PREFACE

The period from thirteenth to the nineteenth century is an important era in the development of educational system in Assam. Assam's educational progress takes a different complexion from that which it had in the earlier period. From this time onward Satra system of education makes its appearance and rejuvenated the Tola and Gurugriha system of education of ancient times. The Assamese people are proud of their Satra institutions which greatly influenced the Assamese society to inaugurate a cultural reformation in Assam. It is the most significant period the book has dealt with for the educational development of Assam - a period marked by the gradual assimilation of Brahminical education by that of vernacular system culminating in the mass education of medieval Assamese renaissance.

Born and brought up in Assam, I cherished a keen desire to know about the system of education in Assam during medieval age. The main objective of the present work is to narrate the educational set-up of Assam from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. Having been advised by my teacher Prof. N. N. Acharyya, M. A. Ph. D. (London), Reader, Department of History, University of Gauhati (Retd.) and now Prof. and Head of the Department of History and Archaeology,
NEHU, Nagaland Campus, Kohima to take up the history of education in Assam during medieval period for my advanced studies and research, I began my research on history of education in Assam during medieval period (1228-1826 A.D.) on the basis of available educational data.

I have approached the subject mainly as a student of education because before my experimentation no body has given so much attention to the educational system of the medieval time. I have endeavoured to throw new light on the subject since no scholar before me has ever attempted to delineate the rich educational heritage of medieval Assam. A systematic and detailed study of the subject incorporating both of its formal and informal aspects has long been a desideratum and I have spared no pains to present necessary facts in a logical way.

From the very beginning I have attempted to produce a critical study on the Ahom system of education. The narrative of the work is based mainly on the vaisnavite literatures, the details of which are appended in the bibliography. In the first chapter of the thesis I have tried to describe the historical background of medieval Assam.

In the second chapter I have discussed about the socio-cultural history of Assam during whole medieval period. In the third chapter I have analysed the development of vernacular
during that period. In the fourth chapter I have produced the Brahminical system of education in Assam during medieval period. In the fifth chapter the Tai Ahom system of education was drawn out. In the sixth chapter there has been analysed the extensive use of manuscripts in different ways. The seventh chapter shows a neo-vaishnavite movement and a mass education in Assam inaugurated by Sankaradeva which fully influenced the mind and culture of the people to commence a new era in their history. The last chapter sums up the summary of the entire thesis along with the contributions made by Sankaradeva for educational upsurge of Assam.

All through it has been my aim to make a general study of the development of different aspects of Assamese system of education from the earliest times down to the beginning of nineteenth century. I have considered it necessary to discuss at length of socio-cultural and religious conditions of the Ahom age.

The Thesis contains seven appendices, two maps, seventeen plates, glossary, abbreviation and bibliography.

It is a pleasant obligation for me to acknowledge the kindness of my teachers and friends from whose help and advice I have been benefited. I wish to acknowledge very sincerely the help and advice of Dr. N. N. Acharyya, formerly Reader in the Department of History, Gauhati University and now Prof. and
Head of the Department of History and Archaeology, NENU, Nagaland Campus, Kohima, for the valuable guidance I received from him. My thanks must also go to all those who have helped me in many ways but they must go unnamed.

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Binapani Talukdar.