Here is a new Clay Sanskrit Library translation of Volume One of “Shalya,” Book Nine of the great Indian epic the Maha·bhárata. “Shalya” portrays, in grand style, the last day of the great battle between the Káuravas and the Pándavas, recounting in gory detail the final destruction of King Dur·yódhana and his army.

This, the first of the book’s two volumes, focuses on Shalya’s short-lived role as general of Dur·yódhana’s army. Shalya had previously fought as the charioteer of the great hero Karna. However, after Árjuna’s slaughter of Karna—to which Shalya himself contributed as a favor to the Pándavas—the Káurava army becomes leaderless and Shalya, tempted over to the Káuravas’ side by his weakness for luxury and wealth, is consecrated as its general.

Martial speeches, heroic duels and bloody massacres abound on the battlefield, until finally Shalya is killed by King Yudhi·shthira, in accordance with the inexorable proceedings of fate. At Shalya’s death, King Dur·yódhana flees and takes refuge in a lake.
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MAHA-BHÁRATA IX – SHALYA

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3–5
SURRENDER REJECTED
sañjaya uvāca:

3.1  Sṛṇu rājann avahīto yathā vṛtto mahān kṣayaḥ
    Kurūṇaḥ Paṇḍavānāṁ ca samāśadya parasparam.
    nihate sūta-putre tu Paṇḍavena mahā-ātmanā,
    vidruteṣu ca saīneṣu samāniṣṭeṣu ca āsakṛt, 
    ghore manusya-dehānām ājau nara-vara-kṣaye.
    yat tat Karṇa hate Pārthaḥ simhaṁ-ṇādam athi ākarot
    tadā tava sutān rājan prāviṣat su-mahād bhayam. 
    na sandhātum anikāṇi na c’āiv’ āthā parakrame
    āsid buddhir hate Karṇa tava yodhasya kasya cit. 

3.5  vañjito nāvi bhinnāyām aģādāh viplāvā iva
    aipāre pāram icchanto hate dvīpe Kiriṭinā. 
    sūta-putre hate rājan vītrastāḥ śara-vikṣatāḥ
    ajaṁthā nātham icchanto mṛgāḥ simhaṁ-arditā iva.
    bhagnaśrīgā iva varṣāḥ śīraṇa-daṁśtra iva’ōraṅgā
    pratuyāyamaḥ* sāyāhāne nirjītāḥ Śavyaśacānā. 
    haṭapraurā vīdhvastā nīkṛtā niśitāḥ śāraiḥ
    sūta-putre hate rājan putrasing te prādravāṁs tataḥ. 
    vīdhvasta-kavacāḥ sarve kāṇḍiśiṅkā vicetasāḥ
    anonyam abhinighnānto vikṣamānā bhayād disāḥ. 

3.10 «māṁ eva nūnaṁ Bhāhatsur māṁ eva ca Vṛkodaraḥ
    abhiyāt’ iti” manvānāḥ petur mamlus ca Bhārata.
SÁNJAYA said:

LISTEN CAREFULLY, Your Majesty, to how a great slaughter took place between the Kurus and the Pándavas after they clashed together.

When the heroic Pándava had killed the charioteer’s son, and the troops were repeatedly fleeing and rallying, there was a terrible carnage of human bodies in battle and the destruction of excellent men.* When the son of Pritha shouted a lion-roar at Karna’s slaughter, a huge fear overtook your sons, Your Majesty. Indeed, after Karna died, not one of your warriors had the resolve to control their regiments, let alone show courage in battle.

They were like merchants who were without rafts after being shipwrecked in the ocean, and who sought the shore in the boundless sea after their island had been destroyed by diadem-adorned Arjuna. Wounded by arrows and terrified after the death of the charioteer’s son, they yearned for a leader—leaderless as they were—and were like deer hounded by a lion, Your Majesty. Like bulls with broken horns or snakes that had had their fangs removed, we returned in the evening, defeated by Savya-sachin.

When their hero was slaughtered, your sons fled at the death of the charioteer’s son, crushed and lacerated by sharp arrows, O king. Fearfully looking in every direction, they even began to kill each other as they all ran away madly, their armor destroyed. Thinking, “It is I whom Bibhátsú* is chasing! It is I whom Vrikódata* is chasing!” they fell and languished, descendant of Bharata.
aśvān anye gajān anye rathāṇ anye mahārathāḥ
dūrtyuḥ javāṣampannāḥ pādātān prajahur bhayātt.
kuṇjāraḥ syandanaḥ bhagnāḥ sādinaḥ ca mahārathaḥ.
padarīṣaṅgahaḥ c’ āsvāughāḥ palyadbhir bhṛṣam hatāḥ.
vālaṭkaśaṃkīrṇe ś’āṛthaiḥinā yathā vane
tathā tvadīyā niḥate sūtaṇpute tadd” ābhavan.
hat’ ārohaḥ tathā nāgāś chinnaḥastās tath” āpare
sarvaṃ Pārthaiḥmaṃ lokam apaśyaṃ vai bhayārditāḥ.

