It has been very late of us indeed to try for a work like this one I have undertaken to write. The use of Freudian psychology in literature has been so old, extensive and plain that it is cumbersome even if it is not common-place to spend time in its evaluation. The science of analysis has not remained confined to literature only. It is interesting to note how it has extended its realm to the other activities of man. Still, it must be said that psychoanalysis finds nothing so congenial to it as literature, nowhere feels so much at home as in fiction.

The creative approach to Freudianism in our literature was romantic and therefore, in most cases uncritical. And much to our surprise and regret what has been achieved has remained up to now unassessed. No literature can thrive, as we have learnt from experience in the right way in the absence of a critical literature, side by side, to judge its worth and achievement and to direct its course to follow. The few articles published in the monthlies (namely Rāmdhenu and others) as criticism pointing out the worth and limitation of the literary application of the scientific discoveries are fragmentary, and as a whole, loud in their bias, - hysterical in praise or condemnation. What T.N. Goswami and Dr Satyendra Nath Sarma have done through theirs for short stories and novels respectively is learned. But their criticisms are too general, and therefore, not of much help for an undertaking.
like this. They do not limit their studies to a specific aspect of fiction. Versatile though they are, their use of the regional language has set a limit to the wider recognition of their critical worth and the creative ability of the fiction-writers.

A belief has established itself among our writers and readers alike that the high degree of excellence, that our literature, - short story in particular has achieved in matter and technique has been subject to a considerable set-back in its wider recognition, and that but for a propaganda literature created in its evaluation and appreciation in an intelligible medium other than the regional language, this progress could not be made more meaningful. We are fairly convinced that no language can be so much of service in this propagation as English. Our notion towards English even when we cannot write well in it and speak it as it should be spoken is free of ambivalence, for it is not ours i.e. not inherently related to us.

T.N. Goswami one day said in a word of exhortation (when I approached him for a preface to my anthology of poems) that it was time for us to look back to see over the progress, our literature had made in the creative field. "To be frank", he continued, "we have enough of creative writings, but very few to judge their worth." Shri Goswami seemed to have suggested the responsibility of the students of English literature in the propagation of our literary worth for recognition abroad.
My encounter with Shri Goswami was inspiring so much so that I used to write short stories in English, and even felt the urgency of an authoritative writer for a look on them though with the least hope that these would be published one day. My approach to Dr. Satyendra Nath Sarma was rather instinctive and very interestingly humiliating, which I would like briefly to state if a bit of personal indulgence is no blot in a preface such as this.)

When I was on my way to Dr. Sarma I happened to have two things in my mind. I would entreat him first for a preface (to my book on different -isms which did not consider, I cannot explain whether for luck or ill luck, Freudianism and Marxism important for inclusion in it) and second, I would ask him to act as guide in a systematic study, — of what I had actually not the slightest idea, of course. When I offered the manuscript, Dr. Sarma accepted it but put it on the table in his propinquity just, as it were, to unburden himself. When I asked him for the preface of the book, he pleaded age and the want of time. I did actually have little courage left to entreat him for anything more. Dr. Sarma is old indeed but he looked more passive than age is apt in one to beget. It is hard to go farther on surmising about a scholar’s behavioural singularity in the first encounter. But had I left him just then and there simply envisaging him as he appeared, I would have lost what I am now with, — my personality and possession,—this thesis if it is a thesis at all, the labour of the years involved, the invaluable knowledge of psychoanalysis and above
all, the wisdom about a scholar, reticent but always retaining for himself and resuscitating for his pupil.

I have no design to write a preface as a panegyric on Dr. Sarma. He is not the sort of a scholar, accustomed to get puffed up in popular praise. I am grateful to him for the choice of the subject, the kind guidance etc. in its being.

The synopsis or the chapters which have been made in preparation of the work are very simple, evident but inevitable, I think, in the process. The quest of the impact of Freudianism in literature or in a particular genre of it makes an outline of psychoanalysis imperative. The chapter has been longer than the rest and is likely to be monotonous to a scholar in the line, but it has been so intended for my own comprehension of depth psychology, of which I had only the slightest of popular knowledge. The brief survey of the influence of Freudian psychology in continental literature with which the second chapter of the book starts is just an attempt to examine the extent of the psychological knowledge used, and the art which has expressed it. This survey has enabled me to have a glimpse of the new realism towards which our fiction has directed its course. Chapter IV deals with the problem which the introduction of the new knowledge has posed, and been expressed through the reactions of the critics and the creative writers, prompted by their like and dislike of the literary tradition. The erudition of the Vaishnavite critics, conservative though they are, and the well-argued articles of the progressive writers, minor though most of them appear in consideration of their achievement
cannot be thrown out to the scrap-heap. The critical evaluation of their views has been illuminating for the purpose and the drawbacks have been brought to light. The frequent references, made by the critics in reaction to the application of Freudian discoveries to the Vedas, the epics, the great Sanskrit plays, and the plays, Kāvyas and songs of the Vaisnāvite poets have made it urgent for me to discuss the sex-tradition in our literature and to examine to what extent it is pliant or susceptible to modern realism. It is a far cry indeed from old Indian eroticism to modern sex, and looks ambitions on one’s part trying to establish a relation through contrast between the two. The impression of the unbridgeable gap is however soon wiped out when one assumes it and interprets in the manner of Freud to be the distance between the instinct and the object. Old eroticism, to make it more intelligible, is the exaltation of the instinct; modern sex is a shift of importance from the instinct to the object. I do not believe in the inconceivability of an Indian or Assamese fiction to be grown on the base of our literary inheritance in the absence of the exotic materials. The treatment of sex and other aspects of Freudian psychology and the character-groups in the light of it could have been included and assimilated to form one big chapter but in so doing many of the materials now assimilated would have to be omitted. Chapter VIII has been developed in defense of psychoanalytic fiction which is often misconstrued as a cause of affliction and not as an instrument of cure. My inspiration for the creation of the last chapter has come from my study of Freud’s Lecture 35 entitled "A
philosophy of Life" in his New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-
Analysis, and from his remarks scattered throughout The Major
Works on art and the artists, and has been added and
intensified by the criticism on psycho-analysis, and of
psychological fictions. The fault in the frame of my work and
its development is mine. If it merits to be called an
achievement the credit is Dr. S.N. Sarma's. If it is accepted
as a thesis, it will be a possession of my mother tongue, which
was being deprived of it. I shall reserve a prefix or suffix
to add before or after my name.

At the end, I gratefully acknowledge the assistance
accorded to me by the Gauhati University Library which lent me
most of the books for the purpose. Specific acknowledgement is
made to the Tihu College Library where I happened to have the
two volumes, namely, The Major Works and The Basic Writings.

B. K. Deka
Tihu College.