CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The undivided Kamrup District (before 2011) of the State of Assam in North-Eastern India is a region that lies in the western part of the State covering both north bank and south bank of the river Brahmaputra. The Kamrup District lies between 25.46 and 26.49 North latitude and between 90.48 and 91.50 East longitude. (www.kamrup.nic.in, accessed on 14.6.12 at 21.06 pm) with a population of 1,517,202 (in 2011 as per official release by the Directorate of Census, www.census2011.co.in excess on 18.07.2012 at 1:25 a.m.) The earliest name of Assam was known as Prāgyotisha in ancient times as mentioned in the two epics the Rāmayana and the Mahābhārata, and Kāmarūpa in medieval times. Both the epics state that the kingdom stretched as far as the sea and the region was partly hilly.\(^1\) It appears from the traditional accounts that the ancient kingdom of Prāgyotisha, later known as Prāgyotisha-Kāmarūpa was much wider in extent than the geographical boundary of modern Assam. At present the State of Assam has 27 Districts within its jurisdiction.

The first epigraphic reference of Kāmarūpa has been found in the Allahabad Pillar Prasasti of Samudra Gupta and next references have been made in Belava grant of Bhojarman, the Silimpur grant of Prahasa, the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena, Madhainagar grant of Lakshmanasena and the Kamuli grant of Vaidyadeva.\(^2\) Kamuli plates of Vaidyadeva (GL, p.134) that mention Kāmarūpa-mandala in the Prāgyotisha-bhukti indicates present Kamrup District.\(^3\) Gradually the name Kāmarūpa used to denote one of the Districts of modern Assam as ‘Kamrup District’ comprising ‘Dispur’, the capital city of the State of Assam.

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Statement of the Problem

The District of Kamrup, the area of study has rich assortment of archaeological evidences of various materials like stone, terracotta, metal and wood which reflected the art and iconography of the sculptures of different phases of historical development based on religious and socio-cultural condition of different historical period. Geographically the Kamrup District is bounded by the Kingdom of Bhutan in the North, the state of Meghalaya in the South and the District of Nagaon and Darrang in the east and the District of Nalbari and Goalpara in the west.

The period has been taken from 5th C.E. to the 18th C.E. as most of the archaeological developments had taken place during this period in the Kamrup District under different historical periods.

Review of Literature

No detailed study has been done on the art and iconography of the sculptures of Kamrup District covering the entire historical period. Though a few scholars has done some works on the sculptures of Assam as a whole. Dr. P.C. Choudhury, in his published work 'The History of Civilisation of the People of Assam to the Twelfth Century A.D.' has discussed about sculptures of Assam till 12th century A.D.; but not specifically dealt on the art and iconography of sculptures of the Kamrup District. His other published work 'Amrit Manthan' discussed about the sculptures of Ambari Archaeological Site in general. Dr. R.D. Chowdhury in his published work 'Archaeology of the Brahmaputra Valley' has discused about the art, iconography and archaeology of the Brahmaputra Valley as a whole from the earliest times to the 12th C.E. Besides, Dr. Chowdhury discussed about the stone and metal sculptures of the Assam State Museum in his work 'Catalogue of the Metal Sculptures in the Assam State Museum'. Dr. N.P. Choudhury in his published work 'Historical Archaeology of Central Assam' deals with the remains of Guwahati in Part but not in detail. Dr. P.C. Sarma in his published work 'Architecture of Assam' has discussed about the temple architecture of Assam where some references has been made on the sculptures of Assam. Dr. Manoranjan Dutta in his published work 'Sculptures of Assam' deals with sculptures of entire Assam as a whole but not the sculptures of Kamrup District in detail. Dr. S.K. Saraswati studied iconography of sculptures of Assam in general which
is incorporated in 'the Comprehensive History of Assam' (Vol.-I) edited by Dr. H.K. Barpujari. Besides there are several informative papers in the Journal of Assam Research Society like 'Archaeology of Guwahati' by M.K. Dhavalikar; 'Excavation at Ambari' by Z.D. Ansari and M.K. Dhavalikar; 'Indian Archaeology 1970-71: A Review'; 'Sakti Icons found at Ambari' by Dr. Minarva Sonowal; and Dr. N.P. Choudhury on 'the Goddess Mahisha Mardini and her icons' etc. Thus though there has been some work on the sculptures of Assam, no attempt has been made to analyse the artistic features as well as style and technique of the iconography of the images of different phases of sculpture of the Kamrup District.

It is a humble attempt through this study to present a work on the different aspects of the art and iconography of the sculptures based on various religious beliefs and practices which reveals the political, socio-economic and cultural condition of the Kamrup District of Assam.

Objectives

The objectives of the work, were to study the evolution of the art and iconography of different sculptures of the Kamrup district belonging to different historical periods on the basis of art objects as well as literary sources, to evaluate the artistic features of the various Icons based on Indian Silpasastras throughout the period and to study the various features of the society, the social custom and behaviour; social and religious activities prevalent in the society during that period as reflected in art style.

Methodology

The study comprised of extensive field survey as a primary source of information by exploring different archaeological sites and monuments and documentation of art findings at various sites. The study is further supplemented by exploring secondary sources of translated ancient texts like Kalika Purāṇa, Yogini Tantra, Vishmudharmottara Purāṇa, Siva Purāṇa etc., and the epigraphic evidences and journals, reports and Bulletin and other publications of different organisations, society and Govt. Departments as well as other various published work in this context. Photographic documentation of the studied art objects were done and have been used in the report to analyse, evaluate and interpret the findings.
The objectives of the study have been tried to be achieved by analysing, comparing and interpreting the data and findings from the primary and secondary sources. The process of evolution of the sculptures as gathered from the art objects and literary sources were explored for the study which signifies assimilation of Indian and South-East Asian influence imbued with regional elements in it. It also indicates continuous habitation settlement in the region. The depiction of various icons based on the ancient Indian Silpasastras was found to be represents intermingling of Indian and regional art tradition.

Organisation of the study

The study has been organised into five chapters including the conclusion. The problem of the study, Review of Literature, the objective and the methodology has been presented in Chapter-I alongwith (i) Land and people of the Kamrup District and (ii) Historical outline of the political, economic and cultural changes in Kamrup District in different historical periods. In Chapter (II) the evolution of art style of the sculptures of Kamrup District has been presented; Chapter (III) Iconography of the sculptures of historical periods in Kamrup District has been provided; Chapter (IV) deals with a comparative study of the art and iconography of the sculptures of Kamrup District with the rest of India; In Chapter (V) conclusion of the study and findings has been provided.

(i) LAND AND PEOPLE

The Geographical boundary of Prāgyotisa-Kamrupa kingdom of which present undivided Kamrup district of Assam is a part, was not static and constant throughout the ages. It varied from time to time depending on the different political and socio-cultural conditions prevailed in the different phases of pre-historic and historical period as recorded in different accounts. The State of Assam is located between the Latitude 28°18′24″N and longitudes 89°46′97″ in the north-east frontier of India. The region is bounded by the sub Himalayan ranges of Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh, in North, Patkai range in East, Naga Hills bordering Burma in South-East, Lushai or Mishimi Hills in

The region is hemmed in on three sides by the hills and the river Brahmaputra flows through from the East to the West forming a fertile valley. It was linked up with neighbouring states by several routes either through water or land. Through the Assam Burma route, there was a migration of the racial elements from South-East Asia; from the Patkai route the Tai-Ahoms and other Tibeto-Burman entered into the valley of Assam. The Tibeto-Burman also migrate through the hill passes of Bhutan, Tibet and Nepal. From the West through the water and land route the Aryans of the Gangetic Valley entered the Brahmaputra valley into ancient kingdom of Prāgjyotisha-Kāmarūpa. Thus the coming of different racial elements in different periods with diverse socio-cultural elements contributed to the growth of the greater Assamese culture and represents unity in diversity. Geographically the people of the region can be divided into two distinct ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups - the dweller of the hill and those of the plains. It may be mention that the geography of the land is one of important factor in mouldings the growth of a culture and civilization of a country. The hilly terrain and those of the rich and fertile valley of Assam is an essential element in evolution of diverse socio-economic and ethnic composition of the people that contributed to the growth of a civilization of the region. The people were maintaining their own identity in language, tradition and customs; usages, institutions and religious beliefs. Land being the back bone of economy, due to the soil character in hilly area Jhum or shifting cultivation was the source of living in hilly region. Despite natural barriers there was a frequent intercourse between the plains and the hills, either for economic or other reasons. The undivided Kamrup District of Assam is comprised of alluvial plain of the Brahmaputra valley along with hilly tracts that continues from Shillong plateau and lured the invaders for settlement from time immemorial. In north the Shillong plateau runs down towards the Brahmaputra valley, in West there is Manikuta hill at Hajo and Agiathuri hill, Barkula hill, Chilating pahar, Dirgheswari hill, Manikarneswar hill, Aswakranta hill on the North and Mairanga hill on the East. This apart, there are a number of hills within the District that littered with archaeological

evidence of human activities from the ancient time i.e. Nilachal hill, Chitrachal hill, Sarania hill, Kanvachal hill, Kalapahar hill, Japorigog hill, Fatasil hill, Narakasur hill, Dirgheswari hill, Manikuta hill in Hajo etc.

