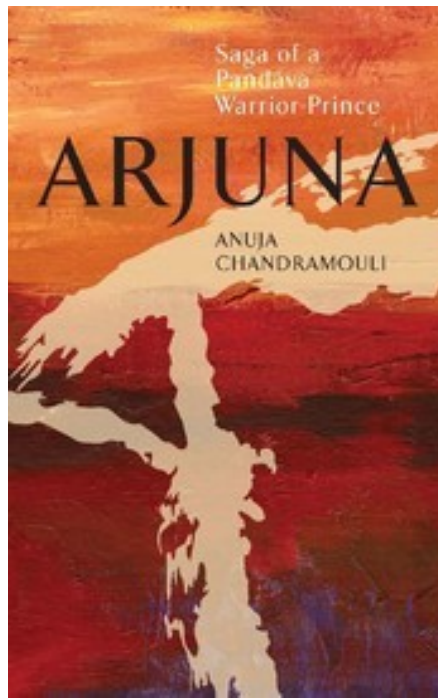




Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince

Anuja Chandramouli

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Arjuna is the immortal tale of one of India's greatest heroes. These pages retell in riveting detail the story of the Pandava Warrior-Prince who has captured the imagination of millions across centuries. This is the intense and human story of his loves, friendship, ambitions, weaknesses and follies, as well as his untimely death and revival, his stint as a eunuch, and the innermost reaches of his thoughts. Told in a refreshingly modern and humorous style and set against the staggering backdrop of the Mahabharata. Arjuna's story appeals equally to the average, discerning reader and the scholar. It spans the epic journey from before his birth, when omens foretold his greatness, across the fabled, wondrous landscape that was his life.

Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince Details

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From Reader Review Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince for online ebook

Jaideep Khanduja says

<http://pebbleinthestillwaters.blogspot...>

Book Review: Arjuna by Anuja Chandramouli: Huge Restitution Before The Final Journey

Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince ARJUNA by Anuja Chandramouli has been excellently stitched and smartly handled the mighty complex story of Mahabharata. Right since the childhood of an Indian few epic characters are so powerfully earmarked in his mind that they never go off right through his entire lifecycle. Arjuna is one of those characters that we start encountering during our early childhood days. Arjuna is one of the strongest characters of the mythological epic Mahabharata.

Arjuna by Anuja Chandramouli focuses Arjuna on the central stage with all other significant characters playing around. The story tells about Arjuna's love, friendship, learning, achievements, struggles, fights, wars, and tough times in his life. This well researched story has been written in a modern style with the basic theme of Mahabharata. The book begins with a select cast of characters that will definitely help you in getting a brief of each character well in advance before jumping into the pond. I did refer to it at times while reading this interesting book. This book is a long journey starting with forefathers of Arjuna and taking you through the complete lifecycle of Arjuna. A great amount of information related this the epic mythological Mahabharata that you will not be aware of, is presented here in this book.

Overall if you see, Mahabharata is one of the most complex sagas in Indian Mythology. The story of Mahabharata is too complex, about the births and deaths, about relationships, about marriages and children, about their counts etc; that you certainly get lost at some or the other turn while riding through this journey. Few points that I would like to highlight regarding this book - Arjuna, and the writer - Anuja Chandramouli are listed below:

1. It is well appreciating on part of the author to take up this challenging task of handling such a complex story keeping in mind present day's readers mindset and thus presenting it in a modern style and penning it down in a 360 odd pages interesting read.
2. The sequence and inter crossing of incidents makes reader lose the track while reading, though best of the efforts have been made by the writer in handling it. Incidents happening at a later stage are told earlier thereby creating a little confusion.
3. I wished if this story had been written in a narrative style with 2 or 3 main characters in line - Arjuna, Krishna and Duryodhana. This way it would have become more interesting and would have removed some of the boredom encountered during the current style of reading. This would required an entirely different style of writing, though!
4. Few of the words were totally off the track and did not match with the seriousness of this epic mythological drama. For example using 'babes' in place of 'babies' made it a matter of laugh and shelved off all the seriousness the story was carrying.
5. Intense style of writing loses track at many instances and all of a sudden you start feeling you are reading a normal story with all seriousness and intensity lost.

