CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ANCIENT ASSAM

2.1. Historical Background:

Ancient Assam was known as Pragjyotisa and Kāmarūpa in the past. The former name is much older and popular than the latter one. The Rāmāyaṇa2, the Mahābhārata, the Harivamsa3, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa4 and the Bhāgavata Purāṇa5 referred to the kingdom of Naraka as Pragjyotisa. These ancient religious texts did not mention the name of Kāmarūpa. But in the Raghuvamsa6 of Kalidasa both the names have been mentioned. In the Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta this kingdom has been mentioned by the name Kāmarūpa. In the Kalika Purāṇa7 it is found that Viṣṇu took his son Naraka to the city of Pragjyotisapura in the kingdom of Kāmarūpa. From this reference it evidently follows that since long before the writing of the Kalika Purāṇa9 this north-eastern

---

1. Rāmāyaṇa, Ch.42.
2. Mahābhārata, Ch.48.28.30.
3. Harivamsa, Ch. 63-64.
4. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. 5., ch. 29.
5. Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Bk. X.
6. Raghuvamsa, Canto. IV, 81-84.
state was known as Kamarūpa with its capital Prāγjyotisapura.

Prāγjyotisa was a famous ancient kingdom. It bears a Sanskrit name. When Aryanism made a foothold in Assam is difficult to determine. In the Vedic literature, the Buddhist and the Jaina literature prevalent before the Rāmāyāna and the Mahābhārata the reference to Prāγjyotisa and Kamarūpa could not be traced. That the Vedic literature contains no allusion to ancient Assam has been demonstrated by M.M. Sharma.  

In the Arthasāstra of Kautsilya there is a reference to Lauhitya. The words 'Kamarūpa' and 'Prāγjyotisa' are nowhere mentioned in the said ancient work. But in connection with the 'examination of gems that are to be entered into the treasure' Kautsilya speaks of various products of various countries and tracts of lands of which, according to the commentator Bhattasvāmin, certain tracts belong to Kamarūpa. The sources of products are Parasamudraka Suwarnakudya, Antaravatya, Jongaka, Pūnadvipaka, Paralauhityaka, Grāmeruka, etc. Pt. Ganapati Sastri in his Srimula Commentary explains the identification of Paralauhityaka as 'Paralauhityakām Kamarūpe lauhityakhya nada parabhavam'. Suvarnakudya has been identified by K.L. Barua with village Sonkudiha which is situated in the present District of Nalbari. All these place names and products mentioned in the Arthasastra

12. R.S. Shamasastry. (tr), Arthasastra Book II., Ch. II, P. 75 ff.
indicate that Aryan culture and Sanskrit language penetrated in ancient Kāmarūpa prior to the early centuries of the Christian era.\textsuperscript{16}

Panini, the renowned Sanskrit grammarian was either contemporary of or prior to Gautam Buddha. In his Ashtadhyayī (IV, I. 170) Panini referred to Suramasa along with Kosala, Kāsi, Magadha and Kalinga as a Janapada of the east. It was a monarchy under a Kṣatriya king. Suramasa included Suramāvalley of Assam and northern hilly region now included in Bangladesh. From this it could be deduced that during the time of Panini (c. 6th-5th BC) ancient Assam had contact with Northern India.\textsuperscript{17}

No definite mention of either Pragyotisa or Kamarupa is made in the early Buddhist canonical literature and it is not included among the Sixteen Mahajanapadas.\textsuperscript{18} But in Dīgha Nikāya\textsuperscript{19} and Samyutta Nikāya\textsuperscript{20} a Brahmana from the Lauhitya region was mentioned. From this it follows that since long past this region was the nerve centre of the Brahmanical culture. In the literatures of Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan it has been stated traditionally that Mahāparinirvāṇa of Gautam Buddha took place at Hajo.\textsuperscript{21}

As regards to the Chinese sources Kāmarūpa is chiefly mentioned in connection with the visit of Yuan-Chwang during the 7th century A.D., but commercial

\textsuperscript{17} A.M. Shastri, Ancient North-East India, (Prajīyota) P. 16.
\textsuperscript{19} Dīgha Nikāya, Vol. I, Pali Publication Board, Bihar Govt.
\textsuperscript{21} Waddell, Buddhism of Tibet, P. 307 ff; P.C. Choudhury, H.C.P.A., P. 15.
and cultural relations are testified by earlier sources like the accounts left by Chang-k‘ien of the 2nd century B.C. The account of the Shung Shu (AD 420-71) records the sending of two embassies from India to China of which one was sent by Yu-Chai in 428 AD from the Kapili valley.

Classical writers from about the 5th century B.C. onwards seem to refer to the people and place names of ancient Assam. It has been pointed out that the first person to mention the regions of Assam is Hekataeus of Miletus (500 B.C.) who mentions such people as Indoi, Kakatiai, Opiai etc. of India. However, according to J.W. Mc Crindle, the Geography of Hekataeus of Miletus has been lost and is only known from fragments of its contents cited in works of later days. Herodotus mentions the Kalatiai along with Gandarioi and Padaioi. Kakatia or Kalatiai mentioned by Hekataeus and Herodotus have been tentatively identified with the Kalitas of Assam by P.C. Choudhury. However it is extremely difficult to identify satisfactorily the persons and peoples mentioned by Classical writers.

The earliest mention of the city of Prāgjyotisa is traced in the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata in connection with Naraka, his son Bhagadatta and the latter’s son Vajradatta, all of whom bear Sanskrit names. The composition of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata has been assigned to the period between the 3rd century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D. for the first and the fourth century B.C. and the fourth

22. P.C. Bagchi, India and China, P. 7 f. 16 f.
25. J.W. Mc Crindle, Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature, Intro. XIV.
century A.D. for the second respectively. In the Rāmāyana (Kiskindhyā Kānda Ch. 42) the city of Prāgjyotisa and Naraka is referred to in the context of the search for Sita. Sugrīva directed Suśena to set out in a mission to the western side in search of Sītā. In course of his description of the exploration of the western part Susena told Sugrīva that he had visited the city of Pragjyotisa situated on the Varāha mountain surrounded by the deep sea and inhabited by Naraka. K.L. Barua guessed Varāha mountain to be the Assam range. But the reference to the west has been totally ‘vague and misleading’.

