

A Cultural Mediation of Mahabharata with special reference to Lord Krishna Influence in Mahabharata

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ABSTRACT: This research paper would analyze the cultural contribution of Lord Krishna in the great epic Mahabharata. Manu is the original root of humanity and lawmaker. He has specified that the king assigns a representative and the defense force depends on its Leader and the subjects are dependent on the defense force in the same way as the Administration of the monarchy relies on the King and finally, the conflict and harmony completely depend on a Representative. In Mahabharata, Lord Krishna had visited Hastinapur as a messenger on a diplomatic mission to talk with Duryadhon and played the role of a mediator to avoid a battle between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The conflict itself was termed as Dharmayuddha meaning Battle of Fairness which was fought with well-defined standard with highly well-organized political contact between the two argumentative sides. The concepts of protection and exoneration were well established and were respected. A diplomat needs to be treated with superiority and respect. The role played by Lord Krishna envisions his wisdom and dream and huge technique of political practice which is also suggested by Manu, Kautilya, Shukracharya, etc. They certainly provide meaningful input for the variation of modern trends of mediation. The Mahabharata is deliberated to be the notable work of the multiplicity of Indian and Hindu dogmas in existence. Lord Krishna, at the same time, indorses a different approach of using dishonesty and deceiving strategies to regain back the moral cause. **KEYWORDS:** Epic, Mediation, Mahabharata, Culture, Lord Krishna, Shakuni, etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

The epic Mahabharata is an ancient Indian classic where the core story rotates around two twigs of a family named the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The Epic is continued to be read and

achieved all over the world. Mahabharata can also be called the story of the Bharata Empire, the epic, Mahabharata founds a major part of the Indian history and no one can disregard that it has created a space in people's mind. It is conceptualized that Mahabharata is a war between the Kauravas and Pandavas for the kingdom of Hastinapur. The war that was fought between the two cousins' brothers and the war was based on diplomacy. This is considered to be one of the major text which depicts the richness of Indian culture of the complete Indian subcontinent. It has successfully answered the questions of Dharma which makes it reliable as a text and established a relation between the human being and God. We can see from so many instances that have taken place in this epic. It is estimated that the war took place around 5000 BC. More accurately, it took place in 3139 BC. Lord Krishna, who is considered to be the 8th avatar of Lord Vishnu played a major role in this war. It happened towards the end of Dwapayuga. It is believed that there are four yugas, Satya Yuga, Trataya Yuga, Dwapar Yuga, and Kali Yuga. It is also believed by the Hindus that Lord Vishnu existed in Satya Yuga, Lord Rama in Trateya, Lord Krishna in Dwapar Yuga, and Lord Jagannath in Kali-yuga. This cycle is fictional to be repeated. BhagwadPurana gives constant details about Lord Krishna and also accounts details about the preachings of Shri Krishna to Arjuna on the frontline when the latter refused to fight with the Kauravas as they were his cousins. This teaching is very popular as ShrimadBhagwad Gita which is reflected as the holy book of Hinduism. This book tells us how Shri Krishna explained Arjuna about the content of the Vedas. Occasionally a combination of Bhagwad Gita, The Puranas, Mahābhārata is taken to be the Fifth Veda. As we all know that there are four Vedas namely The Rig Yajur, Sam, and Atharva. After the war the

Pandava was won under the leadership of the eldest brother, Yudhishthira ruled for a very long time stretched over thirty-six years and eight months. This highly much-admired war has been very well documented and it was always taken as reference by the famous poet, Mahakavi Kalidas, who was world-renowned poet, writer, Even the eminent astronomer, and mathematician Aryabhata, also had to take the help of the Mahabharata in documented form because one can find astrological, natural, geographical, physical, inscriptional and holy evidence. It is said that when Lord Shri Krishna's role was over after the Mahabharata war, the earth planet and climbed to his Divine dwelling a calamitous rain, storm, and sea overflow, that continued for seven days, totally sank and destroyed Dwaraka town.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Sukthankar (1957) stated that 'Whether we realize it or not, it remains a fact that we in India still stand under the spell of the Mahabharata. Several different strands are laced in the thread of our civilization, reaching back to our overused antiquity. It is a dateless and immortal poem that forms the strongest bond between India old and new.

