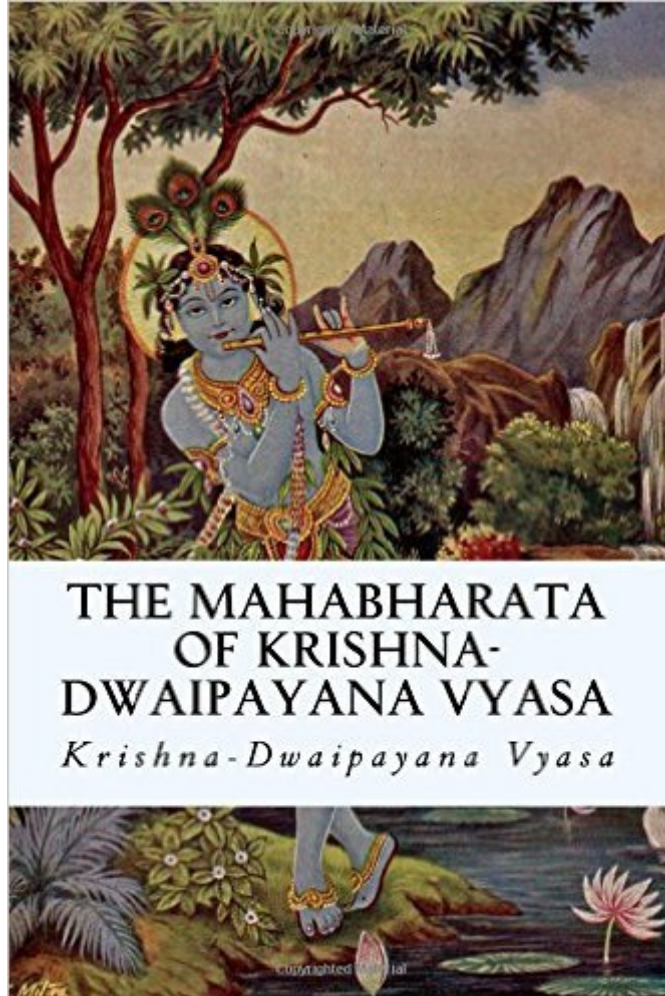


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The Mahabharata Of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa



Synopsis

The Mahabharata is one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India, the other being the Ramayana. Besides its epic narrative of the Kurukshetra War and the fates of the Kaurava and the Pandava princes, the Mahabharata contains philosophical and devotional material, such as a discussion of the four "goals of life" or purusharthas.

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Customer Reviews

I'm familiar with four translations of the Mahabharata. The first of these, that of C. Rajagopalachari (1951), contains a selection of over one hundred of the more interesting stories and episodes with interspersed comment. Rajagopalachari's translation is a joy to read. The quality of his English style is on a par with that of the finest English writers, and his vivid and dynamic versions of these stories capture much of their humor and poignancy, and have a real vigor, sparkle, and human interest. Anyone approaching the Mahabharata for the first time could do worse than start with this wonderfully readable selection. I wish I could say the same for the second and longer abridgement that came my way, that of Kamala Subramaniam (1965) in 766 large pages. Sadly, though one appreciates the effort that went into it, this is a book that I could not in good conscience recommend to anyone. Subramaniam seems to have had no grasp of English style at all. She has chopped each Sanskrit verse into small bite-sized pieces of English, and the staccato effect of her unending series of short, simple, unvaried sentences would, I think, weary any discerning reader. The third translation, and the only complete one I have, is that by Kisari Mohan Ganguli, published between 1883-1896. Mine is the economy paperback reprint in four stitched and sturdily-bound though poorly

printed volumes, and runs to over 5000 closely printed pages. Although not, of course, based on the recent critical Poona edition of the Sanskrit text, this edition should serve well enough as a reading text for anyone but a Sanskrit scholar.J.A.B.

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