A. Holy Places of Buddhism:

General Introduction:

Buddhism is in fact an offshoot of Hinduism, which was propagated by the Great Buddha in the 6th century B.C. This period is a landmark in the Indian history, which left great religious influence upon the society. Buddhism originally was a purely ethical concept without formal worship of any god head, even Lord Buddha himself. But gradually there occurred great changes, and what is more the Buddha himself came to be regarded as God itself. As a result of it, temple was constructed and images of Buddhas were installed and worshipped as in Hinduism. According to Buddhism "the final destiny of men is the attainment of Nirvana, a state of spiritual freedom and perfection."¹ Buddhism believes in the doctrine of universal salvation. "It is out and out a man centred religion, totally Humanistic in its outlook approach and aim."²

1. Tiwari, K. N., *Comparative Religion*, p. 49
2. Tiwari, K. N., *ibid*, p. 45
Buddhism never played a vital role in Assam. Only a small sections of the people came to be considered as the followers of Buddhism. In Assam the extent of the prevalence of Buddhism is a matter of great controversy. There are evidence of both archaeological and literary sources to prove that some amount Buddhism flourished in ancient Assam. According to a traditional account, current in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and Assam, the Mahāparinirvāṇa of the Buddha took place in western Assam, in Suālkuchi or somewhere near the Haygrīva Mādhava temple at Hājo. According to another tradition, the old shrine at Hājo was a great chaitya, built over the relics of the Buddha’s body.

“The prevalence of the faith of Buddha is supported by the existing ruins of temples and icons of the Buddha. Among the remains, we find traces of Buddhist temples at Hājo, Nilāchal, Singri and Tezpur. It is likely that some Hindu temples were built on the sites of and with the materials of old Buddhist shrines.”

Though a few images of Buddha have been found in the land. These, however, seem to have been imported from the neighbouring region, where Buddhism was a flourishing and popular religion. It may happen that some traders have brought the images or icons of Buddha to Assam. In fact, in the early

medieval period Brāhmanical religion and Tāntricism had already occupied the place in the mind of the people, so Buddhism never had a strong foundation in Assam.

Both the Indian and Tibetan sources show that the later Buddhism in the form of Vajrāyāna prevailed in Assam. It is a fact that Vajrāyāna form of Tāntric Buddhism developed as a result of the incorporation of Śakti worship into Mahāyāna" form. 4 5 According to K. L. Barua, during the reign of Ratnapāla and his successors, (11th to 12th century A.D) Kāmarūpa, became one of the centres of Vajrāyāna and Tāntric Buddhism was not unknown in ancient Assam. Relying on a Tibetan source, Barua has identified Ratnapāla, of the Pāla dynasty a Vajrāyāni Buddhist king with Ratnapāla of Pāla dynasty of ancient Assam. 5

Taranāth, the Tibetan historian in his History of Buddhism / (1688 AD) refers to the introduction and prevalence of Buddhism in Assam in a later period. According to him, Buddhist teacher Dhitika converted the people of Kāmarūpa from Sun worship to Buddhism. Again from different relevent sources it appears that most of the "followers of Vajrāyāna and Siddhas were associated with the greater Kāmarūpa region and specially the Pāla line of

kings who had not only patronised the system but also converted themselves as Siddhas to attain the status of preceptors.6

The demographical chart of Dhubri district (Ref. in chapter II) shows that Buddhism also influenced the people of this locality to some extent, though remains of temple had not yet been located so far. The prevalence of Buddhist faith is also supported by the existing remains and icons of Buddha which are found in erstwhile undivided Goalpara district. The votive stupas lying on Pañcharanta and Śrī-Surya-pāhār outwardly seem to be Buddhist relics in nature. They are supposed to be the abode of meditation, which are locally known as ghopa or caves. But they are silent about their maker or the time of the making. A small number of Buddhist icons were discovered at Barbhitā near Pāglātek in Goalpara district. Among which two icons have been preserved at the Assam State Museum, Guwahati. The Directorate of Archaeology explored evidence of terracotta Buddha stupa at Barbhitā village near Pāglātek, about 20 Km. west of Goalpara town. The terracotta stupa-relics bear horizontally laid moulded reliefs of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśa mudrā, each embossed in an oval shaped depression. This apart, evidence of other ornamental designs, human figures, floral motifs have been found in the site. It appears

that a wave of Buddhism came from Bihār via Nālandā, West Bengal, Bāṅglādesh, Western Assam, Meghālayā and Tripurā which passed on to the south east Asian countries of Burma, Thailand and other islands in the remote past.\(^7\)

Again, on the South bank of the Brahmaputra river near the “Burā- Burī-thān of Jaleswar, one site is known to have a Buddhist temple. A section of the local scholars belief that the relics of Buddhist period are to be found if we conduct archaeological excavation at this site. It may throw some new light on the extent of the influence of the Buddhist faith in this region.