In Gauder Itihās edited by Rajanikanta Chakravarty, the founder of the city of Pragjyotisa has been attributed to Amūrtaraja, but in the printed Bangavāsī edition and in the Bombay edition with the Tilaka commentary there is no mention of Pragjyotisa instead Asūrtarajas (not Amūrtaraja nor Amūrtaraya) as has been named to be the founder of Dharmarānya instead of Pragjyotisa.

There are a number of references to Pragjyotisa in certain section of the Mahābhārata. In the Udyoga parvan, it is related that in a great citadel named Pragjyotisa, there used to live the valorous Naraka with the epithet Bhauma (Ch. 48, VV. 80,85). It is further mentioned that this Naraka stole away the earrings of Aditi. Subsequently, the earrings were recovered by Kṛṣṇa who also gained great fame in this encounter in which he killed Naraka. Again in the same parvan (Ch. 130, VV. 44-45) it is stated that Naraka lived for several Yugas residing in Pragjyotisa.

and even with the Danavas he could not withstand Krṣṇa who killed him in a battle and took away thousands of his damsels. In the Sābhā parvan (Ch. 26 VV. 7-16) it has been narrated that Arjuna during his expedition on the north was obstructed by the allied soldiers of Cīna, Kirāta and the Coastal region (Sāgarāṅupavāsin) as arranged by Bhagadatta, the then king of Prāgijotiṣa. On the other hand in the same parvan (Ch. 30 VV. 26-27) it has been stated again that Bhīma during his expedition on the east reached the Lauhitya region and compelled the Mleccha kings and dwellers of the sea shore to pay taxes. Bhagadatta's supremacy over the Cīnas and the Kirātas is confirmed in the Udyoga parvan, where it has been stated that Bhagadatta with one aksauhinī of soldiers, mostly the Cīnas and the Kirātas sided with the Kauravas endowed with a golden complexion (Udyoga 26. 15 -16 a). The Kiratas who were the followers of the king of Prāgijotiṣa were the descendants of the Mongoloids living in the Himalayan mountain region. These inhabitants are even found among the people of the eastern Himalaya, even though this definition had an extensive connotation in the ancient time. According to the Indian traditional current the region situated to the south-east of the Mānas lake has been known as China, and here in this context the word Cīna has been used to denote the Tibetans.

Bhagadatta's heroism displayed in the war and qualities of his elephant named Suprātika are described in a full chapter containing 86 verses in the Bhīṣma parvan.

32. Ibid.
Four chapters in the Drona parvan describe Bhagadatta’s fight first with Bhīma and then with Arjuna in whose hand he lost his life. According to the Mahābhārata (Karna-parvan, Ch. 5, VV.15-16) Bhagadatta’s son named Kṛtaprajña was killed in the Kurukṣetra war in the hands of Nakula. However, the local records do not refer to this son of Bhagadatta. Puṣpadatta of Harsacarita, who has been described as the son of Bhagadatta was perhaps Kṛtaprajña. In the Asvamedha parvan two complete chapters (Ch.75f.) were devoted to the description of Bhagadatta’s son Vajradatta, the king of Pragjyotisa. It is also stated that Vajradatta acknowledged Yudhiṣṭhira’s Chakravarti status at the time of his performing Asvamedha sacrifice after the fierce battle.

The Kalika Purāṇa narrates that Naraka was born when Lord Viṣṇu in the form of a Boar retrieved the earth from the sea of dissolution in the golden age and laid the seed in her. The Earth, mother of Naraka, handed over Naraka to Janaka, the childless king of Videha. When Naraka grew up and attained the age of sixteen he was taken to his father Viṣṇu with whom he arrived at Pragjyotisa in Kāmarūpa where Mahāmāya in the form of Kamākhya was the chief goddess of worship and flows the river Lauhitya, the son of Brahmā. The kingdom of Pragjyotisa was exclusively belonged to Sambhu, inhabited by the Kirāta people of golden colour and with shaven heads. Naraka at the behest of Viṣṇu killed Ghaṭaka, the Kirāta king in the battle and had driven away the other Kirāta people upto the Dikkaravasini and settled some of them with the consent of Sambhu on the seacoast. Thus the

33. Kalika Purāṇa, Ch., 36-42.
eastern part of Lalitakanta became the land of the Kiratas and the western part of
the goddess Lalitakanta up to Karatoya became the land of Naraka. Visnu installed
Naraka as the king of Pragjyotisa. Naraka settled the twice born people in his
kingdom and started the performance of the Vedic rituals. Hari, the father of Naraka
got married his son with Maya, the daughter of the ruler of Vidarbha. Gradually
Naraka became prospered and powerful. In subsequent years Naraka came into
contact with Bana, the king of Sonitpura and acquired demoniac character and
temperament. As a result the great sage Vasistha was interrupted in his
pilgrimage to Kamakhya and Vasistha uttered a curse to the effect that
Narayana would assume a human form and would kill him. In the meantime the
goddess Kamakhya would go underground. In compliance with the advice of Bana,
Naraka practised penance for thousand years and received from Brahma several
boons. Finally like in the Mahabharata he was killed by Sri Krsna, an avatar or
incarnation of Visnu and installed Naraka’s son Bhagadatta as the next king of Pragjyotisa

The historians have looked at the historicity of the account of Naraka in
different ways. Gait described the story of Naraka under ‘Mythological period’.34
K.L. Barua35 also dealt with the legend of Naraka and his predecessors almost the
same in content as like Gait. He believes that the advent of Naraka was the earliest
settlement of Aryans in Pragjyotisa. According to D.C. Sircar, “Naraka legend is
not just an oral tradition or folklore; even if a myth it is a recorded myth” though

the recording might have been done much later than it was actually authored. There are some historians who accept Naraka as a historical character. Dr. Kakati opined, there were two different personalities with the name Naraka. According to him there have been different scattered descriptions of Naraka found in the two Epics and the Puranas. The composer of the Kalika Purana compiled these findings into a full-fledged life history. Dr. Kakati also calculated the time of Naraka. To him Naraka of Mithilā was a political adventurer, who captured the power of Prāgyotīṣa some where between 200 A.D. and 500 A.D. and propagated the Śakti cult found in the local goddess Kamākhyā a manifestation of the divine authority. After his death his name got mixed with the former legendary figure of Naraka and the author of the Kalika Purana collected the salient features from both the legends and built up a new character that stretched for centuries. P.C. Choudhury also referred to various Epico-Puranic legend about Naraka and suggests that Naraka was a 'dynastic title like Janaka' and there were more than one Naraka. According to M.M. Sharma the reign of Naraka that lasted for five centuries is an absurd tale, but in the back ground of all exaggerated and unreal tales there appeared to have some historic basis. The local traditions handed down to the ages and names of places related to Naraka have led Dr. Sharma to arrive at such a conclusion. N.J. Lahiri.

