From Matter to Spirit: Metaphors of Enlightenment in Bhagavad-gītā

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the use of metaphors in a prominent Hindu scripture named Bhagavad-gītā. Although Hindu scriptures have been analyzed for centuries, the focus is rarely on metaphors. Bhagavad-gītā has 700 verses in 18 chapters and it records a historical conversation between Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna. Krishna teaches Arjuna philosophical concepts, which are frequently articulated through metaphors. The article selects an English translation of Bhagavad-gītā by Swami Prabhupāda and it pursues a text analysis, which is grounded in conceptual metaphor theory (CMT). The analysis identifies the source and target domains for the metaphors, and interprets their functions. The article only explores metaphors of enlightenment, as Bhagavad-gītā instructs people to become enlightened. The concept of enlightenment is conceptualized by ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY, KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT, KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE and KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT. Bhagavad-gītā conceives people as body, mind and soul because a body and mind (matter) are required to understand a soul (spirit). It endorses four *yogas* or methods (devotion, meditation, transcendental knowledge, virtuous acts) to obtain the results of enlightenment, which terminate reincarnation and grant Paradise. Bhagavad-gītā lists two guides (mentor, scripture) although personal endeavor must be invested to move from matter to spirit. The article traces the choice of metaphors to physical and cultural experiences, besides the motivation of the translator. These metaphors may be inspired by the human body or ancient India but they should resonate with modern people. Moreover, Prabhupāda's translation utilizes the metaphors to make Vaishnavism comprehensible to Westerners and to validate the denomination.

Keywords: Bhagavad-gītā; philosophy; metaphor; yoga; enlightenment

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is termed a textualized religion (Lindbeck, 1986, p. 361) because it boasts an extensive variety of scriptures. There are two categories of scriptures, named *śrūti* (revealed) and *smṛti* (remembered). God revealed instructions through the Āraṇyakas, Brāhmaṇas, Upanishads and Vedas, and ancient sages remembered events through the Itihāsas, Purāṇas and Vedāṅgas (Gosvami, 1995). The Itihāsas are epics, which are the Mahābhārata and Ramayana. The Mahābhārata contains Bhagavad-gītā (The Lord's Song), a prominent Hindu scripture (Whaling, 1980). It records a historical conversation between Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna but retains universal relevance (Davis, 2015). Bhagavad-gītā informs the doctrinal foundations of Hindu denominations, notably Vaishnavism (veneration of Vishnu) because Bhagavad-gītā establishes the Supreme Being as Vishnu (Prabhupāda, 1986).

Commentaries on Bhagavad-gītā have been prepared throughout history and principal commentators are Śaṅkara (8th century), Ramanuja (11th century), Nimbarka (12th century), Madhva (13th century), Vallabha (15th century) and Baladeva Vidyabhusana (18th century) (Bhūrijana, 2007, Gosvami, 1995). Their commentaries continue to be read although newer commentaries proliferated after the 20th century. Among the Hindu commentators are Aurobindo, Prabhupāda, Sivananda and Yogananda, besides other non-Hindu commentators.

Despite centuries of study, Bhagavad-gītā remains very hard to understand because it explains many concepts (Sreekumar, 2012). These studies frequently adopt philosophy or theology to scrutinize these concepts and can incorporate linguistics to complement their analysis. One typical language feature in Bhagavad-gītā is metaphor. It is a linguistic realization which experiences domain incongruity, where an expected domain (source domain) is replaced by an unexpected domain (target domain) (Charteris-Black, 2004).

Metaphors are pervasive and render philosophical concepts possible (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) for religious discourse. Religious discourse employs philosophy to teach concepts about divinity, living beings, the world, ways of life and life beyond death. These concepts are often unknowable via direct perception and are relayed through metaphors (Jaberi, Ho-Abdullah & Vengadasamy, 2016, Rajandran, 2013). Major religious texts have been analyzed for metaphors but Bhagavad-gītā remains a conspicuous exception. Selected concepts are presented through metaphors in Bhagavad-gītā and a text analysis can ascertain their use (Charteris-Black, 2004). The present article examines metaphors about the concept of enlightenment. It discloses how Bhagavad-gītā conceptualizes enlightenment, its methods and results through metaphors.

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

Hindu convention dates Bhagavad-gītā to around 3000 BC (Prabhupāda, 1986). This date is not held by academia although it recognizes a pre-Christian date. Bhagavad-gītā is in Sanskrit and contains 700 verses in 18 chapters. It records a conversation between Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna. Krishna is the charioteer for Arjuna, who is fighting in the Mahābhārata war. The war confronts two branches of one imperial family, the Kurus, who could not reach a diplomatic solution. Before the war begins, Arjuna hesitates to fight and becomes dejected because the war may adversely impact himself, his family and society. Consequently, Arjuna requests Krishna to become his mentor, and to dispel his confusion and ignorance about his responsibility. Krishna and Arjuna exchange arguments, and Krishna gives separate but linked arguments to convince Arjuna to fight. These arguments are expanded through questions and answers, and explain numerous philosophical concepts.

