THE TAI AND THE TAI KINGDOMS:

WITH A FULLER TREATMENT OF THE TAI-AHOM KINGDOM IN THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY

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To
THE MEMORY
OF
DR. **BANIKANTA KAKATI**
WHOSE INSPIRING ADVICE
AND GUIDANCE ENABLED
ME TO UNDERTAKE
THIS WORK

ABBREVIATIONS

AB..Ahom Buranji (Tr. by G. C. Barua).

DAB..Deodhai Asam Buranji.

ACA or
PAB..The Ancient Chronicles of Assam or Purani Assam Buranji.

AB-'SMJC'..Assam Buranji—'Shri Shri Svarganarayandev Maharajar Janma Charitra'.

KB..Kachari Buranji.

JB..Jayantia Buranji.

TB..Tungkhungia Buranji.

BBB..Banhgarhia Bura Gohainr Buranji.

BG..Bāhāristān-i-Ghaybi.

SSB..Satsari Assam Buranji.

BVR..Buranji-viveka-ratna.

K.T.P...Kasi Nath Tamuli Phukan.

H.S.B...Harakanta Sarma-Barua.

GUBSS..Gazetteer of Upper Burma and Shan States.

JBRS..Journal of the Burma Research Society.

BEFE-O..Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient.

JSS..Journal of the Siam Society.

JAOS..Journal of the American Oriental Society.

JASB..Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

JBORS..Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Gauhati University decided to publish Dr. Padmeswar Gogoi's research work 'The Tai and the Tai Kingdoms' under the scheme of 'Publication of Research Works including Doctoral theses' sponsored by the University Grants Commission. Dr. Gogoi's work was approved by this University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (D. Phil.) in 1961. Owing to various difficulties the printing of the book could not be taken up earlier than September 1966.

We are grateful to the University Grants Commission for their financial aid without which the printing of this scholarly work would not have been possible.

Messrs. Lakshmi Printing Press of Gauhati deserves our thanks for conducting this complicated work through the press.

The publishers will be happy if this work is received with the appreciation it deserves.

15 October 1968

Chidananda Das
Registrar,
Gauhati University

PREFACE

The book emerged from an article entitled 'Westward Migration of the Tai' written in 1950 for the Gauhati University Journal. At the suggestion of the late Dr. Banikanta Kakati, the then Dean of the Faculty of Arts, the subject-matter of the article was later developed into a doctoral thesis for submission to the University of Gauhati. It was approved by the University and the degree of D. Phil. was awarded to the author in 1961. The original title of the thesis was 'The Tai and the Tai Kingdom in Assam—a political study'. For publication the title was changed to *The Tai and the Tai Kingdoms* (with a fuller treatment of the Tai-Ahom Kingdom in the Brahmaputra Valley), so as to make it conform to the accounts given of the Tai Kingdoms of South-east Asia, Assam and China in the work In particular, it contains a fairly exhaustive treatment of the history and politics of the mediaeval period of Assam including materials as yet untouched. The period covers more than six hundred years from the thirteenth to the early decades of the nineteenth century A.D.

Literature on the history and civilization of the great Tai race in the major European languages is far from adequate to give a complete and connected picture of the race from its ancient to modern times. However, fragmentary materials of great historical value have been brought out from time to time by European, American and Thai scholars in their various research journals partly from original literary and archaeological sources and partly from field studies.

Before the advent of the Europeans as colonial powers and recent extension of American sphere of influence to the South-east Asian countries Tai was the dominant language of Thailand (Siam), Upper Burma, Laos and South-west China, particularly Yün-nān, and it was also the Court language of Assam for centuries. There were also large sections of population in North Vietnam and Hainān speaking Tai or mixed Tai. Now the Tai or Thai language and culture seem to have lost their old glory and richness except in Thailand and Laos, the two independent countries. As known from extant literature the Tai people were a literate race from ancient times, but vast masses of precious records relating to the history and culture of the race were destroyed, first, under Chinese imperialism as early as the third century B.C., second, during the Thai-Burmese wars, Ayuthia being the harrowing scene of devastation in 1767 and, third, during the Moamaria depredations and the Burmese invasions of Assam in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth

century. In consequence of these major disasters there have occurred almost irreparable lacunae and dark periods in the history of the race. Foreign and local workers in this field of study have been trying to fill them up with whatever subsequent writings and traditions of each branch of the race say about them. Thus books have been written by modern scholars and missionaries with materials available within their territorially limited range of research in each country. These books cover the story of the origin, development, migrations and ramifications of the race under different names more or less authenticated as well as the political and cultural achievements of the main branches of it, namely, the Tai or Thai, the Laos, the Shans and the Ahoms producing their separate histories in their separate developments in the separate regions of South-east Asia and Assam.

But no book is available giving a fairly complete and connected history of the race as a whole. The author in this book is making a very modest attempt in that direction and in it the cultural aspect is left out, except where it is incidentally called for, to be dealt with separately.

I express my debt of gratitude to H.H. Prince Dhaninivat Kromamün Bidyalabh, an erudite scholar and the then President of the Siam Society of Thailand, for rendering me his generous help by offering certain rare and valuable portions of the Journal of Siam Society in the preparation of my work. I am particularly grateful to Phya Anuman Rajadhon, D. Litt. (Honoris Causa), Chulalongkorn University, one of the greatest living scholars of Thailand and a prolific writer on varied subjects, for giving me many suggestions and clarifications of difficult questions of Tai history.

I acknowledge my debt to Shri P.C. Brahma, M.A., for interpreting for me certain words of Boḍo origin. I am very thankful to Shri Dhaneswar Saikia, now a field officer o. the Life Insurance Corporation of India, who spared no pains to prepare the typed copies of my thesis and also to Shri Anil Bargohain, M. Sc. for helping me in preparing the Index.

I am deeply grateful to the University Grants Commission of India for the financial assistance made available for the publication of this work, and to the authorities of the University of Gauhati for publishing the book.

RAJBARI,
GAUHATI-1,
26th August, 1968

P. GOGOI

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P. GOGOI

CHAPTER I

THE TAI : THEIR ORIGIN AND BRANCHES

The 'Tai' is a generic name denoting a great branch of the Mongoloid population of Asia. The Tai are now mainly concentrated in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The present habitat of the Tai people extends from Assam in the west to Kwangsi and Hainan in the east and from the interior of Yün-nān in the north to the southernmost extremity of Thailand (Siam) in the south.

Wherever they have spread the Tai have acquired local appellations. In the four major areas of East Asia, namely, Burma, Thailand (Siam), French Indo-China and Yün-nān they are known respectively as the Shan, Siamese, Lao and Pai. The Tai groups and sub-groups in this vast region are known by innumerable other local names which, at times, tend to obscure their racial identity. There are many instances of the same groups being named differently by different peoples and at different historical periods. But the members of this great race, to whatever local groups they may belong, call themselves Tai.

Only in southern and central Siam the aspirated form 'Thai' ('free') is used. 'Chai', a variant of 'Tai', is prevalent among the Laos. The local peoples generally know the Tai by their local names. The Assam branch of the Tai, for instance, that ruled for about six hundred years (A.D. 1228-1826) in the Brahmaputra Valley, is known by its local name 'Ahom'. The other smaller groups of Tai people that came to Assam during a later period are known by their various local names, such as the Hkamti, the Hpaké or Phakeal as the Assamese-speaking people call them, the Turong (or Tai-rung), the Sham, the Īton or Ītonia, the Hkamyang and the Norā.[1] But when asked for their racial identity they introduce

1. These people are called Norā only by the local Assamese-Speaking people. The Norās are called by the Tai 'Mān-Nām' (*mān*, village, *nām*, waters, river), meaning lowland or river-side dwellers. Another section is called 'Mān-Noi' (*noi*, highland) meaning highland dwellers.

themselves as Tai-Hkamti, Tai-Hpaké, Tai-Turong and so on. Unlike the Hinduised Ahom these later immigrants still preserve their racial habits and customs. They are to-day mostly scattered in the backward areas of Eastern Assam. They are almost all Buddhists.

Sir George Scott, a well-known authority on the Shans, gives an exhaustive list of Tai communities as known by their local names.[1a] He also points out that "the branches which are indisputably Tai are known by a bewildering variety of names, which serve to conceal their identity".

The Tai are a very ancient race and like other such races their origin is shrouded in obscurity. All that is said about their origin and development in the early period by modern writers is largely based on legendary accounts contained in ancient books. Hence these writers, in attempting to construct an historical narrative of the early periods of this race out of the available data in fragments and fables, have had to resort to conjectures and interpretations on many points. One of the most eminent scholars in this field, Professor M. Terrien de Lacouperie, from his close study of the Chinese records, asserts that "the cradle of the Shan race was in the Kiulung mountains, north of Setchuen and south of Shensi, in China Proper.[2] Probably the progenitors of this race, being driven by the hardships of the semi-desert North in the regions about Mongolia, migrated to the south at an early period following the courses of the Yellow River. Dr. B. Laufer, Curator of Anthropology, Field Columbian Museum, Chicago, traces that "the early home of the peoples of eastern Asia was in the Upper reaches of the Hoang-ho or Yellow River of China, and that from this centre the Tibetans migrated westward; the early tribes of Indo-China, southward; and the Chinese southeastward."[3] According to Max Müller the original seat of the Tai or Siamese branch of the Indo-Chinese peoples, called Shan by the Burmese, was in Central Asia and it was f om that area that these people were the first to migrate to-

1a. "such as Tai, Htai, Pai-i, Moi, Muong, Tho or Do, Hkamti, with a very much greater number of local names, assumed by themselves or given them by their neighbours, such as Lao, Law, Hkun, Lu, Tai-long, Tai-noi, Tai-nö, Tai-man Tai-mao, Tai-hké, Tai-loi, Pu-tai, Pu-nong (or Nung), Pu-man, Pu-jü, Pu-chei, Pu-en, Pu-yioi, Pu-sui, P'o, Pa, Shui Han, or Hua Pai-i, Pai-jên, Yu-jên, P'u-man, Pai, Hei, or Hwa T'u-lao, Nung or Lung-jèn, Sha-jên, Hei or Pai Sha-jèn, Minchia, Shui-chia-chung-chia, and many more still more purely local." - George Scott and Hardiman : *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, Part I-Vol. I,* (Rangoon, 1900), pp. 187-8.

2. A.R. Colquhoun : *Amongst the Shans* (London, 1885,) ; Introduction to "The Cradle of the Shan race". p.lv.

3. Dr. Laufer's note to Rev. H.I. Marshall, Jan. 6,1920 referred to by the latter in his book *The Karen People of Burma* (1922, Ohio State University), p.6.

wards the south and settle along the rivers Mekong, Menam, Irrawaddy and Brahmaputra.[4] The history of their migration is a history of long centuries of struggle which they had to carry on both against the Chinese imperial pressure from the north and against the powerful neighbours in the south resulting in a succession of glorious periods of their supremacy in China, Burma, Laos, Assam and Siam down to the modern times.

It has been brought to our notice by recent researches that the Tai were ruling in Central and Eastern China with a comparatively advanced culture long before the formation of the so-called "Chinese race." In fact, the Chinese race is the product of a gradual process of amalgamation of many separate peoples belonging to different races including the Tai.[5] But the real home of the Tai peoples, or rather the region where they developed as a distinct race, had been in South-west China whence, in course of time, under the pressure of the Chinese and of the invading Mongol hordes at a later date, they had to move in successive waves towards the south fanning out along the courses of the great rivers, the Irrawaddy, the Salween, the Menam, the Mekong and even the Brahmaputra consolidating their power over these areas. Thus sprang up, in course of time, numerous Tai States in the extensive river valleys of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, some acknowledging at times the nominal suzerainty of China, Burma or Cambodia, while others developing into independent kingdoms under their powerful potentates. Of the Tai States of earlier periods, particularly those that flourished before the sixth century A. D., systematic history is no longer available ; only the names of some are mentioned in the extant records with scant details in the form of stories.

Explanations so far given by scholars about the origin of the racial name 'Tai', or 'Thai' as pronounced in southern and central Siam, are not conclusive. But the latter word 'Thai', used in the sense of 'free' or the free people, has a history of its own in the traditions of Thailand (Siam). It is said that in the seventh century A. D. a Tai prince, named Phra Ruang, was the ruler of Sangkalok (Svargalok), a principality of Zimmé (Chiengmai). He was a tributary chief under Cambodia, which at that time was supreme in south Indo-China. In A. D. 638 this prince rebelled against the ruler of Zimmé and seized that State overthrowing the suzerainty of Cambodia. He proclaimed himself sovereign of Zimmé and of the Tai people just liberated from the Cambodian yoke, and started the Siamese national era, which dates from A.D. 638.

4. Arthur P. Phayre : *History of Burma* (1883. London), pp. 6-7.

5. W. Eberhard : *History of China* (1950, London), Introduction, xiv.

Bishop Pallegoix is of the opinion that this took place "in the year 1000 of the era of Phra Khodom."[6] Phra Ruang is mentioned in the Siamese Annals as a national hero of the Thai people. But the Phra Ruang Dynasty, so founded, did not last long. It was overthrown during his son's rule by the king of Kiang Tsen.[7]

This appears to be the earlier history of the Phra Ruang Dynasty. But the dynasty is said to have reappeared in the thirteenth century at Sukhodaya (Sukhot'ai) in the person of Sri Indrāditya, who firmly established his dynasty in that State by ousting the Cambodians. Bishop Pallegoix says that after Phra Ruang had freed the country from the Khmers, 'the *Sajam* took the name of *Thai*', which signified "free". This explanation is generally accepted by other scholars who want to explain the origin of the term 'Thai'. Phra Ruang, in this later period, seems to refer to both Indrāditya (ca. 1256-75) and his son, Rāma Khāmheng (ca. 1275-1317), but, as pointed out by Briggs, the name is sometimes applied to other kings of Siam. Phra Ruang (Phra Luang) was probably a patronymic title of the rulers of the dynasty. It is believed that in this case Rāma Khāmheng is certainly meant. If so, the date of the appearance of the form *Thai*, or *Tai*, in the written language, can be placed between A.D. 1292, when the form *Dai* appears in the inscription of this monarch, and A. D. 1317, the probable date of his death. In the context of the events of the earlier history of the Phra Ruang Dynasty the later use of the term *Dai* or *Thai* by Indrāditya or Rāma Khāmheng may be called only as its revival or rather restoration. Sukhodaya was, until its emergence as an independent Thai State, the northern capital of the Cambodian Empire. Thus the application of the term 'Thai' marked the liberation of the Tai people in the Menam Valley from the Cambodian yoke. Further the word had its origion in the Upper Menam Valley, though now it has its currency mainly in southern Siam.

According to some authorities the word 'Tai', as used from ancient times, comes from the Chinese word 'Tā', which means 'great'. Gait has also suggested almost a similar meaning of the word. According to him, 'Tai' means 'glorious' corresponding to Chinese 'celestial'.[8] But it seems improbable that the appellation 'Tai' signifying great or glorious or heaven-born could be of Chinese origin. To the Chinese these

6. Phra=the Buddha, Khodom=Gotama. Cushing : *Grammar of the Shan Language* (Rangoon, 1887), Introduction, p. 3.
7. Holt S. Hallett : "Historical sketch of the Shans" in Colquhoun's *Amongst Shans* (1885), pp. 344-45.
8. *A History of Assam* (Calcutta : 1926), p. 246.

people were 'southern barbarians'. Recently Nai Likhit Hoontrakul[9] of Siam, from his researches in the Chinese sources, has thrown new light on this point. He traces the origin of the racial name 'Tai' to an ancient official title giving certain rights and privileges to its holder. It was Seow-Hao (2nd Emperor : 2596-2513 B. C.), the second son of Hwang-ti, (the first Emperor of China : 2697-2596 B. C.) and uncle of Tuan-yok (3rd Emperor : 2513 - 2435 B. C.), whose descendants received the title of *Tai* or *Tai-Tai* which carries with it the full right to levy duties on the waterways.[10] Emperor Tuan-yok, the grand-son of Hwang-ti, created a Tai family with a hereditary *Tai-Tai* title by conferring the title upon his nephew General Sin-How, who was apparently the grand-son of Seow-Hao. General Sin-How received the title for a victory which he had won over a powerful minister named Kung-Kang, who had led a rebellion against the Emperor with the object of usurping the throne. The title of *Tai* gave Sin-How and his descendants the right to impose on and collect duties from all who used the waterways of the Poon, (or Phen), the earlier name of the Hwang-Ho[11] or Yellow River, which flows through the provinces of Shan-si and Ho-nān. The enjoyment of the *Tai-Tai's* hereditary right is said to have ended with the ascendancy of the Hia Dynasty (2205-1766 B. C.).

Thus the 'Tai' first appeared in the Chinese history in Shan-si and Ho-nān as early as 2515 B. C. The *Tai-Tai* was the only hereditary title of rank enjoyed by the highest aristocracy in ancient China and was regarded "as the first Tai, which led to many subsequent Tai titles, without the heritable rights, but accompanied by its meaning of honour, created in subsequent periods as Choung-Tai (Minister), Chi-Tai (Viceroy), Tung-Tai (Under-Secretary of State), Pu-Tai (Provincial Governor), Git-Tai (Provincial Chancellor), Pan-Tai (Provincial Financier), Tien-Tai (Provincial Commander-in-Chief) and Tao-Tai (Intendent of Circuit or Regional Governor)"[12] "This *Tai* means", says Hoontrakul, "a high stage or tower or a respectable and independent personage in address. The word is highly regarded as meaning freedom and well beloved in the soul of Tai people upto present day".[13] Thus *Tai*, in course of time, came to carry the sense of high or great in position, which necessarily implied possession

9. L. Hoontrakul comes from a prominent Sino-Thai family of Hainanese descent.
10. L. Hoontrakul : *The Historical Records of the Siamese-Chinese Relations* (Bangkok, 1953), p. 13.
11. *Hwang :* Yellow, *Ho :* river.
12. L. Hoontrakul, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.
13. *Ibid*, p. 16.

of great power and hence freedom from political subjection. When Phra Ruang, in the seventh century, used the term 'Thai' to mean the 'free people', he probably did it in this sense of the ancient word *Tai*.

The above history of the word Tai shows that the Tai belong to the race of early Emperors of China. From Hwang-Ti to Shih-Wang-Ti all the early Emperors are called Chinese in the books on China. But modern scholarship appears to reject the idea of the Chinese having ever flourished as an imperial power in the third or even the second millennium B.C. Though both the communities, the Tai and the Chinese, are of common Mongoloid origin and akin to each other, yet recent researches in the archaeology and history of China disclose the startling fact that the Chinese, as such, did not appear on the scene as a great ruling power before the first millennium B.C. In this background the Tai have undoubtedly a claim to greater antiquity in China as a ruling race than the Chinese.

According to Professor Coedés 'Tai' or 'Thai' is synonymous with the name 'Dai'. In the inscription of King Rāma Khāmheng of Sukhot'-ai, dated 1292, which is said to be the first known specimen of Tai writing in Indo-China, the name of the language and the people is represented by symbols, which Coedés, who made the literal translation of the inscription into French, translates as *Dai*.[14] It is further held that 'Dai' was probably the name of the Tai prior to the separation of the three linguistically and ethnologically closely allied groups of the Thai, Kadai and Indonesians somewhere in Yün-nān more than three thousand years ago.[15] But in view of what has been said above about the origin and antiquity of the word Tai, a date more than 4,400 years from now, the word Dai appears to be a later corruption of 'Tai' in certain parts of East Asia. Even to this day the basic word Tai or its aspirated form Thai, and not Dai, is universally used by this race of people to refer to itself everywhere irrespective of their various local names.

Cushing, who worked many years among the Shans, says *Tai* is the regular form and the writers of the Burmese Shan school agree. Briggs says that the French do not seem to agree among themselves on the point. But Maspero and some others seem to accept *Tai* as the generic name of

14. Lawrence Palmer Briggs : "The Appearance and Historical usage of the Terms Tai, Thai, Siamese and Lao" in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 69, No. 2, April-June 1949, p. 62. Also George Coedés, *Recueil des inscriptions du Siam* : 1. Les inscriptions du Sukhodaya 47-8 (Bangkok, 1924).

15. JSS, vol. XL, pt. 1,1952, pp. 75,80 for reference to G. Coedés: *Les langues de l'Indochine*, 1948.

the people, but adopt the aspirated (*T'ai* or *Thai*) form for the name of the language. Bishop Pallegoix, a French missionary who served many years in Siam and wrote a dictionary of the language, explains *Thai* by saying that after Phra Ruang had freed the country from the Khmers, 'the *Sajam* took the name of *Thai*, which signified "free",[16] as already mentioned above. But Briggs points out that this explanation is older than Pallegoix. It may be noted that the term *Thai* was first applied, according to the French authorities, only to the inhabitants of the ancient kingdom of Sukhot'ai, and this was precisely the region to which the terms *Syam Sajam Siem* and *Sien* (*Hsien*), which finally resulted in Siam, were originally applied.[17] Thus the name *Syam* or *Sajam*[18] in Sukhot'ai appears to have preceded the name *Thai*, not *Tai*. The Tai of Sukhot'ai, however, have not left any account of their early history to enable us to solve this question beyond all doubts and more authoritatively.

It is remarkable that the Indonesians of Hai-nan call themselves Hiao in the centre and Dai in the southern part and Li and Lai in the south-western part and these groups are said to speak different dialects which may have sprung originally from the same language. Paul Benedict's researches have led to the discovery that close linguistic affinities exist between the Thai, Kadai and Indonesians.[19] Again 'Doi' or 'Dioi' is said to be another name for 'Dai' and the former might have arisen from the phonetic variation of the latter word. But 'Doi' means a hill or mountain not only in the northern Siamese language but siso in the languages of the northern Tai, such as that of the Ahoms of Assam. The words 'Tai' and 'Doi' mean also companions or comrades in the Ahom language. Erik Seidenfaden is inclined to believe that 'Li', 'Lai' and 'Loi' are but the other forms of 'Day' or 'Dai'. In plenty of cases *Ahom da* becomes *la* in Shan, both being two branches of the same original Tai language. As for instance, Ahom *dai* (thread), *doi* (mountain or hill), *den* (moon), *dao* (star) become respectively *lai*, *loi*, *lun*, and *law* in Shan. Hence the above change from 'Dai' to 'Lai', 'Loi' or 'Li' is quite possible. The distinguished French orientalist M. Paul Mus, after

16. *JACS*. vol. 69, 1949, p. 62 : Mgr. J.B. Pallegoix : *Description du royaume Thai, ou Siam* 2. 64 (Paris, 1854).

17. Briggs : *Ibid*, p. 62.

18. In Tai *y* and *j* are often interchangeable. It is also said that in Malay, the word for 'brown race' is said to be *Sajam* (Pallegoix, 1.5) or Sagam (Anna Leonowens, Romance of the harem 1).

19. Paul Benedict : "Thai, Kadai and Indonesian, a New Alignment in South-east Asia", *American Anthropologist*, *vol.* 44. 1942. ; JSS, (vol XI, Pt. 1, Bangkok, July 1952), PP. 73-75.

a careful examination of the vocabularies prepared by Father Savina[20] says that the 'Dai' or 'Li' language contains many Thai elements. It must also be known that Hai-nan is mentioned by the ancient Chinese writers as the land of the 'barbarian Li people'. Monsieur Bons d'Anty, the consul for France in Canton, who had many opportunities of studying the race, believes that the Li, the inhabitants of the interior of Hainan, are pure Tai.[21] Fr. Savina[22] actually found in the Hai-nan island a Tai community, locally called Ong Beor Bae, with a population of 400,000.

The Shans

The name or rather the title 'Tai' undoubtedly refers to the race whereas the designation 'Shan', said to be of Burmese origin, means probably "Highlanders". But actually the Burmese Shans are the descendants of the ancient Tai -Yai, the Great Tai, and all legends agree on this.[23] The Mon records mention contingents from the Shan States of the mountainous country beyond Burma proper entering and invading Upper Burma. Sometimes they refer to the invaders simply as 'Shans'.[24] It may be noted that the word *Shan* in Chinese means a mountain or highland and to the Burmese the Shans were merely the people, who descended upon the 'plains of Upper Burma from the Shan States or Hill States of the southern Highlands of Yün-nān, a country predominantly of Tai population, particularly the areas adjoining the Northern Shan States of Burma. The Burmese probably referred to these people as Shan after the Chinese *Shand-tse* and *Shan-yen* meaning "highlanders".[25] As re-

20. Published in the *Bulletin de I 'Ecole Francaise d' Extreme-Orient*, vol. XXXI, pp. 103-9 under "Lexique Day Francaise" i.e. a French-Day Dictionary and also a comparative table of the two Day dialects.

21. J. George Scott and Hardiman : *GUBSS*, 1,1. p. 187.

22. The late Revered Father F.N. Savina lived in Hainan for more than four years from 1924 to 1928 and travelled widely. He was a real polyglot and was able to converse with the natives in their own tongue. He wrote among others a monograph on Hainan with its title *Monographie de Hainan*. He specially studied the Li tribes of Hainan. He broadly classified the population of the island (about 2,000,000) into three groups locally called the Hok-lo, ong Beor Bae and Hiao-oo or Day. The Hok-lo are Chinese who occupy the northeastern part and all the coast line, the Ong Beor Bae are Tai who occupy the northwestern and the Li tribes the central parts of the island and the Hiao and the Dai, supposed to be Indonesians, occupy respectively the central and southern parts--Major Erik Seidenfaden's Note on Rev. Fr. Savina, *JSS*, vol. XL, pt. i, 1952.

23. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 64.

24. D.G.E. Hall : *Burma*, (London, 1950), p. 31.

25. *Shan* : highland, *tse* and *yen* or *jen* : man together meaning hillmen or highlanders. A.H. Keane : *Man : Past and present*, edited by Quiggin and Haddon, Cambridge, 1920, p. 191. Refer also to Dr. A.H. Keane's contribution on the Shans in *The Living Races of Mankind*, (London Hutchinson & Co.) p. 173.

ferred to above the Tai are also called Doi, which means a mountain or a hill. The Chinese name for the Tai people of this area is Pa-i. 'Pa' in Chinese means 'cultivated highlands' and 'i' means 'barbarians'. Hence Pa-i means barbarian or non-Chinese cultivators of the highlands of Yün-nān.[26] It is said that the Burmese originally learnt the terracing of hill slopes for cultivation from the Tai cultivators of Nānchao in Yün-nān.[27] It appears that Chinese 'Shan' was Burmanized into 'Sham' and written as Shan as the Burmese words ending in *m* are usually turned into *n*. But the peoples, referred to as Shans in Burma, called themselves only Tai.

Mr. A. R. Colquhoun, who made extensive travels of exploration in the Southern provinces of China, found that most of the aborigines of that region were shans although the Chinese called them by various nicknames. Their propinquity to the Chinese is largely responsible for their gradual change in habits, manners, and dress and their absorption by that people.[28] What is true of the Shans of China in this respect is also true of the Ahoms of Assam and many of the Shans of Burma outside the Shan States. The Ahoms took to the Hindu ways of life and many Shans of Burma to the Burmese ways in dress, language and culture. Particularly in the fashion of their clothing the North-western Shans have assimilated themselves to the Burmans in the midst of whom they live.[29] But yet the racial identity of the Tai-Shans is recognisable from their physical type, colour, tradition and history.

The Burmese gave the appellation 'Shan' to those Tai that entered the plains of Burma in the thirteenth century A. D.[30] This apparently refers to the period when Kublai Khan's invasion of Ta-li in 1253 caused a mass migration of these people, mostly as refugees, into the Shan States of Upper Burma and the Upper Menam Valley in Siam. But the word Sham or Shan must have been formed and used at a date much earlier than this. During the early centuries of the Christian era the peoples of Burma almost certainly knew the Tai as Taroks or Tayoks (but written as 'Tarops'). There is mention in Burmese history of two irruptions into Burma by the Taroks[31] from Yün-nān, one not long before

26. Colquhoun : *op.cit.*, p. 207.

27. D.G.E. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia* (London, 1955,) p. 123.

28. Hallett : *Historical Sketch of the Shans* in Colquhoun's *Amongst the Shans*. p. 328.

29. Alleyne Ircland : *The Province of Burma*, vol. 1, 1907, pp. 63-4.

30. Harvey : *History of Burma*, (Calcutta, 1925), p. 4.

31. In Burmese *Tayok* or later mantioned as Shan-Tayok. E.R. Leach points out in his book *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (P.32) (G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. London, 1954) that 'the Burmase make a distinction between Burmese Shans (*Shan B'mah*), Chinese Shans (*Shan Tayok*) and Hkamti Shans'.

the Christian era and most probably during Binnaka Raja's reign in old Pagan in the first quarter of the sixth century B. C. and the other about A. D. 241 or probably A. D. 225. According to Cushing, an eminent authority on the Shans, these invaders could not have been Chinese, for the Chinese did not establish any real connection with the Burmans until after the conquest of Yün-nān by Kublai Khan in the thirteenth century. These Taroks must have been the Tai, who were in that period the most predominant people in Yün-nān. Cushing is of the opinion that the irruptions mentioned here seem to indicate the presence at those early dates of a powerful Tai kingdom or kingdoms in Yün-nān, whence the invaders were sent.[32]

Of the earlier migrations of the Tai into Burma that of the sixth century A. D. is of historic importance. These immigrants from South-west China, who were not, however, known as Shans, advanced westward along the river valleys of Upper Burma and conquered the territories then under an Indian dynasty, whose capital was at Tagaung and about whom more would be told later. What is noteworthy here is that all these invaders, who came and established their political supremacy over Upper Burma, called themselves Tai as found in the ancient Chronicles. As they entered Burma immediately from South-west China they were designated, more specifically, as Tai Khé or Tai Ché. Major Davies points out that it is in the Shan States of Burma and also perhaps of its eastern neighbourhood that these Chinese Shans are so called. The Chinese Shans generally call themselves *Tai Nö.* or Northern Tai (Shans), while they refer to the inhabitants of the Shan States as *Tai Tua*, Southern Tai (Shans), and not *Tai Löng*, Great Tai (Shans). A few Tai Tau also exist in Yün-nān close to the Burmese border in Mengting.[33] The Tai-Khé or Tai-Nö branch of the Tai is also known in the Shweli valley as Tai-Mao or simply as Mao. But Sham or Shan is a distinctive appellation used by the Burmese to refer to the Tai immigrants of a much later period and under different circumstances. According to an eminent writer 'Shan' appears to be the collective Burmese name given to all different Tai people that entered Burma just as 'Lao' is the collective Siamese name for the Tai peoples formerly subject to Siam and since 1896 who became mostly French subjects.[34] In this sense the appellation 'Shan' is more political than purely ethnical and represents the nation as distinguished from the different groups constituting it. Even the Thai people

32. Dr. Cushing's Monograph on the Shans : vide Mr. H.L. Eale's *Report on the Census of Burma*, 1892, p. 200.

33. Davies : *Yün-nān*, pp. 380-81.

34. Keane : *ibid.*, p. 191.

of Siam are called Shan by the Burmese. To the Annamites they are Xiem, which is perhaps a variant of Siam, . Major H. R. Davies points out that the Kachins, A-Changs, Zis and La-shis call the Shans by the name of Sam, the Ma-ru name for them is Sen, the Palaung name is Tsem, the Wa name Shem, and the Talaings call them Sem.[35] All these names appear to be mere phonetic variations of the original word 'Shan' in the different tribal tongues.

Siam :

'Siam' is another name of which the origin is a subject of controversy. It is said that Siam is the same word as Shan, a form coming to us through the Portuguese *Siao.*[36] J. Leyden points out that "by the Barmas, they (the Siamese) are denominated *Syan*, from whence the Portugueze seem to have borrowed their *Siam* or *Siaom*, from whom the other nations of Europe have adopted the term".[37] Others believe that it has been derived from Malay *Sayam* meaning brown. Cushing says that "it may not be generally known that the form Siam is nothing but a corruption of the French method of writing Shan as 'Sciam'. He further says that "in adopting the French method of spelling the word, we mispronounce the name because we make two syllables of the word. This mispronunciation, however, has become generally accepted, and to call the Shans of Bangkok anything but Siamese would be needlessly misleading as well as pedantic. Moreover, the difference in the name is now useful, as it marks off the Southern branch of the Tai or Htai race."[38] Dr. Grierson, who substantially agrees with Cushing, also points out that the word 'Siam' appears to be an Anglicised form of the Portuguese or Italian 'Sciam' which is an attempt to write 'Sham', a variant of 'Shan'.[39] Thus the words Sam, Siam and also Cham (not the Austronesian Cham of modern Annam) undoubtedly stand for the original name Shan. That the Tai, the Shans, the Siamese and the Ahoms (from Ā-sham) belong to the same racial group is proved by the fact that the Tai from the north are called Shan-gyi or Great Shans by the Burmese, 'Sam' in Assam by

35. *Yün-nān* : *The Link between India and the Yangtze.* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. 377-87. See also E.R. Leach : *Political Systems of Highland Burma.* (The London School of Economics and Political Science, G. Bell and Sons Ltd, London, 1954), pp. 29-30.

36. Keane : *ibid.*, p. 191.

37. *Asiatic Researches* : vol X, London, 1811 : vide, "On the Languages and Literature of the Indo-Chinese Nations" by J. Leyden, M.D.-X Thay.

38. Eale's *Report on the Census of Burma*, 1892, p. 200.

39. *Linguistic survey of India,* vol, II. Tai Group : General Introduction.

the Assamese and Tai-gut or the left-behind Tai by the Siamese, the latter meaning those Tai who did not come with the Siamese to Ayuthia, the Siamese themselves being called Yodia Shan by the Burmese.[40]

But the above explanations are concerned mainly with the form of the word 'Siam' and not with its origin. Regarding the latter point some scholars suggest that the name 'Siam' is derived from the Sanskrit word *Syāma* meaning 'black'. When the Indians first colonised this country the fair-coloured Hindus called the native population "Black" (Skt. "Syama", Pali, "Sāmo"). This black population, according to these writers, referred to the Thai, who, on their part, called the country Muang Thai, the country of the Thai people.[41] But this view is obviously wrong, because the Thai people are as fair as the Hindus or rather fairer on the average. If the early Hindu colonists would have at all applied the term 'Syāma' to designate a black race they could have done so more appropriately to refer to the black-skinned inhabitants of Funan (Southern Cambodia), where they had landed much earlier than in Siam and spread their culture. The Funanese were described as ugly, black, frizzy-haired and naked by Kang Tai, a Chinese envoy, who visited that country between A.D. 245 and A.D. 250. Kang Tai was also the first person to mention in his accounts the name of Hun-tien, who founded the kingdom of Funan in the first century A. D. It is also said that Hun-tien was but a Chinese transliteration of Kaundinya, a political adventurer from India. The name 'Kaundinya' suggests that he was the descendant of the original Kaundinya, who was a Brahman, but was first to be converted by Buddha.[42] But in this case the conqueror of Funan (Kamboja-deśa) appears to be a Hindu Kṣatriya prince of the Kaundinya *gotra* and the kings of that dynasty adopted this family name. Maspero suggests that the first invasion by Kaundinya came from Java and formed part of a great movement, possibly with its central seat in Java, that led to the foundation of other Hindu States in Champā and Borneo in that early period of the

40. Ney Elias : *Introductory Sketch of the History of the Shans*, 1876, p.2 : Colquhoun : *ibid* p. 207. Yodia, pronounced 'Euria' by the Burmese, is simply Ayothia or Ayodhyā, the old capital of Siam and Yodia Shans means the Shans of the kingdom of Ayodhyā.

41. G. Schlegel : *Siamese studies*, 1902, pp. 6-7; P.N. Bose : *The Indian colony of Siam*, 1927, p. 2.

42. Edward J. Thomas: *The History of Buddhist Thought*, 1953, pp. 136, 183. Hun-tien's name is mentioned in the annals of the Chi dynastry (479-501). But in the annals of the Tsin dynasty the stranger's name is given as Hun-Hui, who worshipped the Devas and had a dream, in which one of them gave him a bow and ordered him to sail for Funan. He then set out for this new land and conquered it and married the queen, who ruled there. -vide Pelliot's *Founan*, also Eliot : *op,cit.*, vol.III, pp. 104-5.

Christian era. At that time the modern Siam was included in the dominions of the Empire of Funan, which extended from Annam to the Bay of Bengal. It is extremely doubtful that there was any Tai population worth the name in the Menam valley in that early period. It is also not known that the Tai of Siam ever professed Hinduism as a national religion.

In the tenth centuary A. D. the central part of Thailand (Siam) was called by the Mon-speaking people of Dvāravati as "Sāma-deś" or the Land of the Sāms. Briggs refers to a Pali document, *Jinakālamālini* written in 1516 which, in speaking of events in 1339, mentions 'Sukhodayapura in Syāmadeśa' (i. e., country of the Syām, or of the 'dark brown people')[43] Phya Amuman Rajadhan, an eminent Thai scholar of Bangkok, points out that the word 'Sām' was Pali-ized into 'Sāma' and then Sanscritized into 'Syāma' and Europeanized into 'Siam'. This appears to be the most probable development of the word 'Sām'or 'Shan' into 'Siam'. Some scholars trace the origin of the word Siam to 'Sien' of the Chinese, who applied that name to the Thai kingdom of Sukhot'ai (Skt.Sukhodaya).[44] Francis Buchanan, from his local investigations, learns that the Thai people of Siam were called 'Syianlo' or 'Kyaenlo' by the Chinese of Yün-nān.[45] Thus these 'Syianlo' or 'Sienlo' were the people of 'Sien' country or Sukhot'ai. The Khmers used the name'Syām' to refer to the 'Savages' from the middle Menam. That these savages were no other than the Tai, who were destined to be the powerful rivals of the Khmers, is further confinrmed by the fact that in the bas-reliefs of the South-west gallery of the Angkor Wat[46] are depicted soldiers dressed like the Cambodians and described in the inscriptions as troops of Lvo,[47] while those depicted on the South gallery and dressed and armed in a different manner are menioned as the soldiers of Syam-Kuk (Sukhot'ai), the latter being Thai mercenaries[48] exhibited as representing martial characteristics different from those of the Cambodians. Peaceful pene-

43. *JAOS*. vol. 69, 1949, pp. 68-9 ; also *BEFE-O* 1925-95.

44. Hall ; *op.cit*, p. 150; P.N. Bose; *op.cit*, Foreword by P.C. Bagchi, pp. V-VII.

45. "A Comparative Vocabulary of Some of the Languages Spoken in the Burma Empire" in *Asiatic Researches*, vol. V, 4th Ed., 1807, pp. 227-28.

46. Angkor is a corruption of Nokor (=Nagar). Angkor Thom=Mahanagara.-Eliot. *op.cit*., III, p. 110.

47. The country of Lvo is also mentioned in an inscription of the end of the tenth century A.D. discovered at Lopburi. Lvo of the Angkor-Vat inscription, *Lo hou* of the Chinese annals, and Lavo of the ancient Siamese is the same as the Lopburi (Skt. Navapurī) flourishing in the lower valley of the Menam. "P.C. Bagchi in P.N. Bose's book, p. V.

48. Hall : *op,cit*., p. 144.

tration of the Tai into the Menam valley began from a much earlier date and by about the ninth century A.D. many Tai cities (Muangs) were found to have developed among the Mons and the Khmers. From the latter part of the ninth century the Tai in the Upper Menam and the middle Mekong region assumed an aggressive role putting increasing pressure on the Khmer dominions and annexing or liberating from the Khmer yoke parts of those dominions from time to time in the following centuries.

The territories, which the Tai mostly inhabited in the Menam valley, were known as Siem, Syam or Syama.[49] According to Gerini the Mon word for Siamese is *Sem ;* the Khmer word is *Siem;* the Chinese word is *Sien* or *Hsien;* the Cham, *Syam;* and the Malay, Siam.[50] Briggs thinks that the first Europeans, the Portuguese, who came in contact with the Siamese in 1511, called them Sião (= *Sian* in English), probably from Malay. This explanation is less convincing than that given by Cushing. The name 'Syam' is found first in an inscription of Champa (in Sanskrit) of A. D. 1050. The Cham inscription speaks of taking Syam prisoners along with Khmers and Chinese. About a century later (1150) they appear on the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat as mercenaries in the Khmer army where the accompanying sanskrit inscriptions call them *Syam* and *Syam-kuk. Syam* here refers to the Tai of the upper or rather middle Menam. According to Gerini, the word appears in Ptolemy's *Sāma-rade* (2nd Century) which is interpreted as Sāmarāttha.[51] Here 'Syam' is commonly identified with Sanskrit 'Syama' meaning black or dark, but actually Syama appears to be a Sanskritized distortion of the non-Sanskrit original. Further Sāmarade is in the lower Menam valley where the presence of the Tai in Ptolemy's time is most improbable. The Chinese historians refer to frequent embassies appearing at the Chinese court from the States of Sien (Hsien) and Lo-hou between 1282 and 1323[52] and these two States were undoubtedly the Syam and Lvo of the Khmers as mentioned in the inscribed labels of Angkor Wat. Syam and Lvo are identified with Sukhot'ai and Lopburi. About the same time, the name *Sien-lo* (Hsien-lo) was also applied by the Chinese to these people.[53] The kingdom of Sukhot'ai was then well known in Eastern Asia under the name Syam or Sien and its founders were called 'Syam-kuk or Sien-lo. Aymonier

49. Eliot : *op.cit.*, III, p. 79.
50. *JAOS*. vol. 69, 1949, p. 69.
51. Gerini : Researches on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia, 1909, p. 170.
52. Paul Pelliot : Deux itineraires etc., *BEFE-O* 1904, 230-1.
53. Pelliot : Memoires sur les coutumes de Cambodge, par Tchou Ta-Kouan. *BEFE-O*, 1902. 112 as referred to by Briggs in *JAOS* , vol. 69, 1949, p. 62.

read the name in the Angkor Wat inscriptions as Syam-*kut* and Pelliot followed his reading, but Coedés, who made a thorough study of these inscriptions, says the reading is clearly Syam-kuk.[54] At this time the territories south of Lvo were still held by the Cambodians. In the above context *Sien*, *Siem* and *Syam* appear to be the variants of Shan or Shām, and Siam is the Europeanized form of it. Chinese Sien was simply the land of the Shan people.[55] The terms *Syam* or *Sam* preceded the name *Thai* in this area.

These Tai people were earlier living in the hills in Southern Yünnān before getting down to the fertile plains of the Mekong and the Menam rivers.[56] Most of these people had to seek shelter in the hills leaving their homes in the rich plains of Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Kwei-chow as early as the third century A. D. when General Chuko-Liang of the Han invaded Yün-nān, apparently to put down a rebellion. The last greatest exodus of these people to the south was when in the middle of the thirteenth century the Mongols under Kublai Khan swept down to South China. It seems therefore that the appellations Shan (or Sham), Sam, Sien, Siem, Syam or Siam were used from about the ninth or tenth entury A. D. by the different peoples in referring to the Tai

54. *Bulletin de la commission archeologique de I 'Indochine* 1911. 203, note 3; *JAOS*. vol. 69, 1959, p. 62.

55. Terrien de Lacouperic, writing much earlier, connects the Tai-Shan race with the ancient Shang (*Shang*, Traders), who, after overthorwing the Hia dynasty about the sixteenth century B.C., established their sway over northern China. The very name 'Shang' is supposed to be the antecedent of the cognate appellatives Shan and Siam. He points out that many names, such as Tchang, Siang, Shen, Sien and similar others are met with representing one original name in the nomenclature of native clans and tribes of the same stock in its earlier seats in Central China over which there was no Sanskrit influence. Hence he has dismissed the proposed etymology for Siam from Sanskrit, "Syama",black, as inadequate as the original racial name is certainly older than this supposed origin would permit.-*op.cit*, p. 1. Whatever may be the real origin of the words Shan and Siam, the appearance of names, such as Shen and Sien, in Central China is remarkable for the presence of same names far South in Indo-China at a much later period when the Tai had already migrated to that region. As in Central China these names in the Irrawaddy and the Menam Valleys undubtedly refer to Tai tribes and their principalities. Moreover they point not only to the earlier abode of the race but also indicate the general direction of its movement to the South. If Terrien de Lacouperie's statement can be relied upon, then the original *Shen* or *Sien* might well have become *Shan* in the south and become *Sam* and *Siam* as these people spread further to the south and west in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. In that case *Shen* or *Sien* must have been an appellation given by the Chinese to the original Tai race as a term of contempt signifying a conquered people, or it was a Chinese place name from which the Tai, who had their abode in it, acquired this appellation. But the Chinese tonal differences of words meaning different things can not always be expressed in foreign words. Hence mere similarity of spelling of words may not always mean the same thing. Neither is there any historical evidence in support of the above identification.

56. L. Hoontrakul : *op.cit*, p. 99.

immigrants from the southern highlands of Yün-nān. But the name Siam became prominent in history only in the thirteenth century which is also the Sukhodaya period.[57]

Assam : Ahom :

The Shans from Burma were called Sām in Assam and at a later stage Sām became Sanskritized into syām among the Assamese Hindus. The name of the Shans as Sām was perhaps first heard by the inhabitants of Eastern Assam from the Kachins (Singphos on the Assam side) on the eastern border of Assam. In Assam 'Sām' or 'Syām' does not mean 'black', only the tribe is known by that name to the local people. The appellation Ahom is applied to the pre-British Tai rulers of Assam. After the British occupation of Assam the Ahoms found themselves gradually reduced to the status of a distinct community only among the population of the Brahmaputra valley, their habitat being virtually confined to the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur in Eastern (or Upper) Assam. The word 'Ahom' appears to be a phonetic variation of 'Asam' or 'Asama', which is itself a Sanskritized distortion of Ā-Sām, a form of Boḍo origin. Ā of the Deori-Chutiya Boḍo group, which is deaspirated from *Hā* in Boḍo, means earth, land or country and when the Tai or Sāms conquered the upper-part of the Brahmaputra valley in Assam and established their kingdom in it the Boḍo people called that area Ā-Sām, the country or kingdom of the Sāms. In the old Assamese Buranjis and religious books the writers referred to the Ahoms or their kingdom as Āsām, Ācām, Āsyām, Asam or Acam. These words were so written either from actual Ā-Sām, the land of the Sāms or its Sanskritized variant *Asam* (peerless, unequalled) which the Pandits used in their writings during the great days of the Ahoms. The words *Āsām, Ācām* and *Asam* (or *Asom*) were further corrupted in the early British period into *Āham* and *Aham* and lastly into *Āhom*, the present form of the earlier Sām or Āsām to refer to the race instead of the country. Whatever may be the course of word development according to the rules of Philology, it is difficult to think otherwise than that 'Āsām' developed from 'Sām' in the dialects of the peoples of the Brahmaputra valley region and, at a later period, 'Āsām' was put in writings in the Sanskritized

57. In the English language the name Siamese refers to the people of Siam and Siam refers to the country of these people. L. Hoontrakul points out that King Khun Sri Indratit of Sawankalok moved southward and built a capital called Sukhat'ai and and established a kingdom called Siam. He also says that in Chinese Siam means High Noon. -*op.cit.*, pp. 101, 104. Does Siam mean here simply the most powerful kingdom or a great kingdom ? It is difficult to explain the word Siam in this sense in reference to the Siamese people.

form 'Asam', from which the name Ahom has evolved. Assam (Anglicized) or Asam is the land of the Sāms (the Tai-Ahoms), who first established their independent kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley in the thirteenth century. The name Āsām, and not Sanskritized Assamese 'Asam' (Assam), is therefore correct in the original sense. 'Āsām' refers to a definite political change in the history of Assam, whereas 'Asam' is a convenient transformation under Sanskrit influence and hence admitting of all manner of explanations, such as unequal, uneven, etc. In recent times the Assamese have, however, preferred the Sanskritized form 'Asam' to 'Ā-sām' or Assam and have used it as the standard form of the name of their State. In this connection it may be mentioned that the term "Assamiya" (Assamese) means to-day the Aryanised Assamese language of Assam and, in the present day practice, the term is also used more and more to mean only the section of the population speaking this language. But in history by the term Assamese (Āshām or Āsām) only the Ahoms (the Tai of Assam) were referred to both by the Mughal writers[58] and Hindu Vaiṣṇava preachers.[59] The Mughal writer's *Āshām* and the Vaiṣṇava writer's *Asam* were without doubt merely characteristic variants of origianal Ā-sām.

But the Ahoms have never referred to themselves as Shan or Sām or by any of its Assamese variants including Ahom in their own literature or *buranjis*, written in Tai. This is true of their writings down to the end of their rule in Assam. They always called themselves Tai and their scholars wrote as such throughout the historical period. The downfall of the Ahom rule was followed by a dark period in the glorious traditions of Assam. With the loss of independence and under the changed conditions, political and cultural, of the last hundred years or so the Ahoms have fast deteriorated in mental and physical vigour and forgotten their own language, history and historical link with their race in the great subcontinent of South-east Asia. As a result they now generally call themselves not Tai but by the local name Ahom which is little known to the Tai of the rest of Asia. Only in very recent times historical researches seem to have brought a certain degree of consciousness to the Ahoms about their past and racial identity.

58. Shihabu'd-Din Talish : *Fa-thiya-i-'Ibriya* (*Ta'rikh-i-Asham*) of which a text was published in Calcutta (24th May, 1849) by "Aftab-i-" Alamtab" Press. See Blochmann's translation (an abstract only), *JASB*; 1872; Sir Jadunath Sarkar : *JASB.* in 1906, 1907 and *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, vol. I, p. 179; also Gait : *A History of Assam* (Calcutta. 1926), particularly p. 140 (footnote) for the meaning of 'Assamese'.

59. Assamese *Nām Ghosā* (501).

Two other explanations of the terms Ahom and Assam deserve consideration. Dr. B. K. Kakati has attempted to connect the term Āsām as applied to the Shans with Tai √*chām*, "to be defeated", with the Aryan Assamese privative prefix *ā-*, the whole formation *Āsām* meaning "undefeated" 'victorious', thus being a hybrid equivalent of the word Thai, (Tai) meaning free.[60] This explanation appears to be far-fetched. The Ahoms never called themselves Āsām or Āchām. If the Aryanized people of Assam ever called them by that name in the above sense it would presuppose a knowledge of the Tai language on their part in order that a comparatively obscure foreign word, such as 'chām', might be so used to coin a new word. But it is difficult to believe that the Assamese, in general had already any such knowledge. Moreover the word *chām*, *Shām* or *Hsān* of the Shans is a verb only and is not used either as an adjective or a noun. Hence *Āsām* or *Āchām* as a noun from *chām* is unlikely. If *Āsām* be a hybrid equivalent of the word Thai meaning free, 'Sām' or 'Siamese' would mean 'unfree' which is contrary to facts of history.

Dr. S. K. Chatterji suggests that the name *Ahom* comes from *Rhwam*, a name by which the Burmese referred to the Shan people when they first met the latter. The Burmese wrote the word Rhwam in the Mon script which they had adopted in the eleventh contury A. D. "In course of centuries, owing to certain characteristic developments of the Burmese phonology, the word has now come to be pronounced in Modern Burmese as Shan, although the old orthography as *Rhwam* still persists (*Rhwam/ Yhwam/ Hyam/ Cyam/ Shan* :....) Now, the name Ahom would appear to be connected as a tribal name with this Rhwam : Dr. Chatterji seems to believe that either from "early dropping of the initial *R-* in Ahom mouths, or its modification to *A* gave the form Ahom. He further says that "Ahom as a foreign tribal name was not properly understood by Old Assamese speaking Hindu and other Boḍos when the Ahom conquerors came into East Assam, and it would appear that the name *Ahom* was sought to be 'corrected', into what was thought to be its original Sanskrit form, as *A-sama* and this gave the word *Asam-Assam* as the name of the country which the Ahoms conquered and established themselves in.[61] As pointed out already the modern Ahoms never wrote nor called themselves Ahom as a corruption of *Rhwam*. The word 'Ahom' is nowhere to be found in their Tai-Ahom literature. Hence it is difficult to imagine that the Assamese of those days could get this tribal name

60. *The Mother Goddess Kāmākhyā*, p. 2. *Assamese, Its Formation and Development*, (Gauhati, 1962) pp. 2-3.

61. *The Place of Assam in the History and Civilisation of India*—Banikanta Kakati Memorial Lectures, (Gauhati, 1954), pp. 42-3.

from the Ahoms to be corrected into its supposed Sanskrit form. Further it is Āsām, Asam, Ācām that is generally found in the earlier Assamese literature, the form Ahom being the latest development and that too in the British period. The Boḍos predominated in Eastern Assam at the time the Tai-Ahoms entered that land. The Kachins and the Boḍos called the Tai-Ahoms Sām. It is most certain that Assam, the name of the country, is from Ā-sām, the country of the Sāms, which was later Sanskritized into A-sama from which the forms Asom and Ahom gradually arose.

THE PAI-YI : (*Pā*, cultivated highland *yi*, barbarians) :

The Tai of South China are called Pā–yi or Pai-yi (barbarians).[62] They are chiefly concentrated in the South-western bulge of Yün-ñān across the frontier of Burma where they are also called Thai Nu'a. But the Pai-yi of South-eastern Yün-nān seem to be the ancestors of the Laotians, as well as of the Black Tai and White Tai of Tonkin.[63] In early periods they were referred to by the peoples of Burma as Tarôks or Shan-Tarôks and in the later period as Shans. These names were probably applied by the Pyu and the Mons of Burma, whose dominions once extended far to the north and were subject to inroads from China from time to time. The Tai people of South China have numerous sub-groups whom the Chinese called by various names, such as P'o, Pa or Pai-i, Shui Han or Hua Pai-i, Pai-jên, T'u-jên, P'ū-man, Pai, Hai, or Hua T'u-lao, Nung or Lung-jên, Sha-jên, Hei or Pai Sha-jên, Min-Chia, or Hin-Ch'iang, Shui-Chia and Chung-Chia.[64] Among all these the Pai-yi[65] is the most numerous element and the Chinese use it as synonymous with Tai. They are both upland dwellers (*Han Pai-yi*) and river valley dwellers (*Shui Pai-yi*).

Ju-K'ang T'ien, writing on one of the Tai tribes called Mangshi in the South-west part of Yün-nān, said that the Chinese of the neighbouring districts say that these people are called Pa-i because they practise cults known as Pai which they consider to be essential features of their social life. "Pai"[66] is the comprehensive name given to a series of cultural activities having religious significance expressing the community's belief in the Buddha.[67] It may be noted that many

62. Erik Seidenfaden's Notes on Ethnic Groups of Northern Southeast Asia in *JSS.*, Vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952, p. 77.

63. *JAOS.*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 66.

64. *GUBSS.*, "Ethnology", p. 619.

65. Pai-yi is variously spelt as Pa-i, Pai-i, Paiyi, Pa-y, Pai'y, Peyih, Paeh, etc.

66. In the Shan Buddhist language 'pai', pronounced as 'pwei', means a religious festival.

67. *American Anthropologist*, vol. 51, Nov.i. 1949, pp. 46-59.

features of these cults are strikingly similar to those of the Assamese Bihu festivals.[68] The appellation Pai from Pai cults is undoubtedly a vulgar way of interpreting the meaning of the word. Pai or Poy means simply a festival and is not restricted to the cults mentioned above. What is important here is the essential features of the festivals which are more or less common to the festivals celebrated elsewhere among the Tai.

Professor T. de Lacouperie, relying on the Chinese sources, points out that the Pa or Pa-Y are a branch of the Tai and are "scattered from the south of Setchuen, throughout Yün-nān and south borders. We hear of them in 1971 B. C. when the Chinese ruler, K'i of Hia, is reputed to have sent to them his minister, Mong-t'u. They were subdued by the State of Ts'in in 338 B.C., and since that time have slowly advanced southwards. The oldest settlements were in Western Setchuen".[69] The early account given here refers to the mythical period and, even without denying some K'i of Hia (Hsia) of the time, we can not be definitely sure that there ever was a Chinese ruling House called Hia and hence Mangt'u's mission. Apparently at that time the Pa-y were enjoying free and independent life with a system of government of their own. But whether the Tai were actually known to the early kings of China by the name of Pa-y is doubtful. It is equally doubtful if there were powerful 'Chinese rulers' at that time. As regards the Pai poople's movement further to the south from their earlier home in Western Sze-chuan J. Denikar says that their migrations may be followed from the first century B. C., when "the Pa-y tribes came from Sechuen into western Yün-nān to found there the kingdom of Luh-Tchao.

68. There are six Pai cults of which the Great Pai is the most important, the other cults being Public Pai, Chin-Hueng-Tan-Pai, Kan-To-Pai, Ting-Tang-Pai and Lan-se-Pai. The Great Pai, in its essentials, consists of the exhibition of certain articles which the house-holder presents as offerings to the village Buddhist temple. The ceremony extends over at least three days accompanied with various other activities including dancing, singing, feasting and processions. Other Pai festivals provide occasions for demonstrating the whole procedure of clothing manufacture, arts and crafts and their products and also the arrangement of daily work according to seasonal changes. The Assamese Bihus, too, apart from their religious significance, if any, must have had as their cardinal feature demonstration of the basic arts and culture and the mode of social life of the community. The Assamese national festival called Bohag Bihu, which is celebrated annually in April on the grandest scale with dances, songs, instrumental music and congregational merriment and with the exhibition of the best samples of clothes woven by the women in every family, represents the tastes and the artistic achievements of the Assemese people. Likewise the harvest festival or Magh Bihu, which is characterised by social entertainments with the choicest dinners and exhibition of wrestling power of the youth and animal fighting, represents the richness and variety of the harvests of the season. Stripped of their religious coating, whether Buddhist or Hindu, this group of social festivals, wherever they are found, in Yün-nān, Burma or Assam, appears to be peculiar to the Tai and the associated peoples.

69. *Op, cit.*, pp. li-lii.

Another kingdom, that of Muangling,[70] was founded more to the south-west in Upper Burma". The cause of these migrations was the pressure of the Chinese from the north.

Henri d' Orleans points out that Pa-i is only another name for Lao. He constantly met Pa-i groups all along the route from Tongking to Assam. He further says that the bulk of the lowland population of Assam (meaning the Ahoms), from whom Assam takes its name, belongs originally to the same family.[71] Rev. William Clifton Dodd writes that both Pa and Lung belong to the Lao race and that he found both these tribes in Southern Yün-nān during his journey of 1910. They sitll bear the ancient tribal names, Pa and Lung. The modern Chinese call them *Pa-i*, the Pa barbarians and *Lungjên*, the Lung people. The Lung (or Nung) are mostly found now in Kuang-tung and Kwang-si. Rev. Dodd also says that their own speech is Lao or Tai as he found by talking with them and hearing them talk. The modern Pa call themselves Tai, but are invariably mentioned as Pa-i by the Chinese writers.[72]

THE MUNG :

Chinese Annals refer to another group of people, called Tā Mung or Dai Mung, that is, the Great Mung, belonging to the same race, which is mentioned in the geographical survey instituted under the Emperor Tā Yu or Dai Yu (the Great Yu), said to be the founder of the Hia (or Hsia) dynasty.[73] Phra Sarasas points out that it was the Chinese who called this race (Tai) Dai Mung instead of Ai-Lao.[74] The Mung established themselves in China before the advent of the Chinese, but as to the origin and meaning of the word "Mung", nothing definite is known except that they are an integral section of the Tai. "The Mung", says Dr. Dodd, "belong to the Ai-Lao race. The Ai-Lao belong to the aborigines; the aborigines preceded the Chinese in the migration from the West ; the Chinese themselves came earlier than 2200 B. C., probably much earlier".[75] If this statement can be relied upon then the pre-Ch'in early empires of the great Lao people can be said to have extended over the major part of the present China

70. probably Möng Ling.
71. Keane : *op, cit.*, p. 192.
72. Dodd : *The Tai Race*, (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1923), chap. I.
73. T. de Lacouperie : *op. cit.*, pp. 1-li.
74. *Ai-Lao* means senior or elder people. Sarasas : *My Country Thailand : Its History, Geography and Civilisation*, p.4.
75. Dodd : *op. cit.*, chap.I.

and the ruling aristocracy of the race, known as the Tai, spread to the different territorial divisions of the Lao dominions for the management of their administration. In later centuries the Ch'in Imperialists, in their vast drive for expansion, simply discovered the descendants of the early Tai, both as politically dominant communities in some areas and as scattered elements in others in the Central Belt of China and southwards and called them by various nicknames.

Tā Yu's reign is said to have commenced about 2208 B. C. and his name is mentioned in what is probably the earliest literary work, the *Shih Ching* (Classic of Poetry)[76]. The great Mung people, who were contemporary of Tā Yu, must have had a glorious career in the early period of China, but we know little about it except by way of casual references made to them by Chinese historians until their reappearance as builders of the Nan-Chao empire in the seventh century A. D. The Tā Mung were in the region of the setting sun according to the *Erh-Ya*, the oldest known Chinese dictionary, compiled in the fifth century B. C., and their habitat was in the western part of the Sze-chuan province. The chief characteristic of the Mung people, as stated by the Chinese compilers, was sincerity. The Mung formed the leading family of the Nan-Chao agglomeration of tribes which united under it to set up that powerful Ai-Lao kingdom in Yün-nān which was destined later to flourish as the Nan-Chao empire. The Mung also played a leading part in several other agglomerations in subsequent periods.[77] They migrated eastwards and are to-day known to the Annamese as Muongs, who spread throughout the hilly regions in Tongking.[78]

THE LÜ : THE HKÙN : THE YUNS : THE TCHAO :

It has been noted that Lüh or Lü and Muang or Mung are but different clan names of the same Tai-Shan race. The Lü of the left bank of the Mekong form the bulk of the population in the State of Hsip Hsawng Möng (Keng Hung : lat. 22°, long. 100°50') and the neighbouring parts of southern Yün-nān.[79] Keng Hung is the Cheli of the Chinese and the Hsip Hsawng Panna (XII Panna) of the local Tai. Keng Tung has another group of Tai people called Hkün. The Yuns are concentrated in Lan-nā in Northern Siam, Chieng Mai was anciently called yun. These three sections of the Tai race are supposed to have descended from the Ngai-Lao on the Mekong, with whose *Kengs* theirs were continuous. Briggs says that they mixed with the Karens and with still earlier Lawas whose dwellings in the hills surrrounded them. The Yuns conquered the Mons of Haripunjai and absorbed them. According to Pierre Lefevre-Pontalis the Lü spread to the south establishing their kingdom of Lao Chong below the Hsip-Hsawng-Panna in A. D. 701 with its capital of Chieng Rao which was in the beginning of the tenth century A. D. moved near Chieng Sen.[80] The Tchao, as mentioned in connection with Lüh-Tchao, were simply the easternmost branch of the same Tai race that occupied Central China at that time. They lived in what is now An-hui in the vicinity of the Lao mountains. The meaning of the name Tchao is, according to Professor T. de Lacouperie, a nesting poeple, so called from their habit of building their houses on piles. He further says that it was among them, possibly as a cognate tribe, that the founder of the Shang dynasty exiled Kieh, the last ruler of the overthrown Hia dynasty in 1558 B.C.[81] The Tchao spread southwards in the subsequent periods into Kiangsi and became an important constituent of the population of the Tsu Kingdom. In the tenth century A.D. they moved under pressure from the north into the region of Hunan, western Kwang-si and Kweitchou and many even left China for the neighbouring countries. They are still largely represented by the Tu-jên, Tchung-kia and other tribes now found in Kwang-si and Kwei-chow. Some of these people must have migrated even from much earlier times to Yün-nān and Burma and set up their own States.