37. B.K. Kakati, M.G.K., P.16.
38. Ibid., P. 29.
40. M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., P. 0.5
41. N.J. Lahiri, Pre-Ahom Assam, P. 66.
while discussing the literary sources particularly the references on Naraka and Bhagadatta in the two Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata says that the reference to Prāgyotisa with Naraka is not entirely co-incidental. J.B Bhattacharjee while discussing Bhauma-Naraka legend said that Naraka remains a legendary King of pre-fifth century A.D. Prāgyotisa-Kāmarupa and Bhauma-Naraka a legend. He opines that, “it cannot be ignored that Naraka, Bhagadatta and Vajradatta are characters of the Epics, Purāṇas and such other literary works which are accepted as sources of ancient Indian history. In any case, the Bhauma-Naraka lineage has been claimed by the rulers of the historical dynasties, which flourished since fourth century A.D. at least for the purpose of legitimacy and this explains the role of the legend in state formation processes in Kāmarūpa like the rest of the subcontinent”. However Prof A.J. Shastri discussed the Naraka legend and his relations with the Bhauma Naraka’s or Varmanṣ on the basis of the Dubi Seal attached to the Dubi Copperplate Grant and the Nālandā Clay Seals of Bhāskaravarmaṇ. He suggests a new interpretation of the reading of the seals and opined that Puṣyavarmaṇ was the son(tanaya) of Naraka who was the only member of the family of Puṣyavarmaṇ without any regal title but wrote a word ‘Srīman’ which would make good sense.  

The early kingdom of Prāgyotisa according to Pargitar, comprised the major portions of modern Assam together with the Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar, Rangpur,  

Bogra, Mymensingh, Dacca, Tippera districts and parts of Pubna district in Bengal and probably also the eastern areas of Nepal. K.L. Barua refers to Pargitar’s view and suggests that the western boundary of Prāgjyotisa was the Kośī river and that the Purina District was included in it. D.C. Sircar rejected the western boundary of Prāgjyotisa as suggested by Pargitar and suggested that North Bengal was actually known as Pundra or Pundravardhana bhukti which was quite distinct from Prāgjyotisa and boardered it on the west. The present capital of Assam is located at Dispur, at a distance of only lk.m. from a village known as Narakasurgaon. The identification of modern Guwahati with ancient Prāgjyotisapura is suggested by P.C. Choudhury.

The well recognised famous book Kalika Purāṇa pertaining to religious history of the Middle Ages unveiled enough geographical details of Kāmarūpa. According to the Kalika Purāṇa (Ch. 44) the region of the east of the river Karatoya upto the seat of Goddess Dikkaravāsini, thirty Yojanas in breadth and one hundred Yojanas in length, triangular in shape, black in colour interspersed with innumerable hills and hundreds of rivers is called Kāmarūpa. The description provides the same limit in the west and the east of Kāmarūpa which is given as that of Pragjyotisa. The Kalika Purana is silent on the north and the south point of the country. In describing the four boundaries of Kāmarūpa the Yogini Tantra not only

45. D.C. Sircar, Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, PP. 159-65.
mentioned the east and west boundaries but also those of north and south. In Yogini Tantra the narration of north and east boundaries are found twice, but both differed a little. In it the definition of boundaries of Kamarupa ran thus,

"From the mountain Kančana in Nepal upto the confluence of the Brahmaputra, from the Karatoya to Dikkaravāsinī the northern limit is the mount Kanja, in the west the Karatoya, in the east of Diks, O daughter of the mountains! in the south the confluence of the Laksā with the Brahmaputra; this is the territory which all treatises call by the name of Kamarupa." Thus Kamarupa included roughly the Brahmaputra valley, Bhutan, Rangpur and Cooch-Behar, the north-east of Mymensingh and possibly the Garo Hills.

Thus, the history of Assam starts with the traditional rulers called Danavas and Asuras. Mahiranga Danava is said to be the first ruler of Assam, who had his capital at Mairāṅka. Mahiranga Danava was inherited successively by Hatakasura, Sambarasura, Ratnasura and Ghaṭakasura. The latter is described as the ruler of the Kiratas or yellow skinned people. Generally Danavas were giants while Asuras were the opposite of Suras or divine beings. Both terms seem to have been applied indiscriminately to all non Aryans. Naraka killed Ghaṭakasura and became the king of Pragjyotisa. He was succeeded by Bhagadutta. The period intervening between

Bhagadatta's successor and Puṣyavarman is dark.

46. Yogini Tantra, Ch. XI, PP. 16-18.
47. E.A. Gait, A History of Assam, P. 11.
49. Ibid, P.12.
50. Kalika Purana Chapters 36-42 and also Yogini Tantra, Part 1, Patala XII.
2.2. Political History of the Varman Dynasty:

The real political history of Assam begins with the foundation of the Varman dynasty. The History of the Varman dynasty is known from the account of Yuan-Chwang as well as from the Nidhanpur Grant, the Dubi Copperplate Grant and the Clay Seals of Bhaskaravarman. Puṣyavarman, the founder of this dynasty claimed himself to have been offspring of Naraka-Bhadatta. Bhāskaravarman, a king of the Varman dynasty recorded his ancestral genealogy in his Nidhanpur Copperplate Inscription where he clearly stated that after Naraka the king ascended to the throne was Bhagadatta who was followed by Vajradatta after whom a long line of illustrious kings ruled the country for three thousand years and finally was succeeded by Puṣyavarman. The Nagājari-Khanikargāon Fragmentary Stone Inscription also refers to Vasundhara-varman, a king of the 5th century ancient Assam.

