

Impact of the Mahabharata, the Great Epic in Assamese Literature

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Abstract

The Mahabharata, one of the greatest epics of the world, has been exerting its influence on the minds of Indian people through centuries. Composed by Veda Vyasa and inlaid with more than one lakh slokas (verses) the Mahabharata is a matchless and spacious volume of not only India but also of the whole world. History, tales, philosophy, ethics, diplomacy, sociology and so on are therein this great literary work which eventually put itself in the core of everyone's heart. Like other parts of India, the Mahabharata extends its sway in the state of Assam, its people, society, culture and literature. The Mahabharata comprises all the human attributes - Dharma (virtuousness)-Artha (means)-Kama (desires)-Moksha (salvation) etc. in such a way without which we cannot analyse the Assamese literature in its complete sense.

This research paper aims at how the Mahabharata has been influencing Assamese Literature from ancient times till today.

Keywords: Mahabharata, epic, culture, Assamese literature, society

I. Introduction

Though the epic narrative of the Mahabharata was inscribed eons ago, the illustrious saga prolongs to find eminence in every form of art that continues to influence our minds even today. People venerate the epic piece till the present times not because of its poetic and aesthetic splendour only, but its relevance to our lives is being cherished due to its philosophical ideas. *It is said that what is in the Mahabharata, is everywhere; and what is not in it, is nowhere.*² From ancient times the study of the Ramayana (another great epic of India) and the Mahabharata in India which is rich in art, culture, and philosophy is worth mentioning. The stories of the Mahabharata (also known as *Bharata-Kavya*) are on one side prevalent in everyone's mouth and on the other side, the litterateurs have given it a bright and lasting shape by their writings on the basis of the same in a way to establish an everlasting nexus

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² Dharme cha arthe cha kaame cha mokshe cha bharatarshabha.

Yadhihasti tadnyatra yannehasti na tadkvachit..., (Adi Parva, 56, 33), the Mahabharata

between the great epic and our society. The characters of the Mahabharata are as lively and moving as those of real life.³ The correlation commonly found in the principles-religion-ideals of the accounts and characters of the Mahabharata unites the people who had been separated by different race, colour, religion, language, culture and geographical distances since long. The authors of various languages translated the Mahabharata into ancient Indian Aryan, Sanskrit and Middle Indian Pali-Prakrit dialects and also into varied provincial languages and besides this they wrote many books. There is not any rich dialect among the Aryan-languages into which the Mahabharata has not been rendered or take the masterpiece as the basis to write poems, songs drama etc. Assam, as a province of rich culture and literature, is not lagging behind to render the noble epic into vernacular language and make many literary works based on it as to show its never-ending influence on the greater Assamese society along with its culture and literature.

Area of Research

This research paper has been prepared to analyse the influence of the Mahabharata in Assamese literature and society. In this paper, the analysis is done in two parts – **Ancient Assamese literature based on the Mahabharata and the Modern Assamese Literature based on the Mahabharata.**

Objectives

Without a profound study we can not make a proper evaluation of a creative work. Hence, the main objectives of this research paper are as follows:

First, to assess the Assamese literature written on the basis of the Mahabharata through a detailed analysis of Assamese poems, dramas, Novels and others.

Second, to study the changes happened in the area of the authors' uniqueness, inclusion-exclusion in their literary works.

Third, to analyse the social perspective that has been portrayed according to the epic principles since the ancient times till the Modern age in the literature contained with the religious sentiment and ethical idealism.

II. Methodology

A research is in fact a kind of investigation. While doing this explorational work, it is very necessary to use a systematic process. In this research paper, explanatory and descriptive method has been employed.

³ C. Rajagopalachari, Preface to second edition, Mahabharata, p. XII

III. Results and Discussion

Ancient Assamese Literature based on the Mahabharata: Early Assamese literature based on the Mahabharata, from the fourteenth century, gets affluent with the treasure of various books written on the stories, fictions, characters incorporated in the Mahabharata and rendering of different sections of the epic into Assamese verse. Ancient Assamese literature on the Mahabharata may be classified into three divisions: *Pre-Sankari era*, *Sankari era* and *Post-Sankari era*.