The explanations transcend the imminent war and cover 5 major concepts, namely *īśvara* (God), *jīva* (soul), *prakṛti* (material nature), *kāla* (time) and *karma* (activities) (Prabhupāda, 1986). These explanations are synthesized in Chapters 2-18 (Whaling, 1980) and advocate enlightenment through *yoga*. Yoga in popular opinion means physical poses but its technical meaning is a method of enlightenment or God-realization (Gosvami, 1995, Prabhupāda, 1986). Bhagavad-gītā recognizes four yogas or methods of *bhakti yoga* (devotion), *dhyāna yoga* (meditation)**,** *jñāna yoga* (transcendental knowledge) and *karma yoga* (virtuous acts). It endorses these four methods (Whaling, 1980) to obtain the results of enlightenment, which terminate reincarnation and grant Paradise.

Bhagavad-gītā can transmit Hindu doctrine to the West (Stroud, 2005) but this is mostly done through Western languages. Since English is considered the global language, an English translation reaches more people than translations in other languages. The first English translation of Bhagavad-gītā is traced to Charles Wilkins in 1785 (Robinson, 2006) and other English translations have been produced after his seminal contribution. The present article selects an English translation by Swami Prabhupāda (1896-1977), a spiritual mentor for Vaishnavism. His translation is read by Hindus and non-Hindus alike and is translated into 59 languages (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2015). It is reported to be the most widely read translation of Bhagavad-gītā (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2013), as it is vigorously promoted by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) (Davis, 2015).

METAPHORS IN RELIGIOUS TEXTS

Religious discourse links human experiences to philosophical concepts. These concepts are often unknowable via direct perception but metaphors can structure concepts in an understandable manner (Rajandran, 2013, Vengadasamy, 2011). Metaphors are inherent in religious discourse (Jablónski, van der Lans & Hermans, 1998) and therefore may be observed in Bhagavad-gītā. Existing research confirms their prevalence among Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Judaic texts although Hindu texts do not seem to have been explored.

Metaphors are mostly explored in Christian and Judaic texts (Soskice, 1985). While Christians employ the Old and New Testaments, Jews only employ the Old Testament. The Old Testament has human and fauna metaphors to refer to God (Nielsen, 2007). The human metaphors involve familial duties (e.g. father, mother) or occupational duties (e.g. king, potter, shepherd, vineyard owner) while the fauna metaphors involve a lion (Nielsen, 2007). These metaphors infer responsibilities for God, who protects the Israelites, and for the Israelites, who must obey God. These human and fauna metaphors display God's preserving power but nature metaphors display his destroying power. His anger is conceived as fire in the Old Testament (Labahn, 2006). It spares nobody and destroys urban and rural structures to punish the Israelites. The Old and New Testaments contain fauna, flora, food, and light and dark metaphors to conceptualize ethics (Charteris-Black, 2004). While fauna metaphors compare positive and negative behaviors, flora metaphors compare natural and spiritual growth (Charteris-Black, 2004). Food metaphors imply sustenance or poison (Charteris-Black, 2004), where good or bad food helps or harms people. Moreover, light and dark metaphors contrast dualities, such as good and evil, and life and death (Charteris-Black, 2004).

Metaphors have also been examined in Islamic texts, which comprise the Quran and Prophet Muhammad's sayings. These texts employ human metaphors to refer to God. He has an occupational duty as master, and he cares for and remunerates his loyal servants (El-Sharif, 2012). God's preserving or destroying power is conveyed by nature metaphors. God sends winds to comfort believers and to trouble non-believers but he sends rains to trouble non-believers (Charteris-Black, 2004, Mohamed, 2012). These weather conditions indicate reward for believers and punishment for non-believers. There are also light and dark metaphors to contrast belief and non-belief in God, Prophet Muhammad or the Quran (Charteris-Black, 2004, Mohamed, 2012). These metaphors are also noted in Prophet Muhammad's sayings to contrast spiritual knowledge and ignorance (El-Sharif, 2012). The Quran and Prophet Muhammad's sayings contain journey metaphors (Abdulmoneim, 2006, El-Sharif, 2012). Islam is conceived as the right path to God (El-Sharif, 2012) but there are righteous and wicked travelers on this path. The righteous travelers (believers) go to Heaven and the wicked travelers (non-believers) go to Hell (Abdulmoneim, 2006).

