

Krishna's development as god in mahabharata



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Krishna is an enigma in Mahabharata. In this paper I'll talk about the development of Krishna's character from being a Yadava chief to the creator and God in Mahabharata. I'd like to begin with examples that are there throughout Mahabharata that depict Krishna as a normal human being and how slowly his position as God is revealed in the epic. We see Krishna first appearing in Mahabharata during Draupadi's swayamvara. He witnesses it as Arjuna's distant cousin and makes all the arrangements for it. He is shown as the head of Yadava clan which traces its lineage from Yadu, who was the son of Devyani and Yayati. Krishna is raised by milkmen and has had a miraculous childhood which is added later on in Mahabharata as a separate appendix called as Harivamsa. Krishna acts as Arjuna's dear friend who guides him at every step and takes the responsibility of Pandava's actions. He is a great statesman and if anything, he appears to be a devious diplomat. His flaws are human, and he bends Dharma conveniently to make Pandavas win the war and establish the higher good. Krishna's is a very utilitarian perspective as he also states in one of his sermons to Arjuna during the war; he says that means don't matter till the end is good. He is a manipulator and adjusts Dharma according to his will. One of the best examples of this is when Bhima has to fight with Duryodhana, Krishna realizes that if Bhima fights according to Dharma he will not win. Thus, he advises Bhima to hit Duryodhana's thigh with the mace with which he ultimately falls and loses the duel. Balrama gets really upset with Krishna who gives two different explanations to Balrama and Pandavas to justify the unlawful killing of Duryodhana. To pacify Balrama, he tells him that Bhima had taken a vow of breaking Duryodhana's thigh during the deceitful game of dice when Draupadi was disrobed in front of the whole Sabha. To

Pandavas he gives an entirely different explanation that the higher good could not have been established if Bhima fought lawfully. Krishna, therefore, comfortably manipulates both the parties and keeps his say in the end. Also there is the story of sage Utanka who regarded Krishna as Vishnu's avatara and was also unaware the great battle of Kurukshetra had taken place. He therefore asked Krishna with confidence if the Lord had been able to prevent the devastating war. When the hermit learns what had actually happened he gets depressed and accuses Krishna of all the evil doings. He blames Krishna for having let the war happen in the first place when he being the God could have easily stopped it. Gandhari places similar accusations in Krishna when all her sons die and Kuru dynasty is left without a heir, she questions what kind of a God he is and curses him that his clan would also get destroyed without a heir. Krishna again accepts all the curses and accusations like a human being and not a God. A god is supposed to be omnipotent and makes sure that justice is done in the end. However, in Mahabharata Krishna's character is mysterious and he accepts in front of Utanka how powerless he was to stop the devastating war. And that no matter what he did, the war was meant to happen and he only made sure that the right side won and got justice. Though both Pandavas and Kauravas were at fault somewhere or the other and greed, hatred and jealousy were the main evils that caused hostility and took Kauravas to such an extent that they tried to disrobe Draupadi in front of everyone. This was the last straw which finally caused the war and Krishna by means of hook and crook tried his best to see that justice is done in the end. Krishna also establishes himself as human when in the end he tells Yudhishtira in a long speech that they have won the war, against all the odds just because of plain luck and not through the

omnipotence of Krishna. Even the death of Krishna in Mahabharata is very human or perhaps he chooses to die like that. He dies of an arrow that strikes his foot while he was meditating in the forest. Even this throws light on Krishna being a human and not really a God in the epic. (Ref: stories taken from discussion in the class and the article Essays on Mahabharata by Arvind Sharma). Now I'd throw light on Krishna's position as God which also becomes of great importance in Mahabharata. It is only through Krishna that we come to know what the status of dharma really was in those times when he talks about it to Yudhishtira and Arjuna in different sections of the epic. He explains Dharma during Bhagwad Gita and guides Arjuna during the war. It is from Vanaparva, where Yudhishtira goes to Markende and he tells him that Pandavas don't need to worry as they are following the right path and will be rewarded in the end. He acknowledges Krishna as the creator and tells them that he is the creator and destroyer of the world. Their destinies are already known to omniscient Krishna who is playing this leela to save the world from adharma. Also during the war, it is Krishna who tells Arjuna how he can kill Dronacharya who was undefeatable, they go against the Dharma because Krishna tells him to do so and Yudhishtira lies for the first time just because Krishna asks him to. He takes the responsibility of their actions and convinces them that whatever they are doing is right. Krishna also gets Duryodhana killed by crook and justifies his actions by using Dharma as a weapon. One thing that makes him God is that he knows things that nobody knows and even without actually fighting the war he wins it through his divine knowledge. Then we have instances when Durvassa comes to visit Pandavas in the forest and Draupadi calls Krishna for help because she doesn't have any feast ready for so many people. Krishna appears in front of

<https://assignbuster.com/krishnas-development-as-god-in-mahabharata/>

her and eats the last grain of rice which fills the stomachs of all the sages and thus saves Pandavas from getting cursed by Durvassa. Then Krishna saves Draupadi in the Sabha where Yudhishtira loses her in the game of dice and Duhshasana tries to disrobe her. She again prays to Krishna who comes to Draupadi's rescue and supplies her with endless sari which Duhshasana is not able to take off. Krishna also shows his Vishwarupa twice; once when Duryodhana denies him to meet Dhrutrashtra when Krishna visits Hastinapur to try to reconcile both the parties and prevent the war. He gives Dhrutrashtra temporary eyesight to witness this elaborate and powerful side of Krishna. Next is on the battlefield where Krishna again shows his divine form, Vishwarupa to Arjuna during Bhagwad Gita when he tells him that he is the creator and that all Kauravas and Pandavas have already been destroyed. He opens his mouth and shows their dead bodies and also admits that later it would be his and Yadava clan's turn which would also get destroyed like this. Also in Bhagwad Gita his dialogue ' sambhavami yuge yuge' literally means that he exists in every generation for he is the God, the creator. He also states in Bhagwad Gita that he'd keep taking birth in different avatars to save the world from adharma and injustice. Throughout Mahabharata he acts as an inner manipulator of every being and brings about intended destruction to ensure the good end in the epic. Krishna thus establishes himself as God in the epic. Due to his dual character, that of a normal human being and Arjuna's friend and counselor to that of God and creator - makes him the biggest mystery of Mahabharata, he is an enigma, a paradox who is most complicated to understand in the whole epic.