3.15
tān prekṣya dravatāḥ sarvāḥ Bhāmasenaḥ/bhayā’ārditān
Duryodhanaḥ ‘tha svamḥ sūtaṃ hāḥākṛtv” āvivam abravit:
“n’ āṭikramisyate Pārtho dhanuṣpāṇiṃ avasthitam
jaghane yuddhyamānaṃ māṃ. tūrṇam aśvān pracadaya!
samare yuddhyamānaṃ hi Kaunteyo māṃ Dhanaṅjayaḥ
n’ ēṛsahe’ āpy atikṛntum velām iva māḥ” āṛṇaṃvāḥ.
adya’ Ārjunāṃ sa’Govindaṃ māṇināṃ ca Vṛkoḍaram
niḥatyā śitaṅ śatṛūṃs ca Karṇasyā’ anṛṣyam āpnuvām.”
tac chrutvā Kurusājasya śūr’āṛya’ṣaḍṛṣṭāṃ vacaḥ
sūto hemaparicchannāṃ śanair aśvān acodayat.

3.20
gaj’ āśva’vraṭaḥ/hinās tu pādātās c’ āiva māriṣa
paṅcaviṃśatiśaḥastrāḥ prādryavaḥ śanakair iva.
tān Bhāmasenaḥ saṃkṛuddho Dhṛṣṭadyumnaḥ ca Pāṛṣataḥ
balena caturaṅgeṇa parikṣipy’ āhanac charaiḥ.
pratyayudhyaṃs tu te sarve Bhāmasenaṃ sa/Pāṛṣataḥ
Pārtha’Pāṛṣatayoś c’ ānye jagṛḥus tatra nāmaṇi.
Abandoning the foot soldiers in their fear, some mighty warriors climbed swiftly onto horses, others onto elephants, and others onto chariots. Chariots were crushed by elephants, and horsemen by huge chariots. Hordes of infantrymen were brutally killed by packs of fleeing horses.

When the charioteer’s son died, your soldiers resembled people that had lost their caravan in a forest full of animals and thieves. Elephants that had lost their riders, or that had had their trunks lopped off, viewed the entire world as being permeated by the son of Pritha, so stricken were they with fear. When he saw that his men were all fleeing and stricken with fear of Bhima-sena, Dur-yodhana shouted loudly and said this to his charioteer:

“The son of Pritha will not overcome me if I stand in the rear and fight, bow in hand. Drive on the horses quickly! Dhanan-jaya,* the son of Kunti, will not be able to conquer me when I fight in battle, just as the great ocean cannot surpass the shore. Today I will remove my debt to Karna by killing Arjuna and Go-vinda,* as well as proud Vrikóda and my other enemies, too.”

Hearing the king of the Kurus say these words—so suitable to a heroic noble—the charioteer gently urged on his gold-decked horses.

Then, my lord, twenty-five thousand foot soldiers slowly advanced forward, men who had lost their elephants, horses and chariots. Angry Bhima-sena and Dhrishta-dyumna, the grandson of Príshata, surrounded these troops with their fourfold army and began to slaughter them with their arrows. The foot soldiers, however, all fought back against

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*Sanskrit text from the Mahabharata*
akruḍhyata raṇe Bhīmās tair mṛdeḥ pratyaṇavasthitaiḥ.
so 'vatīrya rathāt tūrṇaṁ gāḍāpāṇiṁ ayuḍhyata.
nā tān rathajstho bhūmiśṭhān dharmāpekṣi Vṛkodaraḥ
yodhayām āsa Kaunteyō bhujavīryam upāśritaḥ.

3.25 jāta-rūpaparicchannāṁ pragṛhya mahātiṁ gāḍām
nyavadhitī tāvakān sarvān dāṇḍaipāṇiṁ iv' Āntakaḥ,
pādātayo hi saṁrābdhās tyaktajīvitaṁ bāndhavāḥ
Bhīmam abhyadravan saṁkhya pataṅgag īva pāvakaṃ.
āsādyā Bhīmasenaṁ te saṁrābdhā yuddhaḍurjmaḍaḥ
vinesuḥ sahasā dṛṣṭā bhūtaigrāmā īv' Āntakam.
śyenavad vyacarat Bhīmaḥ khadgena gādaṇā rathā
paṅca-viṁśatiṣṭhānasāṁ tāvakānāṁ vyapoṭhayat.
harvā tāt puruṣāḥ ānīkam Bhīmaḥ satyaparākramah
Dhṛṣṭadyumnaḥ puraṅkṛtāḥ puṇas tathau mahābalaḥ.