THE LAOS :

A very important section of the Tai called Lao deserve special notice. To-day the inhabitants of North Siam are described as Lao.[82] Actually the Laos are scattered over southern China, northern French Indo-China and the north and north-eastern parts of Siam itself.[83] It is the southern Thai who call the Thai people of northern and eastern Siam Lao. Cushing mentions the Lao as one of the several divisions of the Tai family.[84]

76. Latourette : *The Chinese : Their History and Culture*, (New York, 1946). p. 39.
77. T. de Lacouperie : *op. cit.*, p. li; Dodd, *op.cit.*, chap.I.
78. Dodd : *ibid* : Hallett : *op.cit.*, p. 329.
79. Davies : *Yün-nān*, p. 381.
80. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 70.
81. "The accomplished T'ang banished Kieh to Southern Tsau"—The *Shu King*, trans, by Walter Gorn Old, 1904, p. 77. T'ang banished Hia's Ruler (Kieh-Kwei) to Nan-tsau, the modern Ngan-hwi on the Yang-tse-Kiang. -See translator's Note. *op.cit.*, p. 83.
82. Wood : *History of Siam*, 1933, p. 31.
83. W.D. Reeve : *Public Administration in Siam*, (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London & New York), 1951, p. 7.
84. Cushing : *op.cit.*, Introduction, p.1.

He further says that the Siamese form the southern half and the Laos the northern half of the kingdom of Siam. According to H.R.H. Prince Damrong "Lao" is a nickname used as a contraction of the word Lawa or Lwa.[85] Briggs says that the use of Lao is now specifically applied to a Tai people, called Laotians by the French. He further says that recently an attempt has been made to extend the appellation Lao to the Lawas, who are quite a different people.[86] The Lawas are one of the darker races, but the pure Laos (Tai) are fair.[87] Here it is important to note Hallett's investigation who points out that the Lewa, or Lawa, were the aboriginal inhabitants to the south of Yün-nān and were driven southrward and into the hills by the Yun or Karens, who, on their part, had to move southward under Shan pressure.[88] This appears to be true as the Ngai-Laos and the Laos are undoubtedly Tai, whereas the Lawas are not. There is another Tai group called Lau who are found chiefly beyond the Cambodian river and are tributary to Siam. Yule locates them in Wintchian and Lantchian.

During the sixth century A.D. the Laos pushed eastward through North Siam to the south-west of Tongking and, during the three centuries that followed, established their kingdoms as far as Viengchan or Chandrapuri on the banks of the Mekong. It was also the time when the Yun-Shans occupying the country to the south of Kiang-Hung, founded the towns of Labong, Lagon, Phitsalok (Pitsanulok or Vishnulok), Kampang (Kamp'engp'et i.e. Kamben Bejr or Vajra) and Sangkalok (Svargalok) in the basins of the Me-ping, Me-wang and Me-nam. Now the Laotians are an important section of the Tai that occupy the south-eastern region of the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

In regard to the trend of migration of theTai in Indo-China. Cushing observes : "It is probable that the earliest regions occupied by the Tai were in the upper part of Burma. The Siamese, who are the latest division to emigrate and settle in their present home, call themselves Htai Noi or Little Tai and name the Laos Htai Niai or Great Htai. The Laos, in turn, use the term Great Tai to designate the Shan communities

85. Credner : *Cultural and Geographical Observations made in Tali (Yunnan) Region with Special regard to the Nan-Chao Problem*, (Bangkok, 1934,), Translator's Comments, p. 19.

86. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 63 : Erick Seidenfaden : Anthropoligical and ethnological research work in Siam, *JSS*. 28. 1.15-8 (1935) ; W.A. Graham : *Siam*, 131-3 (2 vols : London, 1824).

87. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 69.

88. *Historical Sketch of Shans*, in *Amongst the Shans*, pp. 338-39.

farther to the north. The appellation Tai Long, which is the equivalent of the Siamese Htai Niai, really belongs to the Shans of Northern Burma, and is accepted by them. This would seem to indicate that that region is recognised as the one occupied by that portion of the race which made the earliest migration."[89]

Rev. Dodd, who worked among the Laos and made a special study of that people, is of the opinion that the Tai-speaking race call themselves Lao from the earliest times. For the word 'Lao' in their language originally meant 'man' or 'person'. Dodd discovered its use in this archaic sense during his journey amongst the illiterate Tai in China, who use many words in a sense lost or discredited among their literate brethren. He also refers to Colonel Gerini, a great authority on the Siamese language and race, who wrote in the *Asiatic Quarterly* that "their racial name was Lao or Ai-Lao, for which they soon substituted the title not name of Tai'. Enough authentic material is not available for the confirmation of this view. The northern Tai, including the Ahoms of Assam, call themselves Tai and not Lao in their Chronicles. Gerini also points out that the term 'Ai' in the compound Ai-Lao is the Tai word for 'male', whence Ai-Lao means "male Lao" as well as "The Lao" (men or people).

The ancient home of the Laos was in the eastern part of Central China to the north of the Yang-tse-Kiang occupying most of the region extending from Sze-chuan to An-hui. E. Seidenfaden is of the opinion that the southern Thai wrongly give the name Lao to the northern and north-eastern Thai people of Siam, for the word Lao or Ai-Lao probably denoted not the race but the region from which these Thai people came.[90] This view deserves attention and, if supported by ancient geography of the region, will solve a puzzling question arising from the multiplicity of names of the race. Mr. E. H. Parker, quoting chiefly the Annals of the Chinese T'ang dynasty, points out that "the Annamese still call the Laos of Upper Siam by the name of Ai-Lao",[91] He further says that Ai-Laos were next called Nan-Chao when they reappeared upon the Chinese political stage.[92] That Nan-Chao was Tai no body disputes. "Chao", according to the Chinese, is a barbarian word for "Prince". It means "Prince" in Siamese, Shan, Lao and Ahom.

89. *Op.cit.*, Introduction, p. 2. See also his "Note on the Shans (Tai) in Burma" in the *Report on the Census of Burma* by H.L. Eales, 1892, pp. 200-201.

90. Credner's Monograph *Cultural and Geographical Observations made in the Tali (Yunnan) Region with Special Regard to the Nan-Chao Problem*, (Bangkok, 1935): Translator's Comments, p. 19.

91. Scott : *Burma and Beyond*, (London, 1932), p. 208.

92. *GUBSS*. 1.1. p. 260.

The geographical distribution of the Lao people in the region from North Siam to Yün-nān also connects the Lao of Siam with the Ai-Lao of Yün-nān as one people. It seems a branch of the Tai that lived in the area of the Lao Shan (i.e. Lao Mountain) at the intersection of Honan, Hupeh and Nganhuy (An-hui) provinces, acquired the name of Lao or Ai-Lao. These Lao people gradually extended their habitat to the Kiu-lung range forming the boundaries of Shen-si and Sze-Chuan provinces.[93] Perhaps it was in this area that the Chinese imperialists, during their period of political expansion' first discovered this race towards the last Quarter of the third century B.C. and recorded their relations with these people, from which T. de Lacouperie came to the conclusion that "the cradle of the Shan (Tai) race was in the Kiu-lung mountains", as noted above. The Laos, in their turn, had many sub-groups, such as Shen-Lao, Ko-Lao, Do-Lao, etc. These Ai-Laos (Ngai-Laos) also emerged as a ruling race in the first century of the Christian era in Yün-nān with their centre at Mt. Lao about which more would be said in the next chapter.

The Thos and Muongs :

Among the other groups of the Tai the Thos and Muongs of the eastern part of Indo-China are important. The Thos[94] are mostly found to inhabit the region to the east of the Red River in Tongking and also Kwang-si in China The word Tho is probably a local variant of "Dai" or "Doi" of Professer Coedés. They now mostly occupy the hilly areas but were the early inhabitants of Kwang-si, southern Kwei-Chow and eastern Yün-nān. The Muongs (or Mungs) of Tongking occupy the region to the west of the Red River and are presumed to be an offshoot of the great Mung (Tai) community of China. The Thos and Muongs speak a Tai dialect which is very much altered by the influence of the Chinese and Annamese languages.[95] The Tai population of this area (N.W. Viet Nam) is now over two-hundred thousand.

The Pang :

A section of the Tai, the Pang, had been flourishing in central China even from before the foundation of the ancient Shang (or In) dynasty. The Pang were called Ngao (or Yao), the great or powerful. They later

93. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, p. lii.

94. The Thos are sub-brachy-cephalic of lofty stature having elongated face, straight non-Mongoloid eyes and brownish complexion. They are husbandmen, living in houses built on piles and wearing a very picturesque costume. -Denikar : *op.cit.*, pp. 400-402.

95. *Ibid*, pp. 400-402.

became the ruling race in the powerful State of Ch'u (or T'su), a great rival of Ch'in (T'sin). They are mentioned in the ancient Chinese Annals. Confucius speaks of "Our old Pang"[96] and in other records there appears "the Patriarch Pang", who ruled for an unusually long time. While Pang is the form of the name of "the Patriarch Pang", the founder of the dynasty Pan-hu is the name by which the later Chinese have heard of him among his descendants, in the province of Hunan, where the latter have more or less diverged from their orginal type. Some two thousand years before Christ the Pang were ruling in Central China in the area immediately to the north of Sze-chuan-and Hupeh as contemporary of the Hia, but their sovereignty was destroyed by Shang Wu-ting in 1231 B.C. after it had existed for more than seven hundred years. The whole period of their sovereign rule was afterwards fabulously believed to be the lifetime of their first Chief, the Patriarch Pang.[97] "The Pang or Pan-hu race", says Rev. W.W. Cochrane, "once from Central China southward, were Tai".[98]

The Pan-hu were an important element among the population of an anciant State of the Karens. The earlier name of the State was Teru but in the later period it was referred to as Tsu (or Tch'u). It developed from the eleventh century B.C. under the leadership of the Karens and at the end of the fourth century B.C. it developed into a vast empire comprising the major part of South China down to about the border of Burma and a considerable portion of Central China including the larger part of Honan. Its dominions touched the sea in the east with the States of Ngu and Yueh forming part of them. In size the Karen empire of Tsu (Ch'u) became equal, if not more, to the grand Chinese Confederation of the time and later to Ch'in, the most formidable rival of Tsu.[99] The Karens of Teru drove to the south the King tribes from around the Tung ting lake in Hunan between the Yang-tse-Kiang, the Han river and southern Hunan and conquered that part of the country. These tribes are represented by the modern Khyens (Hiu or Shu) of Burma.[100] The Karens in large numbers—some 200,000 families—were expelled from South China via Yung-chang in Western Yün-nān to Burma in A.D. 778 by Ko-lo-fêng, the powerful king of Nan-Chao, when he destroyed the western part of the Tsuan State in northern Kwang-si, Kihlao or Kihtou tribes

96. Lun-yü, VII, 1.

97. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, xliv-xlv.

98. Milne and Cochrane : *Shans at Home*, (London, 1910), p.3.

99. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, xlvii-xlviii ; Letourette : *op.cit.*, pp. 48, 51.

100. T. de Lacouperie : *Ibid.*, xlvii.

of Kwei-tchou, whose dialects have a great affinity with those of the Karens of Burma[101].

Being driven from Central China, the Pang rulers consolidated their power in the South in the mountainous region of the Province of Hunan between the Yuan and the Wu rivers and to the west and south-west of Tung-ting lake. This part of the country was highly favourable to gratify their hatred of the Shang by whom they had been dislodged from their earlier seat in the north. They retaliated by rallying the Chou and helping them to overthrow the decaying Shang dynasty.

Who were the Chou ? The Chou dynasty sprang from Chou, a principality in central Shen-si in the valley of the Wei, on the western frontier of the then China. The Chou supremacy (Circ. 1122-249 B.C.) in China, though disturbed by constant warfare, marked an epoch of great cultural progress, which, towards the close of the Chou rule, resulted in a synthesis of different cultures, Chinese and non-Chinese, that had existed side by side among the races living round the central seat of Chou civilization. According to Eberhard the results of recent researches indicate that the Chou (as distinguished from Chao, a Tai people) were originally a Turkish tribe with their small realm with Turkish and Tibetan populations.[102] The Chou culture was closely related to that of Yang Chao. But the Chou had bronze weapons and war-chariots. Owing to repeated, 'barbarian' incursions the Chou capital had to be transferred during the latter half of the eighth century B.G. from the Wei valley to Loyang, near the present Honan-fu, in the east. The Eastern Chou, possibly because of comparative security and peace, made a great progress in arts and philosophy which is comparable to that of the Greeks of the age of Plato and Aristotle. It was at this time that the "Chinese" language took its form and the ,'Chinese society", properly so called, was born in which the conquerors formed the ruling aristocracy and the conquered population, the working classes with the peasantry, formed the most numerous and important group. All the changes that followed in the later periods were the results of internal development rather than of external influence.

In the seventh century B.C. the China of the Eastern Chou split up into five contending feudal States, which were Ch'i in the North-east in parts of Shantung and Hopei, Chin in the North in modern Shansi, Ch'in (Ts' in) in the West in modern Shensi, Sung on the central plain and Ch'u (T'su) in Hupeh in the South. These States entered into a

101. *Ibid*, xlvii and xlviii.
102. W. Eberhard : *op.cit.*, p. 25.

long-drawn war of attrition each fighting for establishing its own supremacy over the others with temporary hegemony of one State or the other. After a prolonged struggle Ch'in[103] and Ch'u[104] survived as rivals, the former establishing its dominance over the States of the North and the latter expanding in the South. In the fourth century B.C. Ch'in annexed Shu in Western Sze-Chuan and Ch'in forces successfully crossed the Yang-tse-Kiang in 279 B. C. occupying a belt of territory in the South. Thus the struggle between Ch'in and Ch'u, the two giant States with their satellites joining this side or that in their shifting alliance, resulted ultimately in the destruction of Ch'u in 224 B.C. The fall of the strong rival made it easier for the Chinese imperialism to grow with rapid strides. The victory of the Ch'in over Ch'u was mainly due to the organizational superiority of the Ch'in army. It had been reformed on new lines largely replacing the traditional chariot by cavalry and foot soldiers.

In this connection it may be pointed out that the essentially Karen State of Teru was later transformed into a predominantly Tai State with the flower of the Pang or Pan-hu race constituting its hard core and refusing doggedly to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Chinese.[105] They not only put up a stubborn resistance to the aggressive policy of expansion of the northern power, but also progressively extended their territories by subjugating a score of other neighbouring States in the south. The dominion of the Ch'u State even extended beyond Yünnān to northern

103. The Ch'in (Ts'in) State was originally a small territory in the province of Kan-su. The eighth Emperor, Heaw-Wang (909-895 B.C.) of Western Chou, in the second year of his reign, assigned to Fei-Tse, a scion of a family of cattle breeders, who earned a reputation of being an excellent trainer of horses for chariot regiments, the territory of Ch'in to be held as a vassal State. Thus the Ch'in State first appeared in 908 B.C. in Kan-su with Fei-Tse as its first prince. Li-Wang, the tenth Emperor (878-879 B.C.) added to the State of Ch'in more than half of Shen-si. With this acquisition of new territory Ch'in rapidly developed into a powerful State and ranked among the twelve powerful feudal States of the time. In 249 B.C. Ch'in flourished as a unified empire with thirty-six great Divisions; each ruled by a prince. In that year the thirty-sixth prince of Ch'in founded the Ch'in Dynanty and reigned under the title of Shih-Wang-Ti and the country since then has been known to the world as China.—Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, pp. 22,38-39 : James Legge : *Chinese Classics*, vol. V, Part I, Clause xiv, 'The Princes of Tain, pp. 110-11. A great part of the population of Ch'in, including the ruling class, was not purely Chinese but contained an admixture of Turks and Tibetans. The Chinese writers even dubbed Ch'in as a "barbarian State". Yet the name China has been derived from Ch'in with which the non-Chinese peoples from Central Asia first came into contact and called the country, conquered by Ch'in, China which became Sinae in Latin.

104. Ch'u (Tsu, Tch'u or Tso) "appears to have been almost entirely non-Chinese in race, originally non-Chinese in speech, and partly so in culture" Latourette : *op cit*, p 47 According to T. de Lacouperie "it developed itself from the eleventh century B C under the influence of a branch of an intrusive race, the Karen" In the early part of its development it was known as Tero or Teru, Ch'u being the modern name —T. de Lacouperie : *op cit*, xlvii

105 Cochrane in Milne and Cochrane : *op cit*, p 5

Burma and included what was then called the Tien or Tsen (Hsen) kingdom, which was destined to become the third great seat of power for the Tai after Ch'u. The first invasion of Burma by the Tarôks from the north-east in the sixth century B. C. might well have been an event forming an integral part of the political expansion of Ch'u from the seventh century B.C.

The fall of Ch'u led to the consolidation of Tai power farther south in the region of Tien or Tsen (Hsen), and also the first establishment of Tai principalities, such as Hsen-Wi and Hsi-Paw, in Upper Burma in the first half of the fifth century B.C. was a sequel to the conquests of Ch'u. The early Tien or Tsen has possibly survived to this day in the name Hsen-Wi, which has always been the historic abode of the Tai (Shan) people and an ancient centre of their power and culture.

The Chinese Empire,[106] founded by Shih-Wang-Ti[107] (249-210 B.C.), included large tracts of country south of the Yang-tse-Kiang, but the Chinese authority could not always be effectively exercised over the southern territories because of their distance from the capital and the violently rebellious spirit of the 'southern barbarians' who were generally Tai. Under Shi-Wang-Ti's ruthless policy of expansion the Tai suffered untold miseries, particularly those in the Tai State of Loin Hunan, and Tai scholarship met with virtual extinction. He suppressed confucianism and caused indiscriminately men of letters to be buried alive and the valuable ancient writings destroyed. He abolished the old feudal system.

106 The name Ch'in or Ts'in had found its mention, according to many oriential scholars, in the form of *Chīna* in the laws of Manu, in the *Mahābhārata* and in Kautilya's *Arthašātra* before the foundation of the 'Chinese Empire' Later the foreign travellers, who visited China, spread reports of the wealth and extent of the country which was variously designated as Sin, Chin, Sinae, China, Seres (silk), and subsequently Cathay (from *Kitai*, corrupted from the tribal name K'itan Tartars). It is supposed that "Sinim" of Isaiah refers to the same country. Ptolemy speaks of Sinae and Chinae. Sir R. K. Douglas suggests that Arab travellers, who are destitute of the sound of *Ch*, pronounce as Sinae The author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* writes of *Thin*. See Sir Robert K. Douglas : *Europe and the Far East*, (Cambridge University, 1904), pp 2-3

107 Shih-Wang-Ti, often written as Shih-Hwang-Ti or Shih-Huang-Ti, occupied the thirty-sixth place in succession in the list of Princes of Ch'in State He overthrew the Chou dynasty and united the different divisions of the Empire under his sway. He founded the Ch'in dynasty with his capital at Hsien-Yang in Shen-si He abolished the old Feudal System and reorganized the Empire with thirty-six territorial divisions or Provinces with a Prefect in each. *Wang* means Emperor and *Ti* also means Emperor. He claimed that his own virtues were comparable to *San Wang*, that is, China's three mythical Emperors, who were Divine Emperors and his services were equal to Wu-Ti, the five virtuous Emperors, namely, 1 Hwang-Ti (Circ 2697-2596 B C), 2 Tuan-Yok (Circ 2512-2435 B C), 3 Yao (Circ 2357-2256 B C.), 4. Shun (Circ. 2255-2206 B.C.) and 5. Yu (Circ. 2205-2198 B.C.). Hence he called himself both *Wang* and *Ti*.—Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p. 56.

One of the reasons given by scholars for his action against the ancient literature and the men of letters of his time was that they supported the feudal ideas. Whatever may be the reason, the Tai scholars and their writings suffered irreparable loss at the hands of the Emperor, who wanted to suppress ideas by suppressing literatures and writers.

Great masses of Tai population, as also other barbarian groups, fled from their homes in Hunan and the neighbouring provinces to escape the oppressions of the Emperor, some taking shelter in the hills and others migrating to distant countries in the south. Those, who refused to leave their hearth and home, were always waiting for opportunities to throw off the Chinese yoke. The Han (206 B.C. - A.D. 264) extended their suzerainty of a nominal character over Yün-nān and Kwang-si, but it was costly to maintain it. Rebellions were of frequent occurrence in those parts of the Empire, to quell which there was almost incessant fighting, at times, with heavy losses and defeats for the Imperialists. For the maintenance of political stability, however weak, in the southern frontier regions of the Empire, to which the Tai had been pressed, the Chinese government had to recognise the indigenous Chiefs and confer on them Chinese titles of office and seals in addition to their native dignity. For instance, in the latter part of the fifth century A.D. a Tai potentate of the Pan-hu race was recognized as the king of Siang-Yang in Hupeh and Governor of Kingtchou (in Southern Hupeh) by the Emperor of China. His realm, containing about 80,000 villages, covered the provinces of Central China and extended northwards to the neighbourhood of the Yellow River.[108] Professor Terrien de Lacouperie, from his penetrating study of the development of early Chinese polity, rightly observes that "under the cover of Chinese titles and geographical names' large regions occupied by populations entirely non-Chinese were included as homogeneous parts of the nation, with the effect of concealing the real weakness of the Chiness Empire previous to the last few centuries".[109] Thus the greatness of China is not all Chinese; it can be equally claimed by other ancient races, such as the Turks, the Karens and the Tai that had lived in that vast sub-continemt in the past and developed their cultures and civilization.

108. Cochrane in Milne and Cochrane : *op.cit.*, p. 5.
109. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, xxxiii.

CHAPTER II

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TAI : THE NGAI-LAO KINGDOM

The history of the East Asian regions, called China and Indo-China, is a history of vast movements of population from the north to the south from the pre-historic times and in this the Tai were one of the latest and the most important of the historical races that had migrated from their original homeland probably in the Hwang-Ho valley. Among the various causes that compelled the Tai finally to emigrate from Central China and concentrate in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula the direct one was the political pressure of the growing Chinese Empire since the middle of the third century B.C. Among other causes that drove them to the south the less hospitable natural environment of the north was undoubtedly one. This economic cause, more than anything else, had compelled the earlier hordes to expand southwards in search of better conditions of living. There is yet a third cause, namely, an indomitable passion for power over mankind on the part of ambitious chieftains of fighting clans. Thus in the later centuries there came from the north like avalanche, vast sweeps of conquering hordes driving huge masses of humanity before them. The powerful impacts of these races, coming one after another, forced the earlier races of Central and Southern China to move still further to the south. It appears that there was almost a ceaseless struggle among these races for the possession of the fertile river valleys of the sub-continent of China and Indo-China and those of them that could hold these valleys for long generations got ample leisure to develop their characteristic cultures. Thus the Mon, the Khyen, the Karen, the Tai, the Chinese and the Mongols came in successive streams and, at times, in formidable waves as raiders and conquerers, driving their predecessors southward and obsorbing those that would not leave their hearths and homes.

It must be remembered that the Tai are the descendants of the early Imperial Dynasty of Hwang-Ti and constituted the highest aristocracy in ancient China enjoying special and exclusive hereditary rights and privileges more than sixteen hundred years before the birth of the Ch'in State in Kan-su and more than two thousand three hundred years before the first appearance of the "Chinese" with imperial dignity in 249 B.C. At this later date the Tai had already formed themselves into a distinct

race south of the Yang-tse-Kiang with their characteristic racial culture and tradition. Though the events of history had brought them into a long conflict with the Chinese, yet from physical resemblance and linguistic affinities these two peoples appear to be cognate races. The Tai, who had been in power in China for long before the appearance of the "Chinese" on the scene, crossed the Yang-tse-Kiang at a very early time as governors of their southern dominions. In evidence of early Tai dominions in south China Nai Likhit Hoontrakul has recently brought to our notice the existence of two imperial mausoleums, now in ruins, on the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang, one of Emperor Shun (2255-2206 B.C.) erected on the Kiew-Yi-Shan mountain on the 'extreme southern Hu-nan province' and the other of Emperor Yu (circ 2208-2198 B.C.) erected on the Huey-Chi-Shan nountain on the south of Shao-Hing province of Chekiang. These two Emperors were respectively the great grandson and a descendant of Tuan-Yok. Yu was shun's associate and later the founder of the Hia dynasty. Moreover, the grave of the two Empresses of Emperor Shun, whose names are given as Ngo-wang and Nu-Ying, is still standing at Tung-Ting Lake in Hu-nan. The bodies of these great Emperors and Empresses were certainly not buried in the land of the 'Southern barbarians" had they been other than the Tai. In fact, the ancestors of the modern Tai had their feudal States south of the Yangtse-Kiang ruled by the princes of the Imperial House. The ruined monuments also indirectly bear testimony to the fact that the ancient Tai were a cultured and civilised people and not a barbarian race as believed by many modern writers.[1]

It was Shih-Wang-Ti[2] (249-210 B.C.), the Napoleon of China and founder of the Chinese Empire, that initiated the real pressure on the Tai of Hupeh and Hunan and destroyed their strength, solidarity and culture with the result that from that time onwards the Tai looked upon the Chinese as their hereditary enemy. Long conturies of struggle, in which the Tai were engaged against the Chinese with varying success,

1. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, pp. E-G of the Preface ; also pp. 18, 20-21 for the pictures of the mausoleums.

2. Prof. Latourette, who prefers to wirte Shih Huang Ti like many other European writers, interpretes that 'Shih meaning first, and Huang and Ti being titles customarily ascribed to mythical or semi-mythical rulers of antiquity-the three Huang and Five Ti. He thus gave fresh prestige to his reign and distinguished his office from that of the inept Chou. Had he been content with *wang*, the designation of the Chou monarchs, he might properly have been expected to reproduce their form of government, with its disastrous decentralization. '-*The Chinese* : *Their History and Culture* 1946, p. : 90. The first explanation given elsewhere above appears to be correct as the Emperor must have adopted the titles *Wang* of *San Wang* and *Ti* of the later *Oo-Tis* and the *Wang* of the Chou does not come in at all.

were marked by the rise of a number of powerful Tai States in South China. These States were the result of Tai consolidation in the new positions against the advancing Chinese. The Tai offered stubborn resistance to every one of the aggressions by the Empire, often themselves playing the aggressive part and making powerful inroads into the Chinese territory as opportunities occurred. Even as late as A.D. 566 Emperor Wu-Ti of the Northern Chao dynasty[3] had to protect the passages of the Yangtse-Kiang, west of I-Chang, by erecting strong ramparts against the raids of the barbarians, who were apparently Tai, the regnant race throughout that region.[4]

The first series of struggles of the Tai against the Chinese came to a close in the first quarter of the third century B.C. with the destruction of the great kingdom of Ch'u (T'su) in Central China in which the Tai were strong rivals of the Chinese. The fall of the Ch'u kingdom was followed by the rise of a number of Tai kingdoms in the region of Sze-chuan and Yün-nān and subsequently also in northern Burma and the Mekong velley in French Indo-China, Towards the end of the fourth century B.C. the Ch'u kingdom became an extensive empire threatening the security of north China then under the hegemony of the Ch'in State. Ch'u annexed a number of States in the north including one called Lo, created originally by Chong-kang, the fourth Emperor of the Hia (Hsia) dynasty. Two ministers of the Emperor (2158-2146 B.C.) Hi and Ho rose in revolt against him, but a general named Mi-Yen, a descendant of Emperor Tuan Yok and of Tai-Tai hereditary family, was asked by the Emperor to lead an expedition against the rebels. Mi-Yen succeeded in putting down the revolt after heavy fighting. The ancient historical work, *Yen the Conqueror*, contains an account of this great civil war. As a reward the Emperor conferred upon the victorious General the hereditary title of "Marquis of Lo" and made him a feudatory ruler of the State of Lo in Hu-peh. The Lo people[5] were descended from Tai-Tai ancestors and were probably vested with the right to levy duties on the waterways of the Yang-tse-Kiang during the period of the Hia dynasty.

3. This Chao dynasty belonged to the Hiung Nu (Hsiung Nu), a non-Chinese race that destroyed the Western Chin and established their rule in Pei (Northern) Han which it founded. But this Chao dynasty was different from the Chao, a Tai People already mentioned. -Latourette : *op cit.*, pp. 150-51.

4. *GUBSS.* 1.1, p. 192 ; Milne and Cochrane : *op.cit.*, p.5.

5. It is said that Lo character is composed of two letters, viz., "Szu" is the upper one and means Four ; "Wei" is the lower one and means Factors. "Szu-Wei" means, in Chinese, "the four factors of national maintenance" : (1) Prosperity, (2) Rightness, (3) Prugality and (4) Shame. The factors are greatly valued in the heart of the Lo people (who are identified as Tai people) upto the present day. --Vide Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p. 25.

The Lo State was at first in the district of Yi-chen in northern Hupeh, but was later transferred to Ki-kiang district of southern Hupeh on the north bank of the Yang-tse-Kiang. It appears that the province of Hupeh was reorganized in the meantime. The State was ruled by Tai princes and was able to maintain its continued existence for many centuries without much harm to its territorial integrity from outside enemies. But in 689 B.C. which was also the twentieth year of the reign of the Eastern Chou Emperor, Huan-Wang, the king of the powerful State of Ch'u invaded Lo. But the invading army was badly defeated by the Lo forces. In 698 B.C. Tso-Wen-Wang, the son of Tso-Wu-Wang, made a second invasion of the Lo State and compelled the Tai Marquis of Lo to submit to and accept the suzerainty of Ch'u. Lo was probably wrested by Ch'u from the Chou. The Marquis was then ordered to leave Ki-kiang and settle at Ping Kiang in Hu-nan on the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang. The Tai people, who had their original home in Hupeh and Honan, also migrated in great numbers to the south.

The greatest calamity that overtook the Tai people of Central and Southern Chian was when Shih-Wang-Ti raised an army of 600,000 men under the command of General Wang Chien and invaded the State of Ch'u in 224 B. C. Shih-Wang-Ti had built his capital at Hsien-Yang in Shen-si from where all these gigantic war preparations were directed. Ch'u was then a large State comprising the southern part of Hupeh, Hunan, Kiang-si, Kwei-chow and the northern parts of Kwang-is and Kwang tung. The war that took place ended with disastrous results for Ch'u. Being heavily defeated the Prince of Ch'u had to sue for peace. Shih-Wang-Ti banished him to Sew-chun in An-hui. The Marquis of Lo, the vassal prince of Ch'u, was also transferred to the newly conquered district of Shu in western Sze-chuen as its sub-Prefect. The Lo State in Hu-nan thus came to an end.

As a sequel to all these revolutionary changes in the political set-up of these conquered territories with their tremendous social consequences those Tai or Lo people, who clung to their native homeland, had to break up in the years that followed and distribute themselves in varicus localities of the southern Provinces of China. These localities with Lo-Tai populations grew up into cities which were named after them as Lo-Shan in Hu-nan, Lo-Yuan in Fu-Kian, Lo-Tao an Lo-Huo in Kwei-chow, Lo-Cheng in Kwang-si, and Lo-Ting in Kwang-tung. Even to this day Tai communities are found in these areas who speak a mixed Tai language.[6] That the Lo people were so scattered might well be also an

6. Hoontrakul : *op,cit.*, pp. 61-2.

act of policy on the part of the chinese government to weaken them and effect their merger with the Chinese.

Those Tai people of the Lo State, who found it impossible to continue as a subject race under the Chinese and refused to accept the humiliating status of being called 'the people of Ch''in', preferred to quit their homes for even the wilds of Chang-sha and Hsiang comprising the modern Provinces of Hu-nan, Kwang-si and Kwang-tung. They formed their settelment in the hill tracts of those provinces and were referred to as Hill Tribes by the local plains peoples though they called themselves Tai of the ancient Tai-Tai families. Later on they migrated to the north-western part of Indo-China, most probably by the Black river valley, and set up along the south-western side of that river a State called Hsip-Hsawng-Chu-Tai. This branch of the Tai also constitutes the population of the Laos kingdom founded by a powerful Tai chieftain, Fa Ngoun the Conqueror, in the Upper Middle Mekong valley in 1353. This Loas kingdom, then called the kingdom of Lan Chang (later Luang Prabang or more properly Luāng phrā Bāng) was the result of the union of a number of Laos or Tai States under the leadership of Fa Ngoun and it extended from Hsip-Hsawng-panna to the northern border of Cambodia. It later formed one of the three Associated States within the French Union.[7] Both the Pai-Yi and Ngai-Lao legends agree that the Laotians are of the same group as the Pai-Yi of South China.[8] Probably towards the close of the thirteenth century A.D. or early in the fourteenth these people moved down the Nām Hou (Nām U) from their earlier home around Dieng-Bien-phu, in Hsip-Hsawng-Chu-Tai in what is now Tongking, into the Mekong valley. They not only occupied the middle Mekong area, but, as pointed out by Briggs, they seem to have spread like a layer over the other Tai of neighbouring regions.[9]

A large section of the Tai population of the State of Lo also followed the Marquis of Lo to Shu when the latter was transferred to that district But these Tai people in Shu were not allowed to have peace by the Chinese government. All able-bodied men were forced to leave their homes to construct roads and bridges throughout the Enpire and to build up the Great Wall of about 2,500 miles in length. It is said that every third man in the Empire was summoned to work upon the Great Wall which was completed in five years under the supervision of General Meng-Tien.

7. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p.62 ; Hall : *op.cit.*, p.207.
8. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949.pp. 64-5.
9. *Ibid*, p. 70.

Most of the Tai conscript labour perished under the rigorous conditions of the works and those that survived fled into the wilds of Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Kwei-chow, then called Shu, Chien-chung and Kui-lin respectively, in order to escape the oppressions of the Chinese task-masters.

Shih-Wang-Ti reorganized his administrative system and divided the territory of his Empire into thirty-six Provinces each of which was governed by a Prefect. He abolished the old feudal system which was originally introduced by Emperor Yu (Circ. 2208-2198 B. C.) of Hia and prohibited the study of Confucious. In 214 B. C. he issued orders to seize and destroy all classical books, particularly those of Confucius, except the books on agriculture, medicine and the divining art. He did not spare the books containing ideas in support of feudalism. Huge stacks of books so seized were burnt away. To avert the penalty of death the book-sellers throughout the whole empire closed their shops and burnt their books. The Emperor also caused four hundred and sixty men of letters to be burried alive probably because they had remonstrated with him on his mad act of destruction of the valuable ancient writings. He even punished his own son Hu-Su with imprisonment for expressing disapproval of his measures. The Tai, who had been a cultured people being of the princely rank in early times, were in possession of a rich heritage of art and literature at the time of Shih-Wang-Ti, but the men of letters among the Tai and their literary works were so completely destroyed in this wild act of persecution that from that time the Tai in the Empire became almost an illiterate race through lack of books and teachers. In a few decades following this tragic event these descendants of the once highest class of nobility degenerated into being Hill Tribes,[10] or rather many of them got merged with the Hill Tribes living in the inaccessible mountainous regions. Those who took shelter in the highlands of Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Kwei-chow call themselves Tai or Chai to this day. As men of the wild country they became known as 'barbarians'.[11]

There were also a number of hill tribes in the southern Provinces of Hu-nan, Kwang-si and Kwang-tung including some of the Lais who were the descendants of early feudal rulers or Marquises created by Emperor

10. Twelve such tribes are mentioned, nine Lais and three Miaos. The Lais are found also among the southern Chin tribes of the Chin Hills between Assam and Burma. The Miaos, so called by the Shans, are really Meng or Hmeng. They are called Miaotzu by the Chinese. They are supposed to be of the Mon race. "The Mons would thus stand in the same relation to the Hmeng that the Siamese do to the Tai Long of the Shweli neighbourhood". This race comprises nearly one half of the population of the province of Kwei-chow and is also very numerous in Kiang-si and neighbouring provinces. -Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p. 63. : *GUBSS*, 1.1.pp. 454, 597-601..
11 Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, pp. 58-63.

Seow-Hao in the third millennium B.C. and who had come and settled in those areas long before the rise of the Chinese Empire. They were later discovered by the Chinese in the period of the Han, whose dominions extended far to the south. These hill tribes, who were mostly Tai, still contemptuously refer to the Chinese by the nickname of "Ping-Ti-Kan", meaning Plateau Traitors. These Tai used to migrate in small groups to the southern countries as peaceful settlers of the plains regions, but they would also move in large masses in the event of a war or large-scale repression by the Chinese within the Empire. The routes these migrants usually followed, particularly in descending from the hills, were the river valleys which open out in the lower courses into wide tracts of fertile plains. Thus these people entered Upper Burma through the valleys of the Shweli, Nam-ting and Taping ; Siam through the Menām and Me-ping valleys; and French Indo-China through the Mekong, the Black and the Red Rivers and settled down in the rich rice-growing areas of those countries.

There was also a great concentration of the Tai and other non-Chinese 'barbarians', such as the Lolo, the Miao and the Minchia in the south-western part of Yün-nān from the continual flow of populations from the north and north-east owing to Chinese pressure. Two instances of this early pressure on the Tai are mentioned in the records of the Chinese one on the Ai-Lao (Ngai-Lao), locally called Pa in Sze-chuan, in 338 B. C. by the State of Ch'in and another on Ch'u in 224 B. C. by imperial China which seriously affected the Ai-Lao in the Lao-Shan Kiu-lung range, both causing the local tribes to move *en masse* to the south. It was this vast agglomeration of tribes with the Tai (Ngai-Lao) as the central ruling group that constituted the strength of a rival empire called Nan-Chao by the Chinese. The early history of Nan-Chao is thus the history of the branch of the Tai called Ai-Lao or Ngai-Lao, who had already established a small kingdom in Yung-Ch'ang[12] in Yün-nān. The appearance of the Ngai-Lao in Yün-nān as a ruling race in the first century of the Christian era was preceded by a dark period of over two centuries. These Ngai-Lao entered and settled in that area as the result of a vast wave of migration of population to western Yün-nān from their earlier home and shelter in the Lao-shan and Kiu-lung mountains when the Ch'in army, in the war against Ch'u, swept across these ranges in 224 B. C. from east to west annexing Sze-chuan (Shu).[13] This great drive by the Chinese imperial army in the southern country led to a large-scale dis-

12. Major Davies tells us that "Yung-Ch'ang is merely a corruption of Wan-S'ang, the name by which this place is still known to the Shans" - *Yun-nan*, p. 379.

13. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, p. lii ; Dodd : *op.cit*, Chap. I.

persal of the populations of Sze-chuan, the Ngai-Lao race being broken up and driven away further to the south and south-west. But in the subsequent decades these people regrouped themselves in various localities amid the hills and plains of Yün-nān and set up a number of small principalities, six of which are well-known in the history of Yün-nān. One of these principalities was that of the Ngai-Lao founded by one prince Chiu-lung. This principality is historically important as the original foundation of Nan-Chao.

It would be of interest to digress here for a moment to refer to a Chinese work of the sixteenth century A. D. called *A History of the Southern Princes*[14] by an author named Yang-Tsai of Chen-T'u-fu in the province of Sze-chuan which traces the descent of Prince Chiu-lung from king Asoka of Magadha (264-228 B. C.) in the direct line.[15] This legend of Asoka showing relaionship between the ruling dynasties of Yün-nān and Magadha is also current in the local Buddhist tradition in Yün-nān. It is said that Avolokiteśvara came from India and converted the country to Buddhism. Early cultural relations between India and these Far-Eastern countries are well-known. They were established and maintained mostly by Buddhist missionaries, who travelled by overland routes from India to those countries. Pelliot argues with much reason that Nan-Chao received Buddhist influences from India via the P'iao of Burma.[16] The routes lay through Eastern Bengal, Manipur and Arakan and probably it was by this route that the Sakya princes Abhi Raja in 923 B. C. and Dhaja Raja in 523 B. C. (or 519 B. C.) reached Burma. There is no mention of any journey by sea at that early period.[17] The northern part of the Kubo valley which was on the direct route from Manipur to Burma is still called Mauriya or Mauria, said to be the name

14. This work was collected at Tali-fu in Yün-nān by an English missionary named G.W. Clark and was translated into English by him with the assistance of a local Chinese scholar. The manuscript was written in A.D. 1537 by Yang-tsai of Chen-t'u-fu in Sze-chuan and reedited by Hu-Yu of Wuchang-fu in Hu-peh in 1776. Clark published the English translation of the manuscript in a small book printed at the Shanghai Mercury Press in 1894 in a very limited number of copies for distribution among his friends. This book is unknown in the libraries of Europe and America. Only four copies were there with the translator of which one was borrowed by M. Carthew, M.D. (Phya Ayuraved Vichakshana), who has, from his notes taken from the book, contributed an article under the heading "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan", 2205 B.C.—A.D. 1253 to *JSS*., vol . XL, Part I. July, 1952, pp. 1-38. The present introduction is from the information given by M. Carthew. This work gives a connected account of the Tai rule in Yün-nān from the earliest times down to the fall of Nan-Chao in 1254.

15. M. Carthew : "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan" in *JSS*, *ibid.*, pp. 1, 6-7.

16. *Deux Itineraires*, pp. 154-83.

17. *GUBSS*, 1.1, pp. 217-18.

of the tribe to which king Asoka belonged.[18] The Kubo valley specially its northern part was inhabited by Tai people from before the sixth century A. D. We know from Francis Buchanan's investigations that the Tai-löng or the great Tai were called Maitay Kabo (Kubo) by the people of Cussay (Manipur). This Tai community settled in the upper part of the river Chindwin.[19] Further being the grandson of Candragupta, who was probably of Śabara or Kirāta (i.e. Śūdra) and hence Mongoloid stock,[20] as indicated in the drama *Mudrārākṣasa*, *Code of Manu* and the *Mahābhārata*, Asoka may be assumed to be a non-Aryan ruler of Magadha. Hence the possibility of his racial affinity with the Mongoloid peoples of Yün-nān or Burma is not to be brushed aside on sentimental grounds. Even Cānakya calls Candragupta (Candagutta) by the name of Vṛśala Maurya, Vṛaśala being a denomination which means a class of wild tribes in which the Kirātas and Śabaras are included. It was perhaps after his great military success against the Nandas that Candragupta was given the Kṣatriya status, an instance not uncommon in India even to recent times.[21] In this context it is quite possible to show some sort of a legendary connection of Asoka with the contemporary Yün-nān dynasty. But it was perhaps the Buddhist missionary enterprise more than anything else that was responsible for the glorification of Asoka's name everywhere in the Buddhist world and the Asoka legend in Yün-nān is but an instance of it rather than any direct blood relation with the reigning family of

18. Phayre : *History of Burma*, (London, 1883), pp. 6-7, 15.

19. F. Buchanan : "A Comparative Vocabulary of Some of the Languages Spoken in the Burma Empire" in *Asiatic Researches* : vol. V, 4th Ed., 1807, p. 228.

20. Candragupta's father Maurya was son of king Sarvarthasiddhi of Patalipura (Pataliputra, Kusumapura or Puṣpapura) by his Sudra wife Murā, the daughter of a charioteer, Suta. He was a half-brother of the 'Nine Nandas', all again his sons by his elder wife Sunanda, born of a Kṣatriya family. Murā probably belonged to the Moriya clan of the Sakyas from which Candragupta was called Maurya or Maurya-putra. He was also called Vṛśala (Śūdra) by Cānakya; See the historical drama *Mudrārākṣasa* by Viśakhadatta, Act I; also *The Mudrārākṣasa-nātakakathā* of Mahadeva, ed. by Dr. V. Raghavan, The Sarasvati Mahal Series I, 1946, pp. 23-4. The land of the Moriyas was Pipphalivana. Candragupta is said to have got his name from a bull named Canda, who guarded him during infancy. The Greeks, unable to pronounce properly, called him by various names, all variants of Candragupta. Thus he was called Xandrames by Diodoros, Andrakottos by Plutarch and Sandracottus by Justin. Derivation Maurya from Murā is rejected by historians, according to whom that derivation would be Maureya. The Jain versions speak of Nanda as base-born and Candragupta as born in a family of peacockfarmers (Mayurapoṣaka) and Buddhistic versions assign Candragupta to a Kṣatriya tribe called Moriyas related to the Sakyas and living generally near Nepal i.e. Pipphalivana. - Raghavan : *op.cit.*, (Ed.) Notes. pp. V-VI.

21. See also *The Wild Tribes in Indian History* by Dr. B.A. Salatore, Lahore, Motilal Banarsi Das, 1935, pp. 49-50.

Yün-nān.[22] Asoka's actual visit to Yün-nān is not known from the records availble in India, nor is Asoka's life fully known from these records. Apart from his religious missions, his political relations with the Far East, if any, constitute a subject of immense value which has not yet been investigated with a view to establishing new facts.

Now, to go back to the history of the Ngai-Lao kingdom, we have to recall the history of the earlier kingdom of Ch'u which became essentially Tai in later periods. Towards the close of the fourth century B. C. Ch'u commanded a vast territory extending from the sea in the east to Sze-chuan in the west covering its eastern part and from the middle of Honan in the north to the Nan-ling mountains in the south. The border States of Ngu (Wu) and Yeh in the east, the whole of Kwei-chow and northern Yün-nān were brought under its sway. But after its conquest by Ch'in in 224 B. C. it was not much known for several centuries. In the third century A. D. Ch'u again came into the picture with a territory greatly reduced. It then possessed only parts of Sze-chuan and Yün-nān, and later still its authority was confined to Yün-nān only. It seems the Chinese extended their suzerainty over the principalities of Yün-nān and Sze-chuan as early as the first century A. D., but that suzerainty was more or less nominal and unstable. By the third century A. D. there already came into existence a powerful kingdom in western Yün-nān under the

22. It is even stated in the *History of the Southern Princes* that "King Asoka of Magadha lived for a time at Tali-fu, then ruled over by an Indian prince, and that he there married a princess from Tali-fu called Ch'ien-meng-kui. By her he had three sons, the eldest being called Ti-meng-ch'ien-fu-le. The latter's eldest son was called Meng-cu-fu and he became the ancestor of the 'sixteen kingdoms'. One of his descendants in the direct line, Prince Jen-kue, became King of Tien (Yünnān), 122-117 B.C., and from the latter was descended the long line of the kings of Nan-Chao". G.W. Clark further draws our attention to the fact that "the country around Tali-fu to this day (1890) is full of legends of King Asoka and his three sons and there are still many annual ceremonies carried out by the local Thai in memory of his sons"—M. Carthew : "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan" in *JSS*, vol XL, Part I, 1952, pp. 3-4. Hoontrakul also refers to this legend, which G. Cordier obtained from a Chinese book the title of which is translated as *The Private History of Nan-Chao*. In this book there is mention of Asoka's queen and his nine sons instead of three. The names of the queen and of the eldest son are the same as those mentioned above with slight phonetic variation. Asoka is called A-Yu-Wang and king of Mahagada (Pali) or Magadha in India and his nine sons are said to be the ancestors respectively of the tribes of Yün-nān, the Tibetans, the Chinese, the Marn tribes in the east, the ruling Mêng family of Nan-Chao, the Ceylonese, the Annamites, the Yin-Kwa tribe who reigned in Pai-Se kingdom near Tali and the Pai-yi tribe, the Tai of southern Yün-nān and the Laos. -Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, pp. 129-30, also *La Province du Yunnan* by Cordier, "Legendary period", pp. 532-34.

Ngai-Lao. In the middle of the seventh century A.D. the Ngai-Lao defeated the Chinese and extended their power over lower Sze-chuan and the neighbouring territories. Chinese records mention that Tali-fu was the kingdom of the Ngai-Lao in the first century A. D. when for the first time the Chinese came into clash with them. In the subsequent period they were probably ousted from that area by the Chinese, whereupon they consolidated their position further south-west and began to grow and expand and forced the Chinese to give up a large part of their southern domains. To the Chinese these Tai of South China were known as Ai-Lao or simply Lao.[23]

About the early history of the Ngai-Lao or Ai-Lao (old pron. *ai-lau*) our only source of information are the Chinese Annals. It was E. H. Parker who did the pioneering work of translating a mass of such Annals collected in the border States of Burma and China. Mr. Parker says referring chiefly to the Annals of the T'ang dynasty, which are more than a thousand years old : "The Chinese had clearly defined relations with the Shan or Ai-Lao Empire of (modern) Tali-fu in the first century of our era, and in A. D. 90 (elsewhere the date A. D. 97 is given) one Yung Yu, King of T'an, sent tribute to China through the good offices of the Ai-Lao, receiving an official seal from China. The Chinese seem to take it for granted that Yung Yu of T'en was of the same race as a later Pyu (Burmese) king named Yung K'iang."[24]

The legendary origin of the Ngai-Lao is narrated in the Chinese records[25] in the form of a story thus :

"According to them, there was originally a woman called Sha-i (or Sha-yh, or Cha-yi, wife of Te-mou[26]), who dwelt on Mt. Lao and used to catch fish. While she was in the water she struck against a sunken log,[27] as if in the act of kind, and as a result she conceived and in the tenth month gave birth to ten sons. After this the sunken log transformed itself into

23. Brian Harrison : *South-East Asia* (New York, 1954, Macmillan,) p. 38.

24. *CUBSS*, 1.1, p. 260.

Yung K'iang may be simply the Chinese transformation of Burmese Aung K'iang so as to fit in with their conception of 'Hsing' or clan names ; for the Chinese annalists had the habit of presenting things in such a manner as to conform to Chinese ways. Even as late as the eighteenth century the Chinese referred to Alaungpaya, who assumed the title of Aung Zeya (the Victorious), as of the Yung family. -Sir J. George Scott : *Burma and Beyond*, 1932, p. 213.

25. *Hou Han Shu*, Ch.116, f5. recto, "Ngai-Lao Barbarians".

26. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, p. lii. Shan word is Hsai, meaning sand, for Sha-i. Te-mou is probably Ti Mong-tseu of the Ngai-Lao legend as described below.

27. The legend behind this sunken log is that king Asoka's fifth son Mêng-su-Tok, who was the ancestor of the famous ruling Mêng family of Nan- Chao, while fishing in the lake Yi-Lo, situated on the south of the present Pao-Shan in Yün-nân, was drowned and his remains were transformed into a trunk of tree. -Cordier : *ibid*, pp. 532-34, referred to by Hoontrakul in his book *The Historical Records etc.* p. 130.

a dragon and came out on the surface of the water. Sha-i suddenly heard the dragon speaking. It said : Thou hast borne me sons. Where are they now ? Nine of the sons, on seeing the dragon, were startled and fled. Only the youngest son, who was unable to go, sat down with his back to the dragon, and the dragon licked him ; therefore his mother called her son Chiu-lung (or Kiu-lung),[28] *Chiu* or *Kiu* meaning 'back' and *lung* meaning 'to sit'. And afterwards when he grew up, his elder brothers, considering that Chiu-lung had been licked by his father, and that he was shrewd, all joined in electing him king. After this, below Mt. Lao, there were husband and wife to whom in due course there were born ten daughters.[29] Chiu-lung and his brothers all took these daughters to wife , and after a time they gradually multiplied plentifully. The tribesmen all tattooed their bodies with figures of elephants and dragons and their clothes shewed tails".

This account is the priestly invention about a race of people among whom the dragon worship was the dominantc ult, the Indian counterpart of which is the Nāga cult. Pelliot points out that the Chinese have *hsiang lung*, "elephant-dragon", both of which were used to translate the Sanskrit word *nāga*. The *Lung*, or "dragon", is the most familiar mythological creature which has a large place not only in the popular mind but also in Chinese literature. The Dragon is regarded as benevolent and is associated with divine forces and with rain, clouds and water.[30] Its Indian equivalent is undoubtedly *Nāga*.[31]

28. Chiu—Kiu ,pronounced Chiu.

29. T. de Lacouperie seems to believe that they were of the Man stock, *op.cit.*, p. lii. It may be noted that the Chinese call the barbarians of Southern China 'Man'. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 64.

30. Latourette : *op.cit.*, p. 649.

31. M.L. Finot has grouped together a certain number of epigraphic and literary data referring to this legend. His collections show that the tale of the Nāgī was very ancient in Indo-China and it already appeared in the Chinese Texts of the sixth century relating to Funan (Cambodia' -Note D :—"The Legends of the Nagi and the apsaras" by Victor Goloubew, translated from *Bulletin De l'Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient*. vol. 24, 1924, p. 501 ff. Reproduced in *Administration and Social Life under the pallavas* by Dr. C. Minakshi, pp. 25-34. The name Kambuja (Cambodia) owes its origin to Kambu Svayaṁbhuva, the king of Aryadeśa, who married the Nāga king's daughter and became king of that country. M.G. Coedês called attention to the existence in South India of two inscriptions dating from the Pallavas. The epigraphical texts belong to the eleventh century A.D., the date being disputed, however, by Dr. Minakshi and others. The first of these documents, a charter of Skanda Śiṣya, assigns a Nāgī as wife of king Aśvatthamā, the son of Droṇa, whom the Pallavas venerated as one of their ancestors. As to the second, a charter of Nandivarman III, there is mentioned among the Pallava kings a legendary Virakurca who married a Princess of Ophidian Stock and obtained from her "the insignia of royalty". It may be that the Nāga Princes, who reigned in the Deccan and Central India, believed themselves to be of Nāga origin. -Note D :- *op.cit.*, Whether the Nāga or the Dragon cult originally migrated from India to China or from China to India is not definitely known, but that there was in the past a long period when the Dragon worship was popular am ong the tribes of East Asia is a historical fact.

But the Ngai-Lao (Nān-Chao) legend[32] itself says that Ti Mong-tseu had nine sons, who became the ancestors, respectively of (1) the Tai-Yai (Shans), (2) Tibetans,, (3) Chinese, (4) the Man, (5) the Ngai-Lao dynasty of Nān-Chao, (6) Ceylonese, (7) Annamites, (8) the Pai-tseu kingdom of Yün-nān and (9) the Pai-Yi of lower Yün-nān and Upper Laos. Of these groups only four are Tai, namely, the Tai-Yai (Shans), the Ngai-Lao, the Pai-tseu and the Pai-Yi, and the rest are obviously non-Tai. But the striking fact is that all these peoples, Tai or non-Tai, are Buddhists and the legend does not antedate their conversion to Buddhism, particularly of the Singhalese creed (Thera-vāda). Again the Pai-Yi legend asserts that the Laotians proper, Pu-Euns and the Tai of Tong-king belong to the Pai-Yi family.[33] If these legends are true then the Ngai-Lao and the Lao (Laotians) are two different branches of the same original stock.

According to some authorities the name of the race, called Ngai-Lao, has originated from a place of that name. Regarding the place name Ngai-Lao Sainson has identified it with Mt. T'ien-ching in the prefecture of Yung-Ch'ang. It is from here that the Ngai-Lao kingdom is said to have developed. Sainson says Mt. Chiu-lung is south of Yung-Ch'ang Fu, and the Chiu-lung river is also frequently found as another name for the river Mekong in the Hsip-Hsawng-Panna.[34] The home of the Ngai-Lao thus appears to have been on, or west of, the Mekong, not far from Yung-ch'ang.[35] Chavannes alludes to a note of Hui-lin according to which "Tsang-ko was the name of a tribe situated in the extreme south-west of China and it is also the name of the territory where they dwelt..... The old name for this country was Ngai-lao, from which we get the name Laos".[36] But Professor T. de Lacouperie says that the Lao Shan (i.e. Lao mountain) is situated, according to the tradition of the Ngai-Lao race, at the intersection of the modern provinces of Honan, Hupeh and An-hui in the eastern part of Central China.[37] Dr. Dodd who, probably not knowing that another mountain of the same name also exists in Yün-nān, accepts the location of the Lao mountain as described by T. de Lacouperie and tells us that the Lao mountains are said, by tradition, to be named after the Lao race. He further points out that "the cognate forms of the name Lao, such as Leao, Chao, Ngai-Lao,

32. *Nan-Tchao ye-tche* 24-5.
33. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p.64.
34. *BEFE-O*, 1908, p. 152. n6.
35. Parker on the Ngai-Lao, *JRBS*, vol. xiv, Part II, p.100.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
37. T. de Lacouperie : *op.cit.*, p. lii.

Shen-Lao etc., were common all along the whole range from An-hui to Sze-chuan. The Ai-Lao, also called Ngai-Lao, extended well westward along this Lao-Shan and its continuation, the Kiu-lung range. Westward of this chief centre of the Ngai-Lao, but still hugging the foot of the Kiu-lung, were the Leao, as their name was locally pronounced. But when the Tsin advanced over this range further west, into Ssu-chuan, in the third century B. C., they found the race, locally known there as Ai-Lao, although the tribal names were still in vogue, Mung, Lung, Pa, etc., as is evidenced by their persistence down to the present time".[38] The above geographical descriptions point to two areas called Lao Shan in which the Ngai-Lao had their abode, one in the north and the other in the south-west part of Yün-nān, both being important perhaps in two different periods of history. Mt. Lao or Ngai-Lao in the prefecture of Yung-Ch'ang was probably named after the new racial appellation Lao, acquired by the Tai, as the inhabitants of Lao-Shan in the north. These Ngai-Lao, after being driven from their northern seat by the Chinese, crossed the Yang-tse-Kiang and extended their sway over western Yün-nān with Tali-fu as their capital. They must have concentrated themselves in Yung-Ch'ang, after the surrender of the rulers of Tali-fu, making it their second seat of power.

After the third century B. C. the Chinese next heard of the Ngai-Lao in A. D. 47 during the reign of the Later or Eastern Han (A. D. 25-221), or even much earlier as some annals indicate. In that year the Ngai-Lao king Hsien-li (or Hien-lih), who flourished many generations after their progenitor Chiu-lung, sent warriors to the south down the Chiang (or Kiang)-Han on rafts made of bamboo and wood to attack the Lu-to barbarians on the frontier. Here a difficult geographical question arises. If we accept the position of the Lao-Shan to be at the intersection of the provinces of Honan, Hupeh and Ngan-huy (Ngan-hui) as pointed out by Prof. T. de Lacouperie then it is quite possible that the troops of Hsien-li descended on rafts by the Chiang-Han, a great tributary of the Yang-tse-Kiang, which flows from the north-west to south-east down the adjoining valley on the west and south of the Lao-Shan, the State of the Ngai-Lao. But this northern seat of Ngai-Lao power, if there was one at all, could not have existed in the first century A. D. after the conquest of that area by the Chinese in the first quarter of the third century B. C., for the invasion drove most of the local tribes to the south of the Yang-tse-Kiang. If, on the other hand, Tali-fu, as mentioned by Parker, be the seat of the Ngai-Lao kingdom at that time, then it is not easy to see how any river of the name of Chiang-Han

38. Dodd, *op.cit.*, Chap. I.

flowing south from Yung-Ch'ang, could lead to the Chinese frontier. The only possible river of that name is one that flows through Kwang-tung, but it is to the farther east. The reference may be to the Black or the Red River, or one of their tributaries, flowing south-east to Chiao-Chih (Tongking) as one commentator suggests.[39] But in this connection it should be remembered that in the first century of the Christian era the Ngai-Lao had already lost their political hold on northern Lao-Shan and had concentrated themselves in the western part of Yün-nān (Talifu), from where they led a number of expeditions down the river-ways to the Chinese border territories in Tongking inhabited by the unruly Lu-to.

The result of the Ngai-Lao campaign against the Lu-to men was that the latter were subjugated and many taken as captives by the Ngai-Lao generals. But on way back Hsien-li's army was overwhelmed by a sudden stormy wind blowing upstream from the south accompanied with thunder-quake and rain. The violence of the wind sank most of the loaded crafts and several thousand Ngai-Lao troops with their capatives were drowned. This disaster virtually undid the effect of the victory and Hsien-li had to send a second expedition of ten thousand men under six generals to attack the tribe. But to the utter surprise of the Ngai-Lao Chief all his six generals were killed by the tribesmen and the expeditionary force badly defeated. Being unnerved at this unexpected disaster Hsien-li called the Elders and said to them : "We have entered the frontier from of old, and now we are attacking the Lu-to. Immediately we are punished by heaven. Have they got in the Middle Kingdom a holy Emperor ? Otherwise, how can heaven so manifestly help and protect them ?"

It appears either the Lu-to tribesmen were under the Empire receiving protection from it or in attacking them the Ngai-Lao forces crossed the frontier and violated the Chinese territory,[40] in consequence whereof they met with defeat at the hands of the Chinese. Probably prior to this event the Chinese dominions had not extended so far, or even if they had, the Chinese control over this part of the country had been nominal and incapable of preventing the raids of the Ngai-Lao. The words addressed to the Elders by Hsien-li, however, indicate that the Ngai-Lao king already knew that the Lu-to people were under the protection of the Middle Kingdom. Hence as a sequel to his defeat Hsien-li in A.D. 51, with other subordinate chiefs and 2,770 families of tribesmen in

39. *JBRS*, vol. xiv, Part II, p. 112.
40. *GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 261.

alliance with him consisting of 17,659 persons, went and submitted to Cheng Hung, the Prefect of Yueh-sui for admission to the Empire.[41] Kuang-Wu, the first Emperor of the Later Han, was then pleased to appoint Hsien-li and the headmen, who accompanied him, as Chieftains tributary to China.

