PREFACE

The proposed research work is an attempt to understand the social, religious and cultural history of ancient Assam on the basis of inscriptions. The inscriptions engraved on both stone and metal, constitute invaluable data for reconstructing the history of the land prior to the 13th century A.D.

Lying on one of the great migration routes of mankind Ancient Assam experienced different waves of people coming to her lap through the process of social movements, invasions and trade relations, and these factors contributed in enriching the culture and civilization of Assam into a unique one.

The process of assimilation was engineered by the great kings of Kamarupa. Naraka was the pioneering figure in making Aryan settlement in Kamarupa. The next king Bhagadatta earned immense fame, who participated in Kuruksetra war and his kingdom was having extension in the north upto the borders of China and the sea shore of Bengal.

In historic period the rulers of all the three indigenous dynasties of Kamarupa adopted the policy of settlement of Brahmanas by offering land grant and royal patronage to them. Brahmanas were the sole custodian of the Vedic culture
and religion. Their settlement mostly in the tribal dominated areas spread Aryan culture. Thus ancient Assam became an amalgamous region where both Aryan and non-Aryan culture were incorporated. During this period the kingdom was not disturbed by any civil war and revolutions nor was it occupied by any foreign power until the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D.

Inscriptions of ancient Assam reveal this realistic picture, the process of Aryanisation of ancient Asam under royal patronage and how it created a conducive atmosphere for the growth and development of an excellent culture and civilization in this region which constitutes a strong and vitalising force to enrich the Indian culture and civilization.