6. Despite some shortfalls I would recommend this book to all readers interested in Indian Mythology as it delivers lot of important information about Arjuna and other characters of Mahabharata.
 7. A glossary at the end is definitely going to help you.
 8. Sequencing of 21 chapters in this 360 odd pages book has been done superbly.
-

Indiabookstore says

This 360-page dedication to Veda Vyasa, truly the finest storyteller ever, is solely a retelling of the tale of Arjuna, the valiant warrior of Hindu mythology, and his role in Mahabharata. Mahabharata is by itself a tale with a magical mix of emotions which renders any reader mesmerized. However, the uniqueness of this book lies in fact that the author retold this tale in a simple, quick and fascinating manner.

Though prior knowledge of Mahabharata partially ruined the reading experience for me, anyone who doesn't know much about Mahabharata and Arjuna would surely find this very captivating. In the last eight chapters, many times I found myself unfathomably immersed in the proceedings of the book. So much, that when Abhimanyu and Karna died, I literally cried. And slowly, as I came down the emotional cliff, I stood there wondering whether it was the author's writing or charm of the epic that made me cry. Though I believe it was the latter, fluid and strong-woven writing in this book cannot be denied of its deserved credit...

For the full review, visit [IndiaBookStore](#).

Namitha Varma says

This was just 'Mahabharata Retold'. There were but mere parts in Arjuna's point of view, and just ending the story with his POV DOES NOT make it his story! I was expecting something of the range of 'Second Turn' by MT Vasudevan Nair, a rendition of Mahabharata in Bheema's POV, a true timeless classic. But this fell short of my expectations by light years. The narrative is patchy at times, and the language is hardly contemporary. There is hardly any new information of the Mahabharata even - I mean, for those who watched BR Chopra's epic production 'Mahabharat'. The only parts I really enjoyed and liked were those where Karna's story and POV is narrated. The writer could have at least explored a different rendition style or a true POV.

Privy Trifles says

Every time you read about some mythological character the author carries a risk, because we all have grown up with a healthy dose of mythology with stories being told since childhood. We have already formed opinions about them and now all of a sudden trying to change or maybe the right word would be to make you re-look at that opinion is not an easy task. And here I must commend the first timer author Anuja Chandramouli's attempt. She has done an exemplary job in describing Arjuna which is uniquely different than the Arjuna we all had known and witnessed in the Mahabharata.

When you read about such characters you tend to put them on a pedestal and look up to them but what the author portrays here is that despite being a God he was like any one of us who erred, made wrong decisions

and repented them later trying hard to rectify. Reading this book was quite an eye opener for me, for there were many revelations in store. I was pleasantly surprised by quite a few of them. The beauty of this book is the fact that there is no particular order that the author chooses to follow. She goes back and forth in her narration trying to give reasons and logic behind incidents and behaviours making it one enticing read.

It is fascinating to see how some simple incidents which had us in awe sometime back right now after reading this book make us relook at it in disbelief. The author has brought out the real Arjuna very well in her descriptions and I would definitely give her full marks for this. I somehow loved the ending a lot. It was reminiscent of so many things related to life and yet so touching! I am sure had there been any other ending I would perhaps would not have liked the book this much.

Kudos to the author for having written such an excellent tale as a debutante! And yes she has raised the bar for herself... strongly recommended for people who enjoy reading history and mythological genre but a warning don't read this with your own pre-conceived notions expecting reaffirmation of the same things. Though this book tells the same tale it is surely a different take on it and hence should be read with a fresh mind and open perspective.

Vinay Badri says

Sigh, nothing new here. Just a retelling of the Mahabharata with really no new perspectives or angles. Sorely disappointed

Abhinav Shrivastava says

When I first read the title of the book and saw the cover (good work their too) I was under the impression that it would primarily be Arjuna's story or Mahabharata from Arjuna's perspective but unfortunately it is not so. It is Mahabharata retold and there are very few stories about Arjuna that are new (or new to me at least). The latter half of the book talks so much about Krishna that it sometimes appear that the book is about Krishna. Similar problems figure at different places within the book and many times you would wonder where is Arjuna in all this?