Buddhist texts have been explored and although these are numerous, some early texts explain *karma* (activities) as an inheritance, seed, light and dark, and light and heavy weights (Schlieter, 2013). People inherit *karma* from life to life and it requires time to show consequences, like a seed. *Karma* is linked to light and dark, and light and heavy weights because these metaphors contrast positive and negative *karma*. One of these early texts, the Heart Sutra, clarifies the nature of wisdom. It portrays the underlying truth of existence as emptiness (Lu & Chiang, 2007). Since emptiness is reality, anything with form is in some way an illusion (Lu & Chiang, 2007). The concept of emptiness is conveyed by sight and taste metaphors. The two senses are evoked because wisdom enables people to transcend sensory limitations.

These Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Judaic texts confirm the use of metaphors in religious texts. These texts use typical metaphors, which may be observed in Bhagavad-gītā.

The Old and New Testaments, and Quran use human and fauna metaphors because the ancient Israelites and Arabs faced kings, masters, shepherds and lions as part of their lives. The Old and New Testaments, Quran and Buddhist texts contain nature metaphors, such as fire, light and dark, and weather because natural phenomena were observed and were linked to philosophical concepts. Buddhist texts use sight and taste metaphors to depict events in terms of sensory reactions. The source domains (human, fauna, nature, sensory) demonstrate human experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999), where physical and cultural experiences enable the target domains to be comprehended.

For Soskice (1985), metaphors expand descriptive power and stimulate improved descriptions. Metaphors facilitate comprehension of philosophical concepts and may shape behavior, which impacts the natural and built environment. Their capability to contribute to real-life impact could explain the prevalence of metaphors in religious texts. Yet, metaphors are not unconditional and are suitable for time and place (Soskice, 1985). While the source domain suits physical and cultural experiences, the target domain remains unchanged (Labahn, 2006, El-Sharif, 2012). Religions may conceive shared concepts distinctly because their spatio-temporal contexts are distinct (Gibbs, Lima & Francozo, 2004).

From previous research, a text analysis proves useful to understand how concepts are relayed through metaphors in Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Judaic texts. Yet, Hindu texts do not seem to have been explored although Hinduism is the world's third major religion. Among these texts, Bhagavad-gītā is prominent, as claimed by Whaling (1980). Robinson (2006) relates how Hindu and non-Hindu philosophers and theologians perceive Bhagavad-gītā, which explains their perspective but she did not conduct a text analysis. Since Bhagavad-gītā has various metaphors, a complete analysis is beyond the scope of the present article. Instead, it explores metaphors of enlightenment, as Bhagavad-gītā instructs people to become enlightened. Therefore, the article formulates this research question: How has Bhagavad-gītā conceptualized enlightenment? Bhagavad-gītā remains a crucial scripture for modern Hindus (Davis, 2015) and a text analysis can enlighten people to some extent about the beliefs of 15% of humanity.

METHODOLOGY

Harrison (2007) finds conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) extremely useful to decipher religious texts. The analysis of Bhagavad-gītā is grounded in CMT, which Lakoff & Johnson (1999, 2003) established. Metaphors were previously considered a literary ornament, whose absence would not influence understanding. Lakoff and Johnson (1999, 2003) argue for the inverse because metaphors can conceive philosophical concepts and are fundamental to cognition. Since language reveals cognition (Harrison, 2007), CMT performs a linguistic analysis to decipher metaphors.

A linguistic metaphor is evidence of cognitive structure, which involves a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Consequently, CMT tries to infer conceptual representations through linguistic realizations. It postulates how a source domain maps onto a target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, 2003), since the source domain helps to understand the target domain. While the source domain is traced to physical or cultural experiences, the target domain involves abstract concepts (Gibbs, Lima & Francozo, 2004). For example, the sense of sight (source domain) maps onto knowledge (target domain) through *eyes of knowledge*. The linguistic metaphor *eyes of knowledge* in texts indicates the conceptual metaphor KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT in the human mind. Although metaphors conceptualize universal human experiences, different aspects of these experiences are activated in different societies, which permits variation in metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

The analysis of Bhagavad-gītā comprised two phases, namely metaphor identification and interpretation. Bhagavad-gītā only contains 700 verses and its brevity facilitated a manual analysis. Using the CMT convention, the analysis employs *italics* to designate a linguistic metaphor and SMALL CAPITALS to designate a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, 2003).

Metaphor identification employed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP). MIP is an explicit and systematic method to identify metaphors, which makes the findings reliable and replicable (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). MIP contains three sequential steps. Firstly, the researcher performed multiple readings of Bhagavad-gītā to understand its content. Secondly, the researcher separated the lexical units, where slashes indicated their boundaries (e.g. when / you / are / situated / in / the / boat / of / transcendental / knowledge). Thirdly, the researcher considered the contextual meaning (situation evoked in Bhagavad-gītā) of the lexical units and decided whether these units had a basic meaning. The basic meaning tends to be more concrete, more precise than vague, about bodily action, or historic (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). It was recognized through researcher intuitions and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Pragglejaz Group (2007) proposes consulting other sources to verify intuitions, such as dictionaries. Whenever a contextual meaning contrasted with a basic meaning, the lexical units were marked as metaphorical.

