

Introduction

Jyotiprasad Agarwala belonged to a period which heralded a new era that was dawning upon Assam. Born in the transition period (1903 CE), Jyotiprasad Agarwala had the opportunity to ingrain within himself the rays of the 19th century Assamese renaissance with a strong faith in western education and rationalist thinking. Beyond that, during the period the Assamese attained the consciousness of modern self-entity in all aspects of literature, art and culture. Being a product of the age, his social ideas were also remolded in accordance with the changing needs of the Assamese society.

Though a considerable discussion on the various aspects of Jyotiprasad Agarwala has been made, but there has been a lack of in-depth analysis and historical perspective on his nationalist ideology and his association of nationalism with cultural domain. In the present work attempt has been made to focus on this unexplored aspect of this remarkable personality. It is an attempt to assert his political and ideological vision with his lifelong concern for culture which he defined as beauty and humanism.

We know that modern Assamese nationality formation began with the penetration of the British capitalism in the second decade of the nineteenth century. New consciousness flourished among the Assamese elites with the progressive winds coming from the west and entered Assam through Bengal. Growing contact with western ideas and the aspirations of the emerging Assamese middle class for a greater share of jobs under the British, led to the growth of a new sense of national awareness among the Assamese people. However, the imposition of Bengali as the only recognized language during 1836-1873 CE, mutual territorial claims of the two neighboring provinces, competition for jobs etc. were also responsible for the genesis of nationalist feelings among the Assamese people. In 1905 CE, the British Government formed the new state of Eastern Bengal and Assam with Dacca as its capital which also had put forward new challenges before the Assamese middle class elites and the relationship with the neighboring province of Bengal took a serious turn. The patriotic intellectual leadership was torn between two aspects- their love for their motherland (India) and their respect for Assamese culture. One of the major demands of the situation was the identification of the Assamese as Assamese.

In the meantime, the introduction of English education created an enlightened class who attained the consciousness of modern self-entity and it led to the formation of a new liberal Assamese middle class with a strong faith in western education and rationalist thinking. Amalendu Guha had indicated three types of influence on the formation of Assamese middle class intellectuals. Firstly, the spread of British administration and its associated infrastructure, secondly, the cultural activities of the Christian missionaries particularly the American Baptists and thirdly the direct and indirect impact of the Bengal Renaissance. Jyotiprasad was fortunate enough to have interactions with the giant personalities of that time and found a rich legacy of literature and nationalist atmosphere. Assamese intellectuals like Gunabhiram Barua, who was followed by intellectuals like Lakshminath Bezbarua, Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Benudhar Rajkhowa, Durga Prasad Mazinder Barua and many others introduced new way with new rationalistic ideas. Jyotiprasad inherited such a lineage that was reshaped and remolded due to their cultural contact into the Assamese society. Again, the transformation of the Agarwala family can also be correlated with transformation of Jyotiprasad Agarwala's concept of Assamese nationalism.

Indian nationalism formed as a national movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The freedom movement for the liberation of country from the British colonial rule commanded the moral and active support from all sections of the society. The nationalist movement spread like a wild fire and consumed every other thought except the thought of national freedom. Such a situation was enough to stir the heart of young Jyotiprasad Agarwala. Jyotiprasad Agarwala with his musical and poetical skills ignited the fire of patriotism among the masses.

He brought a new wave in the realm of Assamese culture. He had respect for old traditional Assamese cultural forms and idioms. He showed a new enthusiasm to recreate these traditional forms by experimenting them with western forms and idioms which resulted in the wonderful genre of Assamese songs which was deeply rooted in Assamese cultural tradition representing the new. (Pokee, letters of Jyotiprasad Agarwala, File no 3)

Above all, Jyotiprasad was a creative artist. Indian culture is transformed and transmuted time and again, depending upon social and economic contexts. He accepted a

broader perspective by accepting different traditional cultural traits like folk songs (*lokgeet*, *biyageet*), traditional dance and ballads and poured nationalist flavor in it by composing songs and poems himself. These are the folk treasures of the Assamese society. He believed that all men participated in culture but all of them did not play the role of artists. This distinction of his view can be link one of the Gramseian approach to the role of intellectuals. Gramsei viewed that all men were intellectuals but all of them did not play the role of intellectuals. Culture always tries to transform and transmute hatred to love and happiness. Therefore he utters:

“...Tok bandhu rupehe chao...

He mor sakalo satroo

Tomak namaskar

Prati sangharsate natun

Sakti pao...”

(Oh! my enemies, I salute you. I take you as my friend. In every conflict with you I get new energy).

Jyotiprasad spoke for the promotion of culture. By new culture, however he did not mean a total departure from the best part of our cultural traditions. According to him culture should be review timely. Without his review and update culture does not proceed. (*Natunar Puja*) He said in his essay *Natunar Puja* (Worshipping the new) that change ought to be the law of life. Human civilization proceeds through a process of change, through a process of trial and error.

Though he was a visionary but he was aware that dreams alone cannot bring changes. He regarded himself as a revolutionary to destroy the forces of darkness. He devoted his entire life to cultural activities to restore Assamese society because he was of the opinion that to change the society a cultural change was needed. He says-

“...Aditei yatra kari

Anadile jao

Dhangsor majedi moi

Rupantaredi rup pai

Nabatam Shristir salita jalao...”(I am the artist started my journey in the hoary past. My journey passes through destruction and devastation. But in the process I change and light the lamp for the new possibility that is going to dawn.)

Though Jyotiprasad Agarwala is mostly observing as a cultural portrait, but his cultural engagement also had a political vision and his political vision was reflected in his culture. Because, it is regarded that Cultural Revolution is not possible without the political consciousness. Any person, who thinks about a radical change of the society and desires a society free from exploitation and domination, he will use politics for bringing changes in the society in whatever area of creative activity such a person is engaged. It may be play, literature, art, cinema, music or any other forms of his creativity but he will definitely associates his political vision with it. Therefore attempt has been made in this work to study Jyotiprasad's cultural nationalism and linked it with his nationalism. This very important phase of his vision has not been given its due importance in historical research and thus has been very little attempt at studying his nationalism from the right prospective.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To focus on the social backdrop of Jyotiprasad Agarwala and to explore his relation with the Assamese elites.
2. To explore the features of nationalism in Assam and nationalism of Jyotiprasad Agarwala.
3. To analyze his role in the National movement and link it with the Assamese culture.
4. To explore his contributions to the Assamese socio-cultural life.
5. To explore the location of social margins in Jyotiprasad Agarwala's writings.

Organization of chapters:

To meet its basic objectives the study has been framed into seven chapters including the introduction and conclusion.

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: Jyotiprasad Agarwala: his social backdrop

Chapter III: Jyotiprasad Agarwala and Assamese society in the 19th and early 20th centuries

Chapter IV: Jyotiprasad Agarwala and national movement in Assam

Chapter V: Jyotiprasad Agarwala and cultural nationalism in Assam

Chapter VI: Jyotiprasad Agarwala and marginalized communities

Chapter VII: Conclusion

The first chapter is the introduction chapter. In the chapter discussion had been made on the statement of problem, review of literature and glimpsed all the six chapters.

