FOUR MAIN SATTRAS OF THE PURUSA SAMHATI

The Bardowā group of satras, called nāti-sattra or Thākur naptā-sattra, include four main sattras, viz., Narowā, Kowāmarā, Dīghalī and Cāmaguri. François Hamilton, in his An Account of Assam, puts Salaguri and Kowāmarā separately and omits the Dīghalī-sattra in his list. Dewan rightly puts these four sattras together in one group. In central Assam the word 'Cāri-sattriyā' means these four sattras and not the four sattras of eastern Assam. Some characteristics of these four sattras which are generally not found in any other sattras, may be noted here. As descendants of Śiromāni Bhūṇā, they introduce themselves as Brahma-Kāyastha. As the grandsons of Śaṅkaradeva on the female side, they were greatly

2 ff.13(a) & (b).
4 PKKI.,p.22.
honoured by the people, despite their economically insolvent position. The other four satras of eastern Assam came to the forefront with royal help and they tried to administer initiation to the Ahom kings and nobles at different periods. There is no rigidity as to the tithe system on these satras of the Purusa Samhati. The Superiors (Sattrādhikārs) of these satras offer 'nirmāli' (nirmālya) to other Brāhmaṇ heads in the investiture ceremony. They perform ten 'samśkāra's like Cudākaraṇa, Karnavedha, Pācati etc., of the Brāhmaṇs except Puṃsavaṇa, and take 'Gāyatrī Mantra'. It is noteworthy that marriage among these four satras is generally restricted to themselves and, therefore, in some cases they make matrimonial relations with the Kāyasthas of western Assam. They never marry a girl from any other sattra including that of the Bar Bārajanaīya or of the Saru Bārajanaīya group, but if girls attain puberty, they

5 Bhadracāru, vv. 827–828, states how Anantarāya was honoured by Raṅgacaraṇa and Dāmodara of the Āuniāṭi-sattra; Āi Kanakalatār Caritra, p. 65, narrates how Niraṅjaṇa of the Āuniāṭi-sattra showed great reverence to Dāmodara Atā of the Narowā-sattra.
may be given in marriage to persons belonging to such other sattras. The Head (Adhikār) of a sattra is to perform journey to villages with 'dolā' or 'khātītolā' (a sedan or a palanquin). All, except the Narowā group, use 'uttari' and 'navaguna' as their sacred thread and write 'Mahanta' as their surname like other sattras affiliated to this group. As for 'gottra', the Narowā Gosāis have 'attri', the Kowāmarā 'kāsyapa', the Cāmāguri 'kṛṣṇatreya' and the like.

6 Almost all the Gosāis of the Salaguri-sattra (except those of the Kowāmarā-sattra of Sibsagar) introduce themselves as a member of the 'kāsyapa' gottra. Now a discrepancy is found relating to the question of gottra within the same family. Some people like to question the authority of the Kowāmarā family in accepting a gottra originally accepted by the Narowā family. The principle of accepting a separate gottra by the Kowāmarā family is adopted particularly when they come in contact with the Narowā family. The writer had the experience that on the first 'śrāddha' ceremony of the late Sattrādhikār Maṇikānta Mahanta of the Kowāmarā-sattra held in 1968 A.D., his son performed the 'śrāddha' rite as a member belonging to the 'kāsyapa' gottra.
1. NAROWA SATTRA

Satras originating from the line of Dāmodara Ātā came to be known as Narowā-satra. 'The two main satras, viz., Narowā and Bardowā, established by Dāmodara Ātā became two of the leading satras of the Purusa Samhati'. As to the origin of the word Narowā, Dvārikā states that Caturbhuja's nephew Dāmodara was newly adopted as a son and was given 'nirmāli' (nirmālya) as Superior (Adhikār) in 1650 A.D., at the Visnupur-satra. But at another place he informs that Ramākanta, son of Dāmodara, became the Adhikār and built a sattra near the 'narowā-jān' so that his sattra came to be known after the name of the rivulet. Dvārikā further states that the name of the sattra became well known about the year 1656 A.D. On the otherhand we find a quite different explanation of the word in another account based on tradition,

7 NHBSJA, p.94.
8 vv.2686-2687.
9 Dvārikā, vv.2848, 2851.
10 'Bardowā : Vivartanar Mājedi'.
wherein it is said that on an enquiry for Saṅkara-deva's grandson by the Ahom king Jayadhvajasiṃha, he was reported that Dāmodara camped at a new place (na= new, rowā= resting place), coming from western Assam and hence he was subsequently known as Narowā Gosāi. Dvārikā's above date, however, should come atleast a decade down if we accept 1649 A.D., as Ramākānta's date of birth.