The earliest inhabitants of North-east India were Austroic group of pre Dravidian aborigines represented by the Monkhmer Khasis and Syntengs. They were Neolithic people and celts used by them have been discovered various places of Assam and neighboring region. There is another group of tribes of North-east India belonging to Mongoloid origin that entered through various routes into region in different times. They are grouped as a Tibeto-Burman linguistic Group, though they differ in from each other in physical, language and cultural tradition. The Mongoloids are yellow or yellow brown in colour with broad face. In Assam the mongoloids in ancient times are inter-mixed with the Australoids and Caucasoid representing varied physical feature. The Tibeto-Burman Group entered into Burma from their original homelands of West China and split into two groups-one migrated through Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet, while the other group entered through the North-East corner of the State. The Tibeto-Burman are linguistically divided into two groups – one represented by the various Arunachal tribes i.e. Adis, Galos, Nyishis, Hill-Miris, Apatani and Tagin etc., while the other group includes the Bodos, Nagas and Kuki-Chins. Of these the Bodos represented by the different groups of people like the Garos, Rabha, Kachari, Koch, Mech, Tiwa, Hajong, Lahuung etc. speaking same group of Bodo languages. In Kamrup district, the Bodos were the earliest Non-Aryan inhabitants settled in the region. They practised non-anthropomorphic worship based on fertility cult and ancestral worship in the form of megalithic culture in pre-historic period. This tradition of non-anthropomorphic Worship is still found to be continued among the tribes like Karbis, Garos, Bodos and Rabhas living in Sonapur, Silpota, Boko and in and around surrounding area of the district. This apart, we find non-anthropomorphic worship of pre-aryan culture at the pithas in Nilachal Hill, Ugratara Devalaya and Basistha Temple within the district which were later Hinduised and upon it Brahmanical art and architecture developed. Then the Alpine-Armenoid elements entered Assam from the west or north-west in pre-vedic period and emerged with the Vedic Aryan culture representing Kalitas of present

Assamese society. Dalton writes that Kalitas are earliest Aryan people that entered Assam and they are Ksatriyas. Long before the *Mahābhārata* War, the Alpine tribes from Iran, or neighbourhood of Iran entered India crossing the Himalayas. While some of them settled at the foothills of Himalaya, some others moved towards the east and entered Bengal, Bihar and valley of Assam and established kingdoms. The *Vratya* culture of the Alpines which latter assimilates with the Vedic-Aryan culture developed into anti sacrificial and anti-sacerdotalism in Jainism and Buddhism and to *Yajña* which is one of the systems of Brahmanical worship. Then the Indo-Aryan from the Gangetic valley entered Assam from the west. The *Vishnu Purāṇa* states that “India is in the middle, according to the division (of the world), with the Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, Vaishyas and to the East (of India) are *Kiratas* and to the West are the *Yavanas*” (*purvē Kirata yasya syuh Pascime Yavana sthitah: Brahmanah Ksatriyah-Vaishya madhye Sudras ca bhasasah*). The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a Greek work (last quarter of the first century A.D.) and Ptolemy’s *Geography* (middle of the second century A.D.) mentions the land as *Kirrhadia*, may be named after the people living there called *Kirata*. The genetic traits reveal that Kalitas and Brahmanas are from one subcluster. The Dubi and Nidhanur copper plates of Bhaskarvarmana refer to Indo-Aryan settlers in Kāmarūpa in Sixth century A.D as well as presence of Brahmins of Indo-Aryan origin during the reign of Mahabhutivarman, the great grand father of Bhaskarvarman. In the Kamrup District in thirteenth century A.D. the Ahoms of Tai or Shan group of Mongoloid origin entered into the Brahmaputra valley from the East and settled down in lower Assam. Simultaneously in the same period, the Muhhamaddans from the west entered Kāmarūpa kingdom (13th-16th C.E.) and they were encouraged to settle down in Goalpara, Hajo and Guwahati. These Muhammedans more or less permanently settled down in lower Assam, of whom some are architects, painters, musicians, dancers and artisans, which brought a new cultural trend from the west that assimilates with the prevalent Assamese culture. Some of them are known as Moriya as settled down by the Ahom rulers in upper Assam for making metallic.

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objects as Blacksmith. Thus the Kamrup District was inhabited by diverse ethno-cultural and linguistic groups as well as Aryan and non-Aryan people who contributed to the growth of a large cultural group i.e. greater Assamese society.

(ii) A HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CHANGES IN THE KĀMARŪPA KINGDOM TO LOCATE THE SCULPTURES IN TIME AND SPACE.

The Kamrup District of Assam, which is a part of the ancient Prāgjyotisha or Kāmarūpa kingdom has literary and epigraphic records about the chronology of the Historical background of the different ruling Dynasties in this region. Both the great two epics the Rāmayana and the Mahābhārata refer that the kingdom stretched as far as the sea and the region was partly hilly. The term Prāgjyotisa means a country or Janapada while Prāgjyotisapura means a capital city of Prāgjyotisa. The city was on the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra. It was the oldest name of the Guwahati city. The Matsya Purāṇa refers that King Naraka occupied the city of Gold ‘Prāgjyotisapura’. The name Prāgjyotisa is first mentioned as written records in Rāmayana. The Rāmayana states that the city of Prāgjyotisham puram was built on extensive sea-side mountain i.e. gold-crested mountain, called Varaha which stood on varunalaya (sea). The city was built with gold and ruled by a Danava named Naraka.

The Mahābhārata, the composition of which is between the fourth century B.C. and fourth century A.D., refers to Bhagadatta, the king of Prāgjyotisha as Sailalaya and his armies comprised of kiratas, cinas and inhabitants of the sea-coast. While the composition of Rāmayana has been assigned between the third century B.C. and the second century A.D. In Rajasekhara’s Kavyamimamsa of tenth century A.D., it is stated that Prāgjyotisha is the name of a janapada; Kamauli plates of Vaidyadeva (GL, p.134) mentions Kāmarūpa-mandala in the Prāgjyotisha-bhukti indicates present Kamrup District. The epic tradition that Prāgjyotisha was ruled by the king Naraka and his successors are referred in the early medieval inscriptions of Assam. The name

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Pragjyotisha is derived from the word Prag-jyotis ('Prag' means east and 'jyoti' means light) i.e. "the eastern light". Monier Williams refers the name as 'lighted from the east'. Literal meaning of 'Prag' is East and 'Jyotisha' a sanskritic word means Astrology i.e. Eastern Astrology22. E.A.Gait refers that the word means 'the City of Eastern Astrology'23. It may be co-related with Nabagraha temple in chitrachal hill in Kamrup District. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (last quarter of the first century A.D. and Ptolemy's Geography (middle of the second century A.D.) mentioned the land as Kirrhadia, may be named after the people living there called Kirata24. The Sankhyana Grihya-samgraha mentions Pragjyotisha as a Punya-desa25. Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa mentions Pragjyotisha-Kāmarūpa in Lauhitya valley.

As regard the traditional boundary of Pragjyotisha - Kāmarūpa it varied from time to time. The Yogini Tantra (16th C.E.) mentions - (1) mount Kanchana in Nepala in north, (2) the confluence of river Brahmaputra in south, (3) the Karatoya in west and (4) the Dikkaravasini in the east.


The epigraphic records of sixth century A.D refer that the western boundary of Pragjyotisha is as far as the Kosi River and upto Videha on the west (Mithila). The Markendya Purāna (ch. 58) mentions that Pragjyotisha and Lauhitya are in the face of the Kurma avatar of the Vishnu. It is mentioned in Kalika Purāna that as soon as Naraka became the king of Pragjyotisha and authority of Kamākhya Temple, the name of the land changed from Pragjyotisha to Kāmarūpa. The first epigraphic reference of Kāmarūpa is found at Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra Gupta (350 C.E.), where Kāmarūpa is mentioned as a frontier Kingdom of the Gupta empire27. Again Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa mentions the Kāmarūpa King as a close associate of the Ikshvaku prince of Ayodhya (about 400 C.E.). Rajsekhara (900 C.E.) refers to Pragjyotisha as a country and Kāmarūpa as a mountain. The Jaina lexicographer,
Hemchandra (1200 C.E.) refers that Prāgjyotisha is Kāmarūpa28. The Haragaurisamvada of later period divides Kāmarūpa into four pithas with river as boundaries – (1) Ratnapitha, between the Karatoyā and Svarnakosa; (2) Kāmapitha, between the Svarnakosa and the Kapili; (3) Svarnapitha, between the Puspika and the Bhairavi; (4) Saumāra, between the Bhairavi and the Dikrang river. The Yogini Tantra also refers the same29. The Chinese pilgrim, Huen tsang who came to the court of the Bhaskara varmana in 643 C.E. the country was more then a myriad li or 1667 miles in circuit. He came from Pun-na-fa-tan-na (Pundravardhana) and crossed a river and reached Kia-no-leu-po (Kāmarūpa). Further Kāmarūpa is associated with Kamdeva in Puranic legends30. Kautilyas Arthasastra mentioned Suvarnakundya and further associated it with a fragrant called Tailaparnikas, ‘a commodities of superior value’, refers various kinds of Tailaparnikas—Asokagramikas, Jongaka, Grameruka, Sauvarnakundyaka, Purnadvipaka, which are products of Kāmarūpa31. The Kautilya’s Arthasastra refers to products of various places of Kāmarūpa which confirms its location in Assam. It mentions various localities like Parasanudra, Paralauhiya, Antaravati, Jonga, Turupa, Grameru, Suvarnakundya, Purnadvipa etc. It indicates trade and economic relation of the people of Kāmarūpa with the rest of India which contributed to the growth of the art activities of the region. This apart the BrhatSamhitā, the Raghuvamsa and the Tantras also indicate that the ancient Prāgjyotisha–Kāmarūpa lies in the east of the Lauhitya32.