Another Buddhist stupa, recently discovered at Bhāitbārī near Phulbarī indicates that this area was not in isolation in the past.

The impact of Buddhism in the life of the people and society can be realised after after analytical study of the references which are at our disposal. According to some scholars the term Dharma mentioned in the Copper Plate inscriptions of Dharmapāla, of Pāla dynasty is nothing but a reference to Baudhā vajrayāna (Tantric Buddhism). In this connection, it is obvious that the Sahajiyā (Sahajoyāna) system is closely associated with Tantricism. The people of Bairāgī communities belong to sahajiyā

cult in this locality. Vajräjäna or Buddhist täntricism is described by Winterniz as a queer mixture of monastic philosophy, magic and erotics with a small admixture of Buddhist ideas."

According to historians like Gunabhiram Barua, the so called Kaivarta (Firsherman / Dom) community was originally the followers of Buddhism. That the territory of Bhima continued up to the western border of undivided Goalpara district is mentioned in the Koch Behärer Itihas. According to another source of information Läusena the army Chief of “Mahipäla, with his naval army (Kaivarta) crossed the Brahmaputra river at the junction of Dhubri” and by which they entered the Goalpara district (Undivided) and used to live in this locality, Probably this Kaivarta community (fisherman) is responsible for introducing the songs of Kāti-pūja (Kärtikeya worship) which is very closely connected and popular among the Local Räjbañšhi community. Though Kärtikeya is considered a minor god in Brahmanical pantheon, it plays a vital role in the socio religious life of the people of Dhubri district.

Again, it is found that during the Päla period, Gorakšanätha Panthi propagated Buddhism and the related songs of Gorakšnätha, Mainämätì; Bash-pūjä; Sonäräy, Hüdüm, Kāti etc.

were composed and practised in this region prior to the Koch rule. References to Muslim people are found in these songs as participants. The war between the Musalman people and Sonārāy is also mentioned in the songs.

In the north east corner of Pāglā-bābā-thān in Chāndardihāgā hill, in Dhubri district, one Buddhist icon (Tārā?) is worshipped as Lakṣmī by the local people.

Present Buddhist population in Goalpara and Phulbari regions of Gāro hills may be traced out in the Census Report of 2001. The report throws light on the fact that some followers of the Buddhism are still existing in undivided Goalpara district and Gāro hills areas. They are inhabiting in the areas centering round Sāṅkarpāra, Haldibārī, Rājabālā, Bāṅgal-kātā, Shejan Nagar,(Shyam Nagar) Bhelbhelā, Chibirāṅg etc. and are called Mān. The villages are also known as Mān-gāon. The original home of these Mān people is British Burma, and were of originally mongoloid origin. They migrated from Burma to Assam in c 16th to 17th cen. A.D. Gradually, they have lost their own identity and began to speak Assamese and Bengali languages. The women folk used to wear hand made Dakhanā and Mekhelā along with rings and bangles. Sometimes men are also seem to wear bangles. They use to bury the dead body and after seven days observe the
śrāddha rituals which is to be performed with the guidance of a Buddhist monk by paying him some honorarium.  

The inhabitants of these small settlement areas in Goalpara and Gāro hills, have almost lost their original identity, their old beliefs and customs, but still they believe that they are the deciple of Godmā (Gautama).

According to Dr. D. N. Mazumder the places of worship of Buddhism are found mainly in Gāro hills district. Two Buddhist vihāras are located at Haldibari and Shyam Nagar areas. Buddhist monks generally come from Burma every year for religious propagation. Vihāras are found to have been built very recently.  