It is known that Dāmodara Ātā first established the Narowā-sattra in North Lakhimpur with the help of king Jayadhvajasiṃha. Dr John Peter Wade describes the place in his 'geographical sketch of 1800' in the following way,- 'Narooa is a much smaller district which does not exceed eight miles in length and six in breadth. It is chiefly noted for a temple or Takkorbari (Thakurbari). It is bounded by a much larger district, Munnipur. The Sowparra river falls from the mountain of Miri and flows through Coticoosi, a water contribute to enrich the estate of Nurroowah Gossaign or Goswami, and after a very long course
join the Brahmapooter about sixty miles below Suddia.\footnote{11}

It has already been noted in the preceding chapter that Dāmodara Āṭā first established a sattra near Damarājār, which was named the Vaikunthapur-sattra. So Dāmodara Āṭā was also known as Vaikunthapuriyā Āṭā.

In eastern Assam he established two other sattras in the same locality, Lāomurī and Cāribhāgī, besides the Narowā-sattra. There is still a place called Narowā-thān near Dhemaji in North Lakhimpur. Accounts are given by some writers\footnote{12} stating how Dāmodara Āṭā received royal aid to establish these sattras. During the reign of Sīvasimha (1714-1744 A.D.), the Narowā-sattra was shifted\footnote{13} to a place near Čāmparā. It is

\footnote{11 Reproduced from the 'Asiatic Annual Register, 1805', pp.14-15. The Dakhinpāṭ-sattra by Benudhar Sarma, Gauhati, ed.1,1967, p.5, states that on the north bank of Brahmaputtra, 'Narowā' is situated in the east of Hābuṅg.}

\footnote{12 Harinarayana, vv.465-471; In a paper entitled 'Śrī Śrī Vāsudeva Thānar Camu Itivṛttta' by Durlabha Dev Goswami, the writer incorporates an extract from the presidential address of the 15th All Assam Sarvodaya Sanmilana, 1964, by Lalit Kumar Doley, where we have some account of the above three sattras, pp.7-10.}

\footnote{13 Harinarayana, vv.538-539.}
said that one Ramagati donated his own land to Ramakanta Ata, son of Damodara Ata, and at his request of Ramagati the sattra was newly built there. This sattra later on came to be known as the Vasudeva Than.

Harinarayana gives a vivid description of the sattra in his Thakur Carita. When Damodara made his way to central Assam to find out Sankaradeva's original abode, Bardowa, he established three sattras there, viz., Kujï, Bardowa and Bali-sattra. Of these, the last became a famous sattra for Damodara Ata breathed his last there and his descendants also used to live mainly at this sattra. The most valuable piece of illuminating manuscript, viz., the Bhagavata X, Adi (by Sankaradeva) is preserved at this sattra along with some other rare relics.

According to Dvarika, the name Narowa-sattra came to have a great name in 1650 A.D., and in 1653 A.D., 14 Harinarayana, vv.539-541; 'Bardowa: Vivartanar Majedi'. 15 Harinarayana, v.539, gives this name as Bahudasa. 16 vv.540-542. 17 v.2687. 18 vv.2752-2753.
Dāmodara reclaimed the Bardowā Thān. In 1658 A.D.19 Kanakalatā, with the help of Dāmodara Ātā, appointed persons to act as Superiors. Dāmodara thus established sattras at seven places, viz., Vaikunthapur (Damarājār), Vaiṣṇavapur (Kujī), Bardowā, Bāli-sattrā, Narowā-sattrā (Vāsudeva Thān), Lāomurī and Gāribhāgī. All these come under the Narowā group of sattras, some of which are not existing now.

After the death of Dāmodara Ātā, his son Ramākānta Ātā, could not live at Bardowā owing to the indifferent attitude20 of Kanakalatā. By that time, Anantarāya was born to her daughter, Subhadrā. Likewise, Sumitrā, daughter of Revati, had a son, Viṣṇupati. Kanakalatā was very much affectionate only to her own grandson, Anantarāya and, therefore, a feeling of indifference gradually grew among them. Moreover, Kanakalatā is also said to have quarrelled with21

19 Dvārikā, vv.2785-2786.
20 Dvārikā, vv.2798-2801.
21 Harinārāyaṇa, v. 489, already quoted above.
Ramakanta's mother on the question of successorship of Dāmodara Ātā. She is reported to have tried her best to make Anantarāya, her own grandson, the sole successor of Dāmodara Ātā. Following the suggestions of some bhakats, Ramakanta's mother made her way to Damarājār along with her son and some disciples. But they could not stay there long due to the disturbances created by the Moghuls. So they came back to Bardowā. Again they had to proceed further east as the country was then invaded by the Muslims.

Controversy is there over the question of Ramakanta's date of birth. Following Aniruddha, the Sāṅkaradeva and His Times gives 1651 A.D. as Ramakanta's date of birth. But according to Madan Ātā, he lived for sixtyeight years.

