A strong patriotic fervour dominated Assamese poetry in the romantic age. Large number of patriotic songs and poems were composed by this time and a spirit of nationalism developed in the country. The time of romanticism (in Assamese poetry) coincided with the time of India's struggle for independence and hence in this age the poets as well as the people turned strongly patriotic. In ancient Assamese poetry there were patriotic sentiments but there never appeared at any age a conscious attempt at patriotic poems. Because in ancient Assam, (as well as in ancient India) the eulogy of the Kings superseded the eulogy of the mother land, i.e., the poets were busy in composing Rāja Praśastis instead of Deśa praśastis. Even in classical Sanskrit poetry the number of patriotic compositions on the theme of the mother-land is too small. But it does not mean that the ancients lacked the patriotic sense, rather, they had high ideals of patriotism.
The ancient Indians regarded their mother-land as a very holy place and it was accepted as a rare privilege to be born in India (Bhāratavarsha). The Markandeya Purāṇa says:

\[ \text{"gayanti devah kila gitakani dhanyastu te bharatabhūmibhāge/ svargapavargasya ca hetubhūtan bhavanti bhūyah puruṣāh suratvāt//"} \]

= Bhāratavarsha is so holy a land, that svarga and moksa are possible only by a birth in it and therefore even gods desire to be reborn within its territory.

Another proverbial saying ascribed to Rāmacandra prescribes the standard of love for the mother country, thus:

\[ \text{"I yam svarṇapurī Lanka rocate na me Lakṣmaṇa, Janani janmabhūmiscā svargādapi garīyasi."} \]

= This Lanka, a veritable city of gold does not suit me. Oh Lakṣmaṇa, the mother and the mother land are far better than the heaven.

'The mother and the mother-land are far better than the heaven itself' — this patriotic discipline had ruled
the minds of the Indian (as well as the Assamese) people. Moreover, in Assam a patriotic ideal of love for the mother-country was prescribed by Lācit Barphukan, the national hero of Assam of Sarāighāt fame, who declared: 'Desatkai momāi dānār nahāy', - the maternal uncle is not greater than the mother-land. In the romantic age with the bold and sincere endeavours of a host of patriotic poets this national ideal of patriotism grew much stronger. Their poetic appeals echoed and re-echoed in every lip, and a national patriotic atmosphere grew up in the country, which had ultimately secured independence for India.

The distinctive features of the Assamese patriotic poems, of the age under review, may be summarised as follows.

(i) The rise of a national spirit;
(ii) Lamentation over the loss of freedom of the country;
(iii) Evils of the foreign rule exposed;
(iv) Condemnation of the western imperialists;
(v) Encouragement to the Struggle for Indian independence;
(vi) Respectful reminiscence of the nation's past heroes and ancient glories;
(vii) Pleading for better freedom for man as a social being;
(viii) Appeal for a greater social unity to feed fat the rising nationalism;
(ix) The cause of Hindu-Muslim unity encouraged;
(x) Encouragement to the freedom fighters,
(xi) and the fighters against aggressors;
(xii) Pledge to sacrifice ourselves at the altar of mother Assam (Desa Jnanī)
(xiii) Dream for a prosperous and lovely Assam free from the yoke of British subjugation;
(xiv) Translation of the patriotic songs of other lands;
(xv) Attempt to free man from poverty, repression, inequality and injustice.

KAMALAKANTA BHATTACHARYYA

At the very dawn of the Romantic movement Kamala Kanta Bhattacharyya (1854-1936) began to sing the doleful song of loss of freedom and encouraged the countrymen to rise against the Western imperialists. He also advocated for a national unity and national development.
In his books Cintānāl (1890, 192?) and Cintā–Taranga (1933) the poet has made extravagant appeals to his countrymen 'to arise, to awake' and to fight for the lost freedom. Cakulore Lekhā (written with tears); Pāharanī (Forgetfulness) and Jātiya Gaurav (National Pride) are the most famous of his patriotic poems.

In his Cakulore Lekhā, the poet has described painfully, how his countrymen are suffering at the hands of the Western imperialists and how much they are suffering under ignorance, poverty and difference of caste and creed. The pangs of the poet are very great and his lamentsations are so poignant that they fully evoke a sense of anguish and pain in the hearts of his readers. The poet says:

Then let me cry with a thumping of my chest
Oh, who had robbed our freedom,
Is there such worthless persons, like the Indians, any more, I know not.
There is no trust among each other,
Sometimes I think of leaving this country,
Where there is no freedom, for the countrymen
Others treat us simply as slaves.
Can the slaves command any respect
Everybody hates and discards us.
Others come to insult us,
we have no self-respect;
We are enemies to each other.
Alas, we are guided by others.
We have lost our national pride, forever,
I always meditate on this.
We are enemies within ourselves,
We slab on our faces with own hands.