B. JAINISM

Jainism, like Buddhism, grew as a reaction to the tyrannical oppression of the Brāhmaṇas and corruption in the Hindu temples. Lord Mahāvīra is generally regarded as the founder of Jainism. But Jainas believe that their religion flourished by the contributions of twenty four Tīrthāṅkars (prophets). Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra are the twenty third and the twenty forth Tīrthāṅkaras, respectively. Jainism believe in all the chief Hindu doctrines of karma, rebirth,

10. Roy Barman, B. K., *Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Hills of North east India.*
bondage and liberation.\textsuperscript{12}

In the Jain temples, the idols of Tīrthaṅkars are worshipped. Different temples are constructed in the name of different Tīrthaṅkara where the Mūl-nāyaka's Pratimā (the Tīrthaṅkara in whose name the temple is constructed) is the main deity of worship and his idol should not be moved from the altar at any cost. In the temple all idols of the different Tīrthaṅkaras are worshipped along with the main deity.

Daily worship is done in Jain temples with aṣṭa-dravya (Eight items) like jala, chandana, akshata, puspa, naivedya deepa, dhūpa, phala. It is very surprising that in case of Jaina faith only a very few priests are available for temple services. The priests do not always belong to the monk category, but belong to the laity who adopt the temple service as their means of livelihood. Of course, they neither preach nor teach, they simply perform the rites in the proper way.

Generally, idols of Jain are made of marbles, aṣṭadātu and copper etc.

Like Lord Buddha, Lord Mahāvīra also is treated more or less as God by the Jains. There are Jain temples at many places with the statues of Mahāvīra inside them, and the Jains pay their

\textsuperscript{12} Tiwari, K. N., \textit{Comparative Religion}. p.72
devotion and respect to it in many ways. It is observed that Mahāvīra is prayed and worshipped as a religious Guru, but not as a supreme deity.

The Jains are divided into two major sects - the Digambara and Śvetāmbara.

Relics of Jain faith was unknown to Assam prior to the findings of Śrī-Śuryapāhār. It is a fact that Jainism was not accepted by the people of Kāmarūpa. Because, Hinduism was the principle religion of the land. The findings of Śrī-Śuryapāhār prove that Jainism was also prevalent in this region to some extent. Two rock cut images which have been identified as Rśabhanātha and Neminātha, the two Jain Tīrthāṅkaras, by Prof. S. K. Saraswati.¹³

According to the survey report of Archaeological Survey of India within the cavern locally, called Vyāsārāma, are two roughly sketched figures of jain Tīrthāṅkaras (one being Rśabhanātha ) and a Gaṇeśa on the wall. By their side and also on a second wall are found a short inscription in the eighteenth century characters.

The population of Jain community is increasing day by day and a few Jain temples are being constructed gradually in the Dhubri district. But all of them are of recent origin.

In Dhubri town, besides the Jain temples, one Terāpanthī

¹³. Prakash (Assamese monthly), April 1977, p. 47
organisation is very active in their religious preachings.

Before the foundation of the Jain temples in the locality, the people belonging to Jain faith used to visit Hanuman Mandir to offer puja. There are a few Hanuman Mandira still located at Gauripur, Bilasipara and other places of Dhubri district.

C. ŚIKHISM

Śikhism is one of the latest religious beliefs of the world. It has originated on the Indian soil and flourished in most part on this soil itself. Although Guru Nānaka is regarded as the founder of Śikh religion, the whole Śikhism was not entirely his contribution. Guru Nānak was followed by a chain of nine Gurus, the last of whom was Guru Govind Singh. Śikhism as a religion took shape under the influence of all these Gurus. Besides Guru Nānak, Guru Arjun and Guru Govind Singh played epoch making role in shaping Śikhism in its present form.

The Śikhs, literally mean the disciples, are a body which was founded in India by the great religious teacher Nānaka (c 1469-1538 A.D.) who himself was a follower of Kabir. The rise of Śikhism is seen by many as a protest against both Hinduism and Islām. Nānak, the founder Guru (teacher) of Śikhism, is reported
to have said neither of the Veda nor the Ketāb (the Quaran) know the mystery. Although Şikhism is influenced by both Hindu and Islamic ideas and beliefs, it is still nearer to Hinduism than to Islam.14

The rise of Şikh population in Assam is not a recent phenomena. The visit of Şikh Gurus in Assam in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and those of the Şikh soldiers in the eighteenth century gradually contributed towards strengthening and propagation of the Şikh religion in Assam, which contributed to the gradual growth of the Şikh population in this region. Like immigrant Muslims Şiks too were assimilated.