Pre Sankari era: The poets in this period were patronised by the kings. The names of these kings mentioned in their literary works denote that these kings belonged to the 13th or 14th century. Thus, it can easily be assumed that ancient Assamese literature got inception in this stage. Amongst these poets, three poets namely Haribar Bipra, Kaviratna Saraswati and Rudra Kandali can be mentioned. The greatest of the poets who were inspired by the kings of Kamatapur was Haribar Bipra. King Durlavnarayana patronised him. His *Babrubahanar Yuddha* and *Lava-Kushar Yuddha* are both translation of the tales in the *Jyimiyanashamedh Parva*. In *Babrubahanar Yuddha* the narrative is about how after Judhisthir's *Ashwamedh Yagna*, Arjuna in search of the sacrificial horse entered Manipur and unknowingly fought with Babrubahana, his own son and got killed in the latter's hand; and how hereafter as per the advice of Chitrangada, his mother and Ulupi, the Naga princess, another wife of Arjuna Babrubahana brought *mrityusanjivani* (elixir of life) from *patal* (the Hell) and restored Arjuna to life. In his poetical verse *Lava-Kushar Yuddha*, he depicted the war between Rama and his two sons Lava and Kusha. Another *kavya* (poetical verse) of Haribar Bipra taken from *Ashwamedh Parva* of the Mahabharata is *Tamradhwajar Yudha*. In this work, the subsequent story after the war of Babrubahana is described.

Another Pre-Sankari poet who wrote *kavya* taking sources from the Mahabharata was Kaviratna Saraswati. He got patronage from Indranarayana, the son of Durlavnarayana of Kamatapur. He wrote *Jayadrath Vadh* from the Mahabharata's *Druma Parva*. He also penned *Sakuntala Aru Yajati Akhyana* from the *Adi Parva* of the epic.

One more well-known poet of that time was Rudra Kandali. His patron was king Tamradhwaj. Kandali composed *Satyaki-Pravesh*, the short anecdote from *Druma Parva* of the Mahabharata. Here, the story is about the war expedition and the heroic depiction of Satyaki, the grandson of Shini who was a king of Yadubansa. Satyaki fought in favour of the Pandava in the Kurukhetra war.

Sankari era: The ancient and chief poet of Sankari era was Rama Saraswati. As the writer of Assamese Mahabharata he finds equal niche as that of the great poet Vyasa. He was the one who virtually rendered various cantos of the Sanskrit Mahabharata into Assamese verse for the first time. However, he translated only twenty four thousand verses out of thirty thousand *slokas* of the original Mahabharata as he mentioned in *Kulachal Vadh*, the *vadh-kavya*, another masterpiece of him. As more than one *Veda Vyasa* contributed to accomplish the original Mahabharata, similarly the whole Assamese Mahabharata was completed with the help of some contemporary and later poets. Assamese literature takes much more pride than Bengali literature does with Kashidasa's Mahabharata. Because Kashidasa's Mahabharata was written between 1602-1610 A.D. while Rama Saraswati took to write

Assamese Mahabharata during the reign of king Naranarayana (1540-1548). Thus, Saraswati definitely deserves the reputation of rendering the great epic much before Kashidasha. Moreover, he did this great chore suitable for the common people. He penned *Adi Parva*, *Vana Parva* and ten self-composed fictions, *Sava Parva* and a few portions of *Bhishma Parva*. In this very period, he created *Bhima Charita* where he very beautifully used the milieu of Assam's country life in a simple way. Saraswati rendered Jayadeva's *Geet Govinda* into Assamese verse. Besides, he wrote *Virat Parva*, *Uddyug Parva* and a vast part of *Bhishma Parva*. Apart from that, Rama Saraswati made Assamese literature prosperous by rendering *Karna Parva*, *Gada Parva* and *Shanti Parva* of the *Sauptika Parva* from the original Sanskrit text.