In the Nalanda Clay Seal of Bhāskaravarman the ancestral pedigree was

---


57. M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., Appendix, PP. 303-305.
recorded from Gaṇapativarman who was mentioned as Gaṇendravarman in the Dubi Copper plates. The Nidhanpur Grant contains the names of thirteen kings and ten queens belonging to Puṣyavarman’s family. Puṣyavarman became king after about three thousand years from the death of Vajradatta. But in the inscriptions of Bhāskaravarman no date or year was mentioned and as such Puṣyavarman, the first king of the Varman dynasty has became a problem to ascertain. Bhāskaravarman, the last king of this dynasty was accepted as a contemporary of Harṣavarman, the famous king of Northern India. P.N. Bhattacharya reckoning 25 years span of reign on average for each of the king of the Varman dynasty has observed Puṣyavarman to be of the mid fourth century A.D. 58 In support of this assessment K.L. Barua observes that in the Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta Puṣyavarman was the ‘Pratyantanripatibhih’ (Kings of frontier states ) of Kāmarūpa, along with Samatata, Davaka, Nepal and Karṇāpura. From that point of view Puṣyavarman was contemporary of Gupta emperor Samudragupta (A.D. 335 - 375). That he surrendered to the power of Samudragupta might perhaps be a symbolic gesture because in the seal attached to the Dubi Copperplate Inscription, Puṣyavarman was said to be the overlord of Prāgijyotisa and the Maharajadhiraṇa, a title bore only by independent ruler. His successors Samudravarman and Balavarman also acquired this glorious title. Another significant aspect was that Puṣyavarman’s son and daughter-in-law took respectively the name of Samudravarman and Dattadevi. These two were the names of the Gupta emperor Samudragupta and his

queen. Puṣyavarman was succeeded by his son Samudravarman. The assumption of the title of Mahārājādhirāja suggests that like his father, he also ruled as an independent king. Samudravarman was followed by Balavarman, who was a great warrior. Balavarman is however considered to be the father of princess Amritaprabhā who chose Meghavahana, the king of Kashmir for her husband from among the kings in an assembly. The king after Balavarman was Kalyāṉavarman who brought Kapilivalley under his rule and sent a diplomatic mission to China to celebrate his political victory. Kalyāṉavarman was succeeded by Ganendravarman (according to the Nalanda seal Ganapativarman) after whom Mahendravarman became the king. D.C Sircar identified Mahendravarman's name with Surendravarman found inscribed on the Umācal Rock Inscription.

Mahendravarman by virtue of his might and authority extended the boundary of his kingdom to the sea-shore and according to the Nalanda Clay Seal observed two horse sacrifices. He was the first among the rulers of the line to celebrate horse sacrifice which was undoubtedly an act of much political importance. Bhattasali suggested that when the Gupta empire declined, the Kamarūpa kingdom began to flourish and Māhendravarman by performing two horse sacrifices...

59. R.C. Majumdar, The Classical Age, PP. 80 f.
60. M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., PP. 35.
sacrifices became a paramount sovereign in Eastern India. P.C. Choudhury states that 'he was the first ruler of Kāmarūpa, who not only shook off the last vestiges of the Gupta influence or allegiance, but also tried to carve out an empire at the cost of his neighbours. The king mentioned in the Umācal Rock Inscription was devoted to Bhagavata Balabhadrāsvāmin who was probably a Vaiṣṇavite deity, variously called Balabhadra, Balarama, Sankarsana etc. This deity was generally regarded as an avatāra of Viṣṇu from about the Gupta age. After Mahendravarman his son Nārāyaṇavarman became the king. He was succeeded by his son Mahabhutavarman or Bhūtivarman, who continued the territorial expansion of the kingdom. Bhūtivarman made the Kāmarūpa kingdom one of the important political power in Eastern India. The Dubi Grant praises the power of the arms of this king. Fleet mentions that Bhūtivarman might have contested with the Later Guptas, petty chiefs of southern and eastern Bengal and Yasodharman of Malwa, who is said to have conquered India up to the river Lauhitya. As evidenced in the Nidhanpur Grant Bhūtivarman donated land to 208 Brāhmaṇas in the Mayurasalmaḷāgrahara in the Candrapuri Viṣaya, lying to the west of Trisrotā. The Bargāṅgā Rock Inscription mentions king Bhūtivarman with the imperial style 'Parama bhūṭaraka Mahārajādhirāja.' He is also called 'Paramadaivata' and stated that he had performed a horse sacrifice. The Dubi Copperplate Inscription also

68. Fleet, C.I.I., III, P. 142 f, L. 4-5.
ascribes the same feat to him\textsuperscript{70}.

The Bargangā Rock Inscription records the construction of an āśrama, which means a hermitage by the Viṣayamatya Avagūṇa with a desire for the king’s longevity. Earlier scholars believed that this is the first dated inscription that bears a Gupta era, but proper examination of the record has now made it clear that it bears no date.\textsuperscript{71}

After Mahābhūtivarma, his son Chandramukhavarman ascended the throne of Kāmarūpā. He was succeeded by his son Sthitavarman. Sthitavarman was a man of knowledge and was well versed in various sāstras and Vedas.\textsuperscript{72} He performed his Coronation ceremony according to the Vedic rites.\textsuperscript{73} This is the first recorded instance of the Vedic Coronation ceremony of a Kāmarūpā ruler. The Nalanda Clay Seal (L. 7) credits him of performing two Horse sacrifices. The performance of two horse sacrifices by one king at an interval of about ten years speak of the political ascendancy of the Kāmarūpā king over East Bengal. The other Asvamedha sacrifice might have been performed just to celebrate his unrivalled mastery over the areas to the east of Magadha and north of Gaṇḍa. This was the time when the sons of Isānavarman Maukhari and the Later Guptas were locked in a struggle in Magadha and probably in Gaṇḍa.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., P. 23.
\textsuperscript{72} M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., P. 23.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, PP 23-24.
\textsuperscript{74} H.C. Raychoudhury, Political History of Ancient India, 5th & 6th edition, PP. 607 (f.n. I).
Sthitavarman was succeeded by his son Suṣṭhitavarman also known by the name of Suṣṭhiravarman and Mrigāṅka. During the reign of Suṣṭhitavarman, the political influence of Kāmarūpa appeared waning. It is known from the Aphisad inscription \(^{75}\) of the Later Gupta king Adityasena that Mahāsenagupta, his grand father, defeated the king of Kāmarūpa and he conquered the entire Pundravardhana from Kāmarūpa. The Nidhanpur Grant states that Susthitavarman gave away the goddess of ‘Royal Fortune’, like the earth, to supplicants \(^{76}\). It is known from the Dubi Copperplate Inscription that Susthitavarman died when Supratisthitavarman and Bhāskaravarnā were very young and by that time the king of Gauda invaded Kāmarūpa and took the two young princes as prisoners to Gauda. But they were released after some days by the king of Gauda. Their release was perhaps because they had surrendered to the authority of Gauda. \(^{77}\)