Ma Touan-lin, who says that, in the *Chien Wa* period (A.D. 25-55) the king of the Ngai-Lao, a barbarous people of what is now northwestern Yün-nān, was asked to become a vassal of the Chinese empire. It undoubtedly refers to this event.[43] Briggs points out that E.H. Parker paid a great deal of attention to this legendary kingdom, which he calls Ai-Lao.[43] It may be noted that the name Ngai-Lao, or Ai-Lao, is found all over the map of northeastern Indo-China, even to Central Annam ; but whether the Ngai-Lao, who founded Nān-Chao, had any special relationship with the Lao or Laotians of the Nām Hou, whence were founded the Laotian principalities on the Mekong, is not definitely known. These two groups came from opposite corners of the kingdom of Nān-Chao and according to the Ngai-Lao legend they are two different branches of the same stock.[44]

After eighteen years from the date of their first submission to China the Ngai-Lao king, Liu-mao, sent his son in A.D. 69 at the head of his tribesmen to make his submission again to the Chinese Emperor, Hsien

41. *JBRS*, vol. xiv, Part II, pp. 112-13 : "The Tan and the Ngai-Lao", *Hau Han Shu*, ch. 116, f5 recto : "Ngai-Lao Barbarians".

The position of the prefecture of Yueh-sui, as mentioned above, is of importance as a part of the Chinese Empire in the south. Mr. Parker places Yueh-sui between the Ya-lung and Yang-tse rivers in south-west Sze-chuan. But according to Sainson "Yueh-sui ting is north of Ning-Yuan Fu in south Sze-chuan, north of the Yang-tse". (see *Nantchao ye-tche*, p.11, n8, and map.) Yueh-sui and I-chou prefctures were first established by Han Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.) in 111 B.C. and 109 B.C. respectively. It is further said that Chiung-tu (Cheng-tu), which was to the north of Tien, was organized into Yueh-sui prefecture in the aforesaid year. (Ref. *Shih* chi, 116, f.2 verso : *Chien han shu*, ch.28A, f. 11 verso ; *Hou han shu*, ch. 33, f.1. verso-2 recto). But Chavannes, on the authority of Tung chien kang mu (under year A.D. 272), says that I-chou "corresponds to the prefecture of Cheng-tu in Ssuchuan". (*BEFE-O*' 1903,p. 232, n 5). According to *Shih chi* I-chou prefecture was formed out of the old kingdom of Tien (Yun-nan-fu). Nai Likhit Hoontrakul points out that in 105 B.C. I-chou was but the present city of Kun-Ming (Yun-nan-fu) in Yün-nān. In that year I-chou was involved in trouble for which a royal expedition was sent from the Chinese capital to restore tranquillity in the city.—Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p. 68. It may be that the pressure and expansion of the Ngai-Lao had caused such a shrinkage of the prefecture of I-chou that it was probably placed under the prefecture of Yueh-sui so that the Ngai-Lao had to submit to the Prefect of the latter province instead of that of I-chou which had no separate existence.

42. Ma Touan-lin : *Ethnographic des peuples etrangeres a la China..... Meridionaur*, (Paris, 1883), p. 175 referred to by Briggs in *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 63.

43. E.H. Parker, "The early Laos in China", *China Review*, 19. 72-109 and "The old Tai, or Shan, empire of Western Yunnan, *CR*, 20. 337.

44. *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p. 63.

Tsung, who is famous in history as Ming Ti (A.D. 57-75) and who first introduced Buddhism in China.[45] The total population, represented by the Ngai-Lao Delegation that went to submit to the Emperor, is put at 553,716 in 51,890 families with 77 headmen called Princes. According to Chinese records they lived at a distance of 7000 li south-west of Lo-Yang, the imperial capital of China near modern Honan-Fu under the later or Eastern Han Dynasty (25-221), called in Chinese *Tung Han* or *Hou Han*.

These submissions, must have affected only a section of the Tai people without any great harm to the compact area of the Tai and the Tai kingdoms farther south over which the Chinese could scarcely have imposed their suzerainty. Yet the above submissions of the Ngai-Lao meant a great extension of the Chinese dominions to the south-west of the Empire. Following upon their victory, the Chinese made a further advance which brought their frontier beyond the Lan-tsang (Mekong) river and opened up communications with Burma and the West. This acquisition of new territory necessitated the creation of the Yung-Ch'ang prefecture (*Chun*) in western Yün-nān. This prefecture included only two new districts viz, the small kingdom of Ngai-Lao and Po-nān, to which were added six districts that had formed the western part of I-chou and had been governed by the *Tu-Wei* of that division appointed in A.D. 67 with his residence at Sui-t'ang. As mentioned in the *Hou-han chih* ("supplement to the *Hen chih*") the names of the six districts were Pu-wai, Sui-t'ang. Pi-su, Yeh-yu, Yeh-lung and Yün-nān (Yün-nān-fu ?). Sainson's map shows a Yün-nān hsien (district) south-east of Tai-li Lake. The district Ngai-Lao, it is believed, was given that name by the Ngai-Lao. It was originally a kingdom under the Lao kings.[46] Since the prefecture of Yung-ch'ang extended westwards beyond the Mekong, and Po-nān is said to be east of the district of Ngai-Lao it was, in all probability, situated on the west of that river in the neighbourhood of Yung-Ch'ang-fu.

Ngai-Lao was one of the SIX CHAOS or kingdoms of western Yün-nān and was called by the Chinese Jun-Chow (*Yun-chao*, barbarian-Chief ?) or Shen-to-kuo. Jung-Chow was prabably Jen Kue already mentioned in connection with Asoka's line of rulers in Yün-nān. Ngai Lao was the name given to the kingdom by the 'barbarians' themselves who ruled it. Five of these kingdoms including Ngai-Lao were Tai and the sixth one, called Na-khi with its capital at Li

45. According to Latourette and many other modern writers Buddhism had already entered China before Ming-Ti. -Latourette : *op.cit.*, p. 129.

46. *Hou han shu*, ch. 33, f. 2 recto.

Chiang, was Tibeto-Burman. It is stated in Chinese records that in A.D. 649 Chang-le-chin, king of Ngai-Lao, abdicated the throne in favour of a Tai Prince named Mêng-Hsi-nu-lo, a member of the Méng family of the Ngai-Lao (Tai) race. Hsi-nu-lo's kingdom was south of the other five kingdoms and extended from Yung-Ch'ang-fu to Yao-chew.[47] Thus the general position and extent of the Ngai-Lao kingdom is clear from the above accounts. Nān-Chao empire developed from this originally small Chao or kingdom of Ngai-Lao and the Mêng family ruled over it for 170 years.[48] Po-nān is said to have "the western mountains 30 *li* high. Having crossed them you get to the Lan-tsang Shui" (Me-kong).[49]

Cheng Shun was possibly the first prefect of Yung-Ch'ang to whom must be ascribed the progress and China's popularity in the prefecture. By a treaty with the Ngai-Lao community he levied on all male persons a nominal per capita annual tribute consisting of "a measure of salt and two cloth garments, with a hole for the head to go through". Rev. Cochrane draws our notice to such garments being worn to this day by the wild Karen tribes of Burma. It was the constructive genius of this Chinese officer that brought peace and political stability to this border territory of the far-flung empire of China.

But in A.D. 76,[50] after his death, the Ngai-Lao, led by their General-King, Lei-Lao, rebelled and attacked the neighbouring districts of Sui-t'ang and Po-nan. The Chinese authorities were, however, quick enough to put down the rebellion the very next year, the Ngai-Lao king being killed in the battle. This defeat caused a mass migration of the Ngai-Lao to the Northern Shan States of Burma. A section of them, being oppressed by the Chinese, went towards Tongking.[51] But the Ngai-Lao did not take long to recover from this blow and re-unite, in face of constant threats from the Empire, to work up and bring into being the powerful kingdom of Nān-Chao. In the mean time, for about a century, after the defeat of the Ngai-Lao rebels, the southern frontier remained undisturbed facilitating visits of foreign embassies to China across it. Thus the Tun-jen-i (A.D. 94), the Tan (A.D. 97), the Lu-lei pigmies (A.D. 107) and the Tan once more (A.D. 121) sent their embassies, who passed through

47. "The History of the Thai in Yunnan" by M. Carthew in *JSS*, July, 1952, pp. 7, 15; also L. Hoontrakul : *op. cit.*, pp. B., 91.

48. L. Hoontrakul : *op. cit.*, p. 95.

49. *The Hua Yang Kuo Chih*, vide *JBRS*, vol. xiv, Part II, pp. 107, 114.

50. A. D. 78 according T. de Lacouperie : *op. cit.*, p. lii.

51. T. de Lacouperie : *op. cit.*, pl liii. ; Eric Seidenfaden in Credner's Monograph on Yun-nan, p. 18.

this Ngai-Lao country to the Chinese court.[52] The road for communication with distant countries was thus opened for the first time *via* Mt. Po-nan and across the Lan-tsang (Me-kong) river. A song, that was current, describes this outlet to the world abroad from China thus : "The power of the Han is broad. It opens the door to those who are not yet guests. We cross Po-nan : pass the Lan ford : cross the Lan-tsang : for the benefit of others".[53] *The Hua Yang Kuo Chih* says that west of Po-nan district is a mountain 30 *li* high and after passing it one has to cross the Lan-tsang river.

Except for a gap in the early period a long line of Ngai-Lao rulers is now available. The *Ngai-Lao Chuan* (i.e. "Record of the Ngai-Lao") says that the names of Chiu-lung's successors, generation by generation, can not be numbered up to the time of one called Chin-Kao, but thenceforth they are recorded. Thus "on the death of Chin-Kao, his son Hsi succeeded him. On the death of Hsi, his son Chien-fei succeeded him. On the death of Chien-fei, his son Ngai-Lao succeeded him. On the death of Ngai-Lao, his son Sang-ngou succeeded him. On the death of Sang-ngou, his son Liu-cheng succeeded him. On the death of Liu-cheng, his son Liu-mao succeeded him. On the death of Liu-mao, his son Hu-li succeeded him". Still there is a lacuna between Hu-li and Hsien-li of the first century A.D. But that the race, with its various sections under various tribal names, had been existing from very early times is beyond dispute. They had spread all over that part of the country and formed settlements under their chiefs or 'kings' in localities, separated by mountain gorges and gullies, and also in secluded areas and barren tracts beyond the frontier, cut off by deep mountain streams. Though more or less isolated, yet they grew powerful in Yün-nān and Lower Sze-Chuan. But the formidable impact of the expanding Chinese Empire caused these peoples to migrate to northern Burma, French Indo-China and Siam and those that remained behind in subjection to the Empire were restless looking out for oppotunities to assert their independence and strive to regain their lost territories. Hsien-li's action and Lei-Lao's organized revolt against the Chinese rule are probably only two out of many such historical instances in point as yet known to us. In fact, the whole area comprising Yün-nān and a large part of Sze-chuan was in a state of unrest resulting in intervals of local independence for the Tai and other peoples. Such independence enabled them to consolidate their power to meet fresh dangers from the Empire.

52. *JBRS*, vol. xiv, Part II, p. 108.
53. *Ibid*, p. 115.

There were also troubles in the south-eastern frontier of the Empire. The peoples of the coastal provinces and Annam, which had been annexed by Shih-Wang-Ti and placed under the administrative system of the Ch'in, took advantage of the weaknesses of the Empire after the death of Shih-Wang-Ti and succeeded in overthrowing the Chinese yoke and restoring the independence of their own territories. It has been mentioned how cruelly the Tai had been dislodged by the Chinese from Central and Southern China—from Ch'u, Lo, Shu and even Yün-nān. A considerable section of these Tai migrated, in desperation, to the south-eastern wilds and hills. These Tai must have played a significant part in this drive for liberation from the Chinese yoke on the death of the first Emperor Shih-Wang-Ti. Their freedom, however, did not last long. Being divided under local rival chiefs, they became weak and passed into the hands of China once again under Han Wu-Ti (140-86 B.C.) about 108 B.C. when Nān Yueh, the largest of these kingdoms in the south, was conquered and annexed by the Han.

Weaknesses of the imperial authority soon after Shih-Wang-Ti's death became manifest when ruthless measures were taken against the most trusted advisers and generals by Ur-Sze-Wang-Ti, "the Second Generation Emperor" (209-207 b.c.),[54] at the instigation of an influential eunuch, named Chao Kao. The Emperor's action gave rise to widespread rebellion which brought about rapid downfall of the Ch'in dynasty. It afforded an opportunity to the discontented 'southern barbarians' to overthrow the Ch'in suzerainty, which Shih- Wang-Ti had imposed from Annam to the Burmese border. The Tai, who were the most numerous and dominant element in Yün-nān, Sze-chuan and Kwei-chow, had always cherished the ambition to restore their ancestral sovereignty over as much of Central China as could be wrested from the Chinese. As such, whenever any opportunity arose for striking a blow against the Chinese overlordship, the Tai vassal chiefts did never fail to avail themselves of it. Thus most of the Tai States of the south asserted their independence at the decline of Shih-Wang-Ti's dynasty. These had to be reconquered by the Han rulers towards the last decades of the second century B.C., one of the objects being to open and control the trade routes to India *via* Burma.

54. Shih-Wang-Ti wished that his own descendants should rule the Empire for thousands of years and that his successors should be named as Second Generation (Skt. Purusa), Third Generation Emperors etc. -Hoontrakul, *op. cit.*, p. 56 .

In 100 B.C. Han-Wu-Ti sent an expedition to Tien[55] (Yün-nān-fu), a Tai kingdom. The outcome of the expedition was that the king of Tien became an ally of China and helped her to suppress the k'un-ming[56] tribe. In about 108 B.C. Han-Wu-Ti reannexed the south-eastern part of the former Ch'in Emire. Under him the Empire extended far and wide in the south and comprised the Tai provinces of Kwang-tung, Kwang-si, Yün-nān Kwei-chow, Tongking, Hainan and the north-eastern part of French Indo-China. Such extension was possible due to the superiority of the Han army, which had been organized on a new plan with such major changes as the replacement of the old cumbersome war chariot by a mobile cavalry supported by infantry. But internally the country was so heavily drained of its wealth and the people so mercilessly taxed by Han-Wu-Ti for his ambitious wars of conquest that at length the whole country bristled up with rebellions which were only suppressed by appalling slaughter.[57]

When after about two hundred years the later Han finally collapsed, the Empire broke up into three kingdoms (*San Kuo* : A.D. 221-265) in A.D. 221. In Sze-chuan one Liu-Pei, a descendant of the Han, declared himself Emperor, whose dynasty thenceforth became known as the Minor or Shu Han, Shu being the name of the State over which he had ruled. Liu-Pei was the uncle of Emperor Hien-Ti and, as such, proclaimed himself as the lawful heir to the throne of the Han. He called himself Chao-Lieh-Ti and ruled over the south-western division comprising Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Kwei-chow, predominantly a Tai area, with his capital established at Chengtu. He appointed as his minister Chu-Ko-Liang or Kun-Ming, a great statesman and General who came from Shantung. Chu-Ko-Liang served him faithfully and did much to improve the country. The three kingdoms—Wei in the north, Woo in the east and Shu in the west contended for the Imperial crown, as none of their rulers was recognized by the others as superior.

Chu-Ko-Liang (A.D. 181-234) was a great historical figure of the the third century A.D. whose name has become memorable to this day

55. Mr. E. H. Parker notes that Tien is a name still applied to Yün-nān in the literary style. In the last part of the Chou period a Chou general named Chuan Chao created this earlier kingdom in eastern Yün-nān calling it Tien Kuo. Sir George Scott says that during Wu-Ti's reign the king of Tien was a Shan (Tai). His capital was at Peh-ngai and this place remained an important Shan centre till after eight hundred years.

56. The name K'un-ming is still applied to a lake near Yün-nān-fu.—*GUBSS*, 1. 1. pp. 260-61.

57. Soothill : *op. cit.*, 26-28 ; Latourette : *op. cit.*, pp. 103-108.

among the south-west 'barbarians' and whose life has gathered round it a whole cycle of legends. It was Chu-Ko-Liang, who helped Liu Pei to become king of Shu (Sze-chuan) and also restored order in the barbarian south by subduing the border tribes. In this campaign he is said to have entered Burma and invaded her. This is mentioned in a passage contained in a reference to Pagan in the *Chu fan chih* which says : "There is in this country a temple dedicated to the marquis Chu-Ko-Liang who is said to have led an expedition to the heart of Burma somewhere about A.D. 225.[58] Further many frontier towns and ramparts in modern Burma are to this day called after Chu- Ko-Liang. In the Museum at Yün-nān-fu there is a drum attributed to him,[59] with the following note, partly illegible, by Georges Cordier : "Chu-Ko-Liang....was appointed Governor of I-Chou....plants native to China.... According to tradition, bronze-drums.... approach".

Liu Pei died in A.D. 223 and was succeeded by his son Hou-Ti (or Hou-Chu). In A.D. 225 Hou-Ti attacked Yün-nān. He stopped at Peh-ngai (Pai-ngai) in the neighbourhood of Tien (Yün-nān-fu) and found reigning there Prince Lu-yu-na of the Tai (Shan) royal family and descendant of Prince Jen-Kuo (122-117 B.C.) in the eighteenth generation.[60] It was the first Chinese invasion of the hilly country of Yün-nān during the reign of the Han dynasty. Yün-nān-fu, the provincial capital of Yün-nān, was given the new name of k'un-ming by Young China after the name of the leader of the Chinese army that invaded Yün-nān in that year.[61]

In the third year of Hou-Ti's reign Mêng-Huo, a Tai Prince of the Marn country invaded southern Yün-nān. This invasion was the part of a great rebellion against China in which Yang-Kai, the Prefect of Ch'ien-sing[62] (present k'unming ?), Intendant Chu-pae and officer Kao-tang joined hands with Mêng-huo and all acted in concert. Prefects of Yueh-sui in southern Sze-chuan and Yang-Ko (present Kwei-yang)

58. Giles : *A Chinese Bibliographical Dictionary*, p. 180 ; *Chau Ju-Kua*. pp. 58-9, n 3. as quoted in *JBRS*, vol. xiv, Part II, p. 93.

59. See *BEFE-O*, 1915, No. 3, p. 37.

60. *JSS*, vol. XL, pt. I, July, 1952, p. 7.

61. Credner : *op. cit.*, p. 1. The leader of the army was apparently Chu-Ko-Liang.

62. Marn means Burman. For the Tai prince Meng-Huo (or Ming-Kuo) see *JSS*, July, 1952, P. 8.

63. According to L. Hoontrakul's researches Chien-Ning or I-chou district, the present K'un-ming in the centre of Yün-nān, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

in western Kwei-chow also made common cause with the rebels. But the Prefect of Yang-ch'ang[64] remained loyal to the Chinese Emperor and used all his strength to defend his province. The city of Ta-li was occupied by the rebel leader Mêng-huo. On receipt of information from the Resident at Ta-li about this widespread rebellion against China, Emperor Hou-Ti[65] sent Chu-Ko-Liang, his minister for the western Empire, from Cheng-Tu with a powerful force of 500,000 soldiers to quell the rebellion. Against this imperial force the rebel leaders brought together four divisions, each of 50,000 men.

General Chu-Ko-Liang marched down to Chi-sing-kuan, an important strategic point in north-west Kwei-Chow and used it as the main base of operations for his army. Starting from there he proceeded to cut off the lines of communication from the three provinces in control of the rebels and threatened them with dire consequences unless their Prefects surrendered. At the same time he succeeded in winning over to his side the Prefect of Yueh-sui. He then launched his attack on the rebel leaders, defeated their armies and killed Yang-kai. After this defeat of his allied forces Prince Mêng Huo (also Mêng Kuo), who had already taken Ta-li and installed himslef as its ruler, was left alone to face the formidable imperial army led by the military genius and foremost strategist Chu-Ko-Liang. Yet he was determined to resist the Chinese. The clever Chu-Ko-Liang, instead of making a direct attack on Ta-li, used a few bronze drums to scare away Mêng Huo from within the fortifications of the city without a battle. The plan succeeded and Meng Huo, being alarmed, left the city for the Lu-Sui (the river Salween). On the banks of the Lu-Sui both the armies met and fought a number of epic battles, a narrative of which is found in Chinese literature.

It is said that during this historic campaign Chu-Ko-Liang captured Mêng Huo for six times, not by defeating him in the battle-field but by stratagem, and every time released him magnanimously hoping to see him voluntarily submit to the imperial authority ; but all such gestures were of no effect. In the first phase of the war, captures were on the left (east) bank of the Lu-Sui to the north-west of Yung-Ch'ang-fu, where most of the engagements took place. On being released from captivity for the sixth time, Mêng-Huo found his attempts to resist the Chinese general from this side of the river futile. He therefore retreated to the opposite bank and used the river as his defence against any further advance by the Marquis.

64. Yung-ch'ang, present Pao-Shan in south-western Yün-nān which was formerly called Ai-Lao country.
65. Mentioned as Ch'ien-hsin in the "History of the Southern Princes". vide "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan", *JSS*, vol. XI, Pt. I, July, 1952, p. 8.

But the Marquis managed, with great difficulty, to cross the river with his troops by means of an iron-chained bridge constructed by him. At this place many of his troops died of malaria as the Salween is one of the worst mosquito breeding rivers in South-east Asia. Chu-Ko-Liang then entered Upper Burma in pursuit of Mêng-huo and succeeded in capturing him for the seventh time. It is said that Chu-Ko-Liang could penetrate deep into the Marn or Burma country with the help of a map presented to him during this campaign by the sub-Prefect of Yung-Ch'ang and capture the prince again. He returned to the head quarters at Yung-Ch'ang with the captive prince by the same route and reached the Lu-Sui in the ninth month while the river was in flood. This time he had to decide finally whether he should allow the same generosity as before to this obstinate prince and let him off or treat him as an enemy and take action accordingly. In handling this most difficult but, at the same time, most delicate question of Chinese frontier policy, he was, on this occasion, guided by General Mah-tse, who had just arrived from the Imperial Court with despatches and presents. Mah-tse gave his wise advice to Chu-Ko-Liang in these words :

"Though I may be prejudiced in my opinion, nevertheless, think over my words. These Tai are a self-confident and lawless race; the distant position of their country from ours, the high mountains, the dangerous roads, only encourage their rebellious ideas. If you crush them to-day, then tomorrow they will rally and rebel again. Doubtless, your army will be able to crush them again, but to keep them in permanent subjection and preserve order you would have to keep a large standing army in the country; and then, as soon as you removed it rebellion would at once recur. I strongly advise you to contend with their minds rather than with their bodies or their cities. First govern their hearts and then you will without trouble be able to govern their bodies and their cities. Conquest of their reason is all important and their loyalty will follow after it".[66]

Marquis Chu-Ko-Liang then replied : "You see through my body (literally, into my most intimate thoughts). I agree with you".[67] Chinese classical scholars affirm that Marquis Chu-Ko-Liang was one of the finest statesmen and military strategists ever produced in China, whose opinion about the Tai was based upon intimate personal knowledge of the characteristics of the race.

66. "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan" in *JSS*. vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952. p. 9.
67. *Ibid*, p. 9.

While in detention, Prince Mêng Huo was once sitting in a despondent mood for his defeat. Seeing this his wife Chu-Yong remonstrated with him for his mental breakdown and asked him to give her the command of the army. Prince Mêng-huo reluctantly granted it. The Princess at once prepared herself for the fight and assumed the command of a force of one hundred of his bravest officers and five thousand of his best troops and sallied forth on horseback to meet the enemy.

She was an expert in throwing knives and carried to the battle-field five sharp knives strapped in a case on her back and a long lance in her right hand. The Chinese General Chang-in was surprised to see a woman leading the Tai troops. In the battle that took place between the two armies the Chinese were worsted and Chu-Yong overpowered and captured the two Chinese generals, Chang-in and Ma-chong, who had been sent against her. The marvellous martial qualities and faultless fighting tactics of the Tai Princess evoked profound admiration even from the enemy camp. She was, however, trapped by General Wei in a subsequent battle and presented to the Marquis. The Marquis was so charmed and moved to see the handsome and gallant lady that he immediately released her from captivity and, after dispelling her fears, entertained the royal couple with a sumptuous feast. Next day the Prince was formally set free by the Marquis.

Overwhelmed with gratitude Mêng-huo burst into tears and said : "seven times now have I been mercifully released by my captor. Surely the like of this has never been known in history. I should be a most wicked and ungrateful man if I ever rebel again".[68] On his submission, he was reinstated by the Marquis as a hereditary ruler of his former kingdom after a peace agreement, apparently under Chinese suzerainty.

It may be particularly noted that in this campaign there is mention of the use of gun-powder and cannon by the Chinese. The account of the war also describes the use of a small cannon which fired many balls simultaneously. It is this superiority in arms that gave Chu-Ko-Liang a great technical advantage over the Tai rebels.[69]

68. *JSS*, vol. XL. Pt. I, 1952, *Ibid*, pp. 8-11.

69. There was a great destruction of Mêng-huo's forces, led by his General Prince Wu, in a ravine. The Chinese at this place threw flaming torches from the sides of the ravine when General Wu's troops reached it. The oiled rush armour of Prince Wu's troops soon caught fire and the flames spread rapidly. The lighted torches set fire to trains of gunpowder laid in bamboo poles; and these exploding, ignited buried cannon which fired in all directions. Soon the whole ravine was full of flames and smoke and that day Prince Wu and his whole army perished. Further, 'the cannon were each camposed of nine small ones, bound together with strips of brass and were fired by trains of gunpowder'. Marquis Chu-Ko-Liang watched the carnage and wept with sorrow at the emormous sacrifice of life. —*JSS*, vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952, p. 14.

Mêng-huo is also mentioned as prince of Tien.[70] This and the other geographical descriptions in the narrative of the war, which was fought for five months,[71] indicate that the principality of Tien comprised a part of the present Yün-nān, particularly the south-western part of it, and a part of north-eastern Burma with the Salween at the China-Burma frontier. That frontier appears to have remained so till Kublai Khan's conquest of Yün-nān, for the frontier battle of Nga-saunggyan (1277) between the armies of the Pagan king of Mien (Burma) and Kublai Khan was fought near Vochang (Yung-ch'ang-fu) in the neighbourhood of the Salween river.[72] Chu-Ko-Liang's invasion of Burma may well have been one of the early irruptions of Tarôps and Tarets, from the north-east of Burma, who left their mark at old Pagan. Chu-Ko-Liang is said to have erected an iron pillar in Mitu, 30 *li* from Heng-ai in commemoration of his victories. This pillar was destroyed in A.D. 870, but later one Prince Shi-long caused a copy of it to be cast. This later column is still preserved in the Tieh-en-mai village of Heng-ai.[73] Chu-Ko-Liang is not only noted for his wonderful ideas of strategy, but also for the inventions of military machines.

In spite of personal bravery and great statesmanship of Chu-Ko-Liang, Shu was the first of the three kingdoms to disappear. Then there followed a period of unstable government till at last the Eastern Chin came into power. The Chinese suzerainty over the territories of the turbulent south during this period was no better than a mere formality. At this state of affairs, the ambitious Tai princes, with all their pride and traditions of a great ruling race in China, spared no pains to unite and reconstruct the separate petty States into a powerful consolidated kingdom capable of challenging their northern colossus. The Tai or Lo or Lao people, who made south-western Yün-nān their last stronghold and home, suffered terribly from the ravages of the war with the Shu Han. As a result, large numbers of these people left for the southern countries—Burma, Laos and Siam—as refugees. But a considerable section grimly stuck to their native land and faced all the horrors of the war with silent resistance to the Imperailists. It was these people, who in their uncompromising attitude towards the Chinese overlords organized the scattered forces and set up the Nan-Chao kingdom during a period of China's own disintegration and misfortune.

70. vide "The History of the Thai in Yunnan" in *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952, p. 9. From the references to Tien it appears that writers sometimes refer by that name to the whole of the modern province of Yün-nān with certain adjacent territories.

71. vide L. Hoontrakul : *op. cit.*, p. 86.

72. L. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, see map opposite p. 86 ; Hall : *Burma*, (Hutchinson, London, 1950), p. 26 ; Komroff : *The Travels of Marco Polo*. The Modern Library, New York, 1926, pp. 199-203.

73. *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952, p. 8.

CHAPTER III

RISE AND FALL OF THE NĀN-CHAO EMPIRE

From very early times Yün-nān was called by the Chinese 'the Land of the Hsi-nān', meaning thereby the land of the 'southern barbarians', and its inhabitants were contemptuously referred to as 'ungovernable vermin'. Rejecting the very high antiquity of the term Hsi-nān, about 2200 B. C., as shown in some Chinese records of a much later date, we may safely assume that for many centuries before Christ the tribes of the south, the Tai in particular, were called Hsi-nān by the Chinese. At a later date, about 225 B. C., the Chinese used to refer to them as P'u-jen dropping the earlier term meaning 'vermin', but they always regarded them as 'ungovernable'. Other names for them were Tien-jen (men of Tien or Yün-nān) and later Lu-chao (inhabitants of Nān-Chao).[1] According to *Chiu-t'ang-Shu*, "formerly their chiefs were six ; hence their name Lu-chao.[2] Yün-nān, too, was known by many different names in different periods, such as Nān-Chao, Hao-t'o, Lung-Wei ("Dragon's tail"), Chu-mieh, and Yang-chien.[3] Under the ancient Chou dynasty (C. 1122-255 B. C.) Yün-nān was called Shan-tsan. Only the name Shan-tsan is known without any account of its rulers.

In the last part of the Chou period, somewhere between 280 and 255 B. C., the Emperor sent an expedition to the south under General Chuan Chao for the conquest of Sze-chuan and for exploring the regions along the river Yang-tse-kiang. The General marched upto the shores of the Yün-nān Lake (Tien Chih) in eastern Yün-nān and then wanted to return. But his road had been blocked by troops engaged in a war at the time between two neighbouring States. He, therefore, stopped and proclaimed himself king of the conquered territories calling it Tien kuo (kingdom of Tien). The dynasty he thus founded is known as Tien dynasty. Western Yün-nān, with Tali as capital, was then ruled by kings having legendary connection with India.

To the Chinese "Nan-Chao barbarians were originally a sort of Wu Man ('Black Barbarians') tribe. These barbarians call their king

1. M. Carthew : *ibid*, in *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt.I. 1952, p.3.
2. *JRSB*, vol. XIV, Pt.II, p. 108.
3. *Ibid*, p.108.

Chao. They claim to be descendants of the Ngai-Lao. For generations they dwelt in Mêng-she-Chou and were chieftains there".[4] "Black Barbarians" were so called, as pointed out by Rev. Cochrane, because of the Tai habit of wearing black garments.[5] The Ahoms had the same habit in the earlier period of their rule in Assam.[6] It has no reference to their complexion which was definitely fair everywhere. Mêng-Shè-Chao was one of the six small kingdoms or Chaos of Yün-nān and was the southernmost of these kingdoms.[7] Mêng-She was, according to Chia Tan's *itinerary*, the original Nān-Chao ("the Chao on the south"). Pelliot says that it was on the site of the present village of Ku-Ch'eng, 15 *li* north of Mêng-hua[8]. Parker says that Mêng-She was the ancient seat of the Mêng family of Nān-Chao rulers. Scott believes that Mêng-She was the modern Mangshih, called by the Shans Möng Hkawn.[9] Nān-Chao represented the southernmost limit in the direction of Burma reached by the Sino-Tai cultural influence.

From A. D. 230 until A. D. 649 western Yün-nān remained divided into six separate States, known in history as "the Six kingdoms of Nān-Chao", governed by their hereditary princes called "Chao"s. They were under Chinese suzerainty. In A. D. 649 the king of Ai-Lao, Chiang-le-chin, abdicated in favour of Prince Mêng-Si-nu-lo, a memeber of the Mêng (Mung or Tai) family.[10] He was the most powerful of the six Chaos or Princes and his kingdom was called Mêng-She. At that time eastern Yün-nān was a Chinese territory under a Prefect of the Chang family whose head-quarters were at Chien-ning or I-Chou (the present K'un-ming city). Prince Si-un-lo married a daughter of the Prefect. The Chinese annals say that in A. D. 650 the Tai rebelled and defeated the Chinese.[11] This was probably the triumph of Si-nu-lo in his process of consolidating the Tai power by uniting the petty principalities of Western Yün-nān.

He was succeeded in A. D. 674 by his son, Lo-Sing-Yen, who reigned for about thirty-eight years without any notable event. His son Sing-lo-pi came to the throne in A. D. 712. He rendered very important services

4. *The Chiu t'ang shu* as translated in *JBRS*, vol.XIV, pt.II, p. 107.
5. Milne and Cochrane - *op.cit.*, p. 12.
6. During HSö-HUM-HPĀ'S rule (1497-1539), the people of Gaur were struck to see the terrible looking black-dressed Ahoms on the bank of the Karatoya-*Assam Buranji*, ed. by S.K. Bhuyan, (1945, Shillong.) p.23.
7. L. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p.91 ; *JSS*, vol.XL, Pt.I, 1952, p. 15.
8. *BEFE-O*, 1904, p. 369, n.2 ; vide *JBRS*, vol.XIV, Pt. II, p. 108.
9. *GUBSS*, 1.1, p.264.
10. *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt.I, 1952, p. 15.
11. Sarasas : *op.cit.*, p.11.

to the T'ang Emperor, Yuan-Chung, for which the latter was pleased to invest him with a territory in southern Sze-Chuan and to confer upon him the princely rank of Tai-Ting-Wang. In the history of the "six kingdoms of Nān-Chao" the most revolutionary event was the rise of a single powerful kingdom by the unification of all the six separate kingdoms in A. D. 738. The author of that historic achievement was Mêng-Kui-Yi, son of the Tai-Ting-Wang Sing-lo-pi. He assumed the name of Pi-lo-ko and succeeded to his father 's throne in A. D. 728 at the age of thirty-one. He was an ambitious prince who wanted to unify under him the six kingdoms into one by means fair or foul. But he apprehended that the suzerain power might intervene in the event of a major conflict arising in an attempt to accomplish it. He therefore secretly obtained the co-operation of a high Chinese official named Wong, who was stationed at Chien-C'wan-fu in Sze-Chuan, in the matter. He seems to have suggested to the Emperor through this official how it would be of greater advantage to the Imperial Government to have to deal with only one ruler instead of six in that remote part of the empire and how one ruler over the whole territory would maintain peace better than several rival princes. The Emperor must have appreciated the idea as he gave his sanction for the proposed unification of the country. It is not known, however, what means he had suggested in his approach to the Emperor to secure that end.

Prince Pi-lo-ko then planned a *coup d'etat*. He invited his five royal neighbours with their sons to join him at Mêng-hua (Mêng-whating) on the 24th day of the 6th Moon of the year A. D. 731 in offering sacrifices to the spirits of their ancestors and to participate in the sacrificial feast. But the invitations aroused suspicion in the minds of some of the Princes. Prince Li-chiang, a Na-khi, refused the invitation. Prince U-tsen of Ten-C'wan-chew acepted the invitation after a good deal of hesitation. His wife Tsi-Shan, a woman of extra-ordinary beauty and intelligence, suspected evil intention on the part of the host and therefore requested her husband to put on his sword-proof amulet as a precaution against any act of treachery while going to attend the function. The function was deliberately held in a large hall made of inflammable pitch pine. The Princes and their sons met and performed the sacrifices. When the rituals were over the royal guests were all entertained with a feast in the hall and were made dead drunk. After dark, while the Princes were still in that drunken condition, Pi-lo-ko put armed guards all around the compound and set fire to the hall. Four of the Princes and their sons perished in the flames. The fifth Prince was later subdued.

Having thus eliminated the Princes and their sons by a single stroke of policy he quickly proceeded to annex their kingdoms and also to take into

his harem the royal widows except Tsi-Shan, who refused to submit. He then sent troops to capture her, but she escaped the indignity by swallowing poison. The place, where she committed suicide, is now called Ten-rien-cen, which is 20 *li* north-east of Ten-c'wan-chew. G.W. Clark informs us that both these historic events are even to-day celebrated annually by the local people. On the 24th day of the 6th Moon each year the people in the district round Ta-li celebrate what is known as "He-pa-chieh" or Firebrand Feast in commemoration of the great tragedy of the Princes.

The Tai prince Pi-lo-ko of Mêng-She may thus be called the founder of what later became known in history as the kingdom of Nān-Chao. The combined territory, over which Pi-lo-ko became the unrivalled monarch, was first called Tā-mêng-kuo (Great Mung-Kingdom) in A. D. 738. The name Tā-mêng-kuo was changed into Nān-Chao-kuo (kingdom of Nān-Chao) in A. D. 794 when Emperor Teh-Chung of the T'ang dynasty conferred upon Yi-men-sin, son and successsor of Ko-lo-fêng, the title of Nān-Chao-Wang (Emperor of Nān-Chao). Pi-lo-ko transferred his capital from Mêng-She to the rich and well-protected plains of Ta-li and built it at Tai-Ho-Tsheng,[12] 8 kilometres south of Ta-li, between the shores of Erh Hai and the Tien Tshang Shan range.[13] His main consideration in selecting Ta-li was its great strategic value. In A. D. 739 some of the Man-tsi tribes rebelled but Prince Pi-lo-ko soon reduced them to submission. With some of these tribesmen he visited the Imperial capital. Emperor K'ai uien (?) or probably Hsuan Tsung of the T'ang dynasty, who ruled from A. D. 713 to 755, "received him very graciously, bestowed high titles upon him, gave him many presents, and requested him to build many cities in his kingdom". After returning from the Chinese capital Pi-lo-ko used his Man-tsi prisoners to build the city of Tai-Ho. He also built a number of other cities including Ta-li-fu and Hsia and Shan Kwans, calling them Lêng-tow and Lêng-wi, that is, the dragon's head and tail. In A. D. 740 two cities of his kingdom Ch'ien-c'wan-lau-kong and Yung-ch'ang-fu fell into the hands of a rebel leader named Meu-Chao, but Pi-lo-ko crushed the rebellion and recaptured the cities.

In A. D. 745, during the reign of the sixth T'ang Emperor, Ming-Ti, Pi-lo-ko entered into a new treaty with China. This second treaty, which was perhaps necessitated by the expiry or violation of the old one, guaran-

12. 'Tsheng' is said to be Chinese translation of the Tai word Tshiang (Chieng), which means a fortified town. Now with the decay of this old capital the place is called Tai-Ho-Tsun-Tsun meaning in Chinese a village.

13. Credner : *ibid*, p.5.

teed security of Nān-Chao on the Chinese side. Pi-lo-ko thus became free to deal with the troublesome Tibetans. He then launched a war on Tibet and succeeded in seizing several cities.

Though for Pi-lo-ko end seems to justify the means and he set such an example by committing the dastardly act of assassinating the princes of the neighbouring States and annexing their territories, either at the instigation or connivance of the Emperor, yet he proved to be a great builder and a great king by accomplishing the unification of the hitherto weak and petty States within a very brief space of time. It seems he acted with a vision and preferred to make a short cut to its realization. His great object was undoubtedly to consolidate the Tai power at the Dragon's tail by welding together the small rival kingdoms and the opportunity for this task he created by the policy of promoting friendship with China. Pi-lo-ko's achievement created a great impression on the mind of the Emperor, who was then pleased to appoint Pi-lo-ko's son as a general of the imperial army for the southern defence with head-quarters at Mêng-hua.

The unification of Nān-Chao, then called Tā-Mêng-Kuo, (The Great Mung Kingdom) under Pi-lo-ko, was the first great step towards the development of that kingdom into a rival empire of China. The administrative system of the kingdom, as at the time of Pi-lo-ko's death, reached a high degree of efficiency, so much so that it was supposed to be better organized with its numerous departments than any that contemporary Europe had. The king had a Council of eight Ministers to manage the civil and military affairs of the State. Legislation was one of the functions of the Ministers. For directing and supervising the works of the various departments there were nine Executive Officers, a President over the mandarins, an officer for the Census, Military Instructors, Judges, Commissioners of Works and of the Board of Trade, three officers in charge of the Government granaries, one Superintendent of Horses, One Superintendent of Cattle, a Commander-in-Chief, a Commissariat Officer and eight Prefects ; and two Brigadier-Generals, one stationed at Hwa-li-ch'ee Si-l'wein and the other at Tong-hai-hsien. There were thirty-five military officers in command of troops, stationed at various strategic centres east of Ta-li, but only two such officers west of the city. Provisions were made for rewarding persons for acts of bravery and rendering distinguished services to the State. Rewards were generally gifts of gorgeous clothes. Thus the whole system was based upon well developed principles of Government.

14. *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt.I, 1952, p. 18.

Such division of responsibility and the task of co-ordination of the affairs of so many departments are themselves a great practical limitation upon the royal power. To be used to such a system itself virtually transforms an absolute monarchy into a limited one. In fact, the Tai monarchy of Nān-Chao was based on an unwritten principle of checks and balances and the king was often elected by the subjects. Administrative features, such as these, reflect an enlightened conception of government as distinguished from the rule of the tribal chieftains There is no evidence to show that the king ever claimed to rule by divine right. In the later period, however, the Nān-Chao rulers professed Buddhism and under the influence of that religion the legend grew that the reigning dynasty of the kingdom was descended from Asoka.

The relation between Imperial China and Nān-Chao was one of friendship between two great powers with this difference that the latter had to acknowledge, as a formality, the suzerainty of the former. The Government of Nān-Chao was , on that account, not a subordinate branch of the Government of China. The relations of the other non-Chinese southern States to the Empire were also more or less the same. These southern rulers used to pay friendly visits to the Imperial Court in recognition of the latter's superior dignity and receive from the Emperor honours, titles and presents. At most, the imperial Government of China would sometimes send a Resident to supervise the affairs of these rulers and to report on them from time to time. Nān-Chao being a potential danger, China's interest lay in ensuring her goodwill and co-operation towards China for the maintenance of political stability in the so-called southern dominions. In the event of occurrence of any great disturbance, such as a rebellion, the imperial government would despatch armed forces for quelling the same and enforcing loyalty to the Emperor. In those early days of difficult communication, it was never possible for China to maintain any effective control over these border States lying, as they did, at a great distance from the imperial head-quarters. China had therefore to be contented with the exercise of nominal suzerainty over them. But whenever an Emperor happens to be a man of weak character, intolerant, capricious and blood-thirsty, rebellions break out in the Empire and, in these circumstances, where possible, the Chinese suzerainty is overthrown by the non-Chinese vassal rulers, causing, at times, a change of the Chinese ruling dynasty itself.

It may also be noted that these native rulers were no less benefited from the existence of the Empire. But for the imperial supervision, however nominal, and the constant possibility of armed intervention by that authority, conflicts between the rival States of the south would have been more frequent with still worse consequences. On the other hand,

the same lack of effective control over these States on the part of the imperial Government was a large opportunity for any ambitious and enterprising prince to embark upon a career of conquests and empire-building. Prince Pi-lo-ko of the State of Mêng-she actually played such a role to augment his power and expand his kingdom.

Pi-lo-ko died in A. D. 748[15] and his son, Ko-lo-fêng,[16] succeeded to the throne at the age of thirty-six. W. W. Cochrane, who mastered well the Shan language and studied the history of the race, says that Ko-lo-fêng is but the Chinese corruption of the Tai name Khun-Lu-Fung or Khun-Luang-Fung (meaning Lord Lu the Glorious).[17] He made T'ai-Ho his residence. T'ai-Ho means 'great peace' in Chinese.[18] According to Yang-tsai's narrative, the Emperor Tien-pao probably Hsuan-Tsung (A. D. 712-55), the greatest T'ang Emperor of China, sent Li-kiu-ih to install him as "King of Nān-Chao". By promoting friendship with the Chinese, he first incorporated a number of southern Ngai-Lao principalities with his kingdom and attacked and defeated the Tu'fan or Turfan (Tibetans) whose territorial ambitions were a threat to both western China and Nān Chao. But once in A. D. 751, while Prince Ko-lo-fêng was on a journey with his wife to pay a visit to General Li-mi,[19] he received complaints from the people of his kingdom that two Chiese officers, probably neighbouring Governors, named Chang and Chia, had been behaving in a most impudent and offensive manner towards the people of Nān-Chao. According to another account, King Ko-lo-fêng paid a visit to China, where he was insulted by the Governor of Hunan.[20] The Governor mentioned here might be one of the above two Governors, probably Governor Chang. Ko-lo-fêng immediately sent Captain Yang as his personal envoy to report the matter to the Chinese Emperor, but the latter discourteously refused to listen to the charge. At this the Nān-Chao king felt himself further humiliated. So he himself proceeded to take strong action against the Chinese Governors. He despatched an armed force under General Wang to punish Chang, the chief offender. In the engagement that took place Chang was badly defeated but escaped being made a prisoner by poisoning himself to death.

15. According to some writers A.D. 740.
16. Some say that he was an adopted son.
17. *Shans at Home*, p. 9 ; Credner : *Cultural and Geographical Observations etc.*., Bangkok, 1930,p.6.
18. *GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 265.
19. Li-pi according to Credner
20. Sarasas : *op.cit.*, p. 12.

When this news reached the imperial capital, the Emperor ordered an expedition of 80,000 troops under Generals Suen and Chang against Ko-lo-fêng. The advance of this large army at first frightened Ko-lo-feng. So he made overtures to the imperial Generals for peace even by acknowledging his fault, but the latter paid no heed to his appeals and entered Yün-nān with a revengeful attitude. Ko-lo-fêng made his last appe al to settle the matter by negotiation and with that object sent two officers to the Chinese Generals offering peace proposals, but the latter sent the two officers as prisoners to the Emperor.

When all attempts at peace failed, Ko-lo-fêng resolved to fight and despatched his son, Fung-cia-ih, and his redoubtable General Twan with a strong force against the imperial army, of which General Li-kwang-Pi (perhaps Li-pi as mentioned above) was the Commander-in-Chief.[21] In A. D. 751, a great battle was fought near Hsia-Kwan on the route which, coming from the east, passes along the south shore of Erh-Hai (the Ta-li lake). The Chinese suffered disastrous reverses, with 60,000 of their troops killed. It is said in the accounts that Ko-lo-fêng then caused an enormous pit to be dug as a grave (a "wang sai-fen" or myriad tomb) in which the dead Chinese troops were buried. The inscription by the side of this grave reads : "The Tomb of the Chinese". This grave is still to be seen near the east entrance to the market city of Hsia-Kwan.[22]

After this victory Ko-lo-fêng styled his kingdom the 'Great Mêng Empire'.[23] He also caused a marble slab to be engraved with the reasons which drove him to revolt. M. Emile Rocher first made mention of this tablet in his *History of Yün-nān*. Professor Dr. Wilhelm Credner has given in his monograph the photo of this Memorial Tablet taken by Yet-kui in July 1930. It was set up by Ko-lo-fêng in A.D. 766 to commemorate his victory over the Chinese army at Shia-Kwan (Hsia-Kwan) in the year 751. The inscription was drawn up by Ch'en-hwei and engraved on the marble slab by U-shih. This tablet of stone is probably the largest in south China. M. Carthew informs us thatthis stela is still to be seen "on the road from Hsia-Kwan to Ta-li about 8 *li* from Hsia-Kwan on the west side of the roads". The tablet has fallen and now lies on its side. It is engraved on both sides and many characters can still be deciphered. The local name for it is Mau-chow-pei, which means

21. Credner : *op.cit.*, p. 6.
22. *JSS*, vol.XL, Pt.I, 1952, p. 19 ; see also Latourette : *The Chinese : Their History and Culture* (New York, 1946), p.188.
23. Mêng or Mung being a Tai family to which Ko-lo-fêng belonged.

the Tablet of the southern Princes.[24] Hsuan Tsung lived to witness the decline of the prestige of Chinese arms in the far off south for the first time. The inscription on the Tablet, among others, contains the following statement : "My predecessors, generation after generation, submitted to China, and were repeatedly given titles and presents. My successors are permitted to revert to China. If a Chinese envoy should arrive, they can point to this stone Tablet and purge my crime". It is reproduced in translation by Cochrane in his account of "The Northern Shans".[25] Cochrance has not mentioned in what language the inscription was writen but Reginald Le May says that it was written in Chinese. It is still not clear whether the language itself was Chinese, or Tai in Chinese characters. Cochrane says that the submission to China by Ko-lorféng'e predecessors did not mean subjugation, but only a fiendlys understanding with the Empire.

The T'ang Emperor, Hsuan Tsung (or Ming Huang), the great contemporary of Ko-lo-fêng, held the throne from A. D. 712 to 756. During his reign theT'ang Empire reached the zenith of its power. On the west, his great General Kao-Hsien-chih of Korean extraction pushed the frontiers of the Empire as far as the Upper Oxus valley in the north and the Upper Indus valley in the south in A. D. 747 and broke the strength of the Arab and the Tibetans in that region bringing under Chinese suzerainty the local chiefs including the Indian princes then ruling in the Indus valley.[26] Kao Hsien-chih's expedition would remain a great landmark in the Annals of Chinese conquests. It not only proved the technical superiority of Chinese arms ; but also enhanced greatly the prestige of the Empire among the races of Central Asia.

Emperor Hsuan Tsung was also known far and wide as a great promoter of music and culture. At Ch'angan, he founded an institution of music and culture called Hanlin Yuan to which scholars, musicians, magicians and even jugglers from all over Asia were drawn. Membership of Hanlin Yuan was literary honour for a person. Ch'a ngan was then the new T'ang capital, which had been established by KaofTsu, the first ruler of the dynasty (A. D. 618-26), not far from the site oh the Ch'angan of the Han. Hsuan Tsung also founded a school for the teaching of music. It is recorded in the ancient Manipuri Chronicle that the Mannpuri king Nao-Thing-Thing (or Nao-Thing-Thong), who then acknowiledged the suzerainty of Nān-Chao under Ko-lo-féng, sent a well-trained

24. *JSS*, vol.XL, Pt.I, 1952, p. 20.
25. See *Shans at Home* by Milne and Cochrane, P.9.
26. Latourette, *op.cit.*, p. 187.

troupe of dancers, singers and instrumental musicians to the Imperial Court of China as a goodwill mission.[27] It must have been a mission to Hsuan Tsung's Court.

But by A. D. 751 the Empire showed signs of decline. In that year Kao Hsien-chih suffered a bad defeat at the hands of the Arabs north of Ferghana. Thereafter in West China the imperial authority began to crumble down with the result that a large part of the West Chinese dominion passed into the hands of two Turkish peoples, the Karluks in the west and Uigurs in the north and east. At the same time the Khitans (Ch'i-tan) from southern Manchuria carried depredations into the plains of north China. In the south the Tai Emperor Ko-lo-fêng won a decisive victory over the Chinese thereby ending all vestiges of Chinese suzerainty over Nān-Chao. But Ko-lo-fêng felt that with a hostile China on the north his position was not secure. He therefore wanted to have a new ally against China. He knew that the Tibetans were remembering the injury done to them by China in A. D. 747. He therefore thought it expedient to make a treaty of alliance with the Tu'fan (the Tibetans), his former enemy. He thus threw in his lot with them. The Great Lama of Tibet was pleased to confer upon Ko-lo-fêng a seal and the title of *btsaupo-chung* (i. e. "Younger brother Gialbo"–Tibetan *Gialbo* meaning king) which means ruler equal to the ruler of Tibet, but in rank next to the Great Lama and addressed him as Tung-Ti (the Emperor of the East). The Great Lama never recognises anybody on earth as his Elder owing to the Tibetan belief that they are senior to all other races and their country is the cradle of mankind.

Two years after the historic defeat at Hsia-Kwan the T'ang Emperor Tien-pao (Hsuan Tsung), under the pressure of internal problems, resorted to a conciliatory and persuasive policy towards Nān-Chao, then a powerful adversary of the Empire. He sent to Ko-lo-fêng "Commissioners Ih and Lo with costly embroidered silk robes and various presents, styled him brother and gave him a gold seal. He also sent robes to Fung-cia-ih and made him a general".[28] As subsequent events proved, the Emperor

27. Shri Kalawanta Singh : 'All India Radio talk', published in *Natun Asamiya*, 11th Oct., 1953.

W. Shaw writes from Manipuri sources 'In 707 A.D. the king of Thailand defeated the Manipuri King, Nao-Thing-Thong, which is a Kuki name. After that Manipur was ruled by the Thais for 10 years'. (See W. Shaw's article 'The Manipuris' in *Eastern Sentinel*, June 17, 1959, p.4). Since there was no independent Thai kingdom in Thailand in that early period the reference is apparently to Ko-lo-fêng's conquest of Upper Burma and Assam including Manipur in the eighth century A.D. as described in the T'ang history.

28. M. Carthew : *ibid.*, in *JSS*, vol.XL, Pt.I. 1952, p.19. Fung-cia-ih was the son of Ko-lo-fêng.

had to take recourse to this policy of temporary appeasement just to gain time to prepare for a mightier blow to be dealt on Nān-Chao so as to bring that country under his heels. For in A. D. 755, an army of about a hundred thousand imperial troops under Generals Li and Ho came to chastise Ko-lo-fêng. But, as if under Heaven's decree, a pestilence broke out in the Chinese camp taking a haeavy toll of life from among the troops. The rest, after making a feeble attack on the capital, fled away leaving almost all their arms and treasures behind.

Waiting for the pestilence to subside the Emperor made the last biggest attempt to efface from the map the existence of Nān-Chao. This time a larger force from China came down upon Nān-Chao and a great battle took place. The whole imperial army was routed by two reputed generals of Nān-Chao, named Fung-cia-ih and Twan, the former being Ko-lo-féng's son. In the estimation of Chinese historians the losses of the imperial armies in their various campaigns against Nān-Chao were not less than 2,000,000 men, a number probably exaggerated. In A. D. 765 Fung-cia-ih built the city of Yün-nān-fu to strengthen the eastern defence of the Nān-Chao empire. It is said that the walls of this city still stood in A. D. 1383 when the city was rebuilt.

In the meantime, Ko-lo-fêng strengthened his position by making friendship with Tibet and subjugated the neighbouring countries including parts of Burma and Assam. He also wrested large portions of Chinese territory. China, with all her vast army and resources, could not stop the progress of Ko-lo-fêng's work of empire-building. Emperor Hsuan Tsung, by his costly wars and court extravagances, drained the country of its wealth to such an extent that there was widespread poverty and suffering among the people. China was seething with discontent everywhere and the people were revolting aginst the government. In the northeast a powerful rebellion was led by a Turk named An Lu-Shan in 755. He was an important military Commander of the Emperor. An Lu-Shan proclaimed himself emperor of a large part of China north of the Yellow river. This rebellion proved to be one of the major causes of the decline of the Empire under the T'ang. On the western frontier, the Tibetans appeared to be a great menace. Even the most reputed Chinese generals, Kuo-Tzu-i and Li-Kwang-Pi, could not defeat the Tibetans. The Emperor's scandalous character was no less responsible for his increasing unpopularity among his subjects. He even did not hesitate to take into his own chamber, in 738, the wife of one of his sons as his chief favourite. Now at an age above fifty he indulged in a life of extravagance and gaiety under the influence of this young lady. He also offended his influential supporters by giving to the unworthy members of her family high offices and rank.

When China was thus beset with her serious domestic problems, Ko-lo-féng, shortly after 754, turned his attention to the countries lying to the west and south of his kingdom and by a powerful drive extended his sway over the Irrawaddy valley of Burma and also a large part of Assam. E. H. Parker, by his original research in the Chinese sources, has brought out the important fact that Nān-Chao in the eighth century A. D. bordered on Magadha of India. The available sources of history in India are yet silent about it. During the dark centuries preceding the emergence of the powerful Nān-Chao State the original Ngai-Lao habitat was somewhere nearer Burma. These people in the later period spread towards the north-east from the Upper Mekong valley and founded the kingdom of Nān-Chao with Ta-li as its central seat of authority. Nān-Chao rapidly expanded under the powerful Tai monarch Ko-lo-féng, who, after his dynastic title, styled it' the Great Méng Empire'. His successors in the ninth century A. D. further extended the empire towards the east and south-east right upto Tong-King, whose capital Hanoi was captured in A. D. 863 by a Nān-Chao invading army,[29] probably, when Prince Shi-léng (Tien-lung : A. D. 859-77) was the Nān-Cho emperor. Parker points out that on the east Nān-Chao adjoined the Tsuan ; on the south-east it was connected with Chiao-chih (Tongking) ; on the west with Mo-Ch'ieh-t'o (magadha) ; on the north-west it joined on to Tu-fan (Tibet) ; on the south to Nu-wang, probably the Hsip-Hsawng-Panna : on the south-west to P'iao or Pyu (Burma) ; on the north it reached I-chou ; on the north-east it connected with Chien-wu. The King's capital was Yang-chu-mieh city (Ta-li-fu). Another capital was Shan-Shan-Fu (Yün-nān-sen).[30]

In about the year A. D. 760 Ko-lo-fêng annexed the country of the Pyu (Chinese P'iao) in Burma and also that of the Sun-chwan, which appears to have been an Assamese tribe. The Pyu, it is believed, belonged to the Tibetan stock and hence the account for their eventual absorption by the Burmese. The Pyu established themselves about the fifth century A.D. in Central Burma with their capital at old Prome, now called Hmawza, on the Irrawaddy, while the Mons were in possession of Lower Burma. The latter were split up into two kingdoms, called Thaton and Pegu. The Chronicles of the T'ang Dynasty (A. D. 606-918) describe Burma as containing eighteen States and nine walled towns, all dependent on the Pyu. The Pyu were Buddhist and cultured and used a kind of crescent-shaped gold and silver coins. Śri Kṣetra (modern Hmawza), some five

29. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p.121.
30. "The Tan and the Ngai-Lao", *JBSS*, vol. XIV, Part II, "pp. 108-110.

miles south-east of Prome, is the only Pyu site as yet searched with any thoroughness. Reginald Le May says that one of the earliest finds, at a place called Maunggan near Hmawza, consisted, *inter alia*, of gold plates, containing Buddhist texts in Pali, the script of which, Professor Finot says, is like the Kadamba script of Southern India of the fifth century A. D. The Pyu burnt their dead and stored up the ashes in urns. The urn inscriptions, as deciphered by Dr. Otto Blagden, reveal that a Vikrama dynasty reigned at Śri Kṣetra (now Hmawza) from A. D. 673 to 718 and that it used Pyu script and language. The inscriptions mention three Vikrama rulers named Suriya Vikrama, Hari Vikrama and Siha (Siṁha) Vikrama. Suriya Vikrama died in A. D. 688 at the age of sixty-four, Hari Vikrama in A. D. 695 at the age of forty one and Siha Vikrama in A. D. 718 at the age of forty four. Hall points out that the dates are provisional, since the era is not stated.[31]

Chinese works from the fourth century A. D. onwards refer to the wild and savage tribes south-west of Yung-Ch'ang among whom there were cannibals. The most dreaded among them were the P'u who tattooed their bodies, used bows and arrows and mostly went naked. Apart from other causes these tribes rendered the journey from India to China via Yung-Ch'ang by the ancient routes most hazardous. Beyond the tracts of these wild tribes, at a distance of some 3,000 *li* south-west of Yung-Cn'ang, were the Pyu. The Pyu were the earliest known inhabitants of Burma.[32] The Pyu capital Śri Kṣetra existed in the seventh century A. D. and it was mentioned in that century by the Chinese pilgrims Hsuan-tsang[33] and I-tsing in their account. The inscriptions left behind by the race appear to confirm the period during which it flourished in the kingdom of Śri Kṣetra. Ruined monuments of the city walls are still to be seen in the site. The Pyu capital was finally destroyed by Nān-Chao in A. D. 83?. But the Pyu came under Nān-Chao much earlier when their seat in the region of Halin in Shwebo district was annexed by Ko-lo-fêng.

It is known from the Chinese sources that Prince Ko-lo-fêng of Nān-Chao subjugated the Pyu and the tribes of the Upper Irrawaddy valley shortly after A. D. 754 and thus he is said to have "opened communica-

31. *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XII, pp. 127-132, reprinted in *JBRS*, vol. VII, pp. 37-44 ; vide also "The Ancient Pyu" by Luce in *JBRS*, XXVII, III, 1937, pp. 242-47; Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, 45-7.

32. D.G.E. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, (London, Macmillan, 1955,) pp. 120-21.

33. Watters's *Yuan Chwang*.

tions with the Pyu". But the statement of the *New T'ang History* is that "Nān-Chao, on account of its military power and proximity, has always held the Pyu under bridle and control.[34] Ko-lo-fêng also built a fortress to maintain his dominance over the tribes living in the Irrawaddy valley. He used the Pyu and other subjugated tribesmen as soldiers and labourers in the service of his empire.[35] When a century later the Nān-Chao Prince Shi-lêng invaded Ke-sho (the modern Hanoi) and overran Annam, the Pyu were found to serve as soldiers in the Nān-Chao army. It may be noted that during the period of the Han, Burma was called 'T'an' and in the T'ang period 'Piao' (Pyu).[36] According to Luce the Pyu-Nān-Chao frontier in A. D. 800 roughly corresponded with the Sino-Burman frontier of to-day in the neighbourhood of Bhamo.[37] In order to make the communications with the west secure Ko-lo-fêng controlled the Upper Irrawaddy valley and also a part of Lower Burma.