Kamalakanta was a devout patriot. He could apprehend the evils of a foreign rule and as such he tried to convince the people of the necessity of unity and fraternity to fight for and to re-obtain the national freedom. Out of his deep love for the country, the poet, sometimes suffers from frustration, when he sees that there is none to respond to his genuine invocations. In such hours of frustration, the poet, even likes to see an end of this country. In the concluding lines of the poem Cakulore lekha, the poet appeals to God, either to establish a country of peace here or to destroy it permanently; his helplessness and frustration have led the poet to invite even a total destruction of his dear mother-land.
'Pride and avarice had robbed this earth of love,
Selfish personal interests have led us to hell;
Oh, Almighty God, pray make it a land of peace,
Or, kill this country once for all.'

The strain of patriotic helplessness, pain and frustration are even greater in the poem Paharani. A slab of old stone lying at the Tezpur Court campus inspires the poet with a national and patriotic sentiment. The poet aptly observes, that the people who could reach such a degree of fine finish in sculpture in the olden times must definitely have been a civilised nation. But their descendants, (i.e., the present Assamese people) are dull, illiterate and devoid of any respect for the mother country. However, the poet is hopeful that someday some big personality like Mazzini or Garibaldi will come out of this frustrated nation to rebuild it. In the same poem, the poet passionately recalls the ancient glories of Tezpur. This Tezpur was the seat of the illustrious king Bāna of all India fame. The Mahābhairava temple situated at the heart of the town was once the favourite of princess Usā. The princess worshipped this deity to obtain her dream-found lover Aniruddha, and she was blessed by this
Mahābhairava to obtain her cherished boy. But time is cruel. The Mahābhairava, the temple and the deity have all lost their prestige and glory. The poet picks up a very fine contrast here. Sometimes the poet's anger for the deity increases alarmingly. Kamalakanta interrogates:

O' you! Mahābhairava, pale with melancholy,
Why did you allow this temple to decay?
You were once the presiding deity of the princess,
Usa, an idol of affection for her!

Tell me, pray tell, once again I ask,
Was it the town of the beautiful maid Usā?
That famous damsel, the daughter of king Bāna
Who did worship you, with love and regards.

What is the force, of this cruel time, alas!
Where is Usā, tell me Lord Paśupati, tell.
Why should you be here? Oh the shameless God, why?
Why should you submit yourself to such humiliation.

(In yore) How beautiful this temple was!
Covered in all sides by nice walls,
To-day these broken walls simply inspire
The enemies to pause, a bantering smile.

Kamalakanta's art of narration was less perfect; in matters of metrical arrangement he sometimes badly failed. But, as explained by the theory of the 'new poetry' this discord and irregularity in the matter of metrical arrangement may be said to be suggestive of the inner conflict of ideals of the poet and of his mental disturbance. It may be noted here that in the matter of patriotism the Assamese poets took either the whole of India or merely the land of Assam as the mother land. Thus we have two sets of patriotic songs. Sometimes the same poet may be found to be paying homage to both India as a whole and Assam under different contexts. Kamalakanta, in his Cakulore Lekhā takes whole of India as the mother land while in Paharani he sings of the past glory only of Assam. But in the matter of evoking the patriotic sentiment, which according to Sanskrit poetics may be called bhāva-dhvani, is the same in case of both varieties of patriotic songs. His bhāva-dhvani works with a desaviśayaka rati-bhāva (i.e., love for the country) as the principally suggested context. Reminiscences of the past and hopes for a better future mark the poems of Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya.
Thus the past glories and lost vigour of Assam conceived as the mother land, are nicely portrayed by Lakhirnath Bezbarua in his poem Bin-Barāği (The minstrel). The poet takes pride in making a reference to the nation's past, its wonderful glories and tales of heroic adventures. He has brought to the audience all the heroes of the mother land (i.e., Assama or the ancient Kāmarūpa) like, Jaymati, Lācit, Rudrasingha, Bāṇ, Bhāgadatta, Narakāsur and others. The poet asks the minstrel to sing of the glorious past to a divine ecstasy to the poet who wants to dream of a new-world, through that divine ecstasy:

Natun prāṇar na cakujirī, dīpiti dhālide tāt,
Purāṇī prthivi nakai cāi lao, he vin, esāri mat.

