregoing view some say: Moksha cannot at all be attained by mere Atmajanananishtha, by mere devotion to Self-knowledge preceded by the reunification of all works. –By what then. - Absolute freedom can be attained by knowledge conjoined with works, such as the Agnihotra, prescribed in the Shrutu and the Smriti. This is the conclusive teaching of whole Gita. (16- 17)

With these ideas, it is clearly understood that knowledge is not only enough for *Moksha*. Better it is a rare combination of knowledge and works, that is *Karma*. In other words, if a person performs good *Karma*/ or if a person does his duty honestly, he will get higher status not only in this life but also get *Moksha* to make his after life better.

Honesty and the eagerness for work is the key to get *Moksha*. However, as the war going to be started, Krishan did not find Arjuna honest. Rather participating in the war with good energy, he remains sad thinking about the result of the war. The result may be horrible- the death of many family members and other innocent by his hand. In the meantime, Krishan tries to solace him that there is no sin in even killing the family while doing a duty. That duty becomes even more important if it is for the peace and truth. Krishna threatens Arjun for the outcome of not doing duty as “abandoning thy duty and fame thou shall incur sin” (17). Such a sin makes his present life worse and after his death it will devoid him of moksha.

Krishna, in his speech to Arjuna, set *Moksha* as an essential condition for judging a person moral duty in their physical duty. It judges whether the person live his/ her life successfully or not. If a person always admire truth and does his/ her duty for truth and justice, they will make this present life better and also qualify a supreme status after death. Such a person will be above than the world general being, and they will get moksha or salvation and acquire a state of godhood. On the opposite of this, those who does not do their *Duty/ Karma* will disqualify from acquiring this supreme state of being in their afterlife. Therefore, an inborn warrior like Arjuna do not regret over how many people he would kill in the war. Happiness and sorrow are temporary. They come and go. “Those who are unmoved by happiness and sorrow, those who remain uninfluenced by them, they are worthy of *Salvation/ Moksha*” (Pen Bhakti, episode 72).

Krishna further convinces Arjuna that there is no way of expressing sorrow over the present life because “present life is not a complete life” (Pen Bhakti, episode 72). A person does not have only life; he/ she may have more than one life. Birth and death are continual process. We born and die until we qualify for the a supreme life, the life in Baikuntha- the place of Lord Vishnu, from

where we do not have to return to earth, and we are free from this birth and death phenomena. The state of acquiring of this condition is called *Moksha*. Moreover, this war brings *Moksha* not only to Arjuna but also to 'his gurus and elders,' whom he would kill in the war, because their death would be for the noble cause (Pen Bhakti, episode 73). Still, these ideas could not completely touch Arjun heart and affect humanitarian feeling within him. What's more, Krishna changes his rhetoric, and his tone and language seem to be more commanding than persuasive. His language, tone and attitude seem to be forceful as Naari heard him saying "Do, what I tell you. I am your source, I am the receiver of your action, I am your destination" (Koirala, 68).

Here, Krishna establishes himself as the center of the universe, a supreme destination of life. If people do what he wants, then they will meet him and reside inside him. It is the state of *Moksha*. Though gaining such a state not easy, still there are some options for achieving it. However, here, Krishna only marks a single way to Arjuna to get such a state- that is wage a war against the evil powers, and it does not matter even if they are his family (Tilak, part 8). Such an idea from Krishan was beyond the logic of Arjuna. As a mere human being, he does not have an idea/ logic to oppose it. He does not get any other option than to surrender. The idea of Krishan was extra-terrestrial, and Arjuna helpless to deny it. In the novella, Naari describes the condition of Arjuna as "Helpless Arjuna- How can he bear the magical presentation of Krishna for long? Humane feelings in Arjuna slowly decreases." (Koirala, 69).

Here, Naari appreciates this humanitarian feelings of Arjuna. But such a feeling would have to be vanished before Lord Krishna's godly/ magical power, which after all also draws him to the line of the god and lets him forget the human emotions. Lord Krishna knows Arjun was a *Kshatriya* and reminded him that both *Karma* and *Moksha* for this race of people is to fight at the time of need. Krishna doctrine of *Karma* and *Moksha* were the guiding force to Arjuna which resembles Celia Drummond's ideas of grand narrative. Defining the term, she writes "grand narrative creates an aura of determinism, in which what is anticipated seems almost an inevitable trajectory of the story as told so far" (2018, 59). The way Celia has said the so-called grand narrative of *Karma* and *Moksha*, though was a practice used by Krishna an ideological way, works with Arjun. The result is that he participated in the way with determination, and his arrow followed the directed shown by Krishna.

However, the promise made by Krishna would never fulfil. Of course, the arrow shot by Arjuna and other warriors "killed millions of people in the war" (Koirala, 70). They were dead and we did not have any ideas what happened to them after death. Maybe, as said may Krishna they might have got salvation/ moksha and may have gone to Swarga/ heaven/ Baikuntha as said my him. Beside the warriors, there were also other millions of lives lost in the war. They were not killed by the war, but they were killed due the destruction of the war. These people may include the public, family, children and wives of the soldiers. What about them? Did Krishna's promise for salvation were nor for them? Such question raises the true meaning of Krishna diction in the Bhagawat Gita.