The Kamrup District is the part of the ancient Prāgjyotisha-Kāmarūpa, and covers the ancient capital city of Prāgjyotishapura33. There are literary and epigraphic records which mentioned the location of Prāgjyotisha–Kāmarūpa, refers the land of the District gifted or donated by the king and mentions Uittara-kula and Dakshina–kula which means the Northern bank and the Southern bank of the river Brahmaputra respectively. The Parvatiya plates of Vanamala varman,34 the Guwahati Grant35 and

29 Choudhury PC 1987 (ed.), History of Civilization of the People of Assam to the Twelfth Century A.D., p.44.
the Guakuchi plates of Indrapala\textsuperscript{36} and the Bargaon plates\textsuperscript{37} of Ratnapala referred to Uttara-kula, while the Nagaon plates of Balavarman mentioned Dakshina-kula\textsuperscript{38}.

There are legends and traditions about the earliest king of Kāmarūpa or Prāgiyotisha as mentioned in Vishnu Purāṇa, Bhagavata Purāṇa, Harivamsa and Kalika Purāṇa. As mentioned the earliest Kāmarūpa king was a Non-Aryan ruler known as Mahiranga Danava of Mongoloid origin. There is a hill in Seventh-mile of Guwahati-Shillong Road, which is still known as Mairang-Parvat\textsuperscript{39}. He was followed by Hatakasura, Sambhasura, Ratnasura and Ghatakasura. The king, Ghatakasura was defeated and overthrown by the prince of Videha, Naraka. According to Yogini Tantra and legends, Naraka was the son of Varaha Vishnu and the Prithvi (mother earth) known as Bhudevi. That is why Naraka also known as Bhauma-Naraka and his Dynasty known as Bhauma – Naraka or Varmana dynasty. The Copper Plate land grants, the Harsacarita and the Kalika Purāṇa refers the King Bhagadatta as the son and successor of Naraka. The Mahābhārata mentions Bhagadatta as a great and powerful warrior who helped the Kauravas against the Pandavas in the Kurukshetra War\textsuperscript{40}. The Sabha-Parvan (xxvi-xxvii) states that he was defeated by Arjuna during the war after a fighting for eight days and succeeded by Vajradatta. The Asvamedha Parvan (lxxv-lxxvi) refers that Vajradatta also fought for three days with Arjuna. The Dubi and Gauhati grant also refers the same\textsuperscript{41}. The Nidhanpur Copper plates of Bhaskar varman (7\textsuperscript{th} C.E.) refered to Bhagadatta as the son of Naraka and Vajradatta as latter’s son and grandson of Naraka\textsuperscript{42}. The same grant records a gap of period of three thousand years that between the death of Vajradatta and the accession of Pushya- varman, the founder of Varmana Dynasty in 4\textsuperscript{th} C.E.\textsuperscript{43}.

Pushyavarman, ‘Lord of the earth’, was a contemporary of the great Gupta emperor Samudragupta (336-76 C.E.) of Magadha. Further Dubi Copper-plate

\textsuperscript{39} Barua, KL 1988, Early History of Kāmarūpa, p.18.
\textsuperscript{40} Barua, BK 1986, A Cultural History of Assam, Vol.-I, p.18.
\textsuperscript{41} Choudhury, PC 1987 (ed.), History of Civilization of the People of Assam to the Twelfth Century A.D. 116.
\textsuperscript{42} Das, P 2007, History and Archaeology of North-East India, p.11.
inscription of Bhaskaravarman (600-650 C.E) also refers the genealogy of varman dynasty as well as mentions Pushyavarman as Mahārājaḍhirāja and lord of Prāgijyotisha\textsuperscript{44}.

There are three clay seals of Bhaskaravarman found at Nalanda, out of which one of them, mentions a complete genealogy of the king Pushyavarman\textsuperscript{45}. The Nalanda Clay Seal mentions that Srīman Narakatanayo Bhagadatta-Vajradattanayo Mahārājaḍhirāja Sri Pragjyotisendrah Pusyavarma\textsuperscript{46}. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription mentions the Kāmarūpa King as a pratyanta-nripati along with the rulers of Samatata (South-East Bengal in present Bangladesh), Davaka (Davaka region in the Kapili valley of Nagaon District, Assam), Katripura (may be in Himalaya); Nepala and a host of tribes of Malavas and others of western and Southern India. It is mentioned in the same inscription that Samudra Gupta’s “imperious commands were fully gratified by giving all kinds of taxes and obeying (his) orders and coming to perform obeisance”\textsuperscript{47}.

The Umachal Rock Inscription on the northern slope of the Nilachal Hill, the earliest epigraphic records found in Kamrup District refers to construction of a cave-temple by Mahārājaḍhirāja Surendravarman for Bhagavat Balabhadrasvamin. The inscription datable to 5\textsuperscript{th} C.E. The Mahārājaḍhirāja Surendravarman has been identified with the king Mahendravarman, one of the predecessors of the king Bhaskaravarman. The words Mahendra (the great lord or the great Indra) and Surendra (the lord of the gods) being the same, both the names of the kings have been identified as one and same. It is stated that the ancient Indian kings often enjoyed different names at a time\textsuperscript{48}. Worship of Balabhadrasvamin, a vaishnavite deity and was regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu during the Gupta period. The worship of the deity as an independent cult is rare and indicates influence of vaishnavism in Kāmarūpa. The Barganga stone inscription of 6\textsuperscript{th} C.E. refers to king Bhutivarman, who performed asvamedha sacrifice and D.C.Sarkar placed the date as 550 C.E. corresponding to Gupta era dated 234 C.E.\textsuperscript{49}. The Nidhanpur Grant mentions that king Bhutivarman

\textsuperscript{46} Choudhury, P.C 1987 (ed.), History of Civilization of the People of Assam to the Twelfth Century A.D., p.129.
\textsuperscript{47} Barua, KL 1988, Early History of Kāmarūpa, p. 28,
donated rent-free land to large numbers of Brahmanas in the Mayurasalma ghara situated in the Candapuri-visaya, at Kusiyara in sylhet District, now in Bangladesh. Thus it indicates the extension of the southern boundary of Prägyotisha- Kāmarūpa kingdom in 6th - 7th C.E. as far as Present Bangladesh. Bhutivarman was succeeded by his son Candramukhavarman and followed by his son Sthitavarman. The Nalanda seals mentioned that king Sthitavarman performed two horse sacrifices. He was followed by his son Susthitavarman also known as Mriganka as mentioned in the Nidhanpur plates. The Harsacarita refers to him as Mahārājadhirāja. The Apshad Inscription states that Susthitavarman was defeated by the Gupta Monarch, Mahasenagupta. The Dubi Copper plates mentioned him as worshipper of Siva. King Susthistavarman has two sons – Supratisthitavarman and Bhaskaravarman. Of them Supratisthitavarman died premature death and succeeded by Bhaskaravarman, who was contemporary of Harsavardhan, the king of Kanauj in 605C.E. - 647C.E. Bana’s Harsacarita mentions him as Kumara, the lord of Prägyotisha and a worshiper of Siva. He has been referred as an ally of Harsa, as ajaryyam sangatam i.e undying association and presented many valuables including ornaments and finest gems to Harsavardhan. The same text refers that the king sent the gifts to Sri Harsa through his trusted messenger Hangshavega, the list of which has been found there. The gift included a royal umbrella, beautifully carved and studed with valuable gems, manuscripts of Sachi bark, dye cane crafts, Agar, musk in silk bags, liquid mollases in earthen pots, paintings and silk fabrics etc. It indicates richness and highly developed art and industry as well as economic condition of the people of Kāmarūpa kingdom during that period. The Nidhanpur grant and the accounts of Chinese pilgrims refers that Bhaskaravarman in association with Harsa invaded Gauda though could not completely defeated Gauda king Sasanka during his lifetime. May be the region of Gauda was taken under his possession after the death of king Sasanka as the Nidhanpur Copper plate inscription was issued by king Bhaskaravarman at Karnasuvarna, the capital of Gauda. The king Bhaskaravarman invited the Chinese pilgrim Hieu-tsang who was in Nalanda. As invited the Chinese pilgrim went to Kāmarūpa as found in Chinese records. It is

mentioned in Si-yu-ki that the circumference of the capital of Kāmarūpa was thirty li of which the king was called “Sun-armour” or Kumara (Bhaskaravarman) was a Brahman by Caste, but he also patronised Buddhist sramanas\textsuperscript{54}. The kingdom of Kāmarūpa comprised the whole of modern Assam, a part of Bengal, parts of Bihar or a portion of Mithila and bounded by the Kosi River. It has been mentioned that king Bhaskaravarman did not marry as popularly known as Kumara-raja. After his death the Varman Dynasty declined in Kāmarūpa Kingdom\textsuperscript{55}.

**Sālasthambha Dynasty**

After the death of king Bhaskaravarman, as he has no descendents the kingdom was occupied by the Sālasthambha Dynasty. The origin of the Sālasthambha is very little known, may be a local aboriginal chief. The name Sālasthambha is mentioned in the inscriptions of Harjaravarman, Vanamala, Balavarman III and Ratnapala. The Bargaon copper plate inscription of Ratnapalavarman as deciphered by Dr. Hoernle mentions that “after this for several generations kings of Naraka’s Dynasty had ruled the whole country, a great chief of the Mlechhas, owing to a turn of adverse fate, took possession of the kingdom. This was Sālasthambha”. It narrates as follows as – “\textit{evam vangsha kramena kshitimatha nikhilam bhunjatam narakam rājyam mlechhādhiṇātho vidhi chalana vasadeavā Jagrāha rāyam}”\textsuperscript{56}.