= Please pour, new light, to the new eyes and to this new life;
Let me see this old world with a new vision,
0 minstrel, please sing once,
Do please sing.

Bezbarua's patriotic songs like Brahmaputra, Assam Saṅgit and 0 mor āponār des' are full of deep patriotic inspiration and endowed with beautiful structural patterns.
In all these poems, the glories of ancient Assam are nicely reflected. The call given to the people through these songs could penetrate deep to their hearts. The spirit of the poem 'O mor Ṛponar des' charmed the people so much that the people accepted this song as the national anthem of Assam. Bezbarua, like Kamalakanta in his pāharani, visualised a bright future for the mother-land. To inspire confidence in the people, he tried to open wide the richness of the mother-land. The poet says:

We Assamese are not poor? Why should we be?
We had all; we have all;
Simply we don't count them.
Let the dava roar, let the Sāṅkhā sound,
The mridāṅgi and the Khol play;
Assam once again is climbing the ladder
of progress;
Sing, sing brother, "Victory comes
to mother Assam".

Being constantly away from the mother-land Assam, Bezbarua cherished a great love within his heart for all the objects of Assam — her rivers, mountains, trees,
flowers, towns and villages. Recollections of all these are often interspersed in most of his poems. One thing remains to be said about Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya and Lakhsmi Nath Bezbarua; these two poets did not nurture any personal political ideology. Their patriotism grew not out of political flickering but of deep love for their mother-land.

CHANDRA KUMAR AGARWALLA

Chandra Kumar Agarwalla's patriotism as reflected in the poem Bin-Baragi (The minstrel) spread beyond the borders of the country. His patriotism soared high to a feeling of universal humanism. Chandra Kumar advocates more freedom for man, more justice and more love for them. He dreamt of a world-society of man undisturbed by jealousy, greed, violence and hatred. Like Shelley, he visualizes a new world born out of this rotten one. Agarwalla was perhaps influenced by the French Philosopher August Compte, who is known for his humanistic philosophy. Moreover, Chandra Kumar was guided by the Upaniṣadic wisdom: 'Mānavāḥ bhrātarāḥ sarve bhabanaṁ bhūvanatrayam' — all men are brothers and the three worlds (i.e., Svarga, martya and pātāl) are their home. However, the very base of Chandrakumar's humanism is his love for his own people.
Patriotic sentiments are well-exhibited also, in Hiteswar Barbarua's historical kavyas, like the Vuddha ksetrat Ahom raman; we have made due discussions on them in the chapter xi of the present work.

PADMADHAR CHALLHA

Padmadhar Chaliha (1895-1969) made certain innovations in the sphere of patriotic poetry through his patriotic lyrics of the SvaraJ Samgiti (Songs of Freedom, 1921). Like Bezbarua, he never allowed mother Assam to be undermined by her worthless sons. Padmadhar perceives his mother-land as a beautiful place full of riches and colours. She is, to the poet, a queen indeed. The poet observes in the poem Asam-Gurav (Glories of Assam):

Nohoā janani nicalā dukhuni, tumi vasudhār rānī atīt smṛtir muktā manire, Sobhiche kanṭha punya jeutire Tomār taṭini-vihag kanṭhe sure mahimār vānī.***
Dharā mājat tumīye janani ekhānī sūvani dharā
Katano tīthā sarit sāgār,
Kata mandir, kata girīvar,
Āchā janajāti bukti sāvati amīya ceneh bharā.
= My mother, you are not poor,
you are the queen of earth,
your neck has been adorned
with the pearls and jewels of
the old reminiscences.
The birds and rivers sing your majesty.
In this wide world,
you yourself is a world of beauty.
So many seas and rivers, so many holy places,
So may temples, and mountains have adorned you.
You have embraced the tribal folks
with an warm affection,
As you are full of the milk
of human kindness!