22 Lvarika, v.2301.
23 p.18.
24 'āth-saṣṭhi vatsara dharma śreṣṭhatarā
dravārtāya anupāra/
mahāpuruṣaka dekhayā lokaka
upadeśi dīlā nāma//'

Madan Ātā's eulogy of Ramakanta Ātā.
This accepted, the date of Ramākānta's birth will fall in 1649 A.D., when Dāmodara Ātā was thirtyeight years old. If 1672 A.D., is accepted as the date of the composition of Aniruddha's Guru Varnana, Ramākānta's age at that time would be only twentythree years. Except some biographies of the Salaguri group, it is admitted by all that Ramākānta Ātā lived for sixyeight years and passed away in 1717 A.D. The Kesāva Carita has a verse where it is stated that Ramākānta lived only for a few years and, therefore, Rāmacandra, his sister's son, was adopted as a son. This information, which is also found in some biographies of the Salaguri group of sattras, is to be discarded as baseless on the fact that Ramākānta Ātā administered initiation to the Āhom king Rāmadhvajasimha (1673-1675 A.D.), and he was offered royal patronage to build a sattrā at Gajpur under the supervision of Deberā Barbaruā. An attempt to show that

25 Madan Ātā; Bhakat-mālā; MSS of Puspakanta Deva Goswami and Bāpuṭi Nām-lagowā.
26 v.405.
27 Harinārāyaṇa, vv.501-503; Gait, p.290; Asam Buraṇī, (Sukumār), ed.2, p.106; Ātān Burhāgohāin and His Times, pp.90,92.
The flourishing period of the Narowa Gosais was undoubtedly during Ramakanta and his son Ramacandra Ata's time. The Ahom kings helped them in many ways to bring the position of the gurus to the forefront of all other sattras. As a disciple of the Narwa Thakur the king made every attempt to enhance his Guru's power and prestige, and became instrumental in obtaining more disciples for the Mahanta. A monastery was constructed for the Narwa Thakur at Gajpur under the orders of Ramadhwaj Sinha. Debera had been at Gajpur supervising the arrangements for the consecration ceremony of the Narwa Thakur's monastery which the king had intended to attend. But the monarch fell ill being seized with an attack of dropsy. This compelled Debera to return to Gargaon before the completion of the arrangements. Debera informed the line of the Narowa Gosais has not come as direct descendants is intelligible in the above statement. Besides, the same verse of the Keśava Carita is vividly a later day scribining.
king that he had arranged for Nāma-kīrtan, or religious music and recital, at the Narwā Satra, and made rich presents to Brahmans for the Swargadeo’s speedy recovery. Ramākānta’s flair in dramatic art and music has been narrated by Harinārāyana.

He came to eastern Assam from Bardowa accompanied by six Brāhman disciples to reclaim the Narowā-sattra in eastern Assam. The orator of the Kathā Guru Carita, Cakrapāni Vairāgī Ātai, was a disciple of Ramākānta Ātā. Vairāgī later on used to stay at Bardowa. The incident which led Cakrapāni, the ‘itinerant expert on the guru-lore’, to live at Bardowa on the Salaguri side (although he was a disciple of Narowā Ātā) is still fondly remembered by the bhakats of the Bardowā group.

28 Aton Burhagohain and His Times, pp. 90–92; but the Dakhin-pāt-sattra, pp. 10, 47 and 51 says that Ramadhvaja was a disciple of the Dakhin-pāt-sattra. The source of information of the fact is, however, wanting.

29 vv. 508–511; also cited in EKKI., p. 221.

30 Information supplied by Bhadreswar Sarma Hazarika, 69 years old Brāhman of North Lakhimpur, who is a descendant of one Rāmadeva of the above six families. A disciple of the Narowā Gosāi, Bhadreswar Sarma hails from Sadāsivar-bāri, near the Vāsudeva Thān. The line of the informant goes thus, Rāmadeva = Bagāicaran = Sivanātha = Haranātha = Niranānātha = Bhadreswar.

31 Only recently a full copy of the work is obtained, wherein the name of the work appears as Ātā Purus-savar Vamsāvalī Caritra.
Ramakanta Ata passed away at Caribhagī on the first day of the bright moon of the month of Vaiśākha, leaving behind him his son Rāmacandra. At the time of king Gadādharasimha’s (1681-1696 A.D.) persecution of the Vaiṣṇavas, Ramakanta Ata had to take shelter at Bijṇī along with his son and disciples. Likewise, once Rāmacandra Ata had to suffer royal oppression from Rudrasimha (1696-1714 A.D.) for administering initiation to Brāhmans. Rāmacandra used to live at the Vāsudeva Thān after his father’s death. He was an artiste of repute particularly in histrionics. Even the Śākta king Śivasimha invited him to perform a Bhaona at his capital, and showed him great honour. With royal help, Rāmacandra constructed a sattra near Cāmpara, as the former sattra was

