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Deepti SHARMA

Department of English
Lingaya's Vidyapeeth
Nachauli, Jasana Road, Faridabad, Haryana, India
deepti.rps@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29162/ANAFORA.v10i2.7>

Prethodno priopćenje *Preliminary communication*

Primljeno 9. listopada 2023.

Received: 9 October 2023

Priya RAGHAV

Department of English
Lingaya's Vidyapeeth
Nachauli, Jasana Road, Faridabad, Haryana, India
priyarahav@lingyasvidyapeeth.edu

Prihvaćeno 30. studenoga 2023.

Accepted: 30 November 2023

VYĀSA AND THE MAHĀBHĀRATA: AUTHORSHIP, INTERPRETATION, AND THE MULTILAYERED NARRATIVE

Abstract

The *Mahābhārata*, an ancient and timeless Indian epic of great literary significance, has undergone a substantial transformation throughout its existence due to the intricate interplay among numerous authors, translations, and retellings. This research article delves into an in-depth analysis of the intricate web of factors that have exerted influence on and brought about transformations in the interpretation of the *Mahābhārata* across diverse historical periods and within a multitude of cultural contexts. This paper aims to investigate the origins of the *Mahābhārata* and its early authorships. It will explore the diverse perspectives and interpretations that have contributed to the development of its intricate and multifaceted significance. This analysis places significant emphasis on the philosophical, moral, and sociopolitical aspects that are intricately interwoven within the epic. It aims to explore how these themes resonate with different historical periods and diverse audiences. This research study aims to explore the potential impacts associated with the translation and adaptation of the *Mahābhārata* into various languages. By examining the consequences of this process, the study seeks to shed light on the broader implications

and outcomes that may arise from such linguistic transformations. The present research endeavors to investigate the influence of linguistic nuances, cultural disparities, and translational decisions on the formation of divergent interpretations and portrayals of individuals, occurrences, and ethical dilemmas. The translations of the epic have not only facilitated its wider dissemination, but they have also engendered further layers of significance and reinterpretation.

Keywords: authorship, *Mahābhārata*, retellings, interpretation, Sage Vyāsa

Introduction

This research study aims to explore the various approaches employed by contemporary authors, playwrights, filmmakers, and artists in reimagining the epic genre as a means to address and explore current issues and concepts. The process of reinterpretation in the context of the *Mahābhārata* often involves the integration of novel perspectives, thereby yielding an altered interpretation that reflects the evolving societal values and narratives. This research paper aims to shed light on the dynamic character of the *Mahābhārata*'s significance and its enduring relevance in the age of globalization. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive analysis of various aspects related to the *Mahābhārata* will be conducted. The aforementioned statement underscores the intricate interplay between the original author's literary composition, the process of linguistic translation, and the act of creative retelling in shaping the lasting significance of the epic. In summary, the present inquiry highlights the *Mahābhārata*'s position as a vibrant cultural artefact, continuously subject to adaptation and evolution, all the while preserving its intrinsic and enduring wisdom.

The *Mahābhārata* is widely regarded as a highly intricate and multifaceted epic, renowned for its expansive portrayal of characters, exploration of various themes, and incorporation of philosophical nuances. The intricate narrative of the subject matter traverses a diverse range of subjects including history, mythology, ethics, and metaphysics. By seamlessly interweaving these elements, the narrative constructs a grand tapestry that surpasses temporal and cultural boundaries. The attribution of authorship to Sage Vyāsa, a revered scholar and seer, is a traditional element of the epic. It is mentioned in the *Ādi Parva* of the *Mahābhārata*, as follows:

लेखको भारतस्यास्य भव त्वं गणनायक ।

मयैव परोच्यमानस्य मनसा कल्पतिस्य च ॥ 77 (Dutt 23)

Become the author of this, India, and become the leader of the Ganas.
It was spoken by Me alone and conceived in my mind.¹

The subject matter of this text encompasses a comprehensive exploration of complex philosophical discussions pertaining to the concept of duty, commonly referred to as *dharma*, as well as the principles of righteousness, morality, and the fundamental nature of the human condition. The epic revolves around the struggle for the throne between two sets of cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas. As such, it is mentioned in Vishnu Sukthankar's *On the Meaning of the Mahābhārata* too.

On top of that, the narrative surrounding Karna, a multifaceted and sorrowful character, has garnered significant attention in numerous adaptations, delving into his internal conflict concerning his sense of self and allegiance.