3.30 Dhanāṅjayo rathāḥ ānīkam anvapadyata vīryavān
Mādrīputrau ca Śakuniṁ Sātyakiś ca mahābalaḥ
javen' abhyapataṁ hrṣṭā ghnanto Dauryodhanaṁ balaṁ.
tasyāśvajāhān suḥbāhuṁ te nihatyā śītaṁ śrāvaṁ
tam anvadhaṁ vīṁśaṁ tvartitaḥ; tatra yuddhaṁ avartata.
SURRENDER REJECTED

Bhima-sena and the grandson of Príshata; some even challenged them by calling out their names.

Bhima became filled with battle-fury against these men who confronted him in war. Descending quickly from his chariot, he fought them, mace in hand. Relying on the strength of his arms, Vrikó dara, the son of Kuntí, fought according to the rules of warfare by not standing on his chariot against men that stood on the ground. Taking his enormous gold-covered mace, he slew all your soldiers as if he were Death wielding his staff.

At their kinsmen’s loss of life, the enraged foot soldiers charged against Bhima in battle, like moths flying into a flame. When they attacked Bhima-sena in their rage, the troops—although difficult to conquer in battle—perished as soon as they saw him, like creatures who look upon Death. Bhima swooped like a hawk with his sword and mace, and crushed those twenty-five thousand of your troops. After destroying that division of men, mighty Bhima—who has truth as his strength—once again took up position behind Dhrishta-dyumna.

Powerful Dhanan-jaya, meanwhile, moved against the chariot division, while mighty Sátyaki and the sons of Madri* swiftly rushed with joy against Shákuni, slaughtering Dur-yódhana’s army as they did so. After slaying multitudes of Shákuni’s horsemen with their sharp arrows, they quickly charged against Shákuni himself. A battle then ensued in that area.

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*Madri is a character in the Mahabharata.
tato Dhanañjayo rájan rath‘áni kam agáhata 
viśrutam triśu lokeśu Gándivam vyáksipan dhanuḥ.
Krṣṇaśārathim áyántam dṛṣṭvā śvetahayaṁ ratham
Arjunaṁ c‘ ápi yoddhāraṁ tvadīyāḥ paryávārayan.
vipraḥináratth‘áśvāś ca śaráś ca pariváritāḥ
pañcāvīṃśatīsahasrāḥ Partham árchan padátayaḥ.

3.35 hatvā tatr puruś‘áni kaṁ Pañcālānāṁ mahārathāḥ
Bhimasenaṁ puraśkṛtya na cirāt pratyadṛśyata,
mahādhanurśharaṁ śrīmān ámitra-gañāśamardanaḥ
putraḥ Pañcālārajasya Dhṛṣṭadyumno mahāyaśaḥ.
párvataśalavṝ̄ṇaśaśvaṁ kovidāra-varadhvajam
Dhṛṣṭadyumnanno raṇe dṛṣṭvā tvadīyāḥ prādhravan bhayāt.

Gándhāra-rājāṁ śīghr‘āstram anusṛtya yaśasvinau
ačirāt pratyadṛśyetaṁ Māḍrīputrau sa Satyakau.
Cekitānā Śikhaṇḍi ca Draupadeyāś ca márīṣa
hatvā tvadīyāṁ suṁmahat sainyaṁ śākhāṁ ath‘ ádhaman.

3.40 te sarve tāvakāṁ preksya dravato vai paraṁmukhāṁ
abhyaḍhāvanta nighnanto vrṣāṇi jītvā vrṣā āva.

sen‘āvaśeṣaṁ taṁ dṛṣṭvā tava putrasya Pāṇḍavaḥ
avasthitam Savyasācī cukrodha balavan nṛṣpa.
tata enaṁ śarai rājan sahasa samavākirat
rajasā c‘ ódgaten‘ atha na sma kiṁ ca na dṛṣṭaye.
andhakārikre loke śaribhūre mahiṣṭale
dīṣāḥ sarvā mahārāja tāvakāḥ prādhravan bhayāt.