The author tried to include a little bit of everyone's story and that is where it all went wrong. I didn't want to read Mahabharata again, I wanted to read about Arjuna- the greatest warrior the world has ever produced, his personality, his traits, his rights, his wrongs that are yet unknown.

And though the writing is technically very good and the book reads very easy, the author fails to stir emotions for the protagonist in reader's heart and mind. I didn't feel anything for Arjuna, no sorrow, no happiness, nothing at all. It fails for a reader like me. You as an author need to make me feel it, make me happy, sad, laugh with the characters.

Complete review on my blog: <http://bit.ly/16YiAPP>

Shalini says

The most important thing about my reviews of any book is having felt satisfaction after reading the last word. And this book did leave me quite satisfied. Now, here are the things to love/hate about the book:

Love:

1. It got me hooked just like Janmejaya, who always wondered about his illustrious great-grandfather.
2. I liked how the author didn't make him completely idealistic and fault-less (honestly, I expected it that way for some reason) On many occasions, his faults were highlighted with the metaphoric neon signs, which irritated me, as a reader. His pride most of all would make you roll your eyes. But I liked it, because if the story didn't point out his faults, I wouldn't have liked it.
3. His friendship with Krishna. In the end, you would realise that Arjuna was Arjuna, because of Krishna, and that no one has control over fate, over what will be happen. You may hate that fact as much as you want, fill your heart with venom because you can't change things, but you will have no control, whatsoever, over what is pre-destined for you. And if you realise that, you'll find endless peace in your life.
4. I loved that segment where Karna was compared to Arjuna. They're in fact very similar, but opposite sides of the same coin. Karna's story makes you actually like the magnanimous but naive, ignorant Duryodhana as well. Loved, the way the author makes you understand where Duryodhana comes from as well, especially when in one scene Duryodhana was more likeable than Arjuna. That showed that in the end, there is no right/wrong. Just Dharma and Adharma.
5. His love for his beloved ones, was most interesting to read about in this story. Be it his wife, brothers, Krishna, mother, etc.
6. An especially cute scene towards the end where he gets scared of Gandhari, is most endearing! Haha!

Hate:

1. Disregard for Draupadi's story. I felt like Draupadi was inserted in the storyline in a very haphazard manner because the author remembered "Oh! His first wife! Gotta write about her as well!" A lot of incidents that occurred between the two were also missing, especially the events that shaped their lives, like where Arjuna catches Yudhishtira touching Draupadi's feet while she was sleeping. It was an interesting scene, and the author didn't mention it. :|

Anyway, I'd rate it 3.5/5. It was a cool read.

Pooja says

I had already read Jaya by Devdutt Pattanaik, so this one wasn't what I expected it to be.

However, there were few things I came to know about Arjun, like origin of his names, Vijay, because he had not and never will lose battle, Parth because of his mother Pritha, Arjuna because of his unblemished countenance and many more.

Those will find this book beneficial who have not read any modern-day fiction on Mahabharat or Ramayana.

Divya says

This book cheats the reader of the full experience of reading the Mahabharata. When you read or watch the Mahabharata, as it is properly told, you go through a variety of human emotions, you feel for the tragedies and victories of the glorious characters. This book for one, has structural issues. In the first half of the book, it jumps around a lot, giving background stories for everything and while it is informative of the author to do that, it does not make for the best reading experience.

Also, the book reads more like a straight told summary of the Mahabharata than a book about Arjun and his own opinions and thoughts. The book is simpler than it needs to be, the writing is once again, a little too simple. (This could be called a very, very simple re-telling of the Mahabharat perhaps for people who are looking for easy reads?)

Surprisingly, I did not *feel* anything while reading this. The Mahabharata has many climactic scenes which have always been close to the reader's heart - the death of Abhimanyu, the tragedy of Karna, etc. But this book always seemed like the author was in a rush to tell the story. It did not pause for drama, so to say, and that really took away from the reading experience.