Although the old epic has thus been spoiled by unlimited expansion, the leading incidents and characters of the real epic are still discernible, uninjured by the mass of foreign substance in which they are embedded—even those immortal marble figures which have been recovered from the ruins of an ancient world and now beautify the museums of modern Europe (Sukthankar 3).

The Attribution of Authorship

The attribution of authorship of the *Mahābhārata* to the Sage Vyāsa, as traditionally believed in ancient Indian mythology and tradition, holds significant historical and cultural significance. The Sage Vyāsa, alternatively referred to as Veda Vyāsa or Krishna Dwaipayana Vyāsa, is portrayed as the compiler and transmitter of Vedic knowledge, with his involvement in the composition of the *Mahābhārata* being a crucial aspect of his identity. The attribution of Sage Vyāsa's role in the composition of the *Mahābhārata* is primarily rooted in his profound comprehension of cosmic truths and his exceptional capacity to document the oral tradition. The *Mahābhārata* offers a comprehensive portrayal of human nature, intricate societal dynamics, and philosophical discussions (Anand 26).

The story of how the *Mahābhārata*, an important epic in the Hindu mythology, came to be written, is full of custom and myth. The most common story about how it was made says that the renowned Sage Vyāsa did it with help from

¹ All translations from the Sanskrit are by the authors.

the god Ganesha. In this old story, Vyāsa, a famous person in the Hindu literature and the author of many old texts, tried to put together the long and complicated story of the *Mahābhārata*. In order to write down the epic, the respected sage and author Vyāsa asked the god Ganesha, who is known for his knowledge and intelligence, for help. Vyāsa wanted to make sure that the dictation process went easily so that the epic's content could flow smoothly onto the transcription means. Ganesha agreed to help Vyāsa with the job at hand, as long as Vyāsa read the verses without stopping or pausing. This event led to the famous "Vyāsa–Ganesha Samvaad," which is a conversation between Vyāsa and Ganesha in which Vyāsa tells Ganesha about the epic, and Ganesha writes it down.

The attribution of authorship to Vyāsa serves as a significant indicator that he assumed multiple roles within the narrative framework. Not only did he undertake the task of recounting and composing the story, but he also emerged as an active participant in the very events he documented. Thus, the *Mahābhārata* is replete with profound insights, extensive knowledge, and a profound connection to the divine, all of which contribute to its spiritual depth and profound philosophical contemplation. The *Mahābhārata* is, consequently, a literary work that encompasses a vast array of narratives, philosophical teachings, and historical events. It is crucial to acknowledge, however, that the composition of the *Mahābhārata* did not originate from the efforts of a solitary individual, but that it rather emerged through a collaborative process involving multiple authors and contributors. The epic duly acknowledges the invaluable contributions of sagacious individuals, adept storytellers, and accomplished writers who have played an instrumental role in shaping its present form and substance. The present discourse endeavors to elucidate the manner in which collaborative efforts manifest the evolution and expansion of oral traditions as they traverse the course of intergenerational transmission.

The *Mahābhārata* and the Ancient Indian Writing Traditions

The ancient Indian writing traditions diverged from the Western notions of individual authorship, exhibiting distinct perspectives on the concept of authorship. The premise of this concept was founded upon a collective and dynamic notion of expressing ingenuity. During the historical period under consideration, it was a common practice for the texts to be authored collaboratively by a collective of individuals. In the realm of ancient civilizations, the recognition and attribution of intellectual contributions were bestowed upon a diverse array

of individuals, including sages, rishis, writers, and even deities. These esteemed figures were acknowledged for their significant contributions to various domains of knowledge and creative endeavors.

The concept of authorship has historically been regarded as a means of transmitting sacred knowledge and preserving cultural customs. The ancient texts known as the Vedas have long been regarded as divine in origin, believed to have emanated from a higher power. These sacred scriptures were traditionally transmitted through an oral tradition, carefully preserved and passed down from one generation to the next. The aforementioned statement highlights the collaborative efforts of multiple individuals in ensuring their survival. The composition of renowned literary works such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* can be attributed to the collaborative efforts of a collective of individuals. Throughout numerous generations, a multitude of sages and poets have made significant contributions to the body of literature by incorporating various narratives, myths, and moral teachings into these written works. As we have previously mentioned, the compilation of the *Mahābhārata* is attributed to the revered Sage Vyāsa; however, it is important to note that Vyāsa did not single-handedly author the entire epic. The individual in question proceeded to organize and disseminate the narratives.