60
Dhanan-jaya penetrated the chariot division, Your Majesty, firing his Gandiva bow, which is renowned throughout the three worlds. Seeing the white-horsed chariot approaching, with Krishna as its driver and Árjuna as its warrior, your soldiers surrounded it. Twenty-five thousand infantrymen confronted the son of Pritha, even though they were deprived of their horses and chariots and enveloped by arrows. But Dhrishta-dyumna—that famous prince of Panchála who wields a mighty bow, that glorious destroyer of enemy hordes and great warrior of the Panchálas—was soon seen slaughtering that division of troops with Bhima-sena in front of him. Your troops fled in fear when they saw Dhrishta-dyumna in battle, his horses the color of pigeons and his standard made of fine kovidāra material.

Sátyaki and the glorious sons of Madri were soon seen attacking the king of Gandhára, whose weapons are swift. Chekitána, Shikhándin and the sons of Dráupadi destroyed your great army, my lord, and then blew their conches. On seeing that all your men were fleeing with their backs turned, they chased after them, killing them like bulls conquering bulls.

The Pándava Savya-sachin then grew angry when he saw the remainder of your son’s army still standing firm, mighty king. He violently covered them with arrows, Your Majesty, and nothing was visible from the dust that arose. The world became dark and the earth turned into arrows. And your men fearfully fled in every direction, great king.
bhajyamāneśu sarveṣu Kurūṛaja viśāṃ pate
paresām ātmanāś c’ āiva saînaye te samupā德拉vat.

3-45 tato Duryodhanaḥ sarvān ājuhāv’ ārtha Pāṇḍavān
yuddhāya Bharataśreṣṭha devān iva purā Baliḥ.

3-46 ta enam abhigārjantam sahitāḥ samupā德拉van
nānāśastrāśrājāḥ kruddha bhartsayanto mūkur mūhuḥ.

3-47 Duryodhano ’py aśaṃbhrāntas tān ārin vyadhamaṃ charaiḥ,
tatr’ ādbhutam apaśyāma tava putrasya pauroṣaṃ
yad enam Pāṇḍavāḥ sarve na śekur ativartitum.

3-48 n’ atidur’āpayataṃ ca kṛta-buddhiṃ palayane
Duryodhanaḥ svakaṃ saînayaṃ apaśyaḥ bhṛśāvikṣatam.
tato ’vasthāpya rāj’cendra kṛta-buddhis tav’ ātmaśaṃ
harṣa/yann iva tān yodhāṃs tato vacanam abravat:

3-50 ’na taṃ deśaṃ prapaśyāmi prthivyāṃ parvateṣu ca
yatra yā tān na vo hanyuh Pāṇḍavāḥ; kim śṛṣṭena vah’
svalpaṃ c’ āiva balam teśaṃ Kṛṣṇau ca bhṛśāvikṣatāu.
yadi sarve ’tra tiṣṭhāmo dhrvum na vijayo bhavet.
viprayāṭams tu vo bhinnāṃ Pāṇḍavāḥ kṛtakālīṣān
anuṣṛtya hanisyanti. śreyo naḥ samare vadhāḥ.

3-51 sukhaḥ sāmṛāmīko mṛtyuḥ
kṣatrādharmeṇa yudhiyātām.

3-52 mṛto duḥkhaṃ na jānite.
pretya c’ ānāntyaṃ aśnute.
śṛṇvantu kṣatriyāḥ sarve yāvantu ’tra samāgataḥ:
dvīsato Bhimasenasya vaśam eṣayatha vidrutāḥ;

62
When all his soldiers were scattered in this way, the king of the Kurus began to attack both the enemy's troops and his own, O lord of the people.

Dur-yódhana then challenged all the Pádavas to fight, best of Bharatas, just as Bali* challenged the gods in the past. Enraged, the Pádavas grouped together and attacked Dur-yódhana as he roared, deriding him repeatedly and hurling various weapons at him. Dur-yódhana, however, did not waver but dispersed the enemies with his arrows. We then witnessed your son's remarkable courage in that battle, as all the Pádavas failed to overpower him.

On seeing that his troops were heavily wounded and intent on flight—although not yet very far away—Dur-yódhana restrained them, king of kings. With a resolute mind, your son then made a speech to his soldiers, as if gladdening them:

“I do not see any place on the earth or in the mountains where the Pádavas have not killed you. What then is the use of your fleeing? Their army is only very small and the two Krishnas are heavily wounded. If we all stand firm here, our victory should be certain. The Pádavas will pursue and kill you, if you commit the sin of fleeing and breaking up. It is better for us to die in battle.

Happiness comes from death in battle for those who fight according to the warrior code. A dead man knows no suffering. After he dies, he attains eternity. Let all the warriors gathered here listen: if you flee, you will fall under the control of the enemy Bhima-sena. You must not abandon the practices of your ancestors! There is no worse action for a warrior than flight. For there is no better path to heaven,
MAHA-BHÁRATA IX — SHALYA

piṭāmahaṁ ācaritaṁ na dharmāṁ hātum arhatha.