32 Bhakat-mālā.
33 Dvārikā, v.2922. This portion of Dvārikā’s work appears in Āi Kanakalatār Caritra, pp.89-91, without any acknowledgement; cf. Dvārikā,vv.2904-2931.
34 S.K.Bhuyan (ed); Tuṅgkuṅgiyā Buraṇji, ed.2, Gauhati, 1964,p.31; Bhadracāru,vv.618-624.
35 Harinārāyaṇa,v.532; PKKI.,pp.121-122.
36 Harinārāyaṇa,vv.536-538.
eroded by the river Svarnasiri. The drama Kamsavadha, written by Rāmacandra Ātā, is still performed at the Narowā group of satras on the tithi ceremony of Śāṅkaradeva.

Rāmacandra married two wives and from the second, six sons were born. Of them, except the second all died prematurely. The descendants of the second son have only two families now, one at Bardowā and the other at Jājari in Nowgong district. From his first wife, Rāmacandra had a son, Rāmadeva by name. Rāmacandra died in 1761 A.D., on the day of the fourth bright moon of the month of Āśāda. Rāmadeva built a sattra, called Rāmapur-sattrā, at a spot lying between Bardowā and the Bāli-sattrā. He secured a royal grant conferring on him the lands belonging to Bardowā, Rāmpur and the Bāli-sattrā. Moreover, Lākṣmīsimha (1769-1780 A.D.) issued a charter on Māgha, 1694 Saka/1772 A.D., by which the Adhikārship of the Pāṭbāusī-sattrā came to Rāmadeva. King Gaurīnāthasimha (1780-1794 A.D.) intended to visit the Narowā-sattrā at

37 Harinārayaṇa, v.539.
38 SHT., pp.152-153.
39 FKKI., p.239.
Lakhimpur. The Adhikār of the sattra (most probably Rāmadeva Ātā) came forward with his disciples to welcome the king, but apprehending some danger, the capricious king exploded the act of the Narowā Gosāi. During the Māmarīyā Revolt, the Narowā Gosāis have given their support to some revolting princes like the Gosāis of the Cāmaguri-sattra. By that time, the ownership of Bardowa was claimed by Anantarāya's grandson, Rāmacarana. Rāmadeva, therefore, used to stay at his newly built sattra, Rāmapur. The dispute gained its firm ground during the reign of Kamaleswarasimha (1795-1810 A.D.). The matter was settled by the Prime Minister, Pūrṇānanda Budhagohāi and the chief of the judiciary, Bhadrakānta Barbaruwa, by partitioning the Bardowā-sattra between the Narowā Mahanta and the Salaguri Mahanta. Afterwards Rāmadeva moved to the Narowā-sattra. He died on the day of the nineth bright moon

40 Tungkhunīya Buraṇji, p.93.
42 SHT., p. 153.
of the month of Jaistha. Rāmadeva had two sons, Bhadradeva and Visnudeva. The younger son used to stay at the Vaisnavapur-sattra (Kujī) and his descendants are still living there. Owing to the Burmese invasion, Bhadradeva had to live at Bardowa, Rāmapur and the Bāli-sattra at different periods. It was in his time that the Bāli-sattra attracted many people for its plenty and profusion of all requirements like food and fish. Bhadradeva's son Lakṣmīdeva, therefore, came alone to live at the Bāli-sattra leaving his disciples at the Rāmapur-sattra. But afterwards the bhakats also joined him. They were, however, forbidden to reside inside the sattra compound. Therefore the bhakats newly built a village near the sattra. As they came from the Rāmapur-sattra, the name of the village came to be known as Rāmapūrīyā-gāon. From that time a proverb is in use glorifying the Bāli-sattra. It goes like this: "Vaisnavapur Calcali, Bardowa Simhāli
(V.R. Dhāne Bali)"
Bāli-sattra māje Kudh, Neocākhōwā Rāmapur

( = Vaisṇavapur or the Kuji-sattra is inundated by flood, Bardowā is a quarrelsome place, (variant reading = Bardowā is famous for paddy cultivation), everything including fish etc., available at the Bāli-sattra because of a pond in the midst of the sattra, and Rāmapur is cursed and, therefore, should be avoided).