The collaborative authorship of the book serves as a testament to the interconnectedness of individuals and the collective nature of knowledge acquisition. The concept of anonymity held significant prominence within the historical literary traditions of ancient India. In the realm of literary composition, numerous works, particularly those of a philosophical nature, have been crafted in the form of dialogues between sagacious individuals, wherein the primary emphasis lies on the impartation of wisdom rather than the personal identities of the authors responsible for their creation. The transition from individual authorship to a collective approach highlighted the significance of information itself. The enduring legacy of the *Mahābhārata* is thus rooted in its remarkable capacity to inspire a plethora of retellings and adaptations, each of which presents distinctive viewpoints and interpretations that mirror the cultural, social, and ideological contexts of their respective creators (Ganguli).

What is more, Rishi Vyāsa published this mass of knowledge both in a detailed and in an abridged form, as it is the wish of the learned in the world to possess the detail and the abridgment. Some read the Bharata beginning, with

the initial mantra (i.e., invocation), others began with the story of Astika, and still others with Uparichara, while some Brahmans study the whole. Men of learning display their various knowledge of the institutes in commenting on the composition. Some are skillful explaining it, while others are skillful in remembering its contents (Ganguli).

The array of adaptations serves as a testament to the remarkable adaptability of the epic and its ability to connect with various audiences throughout different periods and geographical locations. The *Mahābhārata* has been subject to numerous retellings in various languages across diverse regions of India. This includes adaptations in languages such as Tamil, Bengali, Marathi, and Kannada, among others. The incorporation of local flavors, idioms, and cultural nuances in linguistic adaptations enhances the narrative's depth and richness. The aforementioned adaptations serve to underscore the all-encompassing nature of the themes found within the epic, while concurrently rendering it more accessible and relatable to distinct regional demographics. The *Mahābhārata* has accordingly been subject to diverse interpretations by various religious and philosophical traditions, each seeking to align its teachings with their respective beliefs. In certain adaptations, a notable emphasis is placed on the exploration of individual characters' narratives, wherein their motivations, inner conflicts, and personal development are meticulously portrayed.

In recent years, there has been a notable surge in the exploration of the *Mahābhārata*'s relevance to contemporary issues through various adaptations. This paper aims to examine the significance of these adaptations in shedding light on the enduring relevance of the *Mahābhārata* in modern times. By analyzing the ways in which this ancient epic has been reimagined and reinterpreted, we can gain a deeper understanding of the enduring themes and moral dilemmas that continue to resonate with audiences today. The present study aims to explore the potential utilization of characters and situations from epic narratives as a means to address contemporary social, political, and moral predicaments (Bhagdīkar). These adaptations can serve as a bridge between the past and the present, offering valuable insights into the complexities of our world.

The *Mahābhārata* and the Barthesian “Death of the Author”

As Roland Barthes mentioned in his essay “The Death of the Author,” we now know that a text is not a line of words releasing a single “theological” me-

aning (i.e., the “message” of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture (146).

The *Mahābhārata* has served as a profound source of inspiration for various artistic expressions, encompassing diverse media such as dance, theater, and visual arts. This significant text has captivated the creative minds of countless individuals, leading to the creation of numerous artistic works that draw upon its rich narrative and profound themes. Through the transformative power of artistic interpretation, the *Mahābhārata* has transcended its literary origins, permeating the realms of performing arts and visual representations, thereby establishing itself as a perennial muse for artistic endeavors. The utilization of various artistic media allows for the expression of distinct interpretations, employing elements such as movement, visual imagery, and performance to effectively communicate the fundamental themes encapsulated within an epic narrative. In recent years, there has been a notable trend in adaptations that aims to address the historical marginalization of female characters. These adaptations have sought to grant these characters agency and delve into their unique perspectives. By doing so, they contribute to a broader understanding of the complexities and nuances of female experiences within various narratives. The aforementioned interpretations presented in this discourse serve to question and contest the conventional patriarchal narrative that is deeply ingrained within the epic. Thus, these alternative perspectives provide novel and thought-provoking insights into the dynamics at play within the narrative.

In recent years, there has been a notable emergence of adaptations that have sought to amplify the voices of marginalized and subaltern communities. These adaptations have undertaken the task of reimagining epic narratives from the perspective of these communities, thereby offering a critique of the dominant power structures that are inherent in the original texts. The extensive range of retellings and adaptations of the *Mahābhārata* serves as a testament to the intricate and multifaceted essence of this epic narrative. The emergence of various interpretations is a result of the intricate dynamics between historical, cultural, ideological, and artistic factors.