In the novella, Naari narrates the condition of the family, particularly women/ wives, of the deceased soldiers. They died after the death of their husband and son in the war. They died out of pangs. The pangs were so strong that the women could not bear it and died in sorrow. With the news of the destruction of life in the war, they became unconsciousness, like a dead, and never woke up again. Naari mentions her own condition- "I first died in the Kuruchhetra with the news of

my husband's death. I did not have to wait much for another death. I do not know when I died" (71).

After all, Naari meets a tragic death, but what happened to her soul after her death raises some critical questions over the admonition made by lord Krishna that *Atma(n)* is eternal, when a person dies his *Atma(n)* passes into another body and prepares for a new life (Sastri, 24). Opposite to Krishna words, Naari soul did not get another life- it did not get *Moksha*. It is still roaming at the place where her husband dead bodies lie (Koirala, 73). In Hinduism, generally the astray soul, the soul which remains as it is even after leaving its body, is taken as a bad omen. The soul must meet its fate, a new destination- a new body, for its life. Maybe it is because of the unnatural death, or some unfulfilled desires, Naari soul is hovering at the graveyard of her husband and other relatives.

Whatever happens to Naari is not an individual case. The family, particularly wives, of all the dead warrior meet the same fate. They faced the same tragic end of life, as Naarisaid, "Like me, millions of the women's tortured spirit is hovering in the universe by searching their loved ones" (Koirala, 71). That is, the spirit of the deceased soldiers' wives is still there in the universe. And there is not time limitation for them. There are not possibilities of them getting *moksha*. They are here not only for now; they do not know how much they would stay here. The reply of Naari "I would stay here forever" confirms the permanency of their status of their soul living as a ghost in their deceased body (Koirala, 73).

Living on the earth with such a condemned spirit of the person is taken as a bad in Hinduism. Like Shrimad Bhagawat Geeta, Ramayan also denies the existence of dead person in the form of spirit as good. Bhanu Bhakta Archarya in his translated version Ramayan, on several occasion accepts the belief that once a person is dead, he/ she should go to heaven. If not, they/ their soul may take another body for rebirth. Whatever, it does not remain as such in the form of the spirit hovering around the earth. For example, in Utterkanda, Sanatkumar Rishi differentiating the after- death life of people killed in the war says "those who are killed by gods goes to heaven, but they have to return back to the earth as effect of their good deeds ends/ whoever killed by *Hari* (Lord Bishnu) get *Moksha*, and they do not have to come to the earth again" (307, slock 86). However, the case of Naari no such thing happened. Her fate of living life for years as a spirit raise a lot of question against Hinduism. As said by Krishna, she had done her duty (*Karma*) by not stopping her husband from joining war. This is what she could do there. Though she knew that her husband would not return from the war, and she would die out of the pangs, she still did not stop him. The reward that she and all other women get doing their duty (*Karma*) really poses some critical eye on Krishna grand narrative that doing duty (*Karma*) honesty ensures heavenly path.

Redrawing the Boundary of SrimadBhagawat Gita

The story of the dead people and their relatives (though dead) waiting for their dear ones still in the present time cross the belief and good rules written in the Hindu mythology, like SrimadBhagawat Gita. It is because these incidents are beyond the normal philosophy written in Hindu mythology, which only possess two normal conditions for birth and death: either one get a new life after death or acquire heaven and win over the normal condition of birth and death. In the Bhagawat Gita, Krishna conforms that he would be responsible for the people who die in the war. He calls Mahabharat a war for truth and for the righteousness, so whoever killed here would directly get the

status of god. In other words, Krishna says that they would acquire moksha in their life. It is the moksha that let them free from the natural bondage of life and death. They would be above such normal rule of nature and enjoys their life the higher state of bliss.

However, many people who died during and after the war would not qualify for this higher state. Though they were not directly killed in the war, they died due to war. That is, many people lost their life because their means of living was swallowed up by the war. All these people, including the Naari, died soon the death of their dear ones, but their death did not meet the promise made by Lord Krishna before the war. They are still hankering on the earth guarding the place where the dead bodies of their husband lied. Instead of getting *Moksha*, their soul condemned in the form of spirit. Such condemn state of the soul is denied by the Hindu religion. And if these are the soul of the person who died in the war, fought under the guardianship of the Lord himself, is full of questions. It was unbelievable for the general people and the people who live their life with the principles of such texts. But we have to believe it as Naari, a witness of the war, herself says to the narrator “people can live for ages in the form of spirit. They want be nearby to their loved ones. Some wishes, some unfulfilled desires, immortalize them and make them circle this earth being invisible” (28). Here, we could not neglect it as an idea expressed by a mere spirit of the women. More than that, it is an essential part of the history which was hidden from the mainstream thought. It raises different question on the purity of whole religious faith of Hindus, which is based on these religious texts.