R.G. Basak \(^{78}\) and P.N. Bhattacharya \(^{79}\) do not give Supratisthitavarman the credit of accession to the throne. However, the Dubi Copperplate Grant proves that he did reign for a few years \(^{80}\). This is supported by Harṣacarita \(^{81}\) and the Nalanda Clay Seal of Bhāskaravarnā (L.8) Supratisthitavarman had a premature death after a very short reign. \(^{82}\) P.C. Choudhury believes that when Mahāsenagupta

\(^{75}\) C.I.I., P. 213 (No. 46).
\(^{76}\) M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., P. 51.
\(^{77}\) Ibid, PP. 26 -27.
\(^{78}\) R.G. Basak, History of North-East India, P. 217.
\(^{79}\) P.N. Bhattacharya, K.S.,P. Intro. 16.
\(^{80}\) M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., P. 27.
\(^{81}\) E.B. Cowell & P.W. Thomas, (ed.) Harṣacarita, PP. 212 ff.
\(^{82}\) P.C. Choudhury, H.C.P.A., P. 162.
invaded Kāmarūpa for the second time both Supratisthīta and his brother Bhāskara opposed him and immediately after the war, Supratisthīta died, perhaps from a wound received while fighting. He was succeeded by his illustrious brother Bhāskaravarman, whose long reign of more than 50 years (A.D. 594-650) formed a brilliant chapter in the history of ancient Assam. He was not only the greatest king of this family but also a remarkable king of ancient India. He played an important role on the political history of Northern India in the first half of the 7th century A.D. The most memorable event in the career of Bhāskaravarman was his alliance with Harṣa made at the beginning of his reign. This alliance proved to be prolific for Bhāskara as it helped to bring fresh glory to Kāmarūpa and enabled it to participate in Pan-Indian politics. This alliance was made to campaign against Sasāṅka, the ruler of Gauḍa, who was the common enemy of both Bhāskara and Harṣa. No authentic evidence is found that Bhāskara and Harṣa conquered Gauḍa during the life time of Sasāṅka, still it is found that Bhāskaravarman issued the Nidhanpur Copperplate Grant from the victorious camp at Kārṇasuvana, the capital of Gauḍa. D.C. Ganguli states that about 642 A.D. Gauḍa formed a part of Kāmarūpa. This view is also supported by N.N. Dasgupta. B.N. Sircar contents that Harṣa’s sway never reached Bengal, the kingdom of Sasāṅka must have passed on to Bhāskara otherwise the latter could not have controlled the sea-route to China, as testified

85. I.C., II., PP. 37-45.
86. I.H.Q., VI, PP. 442 - 43.
by Yuan-Chwang.  

The area of South-East Bengal including Sylhet, Tripura and parts of Samatata were included in the kingdom of Bhāskara as stated by J.C. Ghosh, Bhattacharji, A.C. Choudhury and others on the basis of the discovery of the Nidhanpur Grant; while P.N. Bhattacharya, K.L. Barua and others state that Sylhet lay outside Kāmarūpa. South-East Bengal including Sylhet, Tripura, parts of Dacca, Mymensingh and other regions were already under Bhūtivarman. The Tippera Grant of the feudatory chief, Lokanatha throws a new light on Bhāskara’s sway over Sylhet and Tripura. Bhāskara’s political sway over these regions is testified by Yuan-Chwang. The Clay Seals of Bhāskara discovered at Nalanda, provides further historical material about the boundary of Kāmarūpa, which reached even beyond Bengal. N.N. Dasgupta states that when Bhāskara extended his conquest upto Nalanda region the discovery of his seals at Nalanda is not an accidental phenomenon. P.C. Choudhury supposes that Bhāskara’s kingdom included the whole of Assam, great portions of Bengal, and some portion of Bihar or at least the Nalanda region. He states further that Devavarman was installed by Bhāskara over the Nalanda region towards the end of his reign, perhaps after the

87. I.H.Q., VI, PP. 442-43.  
90. A.C. Choudhury, Srijhatte Itivrtta, IV (f.n.), P. 74.  
95. Life, Intro. PP. XVI-XVII.  
departure of Yaun-Chwang. K.L. Barua thinks that both Harṣa and Bhāskara, on their march from Rajmahal to Kanauj visited Nalanda together with Yuan-Chwang, left their respective seals there to commemorate their visit. Dr. Spooner has brought to light seals of three different dynasties discovered at Nalanda.

Chinese pilgrim Yuan-Chwang’s visit to Kāmarūpa during the days of Bhāskaravarmaṇa is a significant historical event. When Yuan-Chwang sojourned at Nalanda University he was invited by Bhāskaravarmaṇa to his royal court and in compliance with the invitation Yuan-Chwang came to Kāmarūpa. Later, on the request of Harṣa both Bhāskaravarmaṇa and the Chinese traveller undertook a journey to the kingdom of Harṣa who finally offered them royal reception at Kajurgira near present day Rajmahal (Kio - Shu - Ho - kia - lu).

According to Yuan-Chwang the kingdom was more than a myriad li or 1667 miles in circuit and its capital about thirty li. To the east of Kāmarūpa was a series of hills and hillocks without any principal city and it reached the south-west barbarians (of China). The pilgrim learned from the people (of Kāmarūpa) that the south-west borders of Szuchuan was a distance of about two months journey. From Pundravardhana the pilgrim travelled east above 900 li, crossed a large river and came to Ka-mo-lu-po (Kāmarūpa). The large river which in the Tang-Shu is

99. Ibid.
102. Life, PP 169-205.
103. Watters, II, P 186.
known as Kalatu, is identified with Brahmaputra by Watter. Cunningham identified it with Teesta. The capital is identified with Guwahati, and the river with Karatoya.

The account of Yuan-Chwang also throws light on the personal character of Bhāskaravarman, condition of the kingdom and social life of the people. "He was a lover of learning and his subjects followed his example, men of ability came from far lands to study here." His invitation to Yuan-Chwang is a testimony to his love of learning. He mentions that there were hundreds of Devatemples in Kamarupa during his visit. Bhāskaravarman perhaps died as a celibate because no successor to him was mentioned in any inscription or literature. In the Harsacarita of Banabhatta he is called Kumāra. His death may be placed around the year 650 AD. With the death of Bhāskara, sometime in the middle of the 7th century A.D., ended the line of Puṣyavarman.