3.55 na ānyat karm ṭāti pāpiyāḥ kṣatryasya palāyanāt.

na yuddhaḥ dharmāṁc chreyāṁ hi
panthāḥ svargasya Kauravāḥ.

sucīreṇ ārītaḥ lokān
sadyo yuddhār samaśnute.»

tasya tad vacanaṁ rājñāḥ pūjaṁtvā mahārathāḥ
punar ev’ abhyavartanta kṣatryāḥ Pāṇḍavāṅ prati
parājayam āmṛtyaṁ kṛtaṁcitāsa ca vikrame.

tataḥ pravāṛte yuddhāṁ punar eva suśārurṣṇam
tāvakāṇāṁ pareṣāṁ ca dev’āsuraṁ tāpomām.

Yudhiṣṭhirapurogāṁ ca sarvāśainyena Pāṇḍavāṅ
anvadhāvan mahārāja putro Duryodhanas tava.

SAṄJAYA uvāca:

4.1 PATITĀN RATHAṉidāṁ ca rathaṁ ca ṛpi mah’āṭmanāṁ
raṇe ca niḥatāṁ nāgān dṛṣṭvā pāṭrīṁ ca mārīṣa,
āyodhanāṁ ca āṭihorāṁ Rudrasyā’ ākriḍaṁṣaṁnībham
apraṇhīyaṁ gatāṁ tu rājñāṁ śaṭaśaḥasraṁ,
vimukhe tava putre tu śok’āpahataḥ cetasi
bhṛṣṭ’ōdvignेशu sainyeṣu dṛṣṭvā Paṁthasya vikrame.

dhyāyaṁmāneṣu sainyeṣu dūḥkham prāpteṣu Bhārata,
balānāṁ maṁyaṁmānāṁ śrutvā niṇadaṁ uttamaṁ
abhijñānaṁ na’endrāṇāṁ vikṣataṁ prēksya saṁyuge,

4.5 kp’āvīṣṭaḥ Krpo rājan vayaḥśilasamvanvitaḥ
.abravit tatra tejasvī so ‘bhīṣṭya jan’ādhipam
Duryodhanaṁ manyuyavaśād vākyāṁ vākyāviśāradaḥ:

«Duryodhanaṁ nibodhaṁ yad tvāṁ vākyāṁ saṁyugamāt
śrutvā kuru mahārāja yadī te rocete ’nāgaha.
Kāuravas, than the code of war. Through battle, one instantly attains worlds that others obtain after a long time.”

Applauding the king’s words, those great, martial charioteers once again advanced against the Pāṇḍavas, unable to endure defeat and their hearts set on valor. Once again a gruesome battle took place between your troops and the enemy, like a battle between the gods and demons.

Your son Dur-yodhana and all his soldiers then attacked the Pāṇḍavas, who were led by Yudhi-shthira, Your Majesty.

Sānjaya said:

My lord, when Kripa saw the fallen chariots and chariot platforms of the heroes, as well as the elephants and infantrymen that had been slaughtered in battle. And when he saw the horrific battlefield, which resembled Rudra’s playground, and the ignominious end of hundreds and thousands of kings. And when, descendant of Bharata, Kripa saw the valor of the Partha, while your son on the other hand fled—his mind destroyed by grief—and your troops brooded in anguish and utter despair. And when he heard crushed soldiers screaming loudly and saw the shattered mementos of kings in battle. Then, Your Majesty, splendid Kripa—who is compassionate, mature and virtuous—approached King Dur-yodhana and angrily addressed him with these words, skilled as he was in speech:

“Dur-yodhana, descendant of Kuru, listen to what I have to say! And after you have listened, act—if it so pleases you, O faultless, great king.
MAHA-BHĀRATA IX — SHALYA

na yuddhaḥdharmaḥ chreyān vai pántā ráj’ēndra vidyate
yaś samāśritaya yudhyante kṣatryāḥ kṣatryā’śabha.
pitṛ bhṛtāṁ pitā c’āiva svasriyo mātulas tathā
saṃbhandaḥbāndhavāś c’āiva yodhyā vai kṣatrajīvinā.
vadhī c’āiva paro dharmas tathā ādharmaḥ pālāyane.
te sma ghorāṁ samāpannā jīvikāṁ ājīvī’ārthiṇāṁ.
tad atra pratīvaṁyāṁ kiṁ cid eva hitāṁ vacaḥ:

