



Mahabharata (Northwestern World Classics)

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Within its 200,000 verse lines in Sanskrit the *Mahabharata* takes on many roles: epic poem, foundational text of Hinduism, and, more broadly, the engaging story of a dynastic struggle and the passing of an age when man and gods intermingled. David R. Slavitt's sparkling new edition condenses the epic for the general reader.

At its core, the *Mahabharata* is the story of the rivalry between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, two related noble families who are struggling for control of a kingdom in ancient northern India. Slavitt's readable, plot-driven, single-volume account describes an arc from the conception and birth of Bhishma to that hero's death, while also introducing the four goals of life at the center of Hinduism: *dharma* (righteousness, morality, duty), *artha* (purpose), *kama* (pleasure), and *moksa* (spiritual liberation). The *Mahabharata* is engaging, thrilling, funny, charming, and finally awesome, with a range in timbre from the impish naivete of fairy tales to the solemnity of our greatest epics, and this single-volume edition is the best introduction available.

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