A. Lord Krishna and Work Culture

According to Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has set three goals for the human being. Every good person in their life will have definite goals and an adequate work culture that helps to attain such goals. The three goals as defined by Lord Krishna includes

1. 'ParitrayanaSadhunam' – This means welfare for good;
2. 'VinashayaDushkritam' – This means the destruction of destroying evil (thoughts and acts)
3. 'Dharma Sansthapana' – This indicates of establishing and strengthening the good principles.

Lord Krishna as a guru gave us an idea of how having clear goals in life can help one to stay focused. The work values involve creating a place where one can place active and hard efforts in pursuit of given tasks. Lord Krishna indicates two kinds of work culture and the same can be applied in human life.

1. DaiviSampat: This forms a divine work culture where the Dharma is given utmost priority. These activities are performed righteously. To achieve individual goals, it is ideal to create a divine work culture. This work value involves self-control, fearlessness, sacrifice,

straightforwardness, and transparency amongst peers.

2. AsuriSampat: This is a demonic work culture including egoism, personal desires, and improper performance. The lack of Dharma in such work values makes it difficult to achieve the set objectives.

B. Depiction of Lord Krishna and Shakuni in Mahabharata

Mahabharat is considered to be one of the greatest epics of the history of India is based on war. It represents the diversity of both Indian as well as the Hindu thought. The plot, of this epic, has been artistically written which teaches us very simple things from our daily life but through a very instinctive process. It is designed for common people leading a common life. to make them perceive the concept of life and the process to tackle the hurdles when they come. These are some of the aspects which have contributed to make it a masterpiece. The story is based on the battle between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Kauravas consisted of hundred sons of Gandhari and Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra was born blind. Gandhari was the princess of Gandhar. She was the sister of Shakuni who was the prince of Gandhar. To be equal with her husband, Gandhari blindfolded herself. This was not liked by her brother. Shakuni had immense love for his sister. She was afraid of darkness. So to remove the fear, it is said that he collected the fireflies from the forests for her. Undoubtedly she became queen of Hastinapur after Dhritirashtra became the king when his younger brother died. Still, Shakuni felt that it was an injustice done to his sister by Bheesma who had knowingly married Gandhari to the blind Dhritarashtra. So he created the plot which activated events resulting in one of the highest wars of all time. Shakuni is known to be very clever to have existed out of all the clever people survived in history. It is said that during the game of dice, he had the talent of throwing that number which was wished by him. BhishmaPitamah, Duryahana, Pandavas, etc were in awe with him. This led to the stripping attempt of Dushasana, one of the Kauravas. This will always remain a secret regarding the talent of Shakuni in sorcery. After the marriage of his sister, he felt very chastened and hurt. Immediately, he pledged to take revenge on the whole family. The objective of Shakuni was to abolish the kingdom of Hastinapur. but after some time, he focused on Bhishma. He sided with Kauravas. But it is also said that he wanted Pandavas to win. So he created plots that would finally lead to war. He was also

assured that Pandavas will win because Lord Krishna was with them. Therefore, Lord Krishna and Shakuni are complementary to each other like the good and the bad because the evil can end only when the good supersedes the evil.

Collin Gray describes Strategic Culture as a delightfully basic perception that has a safe group and is thought of to view and observe and act in another way that can easily be convinced by the notion that it can focus only on the related settings. With the frequent education, rests chiefly upon the clarification of history and history's Planned values, the set of thoughts held by tactical decision-makers concerning the dogmatic object of battle and the most effective means of attaining it and arise out of policymakers need to act purposively despite this ambiguity. Strategic philosophies can be associated and analyzed using a model that signifies them as a command of concepts on numerous stages like political, strategic, and operational. These ideas must be attractive and, in specific, well-integrated if the strategy-maker is to yield a good strategy.