In Sankari era in addition to Madhabdeva's *Rajasuya Kavya*, Rama Saraswati's *Bhima Charita* and the *badh kavyas*, their contemporaries and subsequent poets wrote verses on the Mahabharata. Among the poets of Sankari era existing at the time of Rama Saraswati the name of Kangsari Kavi, Gopinath Pathak, Kabindra Patra, Sanjay etc. are notable.

Post Sankari era: In the post Sankari era, some distinguished poets who cultivated Assamese literature on the Mahabharata were Vidya Panchanan, Rama Mishra, Damodar Das, Damodar Dwija, Bipra Damodar, Aniruddha Das, Srinath Dwija, Kavi Sekhar, Kaviraj Dwija, Dwija Raj etc. Vidya Panchanan wrote *Bhishma Parva* during the reign of king Dharmanarayana. Rama Mishra rendered the *Bhishma Parva* into Assamese in Jayadhwaj Singha's time. Three persons with the same name 'Damodar' are known to compose Assamese version of the Mahabharata's verses. Damodar Das translated *Shalya Parva* and *Druna Parva* of the epic into Assamese whereas Damodar Dwija and Bipra Damodar wrote *Shalya Parva* and *Adi Parva* respectively. Somewhere in *Adi Parva*, colophon of Aniruddha Das is found. Srinath Dwija being inspired by Pranarayan of Naranaraya's family wrote *Adi Parva*, *DraupadirSayambara*, *Druna Parva* in Assamese. Kavi Sekhar penned *Kirata Parva* of the Mahabharata at the command of Koch king Virnarayana in the very first decade of the seventeenth century. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, during the rule of Koch king Modnarayana and Mahindranarayana, Kaviram Dwija wrote *Bhishma Parva* and some parts of *Druna Parva* and Dwija Rama wrote *Bhishma Parva* respectively.

Therefore, from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, almost all the *parvas* (cantos) of the Mahabharata were rendered into Assamese and by virtue of the writings of various poets Assamese Mahabharata gained its complete form. Nevertheless, the process of composing the Mahabharata did not end in the seventeenth century alone. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also, at the patronage of the Ahom and Koch kings, a few cantos and many books on the basis of the myths included in the Mahabharata were written. The chief poets of the Ahom age who were well versed in Mahabharata based literature were Lakhinath Dwija, Shubhanath Dwija, Vidyachandra Kavisekhar, Shistha Bhattacharjee, Prithurama Dwija, Bhishnurama Dwija, Sagarkhari Daibagya etc. In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, in the royal court of the Koch king Harendranarayana, Dwija Vaidyanath, Mahinath's *Vana Parva*, Dwija Mahinath's *Prasthanik Parva*, Madhabchandra's *Swargarohana Parva*, Jayadev Dwija, Brahmasundar's *Sabha Parva*, Dwija Lakhirama's *Karna Parva*, Dwija Raghurama's *Bhishma Parva*, *Shanti Parva*, Dwija Kaviraja's *Bhishma Parva* and so on are known to be composed.

Hence, from the above analysis, a thorough idea about the ancient Assamese literature based on the Mahabharata may be obtained.

Modern Assamese Literature based on the Mahabharata: The word ‘modern’ is used in a broad sense. Every age is generally modern in comparison to its previous one. The prevailing thoughts and notions of the present time are generally called modern. But, in literature it signifies a unique connotation. *Its key relation is not with time but, with some internal indications.*⁴ According to the Yandabu accord of 1826, Assam went under the British rule. As a result of the nexus with the British and the introduction of English education brought immense change towards social and intellectual life of Assam. Consequently, it led to the inception of a new era in Assamese literature. This age is called the period of modern age in the history of literature. The erection of the platform of this new-fangled age starts from the middle of the nineteenth century. From the very second half of the nineteenth century reflection of modernism can be traced in Assamese literature. During this epoch, liberal humanitarian outlook occupied the place of religious viewpoint of the middle age. The ingress of western idealism in the whole country of India brought forth romanticism in Assam also. In the shape of European, particularly English literature, a number of new streams of modern literature came into being in Assam through Indian literature. Different branches of modern literature like lyrical poems, novels, short stories, dramas, articles etc. made the granary of Assamese literature prosperous and variegated.