Bhadradēva breathed his last on the day of the fourth dark moon of the month of Paśa. His son Lakṣmīdeva was a scholar of repute and among other works, wrote some dramas. Staying at the Bāli-sattra, in course of time he married Tilottamā Ai, daughter of Gorakṣa Caudhāri of Patbāuisī. She gave birth to six sons and a daughter. The eldest son Dāmadeva died a premature death leaving his minor son Harendradeva. Some of the bhakats lifted Harendradeva to establish him as the Adhikār (Superior) of the Bardowā Than, because the second son Dāmadeva's followers also

43 The proverb was first told and explained by Premalata Mahanta, a 70 years old lady of the village Kāndhulimārī, Dhing, Nowgong (Assam).
tried to establish him to the Superiorship. It was in the month of Bhādra when Harendradeva, a boy of six years, was taken away on boat by the bhakats without the knowledge of the members of the family. The bhakats first camped at a place called Telāhi near Dharambul in the district Nowgong and afterwards came to Bheṭiyani, near Bardowā. The boy was all along kept hidden inside a large bamboo basket (duli) for one and a half month without offering him boiled rice to eat because of social custom. Their mission was not fulfilled and later on his mother Dharmeśwarī, who was a daughter of Harideva of the Salaguri-sattra, Sibsagar, came to stay with him. The place afterwards became known as the Bheṭiyani-sattra. The second son Bāmadeva became the Adhikār(Superior) of the Bardowā Thān. Of his two living sons, the younger Acyutacandra had gone to the Narowā-sattra(Vāsudeva Thān). His descendants are still living there. The first son Bhāgīratha's descendants are living at Bardowā. There are only
two families from Bhagiratha's two wives, living at Bardowa. Naranatha alias Bhagavati Ata, the third son of Laksmideva, built a sattra near Dhing (Nowgong), called the Talibil-sattra, but his youngest son Bhavacandra came to reside at the Bali-sattra. Laksmideva's fourth and fifth sons, Bholanatha and Yogendra respectively, also used to stay at the Bali-sattra. The last son, Dhanesvara alias Bhavakanta was made the successor of his father and everything possessed by the family, including that of the famous Citra Bhagavata (the illuminated Bhagavata Purana, X, Adi, which has come under the title Citra Bhagavata through the press) was handed over to him by his father, Laksmideva. After the death of Dhanesvaradeva, his only son Sivendradeva became the sole successor of his father. Thus it is seen that in the later period, Bali-sattra became the central institution of the Narow group of sattras.
II. KOWAMARA-SATTRA

Next to Narowa, the Kowamara-sattra is to be reckoned in order of importance. Nowadays, the name Salaguri, instead of Kowamara, is generally used; but in earlier records we get the name Kowamara only. The Salaguri-sattra was counted as a branch of the Kowamara group of sattras. It was perhaps because of the fact that the descendants of the Kowamara-sattra used to live later on at Salaguri in the present Sibsagar sub-division and from there some of them migrated to Bardowa and its surrounding places. Sattras originating from the line of Anantaraya Ata, son of Kanakalata’s daughter Subhadrâ, are included in this sub-group. Born at Bardowa in 1656 A.D.,44 Anantaraya alias JagajIvana married three wives,—Devayani alias Devahuti, Devaki46 and Jãnekã. During the reign

44 Narinârâyana, v.474.
45 From a genealogical table possessed by Ravicandra Mahanta Adhikar, Sukdal Barbari-sattra, Nowgong.
46 According to some account, she was Anantaraya’s daughter and not wife; cf. Bhadracaru, vv.405-410. Thus it seems that Anantaraya had only two wives.
of Cakradhvajasimha (1663-1669 A.D.), he was invited to the capital along with Ramākānta Ātā of Narowā. Both of them were promised royal help and Anantarāya built a sattra, Govindapur by name, on the south bank of the Dibru river. The king asked him to live together with Ramākānta Ātā, but apprehending future conflict, Anantarāya declined to do so. Afterwards he built a sattra on the bank of the Dīsāṅg river which came to be known as the Kowāmarā-sattra.

With the help of Taṅgou Phukan, Anantarāya first married Devahuti, daughter of Cāndarāya Kāyasastha of the Narāyaṇa Gomostā family who lived at Tāpā (Ram-pārā, Barpeta) on the river Cāulkhowā. From her side, four sons, Viṣṇurāya, Kesāvarāya, Mādhavarāya and Yādavarāya were born. Of them the first established the Khaṭarā-sattra at Mangaldai and the last remained a celibate. From Kesāvarāya's side sattras at different periods originated at different places of the state.

48 Pavitra Asam, p. 45; Bhadracāru, v. 251.
49 Bhadracāru, v.v. 244-248; Santamālā, v. 1337.
50 FKKI., p. 129.
Anantarāya's other wife Jāneki of the Kālsilā-sattra gave birth to two sons, Rāmarāya and Harirāya. Of all his sons, Harirāya was the eldest and, therefore, became the Adhikār(Superior) of the Kowāmarā-sattra.

In course of time Anantarāya founded a sattra on the bank of the river Dihimg with the help of his disciples of the village Salaguri. Although this new institution was named the Madhupur-sattra, subsequently that came to be known as the Salaguri-sattra after the name of the adjacent village. His son Kesāvarāya was put in charge of the management of this new sattra.