Besides, the incident also draws our attention to the appropriate addressee of these religious texts. Mahabharata and Gita are the storehouse of the moral guidelines in Hindu as well as other cultures. People from all the genders, class and sex and background follow the principles from these texts. But the ideas of *Moksha* did not apply to the female victims of the war. Did Lord Krishan does not address this idea to the female victim or did he not think that females could also be the victim of the war? It also hints towards the fact that Krishna only targets the warriors, who were most probably only males, who help him to accomplish his mission. That is, he only ensures the *Moksha* of the warriors who help him in hisso-called mission of making the world free from irreligiosity. It may prove himself to be a selfish personality, which is not a typical quality of a god. That is, he focuses on providing *Moksha* only to those who help him. As being a god, it is unwise to say that he does not have any clear idea of that result of the war and how it would affect even those who do not participate in it. He was the wisest among even among the great kings of that time and “people even worship him as a reincarnation of god” (Koirala, 52). So, it is an immaturity if we say he was not capable to think about what would happen to the women and the families when their warrior husbands/ sons were killed in the war.

With all these evaluations, the condition of Naari and other women in the war only refer to some new perspective for the study of these religious text that directly comes from the god. It may hint a boundary for the validity for these texts. It is similar to what Salman Rushdie call “Defy gods...It is by defying the gods that human beings have best expressed their humanity” (). Rushdie mention this line in reference to the selfish nature of the Greek gods. Here, in the war of Mahabharat how Krishna can be so selfish and neglect the condition of the women. The way Rushdie says, Krishna action seems to be deliberate, or he was letting people to fight for no reasons, and he was having fun out of that. At the beginning of the war Krishna’s activities and the body language did not reflect the gloomy surrounding instead “his control over the Arjuna’s chariot, and his carefree and

calm driving, seemed as if that it is not for the war but for fun and merriment” (63). Such a perception of Naari, a lower-class woman of the time, did not neglect the issue as insignificant. It rather encourages us to study the other side of the perspective of the war of Mahabharat and the Bhagavat Gita.

Such a new perception, of course, draw us to the new way of understanding Lord Krishna himself. It after all challenges his established image as a protector of humanity and interprets him as an ambitious personality who does not care the human feeling and only focus on doing what benefits him. It further lets us to conclude that he deliberately creates the war knowing but neglecting its consequence. If so, it obviously questions his own authenticity as the creator and preserver of humanity; and similarly lets us doubt all this words that come for humanity. People, who follow Hinduism, take their spirit for life from such sacred books, but now it really possesses question to them and invite them to rethink over another route of source for inspiration in their life. On the other side, if he is not deliberate, it would still save purity as a god. We cannot blame an unintentional action- even though it is a severe crime. However, still raises other questions like ‘who,’ ‘why’. That is, it may not be a mistake if it may be done by a mere human being since he/she may not have a such a magical power to gauge future. Why does he lack visions to foresee this future catastrophe? Both condition questions either prove him to be a selfish or not being a god at all. If Krishna himself was not a god, then the words in Shrimad Bhagawat Gita was not come from a god. This directly appeals us to think about the validity of the words written in these texts.

Conclusion

The study of Modiaain is important because it gives us a new perspective for looking into the two important heritages of Hindu mythology, SrimadBhagawat Gita and Mahabharat. Hindu culture and religious practices find their origin in these texts. These texts witness the activities, speech and the moral guidelines shared to the people by the god himself. It is therefore Hindu societies take these texts as the founding stone for its social structure. The value of the texts is deep rooted in the soul of its devotees. However, when we go through the events narrated by Naari, a common woman witness in the war of Mahabharat, raise different notions against the sacred values of these texts. These texts broadly summarize a single interpretation of a writer or rather “an omniscient writer/ narrator” (Morreall, 1994). Rading the ideas of Morreall we understand that the omniscient writer/ speaker possesses the same trait as omniscient narrator whoknows everything and possess a knowledge like a god. Like an omniscient narrator, the speaker of Bhagavat Gita and the writer of Mahabharata seem to know everything, so theycreate the impression that they are describing all the events in details. Nevertheless, in the deeper level, they lack the vison of an omniscient narratorwho has a power to see character or events completely. Though it is impossible to describe everything of anything for general people/ narrators, it should be possible for the godly figures like them (Lesikar and Petit, 1996). Going through Modiaain’s description of the event, we realize that the so-called omniscient narrators’/ writers’ description is not objective- rather it is perspective laden.

The one-sided perspective is exemplified through the broader representation of the main warriors’ or only kings’ ideas in these sacred books. While persuading Arjuna for the war, Krishna ensures him that he would take the responsibility of all the warriors and the noble kings and take them with him in his abode, Baikuntha. It means he confirmed that they would get *Moksha*, which after all

grant them the status of god. Here, he missed those common people and the family of the warrior who were also affected by the war. That is, his grand narrative, made from the omniscient self, did not represent the people this which is not center in the war. They neither heard these people pray against war nor grant them salvation/ *Moksha* which they deserve after their death. The pitiful condition of the people particularly can be felt in Naari comments “No gods pay any attention to the appeal against war made by the women in Bhaarat era (54)”. These words by Naari and those of the omniscient narrators’ contrast, which draw our mind for something else- a new interpretation of the text- that is, taking these texts as a story than a history.

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