2.3. The Sālastambha Dynasty:

No convincing evidence could be found as to who became the king after the death of Bhāskaravarman. According to the Bargāon Copperplate Grant of Ratnapāla, Sālastambha, the king of the Mlecchas has brought about the end of the Bhauma-Naraka dynasty and twenty kings of this dynasty ruled over the kingdom.

104. Ibid., PP., 185 - 86.
105. Cunningham, Ancient Geography of India, PP. 572 - 73.
106. S.N. Majumdar, Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, PP. 572 - 73.
107. Watters, II, PP. 185 - 186.
108. Ibid, P. 126.
The reasons how this dynasty became Mleccha was stated in the Háyunthal Copperplates of Harjaravarman, but unfortunately the first plate of it was found missing, and nothing could be known. The grants of Harjaravarman’s son Vanamālavarman, speak of the descent of the family from Naraka and his son in the style of the records of Bhāskaravarman. P.C. Choudhury has opined that the ancestors of the Śālastambha dynasty were of Non-Aryan habits or being of Alpine origin or of leaning towards Buddhism or because of all these they could be called Mleccha.\(^{111}\) According to K.L. Barua Śālastambha was the governor of the Mleccha kingdom and after the death of Bhāskaravarman he caused revolt and declared himself the king. He was perhaps the descendant of the dynasty of Bhagadatta because generally the descendants of the kings were appointed governors\(^{112}\). Śālastambha is called Lord of the Mleccha in the Bargaon Grant of Ratnapāla which makes it clear that he did not belong to the Bhauma-Naraka family of Puṣyavarman and therefore apparently an aboriginal chief\(^{113}\). During the early mediaeval period, the Hinduised ruling families generally claimed descent from a respectable ancient ancestry. Thus, the kings of the Mleccha dynasty soon afterwards began to claim descent from Naraka exactly as the preceding dynasty of Puṣyavarman\(^{114}\). Śālastambha perhaps became the king in the 2nd half of the seventh century A.D.\(^{115}\). But according to K.L. Barua he became king in 655 A.D.\(^{116}\)

\(^{111}\) P.C. Choudhury, H.C.P.A., P. 80.


\(^{114}\) Ibid.


Though much in details is not known about Sālastambha, it is known that he brought areas under his control by defeating many chieftains. He probably ascended the throne at Harūppesvāra (Hadappesvāra) which finally became his capital. Sālastambha was succeeded by his son Vijaya after whom Pañaka, Kumāra and Vajradeva successively became king. Excepting Kumāra all were the titular kings. The name of Kumāra has been found carved on an 8th century Stone Inscription. The next two kings were to some extent well known, compared to their immediate predecessors. After these insignificant rulers there came Śrī Harsadeva, also known as Śrī Harṣa or Harṣavarman. Śrī Harṣa was one of the great kings of the dynasty as he has been identified Gauḍo-drādi-Kalinga Kosalapati Śrī Harsadeva in the Pasupati inscription of the Lichchavi king Jaya deva of Nepal. This victory of Harsadeva was perhaps accomplished before the expedition to Gauḍa and Magadha of Yasodharman who defeated and killed him.

The Hayunthal Grant of Harjaravarman states (V. 7) that Balavarman ascended the throne after Harsadeva but he died a premature death.

The period after Balavarman is obscure; the records of the family do not give a continuous genealogy, nor do they throw light on his immediate successor.

The readings of the grant after this are very much indistinct, the plate being defaced.

120. Ibid., P. 199.
123. Ibid., P. 207.
and the name of the queen only can be read as Jivadevi who is described as the mother of Harjara. P.N. Bhattacharya introduces two princes Cakra and Aratha after Balavarman who were very much haughty and were disloyal to their father. Therefore the son of the younger of the two brothers ascended the throne. K.L. Barua suggests that there were at least two rulers following Balavaraman until the throne was occupied by the son of Aratha of the Hayunthal Grant. The unknown rulers may have ruled between A.D. 765-790.

The names of two more kings are found-Jivara and Diglekhavarman on two stone inscriptions discovered from the Deopani site in the Golaghat District of Assam. M.M. Sharma supports P.C. Choudhury's suggestion of Sri Jivara as the immediate successor of Balavarman III. But H.N. Dutta refuted the view and suggests that they were the kings of the independent kingdom which existed in the Doiyang-Dhansiri valley. On the basis of the Tezpur Copper Plate Grant of Vanamala P.N. Bhattacharya seems to indicate that Pralambha became the king after the death of rulers, beginning with Salastambha and ending with Sri Harsa. Pralambha was the father of Harjara by his queen Jivadevi. His brother Aratha died like a hero in a battle field and as such it is doubtful whether he occupied the throne. But the discovery of the Parbatiya Copperplate Grant removes all the

124. P.N. Bhattacharya, K.S., P. 52.
127. For details vide, Dr. H.N. Dutta, A.A.D.D.V.A., PP. 40-44.
confusion regarding the successor of Harṣavarman. According to the inscription
Pralambha is mistaken for Salambha and Harjarāj’s father is not Pralambha but his
brother Arathi who became king after Salambha or Pralambha and begot Harjaravarman through his queen Sri Jivadevi. P.N. Bhattacharya by his doubtful reading and wrong interpretation of verse 8 of the Hāyunthal Grant introduces Cakra and Arathi. Again by wrong analysis and interpretation of verses 7, 8, 9, 10 of the Tezpur Copperplate Grant he suggests that it is doubtful whether Aratha occupied the throne and that Pralambha was the father of Harjarāj by his queen Jivadevi. The Hāyunthal Grant is to be placed in about 825 A.D. It is likely that he ascended the throne in about A.D. 815. His Tezpur Rock Inscription was found near Tezpur with a Gupta date 510 (829-30 AD). So the end of his reign may be ascribed to about A.D. 835. The Gupta era definitely expressed Gupta cultural influence on Harjaravarman. One important event in his career was his Coronation ceremony performed according to religious rites in which the people including the merchants took an important role. Harjarāj assumed the grand title of ‘Maharajādhikāra Paramēśvara Paramabhāttāraka’ which proved that he was a powerful and mighty king. Harjaravarman was devoted to his parents and to god Mahēśvara. According to the Tezpur Copperplate Inscription his son Vanamāla succeeded him. His reign covered the period A.D. 835-865. With the

130. E.I. Vol. XXIX, No. 20., P. 149. f.n. 4.
131. P.N. Bhattacharya, K.S., P. 66 f.n.4.
132. Ibid., PP. 44-53.
134. Ibid., P 217.
accession of Vanamāla, the kingdom entered into a new phase of development. The Tezpur Grant (V.24) states that Vanamāla was devoted to Śiva. He constructed the lofty temple of Hetukasūlin and endowed it with villages, elephants and temple girls (VV.16-19).

