PREFACE

My proposed topic of research is: "Creative Approaches to the Characters of the Mahabharata by Madhusudan, Bankim Chandra and Nabin Chandra: A Critical Study". Although some partial and segmented discussions were held earlier, no exhaustive dissertation has yet been done on this topic. Besides, this topic is worth studying from the perspective of research and hence I have selected this subject.

The topic has been classified into three chapters which are as follows:

CHAPTER I

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO THE CHARACTERS OF THE MAHABHARATA BY MADHUSUDAN

a) Principal characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Madhusudan.

b) Secondary characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Madhusudan.

CHAPTER II

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO THE CHARACTERS OF
THE MAHABHARATA BY BANKIM CHANDRA

a) Principal characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Bankim Chandra.

b) Secondary characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Bankim Chandra.

CHAPTER : III

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO THE CHARACTERS OF THE MAHABHARATA BY NABINCHANDRA

a) Principal characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Nabinchandra.

b) Secondary characters from the *Mahabharata* as portrayed by Nabinchandra.

I would like to furnish herewith the contextual points in order to substantiate any distinctive observations as well as those of my cessations clarified by myself given below:

(1) In all respects, I owe my dissertation to the original text composed by Vedavyasa as well as to the portions of the different volumes of the translation (of the original text) done by Haridas Siddhantabagish. The English renderings of the text have been given
within the brackets.

(2) The narratives of the well-known episodes of the *Mahabharata* have been excluded, considering them superfluous and out of context, and hence only the mentions of the same have been included here. Footnotes have been used to indicate the less-known episodes. However, since this dissertation is going to be offered as a test and since it is obvious that the examiners are naturally well-versed in the subject called the *Mahabharata*, I have ceased to delineate the narratives of the main episodes. And the controversy in regard to the time of composing the *Mahabharata* has also been excluded from the dissertation.

(3) I have picked up only those characters for discussion which have been included in the literary works of Madhusudan, Bankim Chandra and Nabinchandra. But some characters which have been merely mentioned in the writings of this Trio, have not been considered to be included in my discussion.

(4) This dissertation somewhere contains the contextual allusions to the *Bhagavata*, Besides, in order to evince the historicity of any deportment of any figure caused by the novel method of characterizing any of the protagonists from the *Mahabharata* with a new dimension, as it was ventured by the Trio.
My dissertation also contains the repeated mentions of the literary creations of Kashiram Das – sometimes as the sources of the modification of the characters, or when sometimes they served the purpose of a secondary source of the dissertation. Besides, a number of secondary sources have been utilized by myself. I have done all these for the revaluation of the characters and also for the sake of my research.

Somewhere else in the footnotes, in order to substantiate my averment, I have quoted the secondary or the primary source.

In the writings of these three writers, the source of the modification of some characters from the *Mahabharata* has eluded me even after a long pursuit. Hence these modified characters devoid of any certain source, have been excluded from my discussion.

The distinctive outlooks of the three writers, as they are revealed through the diverse methods of characterization of the protagonists of the *Mahabharata* have already been mentioned in the three chapters. Hence, I have desisted from including any separate chapter in my dissertation to display the distinctive attitudes of the Trio, in order to get rid of repetitive verbiage. Instead, I have ventured to distinguish among the viewpoints of this Trio recapitulated in the conclusion, in relation to the characterization of the protagonists in the *Mahabharata*.
By my own volition, I have avoided the external aspects of the creation of the Trio and pivoted on the internal aspects of this creative genius instead.

In order to differentiate between transliterated Sanskrit अ and आ sounds diacritical mark (–) for आ in such textual words has been put over आ sound only.

The chapters of the dissertation contain a lot of information related to the distinctive life-spirit of the Trio that had specifically impelled them to indulge in retracing the protagonists in the *Mahabharata*. Hence, nowhere in my dissertation I have mentioned about that. Besides, I have eschewed those information which cannot be evinced with substantial evidence. We observed mainly on the creative genius of the Trio, although we have also ventured to evince the influence of some specific information from their respective biographies and also the influence of the contemporary zeitgeist on the Trio.

I perceived the idea of the topic of my research work from Dr. Dipak Sen. But ideas soon fade into oblivion if they are not accomplished with a proper academic shape. This was the most tough and rigorous task which was silently undertaken by my revered teacher and supervisor of my research work Dr. Dipak Sen, former Reader, Department of Bengali of Gauhati University and Dr. Sujata Purkayastha, Professor and former Head of the Department of Sanskrit of Gauhati
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(Sumita Bhattacharjee)