The *Mahābhārata* as a Source of Inspiration

The *Ādi Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* (ch. 1.1.26) signifies that this epic has been previously told by the poets, is being told by others now, and will be told by various narrators in the future:

आचख्युः कवयः केचित्संप्रत्याचक्षते पटे ।

आख्यास्यन्ततिथैवान्ये इतहिस्ममिं भुवि ॥ 26 ॥ (Dutt 19)

Some poets have told it, while others recount it.

Others on Earth will relate this history in the same way.

The fact that the *Mahābhārata* was passed down orally has major effects on the idea of authorship. In ancient India, the most important way to keep and spread information was through the oral tradition. Stories like the one of the *Mahābhārata* were passed down from one family to the next by being told out loud and being remembered. This way of sharing information questions the idea of individual authorship in the West. In the setting of the *Mahābhārata*, authorship is less about one person and more about the work of many people over hundreds of years. As the story moved from one place to another, the oral custom allowed for changes, improvisations, and new versions. Because the epic was always changing, the author was not just one person. Instead, it was a group of storytellers, sages, and viewers who helped it grow. The fact that the spoken word is more important in oral practice than the written text makes it harder to tell who wrote what. The storyteller's identity became part of the story itself. This created a dynamic in which the storyteller's style, interpretation, and personal impact shaped the story. This shared part of authorship fits with *Mahābhārata*'s focus on the wisdom of many different points of view.

The enduring appeal of the *Mahābhārata* has resulted in its adaptation in various forms, thereby showcasing its timeless relevance and adaptability. Throughout the course of numerous centuries, the epic Indian literary work known as the *Mahābhārata* underwent a significant transformation as it transitioned from an oral tradition to a written form. The written renditions of the epic, although serving to document its content, also incorporated aspects of editorial choices and interpretation made by the scribes and compilers.

The narratives of the *Mahābhārata* have been extensively portrayed through a diverse range of visual art forms, including paintings, sculptures, and murals.

The present analysis aims to explore the various adaptations of the epic, focusing on their visual interpretations of scenes and characters. It is noteworthy that these adaptations frequently incorporate cultural and artistic styles representative of diverse historical periods.

The *Mahābhārata* has served as a rich source of inspiration for various literary expansions throughout history. These expansions encompass a wide range of forms, including commentary, abridgments, and retellings. The original *Mahābhārata*, with its intricate narrative and profound philosophical insights, has captivated the minds of scholars and writers, leading to a multitude of creative adaptations that seek to explore and interpret its timeless themes. The *Mahābhārata* has been expanded upon in the realm of literature, shedding light on the significance and impact of these adaptations. Throughout the ages, numerous intellectuals from various disciplines have contributed their valuable insights and interpretations to the themes encapsulated within the epic. In such a way, the *Mahābhārata* has garnered significant attention and appreciation over the years. Its timeless narrative and profound philosophical themes have led to its adaptation in various traditional performing arts forms, including dance, theatre, and puppetry. These adaptations have not only served as a means of preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the epic but have also provided a platform for artistic expression and interpretation. The present adaptations under consideration effectively integrate various artistic elements such as movement, music, and dialogue, with the primary objective of enlivening the epic narrative within the theatrical realm. In contemporary times, numerous literary works have emerged wherein authors have sought inspiration from the characters and themes of the *Mahābhārata*. These works encompass various forms of literature, including novels, short stories, and poetry.

By employing the lens of the *Mahābhārata*, the writers delve into contemporary issues and offer insightful perspectives. The advent of the Digital Age has introduced novel dimensions to the realm of *Mahābhārata* adaptations. The contemporary media landscape offers a diverse range of platforms and media through which individuals can engage with epic narratives. This includes video games, animations, web series, and podcasts, which have emerged as innovative and immersive forms of storytelling. These media not only provide alternative avenues for experiencing epic narratives but also offer unique opportunities for audience interaction and participation (Sukthankar).

Mahābhārata's Stratification

As a result of his erudite research, Sukthankar, as a versatile scholar, expressed his conviction that, in the *Mahābhārata*, we have the pieces belonging to very different periods and of very different color and content, having thus endorsed the conclusions of Franz Bopp (“Analytical Comparison”). Sukthankar tried, therefore, to separate the various strata and date them—a very hazardous venture at any time (5).