According to T. Sing, Guru Nānaka visited Rangamati Jogighopa, Goalpara and stayed for sometimes at the Kāmākhyā temple to deliver the message of God to the chief priest of Kāmākhyā, the document of which is still preserved by the successors of the said priest.15

Though, it is seen that the Şiks are very few in number in the demographical chart of Dhubri district, they play a vital role in the religious history of the district. The founder of Şikhism Guru Nānaka said to has visited Dhubri and rested for some days,

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and this has made this locality sacred and glorious.

According to Sikh chronicles, it is learnt that Ramsingh, the noted Rajput General of Aurangzeb, led the expedition against the Ahom king Chakradhaj Singh in 1667 A.D. Again, a section of Sikh desciples of Guru Tegbāhādur settled at Dhubri and Goalpara in 1670s after the Guru left Assam. This section of Sikhs have come to be known as Damdamā Sikh (Damdamiyā). The word Damdamiyā perhaps came from Dumdumiyās or Dundiās. According Dr. S. K. Bhuyān "Śikh soldiers who fought against the Ahom in the 18th century A.D. were called Dumdumiā or Dundiās Probably because of the fact that Sikhs had their head quarter at Dhubri which known as Gurudwara Damdamā Sāhib originally founded by Guru Tegbahadur during his visit to Dhubri." On the other hand Damdamā Sahib means visiting places of Guru Nānaka. When Raja Ramsingh and Tegbahadur (9th Sikh Guru) reached Dhubri they became charmed by the scenic beauty of this locality and realised that the founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Nānaka, had already visited the place and rendered all the soldiers to bring five shied- fulls of earth to raise a mound in memory of the founder of Śikh religion on the top of the hillock situated on the bank of the river Brahmaputra. The

16. Bhuyān, S. K., Anglo Assamese Relations., p. 431
soldiers accomplished the task in a few hours. Guru Tegbāhādur then had a pavilion erected on the top of the mound. This place has now come to be known as Gurudwara Damdamā Sahib. Actually the “place of worship” of the Sikh religion is known as Gurudwara. Gurudwara Damdamā has now became a multistoried building replacing the original mound erected by Guru Tegbāhādur and His disciples.

Another theory regarding the Śikh population of Dhubri, based on the “local belief of West Bengal”, holds the view that Selim or Jahangir came to Dhubri with his army to attack the palace of Raja Pratāpāditya and wanted to marry his beautiful queen Vijayā Sundarī, the princes of Ceylon. But Vijayā Sundarī was compelled to commit suicide at this incident. After this incident, Akbar, the great, sent a group of Śikh soldiers to control his son Selim or zahangir. As a result of it, a small number of Śikh soldiers stayed at Patamāri area of Dhubri district permanently (c. 14th century A.D.) In course of time another Śikh personality Tekht Singh came to Dhubri and settled at Chaitamari village near Patamāri and constructed Śikh Bamidwar. According to another local story; Śikh Gurudwar of Dhubri was constructed

during the time of Colonel Captain Mill in 1921, who married a Sikh (Panjabi) lady.

Among the Gurudwaras of the state, the one at the south east corner of Dhubri is known for its antiquity. The birth and death anniversaries of Guru Nanak and his successors are observed here annually with due solemnity and honour. The martyr day is celebrated as Sahidi-Parav by the devotees. In the month of November every year, the devotees assembled at Dhubri Gurudwara from different parts of the country to pay homage and remember their respected Guru Tegbāhādur. In this occasion one fair known as Sikh Melā is also organised near the Gurudwara campus, and enjoyed by all communities of people irrespective of their caste and creed. This melā generally continues upto three days for the public of Dhubri and neighbouring area.

Again, the Gurudwara also observes the birthdays of Nānaka and Guru Govind Singh, and the day of Guru Granth-prakās in the campus with chanting the Akhaṇḍapātha and other religious rituals.