China, being unable any longer to maintain her continued hold on the border territory near the Burma frontier, abolished the Yung-Ch'ang prefecture in A.D. 342 with the result that the old China-Burma communication route was virtually closed and had remained so until Ko-lo-fêng reopened it by his conquest of Burma. During his reign ancient routes of communication were developed and comparatively safer journey ensured in this part of the Nān-Chao empire. The land route from China to India connecting the T'ang Court with the Pyu capital was opened mostly with the help of Pyu conscripts. Luce has pointed out that "its stages are given in some detail by the Chinese minister Chia Tan (Kia Tan) at the end of the 8th century. One route led due west from Yung-Ch'ang to T'êng-Yüeh, and thence approximately by Waingmaw (Li-shui town), Mogaung (An-hsi town) and the Tazu Gap to Gauhati (Kāmarupa) and Magadha. The other went south-west from Yung-Ch'ang to the Pyu capital[38] and so to Gauhati by the Chindwin and Manipur".[39] It may

34. G.H. Luce L "The Ancient Pyu" in *JBRS*, vol. XXVII, III, 1937, p. 248.

35. Hall : *Burma*, (Hutchinson, 1950), p.9.

36. *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt.I, 1952, p.24. The old pronunciation of *p'iao*, according to Karlgren (*Analytic Dictionary*, 727) was b'iau, in Cantonese p'iu—"The Tan and the Ngai-Lao" in *JBRS*, vol. XIV, Part II, p. 118. The kingdom of P'iao is described by the Chinese writers of the tenth century as having dominions whose extent was 'nine hundred miles from east to west'. Hallett points out that this statement must have 'incorporated the Kamboza, Mau, and Loas Shans, and then would be slightly in excess'. Further the population of the kingdom is said to have included two hundred and ninety-eight different tribes, who professed Buddhism.—Hallett : *ibid.*, p. 338.

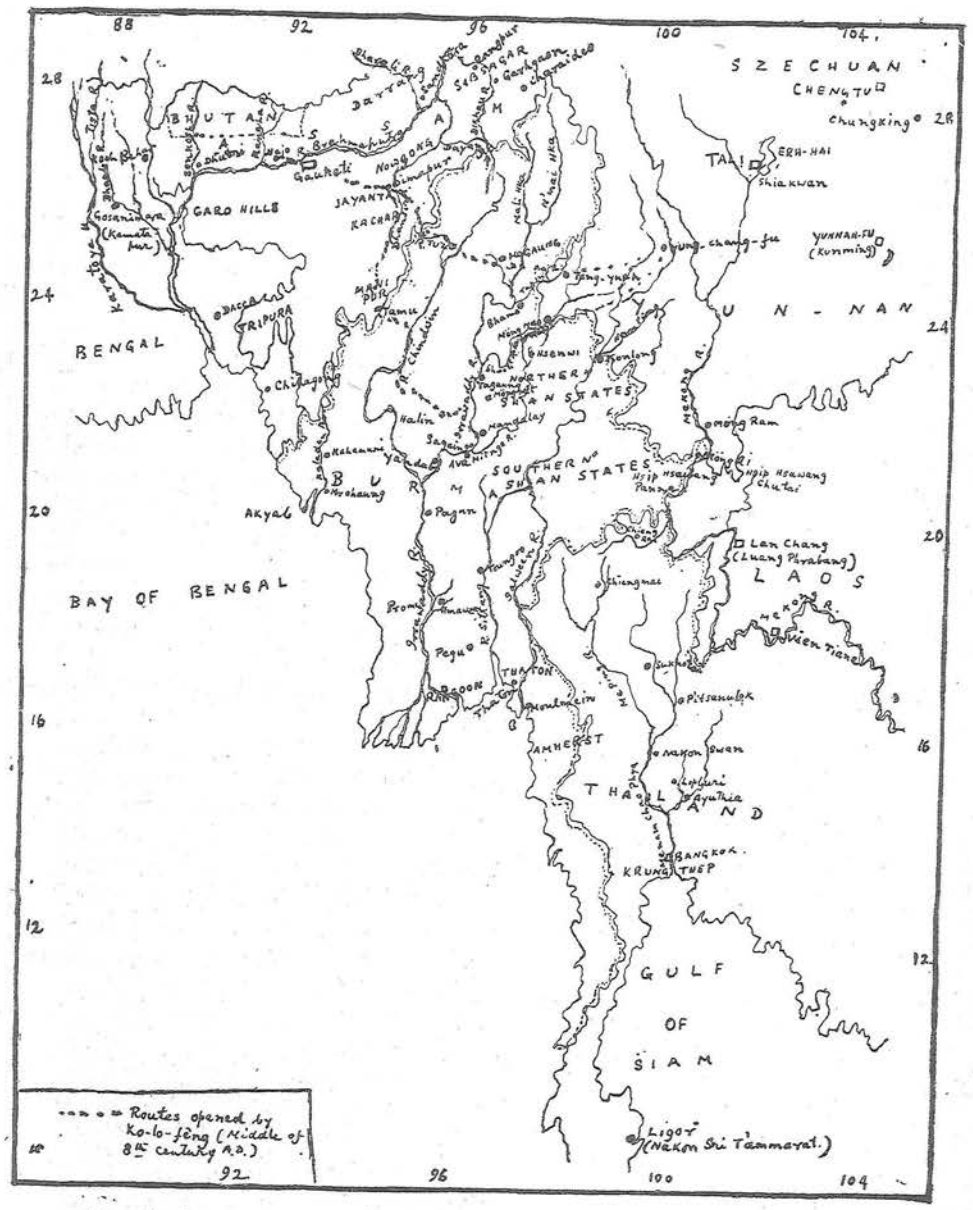
37. "The Ancient Pyu", *op.cit.*, p. 248.

38. From the description of this route it is highly improbable that the route connected Prome, which is so far south in the map and then led up to the Chindwin and Manipur. It is most likely that this earlier Pyu capital was Halin-gyi in Shwebo district where traces of the Pyu rule have been found.

be noted that Chia Tan produced a map of the world based on the geographical accounts obtained from the numerous pilgrims and tribute-bearers who visited the Chinese Court.[40] In this connection it may be noted that Chavannes refers to a note of Hui-lin who points out that "The Tsang-ko (or old Ngai-lao in the extreme south-west of China) road was the shortest route from China to India, but it was very dangerous; it passed the places Yu-yao, Yuch-chueh, Pu-hsi and Yung-Ch'ang." It thus gives the trace of the route eastward beyond Yung-Ch'ang.[41]

That there was an overland route from India to China across Upper Burma from very early times is indicated clearly in the Chinese accounts. In 122 B. C. (?), for instance, when General Chang Ch'ien[42] of Han Wu-Ti (140-87 B. C.) led an expedition to Ta-hsia (Tokharestan) he saw in the markets of Bactria Shu cloth, undoubtedly Sze-chuan silk, and Chiung bamboo.[43] He was told that those goods had come from south-east, from the Shen-tu kingdom (India). On enquiry he learnt that they had come from Yün-nān and Sze-chuan across Upper Burma by way of the Yün-nān-Burma border and northern India.[44] Pelliot holds it to be very probable that it is by this way that the Hindus gained their first knowledge of the Chinese world.[45] Ta-hsia (Bactria) was anxious to communicate with China, but owing to the presence of the predatory

39. "The Ancient Pyu" *JBRS*, XXVII, III, 1937, p. 248.
40. Soothill : *op.cit.*, p. 45.
41. *JBRS*, vol. XIV, Part II, p. 139.
42. Chang Ch'ien (Chang-k'ien) was sent by the Han Emperor, Wu-Ti, as his envoy in 138 B.C. to contact the Yueh-chih and solicit their alliance against the common enemy, the Hsiung-nu (Huns) of whose growing power the Chinese were afraid. Already the Yueh-chih had been driven westward by the powerful Hsiung-nu (Hiung-nu). Chang-Ch'ien made two adventurous expeditions to the new abode of the Yueh-chih somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Oxus. On his way through Chinese Turkestan he was captured by the Hsiung-nu who held him in 'honourable captivity' for some ten years before he could escape with his men and proceed on his mission. Chang Ch'ien contacted the Yueh-chih but failed to obtain their alliance as they were 'tired of fighting and trekking' and now wanted a peaceful life. He was again captured by the Hsiung-nu on his way back to China and released after one year's captivity. He reached China in 126 B.C. This was also the first penetration of the Chinese into the Tarim basin. W.W. Tarn : *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, (Cambridge), 1951, pp. 279-80.
43. Laufer means by Chiung bamboo walking sticks of the square bamboo which grows in north-east Yün-nān. He also gives the date of Chang Ch'ien's arrival in Bactria as 128 B.C.
44. *JBRS*, vol. XIV, Part II, p. 106; Pelliot : *Deux Itineraires* as quoted in the Winternitze Memorial Number, 1938, pp. 181-82 by Prof. Nilakanta Śastri.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 182.



Map showing routes opened by Ko-lo-fêng : middle of 8th. century A. D.

Hsiungnu tribes, who are said to have been Huns, direct overland trade route to the west could not be opened by China. Yet at the suggestion of Chang Ch'ien, Wu-Ti resorted to a caravan route *via* Tufan (Tibet), possibly to avoid contact with the Hsiung-nu, for exporting to Persia and Europe Chinese products such as silk fabrics, porcelain, precious minerals and other less bulky goods. But it must have been a very difficult and wearisome journey along such a route. It is believed that Chinese products first found their way to European markets from this time and China's trade with Bactria and Sogdiana rapidly grew with Khashgar as a convinient emporium. Chang-Ch'ien also saw the advantage of opening a road to Ta-hsia *via* Sze-chuan and India. At his initiative a Chinese re-connoitring party was sent by the Emperor to Yün-nān for exploring this south-western route for commerce. The party advanced upto Tien (Yün-nān-fu) where the king Chang-Ch'iang of that country undertook to find them a route to the west. But his attempt failed and the Chinese exploration party, after waiting in K'un-ming for more than a year, had to return to the capital. The party, however, submitted a report to the Emperor on the lands and peoples they had seen in that journey and spoke well of Tien saying that it was a big country deserving friendship of the Han.[46]

In view of this failure of China to find a way out to the west across south-west China it is doubtful whether the 'Chinese products' had ever reached the markets of Bactria by an overland route through Burma and India. For long centuries preceding the Christian era south-west China was in occupation of the Tai and other 'barbarian' tribes whom the Chinese could not effectively subjugate and for whom the road to India *via* Yün-nān and Burma remained closed to China until the submission of the Ngai-Lao in A. D. 69 when it was possible for the Chinese to cross the Mekong for the first time and found the prefecture of Yung-Ch'ang, the headquarters of which lay east of the Salween, some sixty miles from the present Burma frontier.[47] This extension of Chinese dominions opened up the earliest overland gateway to Burma and made it possible for Chu-ko-Liang in A. D. 226 to enter that country in pursuit of Mêng-huo. We also know from I-tsing that at the end of the third century A.D. a batch of about twenty Chinese monks found their way, "by the Tsang-ko road in the province of Shu" to the court of Sri Gupta who founded the Gupta dynasty.

46. *JBRS*, vol. XIV, Part II, p.106.

47. "Burma Down To The Fall of Pagan" By G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin in *JBSC*, vol. XXIX, Part III, Dec., 1939, p. 264.

It may be noted that during the period from the end of the Han rule to the beginning of that of the Sui China was weakened by civil strife, internal divisions and foreign invasions. Civil strife ensued chiefly among the members of the royal family. The non-Chinese chiefs in the north, taking advantage of these domestic troubles of China, extended their sway into Chinese territory and some even aspired to the title of Emperor. In the south a branch of the Ssu-ma family, known as the Eastern Chin, reigned precariously with its capital on the Yangtze in the site of the present Nān-king. Sze-chuan was dominated by a warlord, named Huan Wen of the Eastern Chin. This period (A.D. 220-589) in China is also marked by a phase called the period of Six Dynasties, namely, Wu, the Eastern Chin, the Liu Sung, the Southern Ch'i, the Liang and the Ch'en. Thus being seriously disabled under a process of disintegration China lost her control over most of the non-Chinese races that had been acknowledging her suzerainty. It was also during this period that she lost her hold on the Ngai-Lao in western Yün-nān which led to the ultimate abolition of Yung-Ch'ang Chun. For the next few centuries China virtually abondoned Yün-nān and the land-route through that country and, as is indicated by the Chinese sources, took to the sea-routes for communication with the west.[48]

Again with the development of general communications and their comparative security under Ko-lo-fêng in the eighth century A. D. it became possible for Buddhist missionaries to travel from the country of the Pyu to the capital of Nān-Chao by the overland routes. It should be remembered that Theravāda Buddhism of south India had a flourishing centre in Old Prome or Śrikṣetra, the capital of the Pyu. The spread of Buddhism among the Pyu from this centre is attested by the Pali inscriptions and writings on gold plates, stones and a gold-leaf book discovered in Hmawza between 1897 and 1926 and also by the existence of numerous Buddhist sculptures and ruined monuments dating from about the sixth century A. D. down to tenth century A. D.[49] The evidence of the T'ang Annals also says referring to the Pyu that "they are Buddhists and have a hundred monasteries".[50] Yet the religious remains of this area are not unmixed, for numerous stone sculptures of Vishnu and bronze statuettes of Avalokiteśvara and other Mahāyānist Bodhisattvas have also been found.[51] The development of intercourse with the Pyu since

48. *Ibid.*, *JBRS*, vol. XXIX, Part III, 1939, p. 266.
49. Nihar-ranjan Ray : *Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, University of Calcutta, 1946, pp. 33-46.
50. Parker : *Burma with special reference to her relation with China*, 1893, p.12.
51. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, 1955, p.121.

Ko-lo-fêng's reign led to a tremendous revival of Buddhism in Nān-Chao in A. D. 827 and the traditional Taoist religion lost royal patronage. Although Buddhism of the Great Vehicle had entered Yün-nān at a much earlier date it could not supplant the prevailing Taoist religion and the Dragon cult of that country, but when Ko-lo-fêng's enterprise opened up the flood-gate to religious and cultural influences of India to come as a wave, their impact revolutionised the religious beliefs and social outlook of the peoples of Nān-Chao, and since that time Buddhism in its various mixed forms had continued to become the dominant religion of Yün-nān.

After a reign of thirty-two years Ko-lo-fêng died in A. D. 778.[52] He was the real builder of the Nān-Chao Empire. In him is seen a matchless combination of military prowess and un-rivalled statesmenship, the twin foundations of strength that enabled him to withstand gloriously the mighty assaults of the Chinese Empire. The Chinese prestige was shattered in the trial of strength with this southern potentate and Nān-Chao came to stay with an enhanced pride as a second empire south of China for about four and a half centuries more.

While Ko-lo-fêng was still reigning, his valiant son, Fong-ch'ieh-i died. On Ko-lo-fêng's death his grandson I-mou-hsun (Yi-Meu-Sin) was installed as successor in A. D. 780. It is said that I-mou-hsun's mother belonged to the Tuhkin tribe. This young prince imbibed some of the qualities of his great predecessors. With his talent for rule he also combined considerable amount of learning. In his early age a wise man, named Ch'enghue, a Chinese ex-magistrate, acted as his tutor. I-mou-hsun was a tactful and intelligent ruler, who conducted the affairs of the State with firmness and vigour like the great Ko-lo-fêng.

After the assumption of royal power he made preparations to extend the empire by annexing the southern dominions of the T'ang. He raised an army of 30,000 men for the projected campaign. In this great undertaking he also secured the co-operation of the Tibetans, who had their designs on the frontier tracts of the Empire. The allied forces then invaded the Chinese province of Shu (Sze-Chuan) but were repulsed with heavy losses by the Chinese. This major reverse at the very start curbed the ambition of I-mou-hsun to annex any part of the Chinese territory. The defeat also rendered the northern defences of Nān-Chao vulnerable to Chinese attack. In face of this situation I-mou-hsun had

52. According to some writers A.D. 779.

to transfer his Court from Tai-ho to Tsu-me further south in the neighbourhood of Mo-mein (Teng-Yueh). He was also advised by the wise Ch'eng-hue to immediately negotiate with China for peace in order to ensure future security of the kingdom. As it was the only course of expendiency at the moment I-mou-hsun accepted the advice and started negotiation with the Chinese Governor of Ch'eng-tu, named We Kao, for the restoration of the old good relation of Nān-Chao with the Empire.

But this policy of I-mou-hsun aroused great suspicion in the minds of the Tibetans, who had tried in vain to dissuade him from such a course. The Tibetans then started warlike preparations on the border territories of Nān-Chao. They established garrisons at all strategic points, raised levies on a war footing and collected imposts from the people. Apprehending danger from such activities of the erstwhile ally I-mou-hsun addressed a note to Governor We Kao apprising him of the ominous developments on the Tibetan frontier and requested him for a joint action agaist them, He also suggested that the Uighour Turks be directed to join the Nān-Chao-Chinese forces in an expendition against Tibet. The Uighour Turks were then in occupatipn of parts of the modern Kansu province with their capital at what is now called Urumtsi.

I-mou-hsun's request ultimately bore fruit and a treaty was signed between China and Nān-Chao at the foot of the Tien-Tsang Shan which commands Ta-li. Four copies of the treaty were made. One copy was placed in the stone temple; one was sunk in the sacred waters of the river of the Ta-li lake or perhaps the Ta-li lake itself; one was lodged in the ancestral shrine of the Nān-Chao monarch; and one was sent to the Emperor of China.[53] The significance of all these elaborate ceremonials in the making of the treaty was probably to emphasize the solemnity of the vow to respect its terms. But as a sequel to the conclusion of the treaty We Kao was appointed Regent of Nān-Chao by the Emperor whom I-mou-hsun had to accept. It seems the terms of the treaty included clauses whereby I-mou-hsun also acnkowledged over again the suzerainty of China. This state of things for Nān-Chao was the culmination of his too ambitious a policy of aggrandizement at the cost of China, whose territory he had invaded without a proper appraisal of her strength.

In A.D. 795 the Tibetans, as expected, started the offensive by waging a war against Nān-Chao. I-mou-hsun replied by capturing the Tibetan

53 *GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 266.

officials in his kingdom and putting them to death. Meanwhile the Uighour Turks (a people of Eastern Turkestan) attacked and defeated the Tibetans in a battle. The Nān-Chao army met the Tibetans near the Iron Bridge over the Kin-shā river, a tributary of the Yang-tse-Kiang in western Yün-nān and "the brass column which marked the boundary between Nān-Chao and Tibet about 250 *li* north of Likiang-fu" and a sanguinary battle ensued which resulted in a decisive victory for I-mou-hsun. The Tibetan loss in men and material was enormous. I-mou-hsun took sixteen towns and cut the Iron Bridge. He fought this war not on his own behalf but also on behalf of China. He despatched the news of his victory with a map of the conquered territory to the Emperor. He sent his brother Prince Tse, accompanied by an officer, to carry that news to the Chinese Court.

Emperor Chen-tien,[54] was very pleased to receive the news of the victory over the Tibetans and acknowledged it with gratitude. The Emperor, in recognition of the great achievement of the Nān-Chao ruler, invested him with the title of "Nān-Chao Wang" ("King of Nān-Chao"). The ceremony of investiture would give an idea of the royal customs of those days. The Emperor deputed Yuan-tze (or Ts'ui Tso-shih) as his envoy-extraordinary to confer upon I-mou-hsun "a yellow gold seal", or, according to Yang-tsai "gold and silver seals",[55] inscribed with "reign 705-805, patenting Nān-Chao".[56] The Chinese envoy was received with great ceremony and pomp at T'ai-ho, to which place the Court was probably shifted again after the treaty. When the envoy arrived at T'ai-ho, Prince I-mou-hsun sent his elder brother and a group of officers with sixty-five horses, to welcome and escort him to the capital. "Their harness was adorned with gold and cowries, and the soldiers lined the road with their jingling staves shouldered. I-mou-hsun wore a coat of gold mail and a tiger-skin, and carried a sheath with two jingles upon it. A thousand men with spears stood on guard, twelve elephants drawn up in front, with the cavalry between, and the foot regiment in the rear. At day-break the next the patent was conferred upon him. I-mou-hsun at the headof his suite of officers, stood facing the north. The proclaimer faced east, and the patent-conveying envoy faced south. The mandate of the patent was then read out". I-mou-hsun knelt to receive the patent

54. Or Teh-chung, the 10th Emperor of the T'ang according to Hoontrakul — *op.cit*., p. 92.

55. *JSS*, XL-Pt.I, 1952, p.21.

56. This seal or plaque inscribed with "Nan-Chao, 705-805" is referred to also by W.W. Cochrane, *vide* his "The Origin of the Ahoms" in *JRAS*, vol. 1914, p. 151. Mentioned also in *Shans at Home* by Milne and Cochrane, p.11.

and seal. "He knocked his head on the ground, and bowed twice, and then received the presents of clothes and other things". Retiring he said "During the two reigns, A.D. 718-756, my great-grand-father and grand-father both received patents as hereditary kings. Fifty years have since elapsed, and the present Emperor has now washed my scars, and recorded my services, once more conferring rank and commands upon me. My sons' sons and grandsons' grandsons will for ever be subjects of China".[57] Then followed a great banquet, at which some Turkish women, presented by a former Emperor, sang songs. Their hair was quite white, as they were the only two survivors of a once large musical troupe.[58]

The account given above describes the pattern of political relation that subsisted between China and Nān-Chao under the Mêng Dynasty. The relation, apart from the elaborate ceremonial forms, was undoubtedly one of the Emperor's formal recognition of the 'King of Nān-Chao' and the latter's acceptance of the same in the shape of the title and the seal. Nothing is known about the actual powers of intervention on the part of the imperial authority in the matters of administration of this so-called vassal kingdom. If the king is strong and follows his policy with a firm hand the suzerain power cannot stand in his way and even remains severed from that power for long periods. But, at times, it is to the advantage of a ruler to get formal recognition and investiture of power from the Emperor as it adds not only a superior dignity to his position as the "King of Nān-Chao" above the inferior status of other ruling Chiefs, but also makes for the kingdom's increased strength and security against the troublesome neighbours, such as Tibet and Burma.

Having settled the problem of Chinese danger I-mou-hsun attacked and reduced to submission the "savage tribes" known as the Mang, Mo and Shi that lived on the hills north-west and north-east of Ta-li. These tribes are described as "black barbarians", a term used by the Chinese in reference to the Ngai-Lao also. There were among them Tai or Ngai-Lao splinter groups cut off from the main body when earlier the Ch'in attacked and scattered them. Their long isolation from the bulk of the race in the peculiar geographical conditions of Yün-nān and Sze-chuan made them appear as aborigines of the hills as distinct from the ruling group in the plains. Besides these, the other savage tribes that were brought under subjection by I-mou-hsun were the Lung-tung of the 'white race', who might be a Karen tribe, and Han-Shang, who were supposed to be of Chinese descent.

57. Cochrane in *Shans at Home* by Milne and Cochrane, pp. 11-12.
58. *GUBSS*, 1.1. p. 266.

During the next few years, particularly since A.D. 799,[59] Nān-Chao was engaged in a continual war with Tibet owing to the aggression of the latter into that kingdom from the north occupying a strip of its territory. In this war I-mou-hsun had assistance from Governor Kao of Ch'eng-tu. Meanwhile, the Tibetans put into the field an army of eight thousand men against Nān-Chao with provisions for one year. The war began with the first series of combats in the south-western part of Sze-chuan which continued for a number of years. The Nān-Chao army from the south and the Chinese and the Uighour Turks from the west and north-west hammered the Tibetans so effectively that the latter had to retreat with heavy losses and the allied forces entered the Tibetan territory occupying seven cities and burning one hundred and fifty military stations during the advance. Several thousand hands of the Tibetans were cut off. A large booty of arms and supplies, left by the Tibetans, fell into the hands of the allied forces. In fact "it was the Nān-Chao that attacked their most vital parts, and made the largest captures of prisoners and plunder".[60] I-mou-hsun captured, among others, five Tibetan Princes, whom he sent as prisoners to the Imperial Court. The Emperor responded by sending an officer to congratulate I-mou-hsun. The Nān-Chao monarch honoured his treaty with China and remained loyal to the Emperor till his death in the seventh Moon of A.D. 809. He ruled for thirty years.[61] On receiving the news of his death Emperor U-ien sent the President of the Sacrificial Court of the imperial government as a special envoy to Nān-Chao to offer condolences and sacrifices to his spirit.

Prince Su-in-ke-cwien (Sin-ko-kiang), son of I-mou-hsun, succeeded to the throne of Nān-Chao in 809 and received from Emperor U-ien-he a gold seal and a very high honorific title. The enlarged territory of his kingdom demanded a second capital in the east. The city of Yün-nān-fu, already built by Fung-cia-ih, was therefore made the Eastern Capital of Nān-Chao in addition to Ta-li, which was made the Western Capital. He, however, died after a reign of one year and was succeeded by his son, Prince C'wien-long-chen, who was only twelve years old.

Prince C'wien-long-chen (Kian-Lung--Sing) appears to have been a great promoter of Buddhism, for he made three Buddhas with 3,000 ounces of gold and installed them in a temple at Ta-li-fu. The origin of the famous Three Pagodas of San-ta-si (San-T'a-T'zu) at Ta-li is to be traced

59. According to another account A.D. 796.
60. Milne and Cochrane : *op.cit.*, p. 13.
61. According to Hoontrakul 16 years. —see *op.cit.*, p. 92.

to these Three Buddhas. In 815 he invaded Sze-chuan. The story runs that at Kia-ting-chew his troops were horrified to see a strange vision of troops fighting in the air and being dispersed in disorder. It is also said that the inhabitants afterwards built a temple at Kia-ting-chew called the *Fu-t'ien-shon-miao* to commemorate this event. In a few years the young prince became such a wicked character that he was murdered by one of his own officials, named Wang-kia, at the age of nineteen years.

He was succeeded by his brother C'wien-li (Kian-Li-Sing) in 817. The Emperor forgave Wang-Kia for the murder, but reduced him in rank. It is perhaps one of the few instances in which the Emperor exercised his paramount authority to intervene in the internal affairs of Nān-Chao. Prince C'wien-li repaired the old pagodas and built a number of new ones. A stone tablet in the Dragon Temple in the east of Ta-li in the lake area bears the inscription that during the reign of this king the water level of the lake rose to an unprecedented height owing to the presence of a huge serpent-like monster or dragon that had entered the lake. The Prince ordered the dragon to be killed and it was killed. Whether the Dragon Temple at Ta-li was built to commemorate this event or had been standing there as a monument of native dragon worship nothing is definitely known. But the stone inscription testifies to the fact that the dragon cult was no longer favoured by the royal court. The Prince, after eight years of his reign, in 825 received from the Emperor Chang-kui a gold seal. In the same year he died at Yün-nān-fu, the Eastern Capital of the realm.

On his death his brother Fong-yeh (Hung-Jew), then only seven years old, succeeded to the throne in 825. The young Prince's coronation was attended by a Chinese official Wai, who was sent by the Emperor as his representative on this occasion. But within a few years Fong-yeh came into clash with an arrogant Chinese mandarin named Tu, who was posted at Ch'eng-tu in Sze-chuan. Tu so maltreated the Chinese troops under him that the latter broke into a mutiny and large numbers of them deserted his army and entered Nān-Chao for protection. Prince Fong-yeh sent General Wang-kia with a force to Ch'eng-tu to investigate the situation. But Governor Tu replied by attacking Wang-kia's troops. Immediately there was a fight and Tu was defeated. Wang-kia then returned triumphantly to the capital with a large number of Chinese prisoners and artisans and a vast booty. These artisans were a great asset to Nān-Chao in the reconstruction of her industries. This event appears to be the same as that mentioned by Cochrane

and said to have happened in A.D. 829.[62] In that year, as he has said, the Shan Commander-in-Chief of Lung-tung invaded Sze-chuan advancing to the very gates of Cheng-tu-fu. The Commander-in-Chief, mentioned by him, was probably General Wang-kia himself.

Chinese Annals further relate that while returning from Sze-chuan after the victory the Nān-Chao General took forcibly with him 'several myriad boys, girls, and artizans'. From that time, it is said, Nān-Chao was on a par with China in matters concerning art, literature and weaving'. From this it would be wrong to think that Nān-Chao borrowed them entirely from the Chinese. For it is clearly mentioned in the early Chinese Annals, such as *Ch'ien han shu* and *Hou han-shu* that the Ngai-Lao knew how to dye with gay colours, make and embroider *Chi-to* (rugs made of animal hair) and *po-tieh* (brocaded silk and cotton) and weave flowered and fine cloth. They also knew the arts of making beautiful metallic goods, such as those of copper, iron, lead, tin, gold, silver, amber and also of bright pearls.[63] As regards the literature of the early Tai, it has already been said that they had men of letters and a rich literature before they were deprived of them in the Chinese territory by the ruthless policy of destruction initiated by Shih-Wang-Ti.

In 831 Prince Fong-yeh wrote to the Emperor T'ai-he about the Ch'eng-tu incident and requested him to take action against Governor Tu for the latter's unprovoked hostility towards Nān-Chao. The Emperor, after investigating the matter, degraded Tu appointing General Li-teh to that post. But General Li-teh's conduct was found to be no better than his predecessor's with the unfortunate result that there ensued an era of hostility between Ch'eng-tu and Nān-Chao. The greatest event of Fong-yeh's reign was the invasion of Nān-Chao by General Li-teh in 860 with an army of 100,000 men. But Prince Fong-yeh proved more than a match for the Chinese General of Sze-chuan. The latter's army was routed by Fong-yeh's forces near Ch'ien-chang-fu in Sze-chuan. Soon after this defeat Li-teh was beheaded by the order of the Imperial Government.

Just at that juncture a serious rebellion broke out among the imperial troops in Sze-chuan. Large numbers of these rebels joined the Tibetans and proceeded to invade Nān-Chao. The famous Nān-Chao General,

62. Cochrane : "The Northern Shans" in *Shans at Home*, p. 13.
63. "The Ngai-Lao" in *JBRS*, vol-XIV, Part II, pp.115-18.

Wang-kia, expeditiously marched with his army to resist the invaders and engaged them in a bloody battle near the Iron Bridge on the Tibetan frontier inflicting a heavy defeat on them. The Chinese alone lost ten thousand men.

In 859 Prince Fong-yeh also sent an expeditionary force under General Twan-seng to the assistance of the king of Burma on whose kingdom an attack was made by the "Lion Kingdom". This Lion Kingdom was probably the Mon kingdom, which, with its capital at Dvāravati in south Siam, had been pressing towards Lower Burma and founded the city of Pegu in A.D. 825 in the region referred to by the Arab geographers as Raman'n'a- deśa. The Burmese, with the help of Nān-Chao, successfully repulsed the enemy and the Burmese king presented Twan-seng with a gold Buddha as a mark of gratitude for the help.[64] Before the arrival of Twan-seng from his Burma campaign Fong-yeh died at Yün-nān-fu early in 860 and was succeeded by his son Shi-lêng[65] (Tien-Lung or Ts'in Lung) in his sixteenth year. General Wang-kia, who was then acting as Regent, went to welcome Twan-seng when the latter was reaching the capital. But Twan-seng most treacherously killed the veteran General of Nān-Chao at the very place of welcome to avenge the murder of Prince C'wien-leng-chen by the latter. Thus ended in a tragic state the life of one of the greatest Tai generals whose brilliant military career had earned for him a great reputation and whose glorious victories in the wars against China and Tibet immensely enhanced the prestige of Nān-Chao.

Prince Fong-Yeh's reign was also noted for a great economic development and a religious revival in the kingdom. Even to this day are to be seen in the areas of ancient marshy lands traces of his extensive irrigation works by which the marshes were drained into the great lake. A strong dam was constructed in the Li-hu ravine at a place about 10 *li* south of Ta-li forming a large reservoir of water from which, in the dry season, water could be led off by means of canals to irrigate the rice fields. This work lasts to this day and its local name is "Kao-no" ("The High Pool"). All these he did to relieve the people from suffering due to a long drought which occurred during his reign.

64. "The History of the Thai in Yun-nan" in *JSS*, vol. XL, Part I, 1952,p.24.

65. According to Scott "In 859 A.D. one Ts'in Lung, who seems to have been a Shan official rather than a member of the 'family of Meng', became ruler of Nan-Chao, assumed the title of Hwang-ti. . . ."—*GUBSS*, I.1, (Rangoon), 1900, p.267.

Under the patronage of this king there was a great revival of Buddhism in the country. He built many temples and completed the work of restoring from ruin what were called the Three Pagodas which are still standing north-west of Ta-li. He also repaired the two pagodas built originally in A.D. 631 on the eastern side of the Wu-hwa-shan in Yün-nān-fu. The king's mother became a devout Buddhist nun and used 5,000 ounces of silver to decorate a room with statuettes of the Buddha in the temple at San-ta-si, where she used to pass the later part of her life. In 827 the king expelled the traditional Taoist priests from Nān-Chao. In a sense it was a revolutionary period of religious change in the kingdom. The king took particular interest in the welfare of the subjects. Under Buddhist influence he also practised abstinence from wine and women, of which he had excessive love, and tried to lead a pure and good life.

The death of Wang-kia exposed the life of the young prince Shi-lêng (Ts'in Lung, Yu-Lung or Tien-lung) to the conspiracies of the Court. The situation became critical when an influential minister, named Chen-nai-i, attempted to murder him. The prince's mother, who was a fisherman's daughter, was noted for her beauty. Her union with the late king was the result of a scandalous connection. Emperor Ta-chang of China was about to offer a princess of the imperial family to Shi-lêng, but his ministers dissuaded him from doing so owing to the "low birth of the Prince's mother."[66] At this time the prince's mother had already become a Buddhist nun.

Some of the earlier princes of the Mêng family of Nān-Chao used to pay tributes to China, but C'wien-long-chen, Fong-yeh and Shi-lêng stopped them. But the Emperor thought that he had yet a rightful claim to such tributes. He therefore sent an army to demand tributes from Prince Shi-lêng, but the latter, in 863, attacked the Chinese in Sze-chuan and completely defeated them and took a stone Buddha, very much revered by the natives, as a trophy. In the same year his army of Tai and Pyu soldiers invaded Tongking and captured Hanoi and overran Annam[67]. Since then the initiative passed into the hands of Nān-Chao, the formidable rival of China. Knowing the weaknesses of China Nān-Chao started a long war against her which, with occasional intervals of rest, continued for the next fifteen years. During these years, under

66. *JSS*, vol. XL, Pt. I, 1952, p.25.

67. *GUBSS*, 1.1, p.267, Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, (Macmillan, London, 1955), p.121.

imperialist oppressions, the fighting Tai were in revolt in Kwang-tung and Kwang-si and carried on guerilla warfare against the Chinese. The Chinese Provinces of Sze-chuan and Kwei-chow were invaded by Nān-Chao and the southern defences of China were about to collapse. The story runs that in one of the earlier campaigns in Sze-chuan the Nān-Chao army had to face a desperate state for failure of rations, but a Buddhist monk, named Song, performed the miracle of turning the sands into rice and the waters of the river into wine. The army then had an abundance of supply of food and drink and fought with great success. On another occasion a Nān-Chao officer, named Tongchou, was captured by the Chinese, but, on request from Prince Shi-lêng, was released by the Emperor. An embassy was then sent to China in 870 to thank the Emperor for the magnanimous act. But the inhuman treatment, with which the Chinese officers dealt with the tribes, was retaliated by the Shans by slaughtering the Chinese who fell into their hands.

Next year (871) a Nān-Chao force made another thrust into Sze-chuan capturing in a powerful sweep a number of towns and reaching Ch'eng-tu for the final blow. The Chinese Governor Lu at Ch'eng-tu was hard put to the task of defending the city under desperate conditions. He had to resort to overtures for peace with the General of the invading army just to gain time for the arrival of reinforcements from the imperial headquarters. In the meantime, there was an excessive concentration of civilian population for safety inside the fortifications of the capital town leaving hardly any space even for standing. The enormous crowd of men, women and children desperately struggled for space, food and water, and when the waters of the "Great Pond" were exhausted many resorted to 'squeezing a drink out of basketfuls of sand.' Many died under hunger and pressure. For want of coffins 'the dead were buried whole-sale in pits.' The capital was just saved from surrendering by the last-moment arrival of two imperial Generals, Jen and Seng, with troops. They halted the advance of the besieging army and pushed them off from the capital[68]. But while leaving Ch'eng-tu the Ngai-Lao Shans committed acts of reprisal of a barbaric nature. "The savages," writes the Chinese annalist, "had cut off the noses and ears of all the Chinese prisoners, and let them go, so that eighty per cent of the residents had artificial noses and ears of wood"[69]. In the meantime China had serious

68. L. Hoontrakul says that Shi-lèng actually annexed Ch'eng-tu in 870. The city was recovered by the Chinese only in 881 when Lèng-Shwen was reigning at Ta-li. But when the imperial troops returned to the capital Lèng-shwen recaptured the city.*op.cit.*, p. 93.

69. Cochrane : *op.cit.*, p. 14 ; *GUBSS*, 1.1, p.267.

domestic troubles and Emperor Chao-Suan-Ti of T'ang was murdered and with it the T'ang dynasty came to an end. No imperial forces could therefore be sent again to repel the aggressors[70]. At this time Ch'eng-tu marked the northern limit of the Nan-Chao empire and it had also the main military headquarters of China for southern defence. Though Ch'eng-tu was the scene of many great battles between China and Nān-Chao and was for a time annexed by the latter, yet its hold on the city was never complete and continued.

In 874 Prince Shi-lêng again invaded Kwei-chow and his General Hwang led an expedition to Sze-chuan and advanced right upto the very gates of Ch'eng-tu-fu, but was forced to beat a retreat by the Chinese garrison. It was also the moment when peace was concluded between China and Tibet, which to a great extent neutralised the power of Nān-Chao in so far as the China-Nān-Chao frontier was concerned.

After an interval of two years Shi-lêng made an attack on Yah-choo, but was repulsed by its Governor Kao. This increasing pressure from Nān-Chao made the Emperor negotiate for peace in 877 and, as desired by Shi-lêng, a Buddhist monk was sent by Governor Kao as an intermediary. But there was no peace agreement and Prince Shi-lêng made his last effort to annex Sze-chuan. His attack on Sze-chuan was, however, repulsed by Governor Kao[71]. Soon after this failure Prince Shi-lêng suddenly fell ill with a virulent attack of fever and died in the Kui-tsiu Temple in Ueh-shiting in Sze-chuan. He reigned for eighteen years.

According to Yang-tsai's account Prince Shi-lêng was given the posthumous title of "Emperor"[72] and his successors enjoyed the title for nearly forty-four years as a posthumous honour. Nān-Chao was conquered by Kublai Khan in A.D. 1253[73]. As the title was never given to them during their life-time the Emperor of China did not object

70. L. Hoontrakul : *ibid.*, p.93.

71. Kao appears from time to time as Governor of some province, Ch'eng-tu, Yah-choo or some other since the time of I-mou-hsin. It is probably a family name and not the name of a particular person and many Governors were appointed from the Kao family.

72. By whom the title was given is not mentioned. It was probably the official title given by the ruling family of Nan-Chao after the death of the monarch, since the Chinese Emperors would not tolerate the existence of another living Emperor within the sphere of influence of the Chinese Empire in East Asia. But the great Ko-lo-fêng declared Nān-Chao as the 'Great Mèng Empire' after defeating China and stopping tribute. He was an emperor in true sense of the term.

73. *JSS*, vol-XL, Pt. I, 1952, *ibid.*, p.26.

to it. Regarding the assumption of the title of "Emperor" by the Nān-Chao Kings Credner writes that "in the 9th century A.D. the power of the kingdom, after victorious campaigns down to Tongking, was so great that King Yulung, whose realm then stretched from Assam to Tonking (859 A.D.) could adopt the title of emperor of Ta-li."[74] From chronological evidences and historical accounts it appears that Yulung was but another name for Shi-lêng or a phonetic variation of the latter and that Tongking had probably been conquered by Shi-lêng's predecessor Fongyeh though history is not clear about it.

According to the Chinese conception of monarchy only the Supreme Ruler of China, the Son of Heaven or Tientze, had the exclusive right to the title of 'Emperor' on earth and he is also called *Min-ki-Fuh-muh*, the people's father-mother and he becomes the ruler of everything under heaven[75]. In the Chinese historical classics there is mention of the Shang Emperor Puon-Kang being the first to be honorifically addressed as "the Son of Heaven" by Yueh about 1399 B. C.[76] In keeping with this tradition the Chinese Emperors conceded the title of 'Emperor', which could not be resisted any longer, to the powerful kings of Nān-Chao, not, however, when the latter were alive and ruling, but after their death.

Prince Lêng-shwen (Lung-shun) *alias* Fa, as the Chinese called him, next succeeded to the throne of Nān-Chao at the age of seventeen. The Chinese, whose southern territories had been repeatedly invaded by Prince Shi-lêng, were expected to invade Nān-Chao at any time. Hence, with a view to bring about reconciliation with China Prince Lêng-shwen sent an embassy to the Imperial Court with proposals of peace and friendship between the two countries. The embassy was received hospitably by the Emperor and peace was granted. All was not well at Nān-Chao at this time and China's friendship was of great value to the kingdom. Emperor Cheng-he sent not only a very friendly letter to Prince Lêngshwen, but in 884 sent also a princess of the Royal Household as a wife to him. Since then Chinese envoys used to visit the Court of Nān-Chao and diplomatic relations began to develop between the two countries.

74. Credner : *ibid.*, p.6. ; A Rosthorn : *Geschichte Chinas*, 1923, p. 119 referred to by Credner.

75 Walter Old : trans. *The Shu King*, (The Theosophical Publishing Society, New York, 1904), pp. 169.

76 Old : *op. cit.*, pp. 109, 129.

As a ruler Lêng-shwen proved to be unworthy and incompetent. He was a most sensual and dissipated man. He was more after his personal pleasures than the duties of his office which he left entirely to his officials. He was therefore greatly disliked by the subjects. Being dissolute in character he soon fell under the baneful influences of his concubines at whose instance he murdered several of his servants in 898. As a result he was hated by his own attendants and was murdered by one of his own servants named Yang at Yün-nān-fu. He reigned for twenty years and was given the posthumous title of Emperor.

He was succeeded in 898 by his son Shwen-hwa, then twenty-one years old. In 900 Prince Shwen-hwa executed Yang and his family to avenge the murder of his father. He was, however, a promoter of education and Emperor Kang-ming of China established five Colleges in Nān-Chao in the year 900. He reigned for five years and died in 903 leaving behind an infant son of eight months to succeed him.

A Chinese officer of the Court, named Cheng-mai-su of the Chang family, became the guardian of the child and acted as the regent. This man had been previously an officer of the Chinese government at Uchchew in Sze-chuan, but was charged with certain grave misdeeds on his part. He then fled to Nān-Chao to escape punishment and was favoured with a job by Prince Lêng-shwen. He soon rose to power and became the First Grand Secretary under the king. From that position he conspired to seize the throne and, when his insidious plans were completed, he one day murdered the infant prince by crushing his testicles. Then in order to remove all fears of possible revenge from the members of the ruling house this upstart hastily collected an armed band and fell upon the members of the Mêng royal family and massacred as many of them as he could reach. Over eight hundred members of the ruling house thus fell under his sword beneath the "Five Glory Tower" in Ta-li-fu. This was the tragic end of the powerful Tai-Mêng Dynasty of Nān-Chao and was the act of a treacherous Chinese officer who was generously given political asylum by the father of the murdered child. The throne then passed into the hands of the Chang family and the name of the kingdom was changed into Ta-Siang-Ho-Kuo. The new ruler built a temple at San-teh-su and decorated it with ten thousand Buddhas as a thanksgiving for success in exterminating the House of Mêng. He died in 911 after reigning for eight years.

But a period of instability followed and a succession of usurpers founded a number of ephemeral dynasties each changing the name of the kingdom after his family. Thus there came into power in succession

Chao-Shan-cheng (928-29), Yang-Kan-cheng (929-36), Twan-Szu-ping (936-44) naming the kingdom as Ta-Tien-king-kuo, Ta-Yi-Ning-kuo and Ta-li-kuo. Cheng-mai-su was succeeded by his son Ren-ming Len-ming. In 913 he led an expedition against Sze-chuan, but the Chinese repulsed it inflicting heavy casualties on his army. He died of a most painful abscess formed in his ear in 926 and was succeeded by his son, Long-tang, at the age of twelve.

In 929 this boy king was murdered by General Yan-kan-cheng of Tong-C'wab under the influence of a mysterious happening. He placed on the throne one Chao-shan-chen who was born of a very poor family. But the General was displeased with the attitude of the new king. He murdered him after a reign of ten months and seized the throne for himself. His dynasty, which lasted only upto 937, was known as the Ta-i-ming dynasty. This usurper was an illegitimate son of Prince Lêng-shwen of the Mêng dynasty and was a native of Ping-C'wan-chew. He was an officer at Ten-C'wan-chew under Cheng-mai-su. As a ruler he was unsuccessful and was hated by both the officials and the people alike.

In 935 General Twan-Szu-Ping (Twan Sz-p'ing) of Teng-hai-hsien revolted against Yan-kan-cheng and defeated him in a battle. Yan-kan-cheng fled from the capital. General Twan-Szu-Ping seized the throne and installed himself as the ruler of Nān-Chao. His dynasty is called Ta-li dynasty. According to *Nān-Chao-Yeh-seh* Twan--Szu-Ping eventually succeeded in capturing the fugitive ex-king Yan-kan-cheng, but his life was spared. Yan-kan-cheng entered a Buddhist monastery and lived the life of a monk.

The illustrious Twan family was connected with the Mêng family, Twan-Szu-Ping (Twan-Sze-p'ing) himself being probably a Semi-Shan. The members of the Twan family had held high civil and military posts for many generations under the Mêng. The new Twan family ruled over Ta-li-kuo till 1253 when it was destroyed by Kublai Khan. Fourteen kings of this family are mentioned in the Annals of Nān-Chao. Twan-Szu-Ping ruled for eight years and died in 944. He was a devout Buddhist and made many temples and decorated them with brass Buddhas. Mr. Parker says "this is the beginning of the *tributary* state of Ta-li".[77] Scott is of the opinion that the Nān-Chao Empire now "split into two". At any rate "the country round Ta-li became

77 *GUBSS*, 1. 1. p. 267.

more and more Chinese, while the western portion, which is no doubt the kingdom of Pông of the Manipur Chronicle and of the list of his conquests made by Anawra-hta, remained Shan and split up into a number of States, united at times by some energetic *Sawbwa* of one State or other.[78] As captain Forbes suggests the Tai race, of which the Shans form a branch, had been gradually forced out of their original seat in Yün-nān by the advance of the Mongols under Kublai Khan from a date much earlier than the destruction of the Pagan monarchy. It was about this time that a portion of the race moving south formed the kingdom of Siam.[79]

Twan-Szu-Ping was succeeded by his son Si-in in 944. His intensely religious bent of mind was unfitted to the management of the kingdom then in a turbulent state. After about a year's reign he renounced the throne and entered a Buddhist monastery.

Buddhism owed its predominance in Nān-Chao chiefly to the patronage and devotion received from the rulers of the Ta-li dynasty. It was during this period that the great Buddhist temples at San-ta-si were rebuilt on a magnificent scale. Nowadays, that immense site is covered with a great heap of ruins. But the Three Pagodas, which were restored and repaired by Prince Fong-yeh early in his reign, still stand in the area. The Great Pagoda is described to be "square and is built of huge bricks accurately cemented together. The base is 11 yards on each side. There are sixteen caves tapering from the tenth cave upto the pinnacle. At the top is a spiral staircase surmounted by a huge globe gilded with gold leaf. The sides are thickly plastered and are decorated with hundreds of niches containing small Buddhas. This Pagoda is about 300 feet high. After a walk through the ruins one comes to the remains of the large brass Kwan-in[80]. The head is missing. The trunk is six feet high, across the breast it is four feet and the arm stumps are one foot wide".[81] Harvey says that the people of Nān-Chao built a

78 *Ibid.*, pp. 267-68.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 268.

80 Sir Charles Eliot says : "Chinese Buddhists say Tara and Kuan-Yin (Kwan-in) are the same but the difference between them is this. Tara is an Indian and Lamaist goddess associated with Avalokita and in origin analogous to the Saktis of Tantrism. Kuan-Yin is a female form of Avalokita who can assume all shapes. The original Kuan-Yin was a male deity : male Kuan-Yins are not unknown in China and are said to be the rule in Korea". *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. II, p. 17 (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1954).

81 M. Carthew ; *ibid.*, p. 31.

monastery in A. D. 777 to Kuan-Yin, the Mahayanist madonna and the above may have been the one mentioned here. Prince Fong-yeh's reign was a turning point in the religious history of Ta-li or rather western Yün-nān, which was the central seat of the Ngai-Lao Shans. It was he who drove out for the first time the Taoist priests of his kingdom and espoused the cause of Buddhism and established numerous monasteries through which to propagate the new faith. Yün-nān-fu had been already under Buddhism for over two centuries and western Yün-nān must have known Buddhism much earlier than the ninth century A. D. Even in the first century B. C. some Buddhist missionaries were known to have come to Yün-nān from eastern India and preached their religion in that country and in the neighbouring areas. A Chinese scholar named Mou-ju advocated the Buddhism so introduced at that time and tried to show how it was superior to the ancient religion of the Chinese. A number of Princes then adopted Buddhism.[82] Chavannes points out that the Ngai-Lao country in western Yün-nān was converted to Buddhism in the time of the Han (206 B. C.-A. D. 221)[83] But this earlier Buddhism of Nān-Chao probably died out for want of constant intercourse with India and for the strong prevailing beliefs in the local non-Buddhist cults, such as the Dragon cult which continued to flourish. It appears therefore that Nān-Chao received Buddhism earlier than China. It was Ko-lo-fêng's enterprise that opened up the way, closed since A. D. 342, to the central seat of religion and culture of the Pyu country (Burma)[84] and onward to Magadha, and since the second quarter of the ninth century A. D. Buddhism had become the dominant religion of Nān-Chao.

Buddhism found its way to China as early as the first century A. D. It was Chang Chien or Chang Kien who first brought the knowledge of Buddhism to China in 126 B. C. on his return from his travels through Central Asia then already under Buddhist influence. In the year A. D. 61 or, according to some, A.D. 64 the Emperor Ming-Ti of the latter Han dynasty is said to have sent messengers to India to bring back Buddhist books and priests. At any rate, certain Buddhist missionaries were brought to the Chinese Imperial Court[85]. The first Indian missionaries,

82 P. C. Bagchi : *Bharat O Chin*, (Visvavidyā Saṁgraha) p. 4.

83 *JBRS*, vol. XIX, Part II, p. 139.

84 Pelliot, in *Deux Itineraires* (pp. 154-83), argues that the Thai of Nān-Chao received civilizing and Buddhist influences from India *via* the Piao of Burma.

85 Max von Brandt : "The Ancient Faiths in China" in Harmsworth's *History of the World*, vol. II, p. 729.

Kāśyapa Mātanga and Dharmaratna, who so visited China in A. D. 66 with a Buddhist scripture (*sūtra*), gathered around them a considerable following in the newly founded White Horse Monastery[86] in the Chinese capital Loyang[87]. In A. D. 386 the Lu-Shan school of Amitābha Buddhism was founded in the south of the Empire by Huiyüan. This learned monk was born in A. D. 334 at Lou-fan, modern Tai-chou in North Shan-si. Lu-Shan was a solitary and picturesque mountain resort in Kiang-si. Hui-yüan, who had studied at Ch'ang-ngan, a famous Buddhist centre of learning in China, founded at Lu-Shan a school which he named the "school of White Lotus" (*Pai lien shê*). Among his seventeen eminent Buddhist scholars there were two Indians, Buddhayaśas of Kashmir and Buddhabhadra of the Sākya clan. The Lu-Shan school was noted for introducing in China the cult of Amitābha[88]. Hui-yüan's desciples collected Buddhist manuscripts with Sanskrit texts in Central Asia and translated them into Chinese. This northern Buddhism of the Mahāyāna school, that spread down to the borders of Nān-Chao, must have penetrated into that country, but there is no evidence to show that it could make any great impression on the Ngai-Lao Shans before the end of the eighth century A. D. It was undoubtedly the conquest of Burma by Ko-lo-fêng that opened the way to a fresh wave of Buddhism to enter Ta-li from the south-west, which brought about a Buddhist renaissance in that country. Subsequent expansion of the Nān-Chao empire to the south must have brought in also ideas of the Southern Canon. Ko-lo-fêng's freindship with Tibet and the presence of Tibetans in his kingdom certainly facilitated interchange of ideas between the two coun-

86 The two monks Kāśyapa Mātanga and Dharmaratna rode on white horses and used them also for carrying the Buddhist scriptures and therefore the monastery was named White Horse Monastery. It is said that Kāśyapa Mātanga was a native of Central India. These monks went to China, then under the Emperor Ming-Ti (A. D. 58-76) of the Eastern Han, from the kingdom of the Ta Yueh-chih, the Yueh chih being the Kushans. Another monk, named Chu Fa-Lan, who came from Central Asia, also followed shortly. These monks were installed, at Loyang, the capital of the Ming dynasty, in the White Horse Monastery. The journey was rendered safe as, in the meantime, the troublesome Hiung-Nu had been crushed by Ming-Ti. In A. D. 67 Kāśyapa Mātanga translated into Chinese a Buddhist work called 'Dvicatvāringsat Vastu-Sūtra'. It contains the fundamental sutras of Buddhism. Its ideas and precepts are Hinayanist. Eliot : *op. cit.*, vol. II, (1954, London). p. 71; *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 244; P. C. Bagchi : *Bharat O Chin*, pp. 4-5; B. A. Saletore : *India's Diplomatic Relations with the East.* (Bombay, 1960), pp. 71-72.

87 P. C. Bagchi : *India and China*, 1950, (Hind Kitabs Ltd)., p. 29.

88 Bagchi : *op. cit.*, p. 99; William Willetts : *Chinese Art* (Vol. I, pelican Book, 1958), p. 347. A foeign priest called K'ang Sèng-hui founded the first Buddhist temple in South China about A. D. 247 which since then spread Buddhism in Canton and Chiao-chih-See Willetts ; *op. cit* ; pp. 302, 315.

tries and hence Tibetan Buddhism must have had a place among the peoples of Nān-Chao. The monastery built and dedicated to Kwan-yin by the people of that country is a case in proof of it. About the Tibatan influence over Nān-Chao much is not known. But, yet, as a nation, the Nān-Chao Tai were almost certainly following their racial religion upto this time, "worshipping", as Wood points out, "the beneficent spirits of the hills, forests, and waters, and propitiating numerous demons with sacrifices and offerings".[89] He further says that this simple faith survives in Siam to the present day, and, in the north, is still more truly the religion of the country people than is Buddhism. So also the Ahoms of Assam brought with them not Buddhism but their racial religion, may be with a slight admixture of Buddhistic influence.

Regarding the influence of Tibetan Buddhism it may be noted that Buddhism was established in Tibet as late as the middle of the seventh century A. D. under the patronage of Song-tsan Gampo, who was one of the greatest Tibetan kings. The introduction of Buddhism into Tibet is attributed to two Buddhist wives of Song-tsan Gampo-one, a Chinese princess named Wen-Ch'eng, given in marriage by the Emperor T'ai Tsung (A. D. 627-50) who founded the T'ang Dynasty and the other, a Nepalese princess, named Bhṛkuti Devi. But in Tibet Buddhism as such could not make headway owing to the prevalence of local Shamanism. There evolved a new form of mixed Buddhism called Lamaism. It may be noted that the Buddhism, that was imported into Tibet and was fast growing between the seventh and the thirteenth century A. D., was essentially of the Tāntric form which was taught in the universities of Nālandā and Vikramaśila, particularly during the rule of the Pāla kings of Bihar and Bengal. The Balaputra inscription characterises the Buddhist monks of Nālandā as Tāntrika-bodhisattvas. Under the Pālas, the Buddhist pantheon was "enriched by a host of new iconographical forms, mudras and postures, or *āsanas*."[90] Hence the Tibetan form of Buddhism or Lamaism is described by David Macdonald as "a priestly mixture of Shamanist cult, Tāntric mysticism, devil-worship and Indo-Tibetan demonolatry, touched here and there by the brighter lights of the teachings of Buddha".[91]

89 W. A. R. Wood : *A History of Siam*, (T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., London, 1926), p. 39.

90 "Indo-Nepalese Art in Tibet" by Dr. George Reorich in *Stepping Stones*, Kalingpong, vol. I, No. 3, p. 49.

91. His *Tibet*, (Oxford Pamphlets, 1945), P. 19.

Nān-Chao undoubtedly derived some inspiration from Tibetan Buddhism. But the form, called Tantrayāna, which accommodated many prevailing superstitions and mystic cults, was introduced into China by Vajrabodhi and widely popularised by his desciple Amonghavajra during the eighth and ninth centuries of the Christian era. Buddhism of this mixed form rapidly spread and exerted its dominant influence almost all over the Far East. It may be assumed that Nān-Chao was not free from the influence of this school though no definite information about it is available. The Ta-li dynasty had fourteen rulers holding the throne of Nān-Chao from A. D. 936 to 1236. These rulers were themselves devoted to Buddhism and built numerous Buddhist temples and monasteries in the kingdom for the promotion of that religion. They used to retire into a quiet monastic life after reigning for a period.

In 978, during the reign of Prince Shu-shwen, peace was restored in Sze-chuan and the frontiers between China and Nān-Chao were finally fixed by the Emperor of China, who "laid his jade axe on the line made by the Ta-tu river and said that all the land beyond this river should remain under the rule of the Southern Princes of Nān-Chao". This was done in accordance with a map of Nān-Chao drawn by Generl Wang-chaun-pin after the settlement of peace with Nān-Chao and presented to the Emperor to fix the boundary.[92] It appears that the Emperor renounced his claims to the disputed territories and settled the political frontiers to the satisfaction of the rulers of Nān-Chao. This settlement was followed by a long period of peace and friendly relations between the two countries extending over two centuries. Though there were occasional internal troubles, Nān-Chao used to get Chinese support against external enemies and rebellious vassal chiefs and the Nān-Chao Princes and nobles valued most the titles and honours conferred by the Emperor upon them. Rebellious Man-tsi tribes, living near Annam under their Chief Beng-Kao, gave much trouble to Nān-Chao during the reign of Si-lien in the middle of the eleventh century A. D., but the latter quelled the rebellion with the assistance of the Chinese.

This period of political security from external danger was marked by considerable degree of material and cultural progress in Nān-Chao. Prince Chen-shwen (A. D. 1097-1109) of the Latter or Second Ta-li dynasty introduced notable reforms in the administration including abolition of the old *cōrvéé* system. He also built a city at T'su-hsieng-fu. In 1104 he sent Kao-tai-uien to the Emperor Tseng-ming with despatches

92. Carthew : *ibid.*, pp. 3-32.

and eighty gold spear-heads to be offered to him as a present. He further sent a list of Nān-Chao families to the Emperor with recommendations for conferment of imperial honours. Burma and two other States sent to Chen-shwen tributes which included elephants and spices.[93] The next ruler Prince Ho-U (A. D. 1109-1148) used to receive tributes from a number of adjacent principalities. The tributes were in gold, silver, precious stones, elephants, rhinoceros together with thousands of horses and heads of cattle.[94]

The Man-tsi tribes again rebelled against Nān-Chao, but were subdued by Kao-tai-ming, the Grand Secretary of State and Chief Counsellor. In the beginning of the thirteenth century A. D. Nān-Chao rose to be one of the most powerful kingdoms of East Asia developing an excellent administrative system with many brilliant men in the management of the affairs of the State. It was also a period of good relations between China and Nān-Chao. Kao-tai-ming received an imperial title for his meritorious works. Ho-U's reign was followed by a more or less stable government under two other kings who succeeded him. Then came the reign of Prince Ci-hsiang (A. D. 1201-39) which was remarkable for all round peace and progress in the kingdom and for some of the finest talents ever produced in that country. In 1239 this Prince abdicated in favour of his son Hsian-hsin, himself retiring to monastic life.

The critical period of Nān-Chao began in the reign of Prince Hsian-hsin. The Mongol hordes under Mangu Khan and Kublai Khan swept down on the frontiers of Nān-Chao in 1245 from the vantage point of Sze-chuan, which had for about a decade been made a part of the Mongol dominion. Kublai Khan[95] was the brother of the Mongol Emperor Mangu Khan.[96] In this campaign Kublai Khan was assisted by his very able Generals, Wu and Ho. For reaching Nān-Chao the Mongol army had to undertake a strenuous march over a distance of 2,000 *li* (about 667 English miles), much of which lay across the mountainous country of Eastern Tibet and numerous rivers and marshy tracts. Prince Hsian-hsin sent General Kao-he to oppose Kublai Khan near the River of Golden Sand[97] but he was killed in the battle that took place between the two

93. Carthew : *ibid.*, p. 34.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
95 Properly Hu-pe-Lei or Ku-pe-Lei from which some modern writers express it as Khubilai or Kublai. He was also later called Emperor Shih Tsu.
96 Called in the Mongol dialect Kha Khan or Grand Khan or Emperor.
97 The Mekong. The Chinese name of the river is Lan-tsang Shui. There is golden sand in its bed which the Ngai-Lao wash and melt and 'so make gold'. It has also bright pearls and has amber (hu-p'o) native in the soil. "The Tan and the Ngai-Lao" in *JBRS*, vol. XIV, Part II, p. 114.

armies. It is said that it took a few months for the Mongol army to arrive at the borders of Ta-li. It could advance no farther owing to the impassable condition of the roads and rivers caused by continuous rain.