Therefore, in the various adaptations under consideration, it is evident that the notion of authorship exhibits a dynamic and collaborative nature. The *Mahābhārata*, a timeless epic of ancient Indian literature, has captivated audiences across various artistic media. From the strokes of painters to the words of playwrights, novelists, and digital media producers, creators have sought to imbue their own distinct interpretations and viewpoints onto the intricate tapestry of this literary masterpiece. The enduring legacy of the epic resides in its capacity to incite a multitude of adaptations while upholding its fundamental themes, thereby exemplifying the malleability and versatility of its authorship. The way the *Mahābhārata* talks about writing is similar to how Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault in the West think about it. Even though these ideas and the epic come from different cultures, there are some interesting similarities and differences in how they look at who wrote what and why. The way people usually think about authorship is challenged by Barthes’ theoretical framework, which argues that the author’s intentions are no longer important once a text has been made. Most people think that the author’s purpose is the most important thing to know when interpreting and analyzing a piece of literature. This point of view questions that idea. By shifting the attention from the author to the text itself, Barthes’s theory makes us rethink the relationship between the author, the text, and the reader. This, in turn, changes how we usually talk about authorship in literary discourse. In this case, the attention is on the readers and how they interpret the text, which puts them in the center. The *Mahābhārata* exemplifies the aforementioned perspective through its collaborative and progressive authorship. The communal nature of storytelling is a prominent aspect emphasized by the various contributors and oral tradition of the epic. In this context, the intention of a single author holds less significance compared to the interpretation and long-term impact on audiences.

In Lieu of A Conclusion; or, a Foucaultian “Auctorial Function”

As proposed by Michel Foucault (“What”), the concept of the author’s function posits that the construction of an author’s identity and intentions is contingent upon various factors such as institutional frameworks, discursive practices, and historical contexts. The oral tradition of the *Mahābhārata* serves as a significant reflection of the epic’s identity, authorship, and meaning, which have undergone a gradual transformation over the course of several centuries due to the contributions of various individuals, changes in cultural perspectives, and the evolution of narratives. The concept of the author’s function is characterized by its dispersion among multiple individuals who contribute to the creation of a work, thereby complicating the process of attributing authorial intention to a singular figure.

The acknowledgement of the complexity of authorial intention is a shared perspective among Western theorists and the *Mahābhārata*. Both sources recognize the intricate nature of understanding the intentions behind a literary work. The notion of authorial intention has been subject to scrutiny by Western theorists, who question its singularity. However, in the case of the *Mahābhārata*, the presence of diverse voices and dialogues within the narrative serves as a reflection of multiple perspectives. In both instances, the concept of intentionality assumes a collaborative pursuit that is subject to the influence of various societal, historical, and cultural elements.

The *Mahābhārata* exhibits a treatment of authorship and intention that bears resemblance to certain elements found in Western theories of authorship. Specifically, the *Mahābhārata* challenges the notion of singular authorship and instead highlights the significance of collective interpretation. This parallel between the *Mahābhārata* and Western theories underscores the universality of these concepts across different cultural contexts. The *Mahābhārata* presents a notable focus on ethical teachings, duty, and the role of the divine. These elements introduce novel perspectives that have not been extensively explored in Western theories. Moreover, the communal and evolving authorship of the *Mahābhārata* aligns with the poststructuralist concepts put forth by Barthes and Foucault. Additionally, the spiritual and moral dimensions of the epic contribute a unique layer to the ongoing discourse on authorship and intention. By questioning the accepted Western ideas and stressing the diversity of authorial responsibilities and intents, research on the authorship of the *Mahābhārata* contributes vital

insights to the larger conversation on literary authorship. Discussions over authorship and interpretation in the modern era are profoundly affected by the narrative structure of the *Mahābhārata*. In Foucault's words,

[i]t has been understood that the task of criticism is not to reestablish the ties between an author and his work or to reconstitute an author's thought and experience through his works and, further, that criticism should concern itself with the structures of a work, its architectonic forms, which are studied for their intrinsic and internal relationships. (301)

The collaborative and developing nature of authorship in the *Mahābhārata* presents a challenge to the conventional perception of authorship as an individualistic endeavor. This statement emphasizes the notion that the process of literary production frequently involves collective participation, shaped by a variety of perspectives, cultural backgrounds, and historical changes. This perspective is consistent with contemporary discourse that highlights the influence of cultural, social, and historical elements on the formation of texts and the intents of authors.

