

Preface and Acknowledgement

The urge in me to study the historical writings of S.K.Bhuyan is not a new one. In the early days of my college life, which started with my admission in Cotton College in 1986 as a student of Higher Secondary Class, the building nearby the Cotton College Library (old Cotton College SKB Library), with its gloomy and archaic façade and the signboard fastened there with the caption “**Narayani Handiqui Historical Institute, Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Assam**” created a feeling of mystery about it. Later on, the mystery gradually vanished. I bought some of the chronicles edited by S.K.Bhuyan from the selling counter of the Department. These books aroused a new curiosity in me for the history of Assam. In those days, I heard that these were the books on the basis of which the scholars have reconstructed the history of Assam in modern times. I could know that the Department collected huge number of manuscripts of medieval chronicles of Assam along with other invaluable ancient manuscripts and they were stored in that building. I heard that the Department was founded in the auspices of S.K.Bhuyan. Gradually, I could gather more information about the Department. In my later student life, I saw not only many curricular books and research works on Assam History, but also, many books on Assamese language and literature contained the writings of S.K.Bhuyan, in the bibliographies of those books. All these aroused curiosity in me about the writings of S.K.Bhuyan.

The contradictory information and explanations on different topics in different papers in my Major Course in History once created a kind of monotony and irritation in me for the subject. Some time after completion of my Masters Degree two books came to my hand –(i) ‘The Use of History’ by A. L. Rowse and (ii) ‘What is History’ by E. H.

Carr. These Two books had introduced me with the concepts of Historiography like 'Subjective elements', 'Objectivity', 'Time-spirit', 'Schools of historical philosophy', 'Biasness', 'Distortion' and so on. The realization of the fact that the contradictions in views are a part of the study of this branch of social science, i.e. the History and studies in history is a continuous effort to penetrate into nearer to the 'true past', the confusions in history became pleasant for me. Rowse's book preferred for a 'countryman way' of studying history. All these resulted in my squeezed out decision to do my research work on the topic 'the trends and changes in the Historiography of Assam'. But, considering the vastness of the area, my guide in this research work, Dr. Bharati Barua and the DRC, G.U. advised me to take the specific area on the writings of S.K.Bhuyan.

S.K.Bhuyan is not merely a person. He is a representative of some socio-politico-economic values and ideas of a particular age, which mould the nature of History and thus he is a representative of some values and ideas of historiography of a particular age. For half a century, S.K.Bhuyan ran after the original sources, worked for preservation of them, did research work, worked for the reconstruction of Assam history, paved the way and set guidelines for future researchers, and worked to shape and stimulate the public psyche with the teaching of history. He transcended his life to an institution and to a movement of historical studies in Assam.

At the very first sight at the works of S.K.Bhuyan, mentioned in the 'Bibliography' (S.K.Bhuyan compiled it in 1951, in which his own writings are enlisted systematically), I was compelled to remember the saying of Channing Pollock that 'A critic is that lame man who teaches others to run' (Gariyoshi-Mar.2002). It is a hard task to draw critical conclusions on the historical writings of S.K.Bhuyan within a period of four or five years, which he had accomplished with passion and die hard labour

throughout his lifetime. But with the progress of my study it was unfolded that S.K.Bhuyan systematically preserved his writings and in many cases he himself was critical of his own writings. In spite of that the Research work would have been impossible or half-done if the helping hands were absent in this research work.

The following persons have helped me in different way in my studies for this research work. I pay my gratitude to these respected personalities.

Dr. Bharati Barua, M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D., Rtd. HoD, History, The University of Gauhati, who is the guide in this research work. Till date she has guided ten successful research-scholars who did research works in wide variety of subjects and areas. She had been Ph.D. research-guide for a long time. She introduced me with Sri Bijoy Bhuyan, able son of that great man, whose writings is the subject of this research work. She corrected the orthographical and grammatical mistakes in the drafts of my works, gave directions of thinking in every steps of this research work but without interfering the freedom of a research-scholar in pursuance of his ideas and methodology. Her stern and at the same time affectionate approach in her guidance is noteworthy.

Sri Bijoy Bhuyan, The youngest son of S.K.Bhuyan is a decent and perfect gentleman. He with his helping hand lessened much of my troubles in this work. The people who have love for knowledge and for Assam history should be grateful to this person. He, in spite of his personal busy engagements in life, has preserved the all and every documents, writings of Dr. Bhuyan both published and unpublished with so great care that these invaluable intellectual evidences are not only saved for some more later generations but also have been being instantly made available to many studious persons, whoever approach him (Bijoy Bhuyan) for consultation in his library.

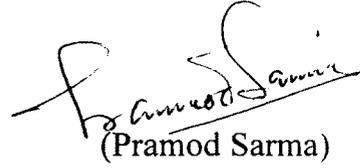
Dr. Sarat Phukan I.P.S., an intelligent and efficient police officer with sharp scholastic bent of mind, writer of several research-oriented books in history of Assam, a littérateur, now serving as the commandant of 10 APBN, gave me an opportunity to access to some manuscripts collected by him, which are related to this research work, particularly the paper on Jaimati presented by him at Kalakshetra on 8-7-07. He inspired me with his decent behavior, his passion and depth of his studies in history of Assam in my meets with him in several times.

For this research work, I had to study many reference books, Journals, magazines, Newspapers apart from the writings of S.K.Bhuyan. For this purpose, I have utilized my personal library, the personal library of Bijoy Kumar Bhuyan, The DHAS Library, The S.K.Bhuyan Library, Cotton College; IHRCS library, The K.K.Handique Library, District Library, Mangaldoi, Darrang; Mangaldoi College Library. Among all of them, the DHAS Library and the Personal library of Bijoy Kumar Bhuyan were utilized in utmost level. I convey my sincere gratitude to the Authority, the staff members and the owner of all of these libraries.

The esteemed faculty members of the Department of History, G.U. particularly, Dr. Ranju Bezbarua, Dr. Priyam Goswami, Dr. Dipankar Benerji, Dr. I.S. Mumtaza, who had been once teachers of in my student life at Gauhati university, and faculty member Dr. Paramita Das, gave me valuable advices and guidelines in time of submission of the synopsis and in the seminar for the final registration of this research work. These advices have helped me immensely. Likewise, I met Dr. J. N. Phukan, a renowned scholar in Assam History, in different times, and he helped me with some information and clarification on some points.

Late Dr. Deepti Prasad Barua, M.A., PhD; Sangeeta Gogoi, M.A. (Mangaldoi College) Dr.Arup Jyoti Shaikia (I.I.T.Gauhati); Dr.Runjun Barman (Handique College); Rahul S.Majumdar,M.A, Kami Ram Sarma (my father and author of Two Volumes of 'Vaisnav Charit'); Dr.Nihar Ranjan Mishra(Mangaldoi College); Manimugdha Barthakur,M.A(Mangaldoi College); Bijoy Hazarika M.A.(Mangaldoi College); Rupjyoti Barua M.A.(Mangaldoi College); Basanta Deka, M.Sc.(Handique College); Rajib Sarma(Axom Jatiya Vidyaloy, Noonmati) participated in some discussions with their valuable comments and helped by providing some books, documents and papers. I convey my gratefulness to all the persons mentioned above and to all other who rendered helps in this research work.

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