I would not recommend this book to anyone. I would in fact recommend that the author maybe go back to this book and re-write it with improved writing, structure, detail, description, etc.

When you read this book, you are "informed" of the stories of Arjun but you do not feel them and that is why this was such a disappointing read. I hope to read improved prose by this author in the future.

Vismay says

‘Arjuna – Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince’ by Anuja Chandramouli is a healthy if temporary respite from the slew of over-dramatized, barely-researched, ‘so-called’ modern renderings of the Indian classics which have become run-of-the-mill, cash cows for the publishers. Book Stores/ Libraries are inundated with these books and their shelf life, as such is pretty low.

But this book stands out, for the reasons mentioned below:

1. Sticks to the story
2. Author does not enmesh her fantasy into the basic plot, nor does she try to add more spice
3. the book does not excessively demonize/eulogize any character
4. A crisp and lucid retelling (much similar to C. Rajagopalachari’s retelling of the epics)

This book is a careful narration, a blow-by-blow account, of the life of the third Pandava – the not quite indisputably, greatest archer ever, Arjuna. The painstaking research of the author shows through the pages as we are transported back to that holy age where Gods deemed it fit to take Avatars to rid the Earth of the demons galore.

We have, of course, vicariously lived the lives of Bhishma, Drona, Arjuna, Yudhisthir, Draupadi, Bhima, Duryodhana, Karna and all the other characters – the many recitals in the lap of our Grandma, Ramanand Sagar’s televised rendition, the various ‘Illustrated Mahabharat for Children’ we read and of course, the philosophical discourse on karma, causality and how difficult is it to be good, being some of the means through which we have kept the legend alive and kicking.

Mahabharat is imbued in the blood stream of all Indians.

Much of the allure that the legend holds is due to the fact that it is imperfect. All characters are flawed and their actions subject to various interpretations. No other legend would have been as much scrutinized or carefully sifted through as this must have been. This book might not have a takeout message (others might

say, it has multiple!), but it can be definitely divined through any of the various lens you care to look through. And you can choose not to accept. Gita is not a religious propaganda, it is a philosophical discourse - you either accept it or not, it is upto you.

And Ms. Chandramouli has stayed true to the spirit of Mahabharat. Though she writes about the Gandeeva wielding, champion of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, she by no means lavish tremendous praise on our hero. Even, Arjuna can be conceited; even Arjuna can wallow in the pool of hubris. The author could have easily glossed over the fact, like so many of us Indians like to do (we like Arjuna damn too much to not ignore his failings). But she did not.

I recommend you to read this book to get a well-informed account of Arjuna. It is engaging, entertaining and informative – all at the same time.

Bookish Indulgences with b00k r3vi3ws says

Dabbling with Indian Mythology is in and you will not hear me complain about it. Indian Mythology has always interested me. It started with my mother and grandmother telling me stories as a child and the interest still continues. And you have to admit that they are much more appealing than the not-so-heart-warming-love-stories that have flooded the market. I mean it is not really difficult to choose between titles like ‘Of Course I Love You! Till I Find Someone Better’ and ‘Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior – Prince’... I’d choose my warrior prince every single time.

‘Arjuna’ is a character from Mahabharat that has always intrigued me. I mean his dedication to the art of archery is really commendable. He had me at the incident when during his lessons he saw only the bird’s eye instead of everything else like those around him. So, while picking up this book, I had really high expectation from it.

Anuja Chandramouli has expertly woven in the story of Arjuna’s life in this novel with her crisp language and smooth flow of writing. The chapters were clear and each complete in its own right. It was almost easy to imagine that I was reading a series of short stories relating to the same cast. Yet they connected and complimented each other very well to form a novel that can claim some acclaim.