Padmadhar Chaliha's genius lies in another aspect
also. He had translated some patriotic poems of other
lands. Specially, his translation of Scott's poem "Brea-
thes there the man with soul so dead" is unique in pre-
sentation. By his superb gift of imagination, the poet
has given the poem such a local radiance, that it is
difficult to recognize the poem as a translation of the
sentiments of a foreign author.
It was Ambikagiri Roychowdhury who brought in vigour and vivacity in place of the tender sentiments of the Assamese patriotic poems. Roychowdhury was an ardent patriot. He joined the struggle for Indian independence and was thrice jailed for that. In him the soft heart of a patriot combined with the vigorous strength of a freedom fighter. Like Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya, Ambikagiri too criticised the callousness of the people, their lifelessness and inactivity. At the same time he had suggested to them the ways and means for the construction of a better Assam. He had appealed to the people, to forget the differences of caste, creed and geographical divisions and to unite with the purpose of making a greater nation of India. The Hindu-Muslim unity, he thought, was very much essential for the country and whenever he picked up any opportunity, he used to sing of it. The poet pauses a revolutionary in his poems. In his beautiful poem Mai Viplavī, Mai Tāndavī (I am a rebel, I am horrible) the poet revolts against the existing order of things and charges the hollowness and hypocrisy of the present society. The sense of patriotism is more stronger in the poems of
Anubhūti (Feelings) and Bedanār Ulka (The meteor of rain). In these poems the poet has asserted the existence of his mother-land and has invoked his countrymen to work relentlessly for her upliftment. Sometimes he reflects back on the past glories of Assam. Ambikagiri's patriotism was twofold in the sense that he shows his love to two mother lands — the greater India and the more intimate Assam.

As a political leader also he first asserted the rights and aspirations of the Assamese people and advocated for a rightful place of Assam in the Pan-Indian nationalism. But he was not parochial. He wanted the political emancipation of India the mother land as a whole. And this patriotism, seen in its two phases, finally took the shape of a love for the entire humanity. In some of his poems intense humanity and robust optimism have nicely combined. He perceived the necessity of a new society and a new world for man. The poet felt greatly the importance of freeing man from the rigours of caste-system, social and economic inequality, envy, hatred, jealousy and meanness. The poet felt strongly that the earth has become too useless for man and as such he should climb to the other planets and establish his superiority there too. It is interesting to note that the poet's dream of
establishing human colonies in other planets is going to be fulfilled to-day by the efforts of the American and Russian scientists. He realised the greatness of man and he had strong belief in man's capacities. The poet, therefore, expected to make man free from these evils, so that the free man may be capable for more betterment of the world as a whole. The poet, therefore, is committed to build a new earth 'over the debris of sloth and disintegration'. In the poem Mai Viplavi, Mai Tandavi the poet says:

The lust for power and pelf 
Has swallowed up man's humanity;
The soul's hunger has been trampled;
The sex impulse has been exalted;
Till it has maddened man;
The sense of duty has been drowned
In the clamour for rights.
I shall come there to stir up mutiny.
And shatter these evils to pieces.
In the most perfect and fruitful life,
There is no fierest friction
With pain, sorrow and tyranny;
And fire breaks out over
The phospherscence of universal cataclysm
- Mad, colossal and time- conquering,
Reducing to ashes
The free emotions of creation -
The errors and blunders -
The rotten jestam of things -
Giving birth to a new heaven and earth,
A new rhythm of indefatigible industry,
Over the debris of sloth and disintegration.

NALINI BALA DEVI

Nalini Bala Devi whose poetic glory chiefly rests on her mystic poems has to her credit a large number of patriotic poems full of love and enthusiasm for her mother-land. Her admiration for the nation's past as well as the earnest hope for a glorious future animate her patriotic poems. The strains of her poem Janambhūmi (The mother-land) are very much cordial and quickening to the soul. She has spiritualised her mother-land, and for the poet the mother-land is her source of great inspiration. Nalini Devi with the fine conviction of a mystic thinks that she had come to this mother-land from time immemorial, birth after birth, life after life.
The poem is full of dream-like freshness and soaring flights of imagination. The poet's intense love for her mother-land has inspired her to hope for taking rebirths in this mother-land again and again in the shape of the various items of Nature.

* * *

Pakhi hai ākaśar
Vukut phurim uri
Vāh lam okha virikhat,
Puvatīr lage lage
Jagām tomāk nite
Vanariya suvadi ētāt.
Ākaśar tarā hai
Ra lāgi cāi ram
Seujiya śuvani ētuti,
Jonākat mil hai
Bimān pathat rai
Ore rāti karim ērati.***
Nādi hai pakhālim
Dukhani caraṇ nite
Māti hai milim bukat,
Sonoāli megh hai
Rānā hāhi birinām
Setāparā dukhani ōthat.
= I will come as a bird
to hover over your sky
to sing to you, 0 mother!
from the high trees;
to awaken you at the
approach of the morning,
with the sweet wild songs.
I will come as a star
to gaze standing high in the sky
your greenish beauty;
coming with the moon-light
waiting at the sky line
I shall sing prayers to you,
throughout the night.