He exerted strong influence over the neighbouring kings through wars as well as by peaceful means. His political influence may be inferred from the fact that he assumed the high sounding title of ‘Paramesvara Paramabhattaraka Mahārājādhirāja’. Vanamāla granted land to a Bhṛman near Candrapuri, on the west of Trisrota river, which indicates his victory and recovery of Kamarūpa’s lost possessions in Bengal. The Tezpur Grant (V.17) refers to his territory as “extending to the lines of forests as far as the seashore”, which indicates the extension of his dominion over the hilly regions in the North-East as well as over South-East Bengal, including Sylhet, Mymensingh, portions of Dacca, Samatata and the neighbouring lands.

Vanamāla abdicated the throne in favour of his son Jayamalavarman and fasted unto death. Having been attacked by a serious disease, he (Jayamalavarman) abdicated the throne in favour of his son Balavarman III. Balavarman III was the last important known king of the Salastambha dynasty. Balavarman, according to his grants assumed the title of ‘Mahārājādhirāja Paramesvara Paramabhattaraka’.

136. Ibid., P. 223.
137. Ibid.
138. Ibid., P. 222.
which indicates his power and dominion. His grants referred to his enemies, whom
he conquered. But the identification of the enemies is missing. He probably made
fresh conquests in Bengal, defeated the Pala ruler Narāyanapāla. This is proved
by his land donation in Hensiva within the Dijjina visaya lying to the west of Teesta
or Karatoya in Pundravardhana.

Details of his immediate successors are not known to history. It can be
learnt from the Bargāon Grant of Ratnapāla that twentyone kings from Salastambha
dynasty reigned and the last ruler was Tyāgasimha who died issueless and a vaccum
set in after the death of Tyāgasimha. Such situation often resulted in anarchy and
civil wars and it was probably this concern that led to the subjects choosing
Brahmapāla as the next king. This event has been described in the Bargāon
Copperplate Grant (V.10) of his son and successor Ratnapāla.

2.4. The Pala Dynasty:

Brahmapāla was probably from a collateral line of the Sālastambha dynasty
because this dynasty also traces their origin from Naraka. K.L. Barua supposes
that during Brahmapāla’s reign Kāmarūpa was attacked by Jātāvarman, son
of Vajravarman of the Varman dynasty from Eastern Magadha who ruled when the
Pala power began to decline. But he could not annex the kingdom. This invasion

139. Ibid., P. 223.
140. P.N.Bhattacharya, K.S., P. 165; J.A.R.S., II, PP. 82-83.
143. Ibid., P. 87.
is mentioned in the Belava Copperplate Inscription of Bhojavarnaṇdeva, the grandson of Jātavarman. P.N. Bhattacharya rejects the statement that Jātavarman crippled the power of the king of Kāmarūpa. D. Sarma has however remarked that the period of Jātavarman may be the eleventh century. Brahmapāla shifted his capital from Harūppesvāra to the city of Durjjaya beautifully situated on the Lauhitya. P.C. Choudhury, however held the view that Durjjaya was a fortified place in Prāgjiyotīsa which remained the capital of the line of rulers beginning with Puṣyavarman, if not earlier and ending with the Pāla line or even later. He is described as a great warrior and called Maharājādhirāja in the epigraph of his son Ratnapāla. He abdicated his throne in favour of his son Ratnapāla. Ratnapāla fortified the capital city and called it Durjjaya. The grandeur of the capital is depicted in poetical style in the Bargāon Grant. The excellent fortification of Durjjaya was a source of anxiety to a number of contemporary Indian powers like the rulers of Gurjara, Gauda, Kerala and Deccan (Bargāon Grant, L. 34-36). Some scholars opine that Ratnapāla actually came in to conflict with these powers. That he defeated a king of Gauda named Rajyapāla is evident from the Gachtal Copperplate Inscription belonging to one of his successors Gopāla.

144. E.I., XII., P. 37.
146. D. Sarma, K.S., P. 70.
148. Ibid., P. 229.
The decline of the Pala rule in Gauḍa after Mahāpāla gave an opportunity for the extension of the influence of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa. Some Deccan princes also led expedition against Kāmarūpa. Katare suggests that the Deccan king was no other than the Chalukya prince Vikramaditya of Kalyāṇi. Ratnapala's reign was formerly assigned to the first half of the 11th century A.D. But the Gachtal Grant states that Ratnapala of Prāgījyotisa - Kāmarūpa defeated king Rajyapala (c. 908-940 A.D.) of Gauḍa and also suggested that the former advanced as far as the Ganges in the heart of the Gauḍa empire. The contemporaneity with Rajyapala of Gauḍa shows that Ratnapala of Assam must have flourished about the first half of the tenth century A.D. 155

Purandarapala, the son of Ratnapala died as Yuvarāja. Therefore, Indrapala, the grandson of Ratnapala succeeded him. Indrapala ruled for a longer period as he issued his Guwākuchi Copperplate Grant in the 21st year of his reign. Indrapala was devoted to study and during his reign the country enjoyed peace and prosperity. At the same time, he vanquished the enemy by dint of his might and could command respect from his numerous vassal chiefs, performed many sacrifices which delighted Indra 156. In his grants he assumed the high sounding epithet of 'Paramesvara Paramabhattaraka Maharajadhira'. The land donation in the area of Pundravardhana indicates that North-Bengal was probably under the suzerainty of Indrapala. 157

153. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I., PP. 13 ff.
According to the Gachtal Copperplate Grant he defeated Kalyāṇ Chandra, son of Śrī Chandra of Vanga who was the vanquisher of a king of Gauda. By this brilliant conquest Indrapāla extended the frontiers of his kingdom in the west to include major portion of modern Bengal. He established relations with the Rastrakutas by marrying a princess of that dynasty which was but his diplomatic triumph over his political rivals of Gauda and Vanga.