In the second chapter that is '**Jyotiprasad Agarwala: his social backdrop**' examine the origins, class character and role of the family in molding Jyotiprasad Agarwala's vision because to assess the importance of Jyotiprasad Agarwala and to determine his position in the Assamese society it is necessary to analyze his family backdrop. This chapter deals with the social roots of Jyotiprasad Agarwala to know his engagement with culture one has to know his philosophical and historical background which determined his vision.

People generally migrated from one place to another or from one country to another mainly for livelihood, to avoid natural calamities and socio- economic and physical

oppression meted out by the economically dominant social classes. To avoid political trouble and instability leading to insecurity of life and property are also counted as causes for migration. As a result of migration of people from different places Assam has been a melting pot for many races and cultures. “The attractions are so irresistible that an outsider living in Assam for a short time do not desire to go back to his native land which gave rise to the report that the people of Assam can transform a man into a lamb”. During the medieval time the Ahoms and afterwards the British and other immigrants come to Assam for different purposes and some of them assimilated with the life of Assamese wholeheartedly. Likewise, the most striking feature of the family of Jyotiprasad Agarwala was their cultural assimilation and it is not just assimilation but contribution of the family in building modern Assamese society.

Navarangaram Keida (1811-1865 CE), the forefather of Jyotiprasad Agarwala left Rajasthan at the age of seventeenth and set out in the search of his fortune, arrived Assam in 1830 A.D. Navarangaram came to Assam at a time when threats were too many and the prospect of trade was bleak. (Agarwal, 1967, p. 15) The British also to facilitate commercial transactions with Bengal, allowed the merchants of Marwar to set up *golas* or depots at several locations in western Assam. In the early days of the Company “these enterprising men are stationed in all principal parts of Assam and their petty agents stroll about the frontiers, wherever there is a chance for making a rupee”. (Cosh, p. 63)

The Rajasthani *Baniyas* took control of the trade and commerce in Assam beginning with the British rule. During the time there was no export and import by private persons and the need of the people were fulfilled by barter form of exchange. The society looked down upon trade and commerce as the occupation of the lowest of the low. The imperialist British also did not care for rehabilitation or any effort but they did as much as for exploiting the resources of Assam for their profit.(Mills, 1853, pp. 3-4)

It is stated that Maniram Dewan had raised his voice to protest against the British policy of employment of Bengali and Marwaripeople in the revenue department of Assam such as *Mauzadars* for which a number of respectable Assamese became unemployed. (Guha, Planter Raj to Swaraj, 1977, p. 16)

Within a short period of time Navarangaram identified himself with the local life, married Assamese girl in Assamese style and merged with the Assamese life. Amalendu Guha presents Haribilash Agarwala (1842-1916 A.D.), grandfather of Jyotiprasad Agarwala as a *keot* from his mother's side and son of a Marwari trade settler. (Guha, Planter Raj to Swaraj, 1977, p. 281)

After Navarangaram's second marriage, he took '*saran*' (refuge) in the Gumadhara *Satra* to be a disciple of the *Vaishnava* religion and he became an Assamese in the literal meaning of the term. It is said that due to the acceptance of *Vaishnava* religion, the distinctiveness of the Agarwala family could be seen from the other Marwari people and it is argued that their religious conversion mostly help the family in assimilating to the Assamese society. On the other hand Navarangaram also devoted all his time and energy for the development of the locality in the transition period.

In the meantime, the Agarwalas also received spontaneous and hearty welcome from the local Assamese people which struck the first generation of Agarwalas with love and admiration. They enriched Assamese culture and society through significant contributions. All that remains at present of the original cultural identity of the Agarwala's is the family name or surname. The rest has all become thoroughly Assamese. Their dreams, hopes and aspirations got intimately bound up with the destiny of Assam. Everything changed completely including speech and food habits. Matrimonial relationships with Assamese families further consolidated their emotional attachment to the socio- cultural life of Assam. It is said that the Assamese people took the 'Agarwala' title from the time of Navaranga's marriage with the Assamese daughter Sadari. The *satradhikar* of Sri Sri Aauniati Satra gave the title 'Gupta' to the family, but the title 'Agarwala' became popular and familiar among the local people that though Haribilash and his sons tried to use the title, it could not last long. (saikia, p. 20)

On the other hand, the Marwari community in Assam started discriminating against Navarangaram's family because; the community did not welcome the policy of Navarangaram's complete assimilation in the Assamese society. (Agarwal, 1967, p. 24)

After Navarangaram's death the family was shift in the field of work. Navarangaram brought in social changes primarily through trade, commerce and agriculture but his descendants wanted to do the same through cultural and literary activities. Like Navarangaram, his son Haribilash also kept up the tradition of love for the culture and literature of the state. They became one of the remarkable families among the Assamese middle class. There is no denying the fact that the Assamese Middle class in comparison to other group established their leadership in the social and cultural spheres. However, the tea planters being the richest section amongst the Assamese middle Class, they monopolized the social, cultural and political life and leadership of the entire Assamese society almost throughout the colonial period.(Ramesh Chandra Kalita, p:21) They as a matter of fact had to play second role from the beginning almost till the non-cooperation movement. Haribilash Agarwala was a man of eminent personality. He became the president of the special meeting of *Asomia Bhasar Unnati Sadhini* in which meeting people paid special attention to the presidential lecture of Haribilash Agarwala. Haribilash Agarwala delivered a short lecture in the presence of Colonel Garden regarding the history of Tezpur which shows the remarkable position and personality of him. (Saikia, p. 7)

He also played an important role in dealing with the British and the Aka tribe as he had a good relation with the tribes through the rubber business. (Agarwala K. , Tezpurar Pakee, p. 10) As the demand for rubber increased rapidly during the colonial rule, it became essential not only to preserve the existing trees but also to set up new plantations. Accordingly, government rubber plantations were established at Charduar near Tezpur and Kulshi in Kamrup. In course of time, the production of rubber proved so profitable that the government decided to establish a monopoly over its production (P. Goswami, P. 181) and in this point Haribilash's business got destruction due to the colonial interest of the Government. His business was declined gradually due to the British capitalists. Due to the economic interest there was constant and unfair competition between the British, European tea planters and the tea planters from amongst the Assamese Middle Class. In this competition, the colonial government always sided with the European planters. (Borkataki, p. 22)

The autobiography of Haribilash Agarwala, namely *Haribilash Agarwala Dangariar Atma jeevani* was written in Assamese language in the 19th century. The text has narrated the Revolt of 1857 and the social and economic condition of Assam which reflected the author's stance on Assamese society and Indian nationalism. In the 19th century, western romanticism stimulated patriotic enthusiasm and the spirit of revivalism in Assamese literature both in poetry and prose. Stress was laid initially on unfolding of the rich heritage of the past by the collection and publication of materials, literary or otherwise, lying scattered and uncared for in different parts of the province. The process started with Nathan Brown was followed up by Haribilash Agarwala. He published the *Kirton* and *Dasham* and thus placed near the common people the works of the great vaishnavasaint.

