Chapter VII

Concluding Remarks

We have already discussed in the foregoing chapters about the matters relating to the identity of Kavindra and his works particularly the Mahābhārata rendering in Assamese language. Taking all the accounts into consideration, Kavindra may be called the pioneer poet who takes the initiative of rendering all the 18 parvas of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata in a regional language of the North-East India. To render a work like that of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata, Kavindra has to acquire a clear conception about the book mentioned above. This enables him to take the task of rending it into Assamese language. He must be credited with the work as he ventures to break the ice in the field of rendering of the 18 parvas Mahābhārata in the early part of the 16th century A.D. and thus enrich the epic literature in the Medieval period of Assamese literature. It requires adequate knowledge, strength of mind, perseverance and energy to take this task and to make it popular amongst the rural people. The rural people of khutāghāṭ paragana used to recite the Virāṭa Parva of Kavindra’s Mahābhārata in certain performance. The virāṭa Parva of Kavindra’s Mahābhārata was sung by a batch of ‘Kirtaniyā’ (a singer group practicing Kirtana) group specially in khutāghāṭ paragana, now obsolete. But the use of Sanskrit Virāṭa parva is recited still in the Śrāddha ceremony amongst the Brāhmin families of
Bilāsipāra, Sālkosa of the undivided Goālpāra district. It is one kind of significant development of the traditions once prevalent in the area.

From his words inside the Mahābhārata it is apparent that the poet must have contemplated and shown his fascination for the rendering of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata into Assamese language. Parāgal Khān is Kavindra’s patron who belongs to Gaura before migration to Chattagram permanently. The narration of the stories upto Virāta parva of Kavindra’s Mahābhārata has aroused Parāgal Khān’s keen interest and curiosity to listen more and more of the details of the woes and miseries of the Pāṇḍavas which are clearly reflected in the eulogy in the Ādi Parva of his Mahābhārata:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{laskar Parāgal Khān sūnant kāhini} & I \\
\text{yena mate pāṇḍabe hārāila rājdhāni} & II \\
\text{ehi sava Kālhā kaha saṁkṣepiyā} & I \\
\text{dinek sūnīte pārī pāṇcāli raciyā} & II \\
\text{tāhāra ādesā mātra mastake kariyā} & I \\
\text{Kavindra parama yatne pāṇcāli raciyā} & II^{104}
\end{align*}
\]

— Laskar Parāgal Khān listens to the story of the Pāṇḍavas who have lost their kingdom. How they lived in the forest for 12 years and one year

\[104. \text{Ibid. Ādi parva. v.v 7-10. p.1}\]
incognito to and how they restored their kingdom ................. narrate all this in an abridged form so that I (Parāgal) can listen to this in a day through the composition of a pāncāli type literature. As commanded by him, Kavindra, with utmost care, composes this pāncāli.

The word 'dineke' does not mean 'a day' Parāgal's view's and expression must have indicated that considering of the vast nature of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata involving 18 parvas the provincial version should be made in brief as far as practicable so as to give pleasure to everybody during listening. This enables him to gather a fair idea of the rendered Mahābhārata within a few days. The reading of the epic poem of Vyāsadeva by Kavindra shows clear understanding. Actually, Kavindra is well-conversant with the Sanskrit literature specially the Sanaskrit Mahābhārata.

The present form of Kavindra's Mahābhārata (K.MBh) is the product being advised by his patron Parāgal Khān of chattagrām, the general of King Hussain Shāh of Gaura as is shown in the eulogy referred in the Adi parva. In the same breadth, the poet's declaration reveals that the poet has already rendered Sanskrit Mahābhārata at least upto Vīrāta Parva long before he happens to meet his last patron Parāgal Khān.

Stress should be given here to another important aspect of the narration of Kavindra in respect of the story of the Mahābhārata. Inquisitiveness of Parāgal has been expressed in questions which are answered by
even agile poet Kavindra in the following words:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{sūniyā hāsanta bira Parāgal Khān} \\
&\text{Yudhīśthira yajña kare pitāra kārane} \\
&\text{ki kārane Duryodhana ichila marane} \\
&\text{ki kārane kumantranā kaila rājāgane} \\
&\text{Kavindra kahila sūna Khāna mahāmati} \\
&\text{Yajña purṇa dīla Jabe Dharma narapati} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Parāgal Khān laughs at hearing that Yudhīśthira performs Yajña for father’s sake. Why has Duryodhana wishes to end his life? Why have the kings conspired? Kavindra answered, listen O’ Khān the great! Yudhīśthira, the king of the virtues has completed his Yajña.