In the meantime Prince Hsian-hsin had died in 1252 and his son Twan-shing-shih (or Twan Hsin-ei or Hsin-ei) ascended the throne. He was the last king of Ta-li-kuo. From the skirts of Ta-li Kublai Khan sent three of his officers to him to demand his submission to the Mongol Emperor. Prince Shing-shih foolishly put these officers to death and sent troops to oppose the Mongols. Man-tsi forces were to join the Ta-li army to strengthen the defence, but they did not arrive in time. Prince Shing-shih's army was defeated by the Mongols and the city of Shang Kwan to the north of Ta-li captured. Unable to stand against the invading army, which was numerically superior, Prince Shing-shih fled to Yün-nān-fu leaving his General Kao-fai-chang with a small force to defend the city of Ta-li. The General gallantly fought against the Mongols till he was mortally wounded and fell beneath the Great Tower. With his dying breath the General cried : "Alas ! the House of Twan has come to an end, though members of that House still live. Thus ends the Kingdom of Nān-Chao".[98] The story goes that as he died black clouds gathered and heavy peals of thunder shook the sky. Kublai Khan heard this and said : "Behold ! A loyal and devoted minister died".[99] The survivors to the Nān-Chao garrison fought bravely till they were exhausted and had to surrender on January 7,1253.[99a]

The widow and the two sons of the deceased General were then brought before Kublai Khan, who being moved with pity spared their lives saying "Behold the widow and sons of a most faithful and brave soldier. Take good care of them and when the boys are old enough give them a position in the Government". It may be mentioned that Kublai Khan's character came under the sobering influence of Buddhism which he adopted as a national religion of China. His Buddhism was of the Tibetan form.[100] During his reign a mass of Tibetan Buddhist litera-

98 Carthew : *ibid.*, p. 37.
99 *Ibid.*, p. 37.
99a *JSS*, vol. XLVI Part 2, 1958, p. 125.
100 He appointed a Tibetan Buddhist scholar named Phagspa, whom he had brought to his Court, to the office of Kuo-Ssu or Preceptor of the State to administer the religious affairs of the whole country. He declared Lamaism as a national religion of China. From Emperor Kublai Khan Phagspa received the title of Ta Pao Fa Wang or Prince of the Great and Precious Law of Buddha and also an imperial decree to invent a script for the Mongolian language. vide Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang : *The History of Chinese Buddhism*, (Indo-Chinese Literature Publications, Allahabad-2, India),1956, pp. 179-80. "Inviting to his court the high priest of the large Tibetan monastery at Sakya, Kublai Khan became a convert to Lamaism and gave the sovereignty of Tibet to the Sakya lama."-David Macdonald : *Tibet* (Oxford Pamphlets, 1945), P. 8.

ture was translated into the Mongolian language. He made himself more a Chinese than a Mongol and ruled with moderation. In religion, he was tolerant though he disliked the Taoists, and treated his subjects with humanity.

After the fall of Ta-li in 1253 Kublai Khan captured the other important cities in western Yün-nān and received the submission of the Man-tsi tribes. He next sent Generals Hu and Ho in the same year to conquer the second capital Yün-nān-fu. At Yün-nān-fu, with the fall of the city, they captured the fugitive king Shing-shih. Kublai Khan, however, forgave the captured king and made him a provincial Governor in Nān-Chao. Shing-shih, the last ruling Prince of Nān-Chao, died in A. D. 1260 on his journey to the Court of the Mongol Emperor after having held his hereditary office of Governor for seven years. The Twan ruling family continued to retain its title, *mahārājā*. Kublai Khan died at the ripe old age of eighty. Successive Mongol-Chinese Emperors appointed the members of the Twan royal family of Ta-li as hereditary Governors. Ta-li was placed under Generals Hu and Ho and Kublai Khan founded the Yüan dynasty of China in 1253 with his capital at Khan Baligh (or City of the King), now Peking (Peiping).[101] Thus ended the Tai empire of Nān-Chao in South China.

Administrative System of Nān-Chao :

The external relations of Nān-Chao, except for a few reigns of strong monarchs, was governed by the Chinese conception of imperialism, according to which the Emperor of China could have no equal on earth. The Emperor was supreme over all other rulers of the known world, though, in fact, he was able to exercise suzerainty real or nominal only over the East Asian countries outside of India, Japan and probably, for a long period, also of Tibet. Nān-Chao, because of her peculiar geographical position, had to acknowledge this suzerainty nominally and pay tribute to China periodically. Her embassies and sometimes the ruling Prince himself used to visit the imperial Court in recognition of the overlordship of the Chinese Emperor. In the usual course of overlordship proper the Emperor would have appointed a Resident at the capital of Nān-

101 L. Hoontrakul : *op. cit.*, p. 97; Carthew : *ibid.*, p. 38 ; Harold Lamb : *Genghis Khan*, (Bantam Books, New York), 1953, p. 130 ; Latourette : *op. cit.*, p. 269. See also *JSS*, Vol. XLVI Part 2. Nov., 1958, P. 127

Chao whose duty would have been to keep the imperial government informed of the state of affairs in that kingdom, and, where necessary, to advise its rulers on matters of high policy. Prefects were so appointed by the imperial government to manage or supervise and report on the affairs of the vassal States of the Tai country of Yün-nān and Szechuan before the emergence of the powerful kingdom of Nān-chao. But in case of Nān-Chao, in his nominal capacity as the overlord, which was no better than a constitutional fiction, the Emperor only conferred on the Princes and nobles of Nān-Chao imperial honorific titles and seals and sometimes appointed the members of the royal family as Governors and Generals under the imperial government, and did not appoint any Resident or Prefect for control of affairs.

Nān-Chao was a kind of oriental monarchy in which there was a Council of Ministers to advise and assist the king. The functions of the Ministers were both civil and military. Important military officers were often appointed as Ministers by the king for consultation and guidance in the formulation of State policy. The kingship was hereditary. The First Grand Secretary of State is a dignitary, probably, next in rank to the king. We know for the first time from Parker's translations of Teng-yueh Annals that 'There were Ministers of State, censors, or examinners, generals, record officers, chamberlains, judges, treasurers, aediles,[102] ministers of commerce, etc., and the native word for each department was *Shwang*. Minor officials managed the granaries, stables, taxes, etc., and the military organisation was by tens, centurions, chiliarchs, deca-chiliarchs, and so on. Military service was compulsory for all able-bodied men, who drew lots for each levy. Each soldier was supplied with a leather coat and a pair of trousers. There were four distinct army corps or divisions, each having its own standard. The king's body-guards were called *chu-nu katsa*, and we are told that *katsa* or *katsu* meant leather belt. The men wore *chuti*, helmets, and carried shields of rhinoceros hide. The centurions were called Lo-tsa-tsz.[103] Scott remarks that these names, if they really were Shan and not Chinese inventions, have been lost since the Shans ceased to be conquering power. Parker has further pointed out that 'some of the best cavalry soldiers were of the Wang-tsa tribe, west of the Mekhong. The women of this tribe fought too, and the helmets of the Wang-tsa were studded with cowries,[104] It

102 Comparable to Roman magistrates superintending public works, shows etc.

103 George Scott : "Shan Buddhism" in *JRAS*, 1912, pp. 487-90 : *GUBSS*, 1. 1, 1900 by Scott and and Hardiman, p. 263.

104 *Ibid.*, p. 263.

is not known who these Wang-tsa tribesmen were, so distinguished in the past by their martial qualities. Parker thought that they were the Wa people, but the modern Wa do not rear horses or ponies for they look upon them as highly dangerous animals.

'There were six metropolitan departments and provincial viceroys in the kingdom. The barbarian word for department was *Kien*.'[105] Of such departments the most important were Peh-ngai,[106] Mêng-she[107] and Tai-ho (Ta-li-fu).[108] 'When the King sallied forth, eight white-scalloped standards of greyish purple were carried before him; two feather fans, a chowry, an axe, and a parasol of king-fishers' feathers having a red bag. The Queen-mother's standards were scallopped with brown instead of white. She was called *Sin-Mo* or *Kin-mo*, and Queen-wife was called *Tsin-wu*.' The chief wife of a *Sawbwa* of the later period was, under the Indian Buddhist influence, called Maha Devi.[109]

Nān-Chao was organized on a feudal basis. The kingdom under Ko-lo-fêng developed into an empire in the middle of the eighth century A.D. with the extension of its sway from Magadha on the west to Kwei-chow and Kwang-si frontiers on the east and from Tibet on the north, to the borders of Tongking on the south. The empire farther extended during the reigns of his successors and included Tongking with Hanoi. The local ruling Chiefs within the dominions of Nān-Chao acknowledged her overlordship and paid tributes to her king. Nān-Chao had only two most powerful rivals, namely, China and Tibet. In the middle of the eleventh century A.D. the Pagan Empire of Burma arose as a third potential rival. Surrounded by these powerful kingdoms Nān-Chao held

105 "*Keng* of present times, which in Lao, Shan and Siamese becomes *Chieng* and along the Mekhong is frequently pronounced and sometimes written, *sieng*, whence the French form *xieng*. The Burmese transformed it into *kyaing*. The forms *kaing* and *kiang* are freaks of the British military officers and of railway promoters. The word may be compared with the Wa *ken*, *meaning* a circle, or community of villages under one chief, as Ken Tau and Wa Pet Ken, beyond the Nam Hka."- *ibid.*, p. 263.

106 The capital of the King of Tien or Yün-nān- *ibid.*, p. 264.

107 Mêng-she, Mong-she, Mong Se or Hsen-hse refers to the same place, namely Yün-nān-Sen- *ibid.*, p. 224, and also Milne and Cochrane : *Shans at Home*, p. 7. According to Parker Mêng-she was the ancient seat of the Mêng (Mung') family of Nān-Chao rulers. This is, he says, doubtless the modern Mangshi, called by the Shans Mong-Khawn. Further Mêng is doubtless the Shan Möng, a State or fortified town - *GUBSS*, 1. 1, 1900, p. 264.

108 *Ibid.*, pp. 263-64.

109 *Ibid.*, p. 264.

her sovereignty as much by diplomacy as by her military prowess. The balance of power depended on their alliances with each other against the most powerful and troublesome amongst them. But China was generally holding a predominant position commanding respect and receiving homage from most of the East Asian countries including Nān-Chao. The political impact of the Mongols wiped out finally from the scene the great Tai kingdom of Nān-Chao and with it ended the age-long struggle for power between China and Nān-Chao.

The extant records of old throw some light on the economic and social system of the kingdom of Nān-Chao. Land was apportioned to each family according to rank; superior officials receiving forty *shwang*[110] or acres. This method of distribution of land survives, we are told by Wood, in Siam to the present day, in the nominal *sakdi na* grade conferred upon officials.[111] Every Prince, official, and private person, had certain amount of land allotted to him, For instance, the Chao P'yas, or P'yas, holding important Posts, were allowed to hold from 1,000 to 4,000 acres. Subordinate officials, such as K'uns and Luangs, held from 160 acres upwards. Common people held 10 acres.[112] The Ahoms of Assam had a similar system which will be described elsewhere. The people knew the arts of weaving cotton, silk and woollen and reared silk-worms. The salt wells of K'unming (Yün-nān-fu) were free to the people. West of Yung-ch'ang a kind of mulberry grew from the wood of which bowls were made. Gold was found in many parts of the country, both in the sands and in the mountains. The Mekong river in the north was noted for the presence of alluvial gold. West of Momien (T'eng-Yueh) the race of horses was particularly good. People of all ranks, including the nobles, engaged themselves in agricultural work. It is interesting to note that it took three men to drive an ox-plough: one led, one drove, and the third poked up the amimal. As mentioned, the old *cōrvéé* system was abolished, but each man paid a tax of two measures of rice a year. As a special mark of honour, the chief dignitaries wore a *kimpolo*, or a coat of tiger-skin comparable to the modern fur-coat. The women's hair was gathered into two locks and plaited into a chignon. Their ears were ornamented with pearls, green-stone, and amber. It is said that female morals were easy previous to marriage, but after marriage one has to suffer even death penalty for adultery.[113]

110 The tone of this word is different from the tone of the first mentioned word *shwang* meaning a department of the government. See Parker's account as reproduced in *GUBSS*, Part-1-Vol. 1, p. 263.

111 *History of Siam :* (T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., London', 1926, p. 37.

112 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 264.

In the T'ang dynastic history a list of the kings of what it calls the Royal Family of Mêng is inserted. In this royal nomenclature the last syllable of the father's name forms the first one of the son's, and this is so in the case of the fourteen Mêng family Princes of Nān-Chao,[114] who ruled from A.D. 649 to 903. In the early pagan dynastic list also a similar practice in naming the Princes is noticed. From this Harvey remarks that the 'identity system' indicates a common origin of the two royal families.[115] But Scott rightly observes that this idea of hereditary syllables, as found in the Chinese writings, seems to be purely fanciful, or an invention of the Chinese mind, devoted to ancestral worship. In modern days the Shan takes his name on much the same system as the Burman, without any reference to the name of his father, and in any case the *Sawbwas* are always known by a title, assumed after their accession.[116] The naming system also depends on the prevailing linguistic or cultural influence. It does not necessarily signify a common origin or a community of race. In spite of racial differences such cultural similarity is possible among peoples living long in a common environment. The case of the Ahoms in Assam, who belong to the Tai race but have lived long in an environment of Sanskritised Assamese culture adopting and promoting it, can be cited as an example in this regard.

That the Tai were a literary people from before the rise of the Ch'in Empire in the middle of the third century B.C. is proved by the records of ruthless persecution of the Tai literati by Shih-Wang-Ti, who also destroyed most of their books. Yet, after a long period of struggle with the Chinese imperialists, they reappeared as a ruling race in the kingdom

114 Hsi-nu-lo (649-74), Lo-shang (674-712), She-lo-pi (712-28), P'i-lo-ko (728-48), Ko-lo-fêng (748-78), Fêng-ch'ieh-i (died young), I-mou-hsun (778-808), Hsun-ko-ch'uan (808-9), Ch'uan-lung-sheng (809-16), Ch'uan-li (816-24), Ch'uan-feng-yu (824-59). The last three rulers are brothers. Shih-lung (859-77). This Prince's mother was not of the bloodroyal, but a fisherman's daughter of exquisite beauty. Lung-shun (877-97), Shun-hua-chen (897-902). The above list of Princes is from Harvey's *History of Burma*, 1925, (Longmans, Green and Co., Calcutta), pp. 311-13. The dates, he says, are well substantiated by Chinese records. When compared with other records a slight difference of a year or so is sometimes noticed.

The following are the Rulers of Pagan before 1044 according to the Burmese Chronicles (*The Hmannan Yazawin*, Mandalay, 1908) with dates which are unsubstantiated : 1. Pyusawti (167-242), 2. Timinyi (242-99), 3. Yimminpaik (299-324), 4. Paikthili (324-44), 5. Thinlikyaung (344-87) and 6. Kyaungdurit (387-412). vide Harvey : *op. cit.*, pp. 311-13 ; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia.* (Macmillan, 1955.) Appendix, p. 730.

115 Harvey : *op. cit.*. pp. 312-13

116 *GUBSS*, 1. 1, 1900, pp. 264-65.

of Nān-Chao and settled down to social and economic reconstruction and also to literary pursuits As already mentioned above, I-mou-hsun entered into an agreement with China when Tibet threatened Nān-Chao and four copies of a treaty were made. W.W. Cochrane wrote to a distinguished archaeologist asking in what languages and alphabets these copies of the treaty were presumably written and got the reply that they were written in Oighur, Chinese, Tibetan, and Shan (Tai) respectively,[117] though the script might be one common to the Chinese and the Tai or to all. Of course, no proof whatever of the statement was given. Perhaps no old record was at the time available containing the texts of the treaty or any reference to the languages and alphabets of the same. In the sixth century A.D. Lengdon, the ancestor of the Ahoms, "wrote a letter to Thenkham" to be more fully described below. Yet, in view of the advancement made by the race in Nān-Chao, it would be wrong to presume that the Tai of that country were illiterate. It should be remembered that it is known on good authority that the Chinese annalists speak of the Ngai-lao kingdom as being quite a reasonable approximation to their own civilization.[118] The Chinese had the habit of referring to the Nān-Chao Tai as barbarians. But 'we need not attach', remarks Wood, 'much meaning to this expression. They called all foreigners barbarians down to a very recent date'.[119]

117 "Shan and Buddhism of the Northern Canon" by Cochrane in *JRAS*, 1912. pp. 487-90.

118 *Ibid.*

119 W. A. R. Wood : *A History of Siam*, 1933, pp. 36-38.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAO-SHAN EMPIRE

The Tai are believed to have migrated to Burma from the sixth century B. C., or probably from an earlier date, from the region of South-west China. The ancient Chronicles of the Shans and the Burmese contain succinct accounts of early Tai settlements in what is now called the Shan States of Burma. The Tai communities, at that early time, penetrated along the tributaries of the Irrawaddy into the plains of Upper Burma as peaceful immigrants in search of safe and fertile areas to settle down ; but, at times, they also came in great strength as raiding hordes from a central consolidated position somewhere in Yün-nān and, where possible, founded their principalities by subjugating the local tribes.

The first remarkable development of Tai power, that of the Mao Shans, in the valley of the Mekong and Upper Burma took place in the sixth century A. D. under the leadership of two Tai Princes named Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai. They annexed vast tracts of territory in Upper Burma driving out the ancient ruling dynasty of Indian origin to the west and subjugating the local tribes. It was followed in the eighth and the thirteenth centuries respectively by a regular expansion of the Tai dominions in Burma and Assam. Thus the steadily growing pressure of the Tai from the north-east of Burma gradually drove, in successive periods, the Pyu, the Burmans, the Kachins and other tribes, inhabiting or ruling in that part of the country, to the south and the west. It may also be noted, if the legendary accounts of the early times now available in fragments can be relied upon in any degree, that the rich valley of the Irrawaddy was also a meeting ground of invading forces from both India and China in the first millennium B. C. ; but, in the later period the danger from India ceased, almost the whole of northern and eastern Burma having come under the rule of the Tai. On the other hand, being dislodged from the north, the Burmans successively consolidated themselves in the central and southern parts of the Irrawaddy and the Sittang valleys, while the Mons ruled farther south in the region of Lower Burma called Raman'n'adeśa.

Though in the old records of the Burmese there are references to the irruptions and movements of peoples, said to be Tai, from Yün-nān into

Burma, they are too insufficient and fragmentary to be of use for the construction of a well-knit history of the region. Of such movements the one noted by Dr. Cushing is of immense political importance. He points out that the sixth century of the Christian era saw a great wave of Tai migration descending from the mountains of southern Yün-nān into the the Nām-Mao (the Shweli river) valley and the adjacent regions. Compared with the earlier ones the strength of the migration wave of this century was such that it converted almost the whole of the Shweli valley down to the Irrawaddy into a consolidated seat of Tai political power for the first time in the history of Burma. It was from this area that the Tai spread out to the north, west and south-east. Thus not only the Shweli valley itself but the whole expanse of territory between the Mekong and the Irrawaddy covering the present Shan States of Burma came under the control of the branch of the Tai called Mao-Shan. Thus there arose at this time a number of Tai States, such as Hsen-wi, Möng-mit and Bhamo in the valleys of the Shweli and the Tapeng. Northwards, these Tai reached upto the Upper Chindwin and Hukawng valleys and westwards the Shwebo district. In the south-east, these people enormously increased the strength of the earlier settlers of their stock in the region of the present Shan States of Burma. Those, who proceeded to the north, consolidated their position in the area of Mogaung (Shan : Möng Kawng) and Mohnyin (Möng-Yang).

The last greatest migration of the Tai to Upper Burma and the Menam valley of the modern Thailand was caused by the advance of Kublai Khan, with his Mongol hordes, right down to the heart of western Yün-nān in the middle of the thirteenth century. At this time the northward advance of the branch of the Tai, called the Mao-Shan, under the leadership of Prince Hsö-Kā-Hpā, had already reached the Brahmaputra valley in Eastern Assam[1] by crossing the Patkai range and conquered a strong foothold in this new country and founded what is called in Assam the Ahom dynasty. In a few centuries the whole of the Brahmaputra valley and once upto the Karatoya river to the west of Assam came under the Ahom rule.

Thus the history and political development of the Tai in Burma and Assam can be conveniently divided into three periods: (1) The Early Period, (2) The Early Mediaeval Period and (3) The Later Mediaeval Period.

1. Called Waisali-Lông by the Shans and the Burmese and Saumār Pith in the *Tantras.*

When exactly the Tai first crossed the frontiers of south-west China and entered the Irrawaddy valley of Burma is not definitely known. The earliest references in the Burmese Chronicles were to an irruption of the "Tarops and Tarets[2] into Burma from the Sein country in the kingdom of Gāndhāla"[3] in the sixth century B. C. This irruption took place about 523 B. C. according to the Burmese era[4] and is pointed out as the first entrance of the Tai[5] into Burma from Yün-nān.[6] Who were the people of Burma at that time to be affected by the invasion of the Tarops and Tarets ? From the extant records it is known that the Pyu were the earliest inhabitants of Burma with their central seats in Shwebo and Prome. The Pyu were still there in Burma as a subject people of I-mou-hsun (778-808), who, on concluding peace with China, sent a troupe of Pyu musicians to the Chinese Court.[7] Hence the Pyu, who might have flourished in the early period as the dominant race in Upper Burma, must have been reduced to subjection by the early Indian rulers of the Sakya clan and later pressed westward by the irruptions of the Shan-Tayoks from Yün-nān.

It is mentioned in the dynastic records of Burma that princes of the Śākya dynasty of northern India ruled in Upper Burma both before and after Buddha. *Tagaung Yazawin* says that the first Śākya Prince to enter Burma with his army was Abhi Raja of Kapilavatthu (Kapilavastu or the Middle Kingdom) as early as 923 B. C., that is, about 360 years before the birth of Gautama, the Buddha. He went by way of Arakan and founded, for the first time, a kingdom called Saugassarattha in the Tagaung[8] country of Burma. The capital was established in the site of the old Pagan, called Kambuja Thintawe or simply Chindwe on the left bank of the Irrawaddy. According to Hall the date of foundation of Tagaung in the Burmese Chronicles corresponds to 850 B. C. and the stories these Chronicles tell are copies of Indian legends taken from Sanskrit or Pali originals.[9] It seems Abhi Raja's connection with his own country ceased

2. Sir Arthur Phayre says the Manchus are called Taret by the Burmese. Parker doubts the fact and demands his authority. -*GUBSS*, 1. 1, 1900, p. 190. It seems Tarets were Karens, the people of the ancient Teru State in China.

3. Gāndhāla was Gāndhāra which name was applied to Yün-nān by the Buddhists.

4. Or 519 B. C. according to the Shan Chronicles.

5. Called in Burma Shan-Tayoks (from Shan-Taroks or Shan-Tarops).

6. "Tagaung Chronicles" as quoted in the *Glass Palace Chronicle*, (Oxford University Press, 1923), by Pe Maung Tin and L. H. Luce, pp. 2-3.

7. Hall : *Burma*, (1950, Hutchinson), pp. 8-9.

8. Tagaung is the Burmanized form of Tung Kawng of the Shans. Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 13.

9. Hall : *Burma*, 1950, p. 1.

and he merged himself with the local population. His two sons are known by their Burmanized names of Kan Rajahgyi and Kan Rajahngé. He carried to Burma the pre-Buddhist culture and tradition of the Śākyas, then a people of the sub-Himalayan tract of North India, but whose original habitat was probably at Śākya in Southern Tibet to the north of Sikkim. It is very doubtful whether the Aryan rule at all extended over that part of the country in that early period, though, of course, the impact of Vedic culture must have been felt by the peoples living in the Gangetic valley.

It may be noted that the Śākyas[10] and the Lichhavis[11] were allied clans and the latter "undoubtedly belong to the Mongolian race".[12] In the inscription by Jayadeva,the Lichhavi king of Nepal, dated A. D. 759, Lichhavi kings are given a legendary pedigree connecting them with the solar lines, Lichhavi being eighth in descent from Dasaratha, the father of Rama. The Himalayan peoples—the Khasas, the Lichhavis and the Śākyas were included within Aryanism at a later date and even a Lichhavi princess was the mother of the Gupta line of emperors of India. Hence they were treated as Kṣatriyas, rather as Vrātya Kṣatriyas by the Brahmins.[13]

The thirty-third descendant of the Śākya line of Princes of old Pagan or Tagaung was Binnaka Raja,[14] a contemporary of Gautama, the Buddha. During his reign and about the commencement of the Buddhist era the Tayoks (Tarops) from Gāndhāla[15] (Yün-nān) invaded his country about the date mentioned above, captured Tagaung, destroyed it and compelled the Raja to quit the country. The Raja and his family, with their followers, entered the Mali stream and took refuge at Male on the right bank of the Irrawaddy and nearly opposite the present ruins of Lower Sabenago (Champā Nagara). The Tayoks could be no other than the Tai, the ancestors of the so-called Shans of Burma, who had been predominant in South-west China until Kublai Khan conquered Yün-nān (Nān-Chao) in the middle of the thirteenth century A. D. Even

10. The Śakyas were rulers of Kapilavatthu.

11. The Lichhavis (Licchavis or Nicchavis), a Himalayan clan of North Bihar and Nepal, were rulers of Vaiśali.

12. C. V. Vaidya : *History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, vol. i. p. 377 : "Notes : (1) Lichhavis".

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 369, 377; also Manu, X, 22.

14. Possibly Skr. Pināka ; The Shan Peng Naka of the Ong Pawag Hsi-Paw Chronicle.

15. Skr. Gāndhāra.

in the eleventh century A. D. Yün-nān was called Tayok (Tarop) country. For, when the Tai kingdom of Nān-Chao (Yün-nān) was under the rule of the Ta-li dynasty, the Pagan monarch Anawrahta visited that country in A. D. 1047 and this fact is referred to in the Burmese Chronicles as his journey to "the Tarop country of the kingdom of Gāndhāla" to ask for the holy Buddha tooth which was known to be in possession of the Tarop Utibwa.[16] The Utibwa, mentioned here, appears to be Prince Si-lien (1045-76) of Nān Chao, who ruled for thirty-one years, defeated and beheaded the Man-tsi leader Beng-Kao and then became a Buddhist monk abdicating the throne in favour of his son, Lien-i.

It is known from the Lao and Siamese sources that there was in the early sixth century B. C. a great migration of Tai and other non-Chinese populations from South China to the central regions of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula partly due to Chinese pressure and partly from internal dissensions among them. The Ngai-Lao, who spread to the south in considerable masses from their home in Yün-nān, built a number of important cities in the areas of their new settlement. Thus the cities of Möng-Lem and Chieng-Hung in Yün-nān, Chieng-Tung[17] in Burma and Chieng-Sen in Siam sprang up during this time. The local Tai Annals say that all these areas were liberated by the Ngai-Lao from the Karen rule in the year 543 B.C., but the Burmese used to call the Ngai-Laos or the Shans, who inhabited the country to the east of the Salween, as Yun Shan. The word 'yun' here appears to be a contracted form of 'Yavana' in Sanskrit or Pali meaning foreigner or barbarian. Thus prabably the Salween was also the eastern boundary of the Burmese Kingdom beyond which were the Yun Shans.

The Möng-Mao State, destined to attain great fame and prosperity in later times, was founded in what is now the most westerly section of Yün-nān well before the middle of the sixth century B.C. For many centuries Möng-Mao remained in obscurity until it reappeared under the Mao-Shans in the sixth century A.D. The kingdom of Möng-Mao reached the zenith of its power in the thirteenth century with her greatest territorial expansion under Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, the Great.

In about two centuries of time since the sixth century B.C. a number of Shan States with their capital towns sprang up in Burma. Thus the Shan Chronicles, quoted by Ney Elias, mention that the city of Mönei

16. *G. P. Chronicle. pp.* 80-83.
17. Officially spelt as Keng-tung.

(Möne of Möng-Nai) was first set up in 441 B.C. and Hsi Paw (Burmese Thibo) in 423 B.C. The most striking fact is that even after a lapse of about 2,300 years now all the above States between the Irrawaddy and the Salween and its eastern neighhourhood have continued to remain predominantly Tai to this day. But how long these historic Tai people would be able to preserve their separate identity and culture under the present-day pressure, both political and ideological, is yet unpredictable.

A brief acquaintance with the history of these three very important States of early times is necessary here. The classicial name for the State of Monei, which is to the south of the other two, was Kamboja. In Yule's map of Burma the name Konanda is given for the present town of Monei. According to Hallett Kamboja includes all the Shan States on the tableland between the Irrawaddy and the Salween.[18] Ney Elias reports from Burmese sources that the original city of Monei was founded in the year 24 of religion or 519 B.C. by Nga-Chau-Kyo, who was succeeded by the *Sawbwas* of his line as independent rulers. But in about A.D. 1223 the famous Mao-Shan General Sām-Lōng-Hpā conquered the State and placed a Prince of the Möng-Mit branch of the Shan rulers as a feudatory to Möng-Mao. Thus the Möng-Mit line supplanted the old independent *Sawbwas*. Monei, before its subjection to the Mao-Shans, exercised sway over a number of States, such as Nyaung-Yuei, Mobyei, Yauksauk, Legya, Tigyit, Kyaing-Taung, Maing-Seik, and sometimes the Mre-Lap Shans in the present Southern Shan States. Most of these areas are now difficult to identify. The tract of the Mre-Lap Shans was neither absolutely under the Burmese, nor entirely under the Shans, but lay more or less south-east of Ava from the neighbourhood of Myin Gyan on the west to the Nittik Hills on the east. It is said that the more easterly-hilly portions were the abode of a Demon race, called the Gungs or Guens, who probably practised cannibalism. The Demon Chief, who, according to the legend, lived in a town called Kinlay, about a mile north-west of the Nittik pass, was driven away eastward to Keng-Tung by Anawrahta.[19]

18. Hallett : *ibid.*, p. 333. It may be remembered that Kamboja or Kamboja-deśa means Cambodia.

19. Ney Elias : *Introductory Sketch of the History of the Shans in Upper Burma and Western Yunnan,* (Calcutta, Foreign Department Press, 1876), pp. 54-55.

Möng Hsen-Wi[20] of the Shans is called Theinni by the Burmese and Mu-pang by the Chinese. Hsen-Wi Chronicles contain dynastic history of the Tai ruling families in Burma beginning from the Burmese Era 92 or A.D. 730. These Chronicles give no account of the earlier period. All that could be gathered about the earlier history of this State was obtained partly from what the natives related to Ney Elias and partly from a Burmese work called the *Zabu-Oke-Saung*. According to these sources Hsen-Wi was founded in 441 B.C. by a native Shan named Kinta-Ho-Hung, who also became the first King of that State. He fortified the capital city with strong walls the traces of which remain to this day. As Ney Elias puts it "shortly afterwards, on the 4th day of the 2nd moon of the 102nd year of Religion (B.C. 441) he began to build a wall to surround the city, the form of which was a square of 1345 *tā*,[21] the height was ten cubits above the ground and 2 cubits below ground; the thickness 10½ cubits; outside the wall, was constructed a moat 5 *tā* broad and 20 cubits deep, while between the wall and the moat a space was left of 3 *tā* in breath. There were 11 gates in the wall each 8 cubits wide, but the material of which the wall was constructed is not mentioned.[22] But from the description it may be assumed that the wall was made of either stone or brick. It is said that at a distance of ten days' journey to the south of the city there was a stone post erected to mark the southern limit of the kingdom just across which one enters the State of Monei. Its position was five *daings* or about ten miles due south of the village of Manthaw. The description given above presents to us the picture of what was a walled city of the Shans in ancient time. Similar cities built by them, whether in Burma or Assam, in mediaeval times, appear to have been essentially of this model. Hsen-Wi was a fairly big State extending from the Kenei-hill near the Shweli opposite Möng-Mao on the north to the border of Monei on the south and from the eastern limits of Hsi-

20. According to Hsen Wi Chronicle, first translated and incorporated in the *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States* (Part 1, vol. I, Rangoon, 1900, pp. 227-257), the name Hsen Wi is derived from *wi*, the bunches of plantains grown in the garden of the two aged cultivators of Man Sé near the Naung Put, the parents of Tung Hkan, and has been in use ever since in the form Hsen Wi Hsi Hsö, Hsen Wi Hsö-an-wu, Hsö-an-hpu, Hsöpatu, Hsömo Kawsampi, the country of white blossoms in the province of Siriwilata Maha Kambawsa Sengni Kawsampi." *Ibid.*, p. 230.

21. The *tā* consists of seven *cubits*, as noted by Elias and the cubit is generally taken at eighteen English inches. Hallett seems to have summarised Ney Elias's description of this wall according to English measurement in his *Historical Sketch of the Shans*, in *Amongst the Shans* by Colquhoun at p. 335. Even to-day a measuring pole called *tār*, eight cubits in length, is used in Eastern India, particularly in Assam, to measure plots of land.

22. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 47.

Paw on the west to the river Salween on the east. But Kinta-Ho-Hung's dynasty came to an end after about one hundred and seventeen years of rule from the date of its foundation, when , in 324 B.C., an Indian Prince, named Chandravaṁśa, said to be a brother of Asoka's principal queen Acandimitrā, took possession of the country and founded a new dynasty.[23] He transferred his capital to a new site which he fortified with a structure made of bricks. The palace was built within the walls with a gilt tower (*pya-that*) and, when the Chinese came to know of this tower, they called the capital "the golden palace city" (*Shue-hnanmyo*). Chandravaṁśa's reign is important for the introduction of Buddhism into Hsen-Wi. Asoka's son Mahendra is said to have visited the State from Ceylon and with Chandravaṁśa's patronage built a monastery on the Yangoma hill in the neighbourhood of the capital. He resided in that monastery for only a few years and preached Buddhism, probably of the Pali Canon of the south, accompanied by a hundred attendant priests and then left the country. Chandravaṁśa died at seventy years of age. He was succeeded by his son, after whom the reigns of fifteen kings, all of Shan names, are recorded without mention of dates.[24] The Shan names indicate the recapture of power by the Shans by overthrowing Chandravaṁśa's son and with it putting an end to the Buddhist missionary work.

Hsi-Paw or Tai-Po, as the Shans would call it, was founded by a local chief named Udina in the year 423 B.C. His dynasty continued to 79 B.C. through a line of sixteen kings. In that year Chau-Hung-Hkām (Hsö-Hung-Hkām), obviously a Tai Prince, belonging to another dynasty, came into power displacing the ruling house. He built a new city measuring 273 *tā* from east to west and 289 *tā* from north to south, the western wall having three gates, and the other three sides two gates each; the wall being seven cubits in height.[25] According to a Burmese source Chau-Hung-Hkām ruled over a State consisting of two hundred and ninety villages. These early Shans (Tai) undoubtedly moved westward from the region of the Mekong and used the valleys of the Shweli (Nām Mao) and the Salween as the principal routes to enter the basin of the Irrawaddy from Yün-nān. From the region of Möng-Mao as their central seat in the extreme west in Yün-nān they spread out to the north, west and south making settlements and building States and cities all over Upper Burma, particularly in its eastern part.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

It may be recalled that the fugitive Binnaka Raja died at Malê. His followers then split up into three groups, one of which migrated eastward and founded what is called 'the nineteen Shan States' of the east. This shows that the members of this group were Shan. But the Shans of these nineteen States became known as 'the descendants of Binnaka Raja'. It was possibly from their habit of referring to Binnaka Raja as their king that they were looked upon as his descendents by their neighbours.

Thus it is evident that the Shans from South-west China had already settled in Upper Burma from before the reign of Binnaka Raja and later became his subjects. They must have come with invading armies from Yün-nān and also as peaceful settlers, group by group, from very early times and the Shans of Tagaung became subjects of the rulers of the Śākya family. It was a section of these Shans that accompanied Binnaka Raja in his flight from Tagaung. It is possibly this section of the Raja's followers, who, after the Raja's death, preferred to start a colony of their own nearer the Shan neighbours of the east. This early Shan colony may be assumed to have developed, in course of time, into what is known in history as 'the nineteen Shan States' of Eastern Burma and its neighbourhood.

The second group moved down the Irrawaddy and entered the Western Country, which was then ruled by the Princes of the Śākya dynasty of Tagaung, descended from Abhi Raja, with their capital at or near a hill called Kaletaungnyo in the southern part of the Kubo valley. As already mentioned, Abhi Raja left behind two sons, Kan Rajagyi (Prince Elder) and Kan Rajange (Prince younger), who, on their father's death, disputed the succession to the throne, and the younger brother contrived to possess it for himself. At this the elder Prince Kan Rajagyi went away down the Irrawaddy and then proceeded up the Chindwin river and founded a dynasty at Kalê. It was at Kyaukpadaung immediately to the south-east of new Pagan that he placed his son Muducitta (Madhu Citra) as the ruler over the Pyu, Kanran (or the Kanyan who were Arakanese) and Sak (Thek) tribes of the area.[26] Muducitta next moved to Rakhaing[27] leaving his line of rulers at Kyaukpadaung and founded the kingdom of Dhanyavati. Tambula, a lineal descendant of Muducitta, appears

26. *The Glass Place Chronicle*, p. 3.

27. The Arakanese call themselves Rakhaing and their country Rakhaingpyi. According to Sir Arthur Phayre, the word is a corruption of the Pali *rākkhaso* (Skt. *rākṣasa'* meaning 'ogre' (Burmese *bilu'* or guardian of the mansion of Indra on Mount Meru. - vide Hall *A History of South-east Asia.* p. 328; Phayre : *History of Burma,* 1883, p. 41.

to be the last ruler of the Tagaung Śākya family at Kyaukpadaung. The third group of Binnaka Raja's followers remained at Malè with the chief queen Nāga-Seng.

At that time another Śākya Prince, named Dhaja Raja, of Kapilavatthu visited Malê and espoused the widow Nāga-Seng being of the same Śākya clan. The event that drove this Prince to Burma was an invasion of Kapilavatthu by Prince Vitatupa (Viḍuḍabha) of Kosala.[28] Dhaja Raja fled towards the east and first founded a kingdom in Moriya.[29] After reigning for a short period over that small kingdom he abandoned

28. The cause of the invasion is related as follows :—

"Pasenadi (Prasenajit), the Kosalan king of Savatthi, sought in marriage a daughter of Mahanama king of Kapilavatthu; who, desirous of preserving the purity of his race, gave him not a princess of the blood royal but gave him his daughter by a slave woman, the princess Vasabhakhattiya. And she was made queen and bore prince Vitatupa (Vidudabha, a distortion of Vallava). He, when he came of age, visited Kapilavatthu. Now when he returned home, they washed with milk the place he had occupied, reviling it as the place of a man slave-born. When he came to know of it, he nursed his wrath and said, 'when I am king, I will wash in the blood of their throat. So when his father was no more, he remembered his wrath and marched out with his fourfold army thrice to destroy the Sakiyan princes, but the Blessed Buddha prevented him. Howbeit the fourth time the Buddha, considering the past life history of the Sakiyans, prevented him not; and Vitatupa marched with a great army and reached Kapilavatthu and slew the whole Sakiyan race, save those who dwelt with king Mahanama, not sparing even suckling babes. ..Thereafter the Sakiyan princes took refuge in diverse places, such as the cities of Moriya, Vedissagiri, and Panduraja... When thus—the Sakiyan princes perished, Dhajaraja, the Sakiyan king, moved with his followers from the Middle Country and first founded and reigned in Moriya". *Glass Palace Chronicle*, p. 4. See also Edward J. Thomas : *The Life of Buddha*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1949, pp. 139-40. That there was such a massacre of the Śākya Princes and their families may well have been a historical fact in spite of conflicting details about it. This event is described in the *Jataka* and the *Dhammapada* Commentary. -vide Trans. in *Harvard Oriental Series*, vol. 29, pp. 30-46.

29. The place name Moriya is from the Moriyas of Pipphalivana. Moriya occurs in the Buddhist literature, such as Dhammapada. In Gotama-Purana it is called Moranga, and in the Arakan Chronicle it is mentioned as Mowrin and now it is Mwerin. Moriya is also the classic name of the Kubo valley and there is also the Moreura petropolis of Ptolemy. Mauroya, as Col. Burney tells us from Burmese history, preceded Tagaung as the seat of Śākya kings (see Col. Burney in *JASB*, V, 163). Mauroya is now known as Mueyen (a Burmese form), according to Yule, and is a town not far south from Bhamo. Probably Dhaja Raja's first kingdom was in the Kubo valley and Mueyen was its capital and the second kingdom in Thintwe in the Tagaung country. Mauroya, after the name of the ruling clan, was perhaps another city south of Bhamo. The occurrence of this place-name indicates that not only the Śākyas but also the Moriyas came to Burma and built cities. 'The Mauryas belonged to a Himalayan clan like such other peoples as the Lichchhavis of North Bihar and Nepal. With their gradual absorption in the Brahmanical society, they claimed the status of Kshatriyas, although orthodox Brahmanists regarded them as no better than Śudras. See *Inscriptions of Asoka* by Dr. D. C. Sircar (The Publications Division, New Delhi), 1957, p. 11.

it and founded another kingdom in Thintwe in Burma. He left Thintwe for Malé where he met queen Nāga-Seng and married her. He then 'founded and reigned in Upper Pagan' where he built a new fortified capital city immediately beyond the north wall of the old city. Here he reigned over the ancient kingdom of Sangassarāttha or Sankissa of Abhi Raja in the Tagaung country. Dhaja Raja virtually restored and reconstructed the old Śākya kingdom in Burma. On ascending the Throne[30] he assumed the title of Thado Jambudipa[31] Dhaja Raja[32] and changed the name of the kingdom into Pānchāla. This Sangassarāttha of the Śākyas is Tagaung of the Burmese and Tung-Kawng[33] of the Shans. Dhaja Raja's kingdom was founded, according to the Burmese chroniclers, in the twentieth year of the year of religion (523 B.C.) and according to the Shans in the twenty-fourth year of the same (519 B.C.). In colonel Burney's text[34] the older city was called Tagaung, and the one rebuilt by Dhaja Raja was named Pinjāla-rit (Skr. Pānchāla-rāṣṭra) or Pinjā Tagaung.[35] shortened into Pagan by the Burmese. Under Abhi Raja the city of Tagaung was named Kambuja Thintawe and was so known also during Buddha's time. It was called Tagaung "because there was but one Nāga".[36] In ancient times Tagaung was, of course, noted for its Nāga tradition.

30. The coronation ceremony is an instance of mixed religion. It is a mixture of Brahminical and tribal forms. First a state ceremony, called *Thingyan*, is performed and then titles are bestowed on the learned and one thousand and three score title-warrants are given to ministers and high officials, to his minions, masters of elephants and horse, foot-soldiers, wealthy men, Brahmins, Astrologers, Doctors of medicine and artisans. While ascending the place, the king has on his right Brahma and the Nāga king, and on his left Sakra and Pajjumna. Eight Brahmin Councillors are present, each holding a dextral conch in his hand, above on the right. Attended by his Generals and Ministers, a hundred thousand in all, two chief queens, seven hundred concubines, four-score and ten white elephants, one hundred and four-score Sind horses and an host of officials, he ascended the ground-palace. Thence he ascended the main palace ; and in honour of his ascension he partook of food. Pots of rice and curry—of each one hundred three score and ten—were served in jewelled salvers. He offered food moreover to the god of the birth day plant, also to Sakra and Brahma and the guardian spirits of the Umbrella, the palace, and the city. On the floor of the palace food was scattered. It was eaten by two cats, and one hour later by two men, one hour later the king himself partook of it ; then the heir-apparent, then the Ministers and officials- *G. P. Cr.*, p. 5.

31. Skr. Jambudvipa which refers to India.

32. Properly Skr. Dhvaja-Raja.

33. Also Tung Kung of the Assamese Chronicles of the Ahoms.

34. *JASB*, vol-V, p. 163.

35. Ney Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 13. f. n.

36. *G. P. Cr.*, p. 35.

Dhaja Raja's dynasty, a line of seventeen kings ruled at Tagaung (Old Pagan) until, within one generation posterior to the year A.D. 568, it was displaced by Hkun-Lông, who installed his eldest son Ai-Hkun-Lông on the throne of that kingdom.[37] In this connection it may be noted that there is a significant mention of a revolt of twelve villages in the Tagaung Chronicle with the result that "Tagaung became servant to the Shan".[38] This undoubtedly refers to the first success of the Shans under Hkun-Lông's generalship in ousting the Indian Śākya dynasty from the Tagaung kingdom.

Hkun-Lông's success seems to have been made easier by a second major invasion of Burma by the Shan-Tayoks (Tarops) from Yün-nān about A.D. 241.[39] This invasion added further strength to the Shan element that had already been there from before. Ney Elias, from his study of Mao manuscripts, now no longer available, has concluded that the Mao-Shan kingdom developed as a separate political entity before the middle of the seventh century A.D. In the last quarter of the seventh century A.D. Hkun-Lông's line in the person of H.Kām-Pông-Hpā became supreme among the Māo.[40] Scott also points out that the Tai Chronicles indicate that the Mao kingdom began in the seventh century A.D. and maintained itself with varying degrees of prosperity until the rise of Anawrahta, the Pagan Emperor, who married a daughter of the Mao-Shan ruler of Möng-Mao of that time.[41] The Hsen-Wi Chronicle places the date of the rise of the Mao power a century later.[42] But the bulk of evidence is in favour of the former authority.[43]

The historic march of the Tai towards Burma in the middle of the sixth century A.D. was undoubtedly headed by two Tai brothers Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai and while Hkun-Lai remained behind as the ruler of the countries called Möng-Ri Möng-Rām and Lai-doi, the Elder Prince Hkun-Lông, after a short reign at Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, left that country and started the conquest of northern Burma and its eastern neighbourhood placing his sons and descendants as Governors of the different Möngs (principalities) of his kingdom. He himself became the founder

37. Ney Elias : *ibid.*, p. 13; Kashinath Tamuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji*, p. 6.
38. *G. P. Cr.*, Introduction, "The Tagaung Chronicle," p. XX.
39. according to Rev. Cushing, and A. D. 225 according to others.
40. Ney Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 16.
41. *GUBSS*, 1. 1, p. 196.
42. "Hsen-Wi Chronicle" in *GUBSS*, 1. 1, p. 230.
43. Milne and Cochrane : *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

of a 'wide country' called Möng-Hku Möng-Jā[44] or probably Möng-Hku Möng-Jao. The country Möng-Hku Möng-Jao appears to be a wide country in the valley of the Nām Yao in the Northern Shan States of Burma.[45] This location of Möng-Hku-Möng-Jao is also almost definitely indicated in the Ahom Chronicles by the successive place-names mentioned while describing the journeys of two Tai princes Hkun-Lu-Cheo and Chao-Changnyeu from Möng-Ri Möng-Rām to Mao-Lung.[46] The Hsen-Wi Chronicle's location of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām (Shan : Möng-Hi Möng-Hām) on the bank of the Mekong to the south-east of the Northern Shan States is confirmatory of this.[47] But Ney Elias appears to be mistaken when he says that Möng-Ri Möng-Rām is at a short distance from the left bank of the Shweli, some eight or nine miles to the eastward of the city of Möng-Mao.[48] Elias further says that Hkun-löng "crossed the Irrawaddy and shortly afterwards arrived at a place near the Uyu (or Uru) river, a tributary of the Chindwin, where he established himself and founded a city called Möng-Kong Möng-Yawng, whence he sent forth his sons or relations to become rulers of neighbouring States".[49] Though he admits that the position of Hkun-Löng's State is difficult to define, yet he seems to believe that the region comprising Maing-kaing on a small left tributary of the Chindwin in the south on the west of the Noajeeree Hills was Möng-Hku Möng-Jao.[50] Scott thinks that this area is the district of, and round about, the present Singkaling (Sāngkring) Hkamti. But this area was then somewhat detached from the main Tai areas in Burma. No other records, so far available, give any geographical account indicating the location of Hkun-Löng's kingdom in the Upper Chindwin valley as is given by N. Elias.

As already mentioned, Hkun-Löng distributed the territories of his extensive dominions among his sons or the princes of his family, about which more will be said below. But the country, allotted to his eldest son, Ai-Hkun-Löng, was, according to Ney Elias, Tung-Kung or Tagaung

44. ꩻꩫꩵ ꩻꩫꩡ, also ꩻꩫꩡ (p. 44) of Tai-Ahom Buranji. vide *Ahom Buranji*- trans. & ed. by G. C. Barua, (Calcutta, 1930) p. 22.

45. *Möng:* country, *Hku:* wide, extensive; *Möng:* country, *Jao* or *Yao* : *Jao* meaning probably the wide, country of the region of the Nām Yao (Burmese Myit-nge) which flows into the Irrawaddy from the Northern Shan States.

46. *AB*, pp. 42-3; also *Deodhai Assam Buranji*, ed. by Bhuyan, D. H. A. S. 1932, pp. 4-5.

47. *GUBSS*, 1. 1, p. 231.

48. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

49. *Op. cit.* p. 15.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

which, till it was wrested from the Śākyas by him, had been ruled by the Indian dynasty of Dhaja Raja. This kingdom, already overrun by the Shan-Tayoks, not once but a number of times, must have contained a large Tai element to Hkun-Löng's advantage.

Almost all the Shan ruling families of Burma, as also the Ahom rulers of Assam, claim their descent from the heavenly House of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai. The Mao-Shans, who extended their power to the plains of Upper Burma from the early mediaeval times, mostly concentrated themselves in the fertile valleys of the Nām-Mao (the Shweli), the Upper Irrawaddy and later of the Upper Chindwin and set up kingdoms in them and built capitals of which there are still some unmistakable traces. All these areas were occupied by the Mao-Shans, partly by ousting from them the ruling Indian dynasties, partly by pressing out to the south the Burmese power and partly by subjugating the local tribes, such as the Pyu and the Kachins.

Early Mediaeval Period :

The Mao-Shans are a well-known section of the Tai race, who in the seventh century A. D., were ruling in Möng-Mao-Lung or the great Mao country in the north-eastern frontier region of modern Burma. Principalities were founded by the Mao-Shans, who settled along the valley of the Shweli river (Nām-Mao). Regarding the origin of the word *Mao*, Terrien de Lacouperie gives from Chinese sources *Ti*, *Mou* and *Tsiu* as the 'tribal names with settlements in Szetchuen'. According to him *Ti* has its modern representative in Möng-ti; *Mou* in Möng-mou or Möng-mao; and *Tsiu* seems to appear in Hsö, the Tiger race of Hsen-Wi.[51] The above three are but different clan names of the northern branch of the Tai, that of Möng Mao being the 'Golden Tigers' (*Hsö Hkām*). The Shweli river was named Nām-Mao by the Mao community of the Tai, who first took possession of its valley, though the precise time when the river was given that name is difficult to ascertain. But yet it may be assumed that it was not later than the sixth century A. D. that the river acquired that name.

51. Milne and Cochrane : *op. cit.*, p. 16. The royal houses of Möng Mao, Chanta (Santa) and Lu Chiang Pa are three separate lineages of the Tiger clan (*Hsö*), Chefang and Lungchwan are both Black Hornests (*Taw*), while Kang Ai are Red Hornets (*Tao*). See Harvey and Burton: *Mengmao Succession* (Burma Secretariat file Imprint No. 99 H. P. D. 29. 10. 30) Rangoon as referred to by E. R. Leach, *op. cit.* p. 216.

No one place was the seat of government all through the long period of the Mao rule, but the site often selected was Cheila on the left bank of the Shweli and immediately opposite 'Mā-kau Möng-Lung.[52] The city of Cheila is said to have existed where modern Se-Rān or Se-Lān[53] has its location, about thirteen miles east of Nām-Hkam, and Möng Mao is in the modern territory of Yün-nān opposite Se-Lān on the right bank of the Shweli. The present Möng-Mao is an insignificant place being only a petty settlement shorn of all its ancient glory.[54] The site of Möng-Mao is also the site of the old city of Mā-kau Möng-Lung. But Hallett says that Mā-kau Möng-Lung was an earlier name of Mogaung and that early in the eighth century A. D. it was a Mao capital under that name.[55] This identification of Mā-kau Möng-Lung with Mogaung cannot be accepted unless the name is used as a general term to mean a great city referring thereby to any ancient capital of the Tai rulers, whether it be Möng-Mao or Mogaung. Another city called Pang-Hkam was also a Mao capital at one time. The ruins of ancient Mao-Shan cities, which were built with strong parapet and formidable entrenchments, are still to be seen in this area.

The political history of the Mao-Shans begins, according to the Mao-Shan and Burmese Buddhist Chronicles, with the descent of two heavenly Princes, Hkun-Löng[56] and Hkun-Lai, on the earth by a golden ladder (or rather a gilded iron ladder).[57] These two Princes, both brothers, were

52. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, pp. 16. 20. *Lung* (Tai-Ahom)= Long (Shan)

53. The people of Se-Lān or Che-Lān use the water of the Khau-khau, a tributary of the Shweli.

54. Sir George Scott: *Burma and Beyond*, 1932, pp. 203-4.

55. "Historical Sketch of the Shans", in *Amongst the Shans*, p. 332.

56. Hkun-Lu of Tai-Shan and Burmese Chronicles.

57. Particular mention of "golden ladder" in the various Chronicles is significant. It may mean 'gold and silver path' by which the Princes came down. Sir Arthur Phayre points out that gold was from very early times brought from South-west China down the river Irrawaddy and exported to India. The name, therefore, may have been given from that fact. He also says that it is only within the last twenty years (i. e. 1863-83) that the import of gold bullion from Yün-nān to Upper Burma has diminished; but gold-leaf is still imported from that country to Burma. Vide his *History of Burma*, p. 25. But probably 'golden ladder' means an actual row of steps or a ladder to descend from the highland city of Lengdon to the plains. Attached to the ladder was probably an iron chain also to hold during ascent and descent. A part of the ladder and the chain was perhaps gilded within the region of the heavenly city. Chronicles also mention both iron ladder and iron chain. It was the road for communications with the plains, particularly in the valleys of the Mekong and the rivers of Burma.

sent down by Lengdon, the Lord of Heaven[58] (Indra of the Assamese Buranjis), whose grandsons they were, to found his dynasty in the lower countries,[59] once governed by heavenly Princes but now suffering from disorder under the misrule of others. According to the Tai-Ahom Chronicles Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai were the sons of Shengtaonyenkaihpa Hten-Hkām, who was a nephew of Lengdon. Hten-Hkām was the son of Chaodāhkām, king of Möng-lai and the latter was the youngest son of Hpohsiphsangdeng. Hten-Hkām became king in Möngthilā[60] or Möng-htin, the Shan Province of Yün-nān-sen. Cochrane points out that Möng-htin extended westward to the Salween. He further says that "Möng-htin and Upper kingdom of the Ngai-Lao Shans were 'equal in power and glory'; the king of Möng-htin called the northern king 'our father' ; the northern king called the southern 'our son' ; a messenger was sent back and forth on horseback ; he crossed a river in a boat;[61] the mother of the northern king is mentioned, as also astrologers; Hkun-löng and Hkun-lai were sent down to Möng-hi Möng-hām with knowledge and consent of the king of Möng-htin; they were carried on palanquins, with four bearers each; they were to pay annual tribute to the northern king".[62] This passage is based on an original Shan text in possession of Cochrane himself. An almost a parallel account is given of the heavenly kingdoms of Lengdon and Hten-Hkām in a Sibsagar Tai-Ahom Chronicle.[63] The above account gives, as Cochrane

58. Though the manner of narrating the story gives a sense of high antiquity to the descent of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai, yet their advent is of a comparatively recent but dark period of history and the reference to Lengdon (or Leng-non) and Heaven is difficult to follow being of a legendary character. Lengdon, who is described as the Lord of eight hundred thousand thunders, is identified by the Hindus with Indra.

59. Lengdon's advice to the Princes was "there is no one of my family to rule the lower country, that is, Möng-tau ( ) and Möng-tam ( ) meaning the country lower than the low. The country is not properly ruled. The The strong oppress the weak. They live on cultivation. They are unable to distinguish right from wrong. I, therefore, give you the rule of the country. Both of you must rule the wide country peacefully". This region is also referred to as Möngklang (or Möng-kang) which means a vast country. *AB*. pp. 12, 14.

60. from Mithila in India. That Hten-Hkām became king of Möngthila or Mong-thi is mentioned in the Tai-Ahom Buranji as Vide *AB*. p. 4. The Indian name was probably applied to Yün-nān-sen at a later date by the Buddhists.

61. From the description it is clear that there was a river which had to be crossed in going from the capital of Lengdon to that of Hten-Hkām and according to the Ahom Chronicle of Sibsagar (p. 8) it was "a wide river with transparent water. A large gilded boat was at anchor". The river mentioned appears to be the Mekong.

62. Shan and Buddhism of the Northern Canon".-by Rev. W. W. Cochrane in *JRAS*, vol. for 1952, p. 487.

63. *AB*, chap. II, pp. 5-23.

points out, terrestrial facts and no celestial myths and that Lengdon was the ruler of the Upper kingdom of the Ngai-Lao Shans. Thus there is no doubt that the Mao-Shans have descended from the great Ai-Lao or Ngai-Lao race of Yün-nān and Sze-chuan. From the Chronicles it is clear that these Ngai-Lao Shans of the sixth century A. D. and their branch, the Ahoms, who entered the Brahmaputra valley, were not Buddhists. As known from the accounts of Nān-Chao, Buddhism had no footing in western Yün-nān at that time. The Ngai-Lao had a peculiar form of religion of their own. If the ancient religion of the Ahoms was any clue to it, then it may be noticed that they worshipped Lengdon, the Lord of Heaven, with animal sacrifices besides a number of other minor deities, whom they propitiated with similar offerings but with less ceremonial grandeur. It was in essence ancestor-worship, the ancestors being represented as rulers of Heaven.

Lengdon was the supreme ruler of Heaven (Chinese *T'ien*) and his city was in the highest part of it.[64] This heaven was perhaps no other region than Yün-nān called T'ien in early periods. It appears that among the Counsellors of Lengdon the most trusted were Jā-Hsing-Hpā[65] (: Goddess of Learning), probably the Queen-mother, Laokhri( ), the senior politician or Chief Minister and Hten-Hkām the most powerful ally and nephew of Lengdon himself.[66] With the object of selecting Princes of his House to rule over the territories in the lower countries, as mentioned above, Lengdon particularly called in Jā-Hsing-Hpā, Laokhri and Hten-Hkām to his palace for consultation. In the meeting that was held they, after due deliberation, decided to appoint Hkun-Lōng and Hkun-Lai as rulers of those countries and then summoned the two princes for formal appointment. When the latter presented themselves at the palace they were formally invested with royal authority by Lengdon. At the investiture ceremony Lengdon gave them a Sword[67] ( ) with magic powers as a symbol of royal authority to be justly wielded

64. *AB*, p. 8.

65. *Yā*-hsing-hpā or "the heavenly-jewelled lady". The Shans of Yün-nān still use *Yā* in speaking of any old lady. The Tai people of Upper Assam are headr to address the mother as Jo', a variation of *Yā* or *Jā*, and father as *Po*' in the localities in which they still preserve their ancient customs and language. In polite address young ladies are also addressed as *Yā* or *Jo*'.

66. *AB*, p. 9.

67. : *tou :* Sword, *sheng :* holy; also called *Hengdān*. See *AB*, p. 14.

against enemies and criminals, a Code of Law to be judiciously applied, an image of a deity called Chum-phrā[68] ( ) exclusively for the ruling Princes of his line to worship. The Sword, which would destroy enemies, was to be placed in the middle of the Council Hall and was to be greeted seven times by the Princes kneeling before it as homage to Lengdon. The image of 'Chum-phrā-rung-mōng' was originally presented by Phālaibet (God) to Shāngdām, who, by worshipping it according to rules, proved a successful ruler. It was to be installed in a temple specially built for it and worshipped according to a set ritual procedure. In addition to the above, he also gave them a pair of drums ( ) to be used only in war and on ceremonial occasions, a tusked elephant( ) and a pair of heavenly cocks ( )whose heads and wings should be prepared and eaten by the ruling Princes alone and the legs and thigh bones were to be used for divination. That the heads and wings should be recommended for the ruling Princes was possibly from the belief that they symbolized the powers of the head and of the arms, the essential qualities of a ruler.

The Sibsagar Chronicle also brings to light certain facts of great historical value. It has specifically mentioned instances showing that the Tai, particularly the Mao-Shans, were a literate race with an advanced language and culture and alphabet of their own in the sixth century A.D., the age of Hkun-Lōng and Hkun-Lai. A messenger named Leng-Sheng ( ) the Lord of Light, proceeded on horseback to Hten-Hkām's Court to deliver to him a letter( )written( ) by Lengdon.[69] The horse was used for carrying mails. For delivering important diplomatic papers or letters containing high policy matter the king usually sent his personal envoy. Addressing the people of Hten-Hkām's kingdom Leng-Sheng said that "both the kings"[70] are ruling wide countries with great fame. All the countries are progressing well under their rule. They

68. *Chum-phrā :* God *Chum*. Sometimes *Chum-sheng* which means' holy Chum'. It is also referred to as *Shengdeo* meaning 'holy god'. (*deo* probably Assamese),

69. from folio 3, p. 5 of Ms. in possession of the writer.

70. Lengdon (Shan: Leng-non) and Hten-Hkam, the former being the ruler of the Upper or Northern kingdom of the Ngai-Lao of which the capital was in the highest part of Heaven. It perhaps refers to the northern part of Yün-nān with some southern parts of Sze-chuan. - *AB*, p. 8.

are of equal power and never in war with each other. Both the kings punish the offenders only. Hten-Hkām, the handsome, is a descendant of the All-powerful and is a great king. Each year, Lengdon consults Hten-Hkām about the affairs of their countries. Both the kings are in very freindly terms. Both of them sit on the same throne.[71] They eat and drink together and converse on the affairs of their States". This account gives us glimpses of the political, economic and cultural background of the Mao-Shans of the time, which also probably formed the basic material for the construction of the nucleus of the Tai Empire of Nān-Chao. There was progress and prosperity among the Tai under their kings, who ruled the countries, not arbitrarily, but according to the accepted principles of justice which 'distinguished right from wrong' and maintained peace with the neighbouring rulers of the race. Moreover, they had a culture and literature developed from the past, which enabled them to explore the higher principles of social justice and political advancement that found expression in the subsequent history of their activities in the mainland of South-east Asia.

Heavenly Princes had been sent to rule over the lower countries as tributary to Lengdon from long before the appointment of Hkun-Lōng and Hkun-Lai and the names of some of them are mentioned in the Chronicles. For instance, one Shāng-deng was sent as the first ruler of a country called Möng-Shāng.[72] He built the city of Möng-chai [73] as his capital and governed the country. This country was full of unruly elements. But he was a great and powerful king and compelled these elements to pay homage to him. He also received homage from the dependent States. He was ably assisted in his administration by the poet Shāngsheng and the Councillor Shāngbun, the forefather of the Deodhais. Once in the lower regions, a country, ruled by Hkun-Kum of the line of heavenly (Tai) princes, fell into disorder. At this, Lengdon sent Prince Shengngaohkām with necessary instructions to take charge of the country and restore peace and order. But he failed to act upto the instructions and proved utterly incompetent as a ruler with the result that the country was once more plunged into lawlessness and violence.