Kamalaprasad Agarwala, the third generation contributed the Assamese through giving the tune of the Assam Sangit "*O Mor Aponar Desh*". His work *Tezpurar Pakee* is an important contribution for the History of the Agarwalas and the Assamese political and social condition. Paramananda Agarwala, father of Jyotiprasad Agarwala was also an eminent singer. Chandra Kumar Agarwala (1867-1938) uncle of Jyotiprasad Agarwala was the founder editor of *Jonakiin* which age Assamese literature reached its zenith. *Jonaki* became the forum of a group of eminent writers who were instrumental in bringing about a renaissance in Assamese literature in the closing years of the 19th century. The florescence of the Assamese romanticism actually began with Chandra Kumar Agarwala. In his two collections of poetical works *Pratima* and *Bin Baragi* the salient features of romanticism are clearly noticeable. Again, love of nature (*Niyar, Ban- Kunwari, Jal Kunwari*), adoration of beauty (*Sundar, Saundarya*), humanism (*Manav- Bandana, Biswa Bhawariya*), revolutionary spirit (*Bin- baragi*) and love for the poor and downtrodden (*Tezimola*) was also visible in his other poetical works. (Barpujari(ed), 1999, p. 144)

The spirit of revivalism was echoed and re- echoed in the poems of Jyotiprasad Agarwala. He found the stage ready through the representation of the Assamese elite class who insisted in establishing the language based Assamese nationalist identity. But Jyotiprasad Agarwala had departed from the mainstream linguistic nationalism and accepted a broader perspective by accepting different cultural traits like folk songs (*lokgeet, biyageet*), traditional dance and ballads and poured nationalist flavor in it by

composing songs and poems himself. In the realm of cultural production, though not blind, he had respect for the old traditional Assamese cultural forms and expressions. He showed a new enthusiasm to recreate these traditional forms by conducting them with western forms and idioms. He accompanied the local cultures and identities with the world culture and the outcome was a wonderful form of Assamese songs which was deeply rooted in Assamese cultural tradition and was refreshingly new. The opening song of *Sonit konwari* 'Gase gase pati dile' has thoughtful mixture of modern-western music and the Assamese folk lore which is called as *biyar geet*. He also took *japi* one of the important elements of the peasant to the limelight and placed it as one of the symbol of Assamese identity. Amarjyoti Choudhury viewed that Jyotiprasad Agarwala's plays, poems and songs inspired the neglected and miserable Assamese culture to sing again in joy. (Dutta, 2012, p. 13) Thus he retained all the folk traditions which were indifferent parts of the Assamese common people in his creative works and took it as a major tool for his nationalist activities. The elements of Assamese folk culture in Jyotiprasad Agarwala's writings are also the example of his love for the culture. It differentiate Jyotiprasad Agarwala's notion of nationalism from the general Assamese nationalism of 19th and 20th centuries.

'Pakee' the home of the Agarwalas' first became the place of vaishnavite teachings during the days of Haribilash Agarwala, then the *sangeetar Deul* (singing temple) during the time of Paramananda Agarwala. Again the historic *pakee* became an integral part of the national movement and turn in to a *ranbheree* (battlefield) which became an instrument in inspiring Jyotiprasad Agarwala's nationalist spirit. (Agarwala K. , p. 20)

The Agarwalas though have contribution in trade and commerce but their chief contribution is to music, literature, culture and other aspects of social life. Most of the Agarwalas like Haribilash Agarwala, Chandra Kumar Agarwala, Anandaram Agarwala and Jyotiprasad Agarwala made continuous efforts to fulfill the needs of Assam in different cultural fields and worked towards national integration.

Navaranga made Assam his home and was amply rewarded for it. The second generation continued exploration of new avenues in business as well as in Assamese culture. The later generations contributed primarily to literature, culture and the socio-political aspects of Assam. Arguing in the same line Jyotiprasad Agarwala viewed that

culture develops with the assimilation of the masses and therefore the highest culture should have to comprise much masses in its breaths. Because he believed that 'universalism' is the indispensable necessity of effective nationalism. He utters: *Rupantarehe matho jagat dhunia kore seye mor gayatri mantra* (that only change makes this world beautiful is my life's core principle) (Gohain(ed), 2007, p. 234).

Thus, the Agarwala family is an integral part of the Assamese society and it has enriched the Assamese nationality with its manifold contributions. The example that the family have set, is a pointer to the unity of thought. It is this unity of thought that can bring all the Indians closer together.

The third chapter '**Jyotiprasad Agarwala and Assamese society in the 19th and early 20th centuries**' deals with the transformation of Assamese society during the colonial period and the emergence of nationalist feelings among the Assamese people. 19th century occupies a unique place in the history of India as well as in Assam. In this period India broke the isolation and had contact with the western World. Since the annexation of Assam to the British Indian Empire, the Assamese society underwent different changes and the transformation continued till the 20th century. The Company introduced new administrative measures and they patronized the spread of western education and culture in the province. The introduction of Western education in India as well as in Assam was an event of great historical significance. It was no doubt a progressive act of the British rule. It brought forth revolutionary changes in the outlook of the Indian social, religious and political spheres. (Mazumdar(ed), pp. 95-96)

In Assam, though in the initial stage the feudal nobility class regards English not necessary for jobs but in due course with the changing needs, they too showed their keen interest in giving their descendants English education. (Mills, 1984). The primary motive of the Assamese youths for English education was the prospect of better jobs under the government. In the meantime, the introduction of English education created an enlightened class who attained the consciousness of modern self-entity and it led to the formation of a new liberal Assamese middle class with a strong faith in western education and rationalist thinking and their efforts led to the growth of modern ideas like rationalism, social reforms, national consciousness which was hitherto unidentified. Of the early English educated

youths imbibing western culture who sought to regenerate the Assamese the name of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan is preeminent.

The autobiography of Haribilash Agarwala which emphasized on the growth of western education in Assam, had also informed that in 1856 there was only one English school in Sibsagar and the rest of the modern schools were run in Bengali medium. He has referred the name of such Assamese elites of the period as Ganga Govinda Phukan, Kirtinath Barua, Ruchinath Sarma who received modern western education through Bengali schools. (Agarwala, 1967, p. 29)

Haribilash Agarwala in his text though referred to the Revolt of 1857 in Assam and the assassination of Maniram Dewan and his associates, he wrote that Assam was not affected by the nationalist flavor of 1857 (Agarwala, 1967, p. 67). Actually, this was a period of emerging Assamese linguistic nationalism against Bengali domination. Therefore, the Assamese elites, very few in numbers, were more interested to get themselves familiar with the western education and new ideas of Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century so that they could be formed into a class to fight against their opponents. However, it was the economic impact than the cultural or linguistic domination which made the Bengalis the eye-sore of the upper classes for whom there was now no other means of livelihood except that of government service. This became a matter of threat for the Assamese people's identity.

At this critical moment, the American Baptist Mission came and helped in rescuing the eternal mother tongue of the Assamese people. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan was strongly supported by the American Baptist Missionaries who not only developed the Assamese language by printing several texts but also published the first Assamese journal- *Orunodoi*. Later on, the Assamese language became acknowledged by the British government as a distinct and separate identity, which is enriched by a literature of great antiquity, variation and vigour.

Assamese literature developed and many journals like *Jonaki*, *Bijuli* etc. published which resulted in the creation of a literary climate. The national self-consciousness among the Assamese intelligentsia also led to the formation of many organizations like *Asomiya*

Bhasha Unnati sadhini, Asom chatra Sanmilan in the early part of the 20th century. These organizations though primarily formed as a cultural organizations but it helped in developing consciousness among the Assamese intelligentsia and which later on played vital role in the national movement. Padmanath Gohain Baruah once declared that ‘political discussion should not remain outside the pale of student organisations. Intellectuals like Gunabhiram Barua, Hemchandra Goswami and many others had contributed a lot in the social formation of the Assamese society with their intellectual thinking.