According to Dvārikā, Anantarāya was given 'nirmāli'(nirmālya= Saṃskṛt:) as an Adhikār at the first śrāddha ceremony of his grand-mother, Kanakalatā in 1668 A.D. He had at that time no sattra of Santamāla,v.1364.

52 Bhadracāru, vv.624-672; ĀCKI, p.241. The descendants of Kesāvarāya used to live at Bardowā and from that time, the family came to be known as the Salaguri family; ĀCKI, p.244. Also 'Licāig-rukhār Miśāti', Satun Asāntā, November, 12, 1937.
his own and the Narowā-sattra was established eighteen years before Kanakalata's death. So the Kowamarā group of sattras came into existence after that date. The sattra was so named because Anantarāya built it near the Kowamarā-bil.\(^{54}\) The Kowamarā-sattra suffered much during the time of Gadādharaśimha's (1681-1696 A.D.) persecution of the Vaiśnavas.\(^{55}\) Rudrasimha (1696-1714 A.D.), however, stopped the act of his father, Gadādharaśimha, and the Vaiśnavas were allowed to resume their old position and avocations. The king also offered land grants and donations to the Vaiśnavas of the state. Cakrapāṇi Vairāgī Ātai visited the Kowamarā-sattra\(^{56}\) when Anantarāya was alive. Anantarāya was greatly honoured by Rāṅgācarana and Dāmodara of the Āuniāti-sattra, and the former offered 'nirmāli' to both of them.\(^{57}\) Anantarāya died in 1741 A.D., on the day of the seventh dark moon, Friday midnight of the month of Āsāḍa\(^{58}\), when Śiva-śimha was ruling (1714-1744 A.D.). After the death of

\(^{54}\) Dvārika, vv.2892-2894. 
^{56} Bhadracāru, vv.673-682. 
^{57} Bhadracāru, vv.802-828. 
^{58} Bhadracāru, v.954.
Anantarāya, his eldest son Rāmarāya succeeded to the position of his father at the Kowāmarā-sattra. Harirāya, the other son from Jāneki's side, secured royal aid from Ra jesvarasimha (1751-1769 A.D.) and built a new sattra called the Sukdal-sattra, in the paddy field of Dāmodara Āta of Narowā near Bardowā.

Keśāvarāya, son of Anantarāya, had four sons, of whom Lakṣmīkānta was the eldest. The second son Kalyāṇarāya maintained his father's sattra at Sala-
guri near Kālugāo, in the district Sibsagar. The youngest son Subhānu settled near Jāmagurihāṭ in Darrang and founded a sattra called Ceuṇi-bardowā. Sudarsāna, the third son who was a celibate, came to live at Bardowā. It is said that when Sudarsāna died, Lakṣmīkānta's son Rāmacarāṇa became the Adhi-
kār of the Salaguri-sattra at Bardowā. It was in his days that the historic quarrel over the Adhikār-
ship of Bardowā arose between Rāmadeva of Narowā

59 ḪKI., p.243.
60 verse cited from the Sukdal Carita in ḪKI., p.244.
61 ḪKI., p.245.
and Ramacarana of Salaguri. As a result of this dispute the Bardowa Than was partitioned between the above two. King Kamalesvarasimha (1795-1810 A.D.) had to settle the matter by a copper-plate alloting, however, the greater part of the sattra for Ramadeva Ata of the Narowā side. The lesser part of the sattra was given to Ramacarana Ata and, therefore, his side came to be known as 'saru-phāl' or 'cota-hissā' as opposed to 'bar-phāl' or 'bar-hissā'. After Ramacarana, his two younger brothers Haricarana and Gopalacarana successively became Adhikār of the Salaguri group at Bardowa, but they used to live at Kanakalata's abode, Aibheti. The descendants of Ramacarana's two sons, Kṛṣṇakānta and Bhadra-kānta, lived at Bardowa but afterwards Kṛṣṇakānta built a sattra near Dhing, called the Leterī Salaguri-sattra. It was so called because of its situation near the bank of the Leterī-suti of the river Brahmaputtra.

Haricarana's son Saśadhara founded a new sattra called the Na-sattra near Aibheti— their permanent place of residence. He is reported to have obtained royal

62 The copper-plate is now with Kusa Adhikari of Bardowa.
63 PKKI., p.245.
The king also donated him lands in Khātā in the district Kamrup. The line coming down from Laksānkānta's youngest son Gopālacarana is living at Bardowā, Viṣṇupur and Ghilājārī. On the other hand, Harirāya's first son Pradyumna stayed at Barbarī and his two younger brothers, Sudyumna and Indradyumna, founded the Sarubarī and the Itakali-sattras respectively.