71. Meaning thrones of the same kind, which are also of gold, with this difference that Lengdon's throne was of nine stairs : ꩻꩵꩮꩵꩫꩵ Bright throne of gold having nine stairs and Hten-Hkām's was of eight stairs (ꩻꩵꩵ eight stairs) The difference was probably to show the higher position of Lengdon in rank and precedence being regarded as the Lord of Heaven.

72. *AB*, p. 10.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 8. Perhaps Möng-chai = Möng-Tai.

It was the period when the Tai (Mao-Shans) were pushing forward down the Mekong valley and to the west across Upper Burma. There was therefore constant fighting between these new Tai conquerors (Mao-Shans) and the earlier Tai elements and the native tribes. At times, when a Tai ruler happened to be weak, the subject peoples attempted to upset his regime and create disorder. It was necessary therefore to send from heaven some powerful ruler to restore order by reducing the ungovernable races to submission. Lengdon, this time, determined to send his grandsons. "He whose forefathers were never rulers", remarked Lengdon, "can hardly be expected to be a king. He can never get homage from others". Approving the remark Jā-Hsing-Hpā said that "if an ordinary being be sent he will not be able to rule the earth. You should, therefore, send your grandsons to rule the wide earth."[74] Laokhri, the great politician and the oldest of the gods, too, agreed to the proposal. Then Lengdon asked all the gods (the Tai) their opinion. They all supported the proposal to send as rulers the sons of Hten-Hkām, the Great.

The two brothers, Hkun-Lōng (Prince-Elder) and Hkun-Lai (Prince-Younger), were then called in and invested with princely authority and sent down to rule over the lower countries,[75] not arbitrarily as they pleased, but according to a Code of Law which was dictated to them by Lengdon, the supreme Ruler of Heaven. The Code was meant for protecting the life, property and chastity of the subject population. It was specifically enjoined that in the administration of law punishments should be inflicted only after a fair trial. The forms of punishment reflect their emanation from a very humane consideration of principles of justice. The sanctions behind law were almost invariably socio-religious in character. Their moderate nature relatively to the age indirectly brings to our mind the picture of a society in which a high ethical sense must have governed the general conduct of the people. The Code contained, among others, the following specimens as models of punishment for the violations of the provisions of the Law :

"If a person commits a crime, don't kill him at once without a fair trial. Cleanse him if he offers a feast by killing a cow. You must confiscate all his properties. A Bailung Pundit will sprinkle incantated water on him with *Nām-blak nyā* leaves. All of you, then bless him".[76]

74. *AB*, p.10.

75. Countries down the Mekong.

76. *AB*, p. 15. The expression *nām blak nyā* means water-flower-medicine, that is, the water of the flower of a medicinal plant. The plant may be either *blak-nyā-rāng*, called *bātguamāli* in Assamese, or, *blak-nyā-dāng*, called *Tanglati* in Assamese and not 'Durba-grass' as the translator translates it. (See *AB*, p.15).

"If you find a person, having unlawful intercourse with the sister of his mother or of his father, or one depriving his father of his property by force, you must drive him away from the country. If you do not punish such a person, others will be demoralized by his example".[77]

"If any of them lives by oppressing others, he should be sent to exile. If he wants to clear himself of the sin, he should sacrifice three white buffaloes, four white oxen and some hogs to gods. He should also give a feast by killing cows and buffaloes. He should make offer of gold and silver to the Deodhai Pundits. He must ask for pardon from all, kneeling down. All his properties are to be confiscated. He should also greet you. He will then be cleared of his sin."[78]

"If any body robs his mother or if an elder brother takes his younger's wife as his, none should have a look at him. If it happens to any body to come across such a culprit he should cast his eyes to the sky".[79]

"If any body commits rape on his daughter-in-law or his brother's wife, his heart should be pierced with the point of a knife. Such sinners are not to be looked at. If they are not put to death, they should be driven to a jungle which is frequented by tigers and bears. If you wish to purify such persons, you must collect all the people and inform Lengdon by sacrificing ten cows. All the holy things are to be collected there, and "*Shengdeo*" too. The culprits should kneel down before the heavenly king. A feast should be given by killing cows and buffaloes. Gifts should be offered to all. The culprits should be allowed to drink a quantity of the water with which "*Shengdeo*" be washed. Then he should perform 'Rikkhan'[80] ceremony (a religious ceremony performed to get a new life). After this, he should be stripped of his garments and allowed to go naked".[81]

Here the feast and gifts must obviously be given by the culprit and after the 'Rikkhan' ceremony he is not allowed in the new life to retain on his body anything of the previous life reminiscent of the past misdeed.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
78. *Ibid*, p. 16.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
80. *Rik* : call, *Khan* : life.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

"If a person weds a girl of his own family,.....gods should be worshipped by sacrificing three cows and some buffaloes. After this, the Deodhai Pundits will bring holy water and offer nine *mehengās* (stands full of offerings) to the gods. The Pundits in order to purify the culprit should sprinkle holy water on his body. His whole garment should be taken off and he should be allowed to go away naked. He should relate the story of his crime to the people at large."[82]

The culprit when purified should throw away the old garment worn in the impure state. Such is the practice also in the Hindu society.

"But those persons" who kidnap women and usurp other's property, should be put to death."[83]

In case of females the punishments appear to be less severe. If a female, for instance, unlawfully unites with a male person "the hands of the female should be bound together towards the back, and she should be made to pay homage to the gods by falling prostrate on the ground. After this, she is to be cleansed by making her wash her body with water purified with holy plants".[84]

Hkun-Lŏng and Hkun-Lai were advised by the Lord of Heaven to rule over the new countries, so long torn by lawlessness, with a firm hand but following moral rules and doing justice to everybody.[85] The mighty Lengdon also assured them of further armed assistance whenever any situation demanded. "I shall send down." he said, "eight lakhs of gods (the Tai) who will cut down all the enemies to pieces as cloths are torn to pieces by a storm".[86] What Lengdon emphasized most was that they should rule in harmony and never allow anything to disrupt their unity and solidarity. He said "if you quarrel amongst yourselves, you are sure to lose your royal power".[87]

On a comparison of the Laws of Lengdon with those of Manu, then in force in India, certain striking differences in purposes and methods between the two systems are noticed. While the Laws of Lengdon were

82. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 13,15.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

meant to regulate the secular relations of man and man according to the universal concepts of fundamental justice and the ethical notions of the Tai, those of Manu were framed to preserve the intergrity of the Hindu society, as based on orthodox principles of the Śāstras, by the rigorous enforcement of caste rules. The modern secular view of law as respector of no persons had no place in Manu's system. He gave the pre-eminent position to the Brahmins and made their persons inviolate, whereas the severest corporal punishments were attached to violations of the law by the Śudras.

The caste privileges and immunities, as were provided in the Code of Manu, have no parallels in Lengdon's Code. For instance, according to Manu, if a Śudra or a member of a vile caste commits an act of violence, however minor, or utters a slander against a Brahmin, he is punished with death or mutilation of the offending limbs, but in similar cases, a Brahmin has to pay only a pecuniary penalty (in Copper coins, *Kārṣhāpaṇa*) or at most, may be exiled, for he is immune from capital or corporal punishment, whatever may be the gravity of his offence.[88] But Lengdon made no provision for such social discrimination in the administration of law. His Laws sought to regulate the relations of individuals, both in the family and the society according to the accepted code of conduct and the sanctions provided were not so severe as those of Manu and included no such disabling and frightful punishments as mutilation of limbs or roasting alive the convict to death.

Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai, after receiving the necessary instructions from Lengdon, greeted the latter ten times by kneeling down before him and also saluted the wise Councillor Laokhri and the gooddess Jā-Hsing-Hpā, who were present at the investiture ceremony. Next they knelt down before the royal deity Chumphrā-rung-möng,[89] an idol of pure gold and then, placing it reverentially in the box, held it on the head and took leave of Lengdon. They set out for their appointed country in the right royal style putting on shining coats adorned with stars and wearing golden crowns. They were accompanied by two Ministers, Hkun-Tun[90] and Hkun-Bān,[91] who were descended respectively from the moon and the sun. Among the other distinguished heavenly com-

88. Na jātu brāhmanān hanyāt sarva pāpesvapi sthitaṁ. Rāṣṭrādenaṁ vahirkuryyāt samapradhānamakṣataṁ. -Manu, VIII, 380; also Manu Saṁhitā, VIII, 270-379, 413-14.

89. It is said to be an image of God in the shape of a heron.—*AB*, pp. 8, 15.

90. or possibly Hkün-Dün (*Hkun* : Prince, *Dün* : Moon).

91. *Hkun* : Prince, *Bān* : Sun, Hkun Hpun of N. Elias.

panions were Hkunthao Laokhri,[92] the astrologer of the family of Jupiter and Hkun Pujākji, the heavenly Pundit[93] A great number of the Tai had already proceeded as a vanguard. According to one account the heavenly princes had with them a powerful body of armed men with guns, cannon, gun-powder and bullets while marching down to the lower countries.[94]

It is of importance to know that the Tai believed themselves to be heaven-born (ꪼꪖꪉ heaven-born race) as distinguished from the non-Tai races, whom they called slaves(ꪙꪀ ꪼꪖꪉ race of slaves).[95] It is almost always so with a conquering and dominating race and the Tai were no exception. 'Lengdon was ruling in the wide country of gods. There eight lakhs (eight hundred thousand) of gods paid him homage'.[96] The eight lakhs of gods, mentioned in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle, were no other than eight lakhs of Tai population (Mao-Shans) whose abode it was and Lengdon[97] was their sovereign. Hence the story of the early Mao-Shans, as fashioned in the Chronicle to give it a heavenly character, appears to the reader extra-ordinary and mythical; but, stripped of its garb, it is a history of the Mao-Shans, plain and simple, with its dynastic links connecting the past with the present, the heaven with the earth.

Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai then proceeded down to the lower plains from the land of the gods, accompanied by a body of chief men and

92. Laokhri was a senior Councillor in the Court of Lengdon. He was also a great poet and the Hindus identify him with Viśvakarmā and say that he was a descendant of Vṛihaspati. Shāngbun or Deodhais—a family of Ahom Priests whose duty it is to invoke the gods in the religious ceremonies - are descended from him.

93. Pujākji was the ancestor of the Ahom Mohan family of Assam. —N. Phukan's Notes. According to the Hindus he is descended from Śukra. The Mohans are priests, who perform the rites with the appropriate offerings. —T. Phukan : *op.cit.*, p. 3; N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 13; P. Phukan : D.H.A.S, Transcript, vol. IX, p. 181; Gurdon : *A Short Note on the Ahoms*, (Morrison & Gibb Ltd., Edinburg.), p. 12; —*AB*, p.24.

94. Padmeswar Naobaichā Phukan's *Asam Buranji*, (D.H.A.S., Transcript.), Vol. IX., P. 153.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 18.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

97. It is not clear whether *Lengdon* was the title of the Sovereign or the name of a particular ruler. More probable is that it was a Tai title of the supreme ruler of the Tai in Yün-nān. That title may now be a matter of legend with the changes of time.

Councillors[98] and also an armed force[99] in the month of Agrahāyaṇa (Nov.-Dec.) in *Lakni Kasheu* of the Tai *Taoshingā* or sexagenary cycle. In addition, ten different kinds of animals[100] were sent down with them. The purpose of sending this moving zoo is not known. These creatures were perhaps necessary as sacrificial offerings for propitiating the gods or spirits and also for sport and food. After reaching the plains they entered a country called Möng-Ri Möng-Rām.[101] The country was found deserted and without any government. Probably the hostile elements, who would not submit to the Mao-Shans and had created disorder during the reigns of the former Tai rulers, quitted that part of the vast country either at the approach of the mighty Princes Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai or by being defeated by the advancing Mao-Shan forces.

There were in that region vast tracts of grassy land and fertile paddy fields. Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai found to their great satisfaction that the people of the neighbouring districts, probably mostly Tai,[102] assembled there and warmly welcomed them. Large numbers of these people also loyally joined them. The Princes then decided to build a city and a palace in the central part of the country Möng-Ri Möng-

98. The following list of chief men and Councillors is given in the Chronicle :- 1. Hkun-tai, 2. Hkun-lai-ching, 3. Hkun-lā-tao, 4. Hkun-hseng, 5. Hkun-chip-chi, 6. Hkun-khrung-chao-blak, 7. Hkun-chām, 8. Hkun-khvak-hpā-chao-lang-din, 9. Hkun-phram, 10. Hkun-teng-ā-rā-chao-hpā-bān, 11. Hkun-thao-Laokhri, 12. Hkun-Pu-jāk-ji, 13. Hkun-klang Phu-ken-möng-khru-hpā, 14. Hkun-tvang, 15. Phu-ken-möng-pum, 16. Kāng-khu-möng Phu-kin-möng-ju-nang and 17. Kvan-ngan Phu-kin-möng-möng-li. Most of these dignitaries took their families with them. One Hkun-bāng-rai brought down the silver vessels with which Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai used to drink liquour. —*AB*, pp.24, 40-41.

99. The strength of the force is believed to be ninety thousand at the most from the account which says "They brought thirty thousand cooking vessels with them. Three persons could eat out of each vessel" —*AB*, *op.cit.*, p.40. Here G.C. Barua's translation is wrong since in the text chaṁ mun (3×10,000) means three times ten thousand. Hence they brought thirty thousand cooking vessels and not 'three thousand cooking vessels' as Barua translates.

100. The lists of animals are given at two places in the Sibsagar Ahom Chronicle. List I. —"alligators, bears, tigers, serpents, monkeys, seven million wild cats, eight otters, seven crows, nine hogs and ten lizards." (p.24.). List II. —"a deer, an alligator, three bears, a tiger, a snake, a monkey, a wild cat, seven others, eight hogs, and a cat., (p.41.). In *Deodhai Asam Buranji*, ed. by S.K. Bhuyan, (D.H.A.S., Gauhati, Assam'), p.3, the list of animals is as follows :—

পানী নাগিনী বুলি লাঙ্গি, লেচাম বুলি ভালুক, লেচাই বুলি বাঘ, লাঙ্গু বুলি সাপ, লাচিত বুলি উদ, লাপেত বুলি মেকুৰী, লাউ বুলি বান্দৰ।

101. *Möng-Ri* : Country uninhabited, *Möng-Rām* : Country deserted.

102. "I Send you down", said Lengdon, "with these essential instructions. The Tais are dwelling there". —*AB*, p.15.

Rām. Thousands of people helped them to build the capital city with fortifications and ditches all around it. They also constructed a large palace or *Haw-Lung*[103] in that city for the Princes. The throne room of the palace was nicely decorated with cloth carpets spread over mats on which a throne of gold was placed. The Tai people, who came down from Heaven in great numbers, selected suitable sites in a fertile valley near a hill and set up villages of their own with the co-operation of the local people.

Both Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai installed themselves as rulers of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām in obedience to the mandate of Lengdon, who, at the investiture, had commanded "I, therefore, give you the rule of the countries. Both of you must rule the wide countries peacefully".[104] A kind of dual princedom was thus established. The Princes sat on the thrones[105] decorated with gold-embroidered cloth.[106] The great golden royal umbrella was "spread over them both".[107] The nobles, officers and the audience sat around them in a circle.[108]

Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai, having installed themselves as rulers of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, made a thorough survey of the country and its frontiers mounting on an elephant and then divided the lands among the subjects. They ruled the country harmoniously and well and the abundance of produce of the vast agricultural tracts gave them perfect economic security. All people including the neighbouring chiefs paid them homage and annual tributes and remained loyal to them.

The Princes were advised by Jā-Hsing-Hpā to worship them, their heavenly ancestors,[109] at the end of a year by sacrificing an elephant and in the next year by killing a cow and a buffalo. They were then sent down to the earth with their blessings to be undisputed rulers. Lengdon ordered the Princes to eat the heavenly fowls at the end of a year[110] and further said "The Tais should eat the flesh of the heavelnly fowls. You

103. *Haw* : palace, *Lung* : large.

104. *AB*, p. 12.

105. Some times only one throne is mentioned for both the rulers. *Ibid.*, p.18.

106. *DAB*, p. 2.

107. *DAB* p. 2; *AB*, p. 40.

108. *AB*, p. 19.

109. Here Jā-Hsing-Hpā herself, Lengdon, Hten-Hkām and others of their heavenly family are meant.

110. *AB*, p.18.

will then be in possession of stores of wealth".[111] But the Princes having descended to the earth found upon enquiry that the fowls were left behind through forgetfulness while departing from Heaven. They also could not remember the ritual procedure and the sacred formulae necessary for the worship of the holy Sword and the drums.[112]

It became thus imperative on their part to send for the heavenly fowls and also for the ritual procedure and formulae, otherwise it would not be easy for them to subjugate the native races in the new country. Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai asked the persons assembled there if any body would be able to do the job of ascending to Heaven to bring the fowls and other things. The job being arduous, none dared, not even their Ministers Hkun-tun and Hkun-bān. But there appeared one man named Lāngu, who ventured to undertake the journey to bring the heavenly fowls and the other articles as desired by the Princes. Lāngu is believed to be the Shan form of the Chinese name Laongu or Lao-Wu. He was also called Chao-Ti-Kan.[113] Lāngu's readiness to serve the heavenly Princes was inspired by the ambition to become the ruler of the Hké country taking advantage of their present difficulty. He therefore bargained for it as a reward for doing this particular piece of job. "I wish to ascend the ladder", said Lāngu to Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai, "and bring down the heavenly fowls. I alone shall climb the ladder. O; Kings of the Tais, I shall fetch the holy cocks, provided, you make me king of the 'Khé' (China) country". Both the Princes then promised to give him the Hké country, which was Mithila[114] (Yün-nān) according to N. Elias, to govern probably as a tributary ruler. Obviously by Hké the whole of China could not be meant at that time.

111. *Ibid.*, p.11. According to N. Elias's version, immediately on arriving on the earth to kill and eat the cock or cocks-Elias, *op.cit.*, p.13.

112. *DAB*, p.2.

113. N. Elias : *ibid.*, p.13; Scott is of the opinion that the story of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai has been taken by the Shan Chronicler (from whose work Elias writes) from the Burmese *Mahā Yāzāwin.—GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 218.

114. Mithilā or Meithilā is the Pali or classical name for Möng-Hké which is no other than Yün-nān. Videha or Wideharit (Wideha-rāṣṭra) is another name for it. Such application of ancient Indian geographical names to this part of south-west China may be attributed to early Buddhist missionary influence. Lāngu's Hké must have been some State in Hkè (Yün-nān'). This State seems to be Möng-htin itself over which Hten-Hkām had been ruling. But when his two sons, Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai, left for the lower countries the question of succession must have arisen and its settlement probably rested with the two Princes. Had not Hké belonged to them there would have been no point in Lāngu's asking for it from them.

Lāngu then went up and reached the abode of the gods and entered into the palace of Jā-Hsing-Hpā. He knelt down before the goddess and greeted her and explained the reason of his coming to Heaven. After listening to him she brought out the holy fowls and handed them to him with the necessary instructions, to be communicated to the Princes, about the proper use of the Sword and the drums.[115] In her instructions she particularly pointed out that the Princes must take only the heads and wings of the fowls and spare their leg and thigh bones for calculating future omens and that the Sword is to be placed in the middle of the Hall tied to a post, by the side of which the Princes sit.

Having received this message Lāngu descended from Heaven holding the fowls on his shoulder and in due time arrived back at Möng-Ri Möng-Rām. But the knowledge he had of the magic powers of the heads and wings of the heavenly fowls and the Sword aroused in him the temptation to secure them for himself. He therefore made up his mind to give to the Princes a report just contrary to what he had been told by Jā-Hsing-Hpā. Thus on arriving at the capital, he knelt down before Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai and humbly reported thus : "I wish to tell you what Jā-Hsing-Hpā said. She said that 'the Princes might not remember what Lengdon said to them. Let no other person know the secret. The rule of the Khé country may be given to you. The princes should eat the flesh and liver of the fowls of the holy country. The heads and wings are to be taken by you, Lāngu. The princes should not take the legs of the fowls as they scatter about dungs with their legs when they go out in search of food in the morning. They (the Princes) are prohibited from taking the heads and legs of the fowls. If they follow the advice they will be able to rule the earth." Lāngu further said, "Jā-hsing-hpā has ordered you to offer me the Sword and directed you, O Kings ! to rule the countries in the north."[116]

The Princes believed all that Lāngu had said and, in fulfilment of their promise, gave him the country of Hké (Mithilā). He was also allowed to eat the heads of the fowls with the result that he became a wise and

115. In *AB*, (p.21) and Tamuli Phukan's *AS.B.* (p.4) the Sword and the drums too are said to have been left behind. At this, Lengdon, according to T. Phukan (*AS.B., ibid.*) and Hten Hkām, according to N. Elias (*ibid.*, pp. 13-14,) became angry with the Princes for their carelessness.

116. *AB*, p. 20.

powerful ruler of the Hké country and the heaven-descended Princes, having eaten of the bodies, "remained ignorant Mao-Shans."[117] Lāngu commenced his rule in A. D. 568 with a capital at Möng-Kyē (Möng-Hké).[118] Lāngu's dynasty, according to the Shan records, ruled over Möng-Hké (Yün-nān) till A. D. 1038, after which the history is silent.

It may be noted that the descent and reigning period of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai fell within the period of the Chinese *Nān Pei Chao* or the Southern and Northern Dynasties (A. D. 420-589). It was an era of division of China which weakened her seriously. To the Chinese rulers the rise of the powerful rival Tai State of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, so close to them, became a source of great menace. At this time the divided China was perhaps too weak also to attack Möng-Ri Möng-Rām. They therefore sent their secret agents to get into the services of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai's administration and disrupt the kingdom from within.[119] Lāngu was probably one of such secret agents. Within a short period the Chinese officers in the services of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai succeeded, it is suspected, in creating a dissension between the two Princes over the claim to become the Sovereign ruler.

Having made their headquarters at Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai ruled for sometime over that country. They next came to a thickly populated country called Laidoi and built there a city and a fort with ditches around it. They made the fort their residence. In olden times this country of Laidoi was ruled over by a powerful Prince named Hkun-Kum, but on his death his sons Khrai-Hkām and Chao-Sām-Wun could not govern it owing to a violent outbreak of disorder, which upset the regime and caused a great dispersal of the population.[120] It was probably this disorder that made Lengdon appoint and send down from heaven another Prince, named Hseng-Ngao-Hkām, for the restoration of peace in and assumption of power over this country. But he failed to rule by neglecting to act according to the instructions of the Lord of Heaven and a great disorder ensued again.[121] Some of the inhabitants

117. N. Elias : *ibid.*, p. 14.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 14. According to Scott Möng-Kyé is Möng-Se-Löng which is the name by which the Shans know Yün-nān-sen. (Kunming)—*GUBSS*, 1.1, Rangoon, 1900, p. 219.

119. P.K. Buragohain : *Ahamar Ādi Buranji*, (Jorhat, Assam',) 1946, p. 19.

120. *AB*, p. 41; *DAB*, p.3.

121. *AB*, p. 14,

crossed the Śri Lohit[122] and entered into the country called Puphangpau. There was a serious clash between the aggressors and the natives of Puphangpau, each party cutting down the men of the other party. In this state of things one Men-nām (or Men-dām) by name, said to be a'Naga slave', made himself ruler of that country. But his rule proved to be one of great oppressions, misdeeds and disorder. Being unable to endure the tyrannies of this upstart the chief men of the country wished to have a Prince of thefamily of Hkun-löng and Hkun-Lai as a ruler. When the request came, Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai sent Chao-Tai-Hpā[123] to bring that State to order and rule over it. This marks the consolidation of power of the Mao-Shans in these new countries in Upper Burma.

It appears that Möng-Ri Möng-Rām and Laidoi,[124] the chief centre probably of the 'countries in the north', were parts of a vast country, which the Mao-Shans brought under their control, building a fortified city in every strategic area so annexed.

About the location of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām (Shan Mŏng-Hi Möng-Hām) it is said in the Hsen-Wi Chronicle that "In the time of the first *Mahā Thāmādāmins*, Hkun Lu and Hkun Lai, the boundaries extended to Möng La, Möng Hi and Möng Hām on the banks of the Mekhong." It is further stated that Möng Hi and Möng Hām are "on the frontier of Möng Lā in the province of Keng Mai" (Chieng-Mai).[125] W. W. Cochrane, who made a thorough study of the available Shan manuscripts, being himself a master of Shan, further clarifies the geographical location of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām. He asserts : "Four Shan records agree in fixing the location on the Me-hkawang ; two of them say that it was on the border of Chieng-Mai; and one is more explicit and say distinctly that it comprised Möng-lu, Möng-yon, Möng-kang, and Mong-hpā. Just what territory was included in these states we do not know, but the general location is clear enough."[126] Möng-Ri Möng-Rām was undoubtedly a part of the ancient Tai State of Hsip-Hsawng-Pān-nā (Keng-Hung), which was situated on the

122. *DAB*, p.3. Sri Lohit is the Irrawaddy. Puphangpau or প্রকাংপৌ is not identified. It is some country to the west of the Upper Irrawaddy. It may be the land of the Kachins or Nagas.

123. According to *DAB*, (p.3 son of Hkun-Lai).

124. It is difficult to locate Laidoi in a modern map.

125. *GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 231.

126. "Shan and Buddhism of the Northern Canon" by W.W. Cochrane in *JRAS*, vol. for 1912, pp. 487-88.

western bank of the Mekong river and which comprised a part of the southern territory of Yün-nān, a part of the eastern Shan States and a part of northern Siam with Chieng-Sen, Chieng-Rai and Muang-Fang.[127]

Though Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai jointly administered the affairs of the country under them, which comprised Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, Laidoi and such other territories as were conquered by the Maos, Hkun-Lai, for administrative convenience, made Laidoi his residence, while Hkun-Lông continued to rule from the capital at Möng-Ri Möng-Rām.

In due time, as instructed by Lengdon, the heavenly Princes performed the State ceremony of planting a peepul tree [128] in the name of the eldest brother Ai-Hkun-Lông, the master of elephants and treasures.[129] The ceremony was peacefully concluded and then salt was distributed among the people. But after some days Hkun-Lai's mind became poisoned, probably at the instigation of some Chinese secret agent who was there in the garb of an officer of the realm.[130] Disregarding the advice of Lengdon to rule the country with unity between them, he conspired to become the real king by reducing his elder brother to the position of a subordinate ruler. With that intention one day, without the knowledge of his brother, he came to the spot where the peepul tree was planted and tied to the main root some gold strings. Then he allowed some days to pass peacefully. When the plan for seizure of the power matured, one day he suddenly asked his brother whether he had tied gold strings to the root of the tree. Hkun-Lông replied in the nagative. Then Hkun-Lai,

127. L. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, pp. 99-100.

128. not a banian tree as Barua translates it. (see *AB*, p. 21, para 23). The name of the tree in the Ahom text is *Tun-rung* which means a peepul tree, or Assamese *Ānhat* tree (আহতগছ) and in Sanskrit *Aśvattha* (fiscus religiosa) which represents long life. Lengdon sent Puphishu as the presiding deity of the forest who would dwell in this peepul tree. Lengdon instructed Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai: "When the month of dinpet (Āṣār, June-July) comes and the lakes and rivers be full of water, Puphishu should be adored by all the people by sacrificing buffaloes. Thus propitiated he will keep you all safe and sound." —*AB*, p. 11. The ceremonial planting of this peepul tree for long and happy life was done in the morning of one auspicious day. According to Tamuli Phukan's Buranji Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai descended from Heaven in the month of Agrahāyaṇa (Nov.—Dec.) of A.D. 568. If so, then the tree ceremony was performed after about six or seven months of their arrival in Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, and in the meantime, they settled down firmly in this country and built two fortified cities, one in Möng-Ri Möng-Rām and the other in Laidoi.

129. *AB*, pp. 11, 20. Here Ai-Hkun-Lông means Hkun-Lông, *Ai* as he is the eldest son of Hten-Hkām.

130. P.K. Buragohain : *op.cit.*, p. 10.

to his brother's astonishment, asserted thus : "I am the real king of the country. I planted the tree and attached gold strings to its root. O, brother ; you may examine it." On examining the root of the tree Hkun-Lông found the gold strings and realised what was in store for him. There was then a difference between the two brothers. But Hkun-Lai, with the help of his supporters, took possession of all the things including the royal umbrella given by Lengdon.[131]

Hkun-Lông was a noble soul. Without further botheration he abdicated and left for Heaven, carrying with him the image of Chum-phrā, to report the matter to Lengdon. Before he went he placed his son Tao-Lông-Hpā-Tao-Lu-Lo[132] as the ruler of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām. When Hkun-Lông related the matter to Lengdon the latter was fired up with rage and cursed Hkun-Lai in the following words : "He will not be able to reign long and come back to heaven. Know it for certain that his family will not reign for a long period." Lengdon then advised Hkun-Lông to go back and rule the country called Möng-Hko Möng-Jao. Hkun-Lông accordingly returned to the earth and assumed the rulership of the said country. He soon rose to be a powerful but benevolent king with a wide fame for his popularity and good government. The dominant element of his kingdom were the Tai who provided the main source of strength to him for embarking upon schemes of further expansion of his dominions.

Hkun-Lông ruled for forty years and during this period he found himself master of a vast empire extending from Chieng-Mai in northern Siam in the east to the neighbourhood of the Lohit (the Brahmaputra river) and the Assam Hills in the west. It comprised almost the whole of Upper Burma and a part of Siam to the west of the Mekong with possibly the rich rice area of Kyaukse to the south of Ava. The Chronicle is, however, silent about the annexations made by Hkun-Lông to his original kingdom. But it can be safely assumed that at this time there was a vast westward surging movement of the Mao-Shans over Upper Burma under the leadership of Hkun-Lông and other minor chiefs.

Hkun-Lông divided his empire and appointed his sons to rule over its different divisions. His eldest son (Ai-Hkun-Lông), possibly Tao-Lông-Hpa-Tao-Lu-Lo, was given the rule of the country

131. *AB*, pp. 21-22.

132. Presumably as subordinate to Hkun-Lai. In some accounts Tao-Lu-Lo is described as the eldest son of Hkun-Lông. (vide *AD.*, p. 88; *AB*, pp. 24, 41; *DAB* p. 3).

Taitamkang[133] and Möng-Mit. Hkun-Hpā, his second son, was appointed ruler of Möng-Teu or lower countries.[114] He had to supply as tribute ten lakh[135] horses every year. He placed his third son Hkun-Ngu in Lā-Möng-Tai[136] as the ruler of that country. He was directed to send as tribute three hundred elephants annually. Hkun-Löng made his fourth son Hkun-Hkak-Hpā[137] ruler of the country called Jun-Löng,[138] his annual tribute being a quantity of gold. He sent his fifth son Hkun-La to rule Möng-Kula[139] on the Assam border and directed him to supply horses as tribute. According to N. Elias and Tamuli Phukan the tribute was to be paid in water from the Chindwin river. In T. Phukan's Buranji the river mentioned is Dihing, which may mean the Chindwin or the Dihing in Eastern Assam. Hkun-Tā,[140] the sixth son of Hkun-Löng, was made the ruler of Ava in Burma. His tribute was fixed at two *viss*[141] of rubies yearly. Hkun-Löng's seventh son Hkun-Hsu[142] lived with his father at the capital and succeeded to the throne of Möng-Hko Möng-Jao after his father's death. Thus the great patriarch king Hkun-Löng became a historic figure among the Mao-Shans as the heavenly ancestor of the Mao-Shan dynasties who ruled over the vast area from the Chindwin to the Mekong. Since then the Shan principalities rapidly increased in number from conquests and the habit of placing the sons and relatives of the ruling house as autonomous governors of the newly formed States. Hence the Shan principalities are almost invariably small in size, but are linked together in the form of confederacies under powerful chiefs of their own.

133. Tung-Kung of the Shans or Tagaung of the Burmese. In Tamuli Phukan's Buranji it is mentioned as Tai-Tung-Kung, that is, Mungkang. If so, it would mean Mogaung which is improbable. For Möng-Mit see *AB*, p. 22. para 24.

134. N. Elias identifies this territory as Mong Yang which is Mohnyn of the present day.

135. It simply means a large number.

136. According to N. Elias this country is Labun (or La Bong) near Zimmé (Chieng-Mai) in Siam. Labun is called Jiutra (or Yiu-tarā) in Tamuli Phukan's Buranji.

137 Hkun Kwat Hpā of N. Elias.

138. or Yon Lon or Möng Yawng. N. Elias thinks that Möng Yawng was, probably, Garnier's Mong Yong, the former capital of Keng Cheng, the Cis-Mekhong portion of which is now annexed to Keng Tung.

139. or Mông-Kala or Kale on the right bank of the Chindwin above Minjin. *Kula* refers to the Hindus and in the text it is the country of the Hindus. In another Tai manuscript Nām-Ti-Lao (Lohit river) is said to be the western boundary of Hkun-La's State. If so, it is not impossible that his State comprised an area of Hindu population or its former rulers were Hindus.

140. Hkun Hsā, according to N. Elias.

141. One *viss* is about 7 lbs. weight.

142. or Hkun-Ju (see *AB*. p. 23).

In Möng-Ri Möng-Rām Hkun-Lai ruled for seventy years with his capital at Laidoi.[143] On his death his son Chao-Ai-Jep[144] ascended the throne in A. D. 638 and ruled the country for forty years. The famous Ai-Jepi *Lakni* or Era of the Mao-Shans was founded by Chao-Ai-Jep with the year of his accession. It may be noted that both the Burmese and the Siamese national eras also commenced with this date.[145] Chao-Ai-Jep died in A. D. 678 leaving no heir. As the throne fell vacant the ministers and nobles sent messengers to Chao-Hkun-Jun, the ruler of Möng-Hko Möng-Jao, to inform him of the situation with a request for a prince of his family. Chao-Hkun-Jun sent his son Hkām-Pong-Hpā to occupy the vacant throne and rule the country.[146] Hkām- Pong-Hpā ruled for twenty-five years and was succeeded by his eldest son Hkām-Tyap-Hpā in A. D. 703. In this very year Hkām-Tyip-Hpā, the younger brother of Hkām-Tyap-Hpā, became ruler of Möng-Mao-Löng and established his capital at Mā-kao Möng-Löng. But according to N. Elias Hkām-Tyip-Hpā (Kāmsip-phā of Elias) succeeded his elder brother Hkam-Tyap-Hpā in A. D. 703 and established his court at Mā- Kao Möng-Löng, thus finally abandoning Möng-Ri Möng-Rām as capital.

Thus Hkun-Löng's posterity became supreme among the Mao and from Hkām-Pong-Hpā's accession reigned more or less peacefully in regular succession for about seventy-five years. During this period of political expansion of the Mao-Shans all over Upper Burma with their centres in Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, Möng-Hko Möng-Jao and Mā+Kao Möng-Löng, rulers of the Vikrama dynasty ruled at Prome, the centre of the Pyu. Then came political pressure from Nān-Chao. Ko-lo-fêng, the powerful king of Nān-Chao, after having won notable victories in the wars with the Chinese and the Tibetans, sent his expeditions to Burma not long after A. D. 754. He broke the power of the Pyu, who were still holding a predominant position over a considerable part of Central Burma and in this, though the history is not very clear, the Mao-Shans probably co-operated with and acknowledged the suzerainty of Nān-Chao.

143. *AB*, p. 41; *DAB*, pp. 3-4. N. Elias and Tamuli Phukan make no mention of Laidoi.

144. Tyao-Ai-Jep-Tyāt-Hpā of Tamuli Phukan or (Mau king) Ai-dyep-that-phā of N. Elias, (Vide T. Phukan; *op.cit*,, p. 7; N. Elias : *op.cit*., p.10).

145. Hallett says that the Siamese civil era, which dates from A.D. 638 is said to have originated in Sangkalok. It was associated with the foundation of the Phra Ruang dynasty in that State. Hallett in *Amongst the Shans*, pp. 344-45. Is it the short-lived dynasty of Chao-Ai-Jep ?

146 Tamuli Phukan : *op.cit*., p. 7.

The predominance of Nān-Chao over Upper and Central Burma and also a part of Assam seems to have continued to the middle of the ninth century A. D., if not more, and during this period, according to the Chinese records, the Pyu kingdom came to a sudden end in 832 when the 'Man rebels' plundered the Pyu capital and deported three thousand captives to Yün-nān-Fu.[147] At the time of its final fall the Pyu kingdom was already reduced in size and strength and pushed to the south by the Mao-Shans who had been exerting a steady pressure on it ever since the advent of Hkun-Lông. The political extinction of the Pyu chronologically synchronized with the reign of Fong-Yeh in Nān-Chao.[148] Fong-Yeh was another very powerful monarch of that kingdom who sent an expedition to Burma and also defeated the Chinese.

The Burmese version of the history of Möng-Mao, as contained in the Hsen-Wi Chronicle,[149] makes mention of two Shan kings Hkun-Lu and Hkun-Lai (Maha Thamadamins) who ruled in Möng-Mao for eighty and forty years respectively covering a period from A. D. 835 to A. D. 955. The important fact to be noted about these two kings is that Hkun-Lai was the son and successor of Hkun-Lông, but he died without leaving any male issue to succeed him. Four Elders or Htao-Möngs of the ruling community had to manage the affairs of the country, which was then a confederacy of eight Shan States, from A. D. 955 to 956 before they could bring five sons and a few relatives of Hkun-Lu-Hkām, the then king of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām, to rule the States. All these princes are said to be the "descendants of the house of Hkun-Lu and Hkun-Lai"[150] They are sent to be rulers over Cis-Salween States. This shows that the Salween was the boundary between Möng-Mao-Lông and Möng-Ri Möng-Rām with her confederate States and dependencies in the region of Hsip-Hsawng-Pānnā and Keng-Mai (Chieng-Mai) between the two

147. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 122. It appears the 'Man rebels' fought for Nān-Chao. According to Hall the Pyu claimed suzerainty over eighteen subject States mainly in Lower Burma. (*ibid*).

148. L. Hoontrakul presents to us a map of the Nān-Chao kingdom as it was during the T'ang Dynasty in China. The map was obtained from the book *Chinese History* (Book 2) which is still used in the Chinese Secondary Schools in China. The map covers an area extending from the eastern boundary of East Pakistan on the west to the sea in Indo-China on the east and from Szechuan on the north to the sea on the south including Malay in the kingdom. -*Op.cit.*, p. 99. Here Nān-Chao included Assam and Burma.

149. It is pieced together from two manuscripts, one furnished by the Northern Shan States, the other by the Southern.

150. Vide Hsen-Wi Chronicle in *GUBSS*, *op.cit.*, p. 232. Here the reference is evidently to the heavenly Princes earlier sent down by Lengdon.

great rivers the Mekong and the Salween. Hkun-Lu-Hkām had many sons most of whom were Governors at that time in the different divisions of the province of Keng-Mai.[151]

As regards the parentage of Hkun-Lu of Möng -Mao the Chronicle relates that one Tung Hkām, a prince of the ruling house of Hsen-Wi, married Princess Pāppāwadi (Pārvati ?), the daughter of Sao Wong-Ti, king of Meiktila (Yün-nān), that Sao Wong-Ti built for the new couple a palace in the town of Tung Hkaw in Möng-Mao where they were made Governors in the year 125 B. E. (A. D. 763) and that a son, named Hkun-Lu, was born to them. From the above account it appears that Hkun-Lông and his wife were governors under Sao Wong-Ti. Sao Wong-Ti here could be no other than the great Ko-lo-fêng of Nān-Chao who had already extended his sway over Burma. Though there is a certain degree of correspondence in names and facts of this story with that of the descent of Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai from heaven, yet they present different historical facts in different contexts and periods. Further the account of the Hsen-Wi Chronicle fits in with the general background of events of that period. It seems that this part of the Möng-Mao history has been inadvertently blended together with the earlier account of the descent of Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai by later chroniclers or compilers with the result that one meets with conflicting narratives about the origin of the branch of the Tai that migrated westwards across Upper Burma. This confusion crept into some of the Assamese Chronicles also in which among others, the heavenly prince Hkun-Lai is said to have left no issue.[152]

Nān-Chao's exercise of suzerainty over Burma did not last much beyond the reign of Ko-lo-fêng. There is a reference in the Chinese records to the fact that I-mou-hsun, Ko-lo-fêng's grandson and successor, after having concluded peace with China, sent a present of Pyu musicians to the T'ang Court early in 800. But two years later a formal Pyu embassy, led by Shunanto and accompanied by thirty-five musicians, visited the Chinese Court via Nān-Chao.[153] Thus it would seem that Nān-Chao suzerainty over the Pyu was merged after about forty years of its existence into that of China when I-mou-hsun formally declared himself and his heirs as 'subjects of China'. Whether this change in the political status of Nān-Chao left the Shan States of Burma independent or placed them

151. *Ibid.*, pp. 231-32.

152. Vide *Asam Buranji* (obtained from the family of the late Sukumar Mahanta) ed. by S.K. Bhuyan. p. 4.

153. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia* p. 121 ; *Burma*, p. 9.

under Chinese suzerainty the available records throw no light. On the other hand, for over two centuries that followed, the Shan rulers of Burma are not known to have owned any political allegiance either to China or Nān-Chao though, as among themselves, necessary political adjustments were made from time to time according to the practices of Tai polity of those days. But from the middle of the eleventh century A. D. the rapidly growing Pagan Empire[154] of the Burmese under Anawrahta (1044-77) in the central part of Burma became a strong barrier to any further extension of the Shan power to the south and west from its main centre. Anawrahta not only restrained the expansion of the Shan supremacy, but also made a number of expeditions into the Shan country endangering its independence and imposing his nominal suzerainty over some of the Shan chieftains of the eastern highlands. But there is no record to show that he completely subjugated the Shans and annexed their country. On the contrary, he had to build a line of forty-three outposts along the eastern foothills to restrain the Shans from attempting to push into the plains".[155]

The greatest event in the reign of Anawrahta is his conquest of the Mon kingdom of Thaton (old Suddhammavati in Suvannabhumi) for the Pitakas of the pure form of Buddhism. From the sixth century A. D., a comparatively dark period—a period when Hkun-Lōng of the Ahom Chronicles marching from Yün-nān conquered Eastern and Upper Burma to the time of Anawrahta Buddhism in Burma "began to be strangled by various heathen growths and to become mingled with the debased Tāntric system which is a mixture of black magic, witchcraft and Siva worship".[156]

154. Pagan or rather New Pagan was known as Pugarāma in the reign of Anawrahta minsaw (or *Mang saw* : Chief, king or ruler in the language of the Szis who have racial and linguistic affinities with the Burmans). —*G.P.Cr.*, p. 70. It is mentioned as *Pukam* in a Cham inscription of the eleventh century and as Fu-kan in *Chien han shu*. In Burma its earliest mention is, according to Hall, in an old Man inscription of 1093. Pali classical name for it is *Arimaddana*. Its ancient Indian name is *Tāmra-dvipa* 'land of copper' in Tattadeśa. The Burmese Chronicles mention A.D. 108 to be the date of its foundation with a line of forty kings who had reigned before Anawrahta. But the history of these kings is not known. In the early second century A.D., 88 A.D. according to the *Jatabon Yazawin*, Thamaddarit (Samuddharaj) is said to have founded nineteen villages at Yon-hlutkyun in the neighbourhood of Pagan, but it is significant that amongst these nineteen villages the name of Pagan does not occur. Probably the accounts of Pagan before the ninth contury A.D. were those of Old or Upper Pagan (Tagaun) (*JBRS*, vols. XII-XV. 1922-25. pp. 95-96). Hall points out that the name of the predecessor of Anawrahta is mentioned in the inscriptions to be Saw Rahan who built a Buddhist shrine on Mount Turan, some eight miles east of Pagan. Another king, named Pyanpya, is credited with the foundation of the walled city or capital called Pagan in 849.

155. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 124; *G. P. Cr.*, pp. 96-7.

156. C.E. Harvey : *JBRS*. Aug, 1919, vol. IX, p. 63.

In Pagan a degraded form of Buddhism, believed to have migrated originally from North Bengal and Nepal, prevailed under the influence of the *Ari*.[157] monks who, it is said, were thirty in number with sixty thousand disciples. Some writers are of the opinion that the *Ari* cult, which held sway in Upper Burma, was a distinct development of Tibetan Buddhism. The *Ari* were centred at Thamahti village, a few miles south-east of Pagan. The *Ari* rejected the law preached by the Lord Buddha and professed cults of their own, particularly one of Dragon (Nāga) worship in which Buddha and his Sakti wives figured. The *Ari* were bearded, grew their hair four digits long, wore robes dyed blue-black, rode horses, drank liquor and went into battle.[158] According to the law preached by the *Ari* a man might take the life of another, even of the parents, and yet evade the course of *Karma* if he simply recited the formula of deprecation, a practice characteristic of the mystic cults of tāntrism. Again from the kings and the nobles down to the common people all were under the religious obligation to send their marriageable children just before their marriage to the *Ari* teachers, the practice being called 'sending the flower of virginity'. They could not be married till they were set free early in the morning. Persons were heavily punished by the king for breaking the custom. The nature of *Ari* worship is well represented by the frescoes in the Payathonzu Pagoda at Pagan. The farmer Nyaung-u Saw Rahan, who usurped the throne of Pagan and ruled from A. D. 931 to 964, is the only name of a king before Anawrahta to be mentioned in the inscriptions. Saw Rahan set up an image of the Serpent and asked the people to bow down and worship it.[159] Apparently this king was under the influence of the *Ari*. But we know from the *Glas Palace Chronicle* that Saw Rahan was killed and his throne and three wives seized by Kunhsaw Kyaungbyu. In A. D. 986 Saw Rahan's two sons dethroned Kunhsaw and compelled him to lead the life of a monk. The elder of the two sons Kyizo then ascended the throne and ruled till A. D. 992 when, being hit by an arrow of a hunter, he lost his life in the Chindwin valley. Saw Rahan's son Sokkate by his younger wife then succeeded to the throne. Kunhsaw's son Anawrahta by the youngest wife of Saw Rahan attended on him. But a conflict

157. According to Maung-Tin "Ari" is derived from *arañña*, forest, and not from *ariya* as Charles Duroiselle and U Tin would say. The Burmese happened to pronounce the final *nn* as *i*, this *Arañña*=*ari*. The *Ari* are the *Araññabhikṣus* who worshipped neither Nat images nor images of the Buddha, but their own images with offerings of rice, curry and fermented drinks. -"The Ari of Burma and Tāntric Buddhism" in the *Archaeological Survey of India*, Annual Report 1915-16 by Duroiselle. Also Editors' Notes in *JBRS*, vol. IX, Part III, Dec. 1919, p. 155 on "Ari". They were generally *āraññika* (forest-dwellers) in their arannaka (forest-monasteries). In later periods most of them used to live in the towns and villages.

158. Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, p. 51.

159. Harvey : *JBRS*. Aug. 1919, vol. IX, Part II, p. 63.

arose between Anawrahta and Sokkate when the latter took Anawrahta's mother to wife. In a duel between them Anawrahta lanced Sokkate to death and seized the throne. He first offered the throne to his father who had become a monk, but the latter declined the offer. The Chronicle records that Anawrahta then became king in A. D. 1017 and ruled for forty-two years. But the latest researches have led to the fixing of the period of Anawrahta's reign from A. D. 1044. Anawrahta was a king of ripe perfections and when he heard and saw the wrong and lawless doings of the *Ari* he was determined to find out and enforce the true religion of the Lord in his country and suppress the false one that degraded the society.[160]

It is traditionally well known that at about this time a famous Hinayānist Mon (Talaing) monk, named Shin Arahan from the kingdom of Thaton in Lower Burma, visited the Pagan Court. His original name was Shin Dhammadassi. Anawrahta being impressed by his personality and profound knowledge of Buddhism engaged him to start missionary work in his kingdom and convert the people to the right path. Shin Arahan's preachings brought opposition from the *Ari* priesthood who lost their gains and honour. In order to put an end to the *Ari* influence Anawrahta took drastic measures and 'unfrocked the thirty *Ari* lords and their sixty thousand followers and enrolled them among his spearmen and lancers and elephant dung-sweepers'. For giving proper instruction to the people on the true doctrine he extended his patronage to the new Buddhist preacher and sought to build a library of the sacred books of Buddhism in the capital. In this enterprise he received the guidance from Shin Arahan himself, who advised him to procure copies of the Tripiṭaka ('Three Baskets of the Law')[161] of the Pali canon, from

160. *G.P.Cr.*, pp. 70-71.

161. Thaton had adopted Buddhism from Conjeveram, which in the eleventh century was dominated by Brahminism, Ceylon being then the centre of Theravāda Buddhism. According to Burmese tradition it was Buddhaghoṣa who first brought to Thaton Buddhist scriptures early in the fifth century A.D. from Ceylon. But modern scholars show that it was not from Ceylon but Conjeveram, a great South Indian centre of Hinayāna school under Dhammapāla, that Thaton received the first current of Buddhism in that century. It was from Conjeveram again that the Mons of Suvannabhumi acquired the Pallava alphabet with which they wrote their earliest inscriptions. It may be noted that during the reign of Jātakuma Śiridhammaśoka of Thaton Indian Buddhist missionaries Śonā and Uttarā visited Suvarṇabhumi which is identified by some scholars with Pegu and Moulmein. (see R.K. Mookerji's *Asoka*, Gaekwad Lectures, p. 33). According to *G.P.Cr.*, (p. 49) 'only Thaton should be understood by Suvannabhumi'.

southern Mon country of Thaton.[162] Anawrahta then despatched one of his ministers to Manuha (Manohara),[163] the king of Thaton, and possessor of thirty complete sets of Tripiṭaka, with a request to offer at least one such set. But Manuha ill-received the minister and discourteously rejected the request. At this Anawrahta marched with a large army and four generals and invaded Thaton in 1057 and occupied it. He also captured king Manuha with his family and ministers. Anawrahta then carried away to his capital the sacred relics which were kept in a jwelled casket and worshipped by a line of kings in Thaton, and also the thirty sets of Piṭakas by loading them on the thirty-two white elephants of the king. He also transferred to Pagan thirty thousand souls including men of valour, nobles of the court and the monks and also elephants, horses, artizans including forgers of cannon and masket. At Pagan a special library building, called the *Tripiṭakataik*, was constructed to house the Piṭakas.

The conquest of Thaton, the Indianized suvarṇabhumi,[164] soon proved to be of revolutionary significance to the Burmese. With the wholesale movement of the Mon population to Pagan came also their men of letters, books and scriptures. The Burmese, who had no alphabet of their own, adopted the Mon alphabet and for the first time Burmese became a written language. Pali, the language of the Tripiṭakas, was studied as a sacred language. Shin Arahan enjoyed the king's patronage and favour as the chief religious guide of the Hinayāna school. Under his direction the Mon Buddhist missionaries spread out throughout the length and breadth of the country to preach the new faith and convert the people. Yet it would be wrong to assume that the Buddhism of Pagan was unmixed in entirety. Luce, from his critical study of the

162. The tribal name "Mon" is defined by Csomo de Koros, in his Tibetan Dictionary, as a general name for the hill people between the plains of India and Tibet. The Mon-pās of the southern lower Himalayan ranges are certainly these people. '*pā* means man' or 'race'; Mon-pās means Mon people. These people are held to be connected with the Mon people of Lower Burma (Ramañña-deśa) and southern part of Central Siam (Dvāravatī) of ancient times, but it is doubtful. The Burmans, who conquered Lower Burma (Pegu and Thaton), called the Mons *Talaing* which was a term of reproach. The so-called Talaings never call themselves Talaing; they call themselves Mon. They are not to be connected with Telengana in South India.

163. Full title is 'Śiritribhuvanādityapavaradhammaraja Manuha'. He was the forty-eighth king of Thaton and lord of the thirty-two white elephants, the founder of Suvannabhumi (Thaton) being Siharajah (Siṁha Rajah). Upadeva, the sixth in descent from Siharajah, founded Suddhammavati. Jātakuma Śiridhamma-śoka was the grandson of Upadeva.

164. Mon name Thaton or correctly Htawtun has the same signification. Suvannabhumi is the Pali form.

inscriptions of Burma, points out that it 'was mixed up with Hindu Brahmanic cults, Vaiṣṇavism in particular. It was tinged with Mahāyānism, and towards the end of the dynasty at least with Tāntrism. It rested doubtless on a deep bed of Nāga and Nat worship'.[165] tis a fact that the coastal countries of the Far East came under the Indian cultural influence much earlier than the Pagan period and in this not one but many different aspects of Indian culture, particularly religious and artistic, found their way to them. Religion of Suvarṇabhumi can be said to be purely Buddhist. Vaiṣṇavism and Tāntrism of India, too, must have penetrated into that land and made their influence felt. Harvey refers to the bas-reliefs of Hindu deities in the throne room of Manuha, built by the captive king himself, in the Nānpāya shrine at Myinkaba, south of the city of Pagan showing thereby how Thaton Buddhism was influenced by Hindu art and ideals.[166] Hence there is no wonder if evidences of various Hindu Brahminic cults are found in Pagan by recent investigations. In particular, the flow of Indian cultural influence into the land of the Burmese became easy after the conquest of Thaton, which opened the way for the Burmese to develop intercourse with the Buddhist and Brahminic centres overseas as far as Ceylon and South India. It may be noted that from the seventh century onward, if not earlier, the Pyu capital Prome, to the south of Pagan, was a centre of Indian religions and culture. Records and relics as evidences of the prevalence of Buddhism of both Mahāyāna and Hinayāna schools and of Hindu Vaiṣṇavism are found in it.[167] The Pyu, who had commanded the Irrawaddy valley from Prome to Halin at one time or other in the past before their subjugation by Nān-Chao, must have left traces of their achievements and cultural features in that region. Hence it is no wonder that a mixed religion was found in Pagan in the beginning, though Hinayāna Buddhism ultimately triumphed. In this background, it may be reasonably assumed that the Tai communities of Yün-nān and Burma were already more or less acquainted with the Indian religious systems and thoughts even before their great movements in the thirteenth century

In 419 B. E. (A. D. 1057), according to the Hsen-Wi Chronicle, Anawrahta also made a journey to "the Tarop country of the kingdom of Gāndhāla", which was the kingdom of Nān-Chao in Yün-nān, to ask

165. 'Burma's Debt to Pagan' by G.H. Luce in *JBRS*, vol. XXII, p.121.

166. *History of Burma*, p. 28.

167 D. G. E. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia* (Macmillan, 1955), P. 121. There were remains of numerous stone sculptures of Viṣṇu, bronze statuettes of Avolokiteśvara and Mahāyānist Bodhisattvas at Hmawza.

the Tarop Utibwa[168] for the Lord's holy tooth[169] possessed by the latter. According to the *Glass Palace Chronicle* he marched to Gāndhāla with elephants, horses and fighting men. He had, however, to return without being able to get the real tooth, but with a friendly understanding between the two monarchs. On way back, he entered the Tai State of Möng-Mao and met Sao-Hôm-möng 'the ruler of the nine provinces of Mao'.[170]

Sao-Hôm-möng was the assumed name of the ruler, his real name being Hkun-Tum. He was the son of Sao Tao-Ngā-Run, a prince from Möng-Ri Möng-Rām[171] and a descendant of the House of Hkun-Löng and Hkun-Lai. After the death of Hkun-Lai, the ruler of Möng-Mao, the the Council of Elders in-charge appointed Hkun Tao-Ngā Rung to be the ruler of Möng-Mao with a few other States.

While at Möng-Mao Anawrahta married Sao-Höm-Möng's daughter Sao-Mon-Lā (or Saw-Mun-Hlā). The Chronicles so far available are silent about the purpose of Anawrahta's visit to Möng-Mao. It appears from circumstantial evidences that the purpose was not to conquer and annex Möng-Mao, but, after his disappointment at the Nān-Chao capital, Anawrahta probably wanted to strengthen his position by a marriage alliance with the powerful Mao-Shan Chief of Möng-Mao. For, there is nothing in the extant records to show that Sao-Hôm-Möng had ever to acknowledge the overlordship of the Pagan monarch or at any time after the marriage visited the Pagan Court, which a vassal prince would have to do.[172] Though the question of Möng-Mao's relation with Pagan may be a little controversial, it seems beyond doubt that the succeeding kings or Chaos of that country were independent rulers.

168. meaning Emperor. *Uti* is possibly the Chinese title meaning 'Emperor' and *bwa*, a form of *Hpā*, hence the word *Utibwa* refers to the king of Nān-Chao who was a Tai king. E. H. Parker is of the opinion that Anawrahta's famous visit to China in quest of the Buddha's tooth took him no further than the independent State of Nān-Chao, then called the Tayok country. (*GUBSS*, i. i, pp. 196). But it is noteworthy that the Utibwa worshipped both Buddha and Sandi.

169. According to the *Glass Palace Chronicle*. But the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* mentions 'the five relics of Buddha'.

170. *G. P. Cr.*, p. 85. As can be gathered from the records of the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* the nine provinces appear to be the following :—Möng-Mao, Möng-Nā, Sé Hpāng, Mêng-Wān, Mong-Ti, Möng-Hko, Möng-Kawn, Möng-Nām and Möng-Nö.

171. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*. *GUBSS*, 1. 1, pp. 232, 235. But N. Elias says that in the history of Möng-Mao it is recorded that Hkun Kawt Hpā's son and successor gave his daughter in marriage to the Pagan monarch, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17. If so, Hkun Kawt Hpā and Tao-Run appear to be the same person and Sao-Höm-möng was Chao-Tai-Hpā, who is said to have ascended the throne of Möng-Mao in A. D. 1050.

172. N. Elias : *Op.cit.*, p. 17.

The Mao-Shan Princess Sao-Mon-Lā enjoyed for a time special favour from the Burmese monarch and attracted particular attention of the nobles of the Court and of the common people by her charms. But the queen and the concubines apparently grew envious of her for her position and the riches of her parents' kingdom that adorned her person. They conspired to poison the superstitious mind of the king against her and, on the plea that she was a witch and wore a magic earring of evil omens, they succeeded in persuading the king to order her expulsion from Pagan. At this, she left Pagan with her attendants and belongings for her native home in Möng-Mao. But she became a legendary figure to the later generations of the people of Burma who attributed to her supernatural powers and venerated her memory as a pious and virtuous lady. It is said that on way back to Möng-Mao she built a Cave Temple called Shwezayan pagoda.[173] In it she enshrined the holy relic of the earring and placed an image five cubits in height. The pagoda was further developed by later Burmese kings.

Next Anawrahta invaded Tharekhetra (Śrikṣetra, now Hmawza in Prome) by land and water for the frontlet relic and destroyed the *zedi* built by king Dwattaboung.[174] He then seized the relic, set it on a white elephant and brought it away.

Anawrahta's religious zeal, when put to action, tremendously changed the political face of Burma. He brought under his sway a greater part of Burma proper. He crossed the Arakan Yoma and conquered northern

173. *G. P. Cr.*, pp. 84-7. In it the date mentioned is the tenth waxing of Tazaungmon in the year B. E. 416 (A. D. 1054) which is antedated by three years from Anawrahta's visit to the Tarop country.

174. The legend about Dwattabaung (or Dwot-ta-baung) is that on the death of Mahāthambawa (483-423 B.C.), the first king of the dynasty that started rule at Prome, his wife, who was in the state of pregnancy, was kept by his brother and successor Sulathambawa as his own. The lady gave birth to a son called Dwattabaung because he was begotten by the two brothers (*dwatta* is from Skt. *dvitva* meaning two). The child is said to have had three eyes from which he was also called Twattabaung. It is also said that Dwattabaung, when he succeeded Sulathambawa, 'built a town still known as Therehkettara'. The capital city of the dynasty had hitherto been Prome, but the new city of Therehkettara was founded on an extensive plain about five miles to the eastward. The ruins of the city still exist and known as Rathemyu or 'city of the hermit'. Dwattabaung had brought the frontlet relic from the Kanyan Country. He is held in deep veneration by the Burmese people and the kings of Burma claim their descent from Mahāthambawa. Chinese sources also mention that Śrikṣetra was the Pyu capital. Thus the Pyu appear to be the predecessors of the Burmese. (vide *Chronicle of the City of Tagaung* as translated by Mg. Tin and Luce in *BRSJ*, vol. IX, Part I, pp. 28-46; Phayre : *History of Burma*, pp. 10-11; Hall: *A History of South-east Asia*. p. 120; *G. P. Cr.*, p. 83).

Arakan. To the east the frontiers of his empire touched the foothills of the Shan mountains. To the south his dominions extended to Lower Burma and included the Mon country of Thaton with its outlet to the sea. Thus he founded the greatness of Pagan and politically united most of Burma. There is, however, no evidence of any wider expansion of his empire in the north owing probably to the consolidation of the Shan power in Upper Burma. Yet the frontier towns and fortresses, as named in the Burmese Chronicles, show that his empire extended to Katha and Tagaung along the valley of the Irrawaddy.[175] He built as many as forty-three towns 'to prevent mixture with the Shan Yuns, who dwelt with the Burmese kingdom of Tāmpadipa (Tāmradvipa or Pagan) and Kamboja kingdom (Tagaung) ruled by Maw kings of the Shan country of Maw'.[176]

Anawrahta had a strong desire, in making his expedition to the west, to bring the famous image of Mahāmuni to his capital from its seat in Dinnyawadi (Dhanyavatī) in the Akyab district of Arakan, but it was not fulfilled as his resources were too limited for the purpose. He is noted for his devotion to the sacred task of shreading Buddhism in Burma and for building a number of solid pagodas of which the Shwezigon was principal. It was erected over relics obtained from Prome and Ceylon.