This insertion of the conversational form in the form of question and answer amply expressed that Kavindra had to explain his Mahābhārata to Parāgal Khān. This lead us to belief that this was the abridged form of Kavindra’s Mahābhārata which required some kind of explanation during the period of listening by his patron. This is also one of the vital information that Kavindra had already started rendering Mahābhārata atleast upto Virāla Parva long before he happens to meet his patron Parāgal Khān. Most probably, King Nilāmbara of Kamatāpur was

105. Ibid. Sabha parva v.v 770-772. p. 29
the patron of the poet before the hostility between the two neighbouring countries.

In course of discussion, we come across the names of Kavindra Patra and Kavindra, the Mahābhārata poet. N.N. Vasu, the author of *The social History of Kāmarūpa*, was intimately connected with the Rājā Prabhāt Chandra Baruā of Gāuripur Rāj family. He had written a big chapter mentioning all including genealogical chart of Gauripur Rāj family. Interestingly, he had not mention a single word regarding this Mahābhārata poet. Even the period of Parāgal cannot be mingled and merged with the date of Kavindra Pātra. Naturally, Kavindra, the poet's name should not be confused any more.

Kavindra can be easily anchored and confirmed as an Assamese Mahābhārata poet on the basis of the fact that his use of Assamese grammatical forms specially the tenses, mode of expression in certain similes use of reduplicated Assamese peculiar forms in addition to the use of Assamese script throughout which is proved beyond doubt by the presence of the letter 'V' (৭) and exclusively the ligature – 'sva' meant for expressing Assamese words only. Assamese ligature (৭) (-sva) cannot be discovered in other language except Assamese. Bengali language cannot claim to it. It is rather shrouded with mystery why once-claimed Bengali literature dares not to print a single copy of Kavindra’s Mahābhārata in Bengal.
although armed with abundant materials of the manuscript. Presence of Assamese character is predominantly felt which makes other to adhere to former claim.

We are firm in our conviction that authors dealing with the compilation of the history of Assamese literature fail to include the name of Kavindra in the Assamese Mahābhārata literature for dearth of information and due to non-availability of the book (printed). Even the printed book in Bengali script has brought confusion. In the context of this important aspect, Sri Dimbeswar Neog, the author of 'Asamiya Sahityar Buranji' had the opportunity to glance at the compiled copy of Kavindra's Mahābhārata and suggested the learned editor Sri Gaurināth Sāstrī about the peculiarities of Assamese forms. But, ignoring all his suggestions Sāstrī preferred to print Kavindra's Mahābhārata with Bengali letters with some motive. So to say, he championed the cause and spread of Bengali literature. Nevertheless, truth will come out one day.

There was political conflicts between the neighbouring Koch-Kamata and Gaura. It is a historical fact that Kamatāpur was destroyed in 1498 A.D by the emperior Hussain Shāh of Gaura. The poet of Kamatā had to take shelter and find Parāgal Khan as his patron. Naturally, this hostility continued for nearly 70 years' and this Mahābhārata had not found any scope to influence any poet of the eastern side. But, we have found that Kasirām
Das, Bengali Mahābhārata poet was influenced by Kavindra's Mahābhārata as it was evidenced by the fact that some of the lines of Karna Parva show verbatim reproduction of Kavindra's Mahābhārata. In the concluding stage, we can say that Kavindra was the poet of first decade of the 16th century who gathered courage to render the Sanskrit Mahābhārata into Assamese. He ought to have been placed a Mahābhārata poet having the capacity to render 18 parvas of the Mahābhārata. Definitely, his rightful place in the history of Assamese literature is secured on the strength of his Mahābhārata. That is to say, he has established himself as a reliable and great poet of Assamese Mahābhārata literature.