However, due to the strong roots in the feudal attitude, the middle class that emerged during the colonial period of Assam appeared to be loyal, compromising and obedient to the ruling class.(Kalita, 2011, p. 45)It was their belief right from the days of Haliram Dhekial Phukan to Lakshminath Bezbaruah that the country under the British rule made much progress and improvement and they wanted therefore the continuation of the British rule.(Kalita, 2011, p. 23) Devabrata Sarma has critically analyzed that the Assamese intellectuals like Lakshminath Bezbaruah, Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Rajanikanta Bardaloi, Nilmoni Phukan and others though were nationalist, yet were very hesitant to refuse the British rule publicly. In the district Gazetters Report B.C. Allen argued that both Anandaram Dhekial Phukan and Ganga Govinda Phukan were the most trusted and loyal government officials amongst the emerging Assamese middle class in the middle of the Nineteenth century. (Allen, 1905) The early middle class people’s minds were free from the thought of freedom and independence and this same condition was prevailed in other parts of the country (Kalita:35). During the period of the peasant movements of 1836-94 the Middle class remained with the British Raj being itself as a part in the system of colonial exploitation. They on the other hand took language as a tool for their nationalistic propagations but they did not dare to write against the British Government. Prasenjit Choudhury viewed that in the nineteenth century there were few nationalists among the educated class. (*Unyois Satika Samaj Aru Sahitya*)

On the other hand, towards the period of 1914-18 CE, there started to emerge a new thinking among the Youngers against the elders of the middle class people. There emerged a new leadership comprising the youths of the valley and they, with the help of a section of the middle class, led the political movements in Assam against imperialism. There was a

change in the pattern of attitudes among the intelligentsia towards the British imperialism. (Misra, 1987, p. 183) And thus the middle class leadership of the tea planting class came to be challenged for the first time for the cause of *swaraj* of the country (Kalita, 2011, p. 21).

Jyotiprasad Agarwalawas born in 1903 C.E., a period of transition which showed a new era in every aspect of Assam. His life span is a time of transitions of Assamese society to a modern era which is marked by the 19th century. Assamese renaissance had its rays in Jyotiprasad Agarwala's life and being a product of early 20th century, his social ideas were remolded with the changing needs of the Assamese society with a strong faith in western education and rationalist thinking. In such an atmosphere Jyotiprasad Agarwala had stepped forward from his nineteenth century predecessors locating the central theme of his intellectual thinking on humanity, culture and nation. He developed a deep sense of humanity and realized the fundamental unity of human culture. He linked his vision of a beautiful and humane world with peoples' striving to free themselves from injustice, oppression and subjugation. In which time a man follow the real sense of nationalism and devoted to it, the Assamese intelligentsia except their language knows nothing about nationalism. He added a new colour and a new dimension to his nationalist feelings by adopted Assamese culture as a major tool to mobilize the Assamese masses. An important element in Jyotiprasad Agarwala's political ideology is his association of politics with culture. Prasenjit Choudhury argued the portrayal of Jyotiprasad Agarwala by the modern writers by placing him on a pedestal on the basis of his ideas about nationalism. It is because Jyotiprasad Agarwala never compromised with his ideology and ethics. He never did support anything which was against his beliefs. As he was not a supporter of any ideological party, he felt culture to be the best way for him to unite with the common people.

Hemanga Biswas viewed that the feelings of humanity, nationality, liberty which were flowed with the renaissance by Assamese intelligentsia like Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, Lakshminath Bezbarua, Chandrakumar Agarwala etc. among the Assamese people was continued alone by Jyotiprasad Agarwala in his age with his new ideas and works. Hiren Gohain also argued him as the pioneer architect of modern Assam after Lakshminath Bezbaruah.

Thus there was an atmosphere of a rich harvest of rationalistic ideas, nationalistic ideas and nationalistic feelings before Jyotiprasad Agarwala came to the limelight and he departed his ideas from his predecessors with his vision of humanity.

Forth chapter i.e. '**Jyotiprasad Agarwala and national movement in Assam**' discussed the national movement of India as well as in Assam and the role of Jyotiprasad Agarwala in mobilizing the Assamese common people in the liberation movement.

Indian nationalism molded as a national movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Freedom is a practical assertion, an evolutionary phenomenon. A nation attains it only when this evolutionary process matures. The Freedom Movement for the liberation of country from the British colonial rule commanded the moral and active support from all sections of the society. The economic unification of India which was the result of the colonial rule become the objective material bases for the stable unification of the disunited Indian people into a unified nation, and also which resulted in the growth of national sentiment and consciousness among the Indian. It also helped in the rise and development of an all India national movement for their political freedom and social and cultural progress (A.R.Desai, p.29). It was spread all over the country under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The Gandhian ideology was nothing but that the practical application of which brought to an end British colonialism in India.

The nationalist movement spread like a wild fire and consumed every other thought except the thought of national freedom and within the stir of the times, Assam's role was significant. Different organizations made conscious to the Assamese people for their cultural identities and thus formed the backbone of a movement for national revival of the province. With the formation of *Jorhat Sarvajanik Sabha* (1875) and the Assam Association (1903) a new political awareness developed among the Assamese intelligentsia of the 19th century. (Baruah, p. 47)

Such a situation was enough to stimulating the heart of young Jyotiprasad Agarwala. The young boy started holding public meetings and tried his best to mobilize support from the people. Before he was at the age of twenty, he was drawn to the cause of the nationalist movement. He in his early age though was a follower of Gandhian ideology, but during the

Quit India Movement of 1942, he developed close association with the revolutionaries and went underground. (Jyotiprasad Rachanawali, p: 67) This was reflected in his early works in different forms and expressions. (Gohain, 1976: 121, 126) His voice against the colonial British rule close with his concern for the common people of the society started ringing within his heart from his early days. According to him fighting for freedom from the colonial oppression was not merely a matter of transfer of political power, but it was a direct extension of his life philosophy inherent in the fight of culture (*sanskriti*) against the evil (*duskriti*) as a companion of the masses. (Gohain, 1976: 121, 126). His political commitment was genuine, uncompromising and dynamic is stood by the fact that he choose to remain among the masses even after the independence. It shows that his love and respect for the ‘people’ was not an elitist sympathy but an outcome of his deep assurance, understanding and empathy for the masses (Chandan Sarma, P: 157). Hiren Gohain states: “the wave of the independence movement brought Jyotiprasad down from the ivory tower of affluence and luxury and made him just one co- traveller among the masses. During this period, on the one hand, he witnessed the preponderance of hunger for power, stratagems, opportunism and ambiguity among the political leaders while on the other, noticed the inspiration and dedication among the masses ready to sacrifice even their lives for their principles. This experience awakened in his mind a deep confidence as well as huge empathy for the masses. He realized that it is the people who are the main driving force of History.” (Chandan Sarma, p: 154) He was aware that workers and farmers formed the backbone of society and it was in the rural areas, around Tezpur that he carried out his nationalist propagating activities. He was a social- political philosopher who could acquire the experience and had a deep confidence and realization that it is the people who are the main driving force of history.