The problem that comes when you are playing with such mythological characters is the fact that these characters have always been a part of our lives and we all feel that we know them, be it through the school curriculum or through B.R.Chopra’s Mega serial. Picking up a book about him, I already had an image of Arjuna in my mind. The author here has stuck to portraying Arjuna as we all know him. The stories narrated are also the ones that we have always known about him. She has stuck to the original version and has only added interesting bits of titbits here and there. Though that fact made it more comfortable for me to read the book, I couldn’t help but wonder if there could have been more to the book had the author chosen to take a different approach.

Overall, it surely made for an interesting and entertaining read.

Meghant Parmar says

Its a grand epic and for a debut novel it has been written amazingly well by the author.

When u see our history there's a lot which has been said and written and some people have come up with their own point of views.

Criticism is a part and parcel of writing but not when u capture the emotions of a character which lived thousands of years ago.

An author always gives their best shot to present the story in best of the manner and Anuja mam has done it perfectly. :)

There are no flaws in the novel. Narration is excellent. Its just that u have to see the history through Arjuna's eyes this time and its a very bold attempt.

People need to give some credit to the author for presenting the facts and not modifying it for her own benefit. :)

Its not a modern day rom com where u can work ur way out with various ideas.

Very well written and thumbs up for the presentation. :)

The cover of the book is excellent. :)

VaultOfBooks says

By Anuja Chandramouli. Grade: B+

Arjuna

Arjuna is the immortal tale of one of India's greatest heroes. These pages retell in riveting detail the story of the Pandava Warrior-Prince who has captured the imagination of millions across centuries. This is the intense and human story of his loves, friendship, ambitions, weaknesses and follies, as well as his untimely death and revival, his stint as a eunuch, and the innermost reaches of his thoughts. Told in a refreshingly modern and humorous style and set against the staggering backdrop of the Mahabharata. Arjunas story appeals equally to the average, discerning reader and the scholar. It spans the epic journey from before his birth, when omens foretold his greatness, across the fabled, wondrous landscape that was his life.

This book was sent to me by the author herself for the purpose of review for VoB – I took my time getting to read this one, as I was still enamored by the starkly vivid world of Acacia created by David Anthony Durham in the concluding volume to the famed Acacia trilogy.

Arjuna brought me back to India. And how. Back to the world I've always loved right from my first brush with India's finest epic fantasy known to one and all as the MahaBharata. And I say this again, against the backdrop of this vast and fantastically detailed epic, of late I've seen countless stories spring up. And not a

single one do I tire of.

Anuja's triumphant debut lays out in lavish detail the life of the greatest warrior of the epic Mahabharata times, the pandava prince Arjuna. Fast read, written in a competent prose and the action keeps moving along at a steady clip. There are no surprises here; we've grown up on this story, right? So I was curious to see how differently she treated this one.

Well, for starters you might argue that by singling out Arjuna alone, who arguably enough hasn't seen his fair share of the mytho-fantasy book-mentions or devotee-vote banks, she has got it right. A book dedicated to the exploits of the greatest archer/warrior of the MBH story written from his point of view, Arjuna is a definite page-turner. It helps that Arjuna being the most gifted archer of the lot, gets involved in most of the interesting action that happens in these times. Most of the initial parts of the book focuses on the character growth of Arjuna as he grows into his inheritance, the tag of being the greatest warrior. In the beginning though, Anuja takes her time setting up the context to the birth of the Pandavas – the narrative zips across events blurring timelines and it didn't help that the author hopped from one event to the other instead of building it up chronologically. Maybe this was deliberate but I personally felt it jarred a little. But quickly sifting through the tumultuous childhood of Pandavas and Kauravas, Anuja takes through Arjuna's journey to the Naga lands, the eastern provinces (Manipur), the famous Draupadi Swayamvar, his quest for celestial weapons that pits him against Gods and Asuras alike, his exile and the year spent as a transvestite dance teacher – all forming a nice pattern weaving into the larger scheme of things, building up towards the formidable eighteen-day war that is the final confrontation between the cousins, the Kauravas and Pandavas.