Nalini Devi's admiration for the freedom-fighters is
great. She has eulogised their sacrifices highly. Spe-
cially, her poems on the Mahatma is full of praise for
the father of the nation. Nalini Devi's patriotic poems
have a deep philosophical aspect too. She believes in
the Gandhian way of life and has a deep faith in Gandhian
philosophy. She believes that India's rejuvination may
be possible only by following the Gandhian way. She has
often the temptation to deify mother-India.
Apart from the fine sentiments, the most attractive point in her poems is her fine craftsmanship. Dr. B.K. Barua has rightly observed: "The roll, the rise, the carol and the evocation of her poetry are exquisitely musical. She has copiously drawn on the rich treasure-house of Sanskrit, and her similes, imagery and vocabulary are enriched by the sublimity of that literature." Nalini Devi has aptly used some epic allusions in the construction of her poetry. She has visualised the Mahatma as the Bhagiratha of ancient legends, who brought the mighty Ganges to the earth.

**Dimbeswar Neog & Salladhar Rajkhowa**

Dimbeswar Neog and Salladhar Rajkhowa made novel experiments by linking nature, patriotism and history in their two beautiful poems the *Sapamuktā* (One released of the curse) and *Pāṣāṇ-Pratimā* (The Stone Image) respectively. Neog's *Sapamuktā* is more allegorical than historical and Rajkhowa's *Pāṣāṇ-Pratimā* is more historical than allegorical. Both the poems carry some sort of incantation to bring back to life the lost glory and the lost valour of mother Assam. The poem *Sapamuktā* invokes the mother Assam to rise in a new form and new stature.
Saladhar's Pāṣaṅ-Pratimā has the "historical back-ground
of the Burmese invasion of Assam. 'Two Ahom generals who
bravely fought and laid down their lives had by their
inspiring heroism and valour attracted two damsels—
Phularā and Catalā by name. The damsels accompanied their
beloved heroes to the battlefield and joined the ranks.
On the death of the two generals, Phularā and Chatalā,
now about to fall into the hands of the enemy, metamor-
phosed out of their own free will into stone images'. The
poet has created such a beautiful natural background for
the poem, as has made the poem exquisitely lovely and
entertaining.

Dimbeswar Neog's poems are full of tinctured patrio-
tism and he oftentimes tried to link the nation's glorious
past with the present day misfortunes. The lyrics of his
Asama are full of patriotic sentiment and imagination.
Dimbeswar Neog's poems did not lack in the intellectual
animation which is the pre-requisite of good-poetry. In
his poem Bardovā, the poet has narrated the lost glories
of Assam and at the same time has made a clarion call for
the rise of the nation, from its deep stupor, ignorance
and lifelessness.
Jaga dev murt hoon jaga bardova
Pum tava agramantra kahane kane diyah.
I jatik utha jaga noha kaudra keu
Bhan madhur garji utha rudradesu
Koaa deu nai jara artyu tahatar,
He vaisnav, mahan ha, putra arthar.

Dimbeswar Neng too has made ample use of ancient legends and allusions in the making of his patriotic poems.

BINANDA BARUA

Binanda Barua's patriotic lyrics are full of passionate love for the country. His heart is warm with the affection for his mother-land. A strong historical perspective dominates the poet's heart. His imagination is broad and oftentimes mixed with intellectual insight. Full of courage, inspiration and reflection on past glories Binanda Barua's poems have the power to shake the soul. He visualised a prosperous and lovely Assam.