While Anawrahta was ruling over Burma proper[177] from his capital at Pagan and expanding his domains in the south, in the north and east[178] the powerful Mao-Shans were ruling over a vast expanse of territory between the Irrawaddy and the Mekong. It may be recalled that the Möng-Ri Möng-Rām prince Hkām-Tyip-Hpā[179] of the line of Hkun-Löng, on arriving in Möng-Mao-Lung (the great country of the Maos) in A.D. 703, made Mā-Kau Möng-Lung his capital. This is the first

175. For fuller details with the names of the frontier towns and fortresses see *Glass Palace Chronicle*. pp. 96-7.

176. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

177. It is practically one great plain in the central part of Burma, the hills that exist here and there being comparatively mere undulations.

178. It is a vast tableland interspersed with rivers such as the Salween, the Sittang, the tributaries of the Irrawaddy and of the above two rivers and also the tributaries of the Mekong. This part comprising the Northern and Southern Shan States is known as the great Shan plateau and is inhabited by the Shans from early times. The area of the Shan Hills is estimated at between 40,000 and 50,000 sq. miles, and, broadly speaking, it may be said to lie between the 19th and 24th parallels of latitude and the 96th and 102nd of longitude. The shape of the area is that of a triangle, with its base on the plains of Burma and its apex on the Mekong river. (vide *GUBSS*, Part I, vol, 1, pp. 22-23).

179. Kam-sip-pha of N. Elias.

influx of Hkun-Lông's posterity into Mao-Lung. From this time onward Mā-Kau Möng-Lung rose to a premier position as a residence of the king and central seat of administration for the great Mao-Shan country and on its rise the importance of Möng-Ri Möng-Rām began to decline. The last Chao-Hpā or ruler of Hkām-Tyip-Hpā's line was Hsö-Lep-Hpā,[180] who died in A.D. 1035 without leaving any male issue to succeed to the throne. Hence a prince named Tyao-Tai-Pông[181] of the line of Hkun-Hkok-Hpā, Hkun-Lông's fourth son and ruler of Jun-Lông (or Yon Lön),[182] was then bought in and installed in that year as king of Möng-Mao-Lung. His coming marked the second influx of Hkun-Lông's posterity into that country. He was followed by his son and grand-son Tyao-Tai-Hpā (1050-62) and Tao-Lö-Lo (1062-81) as rulers of Möng-Mao-Lung, these rulers being contemporaries of the Burmese king Anawrahta of Pagan. It is pointed out by Ney Elias that Hkun-Kawt-Hpā—mentioned as Tyao-Tai-Pông and Sao Tao-Ngā-Run in other Chronicles—signalized the change in the succession by establishing a new capital at Cheilā[183] (the modern Sè Lān), on the left bank of the Shweli and immediately opposite Mā-Kau Möng-Lung. He is also said to have incorporated Bhamo with his dominions. Whether Cheila continued to be the capital of Möng-Mao during the reigns of his successors is not definitely known, but it may be assumed that either of the two places, Mā-Kau Möng-Lung or Cheila, was the capital.

The Hsen-Wi Chronicle[184] presents to us a picture of the Mao-Shan country between the Irrawaddy and the Salween as it was in A.D. 956. As mentioned above, after a period of interregnum, a batch of Möng-Ri Möng-Ram princes was invited and placed as rulers of the Cis-Salween Shan States. The appointments were made by Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām, the leader of the batch, in consultation with the Council of Elders at Möng-Tu in Hsen-Wi. Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām himself lived at Hsen-Sē, a city which he had rebuilt with his son Sao Hkun-Hkām-Hsen-Hpā making it the capital of all the Shan States, so placed under him, where State affairs were to be administered. It was a grand confederacy of States or groups of States ruled by these princes of the house of Hkun-Lông and Hkun-Lai as follows :

180 Chau-Lip-phā of N. Elias.

181. K. N. Tamuli Phukan : *Assam Buranji* (Calcutta, 1906,) p. 9. According to N. Elias Khun-Kawt- phā and as given in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* Sao Tao-Ngā-Run as noted above.

182. It is supposed to be Garnier's Möng Yong, the former capital of Keng Chong, the Cis-Mekong portion of which was later annexed to Keng Tung.

183. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 16.

184. *GUBSS*, 1. 1, pp. 232-33.

Rulers or Chao-Hpās	Territories under the rulers
1. Hkun Tao-Ao-Kwa	Möng-Nai, Keng-Hkām, Keng-Tawng and Mawkmai, as far as the Siamese borders.
2. Hkun Tao-Hseng-Hkām	Yawng-Hwe, Möng-Pawn, Hsi-Hkip, Hsa-Tung, Haw-La-Myeng, Nawng-Wawn, Lai-Sak-Sām-Kā, yān-Kung, and Möng-Pai.
3. Hkun Tao-Ngā-Run	Möng-Hao, Möng-Nā, Sehpāng, Möng-Wān, Möng-Ti, Möng-Hkè, and Möng-Kawn.
4. Hkun Hpā Wun-Ton	Möng-Ting, Möng-Ching, Kung-Mā, and Möng-Möng.
5. Hkun Tao-Lu-Lo	Möng-Hām, Möng-Yawng, and Mong-Hkāttrā.
6. Hkun Pawng-Hpā	Wing-Hao.
7. Hkun Hseng-Pawng	Möng-Kun-Kwoi and Lām-pālām.
8. Hkun Pān-Psö-Lông	Möng-Kut, Möng-Löng, and Hsum-Hsai.
9. Hkun Hkām-Hsen	Keng-Lao, Mān-Maw, Keng-Lêng, Möng-Yang, and Möng-Kawng.
10. Tao-Hkun-Wen	Möng-Yuk, Möng-Yin, Möng-Maw, Möng-Tai, and Möng-Hām.

Most of the above districts are in the present region of Northern and Southern Shan States of Burma. The above Möng-Ri Möng-Rām princes, sent by Hkun-Lu-Hkām, assumed charge of those districts in their respective States and built many towns and palaces in addition to those that were already there. By 319 B.E. (A.D. 957) two very important cities, namely, Hsen-Sē and Hsen-Wi rose to be the headquarters of two groups of towns and districts of the Shan country. Under the direct control of Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām of Hsen-Sē were placed Möng-Hsi-Paw, Möng-Hko, Möng-Lao, Lawk-Sawk, Möng-Nawng, Möng-Sang, Möng-Lön, Möng-Möng, Möng-Kung, Lai-Hka, Möng-Pêng,

Möng-Hsu, Möng-Hu and Möng-Pāt. Another group, namely, Man-Sē Mèmöng, Möng-Yaw, Möng-Htam, Möng-Yā, Möng-Ko, Möng-Wan, Möng-Kek, Möng-Si, Möng-Hkā, Ko-Kang, Möng-Paw and Mög-Lawng, was placed under the direct control of Hkun-Ai-Hawm of Möng-Tu in Hsen-Wi. Tao-Hkun-Wen of Wing-Nān-Möng-Yin managed the affairs of Möng-Yuk, Möng-Tat, Möng-Mao and Möng-Noi.

Another State of some significance was Momiet, of which the Shan name is Möng-Mit. In a Burmese work, entitled *Zabu-Oke-Saung*, the ancient name of the State is given as Möng-Mit-kup-kling-nau. Ney Elias says that the adopted Pali name was probably Thiri-Rāta (Śri Rāṣṭra). At times Möng-Mit included the whole of the country between the left bank of the Irrawaddy and Kusambi or the provinces of Möng-Mao proper, as far north as the territory of the Hkāmti Shans comprising the Sawbwaship of Bhamo. It appears from the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* that Hkun-Hkām-Hken-Hpā or Hkun-Hkām-Hsen-Hpā, the son of the Möng-Ri Möng-Rām prince Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām of Hsen-Sē, was appointed ruler of Möng-Mit Keng-Lao[185] with capital at Keng-Lao. He had three sons named Ta-Ka, Hkun-Yi-Awang and Hkun-Sām-Hsö. Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka succeeded to the throne on the death of his father and removed his capital from Keng-Lao to Sung-Ko or Singu. Hkun-Hkām-Pawng-Hpā of Kare-Wing-Hso died without issue whereupon the ministers of that State applied to Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām of Hsen-Sē for a prince. Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām then appointed his youngest son Hkun-Sām-Hsö to rule that country. Hkun-Kum,[186] who was one of the most noted rulers of the Shan States, was, according to the *Hsen-Wi-Chronicle*, descendant of Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka and ascended the throne of Möng-Mit Keng-Lao in 547 B.E. (A.D. 1185). A Shan prince, Hkun-Yi-Kwai Hkām (the Golden Baffalo Prince), is said in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* to

185. Keng-Lao appears to be Kling-nau of *Zabu-Oke-Saung* and Kup-Kling-dau or Kup-king nau or simply Kup-King of Tai-Ahom and Assamese Buranjis. (see *A. B.* p. 42, Tamuili Phukan : *Assam Buranji*, pp. 8-9; *DAB.*, p. 4. etc). The city of Keng-Lao was the capital of the two districts of Mong-Mit and Keng-Lao. Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka shifted his capital in 1069 from Keng-Lao to Singu on the east bank of the Irrawaddy.

186. Hkun-Kom (or Hkum-Kun) does not appear to be a son of Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka. He may be his descendant or relation, for, if he would have been a son Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka would have a reigning period of 117 years (1068-1185) which is normally impossible. There thus occurs a gap between the reigns of Sao Hkun-Ta-Ka and Hkun-Kom. According to N. Elias's account, which is more reliable, Sao Hkun-Kom was the son of Sao Hkun-Ming, a Möng-Mao Sawbwa, and his reigning period is 1163-1171 which nearly agrees with the Dynastic List attached to the *Deodhai Assam Buranji*. See N. Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 26.
JSS, vol. XLVI Part 2, 1958, "The Early Syam in Burma's History" by Luce. Kublai's general was Uriyangqatai . See p. 125.

be a son of Sao Hkun-Kum and a contemporary of Kublai Khan and Narathihapate (Narasinghapati) or Hsihapadi (A.D. 1254-87), the Burmese king of Pagan. But this connection appears to be absolutely fictitious, for Hkun-Yi-Kwai-Hkām must be a prince of a later period to be contemporary of Kublai Khan and Narathihapate. Sao Hkun-Kum's son was the famous Chao Tai-Pöng to whom his father gave the rule of the country Mao-Lung.

It took four years of continual fighting before Kublai Khan annexed Yün-nān in A.D. 1257. Then, having installed himself as Emperor of China in A.D. 1259, he sent envoys to all those countries, that were regarded as satellites of the Middle Kingdom, demanding their allegiance which they had been traditionally paying to the Emperor of China. In A.D. 1271 his viceroy in Yün-nān was instructed to claim from Pagan the tribute which had been paid to China by the predecessors of the Burmese king. Accordingly when envoys were sent to the Burmese king Narathihapate, the latter refused to receive the envoys and recognize the assumed overlordship of Kublai Khan. But two years later the demand was renewed and this time Kublai Khan deputed an imperial ambassdor, the First Secretary of the Board of Rites, with three colleagues to Pagan with a letter asking the Pagan king to enter into a perpetual alliance with him and threatening war if he refused to fulfil his duties. In this connection it is important to note the version of the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* which says that Hkun-Yi-Kwai-Hkām, reputed to be a son or descendant of the great Mao-Shan king Hkun-Kom, visited the Gem Palace in China with a great retinue on invitation from Emperor Kublai Khan. The latter received him with great honour and proposed that he should go as an emissary to Hsihapadi (Narathihapate), the king of Pukam Pawk Kan (Pagan), to demand the payment of the tribute of four elephants, eight viss of gold, and eighty viss of silver which his ancestors used to pay every three years or every nine years.[187] He (Mao king) then proceeded to Pagan, probably as one of the colleagues of the ambassador, accompanied by one hundred Chinese. Fifty of these stayed with him in Sung-Ko, his father's capital, and fifty went on to king Hsihapadi of Pagan. But the king of Pagan, in his reckless arrogance and against the advice of his ministers, refused to pay the tribute, put forty of the Chinamen to death,[188] and sent back the remaining ten to tell the Sao Wong-Ti (Emperor) that he was prepared for war. In this the Pagan king himself took the offensive and attacked the State of Kaungai on the Taping river between Bhamo

187. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, *op. cit.*, p. 234-35.
188. *Ibid.* But Hall says that Narathihapate seized the ambassador, his colleagues and their whole retinue, and put them to death. See *Burma*, p. 25.

and Momein, because its Chief had submitted to the Mongols. At this the Chief sought the help of the Mongols. Kublai Khan then ordered an expedition against the Burmese and at the battle of Ngasaunggyan in 1277, graphically described by Marco Polo, the Burmese with their numerical superiority were worsted. A series of Mongol campaigns under the provincial governor Nasr-uddin followed against the Burmese till a decisive battle was fought at Kaungsin in 1283 in which the Burmese were heavily defeated. The Chinese or more properly Mongol-Chinese then entered the Irrawaddy valley and Narathihapate being panic-stricken fled to Bassein in the south, for which he was called by the people Tarokpyemin 'the king who ran away from the Taroks' (Chinese). He was later (1287) put to death by his son Thihathu, the governor of Prome.

How was the Chinese army composed ? Undoubtedly it was composed of Tartar and Chinese soldiers, but that it was also reinforced by a Shan army is brought to light by the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*. The Chronicle says that 'the Emperor of China sent an army and asked for support from Sung Ko under the command of Hkun Yi Kwai Hkām. Contingents came from Sé Hpāng, Möng Hko, Möng Hkām, Möng Yang, Möng Nā, Sāntā, Möng Ti, and Möng Wan, and all the other Shan States under the chief *Sawbwa*, Sao Tai Pông, and placed themselves under the leadership of HkunYi Kwai Hkām'.[189] Here Sao Tai Pông must be distinguished from the great Mao-Lung king Chao-Tai-Pông, who ruled from A.D. 1171 or 1172 to 1188 or 1189. The Chronicle also mentions 639 B.E. (A.D. 1277) as the date of Sao Wông-Ti's declaration of war against Hsihapadi which exactly corresponds to the date of the battle of Ngasaunggyan. By 641 B.E. (A.D. 1279) the Chinese forces with the Shan army invaded Pagan and the king and his son Hsiri Kyawza fled to Pyama Möng Myen.[190] Since then the people called the king Tarokpyemin, 'the king who ran away from the Taroks (or the Chinese)'. In the following year the Shan General is said to have carried the head of Hsiri Kyawza to the Chinese Emperor, and the troops returned to their own country. The head carried was perhaps of some other son of Hsihapadi and not of Kyawzwa, who survived the bloodbath in the south in which five of his brothers perished, and later submitted to the Chinese. Though Pagan was destroyed Kyawzwa received official recognition as its ruler.

189. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit., p.* 235.

190. According to some it was Ser Marco Polo's kingdom of Mien and the Burmese histories refer to Male by it. It was perhaps Hsihapadi's immediate refuge before his flight to Bassein. The date (1279) mentioned is four years earlier than one mentioned in recent works.

Sao Hkun-Kum (A.D. 1164-72) was a powerful ruler possessing extensive territories within his domains. He ruled the States or rather districts Möng-Mit, Möng-Yang (Mohnyin), Kare-Wong-Hsö, Möng-Kung-Kwai-Lam, Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) and Mān-Maw (Bhamo), in short, he was the ruler of the northern territories of the Shan country in Burma from A.D. 1185 with his capital at Sung-Ko (present Singu) on the east bank of the Irrawaddy above Mandalay in the State of Möng-Mit, which was larger than the present district of that name.[191] In the same period Sao Tai-Pöng ruled the rest of the Shan States that lie to the south with his capital at Hsen-Sē of Mao-Lung (the great Mao country.)[192] Sao Tai-Pông's period of reign is given as A.D. 1172-89 in the *Deodhai Asam Buranji*.[193] According to the Ahom Chronicles Chao Tai-Pông (or Sao Tai-Pông) was the son of Sao Hkun-Kum. Prior to Chao Tai Pông's accession to the throne of Hsen-Sē, one Thao-Hkunrā was the ruler of Mao-Lung (Southern Shan States) but Sao Hkun-Kum forced the latter to quit Mao-Lung and live in Möng-Lum-Lung-Kaoklang from where he later retired to Mungjākāli. When the throne of Mao-Lung thus fell vacant 'Khunkum gave his son Chao-Taiplung, the rule of the country, Maolung'.[194] He ruled Southern Mao-Lung with his capital at Hsen-Sē. Consequently Sao Hkun-Kum was not only the ruler of the northern Shan States, which then extended far to the north and included Mogaung, but was also the overlord of the States under Sao Tai-Pông. During Sao Tai-Pông's reign it was found that the descendants of Sao Hkun-Ngā-Run, to whom Möng-Mao was given, had already failed and Möng-Mao was left without a ruler for some time. The minister of Möng-Mao approached Sao Tai-Pông with a request to appoint a prince of his family as the ruler of their State. Sao Tai-Pông gave them his youngest son Hkun-Hpang-Hkām, who then proceeded to Möng-Mao and assumed the rulership of the State and also built a new capital at the town of Wing-Wai.[195] At Sung-Ko, Sao Hkun-Kum was lastly succeeded by his grand son Hkun-Yi-Kwai-Hkām, but the latter died leaving no issue.[196] The ministers of Sung-Ko therefore went to Hsen-Sē to ask for a ruler and the Sawbwa Sao-Löng-Tai-Lông, the second son and successor of Sao Tai-Pông, gave them Sao Hkun-Hpo-Hsāng-Kāng to rule over Möng-Mit Sung-Ko.[197] It appears that Tai-Lông, and not

191. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, GUBSS*, 1.1, p. 233-4.
192. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit.*, p. 235.
193. *DAB.*P.215, According to N. Elias 1171-88.
194. *AB*, p. 42; *DAB*, p. 4.
195. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, p. 236. There are errors in the dates of Sao Tai-Pöng's reign and Hkun-Hpāng-Hkām's appointment as given in the Chronicle.
196. *Ibid.* p. 237.
197. *Ibid,*

Tai-Pông, was then the ruler at Hsen-Sẽ. Probably by that time the old king Tai-Pöng was dead and Tai-Lông came to the main capital.

During the reign of Chao Taiplüng (Tai-Pöng), a prince, named Chao Changneyu, son of Chao Chāngbun (or Chao Chāngmun) of the Möng-Ri Möng-Rām line of kings from Hkun-Löng, left Möng-Ri Möng-Rām with his followers and proceeded westward towards Mao-Lung. He first reached Mong-Hkā Möng-Jā (Möng-Hkā Möng-Jao) and then Möng-Pā Möng-Hkan along the route.[198] His was probably an expedition. As he entered Mao-Lung and continued to advance towards the Nām-Kiu (the Irrawaddy), Pāmeoplüng appealed to him saying "You should never cross the Namkiu. We were sent down at the same time. We tied up our hairs together. We killed cows and buffaloes and ate the meat together. We are in peace upto this time, so we must always be in friendly terms". He further strengthened this kinship by offering his sister Nāngmöng Blakhkāmsheng in marriage to Chao Chāngneyu. While at her parents' palace she gave birth to a son whom the grandfather Chao Taiplüng named Hsö-Kā-Hpā. The child was brought up by the maternal grand-mother with great care and affection.[199]

According to Tai-Ahom Chronicles Lengshām Phuchāngkhāng (or Hpö-Hsāng-Kāng) was the second son of Chao-Taiplüng (or Sao Tai-Pông.[200]) and father of Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā, and one account says that he was an adopted son,[201] Chao-Tai-Löng and Pāmeoplung (or Pā-Meo-Pông) being respectively his eldest and youngest sons.[202] This adopted son was no other than Chao Chāngneyu, who thereafter assumed the name of Phuchāngkhāng. It appears that if Sao Tai-Pông had any son above Sao Tai-Löng he must have died earlier without being made a ruler anywhere. The Tai-Ahom account further says 'Chao-Taiplüng divided his countries between his sons. He gave Tailung, the eldest, the rule of Mungjin (or Möng-Jin or Möng-Yin), Pāmeoplüng, the youngest, the rule of the country, Maolung and Phuchāngkhāng, his son-in-law, the rule of the country, Kuplingdao',[203] or according

198. *AB. p.* 43; *DAB.* pp. 4-5.
199. *AB. Ibid; DAB.* p. 5. Here Chao Chāngneyu's son is wrongly called Hsö-Hkrān-Hpā.
200. *AB.* pp. 24, 42; *DAB*, p. 215.
201. *AB.* p. 42.
202. *Ibid*, pp. 24, 42. But according to Tamuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji* Pā-Meo-Pöng was the eldest son and in N. Elias's book Fu- Sāng-Kāng- (or Hpo-Hsāng-Kāng) is shown as the younger brother of Pām-Yau-Pung (or Pā-Meo-Pöng). In Tai-Ahom texts the spellings of these names are (Hpö-Chāng-Hkāng) and(Pā-Meo-Pöng).
203. *AB.* p. 42; *DAB*, p. 4.

to the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* the State Möng-Mit and Kupling. Here the appointment of Phuchāngkhāng was made by Sao Tai-Pông himself and not by Tai-Löng as said in the Hsen-Wi Chronicle and the date of appointment was A.D. 1202 according to Ney Elias or A.D. 1204 according to the *Deodhai Asam Buranji*. It seems this arrangement was made during the life time of Hkun-Kum, the father of Sao Tai-Pông, for, while his grandsons were appointed to rule the different divisions of Sao Tai-Pông's kingdom, he was to rule another district, called Möng Hkan.[204] Sao Tai-Pông's kingdom included eight Shan States which extended over the districts of Hsen-Wi, Tung-Lao, Lai-Hkā, Keng-Hkām, Wang-Kawk, Nawng-Wawn, Hsi-Hkip, Hsā-Tung, Maw-Lā-Myeng, Mög-Nai, Möng-Him, Kung-Mā, Möng-Möng, Hsi-Paw, Möng-Kung, Keng-Tawng, Hpā-hsā-Tawng, Mawk-Mai, Yawng-Hwe, Sām-Kā, Yan-Kong, Pu-Kām, Möng-Lön, Mong-Tiang and Möng-Ching. During the reign of Sao Hkun-Tai-Lung, Möng-Nān and Möng-Yin were annexed to the State of Hsen-Sẽ.[205] The Shan country of Mao-lung thus attained to a great size in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under Hsen-Sẽ.

A comparison of the different narratives leaves little doubt about Sao Hkun-Hpāng-Hkām's family name being Pā-Meo-Pông. Some Chroniclers refer to Hkun-Hpāng-Hkām by the latter name only. By both names this prince is shown to be the youngest son of Sao Tai-Pöng. The greatest Mao-Shan monarch, Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, of the Burmese Chronicles (or Hsö-Hkām-Hpā of the Shans) and his brother General Sām-Lông-Hpā are described as the sons begotten, according to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, on Sao Hkun-Hpang-Hkām's wife by a prince, identified as so-called Yok-kā-so *nat*, and, according to the Tai-Ahom Chronicle, on Pā-Meo-Pông's wife by a Prince named Blak-Hkām-Deng,[206] said to be a descendant of Lengdon, the Lord of Heaven. A story related in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* says that Hkun-Hpang-Hkām managed to catch hold of a tiger that had killed one of the younger daughters of Sao Wông Ti of the Gem Palace in China[207] and took it himself to the latter's presence. Sao Wông-Ti, being greatly pleased, 'presented Hkun-Hpang-Hkām with a State seal and also with a passport seal, which authorized him to tax all who passed through his country, and he also conferred on Hkun-Hpang-Hkām the title of Governor of Mo Pong Hse Pong'.[208]

204. *AB*, p. 42, *DAB*, p. 4.
205. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, *op.cit.*, p. 238.
206. Yok-kā-so is a *nat*, the latter meaning a spirit or god. *Blak* flower, *Hkām* gold, *Deng* or *Neng*, canopy i.e. the prince who looked like a golden canopy-like flower. See *AB.* p. 43; *DAB*, p. 5.
207. Here the reference is almost certainly to the Chinese Governor of Yün-nān.
208. This is said to be Mu Pāng by which Hsen-Wi is known to the Chinese.

In this connection the South Hsen-Wi Chronicle says that 'nine Hsat-hte came with the seals and established nine tolls at different places in Hsen-Wi'. This means some kind of recognition, by the Möng-Mao Sawbwa, of the suzerain authority of China however nominal. Sao Wông-Ti's action also made Hkun-Hpang-Hkām Governor of the Hsen-Wi group of States originally placed under the direct control of Hkun-Ai-Hawm of Möng-Tu. Having returned from China Hkun-Hpang-Hkām also shifted his capital from Wing Wai to Nām-Paw, south of Hpang-Hkām near Sè Lan on the Nām Paw in the country of Möng-Mao. The States or districts over which Hkun-Hpang-Hkam ruled were Möng-Mao, Möng-Wān, Möng-Nā, Sān-Tā, Möng-Ti, Mong-Hām, Sé Hpāng, Möng-Kwan, Möng-Yā, and Mong Hkat-ta-rā[209] and probably a few more not mentioned in this enumeration.

Hkun-Hpang-Hkām had four daughters named Nāng-Yē-Hkām-Lông, Nāng-Yē-Hkām-Leng, Nāng-Yē-Hseng and Nāng-Ām-Aw. He was growing old, but no son was born to succeed him. He was extremely worried at this and started praying daily to the Yok-kā-so *nat* that he might have a son. One day while he was suddenly entering the chamber of his youngest queen the latter was so much discomposed that the king suspected the presence of her paramour who had just escaped from the chamber. After this a watch was set on the queen's chambers and one night the guard reported that the Yok-kā-so *nat* was with her. Hkun-Hpang-Hkām then turned the queen out of the palace. The Chronicle says that 'one day she gave birth to three sons on the banks of the Nām Paw, at the foot of a hill. They were named Hkun-Ai-Ngam-Möng, Hkun-Yi-Kang-Hkām, and Hkun-Sām-Lông'.[210] A further light is thrown on this incident by a Tai-Ahom Chronicle which says that 'in Lākni Raishingā, Blakkhāmdeng,[211] the grandson of the Lord of heaven, came down to have a bath in a river[212] and the queen of Pāmeoplung, Nāng-Nām-Āp, also went there. There Blakkhāmdeng had an intercourse with her and she became pregnant. She was putting up with her father, Thaokhenlung or Thaokhenmöng. In Lākni *Mungmut*[213] Shukhān-

209. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit.*, p. 237.
210. *Ibid.*, p. 237.
211. or Sao (Ai-mo) Hkām-Neng of Ney Elias and Tyao-Ai-mo-Hkām-Neng of Tamuli Phukan. He was a descendant of Lengdon in the line of Hkun-Su. See N. Elias, *op. cit.*, p. 17; Tamuli Phukpn, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
212. The river here is almost certainly the Nam-Paw.
213. *AB*, p. 43. *Lākni*: year, *Raishingā* (or Hai Hsa-ngā) and *Mungmut* (or *Mong Mut*) are names of consecutive years of the Aai-Ahom Sexagenary Cycle. If 1074 be taken to be the year of Hsö-Hkān-Hpān's birth according to the corresponding Hindu *Śak* (see Table: *DAB*, p. 221) or A. D. 1152 then in A. D. 1220, the date of his accession, his age would be 68 years. Again from A.D. 1127 to 1152, as shown in the Hsen-Wi Chronicle. Nāng Ye-Hkām-Leng's reigning period would be 25 years and not 16 as said in the Chronicle. Hence there are mistakes of dates, pp. 237-8.

phā the great was born'. The cause of her putting up with her father, according to the *Deodhai Asam Buranji*, was that she had been driven out by her husband at her being found pregnant.[214] Though there may be a mistake of a few years in the calculation of dates in the two Chronicles there is no doubt that the Chronicles refer to the same story.

In the meantime Pā-Meo-Pông (Sao Hkun-Hpang-Hkām) developed epilepsy and died in A.D. 1203 after reigning for seven years.[215] According to another version he suffered from mental derangement and died by cutting his own throat with a knife.[216] On his death the problem of appointment of a successor arose. According to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* Hkun-Yi-Kang-Hkām, the elder of the two surviving sons, was too young. The eldest daughter Nāng-Ye-Hkām-Lông was betrothed to a prince named Sao Wong-Kiang who lived in China. Hence Hkun-Hpang-Hkām's second daughter Nāng-Ye-Hkām-Leng was appointed ruler by the Chief Minister. But according to the Chronicle of N. Elias Pā-Meo-Pông was succeeded by Chao-Ai-Mo-Hkām-Neng, a descendant of Hkun-Su and Tamuli Phukan's Buranji says that Chao-Ai-Mö-Hkām-Neng was invited to assume the Sawbwaship of Möng-Mao by its Ministers when the throne became vacant.[217] It may be that Princes Ye-Hkām-Lông was in charge till the accession of Chao-Ai-Mö-Hkām-Neng. She left her mark by building a city, called Wing-Nām-I-Mi of Nām Paw (the Paw river). The Chronicles agree that Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and Sām-Lông-Hpā were the two distinguished sons of Chao Ai-Mö-Hkām-Neng alias Blak-Hkām-Deng. Chao Ai-Mö-Hkām-Neng ruled for ten years and was succeeded by Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, the Great, in A. D. 1220.[218] Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's brother Hkun-Sām-Lông had already been made *Sawbwa* of Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) in A.D. 1215 under his father. He then assumed the title of Sam-Lông-Hpā and founded a new line of *Sawbwas* tributary to Möng-Mao. He also built a city on the bank of the Nām-Kawng. He is a remarkable figure among the Maos and seems to have been 'one of the greatest conquerors of the history of Indo-China'.[219] Heretofore, the

214. p. 5.
215. Tamuli Phukan: *op.cit.*, pp. 8-9.
216. *AB*, p. 43; *DAB*, p. 8.
217. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit.*, p. 237; N. Elias: *op.cit.*, p. 17; Tamuli Phukan: *op. cit.*, p. 9.
218. Ney Elias: *op.cit.*, pp. 17, 27; Tamuli Phukan: *op.cit.*, p. 9. There is a considerable discrepancy in the dates given in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*. The date mentioned by N. Elias and Tamuli Phukan appears to be correct when the date and events of the foundation of the Ahom dynasty in Assam are compared with it.
219. See 'The Appearance and Historical Usage of the Terms Tai, Thai, Siamese and Lao' by Lawrence P. Briggs in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 60, Number 2, April-June 1949, p. 67.

Mao-Shans had mostly confined themselves to the valleys of the hill country of the upper Salween and the eastern tributaries of the Irrawaddy, with stray settlements which appear to have spread as far west as the Chindwin and as far south as the upper Mèping-Mènām. Under his brother as sovereign, Sām-Lông-Hpā is said to have consolidated the Shan country upto Yüng-Ch'ang, imposed his authority on the Tai settlements of the middle Mekong and the Menām, overrun part of Arakan as well as Manipur, the Hkāmti country and a part of Eastern Assam.

Hsö-Hkān-Hpā was the first Mao-Shan monarch to dream of an empire over the more or less compact region of independent and semi-independent Shan States between the Irrawaddy and the Mekong, though his successes later encouraged him to extend the frontiers of his empire beyond these limits. After he had established himself in his new fortified capital at SèRān, Hsö-Hkān-Hpā summoned Hkun-Tai-Paw of Möng-Yin, Tao-Noi-Chè of Hsen-Sē,[220] and all the rulers of the Hsen-Wi States to make their submission to him. On their refusal to submit he invaded Wing-Nān and Möng-Yin and drove out Hkun-Tai-Paw and his three sons.[221] They fled to Wing-Ta-Pok in Hsi-Paw from where they made terms with Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and gave him the Princess Nāng-Ai-Hkam-Hpawng in marriage.[222] Thus Hsen-Sē, with the Shan States under it, acknowledged his authority.

Next he turned on Möng-Mit, Keng-Lao and Sung-Ko and summoned the brothers Sao Tai-Hkon, Sao Tai-Hkai, Sao Tai-Tao, Sao Tai-Ting and Sao Hkām-Awn of these States to submit. All these princes except Sao Tai-Ting were the sons of Sao Hkun-Hpo-Hsāng-Kāng, the ruler of Möng-Mit Sung-Ko. Sao Tai-Ting (or Hkun-Ting) was the grandson of the Sawbwa Hkun-Hkām Hken-Hpā of Hsen-Sē and ruler of Kare-Wing-Hsö.[223] Instead of submitting these princes killed

220. It may be recalled that during the reign of Sao Hkun-Tai-Löng, Möng-Nān and Möng-Yin were annexed to the State of Hsen-Sê which was then the chief of all the eight Shan States as mentioned above. Sao-Löng-Tai-Löng appointed his son Sao Tai-Paw to the charge of Wing-Nān and Möng-Yin. Tao-Noi-Ché, the eldest son of Sao Tai-Paw, is mentioned as the grandson of Sao-Löng-Tai-Löng. See *Hsen Wi Chronicle. op.cit.*, p. 238.

221. The sons were Tao-Noi-Ché, Tao-Noi-Myen and Sau-Pān-Noi. *Ibid.*, p. 238.

222. *Ibid*, p. 239.

223. The Möng-Ri Möng-Rām Prince Hkun Hkām-Pawng-Hpā, who was appointed ruler of Kare-Wing-Hsö, died without issue. Then on application from the Ministers Sao Hkun-Tai-Hkām of Hsen-Sè appointed Hkun-Sām-Hsö, the youngest son of Sao Hkām-Hken-Hpā, as its ruler. Hkun-Sām-Hsö's son and successor was Hkun-Ting who then assumed the title of Sao Tai-Ting. See *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit.*, pp. 232-33, 239.

seven of Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's ten messengers sent to ask for their submission and spared three to go and report their determination to resist. Hsö-Hkān-Hpā therefore attacked them with a large army and defeated them. Sao Tai-Hkon, who refused to surrender, was executed at Sung-Ko. The others submitted and Sao Tai-Hkai was appointed Sawbwa by Hsö-Hkān-Hpā under him, first of Sung-Ko and later of Möng-Mit also.[224] Thus Möng-Mit-Keng-Lao-Sung-Ko confederacy broke down and came under Möng-Mao.

With Hsen-Wi an amicable settlement was made, by virtue of which the Sawbwa of that State accepted the vassalage of Möng-Mao and agreed to send a princess periodically to the harem of the Mao king.

Having thus dealt with the Shan States immediately to the south of Möng-Mao he prepared a powerful expedition against the Chinese in the north. The reason was probably, as recorded in the south *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, that the Chinese had made an attack on Sè Rān which, however, was repulsed by the Mao-Shans. Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā then marched at the head of his expedition against the Śē Sung-Tu[225] of China and conquered it. He then advanced to Möng Sè Löng[226] with a force of four hundred thousand men. According to Ney Elias's Chronicle Sām-Löng-Hpā was the Commander-in-chief of the Yün-nān expedition and conquered Möng-Ti (Nān- Tien), Momien (T'êng-Yüeh) and Wān-Chāng (Yüng-Ch'ang) in that region.[227] But *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* says that Sao Wông-Ti enquired as to what Hsö-Hkān-Hpā wanted and 'surrendered Mong Sè Yung, Sang Mu, and Aw Pu Kat', and this ended the war with China.[228] While the Mao king was away his ministers invaded Kung-Mā and captured the Sawbwa and put him to death at Tima. Among the countries or States which Shan legends claim acknowledged the supremacy of Möng-Mao the name of Tai-Lai is mentioned which is identified with Ta-li-fu by modern writers. If so, then Hsö Hkān- Hpā's expedition advanced upto Ta-li-fu and conquered it. Thus the whole region extending from the border of Möng-Mao to Ta-li- fu of Nān-Chao was brought under the Mao power. Scott notes that the Tai kingdom of Ta-li acknowledged allegiance to the Mao king before its fall in A. D. 1253.[229]

224. *Ibid*, p. 239.

225. Sung-tu is said to be the Tsung-tuh or Governor-General of Yün-Küei. Sè Sung-Tu is probably the capital of the Tsung-tuh.

226. This is the Shan name of Yün-nān-sen.

227. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, pp. 17-18.

228. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op. cit.*, p. 239.

229. *GUBSS*, 1. 1, p. 197. Nān-Chao of the Chinese was changed into the name Ta-li in 784 by the Shans. See *Nān-Tchao Ye-Tche*, p. 48. Also Briggs *ibid* P. 67

Returning from Ta-li Hsö-Hkān-Hpā raised another army and marched to the south. He invaded Lān-Sāng, Keng-Hsen, Keng-Hung, Keng Tung, Lā-Song. Lā-Pong. Lā-Hkong, Möng Hawng, and Hpahsa-Tawng, east of Keng-Mai (Chieng-Mai) and conquered them all, and demanded an annual tribute of twenty-four *viss* of gold, three hundred *viss* of silver, and twenty-two elephants, which their rulers agreed to pay.[230] He then marched up to the Hsip-Hsawng-Pānnā of Möng-Yön or Möng-Yün, which submitted without resistance, and then he returned to Möng-Mao but, to his grief, he found that his Chief Minister or Tao-Kang-Mön was already dead. He then appointed another noble named Hkun-Pu-Hkām in his place and gave him the title of Tao-Kang-Mön and made him Sawbwa of Möng-Tu.[231] At about that time the Sawbwa Sao Tai-Paw, son of Sao Tai-Lông, sent presents of gold and silver and asked for the hand of Nāng-Ye-Hkon [232] for his son Hkun-Sau-Pān-Noi. They were married and had a son and a daughter named respectively Noi-Hsān-Hpā and Nāng-Hôm-Möng.

Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's next objective was to conquer the western countries and hence he ordered "an army of nine hundred thousand men [233] to march against Möng Wehsāli Lông (modern Assam) under the command of his brother Hkun-Sām-Lông (Sām-Lông-Hpā) and the ministers Tao-Hsö-Hān-Kai and Tao-Hsö-Yen". According to Ney Elias Sām-Lông-Hpā led his first expedition to Manipur, over which State he successfully established his brother's supremacy, and second expedition 'to Upper Assam, where he conquered the greater portion of the territory then under the sway of the Chutya or Sutya kings'.[234] For conquering Manipur the Mao-Shan General probably advanced through the Lushai Hills and Tripura from Northern Arakan and, as pointed out by Robinson in his *Account of Assam* (p. 160), reached the capital of Cachar and captured it, and 'returning thence he descended into the Manipur valley'. In undertaking the Assam expedition he marched with a victorious army

230. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op.cit.*, p. 23. Some of these States are also mentioned in N. Elias's brief account of this campaign. But according to him it was Sām-Lông-Hpā who conquered these States.

231. Hsen-Wi.

232. She was the daughter of Sao Tai-Hkon whom Hsö-Hkān-Hpā had already defeated and executed at Şung Ko. He then carried off Sao Tai-Hkon's wife Nāng-Ām-Hkawng, with her daughter Nāng-Ye Hkong and her son Ai-Pu-Hkām to Möng-Mao and proposed to marry her, but his mother forbade it as they were cousins. He then gave her to a Paw-Möng, Tao-Kang-Mön, who was a warrior of note.—*GUBSS.* 1. 1. P. 239.

233. It is perhaps a customary way of expressing a large number by such an expression.

234. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, p. 18.

by the way of the Mali valley into Hkamti (Hkamti Long), then ruled by the Aihtun Hkāmyāng Shans who had found their way to that country from Hkaokhao Mao Lon [235] in the Shan States of Burma.[236] It was during the reign of one of their Sawbwas named Sao Hang-Nyi that Hkāmti attracted the attention of the powerful Mogaung Sawbwa who was locally known as Sao Sām-Lôn-Mung.[237] Sām-Lông-Hpā occupied Hkāmti and estabilised there the rule of the Paklongs,[238] who had accompanied him from Mogaung. From there he returned home *via* Assam and the Hukong (Hukawng) Valley.[239]

But from Hkāmti he entered the Chutiya kingdom and found that there was no king on the throne. The last Chutiya king called Lekroy died leaving four sons named respectively Burora, Maisura, Kolitā and Kossi Raja, but before the succession was fixed Sām-Lông-Hpā arrived with a Mao army. The brothers being divided among themselves offered only a feeble resistance. Burora, surnamed Buruk, was killed in the battle with the Mao-Shans ; Maisura, probably Mohishura but surnamed Maikron, fled with a number of followers to Maing-Bing which is said to be a place near the present Visvanath in the district of Darrang ; Kolitā, with a considerable force of his countrymen, also fled westward across the mountains near the Śri Lohit and established a kingdom to the north-east of Assam proper; the fourth brother, Kossi Raja, was captured by the Shans but was spared and appointed as a feudatory chief under a Tamon or Governor whom Sām-Lông-Hpā placed on the Chutiya throne and

235. *Hkao :* Transp arent, *Hkao;* bright, *Mao*: Nam-Mao, *Lông* (or Lön); great. Here two rivers are meant-Hkao-Hkao and *Nām-Mao*. The Hkao Hkao stream falls into the Nām-Mao. Thus it means the valleys of these two rivers in the neighbourhood of Möng-Mao. Péople of Chèlān (Sé Ran or Sé Lan) are said to use the water of the Hkao-Hkao.

236. 'History of Putao' by J. T. O. Barnard in *JBRS*, vol. XV, Part II, pp. 137-38. Putao is a plain district in Hkāmti Lông. This area was earlier under the rule of Tibetan princes but later occupied by the Shans. This change might have been one of the effects of Ko-lo-fèng's victory over the Tibetans. It is said there were as many as sixteen thousand villages in the plain. The local inhabitants were the people whom the Shans called Kāng, Langhkai, Nokkyo, Yoya and Tawhawng.

237. Sām-Lông-Hpā is also known by various names such as Chau-Sām-Lông (Sao Sām-Lông), Sao Sām-Lôn-Mung and Sao Sām-Lông-Hkumöng.

238. called also Tai Palong or plong. These are a section of the Tai who live mostly in the Hills of Yün-nān to the east of Möng-Mao.

239. Barnard : *ibid.*, p. 138.

then left that country.[240] Regarding this invasion of the Chutiya kingdom in Eastern Assam, a reference to which by Ney Elias has already been mentioned above, the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* States : "When they (the Shans) reached Wehsali Long, some cowherds reported the arrival of the army from Kawsampi,[241] the country of white blossoms and large leaves, and the ministers submitted without resistance and promised to make annual payment of twenty–five ponies, seven elephants, twenty-four *viss* of gold, and two hundred *viss* of silver every three years. Hkun-Sam-Lông accepted these terms and commenced his march back".[242] At that time there were three races inhabiting Eastern Assam and they were the Chutiya or Chutya, the Barahi and the Moran, the latter two being subordinate to the first, [243] and Kawsampi was the Mao country in which, we are told by Cochrane, there is still a wealth of white blossoms at the beginning of the dry season in the jungles near the Chinese-Shan town of Möng-Mao.

240. N. Elias : *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62. This account of the Chutiya kingdom is derived by N. Elias from an Assamese manuscript work found in possession of the king of Burma. In this work the first Chutiya king recorded was one Asambhinna, who, with his seven brothers, dwelt on the banks of the Śri Lohit or Brahmaputra. During his reign a Brahmin is said to have come from Banaras and converted the whole of the eight brothers to Brahminism. The king gave him his daughter in marriage. On Asambhinna's death the surviving brothers quarrelled among themselves over the question of succession, but eventually agreed to place the Brahmin on the throne. On his death a descendant of Asambhinna named Indra Deva Raja came to the throne. There were thirty-one kings of his line, the last being called Lekroy Raja. Edward T. Dalton also makes mention of an old Assamese Buranji, which he once met with purporting to be a history of the Chutiyas in which the Chutiyas are said to have entered Assam from the northern hills, crossed the Subanshiri and proceeding east established themselves at Sadiya. (See his *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 77).

241. It is an Indian Buddhistic place name applied by the Buddhists to this part of the country. Burmese officials in the Shan States thought it to be *Ko-Shan-pye*, which means 'nine Shan States', from the similarity of sounds. This group of small States lies to the east of Bhamo and mostly in the valleys of the rivers Shweli and Taping. Hallett, from Chronicles consulted by him, points out that 'the power of the Mau empire gradually extended. At first it seems to have nearly included the ten chieftainships, or muangs, of Kusambi- Mau (Mao), Ti, Wun, or Wan, La, Sanda, Sa (afterwards divided intoHo-sa and La-sa), Si-kuen, Meng Luang, or Momein, and a part of Yüng-chang'. *Op. cit.*, pp. 332-33. Kusambi or Koshampye also refers, as said above, to the region of nine Shan States (or towns) the names of which are given by Burney and Macleod as Maingmo, Tsiguen, Hotha, Latha, Mona, Tsanta, Mowun, Kaingma and Maing-Lyin or Maing-Lyi and by Hannay somewhat differently as Moong-mau, Hotha, Latha, Santa, Moongwun, Sanla, Moong-sai, Moong-la and Moong-tye or Moongti and those are the same as those in Hallett's list. Now from the above there is no doubt about the general position of Kusambi (Kawsampi). (See Yule's "Mission" p. 292, also his map in his end flap for the location of most of these States).

242. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, *op. cit.*, p. 240. One *viss* about 7 pounds weight.

243. N. Elias : *ibid.*, p. 61.

Among the countries conquered by Sām-Lông-Hpā to the west of Burma names of Kunung-Kumun (the Mishmi country) and Hkāng Sè (the Naga country) are also mentioned in Ney Elias's Chronicle and earlier he had conquered, according to Pemberton and Sir Arthur P. Phayre, Cachar and Tippera (Tripura) in addition to Manipur.[244] Pemberton's account says that having conquered Tippera, he marched back across the hills, and descended into the Manipur valley near Moirang, a village on the western bank of the Logtak lake. The fact of Sām-Lông-Hpā's visit is also recorded in the Chronicles of Manipur though there is a discrepancy in dates. It is said 'Sam-longpha, in consideration of the extreme poverty of the Muneepoor territory, remitted all tribute, and appears to have directed the adoption of certain observances in dress and diet calculated to improve the habits and manners of the people, who were evidently in the lowest stage of civilization,. All the above conquests from Manipur to Sadiya and Hkāmti-Lông were probably the achievements of one major invasion of this western region. Having completed the conquests on this side Sām-Lông-Hpā 'dispatched messengers to Möng-Maorông, to communicate the intelligence of his success to his brother Soo-Kampha (Hsö-Hkān-Hpā), and to announce his intended return'. [245] *Hsen-Wi-Chronicle* says that the two Generals, who accompanied Sām-Lông-Hpā, sent ahead messengers on their part to Hsö-Hkān-Hpā 'with a story that Hkun-Sam-Long had obtained the easy submission of Wehsali Long conspiring with the king of that place to dethrone Hsö-Hkan-Hpa'.[245] The Chronicle further says that Hsö-Hkān-Hpā believed the story and sent poisoned food to his brother which the latter ate at Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) and died. In this connection Ney Elias's account is that 'Sao Hkan Hpa, being jealous or fearful of his brother's influence, decided to put him to death, and, with this end in view, left his capital on the Shweli and proceeded to meet him at Möng Pet Hkam on the Taping river (which Elias identifies with Hentha near Old Bhamo). A great ovation was given to the successful general, but after the lapse of some time, according to the most trustworthy account, his brother succeeded in poisoning him, or, according to another account, he failed in the attempt, and Sam Long Hpa made good his escape to China'.

244. Pemberton : *The Eastern Frontier of British India* (Calcutta, 1835), p. 109; Phayre: *History of Burma* (London, 1883), pp. 12-13. For the first time Pemberton brings to our notice that the Manipuris called the Mao-Shan kingdom by the name of 'Pong, of which the city called by the Burmahs Mogaung, and by the Shans Mongmao-rong, was the capital'and further that Hsö-Hkām-Hpā succeeded to the throne of Pong. If that be so, then Pong was just the Mao-Shan empire to the east of Manipur of which Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) and Möng-Mao-Rong (or Möng-Mao-Löng) were the principal cities. The word Pong is foreign to the Shans.

245. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

About the same time Nāng-Hkān Hkām-Hsau, the wife of Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and daughter of the *Sawbwa* of Möng-Leng, lêft him owing to some quarrel and went to China, probably to Möng-Sè Yung-Song (Yüng-Ch'ang) as indicated in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* where she gave birth to a son named Ai-pu-Hkām.[246] Though the cause of the quarrel is not mentioned in the Chronicle, yet, the coincidence of events suggests that it was probably on the issue of the conspiracy to poison the king's own brother, the redoubtable general Sām-Lông-Hpā, which she could not approve. Still another account says that as a plot was afoot in the Court of the king to poison Sām-Lông-Hpā to death his mother having got scent of it gave him timely warning by a letter which led to his continuing to stay in Assam and asking his wife and children to come over from Mogaung and join him there.[247]

Though nothing definite is known about what happened to the great Mao-Shan General after his conquest of Assam, some further light is thrown by the local Garo sources of history of the time on how he settled his conquered territories of Tipām and Nāmrup in Eastern Assam. These sources say that one Riga-Diga, who was no other than Sām-Lông-Hpā himself as confirmed by the Garo account of his family history, entered Saumar Pith (Eastern Assam), marched through it and established a small kingdom in the area of Tipām-Nāmrup which adjoins the eastern Naga Hills. He had two sons and two daughters [248] who came with him. The Garo sources further reveal that he awarded Nāmrup to Jap-Jalinphā and Tipām to Sukh-Bonggiphā, probably as Governors or tributary chiefs of these two divisions of his kingdom. It is also said that Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā, the founder of the Ahom dynasty, stayed at Namrup with his brother or rather cousin Riga-Diga (Sām-Lông-Hpā) in A. D.

246. *Ibid.*, The wife of the Mao king left probably for her parents' place in Möng-Léng. Möng-Leng was probaly some Tai State in Yün-nān.

247 Pemberton: *op. cit.*, b. 110. But the version that the line of Ahom kings descended from Sam-Lông-Hpā's son Chownakhun, as said in Pemberton's Report (1835), is unacceptable in view of the clear family history of Hsö-Kā-Hpā, the founder of the Ahom dynasty.

248. D. K. Marak of Garo Hills, who recently worked in this field and from whom this corroborative piece of information, particularly that of Sām-Lông-Hpā's foundation of a small kingdom in the area of Tipām-Nāmrup prior to Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā's arrival, is received through the Department of Historical & Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati, also gives the name of the elder daughter Ringring-Bangsi who was married to Gringrang Saljapangphā and that of the younger as Khai-Noring who was married to Bugarik-Samrongchuphā. Apparently if the story can be depended upon, these are names of local tribal chiefs and even Sām-Lông-Hpā and his family members acquired tribal names by being connected with the peoples of this newly conquered land where he decided to live owing to his rupture with his brother.

1228 for a year, after which Riga-Diga handed over Nāmrup and Tipām to Hsö-Kā-Hpā as his successor and left the country or retired and died there. As to who the two chiefs, Jap-Jalinphā and Sukh-Bonggiphā, were is not clear from the Garo account. But it is well-known from Assamese Buranjis, as also from tradition, that the area fo Tipām-Nāmrup was inhabited by the Maran and Barahi tribes from ancient times and Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā, who arrived from Māo-Lung next to Sām-Lông-Hpā, found this area almost solely inhabited by these tribes. It is significant that the chiefs of these tribes- Badaucha of the Mataks (or Marans) and Thakumtha (Thao-Kum–thao ?) of the Barahis accepted Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā as their king without any resistance. It may be that the Garo account refers to these tributary chiefs under different names. These tibes must have already submitted to Sām-Lông-Hpā as a corollary to the subjugation of the Chutiyas by the latter.

It may be recalled that the Governor, appointed by Sām-Lông-Hpa to manage the administration of the Chutiya kingdom, could not continue long in his office. After five months of his rule the feudatory Kossi Raja poisoned him to death and seized power. When this news reached the Shan capital, a strong force under the command of Chao Hsö-Kā Hpā[249] was despatched to punish the subverter. The force appeared in the Chutiya kingdom after a period of six months of Kossi Raja's rule. Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā is said to be the same prince who later founded the Ahom dynasty of Assam. Kossi Raja was defeated by Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā and obliged to take refuge in Cachar and the Chutiya country was finally brought under the great Mao-Shan Empire.

After the conquests of Möng-Wehsali-Lông Hsö-Hkān- Hpā next ordered another expedition against Möng-Man (Burma) and gave its command to his two sons, Sao Sau-Pyem-Hpā and Sao Ngok-Kyo-Hpā, together with the veteran generals Tao-Hsö-Yen, Tao Hsö-Hān-Kai, and Tao-Hpā-Prao. The command was so given probably beecause of the absence of Sām-Lông-Hpā. [250] They invaded the Pagan empire (Möng-Man) from the north and first of all captured Wing-Takawng (Tagaung). The Burmese ruler of Takawng, Sao Hsihapadi, fled to Wing-Hsaching (Sagaing) and put himself under the protection of Sao Yun, who was called also Hsato-Min-Pyu. The Shan army advanced on Sagaing and Hsato-Min-Pyu fled immediately and was followed by Sao

249. Chau-kaa-pha of Ney Elias who says that he was 'the younger brother or cousin of the Mogaung Tsaubwa, but the name and event, taken together, appear to establish him as the son of Fu-Sang-Kang- of Momiet'. *Op.cit.*, p. 62.

250. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op.cit.*, p. 240.

Hsihapadi of Takaung.[251] The Shan troops then crossed the Nām-Kiu (the Irrawaddy) and took Pin-Yā capturing its ruler Nalasu (Narasu or Nareś), whom they carried off as prisoner to Möng-Mao, where he was afterwards called Mawpaming.[258] The dates in the Burmese Era are here definitely inaccurate. But the fact that the Mao-Shans annexed the northern part of the Pagan empire from Tagaung to Pin-Yā seems indisputable. It appears from contemporary Burmese history that at the time of this Mao-Shan invasion of Burma Kyaswa (1234-50) was reigning at Pagan and his grandson, Sao Hsihapadi, was Governor of the extreme northern province of Tagaung. Hsato-Min-Pyu, who was then the Governor of Sagaing, was no other than the son of Sao Hsihapadi. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* says that Sao Hsihapadi was put to death by Hsato-Min-Pyu.[253] Hall points out that when Narathihapate (or Sao Hsihapadi) returned to Prome from Bassein his last place of refuge, hoping to collect an army and mend his shattered fortunes, his son Thihathu, its governor, put him to death in 1287.[252] Thus it shows that Hsato-Min-Pyu was later appointed to be the Governor of Prome. There was a marked decline of the Burman power during Kyaswa's reign. Like his father Nantaungmya, nicknamed Htilominlo, 'he whom the umbrella designated as king', Kyaswa devoted himself more to religion leaving the direction of affairs of the kingdom mostly to his son Uzana. After his father's death Uzana reigned for a short period of four years only when he was accidentally killed in 1254 while hunting elephants. His son Narathihapate (Skr. Narasinghapati, 1254-87), a typical oriental despot, by his foolish policy, brought about the destruction of the once great Pagan Empire.

The extent of the Mao-Shan Empire under Hsö-Hkān-Hpā is indicated by the countries and places conquered and brought under it during his rule. Such countries and places are mentioned by Ney Elias as given below :-[255]

(1) Möng-Mit, comprising seven möngs, namely, Bhamo, Molai,[256] Möng-Löng, Ong-Pawng-Hsipaw,[257] Hsum-Hsai, Sung-Ko (Singu), Tagaung.

251. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
252. or Mao-pye-min. *Ibid.*, He does not seem to be the grandson of Kyawswa of Pagan who ruled at Pin-Yā during 1324-43 according to the dates of the Chronicle.
253. *Ibid.*, Hsato-Min-Pyu means the Governor of the Pyu. At Sagaing he was Sao Yun. After his flight from Sagaing he was probably made the Governor of the Pyu province of Prome.
254. Hall : *Burma*, p. 26.
255. Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 19; also reproduced in *GUBSS*, 1.1,1 p. 222.
256. Scott says that this suggests the Mole river, or it may be Mong-Lai.
257. According to Scott these are the same places.

(2) Möng-Kawng (Mogaung), comprising ninety-nine Möngs, among which the following were the most important :- Möng-Löng (Assam), Kahse (Manipur), part of Arakan, the Yaw country, Kale, Hsawng-Hsup, Möng-Kong Möng-Yawng, Möng-Hkawn (in the Hukawng Valley), Sankring or Singka-ling-Hkāmti, Möng-Li (Hkāmti-Löng), Möng-Yang (Mohnyin), Mot-Shö-Bo (Shwebo), Kunung-Kumun (the Mishmi country), Hkāng-Sè (the Naga country), etc.

(3) Hsen-Wi comprising forty-nine *möngs*.
(4) Möng-Nai.
(5) Küng-Mā.
(6) Keng-Hsen, the present Siamese province of Chieng-Hsen on the Mekong.
(7) Lān-Sāng (or Lān Chāng, the Burmese Linzin).[258]
(8) Pagan.
(9) Yôn (Chiengmai and neighbouring States).
(10) Keng-Löng, probably Keng-Hung, the XII Pānnā, called by the Chinese Ch'eli.
(11) Keng-Lawng, said to be the country north of Ayuthia, where there are many ruined capitals.
(12) Möng-Lem.
(13) Tai-Lai, possibly Ta-li Fu.
(14) Wān-Chāng (Yüng-Ch'ang in Yün-nān).
(15) The Palaung country Tawng-Peng-Loi-Löng.
(16) Sang-hpo (Sing-pho or the Kachin country).
(17) The Karen country.
(18) Lawaik. | not easily identified.
(19) Lapyit. | not easily identified.
(20) Lamu | not easily identified.
(21) Lāhkeng (or Rākheng or Rākhaing which means Arakan, probably that portion not under Mogaung).
(22) Lang-Sap, not identified.
(23) Ayuthia (Siam).[260]
(24) Htawe (Tavoy).
(25) Yunsaleng.[261]

258. It is said to be a principality which had at different periods Wing-Chān (Vien-Chān) and Luang-Prābāng for its capital : the Chinese Lan-tsiang.
259. Probably only the northern territories of the Pagan empire.
260. Probably the northern portion of it only.
261. Chaliang or Jalieng, later Sawankalok immediately to the north of Sukhot'ai. It was founded by Prince P'rohm of Chieng-Sen immediately after A.D. 857. See Wood : *History of Siam*, p. 50; also Hallett : *op.cit.*, p. 334.

In the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā is said to have obtained the submission of the following States and received tributes[262] from them to the end of his days :

'Möng Sè-Yung, Hsang Mu-kwa Hsi-pa Tu-hso,[263] Möng Hkön, Meung-Yawn, Kawi-Yotara hpa-hsa Tawng, Labon, Lakawn, Lang-Sang,[264] Wang-Kawk, Mawk-Mai, Hsip -Hsawng-pānnā, Keng-Hung, Chieng-Hai, Chieng-Hsen, Chieng-mai, Pai-ko (Pegu), Pang-Yā (Pin-Yā Eng-wā (Ava),[265] Hsa-Tung, Yan-kong, Maw-Lamyeng, besides Hsa-ching (Sagaing), and Wehsali-Lông (Assam).

Thus the two lists of conquered territories are in agreement with one another except a few unidentified areas. Such extensive conquests may be thought to be somewhat exaggerated, and, in fact, the Mao authority on many of them may have been nominal, but there is no doubt about their solid historical basis. "The territory actually governed by Möng Mao", says Briggs, "was probably not greatly increased; but during the early part of the thirteenth century its armies probably raided all these regions and exacted some form of submission from their rulers".[266] The conquests of western Yün-nān right upto Ta-li (Tai-Lai) show that the rulers of the Twan dynasty of Nān-Chao were made tributary to Möng-Mao for a period however short it may be. These conquests also brought under the Mao rule the peoples of that region known by various names, such as the Gold Teeth, the Bai-i, the P'o, the O-ch'ang, the P'iao, the Hsieh, the Ch'u-lo, the Pi-su and others. Of these the Pai-i and the P'o were Tai who came from the north and the most of the rest went back from the south and settled in Yün-nān when the Twan royal family, who ruled from A.D. 1097 to 1253 at Ta-li, assumed power. Holt S. Hallett in his "Historical Sketch of the Shans" supports, from his independent investigation, the fact that in the thirteenth century the Mao rulers extended their dominions far and wide, including a part, if not all, of the modern Siam (Thailand). Briggs points out that the reputed Tai-Yai raids into the Menām valley, then part of the Khmer Empire, correspond well with the unrest which followed the death of Jayavarman VII which Coedès thinks occurred in A.D. 1218 or 1219.[267]

262. See *op.cit.*, p. 241.
263. the Chinese T'u-ssu ?
264. the Chinese Lan-tsiang; said to be Wing-Chān (Vienchān) or Luang-Prābāng, whichever was for the time the dominant State of the Laos. Luang-Prābāng has outlasted Wing-Chān as capital.
265. Āvā is a corruption of Eng-Wā or In-Wā meaning 'the entrance to the lake'. See Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 135.
266. Briggs : *JAOS*, vol.69, No. 2, 1949, p.67.
267. *Ibid.*

It may be noted that the traditional boundary between the States of Möng-Mao and Hsen-Wi was the Nām-Mao (the Shweli river) [268] and according to *Nan-Tchao ye-tche*, the western boundary of Nān-Chao (the Carajan of Marco Polo), which means probably the kingdom of Nān- Chao proper, under king I-mou-hsün in A.D. 786, was T'ai chè, whose capital of the same name was located on the Têng-Yüeh-Mien (Têng-Yüeh-Burma) route, ten days below- Têng-Yüeh.[269]

The ancient dwellers in the tract of country, south-west of Ta-li, were known to the Chinese, from the T'ang dynasty onwards, as the "Gold Teeth".[270] Luce says that Fan Ch'o, the author of the *Man-shu* (A.D. 863), describes them as 'miscellaneous tribes of Yung-Ch'ang and K'ai-nān. The Gold Teeth barbarians use carved plates of gold to cover their front teeth. When they have business and go out to interview people, they use these as an adornment. When they eat, they remove them'.[271] The Gold Teeth are believed to be original Austric-speaking peoples, such as the Palaungs and the Lawas who occupied the whole north of Burma. But in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. proto-Burmans migrated from the north to the plains of Kyaukse in Burma across Western Yün-nān and the Northern Shan States. In the course of that migration these people occupied, as the *Man-shu* shows, much of the T'êng-Yüeh-Yung- Ch'ang area. Under the pressure of the Burmans and of the Shans the Austric speaking Lawas quitted those areas and took refuge on the hills east of the Salween. When the Burmans of T'êng-Yüeh-Yung-Ch'ang area later migrated to the plains of Burma the Pai-i (Tai) took possession of it. During the Mongol conquest of Yün-nān the Pai-i ("White clothes" or "White Barbarians") massed on the Burma border between the Salween and the Irrawaddy. But the term "Gold Teeth" continued to be used as the name of the T'êng-Yüeh-Yung-Ch'ang area.[272] Möng-Mao, the central seat of the Mao-Shans, was now the head of all the Shan States from Ta-li to the Brahmaputra valley and from the Tibetan borders to Tavoy, enclosing within these limits a vast territory. The kingdom of Möng-Mao was the Kin Chi, "Gold Teeth", of the Chinese annals, the Zerdandan of Marco Polo,[273]

268. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op.cit*, p. 243.
269. Nan-Tchao ye-tche, 56-61, 67, note ; also *JAOS*, vol. 69, No.2, 1949, p.67.
270. "The Early Syam in Burma History" by Luce in *JSS*, vol. XLVI, Part I, 1958, p. 127.
271. *Ibid*, p. 127.
272. *Ibid*, p. 128.
273. *The book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, concerning the kingdom and marvels of the East*, translated and edited, with notes by Col. Sir Henry Yule, 2. 84-106 (Cordier edition, 2 vols.; New York, 1903).

which, the annals of the Mongol dynasty says, had not been conquered by China.[274] Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā later removed his capital from Sè-Ran[275] to a place called Tā Hsup-u about three miles north of the Nām-Mao (the Shweli). He built his capital at this place at the instance, it is said, of a Chinese fortune-teller who had predicted this new site to be a gold and silver field, the object being to have the capital transferred to the Chinese side of the river Shweli at a place vulnerable to Chinese attack. Accoreding to Ney Elias's version, the Chinese sent down a party of one hundred and thirty mules loaded with silver and this silver was scattered about among trees which surrounded the site of Tā Hsup-u, the present Möng-Mao. From the extant records nothing is known of the consequences of such removal of the Mao capital. The great king Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, who consolidated the Shan power on a wider scale than ever before, reigned until A.D. 1250.[276]

He was succeeded by Sao Pem-Hpā, who assumed the title of Sao Hsö-Pem-Hpā.[277] He ruled, according to the Chronicle of N. Elias, for thirty-two years.[278] If this is true, then, during the reign of this Mao-Shan monarch the Burmese fought against the Monogls in the plain of Vochang (the battle of Ngasaunggyan of the Burmese history) in A.D. 1277 probably by violating the torritory of Möng-Mao. It was thouhgt expedient by the Möng-Mao king not to resist the powerful Mongols when their emissaries and armies sought permission to pass through the territory of his kingdom to Burma. Hence Möng-Mao ramained unassailed by the Mongols while Pagan was destroyed by them. On the other hand, being encouraged by the authorities of the new Mongol Province of Yün-nān the Shans overran all Burma and seized the opportunity to establish their domination over that country.