These three steps were repeated until the 700 verses were examined. Although various linguistic metaphors emerged, the researcher only selected those in relation to enlightenment to answer the research question. These linguistic metaphors were then gathered into themes (e.g. journey) and a conceptual metaphor in the form of 'X is Y' was proposed for a theme (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). A conceptual metaphor shows the underlying relationship between two concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). It maps a physical concept (journey) onto a non-physical concept (enlightenment) through ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY. While journey metaphors emerged to conceptualize enlightenment, knowledge metaphors were also involved in constructing it.

Lastly, metaphor interpretation was conducted (Charteris-Black, 2004, Pragglejaz Group, 2007) and the functions of these metaphors were explored, as done by Abdulmoneim (2006), Charteris-Black (2004), El-Sharif (2012), Lu & Chiang (2007) and Schlieter (2013). Besides CMT, the interpretation was enhanced using the researcher's prior knowledge about Hindu texts and Bhagavad-gītā in particular, and reviewing the opinions of spiritual mentors (Bhūrijana Dasa, Swami Prabhupāda). These mentors wrote and spoke about Bhagavad-gītā, which enabled the researcher to clarify uncertainties and explain subtleties in this text.

ANALYSIS

In Bhagavad-gītā, Lord Krishna employs metaphors to enable Prince Arjuna to understand his explanations. Krishna structures enlightenment through the conceptual metaphors ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY, KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT, KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE and KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT. These metaphors target people and indicate a specific metaphysics. People are constituted as body, mind and soul (Sreekumar, 2012) but a body and mind are matter, and a soul is spirit. The metaphors acknowledge human experiences, where a body and mind (matter) help a soul (spirit) to become enlightened.

ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY

The conceptual metaphor ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY maps selected properties in the source domain (journey) onto the target domain (enlightenment). Arjuna has listed the negative consequences of the war in Chapter 1. It establishes material life or being

unenlightened as unpleasant and people would realize the problems of life. Since a journey maps onto enlightenment, the start is where material life is denied and the end is where God is realized. God-realization terminates reincarnation and grants Paradise. People who are searching for enlightenment are travelers along the journey (Abdulmoneim, 2006). The travelers are anyone but may be presumed as men in higher castes, who dominated spirituality during the period of Bhagavad-gītā. Yet, Bhagavad-gītā negates exclusivity and opens enlightenment for 'women, vaiśyas and śūdras' (Verse 9.32), who comprised a major section of society. Anyone 'can attain' enlightenment ('supreme destination') by surrendering to Krishna (Davis, 2015). Bhagavad-gītā disregards sex and caste distinctions because a soul does not have these distinctions (Prabhupāda, 1986).

> 9.32: …those who take shelter in Me…women, vaiśyas [merchants] and śūdras [workers] – *can attain the supreme destination*.

A journey infers paths to lead to a destination. While the Quran makes Islam the only path to Paradise (El-Sharif, 2012), Bhagavad-gītā proposes four paths. These are the four yogas or methods of *bhakti yoga* (devotion), *dhyāna yoga* (meditation), *jñāna yoga* (transcendental knowledge) and *karma yoga* (virtuous acts). Verse 5.5 praises transcendental knowledge and devotion, and it places both 'on the same level' while Verse 6.28 praises meditation. People can select any method and 'reach', 'attain' (Verse 5.5) or 'achieve' (Verse 6.28) enlightenment. These verbs are synonymous and are interchangeable. They indicate going towards a destination, termed 'the position' (Verse 5.5) or 'the highest stage' (Verse 6.28). Bhagavad-gītā has not imposed one method but proposes four methods to suit different people.

> 5.5: One who knows that *the position reached* by means of analytical study *can* also *be attained* by devotional service, and who therefore sees analytical study and devotional service to be on the same level, sees things as they are.

> 6.28: Thus the self-controlled yogī…*achieves the highest stage* of perfect happiness in transcendental loving service to the Lord.

These methods are considered equal because the result is enlightenment. Yet, they are not equal in duration and severity because a method incurs more or less time and more of less exertion. The fastest and easiest method is devotion and its efficacy is hinted at throughout Bhagavad-gītā. Devotion is faster because it lacks 'delay' (Verse 5.6) and it is easier because it is 'sure' (Verse 7.18). It is promoted as the better method and the promotion reaches a crescendo in Chapter 18, the final chapter. The efficacy of devotion is undoubted and devotion ranks first among the methods. Although devotion is faster and easier, people can continue to pursue meditation, transcendental knowledge and virtuous acts, since these are authorized methods.