According to the inscription of Harjara-varman, Sālasthambha was succeeded by his son Vijaya, then Palaka, Kumara, Vajradeva, Hashavarman, Balavarman and Harijaradeva\textsuperscript{57}. It appears that in Harshavarman’s reign the kingdom was extended towards south and west. He was defeated by Yasovarman may be in 746 C.E. as recorded in Pasupati Inscription of King Jayadeva of Nepal, who married Rajyamati, daughter of Harshavarman. He was succeeded by his son Balavarman II, and then came Pralambha, who was followed by Harjjaravarman. His reference is found at Tezpur rock-cut inscription dated 510 Gupta Era equivalent to 829 C.E. It mentions that a big tank named ‘Hajjarapukhuri’ was excavated by him\textsuperscript{58}. There is a tank at modern Tezpur town still known with the same name. He was succeeded by his son Vanamalavarman, 

\textsuperscript{55} Choudhury, RD 1985, \textit{Archaeology of the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam}, p.8.
\textsuperscript{57} Barua, K.L 1988, \textit{Early History of Kāmarūpa}, p.69.
\textsuperscript{58} Choudhury, R.D 1985, \textit{Archaeology of the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam}, pp.8-9.
who extended his kingdom as far as the line of forest near sea-like waters or sea-shore. It is mentioned in the Copper inscription of Vanamalavarman. According to this inscription king Vanamala granted lands to a Brahman in the village, Abhissura-vataka near Chandrapuri on the west of Trisrota (Teesta). The lands may be between the Teesta and the Kausika\(^59\). King Vanamala was succeeded by his son Jayamala also known as Virabahu, who was a contemporary of Devapala, the Pala king of Bengal. King Jayamala abdicated his throne in favour his son Balavarman III. The Nowgong Inscription of Balavarman III describes him as a powerful king and it was issued from the 'ancestral camp,' Haruppesvara. The immediate successor of Balavarman III is not known since there is no account in this regard. The last king of the Sālasthambha Dynasty is Tyagasimha as found in the Bargaon Grant. Between Balavarman and Tyagasimha, there is a gap of long period of 100 years\(^60\). It appears that as per epigraphic records the capital of the country was shifted to Haruppesvara i.e.modern Tezpur from Kāmarūpa.

**Pala Dynasty**

It is recorded in the Bargaon Grants of Ratnapala that Tyagasinha, the twenty-first king of Sālasthambha dynasty departed to heaven without any scion to succeed him, the people elected Brahmapala a descendent of Bhauma-Naraka family as the ruler of Prāgjyotisha-Kāmarūpa. He is called Mahārājādhirāja, while Ratnapala is known as Paramesvara Paramabhuttaraka Mahārājādhirāja. A similar system is found to be followed in the History of Bengal\(^61\). Brahmapala succeeded to the throne in about 900C.E. During the reign of Brahmapala, the kingdom was attacked by Jatavarman, son of Vajravarman of the Varman dynasty of Eastern Magadha, This invasion is recorded in the Belava copper-plate inscription of Bhujavarma Deva, grandson of Jatavarman. King Brahmapala re-transferred his capital to Prāgjyotishapur (Gauhati) or its neighbourhood\(^62\). The Bargaon copper-plate inscription states that king Brahmapala abdicated the throne to his son Ratnapala who was a powerful ruler and fortified his city 'Sri-Durjaya, on the bank of river Brahmaputra. It has been identified with modern Gauhati by scholars like K.L. Barua and P.C. Choudhury etc. There are two grants of

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\(^60\) Barua, BK 1986, *A Cultural History of Assam, Early Period*, vol.-1, p.36.


Ratnapala – the Bargaon copper-plate and Sualkuchi copper-plate Inscriptions. Of these the first one was issued in the twenty-fifth regnal year and other in the twenty-sixth regnal year of Ratnapala. In the records of grandson Indrapala, it is mentioned King Ratnapala built many Siva temples, granted much wealth to Brahmanas and performed many sacrifices. He was succeeded by his grandson Indrapala due to his father Purandarapala’s early death as Yuvaraja (960-90 C.E.) King Indrapala issued two grants – the Guwahati copper-plate in his eighth regnal year and the Guakuchi copper-plate in his twenty-first regnal year. Both the Grants offered respect to Sambhu (Siva), Mahavaraha, mother Earth and to the Lauhitya, the lord of the rivers. In the grants, king Indrapala was described as the ‘Light of the East’ (prachi-pradipa) and as a master of Pada, Vakya, Tarka and Tantra. The Gachtal plates of Gopala states that King Indrapala defeated king Kalyanachandra (975-95 C.E.) of Vanga, who was the son of Srichandra (925-75 C.E.). King Indrapala was succeeded by his son Gopala (990-1015 C.E.), and then came Harsapala (1015-35 C.E.). The Gachtal inscription refers that king Ratnapala defeated king Rajyapala of Gauda alongwith earlier mentioned records of Indrapala about defeating king of Vanga. It also mentions about shifting of capital to Hadappesvara from Durjaya and about mother of Gopala, Rajyadevi a Rastrakuta Princess. Thus indicates matrimonial relationship of the Kāmarūpa king with other States of India. King Harsapala was succeeded by Dharmapala and then came his son Jayapala (1100-1128 C.E) the last king of the Pala Dynasty. A reference of Kāmarūpa king Jayapala is found in the Silimpur stone Inscription of the Brahmana Prahasa. The Ramcarita of Sandhyakara Nandi mentions that the Kāmarūpa king Jayapala was defeated by Ramapala of Gauda. Thus the Pala dynasty came to end by the early part of the twelfth Century A.D. However, the Kamauli Grants of Vaidyadeva of 1142 C.E. refers that the king Ramapala placed a vassal named Tingyadeva on the throne of Kāmarūpa. He has his capital in north Guwahati or Kāmarūpa nagar. But Tingyadeva rebelled against the king of Gauda Kumarapala son and successor of Rampala, Kumarapala defeated him and appointed his minister Vaidyadeva as ruler of Kāmarūpa kingdom. Within a very short period king Vaidyadeva declared independence and established a Brahmana kingdom in

Kāmarūpa and ruled till 1150 C.E. Vaidyadeva had his head quarters at Hahkuchi, still a village in modern Kamrup and forts in north Guwahati known as Vaidyar Garh. However the Pala dynasty on the south bank of the river Brahmaputra after the king Jayapala has been referred in the Ambari Stone Inscription dated 1232 C.E. The Inscription was found to be inscribed in mixed Devnagari and old Assamese script. It mentioned that the Sun-God Samudrapala had Sattra establishment near his royal palace within his jurisdiction for ritual performance. The inmates of the Sattra were called yogis or siddhas and reside in Yogihati. The Ketekibari Sattra of later Ahom period (at present in Paltan Bazar of Guwahati), though a vaishnavite sattra may be a related to old sattra establishment.

**Post-Pala Period**

In post-pala period Kāmarūpa or Kamrud of the Muhammadans witnessed a phase of unstable state due to invasion from the west and east. The successor of Vaidyadeva is not known. The grants of Vallabhadeva of Tezpur (1185 C.E.) mentions a group of rulers with names like Rajyadeva, Udayakarna and Vallbhadeva of Bhaskara verma's origin Candra vamsa. It has been recorded in Mudhainagar inscription that the kingdom of Kāmarūpa was attacked by the Laksmanasena of Bengal in the third quarter of the Twelfth C.E. He defeated the unknown successor of Vaidyadeva. D.C.Sircar referred to them as rulers of Lunar Dynasty, having four line of kings, who ruled between 1120-1200 C.E. But there are some controversy regarding reigning of the Lunar Dynasty among the scholars. It is not clear whether Guwahati was a part of the dominion of the Lunar Dynasty of Tezpur grants and whether the rulers witnessed the invasion of the Muhammadan from Bengal as recorded in Kanai Borosi Bowa Rock Inscription. Ray and Bhattasali are of the opinion that the Muhammadans or the Turks led a troop to Tibet in 1202 and was annihilated by Vallabhadeva or his successor. This victorious incident is recorded on a rock facing the river Brahmaputra in North Guwahati. It is engraved as follows-

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68 In Borpujari, HK 1990, *Comprehensive History of Assam*, vol.-I, Ch.VI,Sec.III,pp.165.
"On the thirteenth of Caitra, in the Saka year 1127 (7th March, 1206 C.E.) the Turks coming into Kamarupa were destroyed". The Tabaqat-i-Nasiri of Minhaj-ul-siraj refers that the ‘Rae of Kamrup’ caused destruction of the entire army of Muhammad Ibn Bakhtiyar in 1206 C.E. (Das 2007, p.18). There is another Inscription from Gachtal in Nagaon District issued in the Saka year 1149 (1227 C.E.). It referred that king Visvasundra-deva ordered Candrakanta to repair the Siva temples damaged by the Mlecchas. Bhattasali is of the opinion that the Mlecchas were the Muhammadans led by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaj inroad into Kamrud and Banga in the Saka year 1244 i.e. on 22nd December, 1226 C.E. This second invasion retreated at the approach of an army led by Nasir-ud-din, son of Sultan of Delhi, who later killed Ghiyasuddin and Iltutmish appointed him as the governor of Bengal. During his tenure, Nasiruddin attacked a Hindu Raja named Bartu or Britu. Minhaj mentions defeat and death of Britu at the hands of Nasir-ud-in. The Yogini Tantra and Kamrupar Buranji identify Britu with Prithu and had his capital in North Guwahati or Kamarupanagara. Glazier refers that the Kamarupa king, Prithu constructed extensive fortifications in the present District of Jalpaiguri. Next Muhammadan invasion was made by Ikhtiyar-uddin Yuzbak Tughril Khan in 1257. Malik Yuzbak captured Kamarupanagara and built mosque in the city. But the Muhammadans in rainy season was forced to retreat back to Bengal in latter period and on the way back Malik Yuzbak got killed. The Kamarupa king of this period appears to be Sandhya, who shifted his capital from Kamarupanagara to Kamatapur in Goalpara. After this, however till the end of the fifteenth century, for nearly 200 years the Kamarupa kingdom was free from foreign aggressions of west, though there are occasional inroads of the Muslims from Mymensing but did not affect the political life of the region. The repeated invasion by the Muhammadans led to the disintegration of the Kamarupa kingdom and growth of small independent principalities under the Bhuyans chieftains and paid tributes to the Kamata rulers and often fought against each

