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Response Essay

**Dharma in The Bhagavad Gita**

The Bhagavad Gita, commonly referred to as Gita, is an epic Hindu scripture and is considered one of Hinduism's primary holy scriptures. The Bhagavad Gita describes duty as dharma, a moral code of conduct from the sacred task that one has towards the universe, the gods, and other people. Duty is a significant aspect of the text because it enhances a sense of responsibility from human beings and gives a fulfilling purpose. The text presents various scenarios that illustrate how specific individuals play their parts to fulfill dharma.

In the text, Arjuna is a warrior who follows his dharma despite the worry that he initially had that it was his duty to prevent himself from murdering his cousins, the Kauravas. Having moral ethics and performing as required per one's duties strengthens the bond between one and the divine. Because of Arjuna's dilemma on killing his family, he turns to Krishna for advice, not knowing that he is the reincarnation of the god Vishnu. The text demonstrates how to be selfless when performing one's duty where one has to recognize that everything comes from God and is connected through Him.

**Filial Piety in Monkey**

In Taoist ethics and Chinese Buddhist, filial piety is the Confucian virtue of respect accorded to one's ancestors, elders, and parents. In Chinese culture, children must offer respect, love, and support to their parents, professional superiors, family members, and elders. Filial piety plays a significant role in Chinese culture and is considered an essential moral tenet. It entails a potent form of deference and loyalty that is extensive to one's leaders and country.

In the text, *Monkey*, various religious figures such as Buddha, Kuan-yin, Lao Tzu, and the Jade Emperor. Despite Monkey being the king of all monkeys, he feels it is not enough and wants to be immortal. In searching for ways to be more powerful and immortal, Monkey disrespects various elders along the way. Monkey engages in constant battles against heaven, which gets him imprisoned. However, after learning the eternal secrets, Monkey became kind to his subjects, which shows that filial piety goes both ways. Buddha’s disciples show filial piety when he sends them to retrieve texts from the west to bring to the people in the east. Despite having different adventures, they still get back the teachings, and each is forgiven for the sin one had committed.

**Religious and Cultural Duty in Death and the King’s Horseman**

Wole Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman* is a text that provokes a lot of thoughts on the rich Yoruban culture. The text's religious and cultural duties are significant in exploring the cultural meaning of the Yoruba and illuminating their superstitious and spiritualistic side. To understand the text, one has to comprehend Yoruba’s quality of spirituality. Yoruba's rich culture is shown through Elesin's fine clothing, luxurious life, and rich food.

The first religious item mentioned in the text is an opele, which appears at the start of the play when Elesin speaks of the Not-I bird. The shell chain is used to seek knowledge supernaturally by dropping it, revealing a message from the gods, and solving community conflicts. Another item mentioned by Elesin is a sigidi, which has a more fearful, darker, and disturbing nature (Soyinka 13). The absolute meaning of the statement Elesin mentions is a bit unclear, but considering it appears within a death allegory and the term spell, the item is definitely spiritualistic and fearsome. Wole Soyinka insists that the text is not about the clash of the African and British culture. He makes an effort not to consciously put on equal perspectives the British culture that condemns Elesin and the Yoruba, and the Horseman ritual, which considers the tradition vital to its survival.

Works Cited

Soyinka, Wole. *Death and the King's Horseman*. WW Norton & Company, 2002.