> 5.6: …But a thoughtful person engaged in devotional service *can achieve* the Supreme without *delay*.

> 7.18: Being engaged in My transcendental service, he is sure *to attain* Me...

The four methods lead to Paradise, the coveted destination of righteous travelers, as in the Quran (Abdulmoneim, 2006, El-Sharif, 2012). Paradise marks the end of the journey because it is termed the 'destination' (e.g. Verse 13.29). It is also termed the 'abode' (Verses 4.9, 8.21). Paradise lasts forever and remains the best place, which the adjectives 'eternal' (Verse 4.9) and 'supreme' (Verse 8.21) indicate. Hindu cosmology divides the universe along

enlightened and non-enlightened worlds (Gosvami, 1995). People who search for enlightenment inhabit the non-enlightened worlds and can 'attain' (Verses 4.9, 8.21) the enlightened worlds or Paradise. The enlightened worlds are their final destination and there is no need to 'take…birth again' (Verse 4.9) and 'return' (Verse 8.21) among the non-enlightened worlds.

> 13.29: …Thus he *approaches the transcendental destination*.

> 4.9: One…does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but *attains* My eternal abode, O Arjuna.

> 8.21: …that place from which, having *attained* it, one never *returns* – that is My supreme abode.

Enlightenment may not be easily achieved because people encounter obstacles along the journey. Among the obstacles are 'attachment' and 'aversion' (Verse 3.34), which are clearly named 'stumbling blocks'. Other obstacles are 'sense gratification', 'desires', 'proprietorship' and 'false ego' (Verse 2.71). These immoral behaviors compel people to pursue material life, which slows their enlightenment. Moral behaviors should be developed and people can 'pass over' the obstacles and avoid becoming 'lost' (Verse 18.58) along the journey.

> 3.34: …One should not come under the control of such attachment and aversion, because they are *stumbling blocks* on *the path of self-realization*.

> 2.71: A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego – he alone *can attain* real peace.

> 18.58: If you become conscious of Me, you *will pass over* all *the obstacles of conditioned life* by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego, not hearing Me, you will be *lost*.

'Great' (Verse 3.21) men previously traversed the journey and 'their footsteps' (Verse 4.15) are their endeavor for enlightenment. These 'great' men are mentors and can guide people who 'follow' 'their footsteps' (Verses 3.21, 4.15). Scripture can also guide people, as most cannot hear from God and it becomes his representative. Some portions of the Vedas explain enlightenment and 'scriptural injunctions' can ensure the 'supreme destination' (Verse 16.23). People are not alone along their journey and can be guided by a mentor or scripture in practicing a method.

> 3.21: Whatever action a great man performs, common men *follow*…

> 4.15: …Therefore you should perform your duty, *following* in *their footsteps*.

> 16.23: He who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims *attains* neither perfection, nor happiness, nor *the supreme destination*.

ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY is a productive metaphor in Bhagavad-gītā, as in the Quran (Abdulmoneim, 2006, El-Sharif, 2012). It maps properties about travelers, paths, destinations, obstacles and guides in the source domain of journey onto the target domain of enlightenment. Anyone can begin the journey because enlightenment is open to everyone. People select one of the four paths (devotion, meditation, transcendental knowledge, virtuous acts) although devotion is faster and easier. The paths contain obstacles but moral behaviors

help to remove them. People also have two guides (mentor, scripture) but ultimately their personal endeavor facilitates God-realization, which terminates reincarnation and grants Paradise.

KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT

KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT maps certain qualities of sight onto knowledge. Since sight helps to acquire knowledge about physical concepts, sight is extended to acquiring knowledge about metaphysical concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 238). It represents cognitive abilities to distinguish matter and spirit. These abilities are not universal because people are not at the same level of knowledge.

Bhagavad-gītā contrasts two groups, namely the non-spiritualist who does know enlightenment and the spiritualist who knows enlightenment. The non-spiritualist is non-enlightened people, and Arjuna before Krishna teaches him. Arjuna states the negative consequences of the war, which he terms 'misfortune' (Verse 1.30) and 'how any good can come' (Verse 1.31), through the verb 'see' (Verses 1.30-1.31). Arjuna is better than most warriors because he knows ('can see') but they do not know ('see no fault') these consequences (Verses 1.37-1.38). Yet, Arjuna acknowledges the limit of his knowledge in Verses 2.6-2.7. His knowledge is partial and people cannot become enlightened if they do not have perfect knowledge.

> 1.30: …I *see* only causes of misfortune...