The concept of strategic ethos has become widely used in the field of worldwide relations, mainly in the outlook of efforts to explain the exceptional strategic behaviors of conditions through orientation to their exclusive strategic properties. Even after this, confusion perseveres about the concept of strategic culture, as well as its usage from the perspective of academic research. Two, excess of strategic culture in literature tend to create another misperception which combines culture as ideas in context to nature and relic through which those ideas are established, and researchers of this topic have included it while trying to define the concept of strategic culture thus providing a very restrained hypothesis about the contexts where strategic culture might have been said to be present.

To tackle the spaces in the theoretical version and the concept of strategic culture is redefined. The new version consists of general concepts about the strategy that is built up with the existing people. This definition has narrowed down because it conceptualizes culture as a common phenomenon rather than mere viewpoints along with the behavior of any person which is otherwise known as artifacts. It has successfully tried to find a solution to the procedural challenges that are experienced by anyone interested to search for philosophies, but because it forces us to encounter these challenges openly in the context of efforts to comprehend the different ways that designs of ideas may yield decorative behavior. The definition can be reflected in a much broader sense mainly because it does not deliver any scope to walk

around the opportunity regarding general ideas that are associated with strategic substances that may occur through populations that are not restricted by the boundaries of existing kingdoms. The basis for such a tactic is simply that one should look and see how common ideas are dispersed across populations, rather than adopt that patterns will imitate to taken-for-granted political units.

Cultural Mediation is sophistically defined as a connotative method of interaction among different people which having diversified originality, ethnicity. It usually raises curiosity about the functioning of Cultural mediation. It operates through the functioning of different processes of movement that are difficult to abstract concisely. Over time, people coming from different countries and having different groups and even diversified levels have interacted with each other. Those days' people acted as envois and it came from royal families. But nowadays the trend has changed, messengers come from different sections of the society like the tourists who visit different countries, the monks who go for pilgrimage, the teachers and professors and academicians going overseas for participating in conferences, businesspersons who travel places for their business, actors, and artists who travel different places to perform and various sportspeople. They travel places and spread goodwill about their country.

Ancient India was depicted as the golden bird was considered to be a place of spiritual knowledge. Indian flavors were very popular over the world and so were its valuable metals like gold, stones, etc.

India is the land of amorousness, visions, and extraordinary wealth and scarcity. According to Twain (1899), India has a great beauty that attracts respect and attention, the inherent land of human speech, mother of antiquity, grandmother of fable, and a great-grandmother of custom. Twain further added that India is one of the explicit countries under the sun that is skillful with an eternal interest for the alien prince and alien peasant, for knowledgeable and exhausted, intelligent and fool, rich and poor, bond and free, the one terrestrial that all men desire to see and having seen once, by even a vision, would not give that vision for the shows of all the rest of the creation united.

C. Lessons of Mediation in Mahabharata

Mahabharata is the vast epic and provides numerous instances of diplomatic practices by almost all the characters whether it was Bhishma or Lord Krishna. Krishna had gone as an envoy to the

Kauravas carrying the message of the Pandavas with a proposal to build a flourishing empire and avoid the war. But as it was destined, the war was inevitable. Despite successful diplomatic efforts to avoid bloodshed so that an alliance could emerge between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, it saw an apparent collapse of a peaceful negotiation though Pandavas were very flexible from their side. Public diplomacy is a concept, though not frequently used and might not be heard by many can be considered as a subgroup of Cultural Diplomacy because it uses tactfulness in influencing the process of communication in a very diplomatically.