We cannot deny the popularity of the Mahabharata in modern Assamese literature. A variety of poems, drama, novels, stories, theoretical books and so on are being continuously written taking plots from the great epic Mahabharata. The various sections of modern literature relating to the Mahabharata may be analysed by categorising as below:

Poems :An ample number of poems have been written in Assamese on the basis of the plots, sub-plots, characters of the Mahabharata. In 1875, Romakanta Choudhury wrote *Abhimanyu Badh* in blank verse for the first time and it was too based on the Mahabharata’s story. Though he composed the poetry alike Michael Madhusudan Dutta’s *Meghnad Badh Kavya*, his own novelty and intellect are obvious in this writing. In Padmanath Gohain Baruah’s poem *Chandangiri*, amidst peerless natural beauty of the Chandangiri hill, the poet’s mind flied away to the past. According to a hearsay, here one day queen Damayanti, after many obstacles, found the way to her father’s kingdom. Thus the poet described the tale of Damayanti of the anecdote *Nal-Damayanti* added in the Mahabharata.

⁴ Bharali Sailen, *Adhunik Bharatiya Sahitya*, p - 1

Lakhinath Phukan in his poem *Brahmaputrar Prati*, narrated the story of king Bhagadutta's heroism in the Kurukshetra war, Arjuna's defeat in the hands of his own son Babrubahana. Indreswar Borthakur's *Ranajeoti* is a story of Ghatotkoch, the great son of Assam and Hirimba, where Ghatotkoch's extraordinary heroism and the war between the Kauravas and Pandavas were delineated. In Atulchandra Hazarika's *Bohagi*, while giving an account of the *basanta kala* (spring season), the poet related the immortal love story of Dushmanta and Sakuntala. Besides the Romantic poets, the modern poets of the post Second World War also used the elements of the Mahabharata while composing their poems. The pioneer poet of modern Assamese poetry Hem Baruah in his poem *Poharatkoi Endhar Bhal*, mentioned the tale of Dushmanta-Sakuntala while portraying the corrosion of ethical values and changes in the society brought forward as a result of the Second World War. Here, Sakuntala is the symbol of the poor whereas Dushmanta denotes capitalism. Another notable poet of modern age is Navakanta Baruah. His poem *Samrat* shows the crisis of the modern state through the inner strife of Hastinapur's king Dhritarastra and his self repentance. Gautam Prasad Baruah's *Dhritarastra* is a modern poem in which the poet tried to put up Dhritarastra at the juncture of modern political milieu. Mahendra Borah's *Bhangasan* expressed an exceptional feeling of the poet. Here, he wrote about that story of the Mahabharata where Yudhisthir wanted to know from Bhishma whether giving birth to a child offers more happiness to a father or a mother. Citing the story of the king Bhangasan Bhishma stated the greatness of a woman's love for her offspring. Like this, Homen Borgohain in *Arjunar Vishvarup Darshan*, unfolded the doleful realisation of modern livelihood. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi, in *Draupadi* and *Gandhari*, analysed the Mahabharata's characters in a new way. In *Draupadi*, she represented Draupadi, one of the foremost women characters of the Mahabharata as a symbol to express female psychology in a Freudian Psychology instead of a mere ideal woman – the poet here exemplifies that instead of having the wise and intelligent Yudhisthir, muscular Bhim, strong, heroic and attractive Arjun, humble and mild tempered Nakul and Sahadev as five husbands of extraordinary worth, Draupadi felt attraction towards great courage and heroism of Karna. In *Gandhari*, the poet revealed the motherly compassion of Gandhari. Karabi Deka Hazarika created a famous poem *Suli Nebandhiba Jagyasini* on Draupadi's character where she painted Draupadi as an oppressed, smashed, insulted woman along with a figure of power and probability to transform the present society. In Pranay Phukan's *Mahabharata Prem Aru Jantranar Padavali*, various characters of the Mahabharata like Bhishma-Amba, Kunti-Bidur, Karna-Draupadi Devika etc. were scrutinised in new ways.

