



The Mahabharata

Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa , Bibek Debroy (Translator)

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The complete, unabridged Mahabharata The Mahabharata is one of the greatest stories ever told. Though the basic plot is widely known, there is much more to the epic than the dispute between Kouravas and Pandava that led to the battle in Kurukshetra. It has innumerable sub-plots that accommodate fascinating meanderings and digressions, and it has rarely been translated in full, given its formidable length of 80,000 shlokas or couplets. The magnificent 10-volume unabridged translation of the epic is based on the Critical Edition compiled at the Bhandarkar Research Institute. Volume 2 consists of the last part of the Adi Parva, the complete Sabha Parva and the early part of the Vana Parva. The story covers Arjuna's stay in the forest; his marriage to Subhadra; the burning of the Khandava forest; the Pandavas building the assembly hall and conquering the world; Yudhishtira's crowning as emperor; Duryodhana's envy at the Pandavas' prosperity; the two games with the dice; Draupadi's disrobing; Arjuna's encounter with Shiva; and ends with the Nala and Damayanti story. Every conceivable human emotion figures in the Mahabharata, the reason why the epic continues to hold sway over our imagination. In this lucid, nuanced and confident translation, Bibek Debroy makes the Mahabharata marvellously accessible to contemporary readers.

The Mahabharata Details

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From Reader Review The Mahabharata for online ebook

Pradeep T says

This series of Mahabharata book is way too hard to read. But once you read, you will get the elation of completing a mammoth task and feel happy. Mahabharata Critical Sanskrit edition translation works by Bibek Debroy is an amazing feat and every one should appreciate the effort that he has put in drafting this book. This volume 2 speaks about the Pandavas defeat in the Dyuta game i.e. the game of dice and their exile to the forest for 12 years. The book also covers some other stories that are connected to the Mahabharata event especially the stories of Nala-Damayanti. I believe it is one of the longest short stories narrated in this book apart from the main Mahabharata event. The book ends on the event where Arjuna ascends to the heaven after he successfully obtains the Pashupatastra. Overall, a fantastic tale and a fantastic narration. Soon shall begin to read the 3rd volume of this book.

Abhinav Agarwal says

This is the second volume of the author's unabridged translation of the Mahabharata, published in April 2011. It starts off from where the first volume had ended, naturally so, and completes the "Adi Parva", contains the entire "Sabha Parva", and contains about a quarter of the third parva, "Aranyaka". As per the 100-parva classification of the Mahabharata, this contains Parvas 16-32 ("Arjuna-vanavasa" to "Indralokabhigamana" parvas). Interestingly enough, the book starts off with Arjuna having to leave Indraprastha and ends with Arjuna again leaving the Pandavas for the heavens in search of divine weapons from his divine father, Indra.

My complete review at <http://blog.abhinavagarwal.net/2012/0...>

Naman Mukesh Chaudhary says

I have been waiting for a translation of the critical edition of the Mahabharat (MBh). Mr Bibek Debroy deserves special appreciation from all for the mammoth task he undertook despite being a professional and occupied with making a living as an economist.

The language is simple and the translator does not confuse us with lengthy explanations and back and forth referrals; any confusion arising out of the translation is implicit in the text. His introduction too is simple and frank; I am grateful to him for the clarification/s on translating the critical edition. In my view, this is a milestone in Indic studies. One request, to whoever is listening and is capable of fulfilling: we need a Hindi translation too. The MBh is a marvel of an epic but the flavour should come across more in Hindi than English. It would complete the circle, so to speak. Many thanks to Penguin and Mr Debroy again.

Tanuj Solanki says

The Humiliation of Draupadi

this is one of the many articles I've written based on this book in the New Indian express - slightly modified

After losing all material possessions in the dice game with Shakuni (who is playing on Duryodhana's behalf), Yudhistir begins to bet his relations. Nakul, Sehadeva, Bhima, Arjun, and then Yudhistir himself, are staked and lost. The last bet is Draupadi.

This is perhaps the most crucial point in the whole story - the utter humiliation of Draupadi in a sabha full of royal Kuru men and their advisors. At no earlier point in my reading have I been more moved (enraged, perhaps, is the better word) than I am after reading the Dyuta Parva of the epic, in which the atrocious dice game is described. In this country today, if it is a fact that a majority of the sexual violence faced by women is inside their own homes, then the story of Draupadi's humiliation in an assembly hall filled with her husbands and her in-laws is a testament to how deep-rooted the notion of treating women as chattel is.

When I shared my outrage after reading the Dyuta Parva on Facebook, a friend reminded me that it might not be correct to look at mythology with a 21st century lens. But the Mahabharata, I feel, has never been just mythology. Even if we ignore the insistence of some people to call it history (and we should, given that these people often go to absurd lengths to 'create' facts for their case, fueling belief in notions like the usage of nuclear weapons in the war, or the impregnation of women through divine energy, and so on), the fact that there exists an entire contemporary literature focused on refurbishing the Mahabharata as relevant to our times, whole bookshelves of semi-scholarly or commercial work intent on keeping the story 'alive', even to transpose its rather inane tactical or strategic maneuvers as management lessons for the modern corporate workplace, it is crucial that no part of it that is unacceptable as per current value systems be allowed to be inherited as is, without condemnation. And there is nothing in the Mahabharata deserving more condemnation than the toxic masculinity that results in Draupadi's humiliation at the hands of the Kauravas.

What saves Draupadi is not Krishna's extension of her garment but the paradox that she poses to the entire assembly, which is in turn based on two axioms. First, that wives are their husband's property. And the second, that slaves can't own property. If Yudhistir has lost himself in the game and become a slave to the Kauravas, how can he then bet Draupadi, who does not belong to him anymore? Yudhistir has to accept that he lied when he bet himself, or accept that he has lost his right on Draupadi. Since the first is impossible, it follows that at this point in the story, unless the Kauravas reject the Pandavas' servitude, Draupadi has been technically freed of her marriage with the five brothers.

I almost wish things had stayed this way.

Aravind Balaji says

Absolutely loved it.
The story of King Nala was spectacular!!