Indrapāla was succeeded by his son Gopāla. The king had personal charm, merit and intelligence, munificence as well as success in war to his credit. It appears that he consolidated his father’s conquests in Pundravardhana. Gopāla’s son Harsapāla was a weak ruler. Harsapāla’s son Dharmapāla was the last important ruler of the Pala dynasty. His Khanāmukh and Subhankarapātaka Copperplate Grants state that he was the Lord of the region girdled by the ocean. This points to his political sway towards South East Bengal adjoining the sea. After the consolidation of his conquests, Dharmapāla devoted himself to the spread of religion and learning. As indicated by his Puṣpabhadra Copperplate Grant (VV. 6-7) he became a propagator of the Dharma. He was not only a propagator of religion but also a poet. The first eight verses of the said grant were written by him, who was “the Sun of the Pala family, the crown jewel of poets, the abode of all arts, the possessor of all virtues, pure and virtuous”.

162. Ibid., P. 245.
Jayapāla, whose name occurs in the Silimpur Stone Slab Inscription probably succeeded Dharmapāla. The Inscription mentioned that Brahmana Prāhāsa did not accept the gift of 900 gold coins and grant of a land in Pundravardhana from the Kamarupa king Jayapāla. A new chronology in the light of the Gachtal Copperplate Inscription and the Silimpur Stone Slab Inscription is suggested by D.C. Sircar as follows:

Brahmapāla - 900 - 920 A.D.
Ratnapāla - 920-960 A.D.
Purandarapāla - did not reign as king
Indrapāla - 960-990 A.D.
Gopāla - 990-1015 A.D.
Harṣapāla - 1015-1035 A.D.
Dharmapāla - 1035-1060 A.D.
Jayapāla - 1075-1100 A.D.

2.5. Later Kings of Kamarupa:

The Kamauli Copperplates of Vaidyadeva as well as Sandhyākaranandin’s Rāmcarita help us to know about the expedition of Rāmapāla, a king of Gauda against Kamarupa. The defeated Kamarupa king was Jayapāla who flourished during the second quarter of the 12th century A.D. After the conquest of Kamarupa, Rāmapāla enthroned Tingyadeva as his subordinate king and soon after this Kumarapala became the king of Gauda. Tingyadeva rebelled but Kumārapala put down the revolt of Tingyadeva and entrusted his minister Vaidyadeva with

the administration of Kāmarūpā. Vaidyadeva did not continue long as the subordinate king of the Palas of Bengal. He declared independence soon after the death of Kumārapāla and took the title of ‘Mahārājadhirāja Parameśvara Paramabhattāraka’. Pragjyotisa was a Bhukti and Kāmarūpā was a Maṇḍala in his kingdom and his seat of government at Hamsakonci was decidedly situated within the area of the modern Kamrup District. These points justify the recognition of Vaidyadeva as a king of Kāmarūpā. During this period, there is reason to believe that scions of Pāla dynasty may also have reigned in some parts of the country. In reality no systematic history about Kāmarūpā could be found for about half a century after Vaidyadeva.

The Assam Plates of Vallabhadeva issued in 1107 Saka (1185 A.D.) refers to a new line of kings. They are Bhāskara, Rayārideva, Udayakarna and Vallabhadeva. The inscription records the establishment of a bhaktasala (alms-house) by Vallabhadeva at the command of his father for the spiritual welfare of his mother. P.N. Bhattacharya ignores the inscription as it has nothing to do with Assam. K.L. Barua states that Vallabhadeva and his predecessors mentioned in the inscription were not kings but feudatory chief of the later Kāmarūpā kings.

168. M.M. Sharma, I.A.A., P. 0.06.  
170. E.I., V., PP. 181-188.  
171. P.N. Bhattacharya, K.S., Intro., P 42 f. n.5.  
set forth in the inscription". But M.M. Sharma opines that Vallabhadeva ruled in Kāmarūpa most probably as an independent ruler and his kingdom comprised of the modern District of Kamrup and probably also of some more adjoining areas. D.C. Sircar refers to them as kings of the Lunar dynasty and says that they probably ruled around 1120 - 1200 A.D.

The Assam Plates of Vallabhadeva refer to a conflict with Vāṅga in which Rayārideva participated. The then ruler of Vāṅga was probably Laksmanasena's predeessor Vijayasena. In the Deopāra inscription of Vijayasena of Bengal states that he impetuously assailed the Lord of Gauḍa, put down the prince of Kāmarūpa and conquered Kalinga. In the Madhāinagar inscription of Laksmanasena (L-32) it has been mentioned that he undertook an expedition to Kāmarūpa towards the end of the 12th century A.D. According to P.C. Choudhury, Laksmanasena defeated Vallabhadeva. Nothing in details about the successor of Vallabhadeva could be known. According to the Kānaibarasibowā Rock Inscription, located at North Guwahati, the Turks' attack of Kāmarūpa was completely annihilated on the 13th day of Chaitra of the Saka year 1127 (1206 A.D.). Tabaqat-i-Nasiri refers to the king of Kāmarūpa named Britū or

173. Ibid., P. 130.
Bartu while, D.C. Sircar has maintained that the Indian form of Bartu or Britu would be Prithu. K.L. Barua identifies Britu with Prithu Raja, king of Kamarupa mentioned in the Yogini Tantra and Kamarupar Buranji. Minhaj has stated that king Bartu was defeated by Nasiruddin in 1228 A.D. The existence of a king named Samudrapala belonging to the Pala family is known from the Ambari Stone Inscription dated Saka 1154 (1232 AD). The evidence definitely proves the continuation of the rule of the Pala family till at least the time of Samudrapala.

B.K. Barua mentions a Pillar Inscription recovered from Gachtal in the Nagaon District which he ascribed to be issued in 1227 A.D., mentions the name of king Visva-Sundaradeva. But on the basis of a new reading P.C. Choudhury holds that the inscription was issued in 1362 A.D. (1284 Saka). In 1257 A.D. Ikhtiyar-Uddin-Yuzbek-Tughril Khan led an expedition to Kamarupa. Sandhya, the king of Kamarupa defeated Yuzbek. Shortly afterwards he shifted his capital from Kamarupanagar to Kamatapur in Goalpara.

Soon after these invasions the old kingdom of Kamarupa seems to have split up into small principalities. By the beginning of the 13th century A.D., the Ahoms entered Assam from the east and a new era in the history of Assam began.

183. Ibid., P. 149.
189. Ibid.