In this way, from the Romantic age to the present time the popularity of the Mahabharata in the realm of modern Assamese poetry cannot be refuted. Kishore Manjit Borah of the recent time has taken themes from the Mahabharata to write his *Mahagatha*, a collection poems in which he has evaluated every character in modern view. Since the Pre-Sankari era till today numerous poetical works have been created. It is not possible to bring up all accounts in this context. The poets of the Romantic age attracted the new generation by eulogising heroism and conceit of the Mahabharata's stories and characters and in this process, they awoke the patriotic sentiment among the youths. In a different light, the modern poets, maintaining harmony with the present era, recreated the characters of the Mahabharata in keeping with the contemporary social, political, cultural environment. In modern poems, the mythological characters are also used as symbol, allegory, metaphor, simile etc.

Drama: The practice of writing mythological dramas began in the hands of Mahapurush Sankardev, the father of Assamese drama. The poets of pre and post Sankari eras left behind many dramas written on the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, various *Puranas* (mythologies) and the like. In the later part of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, mainly to the time of the Second World War, mythological dramas prevailed in the theatrical world of Assamese literature and stages. Among them Bharatchandra Das's *Abhimanyu Vadh*, Raybahadur Kanaklal Baruah, Gopalkrishna Dey and Rajanikanta Bordoloi's *Sabitri-Satyaban*, Ratneswar Mahanta's *Draupadi Haran*, Durgaprasad Majinder Baruah's *Brishaketu*, Benudhar Rajkhowa's *Duryudhanar Urubhanga*, Durgeswar Sharma's *Partha Parajay*, Sarathchandra Goswami's *Parikhya*, Lakhsminath Bezbaruah's *Devajani*, Ambikagiri Raychoudhury's *Jayadrath Vadh*, Mahendranath Bhattacharjee's *Nal-Damayanti Natak*, Binandachandra Baruah's *Partha Sarathi*, Ananda Chandra Agarwala's *Nal-Damayanti*, Lakhyadhar Choudhury's *Ekalavya*, and Data Karna, Atulchandra Hazarika's *Champavati*, *Kurukhetra*, *Sabitri*, *Damayanti* and *Pandavar Agniparikhya*, Ganesh Gogoi's *Shakunir Pratishudh*, Harichandra Bhattacharjee's *Karnaveer*, Surendranath Saikia's *Karna*, Dandinath Kalita's *Kichak Vadh*, Bhabendranath Thakuria's *Maharathi Karna*, Mitraddev Mahanta's *Pracchanna Pandav*, Kamalananda Bhattacharjee's *Sabitri*, *Chitrangada*, Mathuranath Baruah's *Bhishmar Shara-shajya* are worth mentioning.

It is to be mentioned that the number of Mahabharata based dramas written before India's independence are more than those after independence. Due to many reasons like enhancement in social sentiment, ascendancy of rationalism, infidelity on religion and so on, in the post independence period the number of dramas were on the wane. The mythological dramas published during this phase adopted a new outlook to illustrate the characters, environs, situations in a fresh social milieu.

In the post independence period, Sukleswar Borah's *Simhasan* (1948), was written on the source of the Mahabharata's Kuru-Pandavas story. In the drama, the character of Duryudhana was depicted in a sympathetic manner who fought for justice and ideal instead of personal grudge against the Pandavas. In this way, in Mahendra Borthakur's *Pitamahar Sharasajya* (1973), Bhishma, who is revered as a great human being for his obligation, sacrifice and ideals, was portrayed in today's world of view. The dramatist minutely criticised Bhishma and found that his so called valour, sacrifice and knowledge are not acceptable in the present society. The bravery that helped the unjust people, the sacrifice that set biased Dhitarashtra in the throne, the knowledge that could not give courage in mind to protest against injustice - those traits are of no use in the modern society. Ali Haidar in his *Naisha Yuddha* (1999), gave a new interpretation of Ghatotkucha who was killed in the hands of Karna in the Kurukshetra war. Taking the mythological tale as an allegory, the playwright revealed the reality of India's recent politics and disintegration and malice between the Aryan and the non-Aryan race. In this way, the negative sides of the Kurukshetra war were pointed out in Sapunjyoti Thakur's *Kalyan Kharman*. Jagdish Patgiri's *Srikrishna Arjun Aru Gandib* explained the power-loving politics and decaying social veracity, Paramananda Rajbangshi's *Chakrabehu* (2004) divulged the common people's apathy, groan of women, and misery of the war of the Mahabharata.