> 1.31: I *do not see* how any good can come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle…

> 1.37-1.38: …although these men…*see* no fault in killing one's family or quarreling with friends, why should we, who *can see* the crime in destroying a family, engage in these acts of sin?

People need a mentor or spiritualist to perfect their knowledge and Arjuna requests Krishna to become his mentor in Verse 2.7. Krishna represents the spiritualist, who can guide the non-spiritualist. The spiritualist must be 'self-realized' (Verse 4.34) or enlightened ('have seen' in Verse 4.34). He can 'train' (Verse 15.10) his mentee, which means leading by example. The spiritualist shows how enlightenment is achieved and the non-spiritualist must practice his guidance. Practice helps to develop knowledge, which is conveyed by the verb 'see(s)'. The development charts the transition from non-spiritualist to spiritualist. For example, people would learn about souls ('beings' in Verses 4.35, 6.32) in relation to God (Verse 4.35) and other souls (Verse 6.32), and can discriminate body and soul (Verse 13.35).

> 4.34: …The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they *have seen* the truth.

> 15.10: …But one whose *eyes* are trained in knowledge *can see* all this.

> 4.35: …you *will see* that all living beings are but part of the Supreme…

> 6.32: He is a perfect yogī who, by comparison to his own self, *sees* the true equality of all beings…

> 13.35: Those who *see* with *eyes of knowledge* the difference between the body and the knower of the body…

KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT in Bhagavad-gītā conveys cognitive abilities, as in the Heart Sutra (Lu & Chiang, 2007). These abilities distinguish having and not having knowledge about enlightenment through the spiritualist and non-spiritualist respectively. A spiritualist guides a non-spiritualist through one of the four methods of enlightenment, which develops his knowledge regarding matter and spirit. Although a non-spiritualist can become a spiritualist, nobody can see on behalf of somebody else and similarly, people need personal endeavor to practice the guidance received.

KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE

KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE maps certain qualities of taste onto knowledge. Taste is extended to acquiring knowledge about metaphysical concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 239), since taste helps to acquire knowledge about physical concepts. Taste, which resembles sight, represents cognitive abilities to distinguish matter and spirit. It indicates perfect knowledge or the 'higher taste' (Verse 2.59), where the source of pleasure and satisfaction is 'the Self' (Verse 3.17). People become 'satiated' (Verse 3.17) and their priorities are reoriented, as matter is deemphasized while spirit is emphasized. Verses 2.59 and 3.17 imply spirit replacing matter because knowledge is developing. It becomes 'fully' (Verse 3.17) developed as perfect knowledge, a benefit of enlightenment.

> 2.59: …by experiencing *a higher taste*, he is fixed in consciousness.

> 3.17: But for one who takes pleasure in the Self…and who is satisfied in the Self only, fully *satiated*…

People also gain other benefits and these are named 'nectar' (Verses 4.30, 14.20). Nectar, like good food in the Old and New Testaments (Charteris-Black, 2004), leaves a pleasant taste. It motivates people to pursue enlightenment because it infers positive benefits, which 'enjoy' (Verse 14.20) strengthens. The benefits are related because reaching 'the supreme eternal atmosphere' (Verse 4.30) simultaneously grants liberation from 'birth, death, old age' (Verse 14.20).

> 4.30: …having *tasted the nectar of the results of sacrifices*, they advance toward the supreme eternal atmosphere.

> 14.20: …he can become free from birth, death, old age and their distresses and can enjoy *nectar* even in this life.

The explanations of Krishna are pleasant and are termed 'nectar' (Verse 10.18). They become beneficial because their content is perfect knowledge. These explanations 'never satiated' (Verse 10.18) people and they always want to hear Krishna. They can 'taste' (Verse 13.13) enlightenment through his explanations in scriptures like Bhagavad-gītā. Verses 10.18 and 13.13 insinuate scriptural study to indirectly hear Krishna, as most people cannot hear him directly.

> 10.18: …I am never *satiated* in hearing about You, for the more I hear the more I want *to taste the nectar of Your words*.

> 13.13: I shall now explain the knowable, knowing which you *will taste* the eternal…

KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE in Bhagavad-gītā does not seem as prominent as in the Heart Sutra (Lu & Chiang, 2007) because the concept of knowledge is mainly structured by KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT. It shows people changing their focus, as matter replaces spirit to result in perfect knowledge. This is one of the benefits acquired as they become enlightened.

Nobody can taste on behalf of somebody else and similarly, personal endeavor is required if people wish to experience these benefits.