His involvement in the non-cooperation movement of 1920A.D. and Quit India movement of 1942A.D. was most inspiring for the people. In the non- cooperation movement the intellectuals played vital role.They highly inspired with the annual session of the All India National Congress which was held in 1926 CE. Jyotiprasad Agarwala also involved in the movement with different constructive activities. During the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 he emerged as a leader of the freedom struggle. In the Quit India movement he inspired the youths with his fiery speeches and songs. Jyotiprasad

Agarwala with his musical and poetical skills ignited the fire of patriotism among the masses. He emerged as a mass leader who propagated the common people to involve in the movement. His songs like “*lutor parare aami deka lora..., Toi karibo lagibo agnisnan; xajuha xajuha nava jowan..., Biswa bijaye najowan... xantan tumi biplabar...*”. He composed his most famous, patriotic and musical songs and poems during these periods. He has rightly shown us how culture can create harmony among the common masses which he could have able to link with the national movement and can contribute towards the social changes of the society. People now regard him as a new inspiring portrait who revived their culture through his ‘ideology of beauty’.

For him his political activity was the other side of his humanism and creative journeys. He was ready to serve the people, but refused to be the leader of the elected group of the party. His attitude to country’s freedom was romantic. He thought that freedom would change the destiny of the people. People, he thought will start living in peace and prosperity with an ambience of fraternity all around. Freedom of the country will mean the freedom for the common people from all sorts of oppression, exploitation and poverty. It is expected to usher in a new era in the lives of the people. According to him freedom will bring change all around in terms of peace and material prosperity. People, will have love and respect for each other.

He was a devotee of beauty, but his beauty was not abstract. He perceived beauty both in its internal and external contents and propagated a beautiful world devoid of oppression and subjugation. The central theme of his vision was how to create a humane culture and to defeat the evil- the *duskriti*. His contributions gave a new enthusiasm and rhythms to Assamese culture.

His songs were on the lips of the *satyagrahis* which became theme songs of the freedom fighters. In the rise of national awareness in Chaiduar and the historic march to Gohpur by Kanaklata and other freedom fighters mentioned has made on the influencing part played by Jyotiprasad Agarwala in inspiring the freedom fighters of the nationalists movement (Konwar:45).

In the fifth chapter '**Jyotiprasad Agarwala and cultural nationalism in Assam**' attempt is made to explain the composite character of Indian Nationalism as well as Assamese nationalism. An emphasis is made on Jyotiprasad Agarwala's nationalism and his link of culture with political nationalism.

Nationalism is as much a phenomenon of the modern world as of the ancient. As an ideology and movement, nationalism exercised a strong influence in the American (1776) and French Revolution (1789), yet it did not become the subject of historical enquiry until the middle of the 19th century, nor of social scientific analysis until the early 20th century. It was only since the 1960's, after the wave of anti- colonial and ethnic nationalisms, that the subject has begun to be thoroughly investigated by scholars from several disciplines. (Smith, 1998, p. 3)

Nationalism means unity of diverse societies into one nation. It is a particular sentiment that binds together all the people, brings them under one common umbrella, no matter what their religion, caste, language or history is. But, nationalism acquires significance only when it holds the whole world's expanse and stand for humanity. (Subramaniam, 1998, p. iv)

We know that, there are important differences in ways of defining the concept of nationalism. Some equated it with 'national sentiment', others with 'nationalist ideology and language' and others again with 'nationalist movements'. There is also a difference between those who stress the cultural rather than the political aspects of nationalism. But the general view is that nationalism was, first of all, a doctrine of popular freedom and sovereignty. They must obey only their own 'inner' voice. They must be gathered together in a single historic territory and they must have legal equality and share a single public culture.

The forms that nationalism takes have been multicolored as religious, conservative, liberal, communist, political, pan, cultural etc. Founding fathers of nationalism- Rousseau, Herder, Fichte, Korais and Mazzini saw the ideological movement of nationalism. In India on the one hand, a civic, territorial, anti-colonial nationalism and on the other hand, various ethnic and pan cultural movements have exerted the most powerful influence. A romantic yearning for a return to an idealized ethnic and religious past which was being wrinkled by

westernization and capitalism was to be found in late nineteenth century intellectuals like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Aurobindo and in movements like the Arya Samaj. (Smith, Nationalism and Modernism, 1998, p. 8)

However, there are different debates on Indian nationalism. The most important schools regarding the theories of nationalism are 'early nationalist', 'neo- Traditionalist', 'Cambridge school', Marxist school", and 'Subaltern school'. The 'early nationalist' as well as some of its later followers focused primarily on the nationalist ideology and a national consciousness to which all other forms of consciousness were assumed to have been subordinated. Prasenjit Duara has critiqued such formation as 'Teleological model on Enlightenment History' which gives a false sense of unity of Indian nationalism. However, the 'Cambridge School' interpreted Indian nationalism as nothing more than a battle between the two men of straws. In other words this school completely denied the role of a nationalist ideology in Indian nationalism. On the other hand the Marxist tried to explain Indian nationalism in terms of the economic developments of the colonial period.

This notion has undergone considerable shifts in recent years from national analysis to culture, mind and identity. The most important contribution has made by Partha Chatterjee. His assertion on Indian nationalism was that it was essentially a 'different', but derivative discourse from the west. According to him there were two domains of action in Indian nationalism. In the inner spiritual domain the Indians tried to fashion a 'modern' national culture that however was not western and in the outer national world nationalism was already sovereign in which there was little scope for the influence of western models. Indian nationalism was a rethinking and critiquing of the western modernity from the point of India's spiritual-cultural heritage, combined with a scientific approach. Benedict Anderson has categorized nationalism from a different standpoint where he related print capitalism with nationalism. He also pointed out that technology of print and the capital involved which created reading public which ultimately helped shaping a war nation. According to him the nationalism in Asia and Africa were not crystalized as a modular form of the west.

However, a number of statesmen and writers champion that the emergence of Indian nationalism in the 19th century was closely related to the spread of western education and

the rapidly developing means of communication in the second half of the nineteenth century. They asserted that the urge for national freedom grew among the Indian people because modern education helped them to study and imbibe the doctrines of liberation propounded by western authors. After the penetration of the British into India, they radically changed the economic structure of the Indian society for its own purpose. With the establishment of a centralized administration, they introduced modern education and modern means of communications and other institutions which resulted in the growth of new social forces and changes in the society. These social forces with their own unique nature came into conflict with the British imperialism and provided the motive power for the rise and development of Indian nationalism. It is viewed that the growth of Indian nationalism was a by-product of British colonialism in India.

Commenting on this opinion, A. R. Desai argued that it would be incorrect to conclude that Indian nationalism was the child of this education. In fact, according to him Indian nationalism was, the outcome of the new social material conditions created in India and the new social forces which emerged within the Indian society as a result of the British conquest. It was the outcome of the objective conflict of interests, the interests of Britain to keep India politically and economically subjugated to her and the interests of the Indian people for a free political, economic and cultural evolution of the Indian society free by the British rule.