In every Gurudwara, the Sikh religious scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, is installed. There is no provision for appointing priest (priest-hood) in Sikh religion. The person who perform the daily rituals of Gurudwara is called Granthī. Halua with pure
Ghee is prepared and offered to the devotees as prasāda. Every day prayer is offered three times in Gurudwara. The singers of Kirtanas are known as Rāsi and chantings of Śloka are known as Kirtana. The holy Śikh scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, began with Japji composed by the great reformer and founder of Śikhism Sri Guru Nānak. Japji is the mūlamatra (basic concept) of Śikh religion. The Śikhs celebrates the birth and death anniversaries of their ten Gurus.

Sikh Gurudwar of Dhubri:

It is a five storied (5) specious building situated on the bank of the river Brahmaputra, just adjacent to the circuit house campus of Dhubri town. The building complex is maintained by the Gurudwar Committee. Each storey contains separate arrangement for the religious performances for the Śikh devotees. The plinth area is made of marble stone and wooden works of the building are done with intricate designs with excellent workmanship. Gumbuz of the building contains a kalsī (pitchar) as a symbol of purity. On the top floor of the building the Guru Granth Sahib is installed and the Granthis are engaged there for reciting the religious scripture for the devotees. A number of paintings and photographs of Śikh Gurus are displayed on the walls of the room.
The Scenic beauty of the Gurudwar site is really very much charming. It attracts one and all whoever visit this holy shrine. From the top floor of the building, the whole Dhubri town can be seen in a microcopc view. One two storeyed Guest house \((yatri\ niw\dot{a}\dot{s})\) is attached to the Gurudwar complex where people of any caste may stay with free food and lodging (for three days only) by observing certain rules and regulations prescribed by the Gurudwar Pravandhak Committee of Dhubri.

In the year 1993, during the time of the reconstruction of the new building, a number of stone relics were unearthed in the base level of the old temple. Some of these stone pieces contain sculptural designs similar to those of Brahmamical pantheon. Considering this point, it may be ascertained that prior to the construction of the Gurudwars earlier a Hindu temple was in existence in the same campus.

D. Tribal Religion:

General Introduction:

The tribals of Assam are basically Hindu by religion. It is a fact that Hinduism is a product of many cultural groups. It may be seen that though the tribal religions are mainly based on beliefs in supernatural beings and supernatural power, yet Hindu

impact is seen in the diverse beliefs and rituals prevalent among the various tribes of this region. In spite of this, the Hindu religious system could not motivate them to give up their own faith and practices completely. It is observed that the tribal deities have got mixed up with the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. On the other hand, tribal gods and goddesses have been transformed and identified with different Hindu gods and goddesses. Thus the Bođo-Kacharies identify their chief deity, Bāthou with Śiva. Similarly the female domestic deity, Māināo is identified with Pārvatī or Dūrgā or Kāmākhya. “The tribesmen gradually began to absorb themselves into the Hindu system through influence, proselytization and conversion. The process began perhaps one or two centuries before Christ with the process of Saṅskṛtization of the existing names of place and rivers throughout the North-east region and gained momentum in the 7th century A.D. under the Hinduised kings.”


Though the tribal people of this region have their own religious pantheon, they have no traditional type of shrines for religious purposes. The Hindu shrines dedicated to Burā-Buri, Mahāmāyā Kālī, Kāmākhya are also the places of worship of the tribal community. Only the
belief and the way of worship may be different to some extent. This type of impact also brought some important development in Hinduism. Other religious systems, like Islamism, Christianity etc. have considerable influence on the religious life of the tribal people.

In case of the Bodo tribe, the deities are classified into two categories such as household deities and the village deities. The former is called Nani-Mādai and the other Gāmini Mādai. The former, i.e. Nani-Madai is worshipped inside the house, which the latter is worshipped outside the house, near a sacred grove of trees or bamboos. This type of worship is done collectively by the village people, and is called Garjā by the Bođos of Goalpara region; the place of worship is known as Garjā Shāli. Some other gods are also worshipped as forest gods (vana devatā).

The most important Bođo god is Bāthou, who is represented by a Siju (Euphorbia Splendens) tree and is identified with the Hindu deity Śiva. It is customery that in every Bođo household a Siju plant is worshipped as Śiva who is represented by the cactus shoot. Bođos also worship quite a few gods of Hindu origin. There are also deities like Pīr-saheb and Nabāb Bādsā of Muslim origin.21

The practice of worshipping animal deities is found in the Bodo community. While some Bodo people have a tiger deity called Mausā Rājā or Burā Bāg Rājā. Most of the Bodos worship two other deities, called saṅg Rājā and saṅg Rānī as husband and wife - who preside over wild animals. Offering pūjā to them, ensures plenty of game for the hunter and also the protection of the domestic animals from depredation by wild animals. Reference may be made to the yautha vyāgramūrti collected from Tokrabantha hill, 8 k.m. away from Bilasipara in Dhubri district, now preserved in the Bilasipara police station for public worship.