<div align="center">KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT</div>

The conceptual metaphor KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT makes knowledge an object to handle. Among these objects is a lamp (Verse 10.11) and it is Krishna's 'special mercy' because it dispels ignorance. A lamp infers metaphors of light and dark, where knowledge is 'shining' and ignorance is 'darkness'. The duality of knowledge and ignorance is also observed in the Old and New Testaments, and Quran (Charteris-Black, 2004, Mohamed, 2012). Light becomes a positive evaluation for knowledge and the evaluation is extended to Krishna because he provides knowledge.

> 10.11: …I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with *the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness* born of ignorance.

For Verse 4.36, knowledge is a boat to reorient focus from matter to spirit. A boat is utilized to avoid being wet and similarly, knowledge is utilized to avoid being contaminated by material life. Verse 4.42 mentions a weapon while Verses 4.19 and 4.37 mention fire because knowledge has the potency to destroy obstacles. They are named 'ignorance' in Verse 4.42 and 'reactions' or *karma* (activities) in Verses 4.19 and 4.37. Ignorance indicates the absence of knowledge and *karma* means reincarnation to experience pleasure or pain. Ignorance and *karma* are related because ignorant people would not know the way to escape reincarnation. The use of 'slashed' (Verse 4.42) displays a swift movement and ignorance has to be removed before knowledge can develop. Verse 4.19 utilizes 'burned up' and Verse 4.37 utilizes 'burn' to destroy ignorance. The use of 'to ashes' and 'all' (Verse 4.37) intensifies the sense of destruction. Since *karma* has to be eradicated before enlightenment, knowledge enables the quick and total elimination of ignorance.

> 4.36: …when you are situated in *the boat of transcendental knowledge...*

> 4.42: Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be *slashed* by *the weapon of knowledge*…

> 4.19: …the reactions of work *have been burned up* by *the fire of perfect knowledge*.

> 4.37: …so does *the fire of knowledge burn to ashes* all reactions to material activities.

Knowledge becomes an indispensable object for enlightenment through KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT. Objects, such as boats, weapons and fire have similarities with knowledge. These objects have a function: boats traverse water and weapons injure adversaries while knowledge functions to discern matter and spirit. These objects and knowledge exist but their existence cannot ensure their use. People need personal endeavor to practice one of the four methods of enlightenment. Some are more adept than others and their endeavor characterizes their own pace of enlightenment.

<div align="center">**DISCUSSION**</div>

Bhagavad-gītā is similar to other religious texts because these texts employ metaphors to structure philosophical concepts (Jablónski, van der Lans & Hermans, 1998). It explains the concept of enlightenment through ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY, KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT, KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE and KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT. Bhagavad-gītā portrays material life as unpleasant as early as Chapter 1 and inspires enlightenment. ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY

structures how people start, continue and end their enlightenment. Bhagavad-gītā endorses four methods to obtain the results of enlightenment, which terminate reincarnation and grant Paradise.

Enlightenment is achievable by any method but devotion is faster and easier. Bhagavad-gītā prioritizes devotion because it records an early treatment of devotion in Hindu scriptures (Davis, 2015). The theology of devotion is fostered, which links people and God as devotee and devoted respectively. It establishes their individuality and relationship because two separate but reciprocal parties exist. Devotion and the other methods require knowledge and it is conveyed by KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT, KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE and KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT. The sight and taste metaphors structure core concepts in religious texts, be it emptiness in the Heart Sutra (Lu & Chiang, 2007) or knowledge in Bhagavad-gītā.

The metaphors of enlightenment employ physical experiences, which can be traced to embodiment (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). It activates sensory metaphors because the human body senses movement from one place to another place and it can see, taste and handle objects. The human body everywhere has remained unchanged since the time of Bhagavad-gītā. People across time and place should be able to decipher and comprehend its metaphors. Embodiment establishes stable truths about enlightenment.

These metaphors require a body to perceive them and a mind to comprehend them although enlightenment involves a soul. A soul achieves enlightenment but a body and mind facilitate its achievement. The metaphysics of people as body, mind and soul (Sreekumar, 2012) has to be harmonized to become enlightened. Personal endeavor is endorsed, as people have their own set of senses and are empowered to secure their enlightenment. Bhagavad-gītā sensitizes people to their embodiment because they need to manage their body and mind (matter) before realizing their soul (spirit).

The metaphors can reflect cultural experiences (Gibbs, Lima & Francozo, 2004). Metaphors in the Old and New Testaments, and Quran reflect the way of life of the ancient Israelites and Arabs (Charteris-Black, 2004, El-Sharif, 2012, Nielsen, 2007), and metaphors in Bhagavad-gītā could reflect the way of life of the ancient Indians. The sociological conditions of early India exerted an influence on early Buddhist texts (Schlieter, 2013) and may exert an influence on Bhagavad-gītā, which predates these texts. While a historical cultural study is beyond the scope of the present article, some observations about the ancient Indians are pertinent.