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72 Das, P 2007, History and Archaeology of North-East India, p.20.
other, but fought united whenever attacked by outside enemy. While the Chutiyas had their kingdom in the East of the Subansiri and the Disang; Barahis and Morans between the River Dihing and Disang; the Kacharis on the west covering the present Nagaon District on the South bank of the River Brahmaputra and the Bhuyans as mentioned earlier had their principalities between the Kāmarūpa-Kamata in the west; and the Chutiyas and Kacharis in the east. Muhammadans from Bengal were lured by the fertile land, gold, forest with aromatic plants, elephants with tusk, musk-deer in Kamrup as well as trade route to China for commerce through Kamrup. By this time the Ahoms penetrated from the east into the Brahmaputra valley in 1228 C.E. Under the leadership of Siu-ka-Pha, the Tai-Ahoms from Upper Burma entered the valley of the Brahmaputra from the east towards the end of the thirteenth century. As mentioned earlier king Sandhya shifted his kingdom from the Kāmarūpa to Kamatapur and came to be known as Kamatesvara or Kamesvara. The Guru Charita by Ramcharan Thakur of sixteenth century Kamata king Sandhya and his successors as Gaudesvara. He was succeeded by his son Sindhu Rai and followed by Rup who was succeeded by his son Singhadhvaj. The last king Singhadhvaj (1300-1305 C.E.) was killed by his minister Pratapdhvaj (1305-1325 C.E.) and succeeded the throne. Then came to the throne his son Durlabhnarayan as Gaudesvara (1330-1350 C.E.). During his time the Kamata kingdom was divided into two parts, between him and Dharmanarayan. Dharmanarayan got Rangpur and Mymensing, while Goalpara, Kamrup, Koch Bihar and Jalpaiguri went under Durlabhnarayan. He was followed by his cousin Dharmapala or Dharmanarayan, about whom we find mention in Muhammadan accounts also.

Gurucharita records that the Bhuyans subdued to Dharmapala or Dharmanarayan. He was cursed, it is said by the Goddess Kamākhyā and therefore left his kingdom for another country. King Durlabhnarayan was followed by his son Indranarayan (1350-1365 C.E.). By this time Ahom king Sukrangpha (1332-1364 C.E.) attacked from the east and Kacharis from the south of the Brahmaputra. There also arose small chieftains at the same time. This enabled Sultan of Bengal Sikander Shah to occupy the city of Kamrup in 1357 C.E. King Indranarayan was dethroned by Arimatta or Gajanka (1365-1385), who was probably grandson of Dharmanarayan. His successors were

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weak and faced another invasion by the Sultan. This was mentioned in Yogini Tantra and numismatic evidence of 1396-97 C.E. and 1399-1400 C.E.\textsuperscript{75} The last king of the line Mrigangka was succeeded by a vassal chieftain, Niladhvaj as the king of Kamata kingdom who started a new Khen Dynasty (1440-1460 C.E.) He was followed by Chakradhvaj (1460-1480 C.E.) and Nilambar (1480-1498 C.E.). Of them king Nilamber was powerful and conquered parts of North Bengal from Muslims. In 1498 C.E. Hussain Shah of Bengal invaded and destroyed capital of Kamata and left behind his son Daniel in charge of his conquests. But he was killed by the Bhuyans who rose revolt against him. The Muslim chronicles the Riyaz-us-Salatin and the Tarikh-Fate-e-Assam records the defeat and destruction of Daniel and his troops by the Kamata Raja. The Khen dynasty ended with the fall of Nilambar and the Bhuyans rose to independence but did not rule for a long period. The Khen kingdom was attacked by the Sultan as far as Hajo in 1502 C.E. and used Kamarup as Colony of the Afghans. There were two vice-roys – Musunder Ghazi in Kamrup and Sultan Ghiyasuddin of Hajo were appointed to control the new conquests. The Ghiyasuddin Aulia set up a Muslim colony and built a Mosque at Hajo on a Hill as ‘Poa-Mecca’. In Jahangir’s time, Mirza Nathan called him as a darwesh. Even now we found a Mosque at Hajo on Garudachal Hill and he is worshiped as a saint and spread Islam for the first time here.

There we found a number of archaeological evidences exhibits activities done by the Muslims in Kamrup, as laid down by Buchanan Hamilton (1809 c. A.D.) are “(i) A brick lined tank with two Muslim Buildings on the south within a mile of the capital, Kamatapur; (ii) a tank ‘Hoseyn Shah’ 8 kos north of kumarikoth believed to be excavated by Hussain-Shah; (iii) ruins of the entrenchments of the Muslim camp called ‘Barogari’ said to have contained twelve brick-built houses”\textsuperscript{76} City of Kamatapur was triangular in shape, long from east to west with a perimeter of 20 miles and defended by high rampart, protected by inner ditch and outer moat to protect the city from enemies. The rampart has four gates of huge proportions in the north, south and west. The northern gate is called Hoko-duar. The southern gate is called Sil-duar or stone gate. The southern gate has stone gate-way and high embanked road, which marked the


southern boundary of old Kāmarūpa. Thus it represents technique of highly developed security system in the country.

The Darrang Raj Vamsawali mentions that Bisu or Viswasingha ascended the throne of Kāmarūpa in 1515 C.E. by ousting the Bhuyans. He extended his kingdom as far as Guwahati and established his capital at Koch Behar. He was succeeded by his son Malladhvaj or Naranarayan and his other son Sukladhvaj also known as ‘Chilarai’, became his Prime minister and Commander-in chief. The king Naranarayan visited Kamākhyā temple along with his brother Sukladhvaj and rebuilt the Kamākhyā over the earlier basement on the Nilachala hill in 1565 C.E. which was allegedly demolished by the Muslims in the previous year along with Hindu temples at Hajo by Kalapahar, the general of Sulaiman Karanani, the Sultan of Bengal. Still now, we found evidences of demolition activities at Kamesvar temple at Hajo, where sculptures of human figures placed within a niche on the outer side of the Kamesvar temple, of which upper part is missing. Both Naranarayan and Sukladhvaj were powerful and great warriors. The koch king Naranarayan subdued all the neighboring states like the Ahoms, the Kacharis and the king of Manipur, while Chilarai defeated the kings of Jayantiya, Tippera and Sylhet. The king and his brother made triumphant victory with voluntary submission by the Bhuyan chieftains, the Bhutiyas and the Daflas; and strengthened the Koch army with their forces. During his expedition towards Narayanpur in Lakhimpur through the Darmg, Sonitpur and Singri across the Bharali river, the King made several benevolent works like construction of a hill-fort and a temple at Candika behar near Bhramarakunda etc. Chilarai predeceased his brother Naranarayan and left behind a son named Raghudev. The king Naranarayan divided his kingdom into two parts – gave territory east of the Sankosh river to Raghudev and retained the rest of the west of the Sankosh river for his successors. The Muslim chronicles also mentioned two kingdoms as Koch Hajo and Koch Behar respectively. Naranarayan died in 1584 C.E. Naranarayan did many beneficial public works like roads and channels etc. He constructed Gohain Kamalar Ali to facilitate communications within the kingdom and also minted coins. He and his brother patronized Sankardeva’s Vaishnava movement

78 Das, P 2007, History and Archaeology of North-East India, p.22.
and teaching\textsuperscript{80}. It is reflected in the art activities of that period also. In Hajo, at the Batchora (entrance) of the Hayagriva-Madhava temple we found the figures of Jay and Vijay and while there are figures of Lakshmi and Saraswati at the entrance of the mandapa of the Ganesa temple. All these figures were found to be dressed in Vaishnavite style. This apart the King also imported Brahmans from Koch Bihar for the worship of Goddess Kamâkhyâ. After the death of king Naranarayan, there arose conflicts between the two states of his descendents and taking advantage of the situation, the Mughals invaded and annexed Koch Hajo in 1614 C.E. Thus the Mughals annexed a part of the first north-east frontier province and thereby touched the Ahom kingdom. Earlier the Ahoms under the reign of Siu-kleng-Mung (1539-1552 C.E.) came into conflict with the Koch. Later during the reign of Siy-kham-phâ (1552-1603 C.E.), Chilarai attacked the Ahom kingdom and sacked its capital Garhgaon. The Ahoms accepted the suzerainty of the Koch king and gave the land of the north bank of the Brahmaputra to them. But soon they recovered their land and extended their kingdom upto the Bharali river. The occupation of the Koch Hajo by the Mughals led to the conflict with the Ahom king Siu-kham-phâ (1603-1641 C.E.) and the Mughals occupied the modern city of Guwahati.