4.10
hate Bhisme ca Droṇe ca Karṇe c’āiva mahārathe,
Jayadrathe ca nihate tava bhṛtṛṣṇu c’ānagha
Lakṣmaṇe tava putre ca kim śeṣaṁ paryupāsmahe?
yesu bhāraṁ samāśadya rāyje matim akurmaḥi.
te saṃtṛajyā ānu tūr yātaḥ śūra Brahmaśīvaṁ gatim.
vayaṁ tv īha vinābhūtā guṇavadbdhir mahārathaḥ
kṛpanaṁ vartayiṣyāmaṁ pātvitvā nṛpān bahūn.
sarvair api ca jīvadbhir Bibhatsur aśparājitaḥ.
Kṛṣṇaṁetro mahābhaḥur devair api duṛśadsadāḥ.
Indra’kṛmukadṛṣṭyāśvam Indra’ketum iv’ōcchritam
vānumaṁ ketaṁ āśādyā saṁcācāla mahācaṃtūḥ.

4.15
simhaṇādāc ca Bhīmasya Pāncajanyāśvanena ca
Gāṇḍīvasya ca nirghoṣāt saṁbhṛṣyanti manāṁsi naḥ,
carant’ iva mahāvidyun muṣṭānti nayana-prabhām
alātām iva c’āviddhaṁ Gāṇḍīvāṁ samadṛṣyata.
jaṃbūnādājvicitraṁ ca dhūyamānaṁ mahad dhanuḥ
dṛṣyaṁ dikṣu sarvāvāṁ vidyud abhraṅghaṇeṣv ivā.
vètās ca vegāsampannaḥ śaśikāśasamajprabhāḥ

66
SURRENDER REJECTED

King of kings, there is no better path to heaven than the code of war. It is this that warriors follow when they wage battle, bull-like kshatriya. A warrior can fight against his son, brother, father, nephew, uncle, kinsmen or relatives. It is right to be intent on slaughter and wrong to be concerned with fleeing. Warriors practice a terrifying way of life if they want to survive.

Let me give you some useful advice on this matter.

If Bhishma, Drona and the great warrior Karna are dead, and if Jayad-ratha, your brothers and your son Lákshmana have been killed, what is there left for us to do, faultless king? It was on these heroes that we placed the burden when we set our hearts on kingship. They have left their bodies and reached the realm of the Brahma-knowers. We, on the other hand, will slaughter many kings and then lead a miserable existence in this world, separated from these virtuous warriors.

Even while all these men were alive, Bibhátsu was unconquered. Even the gods would find it difficult to attack mighty-armed Arjuna, who has Krishna for his eyes. Our huge army trembled when it approached Arjuna’s monkey-banner, which was raised like the banner of Indra and shone like Indra’s bow.* Our senses were robbed by Bhima’s lion-roar, by the blare of the Pancha-janya conch,* and by the noise of the Gandíva* bow. Quivering like lightning and blinding our eyes,* the Gandíva seemed to be wielded* like a firebrand. When that great bow shakes, glittering with gold, it can be seen in every direction, like lightning in rain clouds. Speedy white horses are yoked to Arjuna’s chariot; splendid as the moon or kasha grass, they seem to devour
pibanta iva c’ākāṣṭha rathe yuktas tu vājinaḥ. uhyamānāś ca Kaṇṭhaṇa vāyun” eva balāhakāḥ jāmbūnāda-viścitrā/jāngā vahante c’Ārjunaṃ rāṇe.

4.20 tāvakaṃ tad balaṃ rājan Arjuno śra-viśtāraṇaḥ gahanam śīśe kākṣaṃ dadah’ āgnir iv’ olbaṇaḥ. gaḥamānam anikāṇi Mah’[ṇḍra-sadṛṣa-prabham Dhanaṇḍayam apāśyāma caturdaṃṣṭram iva dvīpam. viśobhayantam senaṃ te trāsayaṃtaṃ ca pārthivān Dhanaṇḍayam apāśyāma nalinim iva kuijaram. trāsayaṃtaṃ tathā yodhaṃ dhanur ghoṣena Paṇḍavam bhūya enam apāśyāma śiṃhaṃ maṇigaṇan iva. sarvalokāmaḥ’[eṣya-sau vrṣabhau sarvadhanvināṃ āmukta-kavacau Kaṇṭhaṇu lokāmadhye viceratuḥ.