The epic, Mahabharata has lots of lessons to offer in our daily life. Many TV serials have been shown based on this great epic and have been received extremely well by viewers of all generations. The basic reason for this would be Indians never forget the 'Indian-ness' and its always a reminder that wherever the Indians are, they will never forget their roots where they belong. Also, it has been understood by the rest of the world. It is more than just the naivety or non-violence that was invented by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru which is somewhat similar to those policies of Sun Tzu and Machiavelli. They are the practical approach which pursues the objective of the military, social as well as political area. The entire epic Mahabharata is based on the cultural diplomacy of the two major characters, Lord Krishna from the Pandavas side and Shakuni from the Kauravas side. Shakuni was the maternal uncle of Kauravas. His fondness for the elder prince Duryodhana is very clear. Lord Krishna was the king of Dwarka and was related to Pandavas through Kunti, who was the first wife of Pandu. She was the mother of Yudhishthir, Bheem, and Arjun. Nakul and Sahadev were the sons of Madri, who was the second wife of Pandu and both of them died together. Therefore, Lord Krishna and Shakuni showed and illustrate remarkable political plans that can be put into use even today. Its importance cannot be put aside as the Indians get a truthful attitude to the insight of the world. Datta-Ray claims that the art of mediation flourished long before the European class modernity while highlighting on the fact that the Mahabharata is considered to be the backbone of the Indian mediation. The much talked about the delineation of the activities of a diplomat which was started by Harold Nicolson, is said to have developed from ancient India.

Mahabharata has been observed as a scholarly by many researchers and not just as a simple religious text. One of the prime objectives of Diplomacy is negotiating with allies and even

arch-rivals and avoid war in any form. According to Epic Mahabharata, Lord Krishna has used all mediation skills like Sama, Dana, Bheda, and Danda, in his attempt as an envoy when he was sent to Hastinapur. These are very vital weapons to conduct this Mahabharata war and it is well known that Krishna was a proponent of peace in the epic Mahabharata. Shri Krishna had to experiment with all possible means during his duty as an emissary in the court of the Kauravas in the presence of Bhishma, Dronacharya, Shukracharya, etc. Krishna tried them all.

Rules were broken, Shri Krishna was humiliated while he had gone to Hastinapur, and Duryodhana attempted to put an envoy into prison so that meeting with other royal people would be avoided speculating that his father would agree to the words of Shri Krishna as he was not wrong in his point. The Pandavas were also happy to take only five villages to which Dhritirashtra might have given his agreement as he was the king. It was not a rule to harm an envoy as he was considered a guest who comes to another kingdom to read out the message of his master. Therefore, Diplomacy has been very vividly portrayed in the epic with several illustrations and is described as a fundamental component of ethical conduct.

Duryodhana along with his team had succeeded in allying with some countries while Pandavas, with the help of Krishna, started to acquire allies with the different kingdom as many as they could to get support. Pandavas got support through matrimonial alliances with various kingdoms. They knew that the project was huge, so they must try to convince people and discuss how they could contribute. They wanted to ensure that the more the number of alliances that will be ready to work with them, the better the chances of success in achieving the target. Pandavas handled this with Excellency. They outshined in the art of inspiring taking benefits from weakened enemies and exposing any sort of spaces they might have at the right time. They did not hesitate to take guidance from highly qualified people. They learn not to trust anyone even if he or she is from their own family. relatives, husband, wife son, daughter because they had experienced that trusting someone blindly provides an opportunity for treachery which makes someone susceptible. Blind trust led to the downfall of the Kauravas. The king of Hastinapur believed blindly on his eldest son, Duryodhana, and had left everything to him. He also trusted Shakuni without even thinking about what he is doing. There came a time when he did not handle the affairs of the kingdom by himself

and gave it to Duryadhan to rule. All these led to the destruction and killing of his hundred sons.

Confidence in mediation has played a very critical role in this epic Mahabharata. Confident people indeed handle mediation in a very capable manner while overoptimistic people destroy the opportunity. Overoptimistic makes us look at the opposition in a very crushing manner. As a result, one tries to ignore the focus point, a priority. Confidence helps us in understanding and developing one's worth. An overconfident person ultimately makes mistakes because of loss of focus and thereby creates opportunities for failures. This has been visible in Shakuni's approach to handling things. When an envoy comes and requests for just five villages, he should have persuaded Duryadhan to agree and do away with the war. Rather he forced Duryadhan to say he won't agree to give a pinpoint of a nail of land without the war. Mahabharata, one of the greatest wars ever can be considered as a strategy of Krishna which saw a clash between the monarchical powers is an outcome of highly developed strategic thinking and planning. This war could only be at par with the success of the Britishers in the Second World War which involved instigating Nazi Germany to clash with the united Soviet Union thereby destroying one another.