Between 1615-1682 C.E. the city of Guwahati and it surrounding area faced a long warfare between the Mughals and the Ahoms and the city was occupied alternately by one another as recorded in Buranjis. In 1615 C.E. the Ahoms repelled the attacks by the Mughals led by Sayyid Abu Bakr. It is recorded in the Rock Inscription of victory on the Chamdhara Rampart 1538 saka / 1616 C.E.\textsuperscript{81} The Ahoms installed Bali Narayan, brother of Parikhit, as the tributary Raja of Darrang in 1616 C.E. The Ahom king, Pratap Simha sent the Ahom chiefs the Buragohain, the Bargohain and Barpatragohain to reinforce Balinarayan along with the hill chiefs against the Mughals and; garrisoned Pandu and Agiathuri and fortified it. The southern portion of modern Kamrup was covered by hilly areas under the control of the strong hilly chiefs like Chatsa Raja, Raja of Barduar, Bamun Raja and Kanol Raja etc., who were earlier acted as spy of the Mughals, but by 1619 C.E. they became ally of the Ahoms along with Balinarayan. It appears like a national uprising of the North-East against the Mughals.

\textsuperscript{81} Neog, M 1974, \textit{Prachya-Sasanavali}, p.144.
By 1637 the Ahoms occupied Sualkuchi and advanced towards Hajo. The fall of Hajo by the Mughals to the Ahoms in Kamrup, was a major achievement for the Assamese with resultant loss of the Mughals on both side of the Brahmaputra. But in 1638 C.E. the Mughals recovered their lost territories in both Uttarkul and Dakhinkul. In last part of the Seventeenth century C.E. the Ahoms again made their victory in Naval war at Duimunishila against the Mughals. Then by the treaty of Asura Ali in February, 1639 both the Mughals and the Assamese accepted the territorial boundary of each other i.e the river Barnadi in Uttarkul and the Asura Ali in Dakhinkul.82 Accordingly Guwahati came under the Mughals and Allah yar Khan was the Mughal Faujdar of Kamrup. During the reign of Siu-Tam-La (1648-1663 C.E.) though the Eastern Assam was free from invasion, the portion of Western Assam belonging to Koches was still a centre of attraction for both the Ahoms and the Mughals. By this time in 1657 the illness of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan weakened the Mughals in Kamrup. Taking advantage of the situation Raja of Koch Bihar captured Goalpara, Northern Kamrup as well as Hajo, while the Ahoms advanced towards the west and occupied Guwahati, Pandu and Srighat (Saraighat) and also defeated Koch king Pran Narayan. In 1660 C.E. the Ahoms occupied the entire territory from the Barnadi to the Sankosh and carried away Mughal prisoners to Kamrup. The Mughal Emperor Auranzjeb occupied Bengal and appointed his General Mir Jumla as Governor of Bengal in 1660 C.E. In 1661 Mir Jumla annexed Koch Bihar and renamed the capital 'Alamgirnagar'.83 The Mughals under Mir Jumla recaptured Ahom forts in Goalpara, Srighat, Pandu and Guwahati and local chiefs like Raja of Darrang submitted before the Mughals. Mir Jumla then advanced towards the east and occupied the Ahom capital Garhgaon in 1662 C.E. Then there was a peace treaty between the Ahoms and the Mughals in 1663 C.E.84 According to the treaty the Ahom king sent his own daughter named Namcheng or also known as Ramani Gabhoru who was later married to Prince Muhammad Azam and was renamed Rahmat Banu and a Tipam princess to the Mughals. The Ahom king also paid dowry by way of Gold, silver and dressed elephants to the Mughal Emperor and gave away the area from Manah to Guwhati to the Mughals. This indicates prevalence of dowry system in Medieval Assam. Thus the

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84 Das, P 2007, History and Archaeology of North-East India, p.25.
Mughals was pushed from Manah to the Bharali in North and Kalang river in South of the river Brahmautra. During the reign of Siu-Pung-Mung (1663-1670 C.E.) the Ahoms refused to comply with the peace treaty and refused to pay dues. The Mughal faujdar Firuz Khan demanded outstanding dues, but the Ahom king refusing to pay dues, sent his army under Lachit Barphukan against the Mughals. In 1667 C.E. the Ahom army led by Lachit Barphukan attacked the Mughal outpost at Kajali and Bansbari and occupied Itakhuli fort and Guwahati city. Hearing the loss of Kamrup to the Ahoms, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb decided to send Ram singh of Amber to lead an invasion to Assam. Ram Singh and his troops moved towards north Bank of river Brahmaputra in Sualkuchi and easily occupied Hajo. But the Mughal failed to capture Saraighat. Here the Mughals were badly defeated during the reign of King Siu-Nyat-Pha (1670-1673 C.E.), the Mughals were badly defeated in the Battle of Saraighat by the Ahoms and after the victory Lachit Barphukan died in Kaliabor in 1672 C.E. This apart following the death of Siu-nyat-Pha, there prevailed a period of anarchy and chaos due to the weak puppet king and rivalry among the nobles. With the help of the Laluk Sula Barphukan, the Mughals entered the city, who surrendered to the Mughals in 1679 C.E. In 1682 C.E. during the king Siu-Pat-Pha (1696 C.E.) the Ahoms again ousted the Mughals and pushed them as far as Manah river. It is recorded in three canon inscription and there was a period of stability in the state. During the period the Ahom King built the Umananda temple at Bhasmachal near Urvasi in the middle of Brahmaputra. He was succeeded by his son Siu-Khrung-Pha (1696-1714 C.E.) who was ambitious but did not live long. He was followed by his Siu-Khurang-Pha or Rudra Singha, who invited Krishnaram Bhattacharya a famous Sakta priest of Bengal. Rudra Singha was succeeded by his son Siu-Tan-Pha or Siva Singha (1714-1744 C.E.). The king also was a diciple of Krishnaram and gave him management of the Kamākhya temple along with taxfree lands for its Maintenance. His queen Phulesavari a fanatical saktā, insulted the Vaishanava Gosains which resulted in the rising of the Moamoria Rebellion in the last part of the eighteenth century. The Next king was Siu-Nen-Pha, or Pramatta Singha (1744-1751 C.E.) who constructed the Rudresvar and Sukresvara temple. He was succeeded by Siu-Ram-Pha or Rajesvara Singha (1751-1769 C.E.). The king patronized saktā Hinduism and gave management of the temple committee of the Pandunath Devalaya in west of Nilachal hill to Nati Gosain also known as Krishnaram
Bhattacharya. The land grants to the Sakta priest as mentioned in Inscriptions had far-reaching effect in declining of the Ahom monarchy in later period. The inscriptions which recorded grants of lands to the Brahmans also included the prices of various articles of domestic use, which provides valuable economic data of the period.

By this time the political situation in India changed, the Mughals lost their earlier glory which also affected the political scenario of Assam. In 1765 C.E. the English East India Company got the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Emperor Shah Alam. The Company also got the responsibility of protection of these territories by maintaining large armies. It further extended to the Principality of Koch Bihar in connection to the defence of Bengal. In 1773 Koch Bihar became a tributary and protected state of the East India Company. Thus the East India Company entered into polity of the Eastern frontier. In 1769 Lakshmi Singha (1769-1780C.E.), the brother of Rajeswar Singha and son of Rudra Singha ascended the throne. During this time the Moamorias rebelled against the Ahom monarchy in 1769 and occupied the capital deposing the king and placed him in confinement. Lakshmi Singha died in 1780 C.E. and succeeded by his fourteen years son, Gaurinath Singha (1780-1794 C.E.).

During this period Moamorias again rose to revolt in 1782 and 1786 C.E. At the same time the Darrang prince Krishna Narayan with the assistance of the Burkandazes attacked Guwahati. Being attacked on all sides, the Ahom Monarch Gaurinath Singha sought the help of the East India Company. As a result in 1792 C.E. British Governor General, Lord Cornwallis sent an expedition under the command of Captain T. Welsh to assist Gaurinath Singha. Captain Welsh moved to Guwahati from Goalpara in 16th November 1792 C.E. and took possession of Guwahati on both side of the Brahmaputra defeating the Burkandazes in two separate incidents. Being defeated, Krishna Narayan submitted and owed allegiance before the Ahom king Gaurinath Singha in1793 C.E. He was formally installed as the Raja of Darrang. Captain Welsh successfully put down the Moamoria insurrection and arranged for permanent retention of British troops in Assam. He restricted the power of the Ahom Monarch and introduced a number of administrative reforms as well as appointed a new Barphukan. In 1793 C.E. Captain Welsh, who was in favour of the welfare state of the people of Assam, was called back.