This is touted to be an often hilarious rehash of the Mahabharata times through the lens of Arjuna – while for most parts the story reads like a documentary with minimal fictional intervention, the latter half of the novel that concentrates on the war is a bit more lively – interspersed with dialogues and action. As is expected, you cannot really do justice to the larger story arc without bringing in viewpoints of other major characters in this titanic struggle for power. So Anuja deftly weaves in interesting side stories of Krishna, Karna and Drona, among the many other colorful characters who lent vibrancy to the proceedings.

This is another of those books that stands tall on the shoulder of giants – well researched and competently delivered. Anuja's prose is lively and drives the narrative forwards in spurts – Perhaps a slow start that chugs along in the middle and really picks up heated pace towards the latter halves. But it doesn't really deliver anything new to the table. If you haven't read any MBH versions before, you are definitely in for a treat. Rajagopalachari's Mahabharata still remains my favorite any day – Govinda brought a new spin to the proceedings – mixing fact with fiction and magic. Ashok Banker's retelling now with three parts out crowds the bookshelves of most retail bookstores. So in a world where everybody is scampering to cash in on the hype and success created by the rich landscape of India mythofantasy, Arjuna is more of the same wine in a slightly new bottle. Arjuna is probably an incredibly stereotypical protagonist and the plot is also very predictable due to its own been-there-done-that qualities. That being said, I realize that not everything has to be new, fresh and inventive to be enjoyable. Go soak yourself in those wonderful times again – where Gods walked the earth and the best of us got a chance to wield weapons against evil and triumph against odds.

Originally reviewed at <http://vaultofbooks.com/>

Paromita Bardoloi says

It is never easy for an author to pick up a character of the Mahabharata and write a novel on it. Mahabharata itself is so well etched in our psyche that etching a character out of it, is never easy. Anuja Chandramouli

brings in the story of Arjuna in her book with the same name.

To be honest Ved Vyas has carved each character so complexly and with so many shades to them, that it might even take a lifetime to perfectly understand one character as a whole. Arjuna is the hero, he has all the traits to rise above his destiny including the one of being a prince, however he is equally human and flawed. That is the best part of this book. Chandramouli has not tried even once to portray Arjuna as a super human or a demi God. Chandramouli's Arjuna is flesh and blood and therefore one can relate to it.

In the book, the author has not added much of her own. In most part it is retelling of the Mahabharata. It begins with the Janamejaya, son of Parikshit and grandson of Arjuna who was ailing and Ved Vyasa authorizing his disciple Vaishampayana to narrate the whole Mahabharata to him. It is through the eyes of Arjuna. Though there are a lot of moving back and forth in the stories, yet the writer should be credited of maintaining the flow. Though most of the stories are well known, yet something like Arjuna's rendezvous with Hanuman is lesser known, that it was a delight reading about it. It could have been a brighter book, had the author tried more to prod into the psyche of Arjuna and retold everything through his emotions rather than retelling what is well known.

The book is well written, the language and presentation being simple. Even if one is not well versed with the epic, reading this book won't make them feel lost. This book is specially recommended to the people who are born in the nineties and after, because they were not there when B R Chopra's Mahabharata left every Indian breathless and when they were growing up, stories and books were slowly being replaced by the Internet and video games. And for the others, I suggest, winters are here, you won't really mind a cup of chai and a date with Arjuna. Come on, he is one man we can never get too much of. Mark this book as your winter read. Not something you will regret.

Avanthika says

Although Arjuna lives a life of brave warrior in the hearts of million Indians, I would call him a weak-indecisive soul. He can never make it to my heart, no matter what it takes. He had everything that other princes of his time longed for. He was marked favorite by the big shots of his time which ultimately resulted in the victory of Pandavas in Kurushetra war.

But, his indecisiveness I call it, paved way for a lot of troubles.

Arjuna_The Saga Of Warrior Prince by Anuja Chandramouli is just another rendition for Mahabharat, and this time it is from Arjuna's point of view. The thing that distinguishes this one from the other books is that, this one discusses deeply about the other wives of Arjuna :P ! Repetition of known stories left me yawning. On the whole, I did not understand whether the author glorified him or trolled him ! This book is a huge let down for all Arjuna fanatics !

If you want to read Vyasa Mahabharat once again, go for this one.