In some of his poems like the Ashvaghooshir Vir,
Raajamah, he sings of the heroic performances of the devoted sons of Assam in the Abor age. With his picturesque
In his beautiful patriotic lyric Bhāratvarṣa, the poet has made enough expression of his sense of history. He visualizes India, in this poem, as a mother and a goddess. This personification of mother India and the adaptation of the skill of the dramatic monologue have made the poem all the more interesting. Binanda Barua writes a very idiomatic style. The use of the pure Assamese proverbs and idioms like—Bere chāle āche kān (even the walls have ears); teje gāl phuṭo phuṭo kāre (the cheeks are full of blood); bāgh gādu eke-ghāte pānī-khāle bhāge bhāge (the tiger and the bull drink from the same river) make his style racy and effective.
Ganesh Chandra Gagoli

Ganesh Chandra Gagoli's passionate patriotic verses are known for their rhapsody, strong emotional appeal and beautiful constructional skill. Gagoli's Pūjā Āyōjan, Trayodasī Satikār Senar Asan, and Śrī Śrī Saṅkardeva are full of emotional depth and effective diction. His Pūjā Āyōjan shows "a departure from the monotony of traditional patriotic poems in which emotional appeal was sought to be created through vague sentimental allusions." This poem is symbolic in conception and distinctive in music and beauty. The mother country has been pictured as a mother and a goddess. During the period of national struggle for independence the conception of India as a mother had become very popular. It was Bankim Chandra and Bhudeb Chowdhury who idealised India as mother. Apart from Bankim Chandra's Bande Mātaram eulogies of mother India, it was Bhudeb who distinctively innovated pranām mantras for this new goddess mother India in his Hindu Keśavātā.

Mātarmāṁ bhavatīm Satidehūpām
Mātarmāṁ Vasudhātalā punya tīrthāṁ
Mātarmāṁ pūdayuṣa dhṛta saṃdārām
Mātarmāṁ himagaura kirti bhusām.20
The picturesque representation of the mother-land coming in the garb of a mother in Puja Āyojan is surely delighting to the heart. A strong sense of invocation to the youths of the country highlights his poem Trayodas Satikār Sonar Asam.

Rise ye, 0 Assamese youths
like Lāchit of yore,
Sacrifice your petty interests
for our mother;
'My mother-land is greater than my maternal uncle;'
Let this be your voice of meditation.

The Devi-like dear daughters of my country
you too, please awake once again
with a pot of nectar in your hand.
You are the goddess Gāmundā, the goddess
Lakhsmī; Kindly,
Pour your blessings on us.

Ganesh Gagol excels as an artist of verse-form. His similes and imageries, mostly drawn from nature, are picturesque and apt. His poetic diction is characterized by wonderful richness, avoidance of the commonplace, frequent use of repetition, alliteration and assonance.
The call for the freedom struggle had echoed and re-echoed in the songs of Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla. During the days of National movement, Karmabir Habin Chandra Bardaloi, the veteran Congressman and nationalist, gave a clarion call to his country men in one of his songs:

0, ye! the youths of the country,
0, ye! the girls of the land,
The very heroes and heroines
of our country;
Come, come forward and with
your foot-prints
make the earth red
make the earth beautiful.

To this clarion call from the national leader, Jyoti Prasad boldly responded. He sang with courage and confidence.

Luitar pârare anid dekâlara
maribale bhay nãi.
Nûmti medhar mahân mejir
nejâl phiriniati câi,
Purohito yadi thitâte âtari,
trāsate murcha yāy,
And āge bārdhī dīnī pāṭi pāṭi
24
Tejere valisāl yūm volāi.

= We are the youths from the
bank of the Brahmaputra,
We are not afraid of death;
We burn like sparks from the
sacrificial fire of freedom;
If even our Leaders fail,
We don't care;
We shall march forward
We shall offer our necks
And decor the altar of sacrifice
with our blood.

Jyoti Prasad was a sincere lover of the mother-land. He was imprisoned several times for participation in the national struggle for independence. His poems of patriotic fervour spring from the deep sources of his heart. In the song, Viśva vijayī nava jōvēn his call to the people for the liberation of the country is woven with courage and splendour. In most of his poems he appears more realistic than emotional. Through his poems and songs of patriotic sentiment Jyoti Prasad voiced love
of independence, respect for the mother-land and a
desire for a just social order.

DEVKANT BARIKA

Devkant Barua's patriotic compositions are small
in number but whatever little he has written, he has
written with grace and eloquence. Lachit Borphukan is the
very epic of Assamese Patriotism. Employing the method
of dramatic monologue, the poet has narrated to the late
illustrious General of Assan, Lachit Borphukan, the
pitiable state of the present Assam. The poet submits
to the national hero and offers himself for any command
from him. He says:

Still to-day the hearts of the youths wail,
at the misfortune of the mother-land;
You, the Supreme Commander of the nation,
Do once command us again.
Once again you utter the war-crys
Let us once again reddn the white waters,
Of the Uit (with our blood).