Moreover, some modern playwrights wrote a few plays in the title of the characters and other elements from the Mahabharata. Amongst them, Anandamohan Bhagawati's *Dushasan*, *Jatugriha*, Jagdish Patgiri's *Draupadi*, Rafiqul Hussain's *Kaurava-Pandava*, *Abhimanyur Mahakavya*, *Arjunar Prati*, Basanta Khanikar's *Abhimanyu*, Sapunjyoti Thakur's *Draupadi Pariyal* etc. are mentionable.

Novel: Like other boughs of literature, lots of novels have also been written on the mythological ingredients. In this respect, Chandraprasad Saikia's *Maharathi Karna* (Sahitya Academy award winner, 1995) is worth mentioning where the dramatist portrayed Karna as a tragic character. In Giridhar Sarma Award (1993-94) winner novel of Manik Saikia - *Pitamahar Sharashajya*, Bhishma during his sharashajya (lying on arrows) gave reasonable analysis of the Kaurava-Pandava war. In Rabindra Borah's *Draupadi* (1996), the character of Draupadi was painted on sympathetic ground. In Biren Borkotoki's *Pitamaha* (1998), the mental conflict of Bhishma was observed. Santanamoyee Majumder expressed the psychological analysis of Draupadi in *Jagyaseni* (1999). In Khargeswar Bhuyan's *Yubaraj* (1998), after breaking of the thighs in the *gadayuddha* (mace-war), at the point of death, Duryadhana recollected all his past deeds and articulated their action and reaction. Dr. Malini's novel *Jagyaseni* (2005), Draupadi was bestowed with an innovative role. Bogaram Nath himself designated his *Yada Yadahi Dharmasya Glani* (2001) a religious novel where he portrayed the character of Srikrishna, *Parama Purusha* (the ultimate being). Purabi Bormudoi in her *Santanukulanandan* (winner of Sahitya Academy award of 2007), put up various tales and epical writings spread out around the Brahmaputra valley and saturated them with history. Jayanti Gogoi wrote *Hirimba* (2007) to depict Hirimba, the non-Aryan, ignored woman of the Mahabharata. Another novel where the novelist made Duryudhana the principal character is Upendranath Baruah's *Moi Duryudhane Koisu* (2011). Munindranath Sarma's *Mahalagna* (1997), *Kalagrastha Premika Devajani* (2005), Trailokya Bhattacharjee's *Asthi Bhagirathi Tire* (2002), Priyanath Sarma's *Sayambara* (2007), Kalyani Mahanta's *Kashikanya Amba* (2010), Jayashri Goswami Mahanta's *Gandhari* (2013), Nilima Goswami's *Kunti*, Bimal Bhagawati's *Yajati*, rendered version of Assamese (2010) and so forth may be cited in which the different characters and stories of the Mahabharata have been explained in the modern point of view.

Others : Aside from the poetry, drama, novel, several stories, articles, theoretical books, folk-lore etc. have also been written based on the Mahabharata. In some stories, the Mahabharata's characters and narratives are used as figurative to demonstrate the mental conflict. As for example, in Nilima Sarma's *Kalir Gandharir Artanad*, Gandhari is a symbolic character whose pathetic life of a mother is expressed. Arundhati Dutta's *Chakrabehur Bahirat*, Harekrishna Deka's *Yudhisthirar Galpa Likhibo Nuari Kiyo*, Arabinda Rajkhowa's *Bhagadutta Hata, Iti.....*, Prahlad Kumar Baruah's *Dhritarastrar Dristilabh*, Khagen Talukdar's *Moi Jadi Ulanga Holuheten*, Suprakash Bhuyan's *Premhinar Hriday Bilap* etc. may be mentioned where a new approach towards the characters and situations of the Mahabharata can be found.