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87 Acharyya, NN, 1985, North East as viewed By The Foreigners, pp.162-163.
and in his place Sir Jhon Shore came as Governor-General. Captain Welsh returned to Calcutta in 1794 C.E. and after few months king Gaurinath Singha died. Gaurinath Nath died in 1794, leaving a daughter but had no male issue and there was total anarchy in the kingdom. By this time Pumananda Buragohain became all in all and killed Jainath Barbarua, his powerful rival and placed a descendent of Rudra Singha's brother and came to be known as Kamaleswar Singha in 1794 C.E. In lower Assam Barphukan with the help of the Burkandazes and Haradatta Choudhury placed a boy as the Raja of Guwahati. But as opposed by the other Ahom officials at Guwahati and they lured Hazari Singh, the Commander of the Burkandazes to their side and arrested Siring Choladhara Barphukan. Thereafter he was executed in Jorhat. Then Badanchandra became Barphukan after bribing Burkandazes, but he fled to Kajali, since Guwahati was occupied by another leader named Jogangiri. In 1795 the Ahoms troops defeated the Burkandazes and killed Hazari Singh and recaptured Guwahati. Kamaleswar Singha made changes in administration and placed Gendhela Rajkhowa alias Kalia Bhomora in charge of Barphukan removing Badanchandra. After assuming the power the Barphukan confronted a revolt made by two brothers known as Haradatta and Birdatta. The mercenaries of the rebel group was comprised of Hindusthanis and Sikhs, known as Dumdumias or Dundias. But the Barphukan succeeded in suppressing the rebels and killed Haradatta. The Burkandazes were expelled from Kamrup and for his success the king gave him the title Pratapballabh (one whose friend is valour). After the death of Kamaleswar Singha was died in January 1811 C.E. His minor brother Chandra Kanta Singha succeeded, as selected by Pumananda Buragohain. But in reality the kingdom was run by the powerful minister Pumananda Buragohain. This resulted in resentment among his political opponents. In 1806 Rani Kamaleswari, widow of Gaurinath Singha moved to Calcutta and appealed to the Supreme Govt. to expel Pumananda Burhagohain. This internal discontent alongwith series of events encouraged the Burmese to enter Assam and appealed to the Supreme Govt. to expel Pumananda Burhagohain. This internal discontent alongwith series of events encouraged the Burmese to enter Assam and appealed to the Supreme Govt. to expel Pumananda Burhagohain. This internal discontent alongwith series of events encouraged the Burmese to enter Assam and appealed to the Supreme Govt. to expel Pumananda Burhagohain. This internal discontent alongwith series of events encouraged the Burmese to enter Assam and appealed to the Supreme Govt. to expel Pumananda Burhagohain. Thus Assam was again in a state of tug of war between two imperial states-Burma in the east and the British East India Company in the west. There was a series of

wars between the Burmese and the Ahoms. In the first invasion in 1817 C.E. the Burmese compelled the Ahom king to offer submission and retained ChandraKanta as a puppet king and Badan Chandra as Mantriphukan. The Burmese were provided with large indemnity and a Ahom princess to the royal harem. This indicates Ahom king was a tributary king to the Burmese king. After second and third invasion the Burmese had occupied whole of Assam and Chandrakanta fled to Jogighopa in British territory. In 1823 C.E. as the Burmese proceeded to Jogighopa to seize him the British sent him to Chilamari. Then Mingimaha Tilwa the chief Burmese Commander was declared as Raja of Assam. Their entry in British dominion and Burmese Invasion in Kachar and Manipur resulted in Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826 C.E.) But finally the British defeated the Burmese and forced them to retreat back from Assam and made the historic treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 C.E. with Burma. After the treaty the British became master of entire Assam and neighbouring states of North-East Frontier. Thus it is found that since the time of Rāmayana and Mahābhārata of epic age to the Eighteenth C.E. the present Kamrup district i.e. parts of ancient Prāgiyotisa-Kāmarūpa witnessed continuous habitational settlements of different dynasties belonging to various phases of historical development, though the period of study has been limited from the 5th C.E. to the 18th C.E. It was an important centre for political, economic and cultural development based on religious beliefs and practices which reflected in the sculpture as well as art activity of the region throughout the ages. Literary and epigraphic records like land grants, coins, seals and antiquities give a fair idea of the political, cultural as well as trade and economic conditions of contemporary socio-economic life of the people of Kamrup District. It reveals that political system of the Kamrup District like the rest of India was based on kingship. The Arthasastra, Kamandakiya Nitisara, Manusmriti and Sukraniti and Sabha-parvan of Mahābhārata refer to seven elements as angas to constitute a state – the king (svamin), minister (amatya), territory (janapada), fort (durga), treasury(kosa), army (danda) and alley(mitra). All these elements are found in the kingdom of Kamarup. Rajasekharā’s Kavyamimansa refers Prāgiyotisha as a janapada, while the Kamauli grant mentions

90 ‘Assam Buranj’, 381-2, Account, 47-8; cited in Comprehensive history of Assam, p.345.
91 Das, P 2007, History and Archaeology of North-East India, p.29-30.
Pragjyotisha as a *bhukti* and Kamarupa as *mandala*, a lower administrative unit. The kingship was associated with divinity, as found in the Doobi grant which refers to Pushyavarman as the second Vishnu, Goddess of fortune and Narayanvarman as Cakrapani in human form and his wife Devamati as padma. Similarly Ratnapala is considered as equal to Rama and Krishna in the Gauhati grant of Indrapala. Again Vaidyadeva was regarded as having qualities of Varuna, Kuvera, Brihaspati and Others. It indicates the nature of the ruler as benevolent ruler and also at the time exhibits demand of loyalty and devotion from the subjects. The nature of kingship was though hereditary; sometimes the king was elected or nominated in absence of legitimate issue of the royal family. Election of king of Brahmmapala of Bhauma Dynasty and Gopala of Pala Dynasty may be referred in this regard. Again nomination of King Mahendra Varman by his father king Ganapativarman and Sthitavarman by Chandramukhavarman after completion of his study are mentioned in Doobi grant. The kings were well versed in education and polity. The king Vajradatta was conversant with the *Vedas* with their *Angas* and all the *Vakyas* and *Pramanas* as well as knowledge of training and rearing up of elephant, horse etc. The king Bhaskaravarma was a master of state- craft, the king Sthitavarman and king Naranarayana, were well versed in sastras. The Tezpur and Hayunghthal grants refer king Harjara as supreme and paramount. As per records the Kamarupa kings performed series of rituals and rites according to Vedic rites. The coronation ceremony of the king was performed by *abhiseka* or *Mahabhiseka* ceremony according to Vedic rites which is performed by the royal priest or Brahmanas. In this context, the coronation ceremony of king Harjaravarma may be cited as mentioned in the Hayunhthal grant. There are also references of performance of *Asvamedha* (horse sacrifice) by the Kamarupa kings. The Varmanas, Mahendravarma, Sthiravarma, Bhaskarvarma, Harjaravarma, Balavarma and Ratnapala performed a number of *asvamedha* sacrifices to declare themselves with imperial titles.
like paramesvara paramabhattaraka and Maharajadiraja. The king’s council has amatyas and sachivas as found in epigraphic records. Harjaravarma had Sri Govinda as mahamatya and similarly the Badganga inscription refers Aryayaguna as vishayamatya to look after Districts. There are also records of list of officials associated with different sectors of administration. For judicial administration, there are references of dharmadhikarin in Kamauli grant and Haradatta as vyavaharin in Nidhanpur grants. As regards fiscal administration there are records of collection of revenue and other taxes through different officials. These are of two types – bhunicchidra and karada as found in Nidhanpur grant. Bhumucchidra means no tax and karada means liable to be taxed. It also mentions a tenure called brahmadeya to give lands to Brahmanas, as applicable – a plot of land or in groups called agraharas. Similarly karada is fixed by revenue officials through measurement of kara or cess of a plot of land, denoted by the term drona or pataka as mentioned in the Silimpur grant of Jyapaladeva. It was one of the rich sources of income to the state. The Nidhanpur grant and the Kamauli grant of Vaidyadeva also refer to kara. The Kamauli grant also refers to uparikara, a tax levied on special purposes. Further the region has a strong defensive system to protect the country from the enemy. As per records the country has a number of fortified cities with durgas (forts) and parikha (moats). The Kalika Purāna mentioned jaladurga, bhumidurga, aranyadurga, vrikshyadurga, baladurga and sailajadurga or giridurga in Prāgjyotishapura. There are references of a strong military force in Karnasuvarna under Bhaskarvarman and horses were imported from Kamboja. The Nidhanpur grants also mentions large number of horses in Karnasuvarna. The Hayunthal grant mentions Sri Guna as mahasenapati under Harjaravarman. The Kamauli grant refers the naval victory of Vaidyadeva over enemies. King Bhaskarvarmana appointed Mahasamanta Divakara as bhandagarika. The Nidhanpur grant refers Sri Gopola as the pancamahasabdas, the General of the Army at Karnasuvarna. The diplomatic relation of the rulers with the neighbouring states and feudatories are referred in various grants. The Doobi grant mentions that the defeated tributary rajas bowing before Sthitavaram. The Hayunthal and the Guwahati grants referred about bow down of the defeated feudatories before the council of Harjarvarman and Indrapala. The diplomatic

relation either through friendship or matrimony are also referred in various records. The close alliance between the Kāmarūpa king Bhaskarvarma with Harsa of Kanauj was made through Hamsavega, a royal ambassador. Further the Rajatarangini refers to matrimonial alliance of Amritprabha, the daughter of king Bhaskarvarma with Meghavahana, the ruler of Kashmir. Another matrimonial alliance of Harsadeva and Jayadeva II of Nepal in 8th C.E. as a result of Kāmarūpa kings victory with Gauda, Odra, Kalinga, Kosala and other areas was also mentioned. This apart Indrapala’s queen, Rajyadevi, was from Rastrakuta family as mentioned in Gachtal grant. Such diplomatic relation in later period was also important elements in state policy of the Kamarupa kings like the other ancient Indian kingdoms. Thus the region was ruled by the kings of different dynasties who are benevolent rulers and looked after welfare of the people. As per records, they extended their kingdom within the limit of the natural boundary throughout the ages.