Assam's contribution to the Indian struggle for Independ-
ence was very great. A host of its young people, like
Kanaklata and Kusal Konvar sacrificed their lives for the mother-land. The life and activity of these martyrs inspired the poets to sing the patriotic tone in their poetry. Moreover, the memory of the national martyrs of 1857, the Maniram Dewan and Piyali Phookan was still vividly clear to the poets. Their lives too inspired the young poets to a great extent.

INDEPENDENCE AND AFTERWARDS

Things have, however, changed with the gain of independence in 1947. The poets have become busy in welcoming and enjoying their hard-won freedom. The praise of freedom and the dream of a new and prosperous nation have now become the subject matters of poetry. The poets who welcome this dawn of independence by their beautiful patriotic lyrics are Nalini Bala Devi, Ambikagiri Roy Chowdhury, Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla, Ambeswar Ghetia Phukan, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Ibrahim Ali, Bindnda Chandra Barua, Atul Chandra Hazarika, Malavika Goswami and a host of others. The spirit of hope and aspiration, as natural for a newly-liberated country, finds reflection in these poems. The resurgence of India was challenged badly by the heinous aggression of its two bad neighbours, China and
Pakistan. The Chinese invaders had attacked this country in 1962 and proceeded up to Bomdila in the northern part of Assam. In the same way in 1964 the Pakistan army had attacked India in three sectors. India as a nation rose against the aggressors. Through the serious efforts of the Indian Army the aggressors were driven out from this country. The war preparations and the state of emergency had compelled a big number of poets to take their pens to inspire the countrymen. The impact of an impending war is a matter of great concern for a patriotic poet, side by side with its destructive menaces a war also imparts so many good things to a fighting nation. As a war challenges the very existence of the nation, so, the people are bound to collect strength and courage and to forget its differences if any. Schiller, the German poet, speaking of war observes:

Man is stunted by peaceful days,
In idle repose his courage decays,
Law is the weakling's game,
Law makes the world the same,
But in war man's strength is seen
War ennobles all that is mean.

This support of Schiller for war as a measure of awakening
a nation’s strength is just praise-worthy. A good example of war’s awakening power was noticed during the Chinese aggression. An united and strong resistance was organised in India to meet the ‘Huns at the gate’. The Assamese poets, as a part of their solemn duty, wrote a number of patriotic songs and poems to inspire and instigate the people against the enemies. Nalini Bala Devi, Ambikagiri Roychowdhury, Atul Chandra Hazarika, Bhupen Hazarika, Keshav Mahanta and a few others pioneered the composition of patriotic songs and poems on the very face of the Chinese and Pak aggressions. Ambikagiri even paraded the streets of Gauhati with his bold and inspiring poems on his lips, with a number of his junior contemporaries. Nalini Devi’s bold and enthusiastic songs had a strong inspirational motif.

Āmi Bhāratar vijay senāṁ
Nahao śrānta nalao jirāṁ,
Nilā parvatar śilani vāgāi
yām āmi āguvāi,
Larā burhā dekā gābharuve yāba
valīśāl raṅākai,
Āmi lekhi yām yugar vāṭat
Natunar itihās,
27
māțribhūmir mān.
We are the invincible Indian soldiers,
We never grow tired, we donot rest,
climbing up the blue mountains,
We march to the front.
The young, the child and the old
all will colour in red
(with their blood)
the war-front;
We will write anew on the pages
Of time, the history of our
mother-land.
We will defend her
prestige.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Dr. A.S. Altekar: State and Govt. in ancient India,
   3rd edition, 1958, Motilal Banarasidas, pp. 71-72
2. Lachit was the general of the Assamese army during
   the reign of the Ahom king Cakradhvaj Siâha (1663-
   1669). When the Moghuls attacked Assam for the seven-
teenth time, he showed exemplary courage. In the
battle of Sarāighāt, it so happened that Lāchit ordered his men to build a rampart within the night to check the invading army who were on way to Gauhati. Lāchit appointed his maternal uncle to supervise the construction of the rampart. For the leniency of the Supervisor the men were not working sincerely. Late at night when Lāchit came to see the progress of the work, he found that even half of the work was not done. The enraged general then opened wide his sword and with a single stroke he cut his maternal uncle's head. At this moment Lāchit uttered the words — 'My maternal uncle is not greater than my mother-land.' The workmen were much frightened by Lāchit's action and they took to the work with such hurry that the rampart was complete within the night as a result the general was successful in checking the invaders. Sarvesvar Sarma Kataky has nicely rendered this extraordinary patriotic action into easeful verse in his poem, Rajāragat Lāchit Barphukan.