It is a general notion especially in India that high moral ground should be maintained whenever there is any war or even in politics at any expense. As reported by the Diplomat earlier, this conventional school of thought subsequently resulted in the war with China in the year 1962. This was an idealism that was practiced by the Indians which has led to disastrous consequences. History has witnessed many examples. If the anecdotal instance can be considered, in the First Battle of terrain, the Rajput king Prithviraj Chauhan won the war that was fought between him and the invader of Afghanistan, Mahmud of Ghori in the year 1191. After Ghori appealed for mercy for his life, Prithviraj forgave him and freed him because it was correct on the ethical code of conduct. In 1192, Mahmud again came and waged a war against Prithviraj Chauhan. This time he not only defeated the latter but also captured him and got him executed. This was not ethical or diplomatic, yet history witnessed it. This event that eventually established the Muslim rule in Delhi and then spread all over India. This unethical code of conduct was recommended in the Mahabharata, by none other than Shri Krishna, where he says no one is brother, father, cousin, son, etc. on the battlefield. If one is fighting for a moral cause, there is nothing like morality, ethics, and one is

allowed to use deceitful and dishonest means because what matters is the outcome and nothing else.

Hinduism is perhaps one of the very few religions which follows Ahimsa Paramo Dharma (Nonviolence is the prime religion) and it is practiced by many people here in India. To a certain extent, it could have been influenced by the teachings of Mahatma who had asserted that it is better to retain the practice of non-violence than depending on any kind of violence whatever the cause may be, even if it is for self-defense. We can say that Mahabharata the epic which was written long back before Gandhi's generation, accepts the fact that if one is right and the cause is justified, there is no wrong in war. Shakuni opined that war should be an option only after all political solutions fail. At the same time, he adds, if the decision is taken finally that war is inevitable, then it should be fought without any party drawing back till a conclusion is reached. Bhagwad Gita also talks of a similar thing. Lord Krishna says Arjuna by addressing him as oh Pandav when there is an outbreak of war it is justified and also it is compulsory to fight till the end. War as an option should be resorted to achieve the cherished objective instead of shying away from the thought that a war would cause violence and bloodshed. Modern India has treated war and its army is not much appealing and it is discouraging as well as restrained because it is not much comfortable with facing the power of other nations on grounds of moral and ethical code of conduct. At the same time, it has realized that it can easily achieve its goals by accepting the fact that power needs to be utilized and displayed in front of other nations.

III. CONCLUSION

The mediation of Mahabharata, the epic has provided new dimensions and plenty of scopes to be studied. The mediators Lord Shri Krishna, as well as Shakuni, declare the view that it is always good to follow the norms, maintain strictness in the customs till a certain point. Once it is understood that it comes in the way of one's interest, it can be discarded and flexibility can be maintained. Amendment in duties can be made in case it follows an unbending strategy. In an example in the Mahabharata, the Pandavas felt that their integrity would be at stake if they do not play the game of dice. They had the option to withdraw in the middle, again they were bitten by the bug of ethics and were forced to play it till the end. This resulted in losing their kingdom and even Draupadi, the queen of the Pandavas. Again the policy of diplomacy of Shakuni was responsible for this

unfortunate incident. Even though the Mahabharata is a very old epic, yet it has lots of lessons to provide to the modern age of India. This is why it is still popular among people of all ages because of its relevance and ability to correlate instances of the epic with day to day life. This epic has been relived through overwhelmingly successful TV shows, a movie in the pipeline, documentary, plays, etc. It has valuable lessons to people which helps in guiding the Indian school of thought which is to pull oneself away from excess conditions, from extreme modality and extreme immorality. On the other hand, it advocates for something better to look forward to what appears to be unjustified may not be the case and it might be the best for us.

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