As regards the economic condition of the Kamrup district, the geography of the region, climatic condition and habit of the people was backbone of the economy like any other state. The sabha parvan of Mahābhārata, associates Kiratas with candana, agaru, skin, gems and gold. The Chinese traveller, Hieun-tsang refers the country of Ka-ma-lu-po was “low and moist; the crops were regular, there were continuous streams and tanks to the towns”. It indicates proper irrigation and regular cultivation of agricultural products in the kingdom. Rice was the staple food of the people of ancient Assam. Amarkosha mentions of cucumber, bettle and bettle leaves, garlic, onion, gourd and pumpkin. Hieun-tsang refers cultivation of panasa fruit trees i.e. jack-fruit trees. The Guwakuchi grant of Indrapala refers to kantaphala vriksha. The Bargaon plates of Ratnapala refer to the gift of a lavukutikshetra, a field with gourds or pumpkins and the Harchacarita also refers gourd which can be paint. The Harsacarita also refers gourd which can be paint. The Harsacarita mentions that the presents sent to Kanauj king included milky bettle-nut fruits. The Yogini Tantra refers haridra (turmeric), ardraka (ginger), jiraka, (cumin), pipaliyaka (long pepper), marica (pepper), sarisa (mustard), karpura etc. planted in this region. Of these, black pepper was extensively produced in ancient Kāmarūpa. It may be mentioned that there are two places with names – Jalukbari and Adabri in Kamrup District which might be

related with ginger and pepper products. Mohammad Cazim mentions about mangoes, jacks, coconut trees, pepper-vine and sugar cane. This apart, fish and meat was important ingredients of *panca-makara sadhana* in Kamrup District as shown in *Mahacinarakrama text*. As regards evolution of the art and industry, the economy of the ancient Kāmarūpa played an important part. The various literary, epigraphic records and foreign accounts mentioned different classes of people in the society like weavers, spinners, dyers, smiths and artisans of metal, ivory, cane, bambo and wood etc. The country produced all kinds of fine garments, both cotton, muga and silk with the art of dyeing, a specialty which is still found among the ethnic peoples of the region. The mention of various industrial place names in *Arthasastra* like Jonga, donga etc. had Bodo origin. *Arthasastra* also refers to various silk fabrics from *Suvarnakundāya*. The *Kalika Purāṇa* refers the use of cotton (*karpasa*), woolen garments, bark cloth (*valka*), silk (*kopasa*) and hemp cloth (*sanacastram*). One of the gifts from Bhaskaravarma to Harsha was fine fabric as smooth as birch-bark. Old Assamese writings were made on barks from aloe wood, cotton and Sanci tree. The silk industry of ancient Kāmarūpa was mentioned both *Rāmayana* and *Arthasastra*. Though China was the earliest producer of silk, the ancient Kāmarūpa kingdom was a lone producer of Muga silk in the world which continues till date. Further the art of work in metal, gold and silver also found here. The findings of large numbers of metal images at Narakasur hill, Hahara and in various places of Kamrup District indicates development of metal art in this region. The art of wood carvings is indicated by Banabhatta’s *Harshacarita*, who refers a ‘wooden carved box with panels’ as one of the gifts from Bhaskara to Harsha. This apart wooden art also found at Vaisnavite Sattras of Kamrup District like Samaria Sattra, Dihing Sattra etc. In ancient Assam, there were prominent cities like Hatappesvara, Durjaya, Kāmarūpanagara and Prāgyotishapura. These cities were important centers of economic activity through inter-state and international trade since ancient times. International trade through sea route and mountain passes has been referred in different accounts. Hiuen-tsang states that the sea route to China was under protection of Kāmarūpa king. The earliest reference of Indo-china trade through Assam–Burma was mentioned in the accounts of

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Chang Kien (200 B.C.). The commercial and cultural contacts with China through land and sea route led to the development of Indo-Chinese culture in Assam. In this connection reference may be made of findings of exotic celadon ware, also known as Chinese celadon and Kaolin pottery at Ambari Archaeological Site in Kamrup District. The Kaolin is also called China clay and is precious of its kind. This kind of variety is only found in foothills of Meghalaya in the south of Kamrup District. The imported Chinese Celadon ware indicates trade link between the ancient Kāmarūpa and China. According to scholars, the finding of a terracotta sealing at Ambari excavation site recently, indicates that trade and commerce of the region may be dated back to as early as 2nd - 1st B.C. Thus there was regular trade route between the two countries since 2nd B.C. Kia tan of 8th C.E. referred a detail description of the Assam-Burma trade route to China. Further there are numerous mountain passes from the Ancient Kāmarūpa to Tibet, China and Afghanistan. The Tabaquat-i-Nasiri mentions about as many as thirty-five passes between this region and Tibet, through which horses were brought to Lakhnauti. According to scholars through these passes the Alpine races entered the country. Through these routes the Lhasa traders went to China and collected various goods which they sold to traders of the Ancient Kāmarūpa. The traveller, Tavernier of 17th C.E. mentioned that traders went through Bhutan to Kabul to avoid the taxes levied on various goods through Gorakhpur in India. It also referred that gold and silk were exported to China. This apart inter-state commercial and cultural relation of this region with rest of India like Videha, Gujarat and Kasmira since early time has been mentioned in Epics, Purānas, Rajtarangini, and Harshacarita etc. Ptolemy (i,xvii) mentions trade route to this region via Palibothra (Pataliputra). Ctesias and Aelian mentioned an important trade in lac and amber from siptachora tree grown in hills of Ancient Kāmarūpa. Wilford refers that the people of this region export the dried fruit of the trees along with amber and the purple dye made from lac in boats to the rest of India. There are places which are still known as Naojan road in Uzan Bazar area and Dighalipukhuri of Guwahati city which was originally a channel of Brahmaputra, were used for shipping purposes. Such trade was also carried with the king of Magadha and in return they brought back bread, coarse cloth and other items. As mentioned earlier

Arthasastra refers to trade routes between Kāmarūpa and Magadha. Pliny mentioned that iron, skin and cloth were exported from this region. Of these, Iron of Ancient Kāmarūpa was considered best in India. Further as per records and evidences, the trade was mainly based on barter system as a medium of exchange in early period. The Bana's Harshacarita made the earliest reference of use of cowries in ancient Kāmarūpa. The Tezpur rock inscription of Harjaravarman also mentioned the use of cowries in this region. The Arthasastra made earliest reference of silver coin in the name of Gaulikam. The use of gold coin was found in the Silimpur grant of 12th C.E. which mentioned that the tulapurusa gift from Kāmarūpa king Jayapala and states that the Brahmana Prahasa did not accept the gift of 100 gold coins and gift of land yielding 1000 coins. Thus the richness of the region in agricultural and industrial products led to the growth of internal and external trade and commerce which exhibits thriving economy of the state. The various grants like Tezpur grant, Bargaon grant and Puspabhadra grant refer to good transportation system in this region. It led to the growth of art and crafts in different fields during this period in Kamrup District. Thus there are innumerable sculptural activities scattered throughout the District datable to the early period. The maximum archaeological development took place during this period in stone, metal, terracotta, ivory and wood. Temple architecture in stone and brick were built in and around with stone activity in more extensively in the Kamrup District, which are discussed in later chapters elaborately. The ornamental sculpture of 10th-12th C.E. in black basalt was found in this region, though black basalt was not available in this region due to climatic condition. They were probably imported from Rajmahal of Bihar through the river Brahmaputra by ship or boat. As a result of political and economic relation with rest of India, there was an influence of art style of Gangetic valley in Gupta period, then Orissan and pala-sena style of Bengal and Bihar.

In medieval period from 13th C.E. the economy was a feudal one and various changes occurred in economy of the region. As mentioned in various records there were a series of invasions in the region both from the east and the west. The Mughal occupation from the west and the Tai-Ahoms from the east change the economy of the state. Continuous invasions and lack of royal patronage resulted in the decay in art

107 Choudhury, PC 1987, History of Civilization of the People of Assam, pp.339-355
activity of the region. The engagement of common people in warfare against the enemy led to the fall of agricultural productivity as well as trade and commerce. The lack of agricultural productivity and possession of land by the powerful land owners creating a section of land less people led to the growth of sub tenant ship. The *Katha gurucarita* mentioned several instances of landless people worked as bonded laborer to the rich tenant to get a share of the product during that period. The socio-economic division of privileged and unprivileged classes created political and economic disparity in the society. Despite these condition trade with neighboring states of Bengal, Bhutan and sub-Himalayan tribes as well as extreme eastern frontier tracts continued till the 1826 A.D., the coming of the East India Company.\(^{109}\) The grants of lands by the *Kāmarūpa* kings as found in epigraphic records throughout the different periods also weakened the economy of the state. This in the long run resulted in the fall of the art activity of the Kamrup District. Lack of royal patronage and continuous invasion in the state make the people lack of interest in art activity during 13\(^{\text{th}}\) -14\(^{\text{th}}\) C.E. Though in 15\(^{\text{th}}\) - 16\(^{\text{th}}\) C.E. under the royal patronage of the Koches and the Ahoms, there were some changes in the economy of the state. During this period there were maximum reconstructions of the earlier stone temple with the bricks as found in the Kamākhya, Umananda, Manikarneswar, Dirgheswari, Aswakranta, Basistha, Hayagriva-Madhava, Kedar etc. Further coming of the Mughals with various artisans led to the assimilation of the Islamic art with the regional art form. Thereby created a new art form which reflected in the sculptures of late medieaval art style in Kamrup District as found dress style and arch or dome like structure of the late medieval temple activity.

Thus it can be concluded that the art and sculptural activities of the Kamrup District reflected the political, economic and socio-cultural life of the different historical period throughout the ages.

\(^{109}\) Sarma, S N 1989 *A Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Medieval Assam*. pp.142-146.