Among the theoretical books, the **Geeta** of the *Bhishma Parva* is a philosophical one. It was first rendered into prose by Bhattadeva in the sixteenth century. His contemporary Gobinda Mishra translated the Geeta into Assamese. This is known as *Padya-Geeta*. Ratnakar Mishra in order to use as diurnal recitation composed *Geeta Kirtan* in the replica of Sankardeva's *Kirtan*. At the present time also the Geeta is being rendered and various explanations of the chapters of the same along with books on the interpretation of the Geeta. In this context, Padmanath Gohain Baruah's *Geetasaar*, Krishnananda Brahmachari's *Srimadbhagawat-Geeta*, Rajanikanta Goswami's *Geeta-Parichay*, Gouri Dutta Sarma's *Srimadbhagawat-Geeta*, Mahendra Borah's *Geeta* are worthy of mention.

Many review books on the Mahabharata are also written. For instance, Satyandranath Sarma's *Mahabharatar Charitrali*, Kanaklal Sarma's *Kunti*, Chandraprasad Saikia's *Mahabharata Biswas Aru Bismoi* etc. The articles like *Kabindra Mahabharatar Katha: Asomiya Bhasha-Sahityar Pariprekshit* incorporated in Birendranath Dutta's book *Bhasha-Sahityar Jalangaidi*, *Asomiya Sahityat Mahabharatar Prabhav* in Mahim Borah's *Chinta-Bichitra* are as well mentionable.

In this strain, many books on the Mahabharata suited for children are also written like Mitraddev Mahanta's *Mou Mahabharat*, Taranath Borpujari's *Mahabharatar Rahghara*, Maheshchandra Kataki's *Mahabharatar Mou-Bichani*, Keshada Mahanta's *Mahabharatar Sadhu Dutaman Kau* etc. Many a book is written on the gist and reconstruction of the Mahabharata. For instance, Mahendra Borah's *Mahabharata*, Pradip Saikia's *Katha-Mahabharat*, (the Assamese version of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's English rendering of the Mahabharata), Mahadev Sarma's *Katha-Mahabharat* etc. also enriched the Assamese literature based on the Mahabharata.

In folk-literature, as the Mahabharata's elements are present in every type of literature, in the traditionally prevalent folk-literature also fundamentals of this epic are available. In folk-song, mantra-literature, phrases, proverbs, idioms, clauses et cetera the characters and tales have been in vogue from the ancient time till today. In the ceremonial songs, the characters and stories from the Mahabharata are reiterated as in marriages, the bride and the groom are compared with Arjuna-Subhadra or Krishna-Rukmini. In Assamese aphorism, proverbs, clauses, the influence of the Mahabharata is quite obvious. As for example -- *I cannot understand the mind of Dhritarastra, venom inside and nectar outside* (to do something wrong in the guise of affection), *eating Kaurava's and praising Pandavas* (to do good to the enemy while seeking food from the beneficent), *oh Dhananjay! Money is the base of religion, without money success is gone* (nothing is powerful than money) etc.

There are many Assamese Phrases in the name of characters of the Mahabharata like --- *Dharma-Yudhisthir*, *Data-Karna*, *Kaal-Sakuni*, *Kalir Bhim*, *Bhishma-Pratigya*, *Dhananjay Dhol*, *Bheemar Gada*, *Duryudhanar Rajashri Dekhowa*, *Vidurar Khudkan* etc. Some pamphlets of songs are also written on the Mahabharata's legends for *nam-prasanga* (prayer to God) like *Nal-Damayanti Nam*, *Kach-Devajani Nam* etc. These songs have two divisions – *diha* and *pada*. In boat race, some short tales of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are sung in the form of odes.

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