4.25 adya sapta[daś]’āhāni vartamāṇasya Bhārata samgrāmaṣya’ ātighorasya vadhayaṭaṃ c’ abhito yudhi. vāyun” eva vidhūtānī tava saṅyāṇī sarvataḥ śaṛadāmbho-dajālāni vyaśīrtaya samantarāḥ tām nāvam iva paryastāṃ vātadḥūtāṃ mah’ārṇave tava senaṃ mahārāja Śavyasācī vyakampayat. kva nu te sūta-putro ’bhūt? kva nu Dronaḥ sah’ānugaha? ahaṃ kva ca kva c’ ātmā te Ṣaḍākṣaḥ ca tathā kva nu? Duḥṣāsanaḥ ca te bhṛtā bhṛtṛbhiḥ sahitāḥ kva nu bāṇagocara-samprāptaṃ presya ca’ āiva Jayadṛtham sambandhinās te bhṛṭṛṇaḥ ca saḥayaṃ māturalaṃs tathā sarvāṃ vikramya miṣaṇo lokam ākramya mūrdhāni?
the sky. Driven by Krishna, as clouds are by the wind, their 
legs glittering with gold, the horses carry Árjuna on the 
battlefield.

Árjuna—skilled in archery—scorched that army of yours,
Your Majesty, like a violent fire incinerates a thick and dry 
forest in the winter. We saw Dhanan·jaya penetrating your 
regiments like a four-tusked elephant, splendid as great In-
dra. We saw Dhanan·jaya throwing your army into con-
fusion and terrifying the kings, like an elephant disturbs a 
lotus pond. We saw the P´andava once again terrifying the 
warriors with the sound of his bow, like a lion terrifies herds 
of deer. The two Krishnas—the greatest archers in the en-
tire world and bulls of all bowmen—rampaged in everyone’s 
midst, clad in armor.

Today, descendant of Bharata, is the seventeenth day of 
this terrible, ongoing war and of men being slaughtered 
everywhere in battle. Your troops have been scattered on 
all sides, like clusters of autumn clouds dispersed in every 
direction by the wind. Your army has been shaken by Sav-
ny·a-sachin, great king, like a boat tossed about by the wind 
and reeling on the vast ocean.

Where was that charioteer’s son of yours? Where was Dro-
na and his followers? Where was I? Where were you? Where 
was Krita·varman, the son of Hr´ıdika? And where was your 
brother Duhsh´asana and his brothers, when Árjuna saw 
that Jayad·ratha was within range of his arrows and—under 
their very eyes—attacked all your relatives, brothers, allies 
and uncles, and strode across everyone’s head?

69
Jayadratho hato rājan kim nu śeṣam upāsmāhe?
ko h’ iha sa pumān asti yo vijeyati Pāṇḍavam?
tasya c’ āstrāṇi divyāṇi vividhāni mah”ātmāṇaḥ.
Gāṇḍīvasya ca nirghoṣo dhairyāṇi harate hi naḥ.
naṣṭacandrā yathā rātrīḥ sen” ēyam hataṇṇayakā
nāgabhagnadrumā śuṣkā nad” iv’ ākulatāṃ gatā.
dhvajinyāṃ hataṇetrayāṃ yath” ēṣṭaṃ śvetāvāhanāḥ
carisyāti mahābāhuḥ kākṣeṣv agnir iva jvalan.

4.35 Sātyakeś c’ āiva yo vego Bhīmasenasya c’ ōbhayoḥ
darayec ca girin sarvān śoṣaye c’ āiva sāgarān.
uvāca vākyaṃ yad Bhīmāḥ sabhātmadhye viśaṃ pate
kṛtaṃ tat saśphalaṃ tena, bhūyaś c’ āiva karisyati.
pramukhāṣthe tadā Karṇe balaṃ Pāṇḍava/rakṣitaṃ
durāsadāṃ tada guptam yiśdham Gāṇḍīvaḍhanvana.

yuṣmābhis tāni cīrṇāni yāny alsādhūni sādhusū
ākāraṇaḥkṛtāny eva. teṣaṃ vaḥ phalam āgatam.
ātmano ’rthe tvayā loko yatnataḥ sarva āhṛtaḥ.
sa te saṃśayitas tāta ātmā ca Bhārata’rṣabha.

4.40 rakṣa Duryodhan’ ātmānaṃ. ātmā sarvasya bhājanam.
bhinne hi bhājane tāta diśo gacchati tadigatam.
hiyamāṇena vai sandhiḥ paryēṣṭavyaḥ samena ca
vigraho vardhamāṇena. matir eṣa Bhāspateḥ.
If Jayad-ratha has been killed, Your Majesty, what is there left for us to do? What man in this world can conquer the Pândava? The weapons of that hero are divine and diverse. The noise of his Gandiva bow robs us of our courage. Your army is like a moonless night, now that its leader is dead. It is in disarray, like a dried-up river in which the trees have been broken by elephants.