However, the social scientists have been faced with the complex problem of defining Indian nationalism. According to Kohn, people don't have the idea on nationalism because there was the absence of any single unifying factor, whether that was language, religion or of custom which can cement the social groups of India in one state of mind or 'act of consciousness' which may be termed as nationalism. (Kohn, 1944: 10) Nehru though was an observer of 'nation state' he was actually aware of immense diversity of India in regional terms imposed by geographical and historical factors. "The development of India as a nation is the result of combination of several factors and forces during the British rule. The exploitation of India by a common enemy was the most dominant factor which gave the nationalist forces in India a common identity and programme during the British period. Discussing the character of Indian nationalism in the nineteenth century, Charles Heimsath showed from government report that for the average Indians, the concept of Indian

nationalism was generally beyond understanding. The only kind of nationalism that they were aware of were a culture-based regionalism, centering round the idea of linguistic homogeneity. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee also had preferred the use of the concept of 'language culture' in general context of India rather than that of 'racial culture'. (Choudhury, 2014, Vol- V, p. 10) However, it was the educated Indian elite class, belonging to various linguistic and regional groups, who had infused new ideas of regional consciousness among the people of respective areas before they began to think in terms of a larger Indian consciousness. Generally, the spirit of Indian nationalism is dated from the formation of 'Indian Association' in Calcutta. However, it was with the formation of the 'Indian National Congress' in 1885 that the idea of Indian nationalism reached its maturity. (Misra, 1987, p. 145) Despite the existence of such diversities within the Indian sub-continent, however the Indian nationalists of the freedom struggle were able to spread new ideas of unity amongst the different population groups of the country which ultimately developed into a new phenomenon known as Indian nationalism.

The Assamese intelligentsia of the nineteenth century was, therefore, in no way alone in its advocating of the cause of regional nationalism. Amalendu Guha had interacted with nationalism in Assam more than of a century and according to him the two tracks of nationalism in Assam were— the all India unity and the little nationalism based on regionalism, linguistic unity which is nowhere so prominently visible as in the case of Assam. (Guha, *Planters Raj to Swaraj*, p. 45) It is also viewed that 'little nationalism' flowed under the shadow of the anti-colonial movement during the colonial period and were not isolated movements but integral parts of the nation-making process itself. (Nag: 87) In this way several other factors besides those in common with the other parts of India, contributed to the development of a strong current of regional nationalism amongst the Assamese intelligentsia in the second half of the nineteenth century. (Misra, 1987, p. 148) British administration and the material foundation laid by it resulted in the destruction of the old feudal classes and in the rise and growth of new social classes. In Assam elsewhere, of all the social classes thus emerged the middle class and it was the most prominent which helped in social regeneration. New consciousness flourished among the Assamese elites and one major demand of the situation was the identification of the Assamese as Assamese which was primarily done through the attribution of a language.

With the strong roots in the feudal attitude the middle class that emerged in Assam during the British rule appeared to be loyal, compromising and subservient to the ruling class. It was their belief right from the days of Haliram Dhekial Phukan to Lakshminath Bezbaruah that the country under the British rule made much progress and improvement and they wanted therefore the continuation of the British rule.(Kalita, 2011, p. 23) Hemanga Biswas also argued that inspite of tremendous contribution of Lakshminath Bezbaruah to the Assamese society, he had some limitations. As he had never made any comment in his writings against the imperialist rule and never mentioned or recognized the Non-cooperation movement and some of the peasant uprisings occurred during his time.(Mazumdar(ed) P. , 2008, p. 45)

Jyotiprasad Agarwala found the stage ready through the representation of the Assamese elite class who insisted in establishing the language based Assamese nationalist identity. But he had departed from the mainstream linguistic nationalism and through his new ideas of juxtaposing Assamese culture with nationalism added a new dimension to the available legacy. Devabrata Sarma in his narrative has brought to light a very significant debate initiated by Birendra Kumar Bhattacharjee regarding the distinctiveness of Jyotiprasad Agarwala's concept of Assamese nationalism. (Sarma, Devabrata, p:45).

Culture is generally understood as an integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour. However, both John Breuilly and Eric Hobsbawm wished to confine the use of the term 'nationalism' to a purely political movement.((Smith, 1998, p. 177) But such a usage is unduly restrictive. It omits other important dimensions of nationalism such as culture, identity etc. and the result is a serious underestimation of the scope and power of nationalism.

This point had made by John Hutchinson in his pioneering and thought-provoking analysis of cultural nationalism. Hutchinson does not deny the importance of 'a political nationalism that has as its aim autonomous state institutions. In the meantime he also argued that we cannot overlook the recurrent significance of cultural forms of nationalism. Despite its much smaller scale cultural nationalism must accord due weight to 'a cultural nationalism that seeks a moral regeneration of the community'. (Hutchinson 1994:41) According to him, the objectives of cultural nationalist are essentially modernist. For

cultural nationalists, to secure a representative state for their community so that it might participate as an equal in the developing multicultural rationalist civilization. For cultural nationalists, the nation is a primitive expression of the individuality and the creative force of nature. It is a movement of moral regeneration which seeks to re-unite the different aspects of the nation. Cultural nationalism is not a regressive force. It may look back to a presumed glorious past, but it revives both traditionalism and modernism away from conflict. (Hutchinson 1994:34) Raymond Williams has pointed out three common definitions of culture- the ideal, the documentary and the social. The ideal definition views culture as a State or process of human perfection in terms of certain absolute or universal values. The documentary definition takes culture as the body of intellectual and imaginative work, recording in a detailed way human thought and experience. On the other hand the social definition looks at a culture as a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also institutions and ordinary behaviour. (Williams, 1984, p. 57)

Jyotiprasad Agarwala seems to accept the third definition of culture because it is the most crucial aspect of any social reality. He is of the opinion that culture remains an integral part of all aspects of the social life of all civilizations. (Baruah A. K., p. 218) He regarded the national liberation struggle, society, revolution, literature, music all as the different expressions of the same life experience.

He was the pioneer in aesthetic thinking and art criticism in Assam. He conceived the noteworthy notion of *Krishnatatva* and framed a special definition of 'artist' and 'culture'. (Dutta, 2012, p. 15) According to him Krishna is a tradition, a great heritage that is inherited by us over the ages. (Natunaru Puja, p-495) He called Sankari ideal as Krishna culture or in short Krishna who also indicates to Culture. Sankaradeva, the icon of Assamese culture has made an effort to make this legacy of *Krishnatatva* closer to the heart of common masses. The saint gave a sense of direction to the people of the land. 'Jyotiprasad on the other hand totally approved this idea and used it in carving a new culture for the general Assamese society in a modern context.' (Dutta, 2012, pp. 15-16) He had reinvented Sankaradeva to give culture an organic creative meaning rooted in Indian civilization through the ages.

Jyotiprasad Agarwala tried to trace a similarity between the *Kauravas* of Mahabharata which he regards as *Duskriti* as the enemies of pure culture or Krishna culture which he called as *Sanskriti*. Even among the Kauravas pure hearts like Bhisma and Gandhari were there. But their voices have gone unheard by other Kauravas. Bhisma and Gandhari wanted Krishna, but had to remain away from the lord for their own reasons. Lord Krishna was for the protection of the truth as much as he was a destroyer of falsehood. Lord Krishna too had his anti-bodies within his family. The tug of war between culture and the forces of evil exists in a cyclic order. It possibly continues in various forms and shapes. He argued that the Krishna culture is perhaps reborn again in the guise of Mahatma Gandhi who led India to freedom and subsequently got killed by a bullet of his adversary as like Krishna was killed by a bird-catcher. Jyotiprasad Agarwala viewed that if culture fails to dominate within our hearts we are sure to be destroyed. According to him Krishna should not necessarily mean Lord Krishna. India is a multilingual and multicultural country. Every community may be religious or ethnic, has its own Krishna or cultural symbol of its own. He argued that in today's changing contexts our concept of Krishna or culture should be to work out a cultural unity in diversity. In every community culture stand for happiness, this is being symbolized by Krishna. (*Silpir Prithibi*) He viewed that a true artist cannot hate his adversaries and according to him every man is an artist, artist of humanity, good and beauty. This distinction of his view can be link one of the Gramseian approach to the role of intellectuals.