Among the four principal sattras of the Samhāti, the Kowāmarā family is the biggest scattering in most of the districts of Assam. Likewise the number of sattras grew up abundantly at different parts of the state. These sattras may be sub-divided into the following main groups:- (a) Kowāmarā proper (b) Salaguri — it includes sattras like Bardowā(saru-phāl), Aibheṭī, Leterī, Jāmagurīhāṭ - Darrang and Kālugāo: - Sibsagar (c) Sukdal sub-group includes sattras of Barbarī, Sarubarī and Itakali, all in the district Nowgong. It is observed that at different periods, some Salaguri Gosāis

64 HKKI., p.245.
65 The deed bears the date 1744 Saka= 1822 A.D.
were adopted as sons by the Gosais of the Visnupur-sattra when necessity demands. Considering this, the Visnupur-Ghilajari sattras may be included here under a separate head.

II.A. VISNUPUR-SATTRA

We have already seen that Caturbhujas established two sattras- Ghilajari and Visnupur. From his wife Revati, Sumitra was born to Caturbhujas. In course of time Sumitra was married to Gadadhara and subsequently Jambavati was born to Sumitra. Jambavatatis son Visnupati became the Superior (Adhikar) of the Visnupur-sattra in 1656 A.D. It is said that Revati along with her daughter made their way to the Visnupur-sattra from Bardowa, because of Kanakalata's

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66 Dvarika,v.2608; Korcoong-sattra coll.,f.12(a); Candra-caru; MS of Puspakanta Deva Goswami. But PKKI.,p.246, gives the name Manohara instead of Gadadhara.

67 According to Dvarika,vv.2862-2863, Sumitra gave birth to Visnupati. This is supported by the PKKI.,p.175. But according to Candra-caru, Korcoong-sattra coll.,f.12(b), Dui Mahapurusar Vamsaval, f.5(b), Kujj-sattra coll., and MSS of Puspakanta Deva Goswami and Baputi Nam-lagowai, Visnupati was the son of Jambavatii.

68 Dvarika,v.2860.
cruel behaviour. Revati first camped at the Namati-sattra where Kanakalata joined her at the time of Mughal invasion. Thereafter Revati made her way to the Visnupur-sattra and settled there. Visnupati's descendants Gopalanarayana and Madhavacarana became the Adhikars of the Visnupur and the Ghilajari sattras respectively.

69 Dvarikā, vv. 2796-2797, 2801.
70 Dvarikā, vv. 2816-2818.
71 Dvarikā, vv. 2829-2832.
III. DĪGHALĪ-SATTRA

We have no sufficient materials for the study of the two other principal sattras, viz., Dīghalī and Cāmaguri. The Narowā and the Kowāmarā groups of sattras have their numerous records and documents besides a good number of biographies of their own. But the Dīghalī and the Cāmaguri groups of sattras have no such biographies or Vamsāvalīs. It has been already noted that Niraṅjana was the son-in-law of Puruṣottama Thākur. From Bhāt-nākhāṭī Āī, four sons, Cakrapāṇi, Sārāṅgapaṇi, Gadāpāṇi and Padmapāṇi were born to Niraṅjana. The first two sons managed to secure royal patronage from the Āhom king Cakradhūvājasimha (1663-1669 A.D.). Their sattras, not having the slightest trace of Saṅkara's blood came to be known as 'gābharugiri-sattra', 'establishments made by the husband of a daughter of the family'.

According to Dvārika, Niraṅjana was given 'nirmālī' (Sanskrit: nirmālya) by the twelve apostles in

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72 Reproduced from SHT., p.152.
73 v.2567.
1623 A.D. But his statements regarding the second wife of Nirañjana\textsuperscript{74} is somewhat contradictory to the account supplied by other writers. It is narrated in some of the biographical literature of this group of satras that Nirañjana administered initiation to the Āhom king Udayāditya (1670-1672 A.D.)\textsuperscript{75} and identified Ramākānta and Anantarāya as grandsons of Sāṅkaradeva to the king.\textsuperscript{76}

Of the four sons of Nirañjana, Cakrapāṇi established the Cāmaguri-sattra; Sarangapāṇi built his sattra near the Dīghalī-bil and hence his sattra came to be known as the Dīghalī-sattra.\textsuperscript{77} It is claimed that the above two brothers received patronage from Cakradhvajasimha to build their sattras. The third son Gadāpāṇi founded a sattra in the village Carāikhola\textsuperscript{78} or Carāikhoroṅg

\textsuperscript{74} vv.2572-2573, states that Nirañjana married Candrapriyā, daughter of Bejiyā Bhūnā, for a second time and the above four sons were born to her.

\textsuperscript{75} Santamālā, v.1332; According to Guru Sausthava, Cakrapāṇi administered initiation to Udayāditya in 1670 A.D., whereas Gait, p.290, states that the king was a disciple of the Ahatguri-sattra.