(vide, Asamiya Sāhityar Koś, Gauhati, 1937)

3. Marahā Phular Karani, pp. 101-103

4. 'Tente mai kāndo herā hiyā bhukuvāi
Kihe kārhi āmārno svādhinatā nile,
Ene kapuṣa nār bhāratara dare
Ache kat prthivit vīchāri nepāo
Nijar konove kāko visvās nakare
Mane hay deśe āndase yāo.
Nāi yār svādhinata svadesī lokar
Golām vuliye ān deśe kare ghiṅ,
Parādhin jatiye k'at mān pay
Sakalove cei cei kare dekhi hin.
Pare kare apaman nāi lai-jnān.
Nije hao nij sātru para kathā suno,
Kalalai karilo nās svajāti sanmān
Sadāy manat mai eie kathā guṇo.
Nije nije sātru hao nijar opar
Nijar hātere nij gālat carāo.

5. Premar dharani nila ahamkāre kārhi
   Svārtha paratāi khānde narakar gāt
   Hay karā Prabhū seṣ ekevāre mārī
   Nahay santir rājya thāpāhe iyāt.

6. Saṅcayan, pp. 165-166

7. Ibid., p 194

8. Kadam Kali, p 64
9. The humanitarian note is even more prominent in his poem *Manav Vandana* (An adoration of man) wherein the poet says: "Man comes and man goes, and man is a mortal being. The current of man knows no end, and it has been called a mortal's land, why? 0, let your human life flow away in the current of humanitarian deeds. Appreciate, ye men, the love of your brother men; (for) religion consists in kindness. Man is your companion, man is your fellow-creature. Man is god, man is worthy of adoration; there is none else than man. Then do worship man with usual rites and ceremonies, (and sing) glory of god in man."

10. *Saṅcayan*, p 270

11. *Bir dāpere grahantarat*

\begin{verbatim}
tej-mañähe gai,
Pārilehe upanibës
sthāpan kari lava,
Mañāv jātir mān gaurav
nitya natun hava.
\end{verbatim}

12. (Tr.) B.K. Barua: *History of Assamese Literature*, p 121

14. Nalini Devi's father Karmavir Nabin Chandra Bardaloi was an ardent admirer and follower of Gandhi. Bardaloi was an active worker for the Gandhi's war of non-violence. It is natural that Nalini Devi inherited her father's respect for Gandhi and his teachings.

15. History of Assamese Literature, p 127

16. Ibid., p 129

17. The line 'He Vaisnava, manuh ha' reminds us of a similar expression of Rabindranath. He has lamented over the miserable condition of the Bengalis, with the words: 'Sapta Kauṭi santānere he vaṅga janani, rekhecha Bāṅgāli kare mānuṣ karonā.'

The importance of Bardovā lies in the fact that it was the seat of Śrī Śaṅkaradeva's religious activities. For this, Bardovā is still to-day regarded as a holy place.

18. Kon anādir ādit yidina
   Vidāri sunīl sindhu vakṣa
   Uṭhilā janani patit pāvanī
   Harasita kari devatā lakṣa.

19. Hem Barua: Assamese Literature, p 177

21. Salltar sikha dekhi lakhimi cāpiva kāṣ  
āie buli māt divi maramī mātāt,  
Lakhimi Janaṇī mor ceneha te bhol gai  
vandhibahi nī jāo kalaṅ ghātāt.

22. Rūpjyotī, p 15

23. A.C. Hazarika (ed.): Jāṭiya Samgīt, Shillong,  
1958; p 11

24. Ibid., p 47

25. For a detailed discussion of Jyoti Prasad's Patriotic songs, see, chapter xiv.

26. Desār kāraṇe ājio vināy hejār dekār hiyā  
Desār saṇāni ebar māthon ākau hukum diya  
Ākau ebar sunovā tomar rana āhvān vāni  
Ākau ebar raṇā kari maro luitar vaga pāni.

27. B.K. Barua and N.K. Barua (ed.): Desār Kāraṇe  
garajī uthiche, Gauhati, 1962; p 20

28. This patriotic song was written on the face of the Chinese aggression. The heroic vivacity of the poet is worthy of attention.