In his discussion with one eminent personality of the 20th century, he argued that Abstract culture's concrete variation is Krishna and saint Garga would had given the name Krishna with this view. In many times Artist differ from culture. But he wanted to create culture by the artists. In Jyotiprasad Agarwala's view Krishna means culture, the highest form of humanity and who knows it is the cultured man or the artist. (Letter from JA)

Again, when nationalism started to turn with the feelings of conservative and blind regionalism, his nationalism was then reach the point of universal nationalism. Rabindranath Tagore wrote: "*tomate biswamayir, tomate biswamayaer aashal pata*", on the otherhand Jyotiprasad Agarwala sounded- "*Mayei swadesh, mayei bidesh, mai nana desh...*" He was deeply rooted in his own cultural roots but at the same time had all the

attributes of a world citizen. His famous lines urging his associates: “*who will come out to see the world along the banks of the Luit treading on the little village path?*”(Jyotiprasad Rachanawali) According to Hemanga Biswas Jyotiprasad Agarwala took the tunes of his songs not from the fields but from the *sotals*, (the homestead). (Mazumdar(ed) P. , 2008, p. 28) His cultural view which always indicated the mass, his literature and different contributions to the Assamese society differ his uniqueness from the other nationalists.

Though, in many times people regards culture as a medium or source for enjoyment, but Jyotiprasad Agarwala adopted ‘culture’ as a strong weapon for the political movement of the nation. In the words of Hemanga Biswas leaders with Marxist attitude also in many times failed to realized the power of ‘culture’ and regard it as a source of enjoyment. But Jyotiprasad Agarwala showed with a unique example how songs and culture can be effective tool in intimating the communication with the general people. As per our common proverb, ‘*pen is mightier than sword*’, but songs and lyrics are much more strong and effective than pen or writings. Because only educated people can know the language of pen, but songs and lyrics can be understand by all the sections of the society irrespective of their education and age. Which a literate person can acquired through writings, illiterate can’t acquired that. They can be motivated even if the words and meanings of the songs can’t be understand but they could be inspired with the lyrics and tunes. Though in many times we cannot understand the real meaning of songs but it can attract us, inspired us, cried us and can give us courage. Again it cannot be bind with any race, religion or politics. His songs can equally inspire all kinds of revolutionaries who love or aspired a revolution in the society. He showed us a way through which we can create harmony among the common people.

He presented the best of his vision with a great sense of critique of the emerging Indian condition and also capitalism and imperialism. He asserted that independent India’s position has no fundamental difference from that of the colonial situation in dealing with the revolutionaries and according to him it will be a great blunder in today’s Indian history to believe that one can suppress and eliminate an ideological movement through violent and suppressive policies. According to him inspite of getting independence from the British, our country is not free from imperialism. As a result, many tribes and communities

including Assamese people have facing the underdevelopment problem. He suggested that with the joint effort of all the communities and tribes it is possible for the communities to fight against imperialism which will ultimately lead the development of various tribes and communities. He advocated for mutual respect and penetration of the values of different nationalities to bring a new human culture and thereby peace to the region. He promoted for convergence of the 'local' with the 'global' and emphasized on the primacy of both. His humanist approach made him vision beyond Assam. In his poem *Axomiya dekar ukti* he asserts that the Assamese youth is the representative of Assam and also India. He is the representative of all tribal communities of Assam- *Khasia, Jayantia, Chinpho, Lalung-chutia; Losai- Mikir-Garo; Naga-Angami- Hero*. He visualized a pan-Indian, humanly integrated culture in which each tribe, community and region will maintain their own individual ethos, culture and identity. He had a clear vision about the formation of the Assamese nationality. He clearly spelt out a number of occasions that the Assamese community is an outcome of a synthesis of the streams of migrants from the rest of India and various indigenous tribal groups (Xilpir Prithivi: 490). The Assamese community must take lessons from this historical reality while building the emerging Assamese society. (Natunor Puja: 497). According to him unless this happened there was danger for us. (Notun Dinor Kristi: 491-492). He said that 'today no nation or a sub- nation or a tribal can have a culture totally exclusive from others. A process of synthesis is the only way forward for these groups. Only a policy of synthesis which also ensures diversity can save us from conflicts among ourselves.'" (Poharoloi: 484).

In his prose *Natunar Puja*, he argued that to form integration in the region our efforts should be for the creation of a common Indian culture by combining all the regional or individual cultures. Even Sankardeva though tried to bring all the tribes and communities under a common culture, but at the meantime he gave more emphasized in maintaining their own language and culture. Gandhi also viewed that as like 'Americanness', Indianness was never based on imposition of one dominant culture absorbing the others. Rather it presented a synthesis of different cultures assuring each of a legitimate place (Heritage: p:7). He viewed that our pillar must be the culture and the past heritage of Assam. He tried to integrate all under one umbrella without hampering anyones own identity. Arguing in the same line Jyotiprasad Agarwala viewed that culture develops

with the assimilation of the masses and therefore the highest culture should have to comprise much masses in its breaths. Because he believed that 'universalism' is the indispensable necessity of effective nationalism. (Asomiya sthapatar navarup p :519)

The central theme of his vision was how to create a humane culture and to defeat the evil- the *duskriti*. According to him the problem which has not resolved till now is how to bring conformity between material culture and human culture. In his first film "*Jaymoti*" through choosing an inspiring episode of Ahom history, Jyotiprasad Agarwala displayed his nationalistic fervor and love for the land of his birth. John Hutchinson revealed that the dynamics of cultural nationalism has a separate entity and it mostly focused on the moral regeneration of the community. Gerard Delanty and Patrick O' Mahony in their book *Nationalism and Social theory* discussed culture as an integrative structure. Jyotiprasad Agarwala's nationalistic ideas had partly similarities with Bipan Chandra's concept of homogenous nationality. Since, Jyotiprasad Agarwala had tried to mobilize all the different sections or classes of the Assamese society into one national banner. Again his ideologies had partly similarities with Partha Chatterjee's concept of nationalism. As Partha Chatterjee had articulated, Jyotiprasad Agarwala tried to link the 'inner spiritual domain of culture' with the 'outer domain' of the Assamese people. His efforts to link up the 'inner domain' of nationalism with its 'outer domain' as Partha Chatterjee has articulated, further proves the distinctiveness of Assamese nationalism.

The six chapter '**Jyotiprasad Agarwala and marginalized communities**' locates the place of marginalized communities in Jyotiprasad Agarwala's works.

Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci viewed that "the majority of people accept the values and political sayings which shows their subordination to the ruling elite. According to him, capitalism maintains control not always just through violence and political and economic compulsion, but also ideologically, through a hegemonic culture in which the values of the bourgeoisie became ultimately the 'common sense' values of all in the society. Thus a compromising culture developed in which even the working class people identify their own good with the good of the bourgeoisie, and help to maintain the statuesque rather than revolting."(Chakravarti, Mahadev: p.84)

However, Jyotiprasad Agarwala tried to seek assistance of the common people whom he called as ‘artists’ to create a new world.(Dutta, 2012, p. 11) He set an example to the intellectual middle class people for change in hegemony from the bourgeoisie to the working class.

His words were; “*Janata tor pranoro pranot /monaro manat/ xilpi je moi lukai lukai aso* (O’ my people, me the artist is hidden in the deepest layers of your soul and mind) (Rachnawali:p:88) *Aji Janatar alok bijoyi/ apurba abhijan/ aji prithivir akase akase/ janatar abhan/ naba jibanor maha samghate kopai bortoman*” (today (see) the great light capturing march of the people/ (listen to) their clarion call/that reverberates all across the sky/ (see how) the great conflict signaling the new life shaking the present). *Toi jana nai/ toi jak bhabo murxa janata / muruho janata/ murho janata buli/ jar habo khujo swayansiddha neta/ sei janata aji prabuddha hol* (you know not/ whom you deem idiot/ dumb and rustic/ and fancy to became their self- styled leader/ those people are today an inspired lot). His cultural engagements have significantly inspired almost all sections of the Assamese society. Even today like any other personality, the popularity of Jyotiprasad Agarwala’s works was not confined only to a particular era but has transcended the limits of time.

Again, during the early part of the 20th century, when ‘oppressed with growing fears generated by women’s demand for equal socio –political rights and men’s aggressive nature’ it was quite difficult to rise above the gender consciousness. In every phase of history women are always the worst affected. However, during this period Jyotiprasad Agarwala championed the cause of women in the patriarchal society. This is evident in his five plays. In his dramas the significant role were played by the women characters and in this connection his attempt was to create an ideal female character representing the Assamese women. But while championing the cause of women Jyotiprasad activities was to rise above the male- female divide. This is implicated in his dramatic personages, the major female characters of his plays Usha and Chitrlekha in *Sonit Konwari*, Lobhita in *Libhita*, Sewali and Kanchanmati in *Karengar Ligiri* and Rupalim and Itiven in *Rupalim*. Uttam Baruah regards Jyotiprasad Agarwala’s drama *Karengar Ligiri* as the undisputed drama of Assamese literature.(Barua, Uttam. p:48).

These characters empowered in themselves, evolve and strive to achieve ‘the third state of being’ (as Virginia Woolf calls it in her ‘A Room of One’s Own’) where the male – female identity constructs do not have any major relevance at all. It is this third space beyond the private- public divide that allows the women in Jyotiprasad’s plays to get themselves spiritedly engaged in the grand venture of constructing the cultural order by defeating all the forces of anti culture or *Duskriti*. (Dutta, 2012, p. 12) Geetashri Tamuli in her article *Jyotiprasad Agarwalar Natakhar Naribiswa* deals with the role played by women presented in Jyotiprasad Agarwala’s drama and according to the writer Jyotiprasad Agarwala was a visionary and therefore he could recognize the power of women in nationalist activities. He, therefore in his writings claimed the women to play the leading role in building the new Assamese society. (Tamuli, Geetashri., p:33)

The last chapter is the **Conclusion**. This chapter analyze all the findings and summarized it.

It is said that nationalism could never be based on geographical and cultural unity as it happened to be a ‘politic- economic’ concept like its European root. (Choudhury: p.15) To remove the strains on Indian nationalism development measures like constitutional, educational should be adopt. (Ray: p:7) Rajendralal Mitra in the Calcutta Congress of 1886 had said: “Nations are not made of sects but of tribes bound together in one political bond. We are all bound by the same political bond and therefore we constitute a nation.” (Misra, 1987, p. 146) On the other hand Jyotiprasad Agarwala placed nationalism firmly within the arena of current political and cultural thought and paved the way to more systematic and focused progress in this rapidly expanding field. He placed nationalism firmly within the arena of current political and cultural thought and paved the way to more systematic and focused progress in this rapidly expanding field. The thoughts that he promoted paved the way for a new expressive society built on the ‘*Concept of Beauty*’.

However, many scholars regard him as Gandhian, revolutionist, and communist and so on. Although he was a follower of Gandhiji’s philosophy of Ahimsa, but his mind was open to other ideologies also. He was of the opinion that if his ethics would not attained through the ideal means of Ahimsa; it should have to attain through violent means. (Labhita) He called himself as *Chira Bidrohi* (The Eternal Rebellion). He was also closely

involved with the IPTA (Indian Peoples' Theatre Association). Hemanga Biswas, the cultural activist opined that though he had close relations with many prominent literatures and artists, but Jyotiprasad Agarwala was rare among those who had engaged in a continuous struggle to forge a union between life and culture. (Mazumdar(ed) P. , 2008, p. 78) Jayanta Krishna Sarmah pointed out that Hemanga Biswas had played a significant role in bringing Jyotiprasad closer to the politically expressive and committed cultural platform i.e. IPTA. But in actual term Jyotiprasad himself transformed his thoughts and want to attain his beauty through the IPTA. (Dutta(ed.), 2012, p. 17) He was a man who seeks sound for the society.

His ideology was 'Beauty' which means goodness and to achieve this ideology he followed different means and positive ways. Therefore, his ideology can never bind in any narrow banner like Gandhian, revolutionary or communist. He called his ideology as '*xilpir sangskriti*'. Beauty for him was an entity that should light up one's life and imbibe it with meaning and direction. He was a visionary looking forward to a future of a new dawn for the all-round development of human. Suniti Kumar who applied historical and comparative linguistics in his studies on the culture and history of the regions and people of India and the world, the context of his nationalism was basically based on culture and he also viewed on the absolute justice and equality of all. (Suniti kumar's Heritage: p:45) This vision of him got expressed in his works. In other words, his works are in no way different from his vision of life and philosophy. In his all works he had a desire to represent man as beautiful, cultured and superior.

Jyotiprasad Agarwala's cultural involvement has not only inspired the cultural activists but almost the all sections of the Assamese society. Hiren Gohain had articulated him as '*bhabikalar khanikar*' (architect of the future). It is such vision inherent in his thoughts that makes his legacy enduring even today. (Chandan Sarma p: 149). Jyotiprasad Agarwala's teachings can give us the required confidence and guide us through this turbulent period which, according to him is only a transitory phase of struggle between Sanskriti and Duskriti where the ultimate triumph of the former is guaranteed. His popularity not only confined to a particular era but has transcended the limits of time.

Thus, for Jyotiprasad Agarwala also his political activity was the other side of his humanism and creative exploits. “The vigour of the cultural movement of that period, which marked not only a new political awakening but also made a break in cultural practice, derived from its being linked with a political movement which had an anti- feudal, anti- colonial and anti-fascist character whose expression was a united front strategy.”

He considered culture to the pivot of his activities and culture to be the arena for political struggle and a vehicle for social transportation. Jyotiprasad Agarwala through his new ideas of juxtaposing Assamese culture with nationalism added a new dimension to the available legacy.