\textsuperscript{76} Santamālā, vv.1332-1336.

\textsuperscript{77} Dvārika, v.2578.

\textsuperscript{78} Dvārika, v.2579.
and so his sattra came to be known after the name of the village. Dvārikā informs that the youngest son Padmapāni established the Bhogbārī-sattra, but according to the Prācin Kāmarūpya Kāvastha-samājār Itivṛtta, Padmapāni had no offspring, and in the genealogical table it is shown that the Bhogbārī-sattra was established by Vajrapāṇi, son of Sārāŋgapaṇi. The Diṅghalī group of sattras, therefore, include the Bhogbārī sub-group. To this, the Carāikholā sub-group may also be added. Sattras originating from Indrajit Caudhārī, who married Puruṣottama's daughter Ananta-priyā, may be counted in a separate sub-group. Indrajit is reported to have written a biography of Śaṅkara-deva in prose. We have only four sattras originating from the line of Indrajit; they are - (1) Hātīmarā, (2) Kudhimarā, (3) Čepetimarā, and (4) Ghariyāle-khowā.

79 v.2578.
80 Māki., p.150.
81 op.cit.
It is noteworthy that Sarangapāṇi's great-grandson Bhadraçāru, who was Anantarāya's grandson from his daughter Mitraçvṛndā, composed Ananta Carita a biography of his maternal grandfather Anantarāya of the Kowāmarā-sattra. Bhadraçāru's father Satānanda married Mitraçvṛndā, daughter of Anantarāya Atā from his first wife Devahuti, From Sarangapāṇi's second son Vajrapāṇi, who was the father of Satānanda and grand father of Bhadraçāru, the Bhogbārī-sattra has grown.

The Dīghalī and the Cāmaguri-sattras were given equal honour and position with that of the Narowā and the Kowāmarā-sattras. It is narrated that Narowā, Kowāmarā, Viṣṇupur and Dīghalī sattras were given equal seats in the congregation of the religious heads which was organised by Rudrasimha (1696–1714 A.D.) at Viśvanātha.

This family is the smallest one having only its three sattras at present.

82 Dvārika, vv. 2945–2949.
IV. CĀMAGURI-SATTRA

Of the four main sattras of the Puruṣa Samhāti, one is the Cāmaguri-sattra. Like the Dīghalī-sattra, it has come into existence after the establishment of the two other principal sattras, viz., Narowā and Kowāmarā. The founder of the Cāmaguri-sattra is Cakrapāṇi, the eldest son of Niraṅjana. It is said that Cakrapāṇi built his sattra in the river Mājulī island with the royal help, where there were many 'Cāma' (Artocarpus chaptasha) trees. He is said to have kept Śaṅkaradeva's brass made footwear, which was preserved by Puruṣottama's wife Lakṣmī. It is stated in some biographical works that Cakrapāṇi initiated the king Cakradhvajāsimha. Gait simply informs that 'the king showed great reverence to Banamāli Gosain'. According to the Asam Buraŋji, Niraṅjana

83 Dvārikā ,v.2577; also Guru Sausthava.
84 Dvārikā ,v.2576.
85 Pavitra Asam, pp.63-64.
86 Gait,p.290; according to Pavitra Asam, P.K.K.,p.113,and Guru Sausthava, Udayaditya was a disciple of Cakrapāṇi.
87 S.K.Dutta (ed.): Gauhati,1938,p.29.
chanted benedictory words to Cakradhvajasimha (1663-1670 A.D.) at Viśvanātha and died after twenty days. It must, therefore, be before 1668 A.D., when Cakradhvajasimha died.

The number sattras of this group are very few; only three sattras are there at present. Of these, two in the river Mājulī island and the other is situated at Kaliyābar in the present district, Nowgong. The Camaguri and the Narowā Gosāis are reported to have helped some princes of their choice to establish them in the throne during the period of princes' revolt. 88 Once Cakrapāṇi had to go underground and took shelter at the Cinātalī-sattra of Govinda Ātai, where the former met Kanakalatā. There Anantarāya, who was then nine years old, was given the sacred thread by Cakrapāṇi. 89 Cakradhvajasimha made necessary arrangements for Cakrapāṇi's marriage with a Kāyastha girl.

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88 S.K. Bhuyan: Kowār Vidroh, intro.
89 Dvārikā, vv. 2877–2879.
As already stated, Purusottama's wife Laksmi kept the brass made footwear of Sankaradeva secretly after the death of her husband, and from her, it came to Cakrapani's possession. One piece of the pair was taken to the Kaliyabar Camaguri-sattra by Visnudeva, grandson of Cakrapani, when he came from Majuli and established a new sattra there. One Bodhacandra alias Balabhadradeva of the Camaguri-sattra was taken to Koc Behar by Balacandra Baruwa and the former's descendants are still living there.