Rābhā group of peoples are more Hinduised than any other tribal gorups in Dhubri district. It is seen that besides Śaivaitism a section of tribals people follow the Mahāpurūṣiyā Vaiṣṇavism as a guiding principle of their socio-religious life. There are other sections who are the devotees of the goddess Mahāmāyā, a flourishing form of Devi Dūrgā, and worship the deity by offering pūjā in the temple.

Brāhma Dharma was also introduced among the tribal people with the initiative of Gurudeva Kalicharana Brahma. It was accepted initially by the more enlightened section and soon it spread in the undivided Goalpara and the Kāmarūpa district of Assam. The followers of Brāhma Dharma, perform an annual
yajña every year during Mahālayā, Māghī Pūrṇimā and Doḷ Pūrṇimā. They have established some āśrama-type of institution. The followers are abstaining from drinking ricebeer, flesh and meat. It is a fact that a section of the Bodo-Kacharis got assimilated in the Hindu society by the process of Saṅskṛtization, by adopting the Hindu way of life, and claim themselves to the status of Rājbanśī or Kṣatriyas. Many educated Boḍo-Kachārī people accepted Brāhma Dharma to achieve the goal of a higher status, but majority section are in belief of traditional religion. Another section of the tribal people including the Boḍo-Kachārīs, Rābhās, Gāros and Sāṅtals of this region have now embraced Christianity. Christianity has become popular among the tribal people under the banners of different missionaries.

Initially, tribal shrines had no regular houses except for a small open huts. Generally, each deity has an appointed place along the boundary of the open space. Stones are represented as deities instead of any image which they believe different power of gods and goddesses. Normally, propiciation is being done either in forests or river banks of the locality.

The non-idol worshiping tribal people also started gradually to worship images or icons as the representatives of gods and

goddesses as a result of which temple structures are being built in different places of the locality. Simultaneously, they became conscious about preserving their traditional religious beliefs and practices.

IMPORTANT TRIBAL SHRINES OF DHUBRI DISTRICT:
Jornāgrā Thān or Bāmun Thākurer-thān:

This shrine is situated at Jornāgrā village, 13 k.m. away from Šālkochā Dakbangla in Dhubri district. It is a Rābhā populated area just adjacent to Chakrasilā Saṅctuary, a home of endangered species the Golden langoor.

Formerly this shrine was just an open space with thatched and bamboo structure housing different pieces of fine stones having some vermilion (Red sindur) marks. Supposedly, representing certain deities of their faith. From iconographical point of view, these stones have no religious importance. But the local tribal people worship these stones as a spirit of supernatural power of god. They believe that their ancestors or forefathers fought against the enemies and wild animals with the help of those stones as their weapons. So they consider those stones as an “emblem of Victory” of their clan. Different pieces of fine stones are supposed to have represented different deities for worship. Propiciation is normally done in the month of April (Vaiśākha or
Though this shrine is maintained by the Rabha people, a section of other people from Bođo and Kaivarta Communities also visit this shrine and worship the deities with various offerings.

Luṅgāi Śiva-thān :

It is learnt that in North Śālmārā area of the Dhubri district, Luṅgāi-Śiva-pūjā is performed at Bārigāon (Luṅgāi hill) by the Hindu Community since early times. The pūjā is held generally in the month of April. In the hill area Śiva is worshipped in the name of Laṅgā or Laṅgādeva. On the altar of the temple Śiva is placed for worship by the devotees. The origin of the term Laṅgā is used by different authorities as follows; that Mahādeva accepted the worship in naked form, and therefore, his worship came to be known as Laṅgā-pūjā or Laṅgāmār-pūjā. This Laṅga-deva can be identified with the deity Laṅgga mentioned by Martēn who describes as follows: “The most common object of worship is Kāli, but in some parts a deity named Laṅgga which seems peculiar to this division, is much venerated. By the Hindus he is called a God, by the Muslim a saint.”