Like a fire burning in dry forests, mighty-armed Árjuna will roam as he likes with his white horses through your leaderless army. The power of both Sátyaki and Bhima could burst through every mountain and dry up the oceans. The words that Bhima said in the assembly hall have been fulfilled, lord of the people, and he will fulfill them still further.* Even when Karna stood at our head, their arrayed army was still difficult to defeat, guarded as it was by the Gandiva bow and protected by the Pândavas.

You have committed deeds that are wicked for good people to do and that were performed without reason. The fruit of these actions of yours has now arrived. You zealously rallied together the entire world for your own cause. Now it and yourself, my child, are in danger, bull of the Bharatas. Protect yourself, Dur-yódhana; for you are the vessel of everything. When a vessel is broken, my boy, all that is in it disperses everywhere. A balanced man should seek peace when he is weak and conflict when he is strong; this is the creed of Brihas-pati.
te vayaṃ Pāṇḍu-putrēbhya
hīnāḥ svabalaśaktītaḥ.
tad atra Pāṇḍavaḥ sārdhaṃ
sandhiṃ manye kṣamaṃ prabho.
na jānte hi yāḥ śreyāḥ śreyasā c’ āvamanyate
sa kṣipraṃ bhraṣṭaye rājyaṃ na ca śreyo ‘nuvindati.
pranipatyā hi rājanaṃ rājyaṃ yādi labhema hi
śreyāḥ syān, na tu mauḍhyena rājan gantuṃ parābhavam.

Vaicitra-vīrya-avacānāt kṛpāśilo Yudhisṭhirāḥ
vinīyuñjita rājye tvāṃ Govinda-avacānena ca.
yad brūyadd hi Hṛṣikeśo rājanam aparājītam
Arjunaṃ Bhīmasenaṃ ca sarve kuryur aṣaṃśayam.
n’ atikramisyate Kṛṣṇo vacanaṃ Kauravasya tu
Dhṛtarāṣṭrasya manye ‘haṃ n’ api Kṛṣṇasya Pāṇḍavaḥ.
etat kṣemam ahaṃ manye tava Pārthair na vigraham.
na tvāṃ bravīmi kārpaṇyān na prāṇa-parirakṣaṇāt.
pathyaṃ rājan bravīmi tvāṃ. tat parāsuh smarisyasi.»
iti vṛddho vilapya’ ātata Kṛpaḥ Śaṅdeva-vacaḥ
dīrgham uṣṇaṃ ca niśvasya śūśca ca mumoha ca.
SURRENDER REJECTED

As for the strength of our army, we have been weakened by the sons of Pandu. Given our situation, I think that peace with the Pândavas is appropriate, my lord. Those who do not know what is good and who disregard what is good quickly lose their kingship and do not acquire the good. If by bowing to King Yudhi-shthira we keep our kingship, that would be good. It would not be good to be defeated out of foolishness, Your Majesty.

Yudhi-shthira is compassionate and would entrust you with kingship if Vichitra-virya’s son* and Go-vinda request it. Whatever Hrishi-kesh* says to the undefeated king, or to Árjuna and Bhima-sena, will certainly be followed by everyone. Krishna will not go against the words of the Káurava Dhrita-rashtra; nor do I think that the Pândava will disobey Krishna. The safe thing, I believe, is for you not to fight against the sons of Pritha. I tell you this not out of weakness nor in order to save my life. I am telling you what is appropriate, Your Majesty; you will remember this when you are about to die.”

Lamenting in this way and breathing out long and hot sighs, old Kripa, the son of Sharádvat, grieved and then fainted.
Here is a new Clay Sanskrit Library translation of Volume One of “Shalya,” Book Nine of the great Indian epic the Maha·bhārata.

“Shalya” portrays, in grand style, the last day of the great battle between the Kāuravas and the Pándavas, recounting in gory detail the final destruction of King Dur·yódhana and his army.

This, the first of the book’s two volumes, focuses on Shalya’s short-lived role as general of Dur·yódhana’s army. Shalya had previously fought as the charioteer of the great hero Karna. However, after Árjuna’s slaughter of Karna—to which Shalya himself contributed as a favor to the Pándavas—the Kāurava army becomes leaderless and Shalya, tempted over to the Kāurava side by his weakness for luxury and wealth, is consecrated as its general.

Martial speeches, heroic duels and bloody massacres abound on the battlefield, until finally Shalya is killed by King Yudhi·shthira, in accordance with the inexorable proceedings of fate. At Shalya’s death, King Dur·yódhana flees and takes refuge in a lake.