Bhagavad-gītā is dated to India's pre-Christian era (Luniya, 1978), which saw numerous clans dominating or trying to dominate north and central India. Journey metaphors are prominent because the ancient Indians explored the Indo-Gangetic plain and its rivers (Ganges, Saraswati, Yamuna) for agriculture, commerce, pilgrimage or war (Gaur, 2001, Luniya, 1978). Journeys were habitual to their lives and were suitable to conceptualize enlightenment in Bhagavad-gītā. Journey metaphors are also noted in the Quran because the ancient Arabs traveled frequently (El-Sharif, 2012). The ancient Indians perceived sight and taste, and since they farmed and fought wars (Gaur, 2001, Luniya, 1978), objects such as boats, weapons and fire formed part of their lives. Metaphors of sight, taste and objects relayed common experiences and were introduced in Bhagavad-gītā.

Moreover, the metaphors of enlightenment are noted in Prabhupāda's translation and his motivation merits deliberation. Prabhupāda translated several Hindu scriptures to preach Vaishnavism in English in Europe and North America during the 1960s and 1970s (Goswami, 2011). His primary readers were Westerners, who had little to no comprehension about Vaishnavism although the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) later distributed his translations in other regions. Prabhupāda's translation publicized Vaishnavism and embodied its principal beliefs and practices. The metaphors in his translation facilitated preaching about enlightenment to Westerners. Although the target

domain (enlightenment) was relatively new, the various source domains (journey, sight, taste, object) already existed in English, making the translation suitable for its time and place.

Prabhupāda's translation encourages people to pursue enlightenment because this life-changing decision is encouraged by Vaishnavism (Bhūrijana, 2007, Prabhupāda, 1986). ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY advocates devotion as faster and easier because Vaishnavism prioritizes devotion. It is the means and the end of enlightenment, and outshines the other methods (meditation, transcendental knowledge, virtuous acts), which are intermediaries to devotion (Bhūrijana, 2007, Prabhupāda, 1986). Devotion brings people to Paradise, a concept which is familiar to most Westerners. The knowledge metaphors contrast the spiritualist and non-spiritualist. Their relation ensures continuity for Vaishnavism, and it has continued through an unbroken chain of mentor and mentee for centuries (Gosvami, 1995, Goswami, 2011, Prabhupāda, 1986). Hence, the translation validates Vaishnavism (Robinson, 2006), which promotes the denomination to people unfamiliar with it. They become amenable to its beliefs and practices, and would be interested to learn about and ultimately join Vaishnavism.

CONCLUSION

The present article has analyzed metaphors of enlightenment in Bhagavad-gītā. The concept of enlightenment is structured by ENLIGHTENMENT IS A JOURNEY. Knowledge is indispensable to enlightenment, and KNOWLEDGE IS SIGHT, KNOWLEDGE IS TASTE and KNOWLEDGE IS AN OBJECT depict how people can acquire and utilize knowledge. These metaphors represent a typical way to conceptualize enlightenment in Bhagavad-gītā. It endorses four methods (devotion, meditation, transcendental knowledge, virtuous acts) to obtain the results of enlightenment, which terminate reincarnation and grant Paradise. Bhagavad-gītā lists two guides (mentor, scripture) although personal endeavor must be invested to move from matter to spirit. The choice of metaphors is traced to physical and cultural experiences, besides the motivation of the translator. The metaphors may be inspired by the human body or ancient India but they should resonate with modern people. Moreover, Prabhupāda's translation utilizes metaphors to make Vaishnavism comprehensible to Westerners and to validate the denomination.

Bhagavad-gītā is similar to Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Judaic texts because these religious texts employ metaphors to structure philosophical concepts. Yet, the article analyzed one English translation and its findings may not completely reflect Bhagavad-gītā in its original Sanskrit version or other translations. Future research can compare metaphors in translations in English and other languages. These translations imply specific perspectives of Bhagavad-gītā (Whaling, 1980), be it denominational, trans-denominational or non-denominational, and the influence of translation on metaphors should be examined (Charteris-Black, 2004). A plethora of Hindu texts remain to be explored, either in their original Sanskrit versions or other translations. Other religious texts, particularly for Indian religions (Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism) are worth analyzing because these religions also advocate enlightenment.

The article helps to explain the concept of enlightenment in Hinduism. It enables Hindus and non-Hindus to understand the religion better, and may foster inter-religious dialogue and comparative studies. The article promotes linguistics to study religious texts and develops the literature on metaphor in religious discourse. It strengthens the claim of the prevalence of conceptual metaphor in philosophy (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The study of metaphors can enrich the methodologies available for a philosophical or theological analysis of religious texts. It promises to contribute valuable insights to the study of religious discourse.

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