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Nota di contenuto Preliminary Material / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter One.

Draupad'S Hair / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Two. Draupad's Garments / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Three. iva, The Goddess, And The Disguises Of The Pndavas And Draupad / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Four. Purity And Auspiciousness In The Sanskrit Epics / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Five. The Folklore Of Draupad: Srs And Hair / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Six. Orders Of Diffusion In Indian Folk Religion / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee --

Chapter Seven. Draupad Cult Lls / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee --

Chapter Eight. Colonialist Lenses On The South Indian Draupad Cult / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Nine. Review Of Landscapes Of Urban Memory / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Ten. Draupad's Question / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Eleven. Dying Before The Mahbhrata War: Martial And Transsexual Body-Building For Aravn / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Twelve. Hair Like Snakes And Mustached Brides: Crossed Gender In An Indian Folk Cult / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Thirteen. Kttntavar: The Divine Lives Of A Severed Head / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter

Fourteen. Kttntavar's Cross: Making That Young Bride, Whoever She Is, A Widow / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Fifteen. The Indus Valley "Proto-iva": Reexamined Through Reflections On The Goddess, The Buffalo, And The Symbolism Of Vhanas / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Sixteen. Fathers Of The Bride, Fathers Of Sat: Myths Rites, And Scholarly Practices / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Seventeen. Two Ways To Tell A Story: Ih In The Bhavisya Purna / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Eighteen. Boar And Twins: Comparing The Tulu Kti-Cennaya Pddana And The Tamil Elder Brothers Story / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Nineteen. On The Handling Of The Meat And Related Matters: Two South Indian Buffalo Sacrifices / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Chapter Twenty. Transmitting Mahbhratas: Another Look At Peter Brook / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Bibliography / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee -- Index / V. Adluri and J. Bagchee.

## Sommario/riassunto

Explicitly acknowledging its status as a str-dra-veda (a Veda for women and the downtrodden), the Mahbhrata articulates a promise to bring knowledge of right conduct, fundamental ethical, philosophical, and soteriological teachings, and its own grand narrative to all classes of people and all beings. Hiltebeitel shows how the Mahbhrata has more than lived up to this promise at least on the ground in Indian folk traditions. In this three-part volume, he journeys over the overlapping terrains of the south Indian cults of Draupad (part I) and Kttavar (part II), to explore how the Mahbhrata continues to be such a vital source of meaning, and, in part III, then connects this vital tradition to wider reflections on prehistory, sacrifice, myth, oral epic, and modern theatre. This two volume edition collects nearly three decades of Alf Hiltebeitel's researches into the Indian epic and religious tradition. The two volumes document Hiltebeitel's longstanding fascination with the Sanskrit epics: volume 1 presents a series of appreciative readings of the Mahbhrata (and to a lesser extent, the Rmyaa), while volume 2 focuses on what Hiltebeitel has called "the underground Mahbhrata," id est, the Mahbhrata as it is still alive in folk and vernacular traditions. Recently re-edited and with a new set of articles completing a trajectory Hiltebeitel established over 30 years ago, this work constitutes a definitive statement from this major scholar. Comprehensive indices, cross-referencing, and an exhaustive bibliography make it an essential reference work. For more information on the first volume please click here.