The narrative structure of the *Mahābhārata* fosters a multitude of interpretations through its incorporation of complex stories, open-ended conversations, and varied perspectives. This aligns with current literary theories that prioritize the reader's active involvement in the process of meaning-making. The adaptability of the epic to many situations and temporal settings highlights the dynamic interplay between the text, its author, and the reader. The *Mahābhārata* effectively integrates historical occurrences, mythological components, and philosophical discussions while obscuring the boundaries between objective reality and imaginative storytelling. This statement aligns with the ongoing scholarly conversations on the permeable demarcations between the truth and imagination within the realm of literature. This phenomenon promotes the investigation of how the authors incorporate a wide range of sources in order to construct tales that include intricate levels of significance.

What is more, the narrative structure of the *Mahābhārata* frequently revolves around ethical quandaries, moral instruction, and philosophical discourse. This inquiry prompts a consideration of literature's function in conveying moral instruction. The examination of authorship and interpretation in current discourse can be enhanced by the inclusion of literature, such as the *Mahābhārata*, as a means of transmitting ethical perspectives. The *Mahābhārata* encompasses

a wide array of individuals who exhibit intricate motivations, hence mirroring the intricate nature of identity. In the context of a modern society characterized by the prevalence of identity politics, an analysis of how the epic genre develops and deconstructs the identities of its characters can serve as a valuable contribution to ongoing dialogues surrounding issues of representation, power dynamics, and individual self-expression. The transmission of the Mahābhārata through oral tradition might be seen as analogous to the dynamic nature of knowledge dissemination in the digital age. Both challenge conventional notions of authorship and offer chances for a wide range of voices to influence narratives. This analogy has the potential to initiate discussions regarding the impact of technology on the concept of authorship and the distribution of artistic creations.

In conclusion, the investigation into the authorship of the *Mahābhārata* contributes to the scholarly conversation surrounding literary authorship by presenting a distinctive viewpoint that questions established conventions. The narrative structure of the epic invites contemporary discussions regarding various aspects, such as the role of readers, the interplay between myth and reality, ethical dimensions, identity construction, and the impact of technology on authorship. These topics have become significant areas of inquiry in the field of literary analysis and have garnered considerable attention in recent years. By examining the epic's narrative structure through the lens of these themes, scholars, and researchers. The *Mahābhārata* thus continues to captivate and influence a wide range of audiences. Its enduring impact is particularly evident in the field of contemporary literary studies, where its teachings on authorship continue to reverberate.

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VYĀSA I MAHĀBHĀRATA: AUTORSTVO, TUMAČENJE I VIŠESLOJNA PRIPOVIJEST

Sažetak

Deepti Sharma

Department of English
Lingaya's Vidyapeeth
Nachauli, Jasana Road, Faridabad, Haryana, India
deepti.rps@gmail.com

Priya Raghav

Department of English
Lingaya's Vidyapeeth
Nachauli, Jasana Road, Faridabad, Haryana, India
priyarahav@lingyasvidyapeeth.edu

Mahābhārata, drevni i bezvremenski indijski ep velikog književnog značenja, doživio je bitnu transformaciju tijekom svog postojanja zbog zamršene međugre brojnih autora, prijevoda i prepričavanja. Ovaj istraživački članak bavi se dubinskom analizom zamršene mreže čimbenika koji su utjecali i doveli do transformacija u tumačenju *Mahābhārata* kroz različita povijesna razdoblja i u mnogim kulturnim kontekstima te ima za cilj istražiti ishodište *Mahābhārata* i njezina rana autorstva. Istraživat će različite perspektive i tumačenja koja su pridonijela razvoju njezina zamršenog i višestranog značaja. U analizi se stavlja značajan naglasak na filozofske, moralne i sociopolitičke aspekte koji su složeno isprepleteni unutar epa te istražuje kako su te teme usklađene s različitim povijesnim razdobljima i raznolikom publikom. Cilj je rada proučiti potencijalne utjecaje povezane s prijevodom i prilagodbom *Mahābhārata* na različite jezike. Ispitujući posljedice tog procesa, rad nastoji rasvijetliti šire implikacije i ishode koji mogu proizaći iz takvih jezičnih transformacija. Istraživanje nastoji proučiti utjecaj jezičnih nijansi, kulturnih razlika i prevoditeljskih odluka na formiranje različitih tumačenja i portretiranja pojedinaca, pojava i etičkih dilema. Prijevodi epa ne samo da su olakšali njegovu širu distribuciju, nego su također iznjedrili daljnje slojeve značaja i reinterpretacije.

Ključne riječi: autorstvo, Mahābhārata, prepričavanja, tumačenje, mudrac Vyāsa