The Mongols organized northern ano central Burma, which they had conquered, into two provinces, of which the northern was called Chieng-

274. *JAOS*, vol. 69, No.2. 1949, p. 67; also Edouard Huber, 'La fin de la dynastic de Pagan', *BEFE-O*, 1909, 633-80, esp. 666.

275. or modern Sé Lan on the south bank of the Shweli. Sè Lan is close to the frontier of China and is about 13 miles east of Nām-Hkām. Sè Lan stands on the highest point of an irregular four-sided plateau, which rises to height of 200 or 300 feet above the valley level and is about a square mile in area. The plateau is completely surrounded by an entrenched ditch, which is in many places 40 to 50 feet deep. It was undoubtedly an old Shan capital built by Hkun-Kwat-Hpā-in 1035 when it was called Cheila. See *GUBSS*, *op.cit.*, pp. 195, 221, 239.

276. According to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* he reigned for 53 years and died at the age of seventy-three in 1205. The period and the dates of his reign here must be wrong when related to other events of the time.

277. Chau-Pin-phā of Ney Elias.

278. only two years according to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, *op.cit.*, p. 241.

mien and the southern Mien-chung. The conquest of the area that constituted the northern province was completed by A.D. 1283, when the Mongols had taken Tagaung and made it the head-quarters of this province. It may be remembered that Tagaung (Wing-Takawng of the Shans, also variously called T'ai-kung or Takon) had been earlier conquered by the Mao-Shans under Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā of Möng Mao but after Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's death Narathihapate (Narathiha-pade), who had been once driven out from Tagaung by the invading Mao Shans, on ascending the throne of Pagan, invaded and reoccupied this lost territory and raided the Yün-nān frontier, only to be swept back again in A.D. 1283 by the Tartar forces under Nasr-uddin, the Viceroy of Yün-nān, who, this time, made Tagaung the chief seat of government of the newly created northern province of Chieng-mien in Burma. As said above, the Burmese king Narathihapate fled south to the Delta, earning his new name Tarokpyemin or Tarukpliy, only, in A.D. 1287 to be 'seized and imprisoned' as quoted by Luce from Chinese records, by his concubine's son, Pu-su-su-ku-li (Pu-su=Prome, Su-ku-li=Headman, Chief) at the place Hsi-li-ch'ich-ta-la (Śri Kṣetra, Old Prome) and poisoned to death. Later in A.D. 1287 Prince Ye-su Timur, Kublai Khan's grandson, invaded, Pagan and occupied it and the Shans and the Mons completed its ruin. Ye-su Timur then compelled the provinces under Pagan to submit to the Mongol authorities. He reduced this central part of Burma into another province, Mien-chung, of the Mongol empire and made Pagan its capital.[279] But these arrengements were upset by the Shans after two or three years.

There was a Shan colony at Myinsaing in the rich district of Kyauksè. This colony is known to have been existing from before A.D. 1260. This was possibly the only important Shan area in the territory of the Pagan empire. The real Shan country was the highland to the east of Kyauksè. Hall points out that it was customary for Burmese kings to assign lands in this area to the regiments of the army, and he thinks that the colony may have been formed by a Shan mercenary force employed by Pagan.[280] The Chronicles relate that a Shan chief from the hills took refuge at Myinsaing in 1260 and sent his three sons to king Narathihapate's Court for education. When Pagan was overwhelmed by the Mongol invasions these 'Three Shan Brothers' made themselves masters of three principalities, all in the Kyauksé area. Athinkaya (Asankhaya), the eldest, became Chief of Myinsaing; Yazathinkyan (Rajasankrām), the second, Chief of Mekkaya; and Thihathu (Singhasu), the youngest, Chief of

279. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, (London, 1955), p. 132.

280. Hall : *ibid.*, p.133.

Pinle,[281] The Pai-i or Great Shans (the Tai-Yai) of the China border were non-Buddhist. They are commonly called *ditthi Syam* (doitya Syam ?), meaning Shan heretics in later inscriptions. The Tai-Ahoms of Assam belong to this group. But the Shan rulers of Kyauksè, says Luce, were 'every bit as Buddhist as the Burmans'.[282] The northern Shans are said to have left no inscriptions, but those of Kyauksè left many written in Burmese, not Shan. The Buddhist Shans of Kyauksè were more or less in secret league with the Buddhist Tai or Pa-pai-hsi-fu kingdom (Chieng-mai).

Kyawswa (or Klawowa), the sole survivor and son of Narathihapate, returned to Pagan in A.D. 1289. He submitted to the Mongols and was allowed by the latter to rule as their vassal. He thus lost the traditional prestige of the Pagan monarchs. The old kingdom was no more. The northern part of the empire was lost to the Mongols, and Kyauksè, the old home and the richest rice-land of the Burmans on which Pagan's economic strength lay, went into the possession of the Shan brothers during the five years of interregnum from A.D. 1284 to 1289. In the south, a Mon leader of Pegu named Tarabya, with the assistance of Wareru, a Shan (Tai) adventurer from Sukhot'ai (Sukhodaya) in northern Siam, ousted the Burmese rule from the region south of Prome and Toungoo. When Kyawswa succeeded his father at Pagan he had to confirm the three Shan brothers in the possession of their respective principalities. These Shan chiefs are also said to have dedicated a pagoda in their area. Their control over Kyauksè gave them control over the food supplies to Pagan. They used this economic stranglehold to throw off their allegiance to the Burmese suzerain. Further, the A-pa tribe (northern Shans west of the Irrawaddy) had rebelled. At this Kyawswa tried to call in Mongol military aid against the rebels and the three Shan brothers. The rebels indignantly said : 'He calls in an army from China to kill, plunder and enslave us'. They fortified a town and were prepared to resist and retaliate. The Shan brothers, Singhasu and Rajasankrām,

281. Hall : *ibid.*, p.133. The names of the 'three Shan brothers' are given by Phayre as A-theng-kha-ya, Ra-dza-theng-gyan and Thi-ha-thu Ta-tsi-sheng. These brothers of the Shan race usurped authority and governed with equal power for 14 years from 660 B.E. or A.D. 1298, (*Vide* his *History of Burma*, No. 4 List of kings of Burma of Shan Race who succeeded the Pagan kings, and reigned at Myin-Saing and Pan-Ya).

282. Luce in *JSS*, XLVI, 2, Nor. 1958, p. 151. He also cites an instance that in 1375 A.D. *Kankasu* headman of *Khanmwan* on the Sagaing Monywa border compares the victory of king *Tryaphya* of Ava over the *ditthi Syam* to Dutthagamani's victory over the Cola Klan Heretic Etara, at Anuradhapura, Ceylon, in 101 B.C. (List 6828, 736s.). This is, as pointed out by Luce, repeated in *Caw Nanta's* inscriptions of 1383 (List 713a7, 744s) and 1392 (List 761a9, 754s.).

made common cause with the rebels. They attacked Mi-li-fu (Myedu) in the north of Shwebo district) and Pang-chia-lang on the east bank of the Upper Mu. Asankhaya, who was sent to stop them, failed and was captured. But in the fifth month (June 10th-July 9th, 1298), a controversial date, the three Shan brothers returned with a powerful force and entered Pagan. They arrested the king, his eldest son Singhapati and two younger sons and imprisoned them all for eleven months in Myin Saing, east of Kyanksè, while Tson-Nieh (Sawh-Nit), 'a bastard son of the king sixteen years old' was placed on the throne of Pagan as a puppet-king. 'Ever since you submitted to China', they told Kyawswa, 'you have not ceased to load us with shames'.[287] They put the king and also probably two of his sons to death on May 10, 1299. At Pagan, the three Shan brothers were called *Sambyan*, the old Mon title for a senior minister. Their names generally appear together in Pagan inscriptions. They are also known to be the generals, and equals, of the Pagan king. These Shan brothers also sacked the city of Pagan and burnt it and massacred all the Chinese found in it.[284] "The Chinese sack", remarks Hall, "in 1287 ha been terrible, but the Shan destruction in 1299 was decisive".[285] After thi Mien-chung's existence as a Mongol province became untenable. Whe this state of things was reported the Yün-nān government despatched a punitive force in 1300 against the Shan brothers. On January 25th, 1301, the Mongol force, with a small Pai-i levy, reached Myinsaing and laid siege to it. But the Shan brothers, from their strong fortifications at Myinsaing, so successfully beat off all attacks that the Mongol commander preferred to retire in April, 1301 by accepting a rich bribe, with the consequence that he had to face death penalty at the hands of the Yün-nān authorities for such conduct.[286] The Mongols,

283. Luce : *Ibid.*, p. 156.

284. In the *Glass Palace Chronicle* this tragedy of Pagan is attributed to the the treachery of Queen Saw who is said to have been in collusion with the Shan brothers. It was perhaps to eliminate the Mongol-Chinese overlordship with the help of the Shan brothers against the fears and obstruction of the weak king, rather than to eliminate the king himself as some writers believe. This may be inferred from the fact that the Shan brothers permitted Kyawswa's son Sawhnit to succeed to the Pagan throne instead of seizing it for themselves, whatever may Chronicles say about the queen.

285. Hall : *Burma.*, p.29. Kublai Khan died in 1294, at the ripe age of eighty. His successors were weak and incompetent. There were as many as eight such monarchs, some with too short a tenure of office, between the death of Kublai Khan and the accession of the last Mongol emperor in 1333, a period of about forty years. These were the years of religious and political wars and gradual dissolution of the Mongol empire into separate kingdoms.

286. A fairly detailed account of the activities of the Shan brothers in subjugating Pagan and driving out tne Mongols from Burma is given by G.H. Luce from-*YuanShih* in *JSS*, XLVI, 2, 1958, pp. 150-64.

while retreating, were harassed by the Gold Teeth meaning now the Pai-i. This was the last of the Mongol invasions against Pagan. Evidently the Shan successes made the continuance of the province of Mien-chung so difficult and costly that the Mongol authorities had ultimately to abandon it. Two years after this, that is, on April 4th, 1303 the Emperor abolished Chieng-mien province, which was then evacuated by the Mongols. This put the Shans in such a strong position that thenceforward they rapidly extended their power. Later inscriptions attribute the final expulsion of the Mongols from Upper Burma to Thihathu and describe him as 'Tarok Kan Mingyi', 'the king who defeated the Chinese'.[287] After having accomplished their triumph, 'Burma and the Shan brothers were tactful and assiduous in softening the blow'. They sent envoys to China from time to time and offered elephants and and other products as tributes. The resistance of the northern Shans to Mongol aggressions was no less effective than that of the Shan brothers, but the former had to deal with a troubled border for a long time after their victory. In 1312 Thihathu, the sole survivor of the Shan brothers, established his capital at Pin-Ya, not far from Pinle. But soon there arose a family quarrel, in consequence of which one of his sons crossed the Irrawaddy and founded on the north bank another principality with its capital at Sagaing. The withdrawal of the Mongols from Upper Burma and decline of their power in Yün-nān encouraged also the Shans in the far off north in Burma to assert their power aiming at founding an independent kingdom with Chè-Lān (Sè-Lān) as its capital.

Shan Domination in Lower Burma : Rise of Wareru Dynasty :

While Pagan was grappling with the Mongols in a life and death struggle, in her southern dominions equally serious trouble developed, which were destined to eliminate Burmese rule from them. The people of Pegu had become restive under foreign rule. The effete government of Tarokpyemin lost its control over the Burmese officers in that province. These officers, many of whom married into the Mon (Talaing) families, determined to establish an independent government for Pegu. The first open act of rebellion against the Burmese king was that of a Burmese officer, named Ahkamwun, who was connected by marriage with a Mon family. By his influence he enlisted the support of the people, took possession of the ancient capital Hansawadi (Hamsawatī or Pegu), defeated an army that was sent against him, and proclaimed himself king

287. *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 134.

of Pegu.[288] But soon he made himself extremely unpopular by his tyrannical rule and, after a brief period of two years, was put to death by his brother-in-law Lenggya, who himself was killed by another relation who was installed as king under the title of Tarabya.

About the same time there was a disturbance in the country of Muttama (or Mohtama in Siamese, now Martaban) caused by a local political movement to establish its independence. Martaban formed a part of the Burmese dominions in the south ever since the time of Anawrahta and was under a Burmese Governor. Many Shans from Zimmè (Chieng-mai) and other adjoining States had come to this country and made their settlement in it. A Shan merchant named Magadu,[289] born at Donwun in the district of Thaton, rose to prominence by acquiring wealth and authority. He went to the neighbouring Tai kingdom of Sukhotai in the middle Menam region and entered the service of king Ram Kāmhaeng, or "Rama the Brave" (1283-C.1317), who was pleased to raise him from an initial humble job to the post of captain of the guard to the king in appreciation of his merits. He became a great favourite of the Siamese king, to whom he also presented a white elephant which he had possessed. This is said to be the first Siamese white elephant of which history makes mention.[290] It is said that the Shan brothers of Pin-Ya (or Panya) had endeavoured by war to obtain the elephant, but had been defeated by Wareru. Once when King Ram Kāmhaeng was absent on a campaign against Cambodia, Magadu eloped with one of his daughters in A.D. 1281 and escaped to Martaban, where he had previously resided as a trader. Martaban was then under a Burmese Governor, named Alienma, who had been placed to this post by Ram Kāmhaeng. Previous to this, Alienma was the Governor of Martaban under the king of Burma, Tarokpyemin; but for disobeying

288. Phayre : *op.cit.*, p. 64.

289. The story of Magadu is recorded in the Mon history of the famous Rajadirit (Rajadhiraj). It was translated into Thai from a Mon manuscript in the Thai National Library. The date 1231 A.D., when Wareru became king of Martaban, does not coincide with the dates referred to above. As the story of Magadu was translated from Mon, he is popularly believed to be a Mon merchant. He entered the service of king Ruang (Ram Kāmhaeng) as a minor officer tending the king's elephants. One day when the king was inspecting the royal elephants in the elephant-shed he saw a *cowry* lying on the ground which was given to Magadu. Later when the king paid a second visit to the elephant-shed Magadu presented him with a quantity of fine vegetables. The vegetables were grown by him out of a few seeds which he had got in exchange for the *cowrie*. The king was so pleased with him that he was raised to a higher post and in a few days he became a favourite of the king. -(Phya Anuman Rajadhon's personal Note to the writer). This part of Magadu's career is comparable to that of Momai Tamuli Barbarua of Assam history.

290. Wood : *A History of Siam*, p. 54.

certain orders of the king he was turned out by the Burmese. He then sought political asylum under King Ram Kāmhaeng to whom he also took an oath of fealty. Ram Kāmhaeng thereupon restored him to power at Martaban and the Burmese Government at Pagan, being seriously disorganized and confused at that time could not interfere with it. But Magadu raised a rebellion against Alienma and murdered him and seized the post of Governor at Martaban. He then became the ruler of the country and later assumed the title of King Wareru of Martaban.[291]

In the meantime, the king of Pagan sent an army to recover Pegu. The Burmese army encamped at Dala fortifying the place with stockades. Tarabya, not feeling strong enough to attack the post alone, applied to Wareru for assistance which the latter gave, and the allied army advanced by land and water against Dala and forced the Burmese to retire within their own frontier. The two kings, with their armies, then came down the river and encamped to the south of the city of Pegu. Here a difference arose between the two kings and a battle was fought. Tarabya was defeated and fled and Wareru at once took possession of the capital (Pegu). Tarabya was soon afterwards captured with the aid of some villagers and taken to Martaban where he was put to death for entering into a conspiracy. Thus Wareru annexed the province of Pegu to Martaban and proclaimed himself king of both the provinces, with the city of Martaban as capital. In order to strengthen his position he submitted to his old patron, King Ram Kāmhaeng, as his overlord, and in A.D. 1286 the Siamese king conferred upon him the title of Chao Fa Rua, called Wareru in Burmese Chronicles. Hall points out that this did not prevent him from obtaining recognition of China also. He virtually ruled as an independent sovereign. Wareru, for the rest of his reign, was free from any foreign attack. Later in A.D. 1296, after a regular reign of nearly ten years, he was assassinated at his palace by two sons of Tarabya, whose lives he had spared. They then took refuge in a monastery, but were discovered and put to death. Wareru was succeeded, possibly after an interregnum, by his brother Hkun-Law (1306 ? - 1310), who had recognition from the Siamese king.[292] Wareru's death was followed by a period of internal troubles and succession disputes, but the weaknesses of the neighbouring kingdoms saved the situation until, after a number of successors, there came to the throne of Martaban a strong king in the person of Binnya U (1353-85). During

291. Phayre : *op.cit.*, pp. 64-5; Wood; *op.cit.*, pp. 54-5; Hall: *A History of South-east Asia.*, pp. 132, 140-41.
292. Phayre : *ibid.*; Wood : *ibid* ; Hall : *ibid.*

his reign the ruler of Chiengmai attacked his kingdom and the Chiengmai forces burnt Taikkola, Sittaung and Donwun, but were driven off in A.D. 1356. In A.D. 1363, during the reign of Rama T'ibodi (Ramadhipati) in Ayuthia, the Siamese made a powerful invasion of Martaban forcing Binnya U to retreat to Donwun, to which city he had to temporarily transfer his capital. The Siamese also attacked the provinces of Moulmein and Tenasserim and established their sway over them. Under Thai pressure from Ayuthia Binnya U, in A.D. 1369, finally established his capital at Pegu, which remained the capital of the Mon kingdom until Tabin-shweti destroyed its independence in A.D. 1539. Wareru and his descendants and relations ruled over the Mon country for two hundred and fifty two years (1287-1539).

Wareru's kingdom of Martaban, which included Thaton and Pegu, extended from the neighbourhood of Prome and Toungoo in the north to Mergui in the south. Earlier, in A.D. 1287 Wareru had come into clash with Meng-Rai, the powerful Chief of Chiengsen of north Siam, over the frontiers of their respective realms, but in the end he presented one of his daughters to Meng-Rai together with a town on the river Me-Nam as a dowry and the matter was peacefully settled.[293] His monumental work was in the field of law and jurisprudence. He engaged the learned monks of his kingdom to compile a digest of the Laws of Manu preserved in the writings of earlier scholars of which there were collections in Mon monasteries. These laws had been brought to lower Burma by Hindu colonists. The law-book so compiled is known as the *Wagaru Dhammathāt* (*Dharma-Śāstra*) and is the earliest one in Burma still extant.

Last Rulers of Pagan Dynasty :

At Pagan, Sawhnit, a son of Kyawswa, was permitted to succeed to the throne after his father by the powerful Shan brothers. He was annointed king with great publicity. Pagan Sathingu inscription says that in the summer of A. D. 1299 'when the king appeared in full audience, in the glorious Presence of the future Buddha Siri Tribhavanādittyapavaradhammaraja' the chief witnesses were 'the great *Sampeyan* Asankhaya, the *Sampyan* Rajasankram, the *Sampyan* Sinkasu,' etc. This shows the dominant position of the Shan brothers at Pagan. Sawhnit was just a nominal king and ruled from A. D. 1299 to 1325. He was succeeded by

293. Reginald Le May : *The Culture of South-East Asia* (George Allen and Unwin, 1954), pp.168-9.

his son Uzana (1325-69), the last of the Anawrahta dynasty. Uzana, according to Phayre, was a son of Kyawswa, the deposed king of Pagan and ruled from B. E. 684 (A. D. 1322), a date earlier by a few years, for twenty years only. Further, Phayre points out that Uzana was adopted by Thihathu, the youngest of the Shan brothers.[294] This appears to be correct as he succeeded Thihathu at Pin-Ya. In the Dynastic lists of Hall, Uzana of the Pagan dynasty was the fourteenth and last ruler and was the son of Sawhnit. In the list fo rulers of Myinsaing and Pinya, Uzana is shown by Hall to be 'son of Kyawswa of Pagan' who succeeded Thihathu of Pin-Ya- in A. D. 1324 and ruled upto A. D. 1343, which substantially agrees with the reigning period of Uzana as shown by Phayre. If the list and dates are correct in the above then there were two contemporary rulers of the same name, one of Pagan and son of Sawhnit and the other of Pin-Ya and son of Kyawawa. Here a confusion occurs. The truth seems to be that Uzana (Uccanā) succeeded Sawhnit at Pagan,, but, after a short period, left Pagan and succeeded Thihathu at Pinya the capital of Myinsaing-Pin-Ya kingdom.

Mao-Shan Pressure on Central Burma :

At Pin-Ya, Uzana was succeeded by his half-brother, Ngashishin in A.D. 1343. On the death of Ngashishin in A.D. 1350, his son, Kyaw Swange ascended the throne. In A. D. 1359 he was succeeded by his brother Narathu. It may be remembered that as a result of a family quarrel in the house of Thihathu of PinYa, his son, Sawyun, founded a principality of his own on the northern side of the Irrawaddy with Sagaing as its capital in A.D. 1315. Since then there were protracted quarrels between the Shan rulers of Sagaing and Pin-Ya, which became so bitter that Narathu of Pin-Ya, in A. D. 1364, invited the Mao-Shans from the north to intervene and punish Sagaing, which was then ruled by Minbyauk Thihapate (1352-64), the seventh and last ruler of that State and brother-in law of the sixth ruler, Tarabyange, who was himselt a younger son of Sawyun.[295] The Mao-Shans readily responded to the call and swept down on Sagaing driving the population berore them. The easy stampede by which the Mao-Shans ended tor good the Sagaing rule, also tempted

294. Phayre : *History of Burma*, No. 4-List of Kings of Burma etc.

295. Cochrane refers to a short paragraph in the history of the Chinese Ming dynasty (which succeeded the Mongol dynasty in 1368), which says that 'the Mongols appointed Comforters of Panya and other places in 1338, but withdrew them in 1342.' If this is so, then Uzana (1324-43) was then the ruler of Pin-Ya (Pinya). Cochrane comments that this means 'both the Panya and Sagaing Houses accepted Mongol vassal titles for a short period'. This part of the history calls for further investigation· (See Cochrane : *ibid., op.cit.*, p.24.)

them to sack Pin-Ya itself. 'The Mao-Shan from Mo-gaung', says Colonel Phayre, 'carried war into the Panya dominions, and carried off the king (1364)'. Hkun-Tao-Hpā (1361-81), a descendant of Hsö Hkām-Hpā (Noi-SānHpā), was then the ruler of Mogaung. When thus Sagaing became deserted and had to be abandoned owing to its easy vulnerability to attacks from the north, a Shan chieftain of Pinya Thado-minbya, a descendant of the founder of Sagaing, set up a new capital at Āvā in A. D. 1365 on the south bank at the confluence of the Myitnge and the Irrawaddy and built it on the pattern of the Burmese capital Pagan, It was given the classical Pali name of Ratanapura, 'city of gems'. In order to conciliate the Burmese national sentiment he traced his descent from the legendary kings of Tagaung and used Burmese to write inscriptions. He then started a campaign to reduce to submission the country of the Burmese. The Burmese districts to the southwards of Pagan, as yet unaffected by Shan inroads, were, in the meantime, in revolt. He therefore proceeded to subjugate them in A. D. 1368, but died of small-pox while campaigning at Sagu.[296] Mingyi Swasawke (1368-1401),[297] who succeeded him as the next real ruler of the kingdom of Āvā through a palace intrigue, thought it expedient to claim his descent from the Pagan royal family. He was a contemporary of Chao-Ti-Lŏng (1346-96) of Möng-Mao, and Hkun-Tao-Hpā (1361-81) and Chao Hung-Hpā (1381-1411) of Mo-gaung in the north, and king Binnya (1353-85) and Rajadarit or Rajadirit (1385-1423) of Pegu in the south. He had the ambition to conquer the valley of the Irrawaddy right down to the sea and also to annex the Mon country of lower Burma. He therefore adopted a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of the Shan States of upper Burma and refused to intervene when war broke out in A. D. 1371 between the States of Kale in the upper Chindwis valley and Mohnyin. But he was kept engaged in the early part of his reign, particularly from A. D. 1373 to 1383, by the Mao-Shans of Mohnyin (Möng-Yang of the Shans) who made a series of attacks on the kingdom of Āvā. These attacks, started with a powerful raid on the town of Myedu in the Shwebo district in A. D. 1373, were continued during a period of transition when there was a rapid decline of the Mongol rule and the Mings, who succeeded, were yet to stabilize their power. The king of Āvā, being hard pressed by the Mao Shans, appealed to the Ming viceroy of Yün-nān for help. To the Mings also the growing power of the Mao-Shans proved equally menacing. Hence Mingyi Swasawke was accorded

296. Sagu is north-west of the town of Minbu on the west bank of the Irrawaddy and south of Pagan.

297. In between Thadominbya and Swasawke the name of a usurper, Nga Nu, is mentioned in the dynastic list, but nothing in detail is known about him.

official recognition by China as 'Governor' of Āvā, thus placing him under Chinese protection, and, in conformity with this policy, the Ming viceroy asked the Sawbwa of Mohnyin to desist from any further act of aggression against Āvā. This action had effect and peace returned to Āvā for a period. In A. D. 1393 the peace was again broken when the Mohnyin Shans took the offensive and penetrated to Sagaing. But they were heavily defeated by Thilawa, the Chief of Yamethin and brother in-law of mingyi Swasawke. This major reverse discouraged the neighbouring Shan States to attempt any further invasions of Āvā for a number of years.

Occupation of Arakan :

Mingyi Swasawke extended his sway over Arakan. In A. D. 1374 he placed one of his uncles on the throne of this country. On the death of his uncle in A. D. 1381, he sent his son to succeed him. But the Arakanese soon drove out this prince and raided the Pakokku district. At this, Mingyi Swasawke, in A. D. 1404, sent a powerful expedition which defeated the Arakanese and recaptured the capital. The reigning Arakanese king Narameikhla fled to Bengal where he was hospitably received by king Ahmed Shah of Gaur. His son sought refuge in the Mon country. This time the king of Āvā placed a son-in-law on the throne of Arakan, but the latter was killed by the Arakanese prince, son of Narameikhla, who attacked him with a Mon force. As expected, another punitive expedition from Burma arrived in Arakan and a series of campaigns kept both sides engaged until the exiled king Narameikhla appeared on the scene with a force from Bengal under the command of Wali Shah. But Wali Shah, instead of helping the king, treacherously held him as a prisoner by siding with a disloyal Arakanese chieftain. The king, however, managed to escape again to Bengal and, with the help of another force, placed at his disposal by Ahmed Shah's successor, Nazir Shah, regained the throne of Arakan in A. D. 1430 and ruled as a vassal of Gauḍ for the rest of his life. In A. D. 1433 he built a new capital called Mrauk-u in Arakanese and Mrohaung in Burmese in the Akyab district and this city was regarded as an eastern Venice in those days. During the period of vassalage of Narameikhla and his successor, Islamic influence became so predominant in Arakan that, though the rulers of that kingdom were Buddhists, they did not hesitate to adopt Muslim titles and issue medallions bearing the *Kalima*.

298. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, pp. 136—7, 330; His. *Bûrma*, pp. 57-8.

Domestic Trouble of Pegu :

On the death of Binnya U, the ruler of Pegu, his son Rajadarit (or Rajadirit) ascended the throne in A. D. 1385. But his uncle conspired to capture the throne and applied to Mingyi Swasawke for support, and, in return, agreed to rule as a vassal of Āvā. Mingyi Swasawke saw in this domestic trouble of Pegu an opportunity to bring the Mon country to his subjection. He responded readily and his forces marched to the south, took Prome and invaded Pegu, but could not, even by repeated attempts, break the stubborn resistance of the Mons to capture it. It is while referring to these forces that the Mon Chronicles mention contingents of Shans descending from the northern highlands. It appeared to Harvey as a war of Shan migration to the south, but it was essentially a war waged by the Burmese to establish their supremacy over the rich Mon country, an ambition long cherished by the Burmese kings. Rajadarit was a shrewd politician and a capable ruler. He had to deal with ever-increasing Burmese pressure, which rose to a climax during the period from A. D. 1413 to 1415. In face of this great danger, Rajadarit formed an alliance with the Arakanese and also instigated the northern Shan chiefs to attack Āvā. In the meantime, by way of intervention in a renewed feud between the Shan *Sawbwas* of Mohnyin and Kale, king Minhkaung of Āvā sent a force in A. D. 1406 under 'Nolota' (Nawrahta), his 'Senior Comforter' (Wungyi), who robbed the land and killed the *Swabwa* of Mohnyin and his son.[299] The Chinese Emperor, who had vested the king of Āvā with the status of 'Governor', as mentioned above, severely reprimanded Minhkaung for the attack on Mohnyin and the latter 'withdrew his troops and sent a propitiatory embassy'. But the attack was so devastating that the Shan State was ruined and its *Sawbwaship* extinguished. Mohnyin was without a *Sawbwa* until A. D. 1416. As a reprisal the *Sawbwa* of the State of Hsen-Wi raided the Āvā villages in A. D. 1413 and 'sent some of the prisoners to Peking'.[300] But the Burmese defeated him at Wetwin, a few miles to the north-east of Maymyo and forced him to retire. At the instigation of Rajadarit, the Hsen-Wi *Sawbwa* again raided the territory of Āvā in A. D. 1414 and there was a simultaneous attack on Myedu launched by the Shan Chiefs of Mawke and Mawdon. Though they were temporarily driven off, in the following year the latter two Chiefs attacked the Burmese with renewed vigour and threatened the capital city of Āvā. This was exactly the time when the Burmese campaign in the delta, under the

299. Hall relates this attack on Mohnyin from the Chinese account. See *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 137.
300. *Ibid.*

command of Minrekyawswa[301] was on the point of winning a decisive victory over the Mons, only the cities of Pegu and Martaban being left to Rajadarit. But at this crucial moment Minrekyawswa had to hurry back with his force to the defence of Ãvā against the Shans. In A. D. 1417 this prince was killed while engaged in another campaign in lower Burma. Owing to a mounting threat from the Shan aggressions in the north the Ãvā rulers had to give up the conquest of the Mon country in the south. Thus Rajadarit's policy ultimately saved his kingdom from the Burmese danger.

The Mao-Shans Struggle with the Chinese :

Though the Tai were supplanted by the Mongols as rulers at Ta-li in A. D. 1253, yet the Mao-Shans, who had consolidated their position to the south-west with their central seat in Möng-Mao, did not give up the dream of reviving the old Nān-Chao empire. It may be recalled that on the death of the great king Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā in 1250 his son Sao Hsö-Pem-Hpā (or Chau-Pin-hpā) ascended the throne of the kingdom of Möng-Mao, and about this Ney Elias's account in the Table of Sawbwas is supported by the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, the dates only differing. Sao Hsö-Pem-Hpā was succeeded by his son, Hkun-Tai-Pem-Hpā of *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* (or Tai Peng Hpā or Chau Kām-hpā of Ney Elias) who assumed the title of Sao Hsö-Wan-Hpā. During the reigns of these two successors of Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā the capital of Möng-Mao remained at Sè Lān,[302] but their dominions in Yün-nān were annexed by the Mongols. Sao Hsö-Wan-Hpā was a tyrant and was put to death by his people for his cruelty and oppression.[303] In Ney Elias's Table his period of reign is recorded to be three years only. Hkun-Ngok-Chyo-Hpā was then brought from Möng Ang-wa(Āvā) and installed as *Sawbwa* of Möng-Mao under the title of Sao Hsö-Sung-Hpā, but died insane in about six months' time. But, according to N.Elias's Chronicle, Chau-Wak-phā was the son and successor of Tai-Peng-Hpā (or Hkun-Tai-Pem-Hpā) and ruled for thirty years (1285-1315). He founded a new capital called Möng-Mao after the name of the country on the site of the present town of Möng-Mao. This is the last change of capital of Möng-Mao recorded in the old accounts. Most probably Chau-Wak-phā succeeded Hkun-Ngok-Chyo-Hpā instead of Tai-Peng-Hpā (or Sao Hsö-Wan-Hpā). That there was a period of interregnum after this is recorded both by Ney

301. He was the son of Minhkaung by a Mao-Shan princess.
302. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 20.
303. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle, op.cit.*, p. 241.

Elias and in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*. According to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, for want of a prince, the country was administered by the three Ministers, Tao-Hsö-Yen, Tao-Hpā-Prao and Tao-Hsö-Hān-Kai, while, at the same time, a search was made for a descendant of Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā. A deputation proceeded to China, to which country Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's queen had gone while in a state of pregnancy. It reached Möng Sè Yung-song (probably Yung-Ch'ang) and learnt that the queen was dead, but had left a son named Hkun-Pu-Hkam. It contacted the prince and offered the *Sawbwa* ship of Möng Mao, but the latter refused it. He, however, suggested the name of his son, Hkun-Pu-Kaw,[304] and hence the grandson of Hsö-Hkān-Hpā in the direct line, for that throne. Hkun-Pu-Kaw was accordingly elected king, and on his accession he assumed the name of Sao Hsö-Hôm-Hpā. He made his royal residence at Wing-Tā-Hsup-U (the modern Möng-Mao). In the following year he summoned all the tributary chiefs under Möng-Mao to pay their usual homage, but they refused to come. So he despatched an army under the command of his ministers to compel them to submit. The army overcame the States of Man-Maw (Bhamo),[305] Möng-Yang (Mohnyin), Möng-Hkong (Mogaung ?), Möng-Kung-Kwai, Lampalam and Kare-Wong-Hsö and established the authority of Möng-Mao over them. A garrison under Tao-Hpā-Prao was posted at Möng-Yang and another under Tai-Hsö-Han-Kai at Möng-Hkong. But Hsö-Hôm-Hpā was hated for his dissolute character and was driven out from the kingdom by his minister Tao-Hpā-Prao for seducing his wife. In this the *Sawbwa* Tao-Kang-Möng, of Möng-Tu, helped him with a force and himself marched on Wing-Tā-Hsup-U. Hsö-Hôm-Hpā fled to Mông-Nān in Möng Sè (Yün-nān) and put himself under the protection of Sao Wong-Ti. Tao-Kang Möng appointed his son Sao Hsö-Yep-Hpā to be *Sawbwa* of Möng-Mao. The Emperor despatched a force under the command of the General Wang-Song-ping to reinstate Hsö-Hôm-Hpā in Möng-Mao. The General not only reinstated Hsö-Hôm-Hpā, but also proceeded, probably at the instance of the latter, against Möng-Tu, the capital of Tao-Kang-Möng. Tao-Kang-Möng offered to submit and made a present of elephants, gold and silver, which was accepted but shortly

304. Hkun Ai-Puk or Ai-Puk of N. Elias.
305. *Man-mo* or *Wan-mo* (*Wan* : village, *mo* : earthen cooking pot), meaning village of pots or pot-makers' village. Buddhistical name is Champānagara ; Chinese *Sin-Kieh* (new street), pronounced *Sin-gai* in the dialect of Western Yün-nān, so named when the village was first transferred from its former site on the Tapeng near where that stream issues from the Kachyen hills.

afterwards Sao Hsö-Hôm-Hpā with a party of Chinese soldiers surprised him and put him to death[306]. This appears to have occurred at Möng-Tu in Hsen-Wi. Sao Hsö-Yep-Hpās's temporary rule in Möng-Mao ended with the arrival of the Chinese force. Hsö-Hôm-Hpā became ruler again in 641 B. E. (A. D. 1279), a date nearly half a century earlier, when compared with the dynastic list provided by Ney Elias. The Chinese inroad into Hsen-Wi caused the deceased Sawbwa's son, Sao Hkun-Hkam-Tep-Hpā, to flee with his men to Man Kang in Möng-Kyit. As the Chinese pursued him, he further retreated to Keng-Pa in Keng-Tawng. But at this place he organized a force and attacked the Chinese and drove them back to Möng-Tu where a fighting took place. The Chinese asked for reinforcements and Sao Wong-Ti sent them, but when he was informed that the Nam-Mao (the Shweli) was the boundary between the States of Möng-Mao and Hsen-Wi and the Chinese went beyond the limits of Möng-Mao he ordered the hostilities to be stopped and recalled the General Wang Song-ping to China. Sao Hkun-Tep Hpā then returned to Hsen-Wi and, in view of further risks of attack from the northern neighbour, removed his capital from the city of Hsen-Wi[307] to Loi-Sang-Möng, and later to Loi-Löng-Pawng-Nang and lastly to Wing-Ta-Puk in Hsi-Paw. Here he built a large town and 'assumed authority over all the Shan States'; including Hsip-Hsawng-Panna and others in the south.[308] From this account it appears that Hsen-Wi and Hsi-Paw were under his *Sawbwaship* and also a number of other States south of Möng-Mao acknowledged his authority, whereas Möng-Mao's authority extended northwards over another group of States.

In A. D. 1368 the imperial capital of the Mongol emperors, Cambaluc (Khan baligh), fell into the hands of Chu Yuan-chang, usually known as Hung Wu, the founder of the Ming[309] dynasty. The incompetent Mongol ruler fled northward and Chu Yuan-chang was proclaimed Emperor. Sporadic resistance of the Mongols came to an end when by the end of A.D. 1382 Yün-nān had succumbed. It is of importance to know how the Shans were affected by it. Parker points out from Chinese Annals

306. At one place in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* it is said without coherence—'By the advice of the Song-Tu, Sao Hsö-Hôm-Hpā told his story to Nawrahta and was referred to the Emperor of China'. There is a confusion here as Narwahta's (Anawrahta's) visit was more than two centuries earlier and was not to the Court of the Emperor of China, but to that of Nān-Chao.

307. also called Möng-Tu by the Shan being in the valley of the Nam-Tu (river Tu of the Shans and Myit-nge of the Burmese).

308. *Hsen-Wi Chornicle* : *op.cit.*, p. 243.

309. *Hing* means 'brilliant' or 'glorious'.

that during Kublai Khan's reign all the Shan States between Manipur and Annam were at least nominally subject to the Mongol authority. After the conquest of Ta-li Kublai Khan ended the rule of the Twan family there, but put the king's Ministers in charge with the title of *Ssuan-fu-shih* or Pacificator and asked them to conquer the neighbouring tribes. Among the early Pacificators or Conciliators were those of Luhch'wan, which included the *Sawbwaships* of the present Lung-Ch'wan and Möng-Mao, and Kan-ngai or Kan-ngeh, both under the Mongol Military Governor of Kin-Ch'ih (Zardandan). But with the fall of the Mongol power the Shan States became once more free. The Ming rulers, for the first time, came into clash with the Mao-Shans, in trying to control the trade routes to the Irrawaddy valley across the Mao-Shan country of Upper Burma and extreme south-west of Yün-nān. With the decline of the Mongol power the control over these routes was gradually lost to the Shans, who came to dominate over Upper Burma and forced the Mongols to withdraw their authority over their provinces in it. The first attempt to regain control over the Mao-Shan territory by a Mongol-Chinese army from Mithila (Yün-nān) was made in the fifth year (A. D. 1343) of Sao-Ki-Hpā's[310] reign at Möng-Mao. The army, however, withdrew after reconnoitring in the area. The next Chinese invasion of major importance took place in 1393 during the rule of the Ming dynasty. But Sao-Ki-Hpā's son Tai-Löng (1346-96), who was then ruling over Möng-Mao-Lung, repulsed the Chinese with heavy losses. Tai-Löng ruled for fifty years (1346-96). He was succeeded by his son Tao-Loi or Sao Tit-Hpā. In A. D. 1411 he visited Möng-Hkè (Yün-nān-sen), the capital of Mithila (Yün-nān), with his son Sao Ngan-Hpā or Sungam-phā (Szjen-fah of Parker) either on invitation or for a certain consultation with the Chinese Viceroy. It is related in Ney Elias's Chronicle that 'he was given a cup of spirit to drink, which so completely intoxicated him that the Emperor (in all probability the viceroy), at the instigation of a minister named Maw Pi, obtained from him the royal seal and thus rendered his country tributary'. All that may be derived from this story is that Möng-Mao became tributary to China as a result of the interview. It is also said that Sao Tit-Hpā returned to Möng-Mao two years after this event. The cause of this unusual delay remains unaccounted for in the Chronicle. The Chronicle further relates that in the next year (1414) 'a party of 130 mules came down from China. Each mule was loaded with silver cut into small pieces, and on arriving in the neighbourhood of the capital, those in charge led them into the bamboo jungle that surrounded the city, and scattered the silver among the trees. The party then

310. real name being Tai-Pong.

returned to China, and the inhabitants of Möng-Mao cut down the jungle in order to find the silver'.[311] But according to the *Hsen-Wi-Chronicle* 'gold and silver fields' were already there in that area during the time of Sao Hsö-Hkān-Hpā (1220-50) and a notorious Chinese fortune-teller persuaded the king to remove his capital from Sè Lan to Ta Hsup-U (Möng-Mao) on the north bank of the Nām-Mao. Either the same version is repeated wrongly or the Chinese applied the same stratagem twice; on one occasion to get the capital transferred to the northern bank of the river, and on another to get the protective forests cleared for easy attack with cavalry.

In the year 1415 Sao Tit-Hpā died and was succeeded by his son Sao Ngan-Hpā.[313] The rise and fall of this Mao-Shan Chief produced a great effect on the fortunes of the Shan States of Burma Burmese accounts relate the tragic end of this popular and enterprising monarch. With the assistance of his two brothers, Sao Hsi-Hpā and Sao Hung-Hpā, he subjugated the Shan States to the east and south-east of his country and then, elated by success , marched on and conquered Tai-Lai- or Ta-li. The date of this event, according to Cochrane, is A.D. 1413 which is earlier by a number of years. According to Parker the whole story of Sao Ngan-Hpā's conquests and fall 'belong to the period 1432-1450'. At Ta-li he collected a large army from the contingents supplied by the subjugated Shan States and decided to conquer the whole of Yün-nān and revive the old Nān-Chao empire. He then marched with his army to invade the Chinese capital Möng-Sé (Yün-nān-sen) in 1441. Under the walls of the capital he was met by the Ming General, Wang-Chi, [315] the President of the Board of War, with a strong force. In the fight that took place Sao Ngan-Hpā was defeated and had to fall back first on Tai-Lai and afterwards on Wan-Chang (Yung-Ch'ang).[316] Being unable to hold his ground he retired into his own country Möng-Mao. Vast numbers of inhabitants of the Shan States that helped him against the Chinese preferred to follow him, rather than submit to Chinese vengeance. At Möng-Mao his army broke up and fled with the civil population

311. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 21.

312. Sau-jen-fa of the Chinese and Thonganbwa of the Burmese. He is mentioned as Soognampha by Pemberton and as Chau-Ngan-pha by Ney Elias, but his accession is antedated by a century by Pemberton.

313. Yangchangsoo of Pemberton. See his *The Eastern Frontier of British India* (Calcutta, 1835), p.112. With reference to the context Yangchangsoo cannot be Wang-Song-ping or Wang-Chung-ping who reinstated Hsö-Hôm-Hpā earlier at Wing-Ta-Hsup-U. Also E.H. Parker's *Burma with special reference to her relations with China* as quoted in *GUBSS*, *op.cit.*, p.270.

314. Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, pp.21-22; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p.138.

in various directions, most of them entering Mohnyin, Hsen-Wi and Ayuthia. In this great debacle he, accompanied by his brother Sao Hsi-Hpā, escaped first to Mohnyin and then to Kale and at last to Āvā and sought an asylum there. The Chinese under the command of Wang-Chi captured Möng-Mao-Rung (Möng-Mao-Lung), offered Sao Ngan-Hpā's lands to whoever succeeded in capturing him, and then followed the fugitive king to Mohnyin which State he also conquered. He then proceeded to invade Burmese territory when the Burmese king Narapati (1443-69) refused to surrender the Mao Chief who took refuge at his capital at Āvā. In 1445 a battle was fought with the Burmese near Tagaung in which, according to the *Hmannan Yazdwin*, the Chinese general was killed and the army defeated with heavy casualties. Next year the Chinese reappeared in greater strength, marched towards Āvā and encamped before the walls of the city. They pressed their demand for the surrender of the fugitive Mao king. [315] The Burmese king promised to hand over the Mao king if only the Chinese force helped him to subdue a rebellion at Yamethin and capture the rebel leader Min-Nge-Kyaw-Dwin. This the Chinese commander did by despatching a body of soldiers under him, who subdued the rebellion and brought the rebel leader to Āvā. In face of this situation Sao Ngan-Hpā, instead of allowing himself to be surrendered to the enemy, committed suicide by taking poison. The Chinese commander simply received his dead body which was then dried up in the sun and carried to Yün-nān. This event is mentioned in both Chinese and Burmese history.[316] In confirmation of this part of history Hall refers to an inscription at the Tupayon Pagoda, erected by Narapati at Sagaing, which relates how Thongenbwa (Sao Ngan-Hpā) fleeing before Wang Chi to Mohnyin and Kale, was captured by the Burmese and presented to their king on the day of his coronation which took place in 1443.[317]

The account furnished by Capt. R. Boileau Pemberton from an ancient Shan Chronicle found in Manipur, referring to Soognampha's reign, says that about the year 1332 (a mistake of about a hundred years) 'some disagreements originating in the misconduct of four pampered favourites of the Pong King,[318] led to collision between the frontier

315. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, pp. 138-39.

316. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 22 : Milne and Cochrane : *op.cit.*, p. 25.

317. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

318. Mao-Shān king of Möng-Mao. *Pong* or *Bong* and *Wong*, meaning 'Great King' or 'Emperor', appear to be simply phonetic variants of the same original word. It does not seem to refer to the country but to the king, hence Pong kingdom means the kingdom of the Pong. Manipuris referred to the great Mao-Shan empire as Pong empire or kingdom. It is not a Shan term and hence unknown in their ter-

villages of his territory, and those of Yunan'. As a result an interview was held between the king of Pong and Chow-Wong-Ti at the town of Möng-si which was situated at a distance of five days' journey eastwards from Möng-Mao-Röng, the capital of Pong. The misunderstanding between the two countries was removed by the Mao king by executing the offenders.[319] "The Chinese, however", adds Pemberton, "probably, now conscious of their superior power, determined on subjugating the Pong dominions (Mao-Shan dominions), and after a protracted struggle of two years' duration, the capital of Mögaung or Möngmaoröng was captured by a Chinese army, under the command of a general called Yangchangsoo, and the king Soognamphā, with his eldest son, Sookeepha, fled to the king of Pagan or Āvā, for protection. They were demanded by the Chinese general, to whom the Burmese surrendered them, and were carried into China, from whence they never returned'.[320] This is undoubtedly the same episode as that of Sao Ngan-Hpā, narrated in the account of Ney Elias. In this connection we must constantly remember the warning given by Parker that 'the Manipur Chronicle is exactly a century wrong and the whole story belongs to the period 1432-1450. Hall points out two reasons why the Chinese attacked the Mao country, namely, the Mings wanted trade routes through it to the Irrawaddy and the ambitious Mao-Shan chieftain, Sao Ngan-Hpā, was attempting to revive the old Nān-Chao empire as said above.[321] The Chinese aggression probably led to Shan unity and their initial victory which threatened Yün-nān-sen. But in the later phase of the protracted campaign Sao Ngan-Hpā had to retreat against Chinese counter-attack and ultimately take refuge at Āvā. The retreat appears to have been steady and according to plan upto the border of Möng-Mao and then precipitate when his army began to break up and the civil population became panic-stricken.

The queen of Sao Ngan-Hpā, with her two remaining sons and a third born after her flight from the capital, sought a refuge among the Hkamtis on the north, probably in the upper Chindwin Shan State of

minology. Had it been a country the Shans would have been familiar with it. In Shan Pong is Chao-Löng. *Wong* appears to be Chinese, *Wong* meaning the head of the State. When the Shans refer to the Wong or Wong-Ti they prefix it by Shan Chao or Sao. George Scott says that the kingdom of the Mao-Shans is the same as the kingdom of Hsen-Sé Man-Sé and the kingdom of Pong. The kingdom of the Pong is sometimes referred to by the name of the capital or capitals of the Pong. (See Latourette : *op.cit.*, p. 40; *GUBSS*, *op.cit.*, pp. 255, 270.)

319. Pemberton : *op.cit.*, p. 111.

320. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

321. Parker as quoted in *GUBSS*, 1.1, p.270; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p.138.

Hkamti. She returned at the expiration of two years, that is about A.D. 1445, and established a town called Möng-Kawng [322] on the bank of the Nām-Kawng, a western tributary of the Upper Irrawaddy to the north of Möng-Mao. The second son of the exiled king ruled the State of Möng-Kawng for three years. He was succeeded by his next younger brother who ruled for twenty-eight years. On his death the youngest brother, named Hsö-Oop-Hpā, ascended the throne in A.D. 1363, a date earlier by more than a century. He was determined to avenge the treachery of the Burmese, who had surrendered his father and brother to the Chinese general Yangchangsoo. He therefore invaded the Burmese country and laid siege to their capital of Zukaing (Sagaing) on the northern bank of the Irrawaddy and succeeded in capturing and destroying it. Pemberton refers to a very unexpected confirmation of this event in the Appendix of Mr. Crawfurd's *Embassy to Āvā*, where, in the Burmese Chronological table, obtained during his residence in that country, the destruction of Chitkaing or Zakaing (Sagaing) and Pemya (Pin-Ya) is mentioned as having been effected in the year 1364, a date which, in the above context, appears to be more than a century earlier. Pemberton further adds that Major Burney also discovered the same circumstance recorded in the sixth volume of *Maha Yazawin*, or great history of Āvā, where the destruction of both cities is said to have been effected by the Shan king Thokyenbwa.[323] In this reference there is a confusion; for, in A.D. 1364 there was actually a Mao-Shan invasion of Sagaing and Pin-Ya and it is not mentioned from which State the Mao-Shans came. Since Hkun-Tao-Hpā (1361-81) was the ruler of Mogaung at the time, Thokyenbwa (or Hsö-Kyen-Hpā) must have been a ruler of some other State. If Thokyenbwa was the ruler of Möng-Mao, then Tai-Löng (1346-96), the ruler of that country, assumed that name. The matter needs further investigation. Again Hsö-Oop-Hpā's name is not to be

322. It is situated on the right bank of the Mogaung river (i.e. the Nām-Kawng) at its junction with the Nām-yen Nullah. See Bayfield's description in his *Narrative of the Journey from Ava to the frontier of Assam between December* 1836 *and May* 1837. Ney Elias notes that Sām-Löng-Hpā, the first Mao *Sawbwa* of Mogaung, in crossing the river now known as the Nām-Kawng, a short distance above the site of the present Mogaung, found a sapphire drum in its bed. *Kawng* in Shan means a drum. Ney Elias thinks that it was probably 'a sapphire in the shape of a drum'. The Mao chief regarded it as a good omen and soon established a town near the spot and called it Möng-Kawng i.e. "drum-town". The adopted Pali name is Udigiri-rata (Skt. Udayagiri-rāṣṭra). N. Elias *op.cit.*, p. 40. Whether the name of the river is after that of the town or vice versa is difficult to trace. There is also the legend of Western Shans that in much earlier days Möng-Kawng was founded by the eldest grandson of Sao Wong-Ti at the spot where his gong or proabbly *Kawang* (drum) produced a sound of its own accord. Sām-Löng-Hpā, says N. Elias, retained the sapphire, and it was afterwards handed down to his successors, and held by them for many generations as a mark of power.

323. Pemberton : *op.cit.*, p. 112.

found in the dynastic lists provided by Ney Elias. If he was a ruler of Mogaung at any time during the fourteenth or fifteenth century, it is difficult to identify him. Hsö-Oop-Hpā may be another name of Hkun-Tao-Hpā who ruled over Mogaung from A.D. 1361 to 1381, or he may be a *Sawbwa* of another State.

Möng-Mao was without a *Sawbwa* for three years even after the death of Sao Ngan-Hpā. There was a search for a *Sawbwa* and at the end of that period of relation of Sao Wak-Hpa, called Sao Lām-Kôn-Hkām-Hpā, was placed on the throne in A.D. 1448. He was said to be an uncle of Sao Wak-Hpā and the nearest relative to Sao Hgan-Hpā among those who survived him. In the fourth year of his reign a large force from China invaded his country and defeated his troops. He then fled to Āvā and sought refuge with the Burmese. He returned to his country after five years of exile, but died in A.D. 1461. He was succeeded in the same year by his son Sao Hôm-Hpā. The Chinese again invaded Möng-Mao soon after his accession, but were defeated and had to beat a retreat inside their own country after eighteen days of continued fighting. In the later period of Sao Hôm-Hpa's reign, that is about A.D. 1479, the Chinese returned with a greater strength and routed the Mao-Shans compelling their king Sao Hôm-Hpā to take to flight and seek protection at Āvā just as his predecessor had done. He, however, returned to his capital after four years and died after seven years in A.D. 1490.[324]

On the death of Sao Hôm-Hpā, his son Sao Kā-Hpā ascended the throne. In the sixth year of his reign the Chinese appeared again in force and invaded the Mao territory. After some fighting Sao -Kā-Hpā placed his son Sao Pem-Hpā on the throne in A.D. 1496 and himself retired to Ai Hkam, the northern division of Hkamti. Sao Pem-Hpā appears to have enjoyed an undisturbed rule for twenty years. Then a Chinese force from Yün-nān under the command of General Li-Sang-Pā made an attempt to invade the country, but was repulsed. Li-Sang-Pā, being baffled in the open encounter, resorted to a ruse to mislead the Shans. "He constructed a number of rafts", describes Ney Elias, "placed a goat on each, and set them floating down the Shweli; the Shans, on seeing the goats approaching from the side of China, exclaimed *Hkè Poi Pé Ma*, 'the Chinese are sending goats down', a cry that quickly spread through the town as 'the Chinese are coming floating down' and caused a general panic. The citizens, together with the army, fled in all direc-

324. Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, pp. 22-23.

tions and Sao Pem-Hpā, who was ill at the time and unable to move, died as the enemy entered his city".[325] His father Sao Kā-Hpā came afterwards to Mogaung and became its *Sawbwa* in A.D. 1496. He was surnamed Sao Kyek-Hpā and established his capital at Chei-En (or Tsei-En or earlier Tzei-Lan) to signalize his accession and probably also to commemorate the beginning of a new era in Mogaung. The new capital Chei-En is at a distance of one days's journey to the north-west of old Mogaung.[326] He also built another city called Hpa-Kung, now in ruins.

Narrating the history of Mogaung beginning from the time of Sām-Lông-Hpā, Ney Elias says that when Sām-Lông-Hpā was engaged in the conquest of western countries 'he appears to have been succeeded by a nephew named Noi-Sān-phā, a son of the Mau king, but who in assuming the tsaubwaship took his father's name, Chau-Kām-phā'. But, as it would be shown below, Noi-Sān-Hpā (or Chau-Kām-phā) was the son of Phu-Chāng-Khāng and elder brother of Hsö-Kā-Hpā. Noi-Sān-Hpā's accession must have followed the rupture between Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and Sām-Lông-Hpā when the latter was still engaged in his campaigns in Upper Assam. In the meantime, according to Mogaung Annals, the following areas had been subjugated by the Mao General and brought under Mogaung rule; (1) Hkamti; (2) Sankring Hkamti; (3) Hu-Kawng; (4) Maing-Kaing; (5) Maing-Ngyaung; (6) Mo-Nyin; (Mohnyin); (7) Taungthwot (Sumjok); (8) Kalei; (9) the four Yaw towns (the most northern of the districts inhabited by the Yaws); and (10) Mautshobo. All these areas were inhabited by eight different races, which, Ney Elias points out, were' (1) the Naras, divided into Ai-Ten, the Ai-Hkam, and Fakei (the latter were not true Noras, but fugitives from Möng-Man); (2) the Khang or Khang-sei, (i.e. the Khyens or Nagas); (3) the Singphos or Kachyens; (4) the Pwons, divided into great and small Pwons; (5) the Kadus, a kindred people to the latter, similarly divided; (6) the Yaws, a tribe of Burmans on the right bank of the Irrawaddy; (7) the Kubbaw (said to be the Burmese of the neighbourhood of Mautshobo; (8) the Kunungs and Kumuns, or Mishmis, divided by the Assamese into Miju and Chulliccetta Mishmis'. These races, prior to their being conquered, lived in numerous petty States under their own Chiefs.[327]

Noi-Sān-Hpā (or Loi-Sān-Hpā), the *Sawbwa* of Mogaung and contemporary of Sām-Lông-Hpā, sould not be confused with another chief

325. *Ibid*, p. 23.
326. *Op.cit.*, pp. 23,41.
327. Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, pp. 40-4.

of the same name and son of Hkun-Sau-Pan-Noi as mentioned in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*. The latter must have been too young at the time of Sām-Lông-Hpā's western campaigns if he had been born at all by that time. Hence Ney Elias seems to be correct in showing that the Mogaung *Sawbwa*, Noi-Sān-Hpā, was a contemporary of the Mao king Hsö-Hkān-Hpā,. The descendants of Noi-Sān-Hpā ruled in regular succession until A. D. 1443 or 1446 when a change occurred. It is not known how this line of *Sawbwas* came to an end. Ney Elias says that Sao Hsi-Hpā, the brother of the unfortunate Sao Ngan-Hpā, succeeded to the *Sawbwa*-ship in this year and ruled for long fifty years. Sao Hsi-Hpā was surnamed Sao Kwon-Hpā.[328] But Pemberton's Chronicle tells a different story. According to his Chronicle it was not Sao Ngan-Hpā's brother, but his sons, who established their rule over Mogaung at that time. Ney Elias's Chronicle supports the fact that Sao Ngan-Hpā's queen went to Hkamti with her two children seeking protection and further says that the children were Sao Hung aged ten and Sao Hup aged two. On arrival there a third child, named Sao Put, was born and one of these three became *Sawbwa* of Hkamti. Sao Hup was probably Pemberton's Sao-Ope who defeated the Burmese and destroyed Sagaing. When the two accounts are compared Ney Elias's account appears to have been written more carefully providing a regular Shan Chronological table than Pemberton's, with this difference that nothing is said by Ney Elias about what countries the two sons of Sao Ngan-Hpā ruled. In A. D. 1496 Sao Hsi-Hpā was succeeded by Sao Kā-Hpā, who ruled upto A. D. 1520. Ney Elias refers to an expedition by Sao Kā-Hpā with a large army for the conquest of of Assam. When the army approached the border of Assam the Ahom King offered him large presents of cattle and horses, and he retired peacefully to Mogaung.[329] The Ahom king mentioned must be either Chao-Hpā Supim (1493-97) or Chao- Hpā Hsö-Hom-Möng (1497-1539). In the Assam Chronicles there is no mention of this expedition.

Before his death Sao Kā-Hpā completed the work of placing the various dominions of Mogaung on a firm footing by appointing to them his relatives and friends as governors or tributary chiefs. Thus Sao Lông Tu-Möng was appointed Governor of Man-sai on the right bank of the Kyendwen and Tsa-Tsaw-Yot was made Governor of Maing-Tung on the left bank. He placed the northern dominion, comprising the country of the Hkamungs and Hkumuns (Mishmis) and the areas called Ta-Wi and Ta-Wai, under the governorship of Chao Lông-Möng-Chāng. He

328. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
329. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

gave Kassei or Manipur to Haw Yot, and three districts of the Khang-sei or Naga country to one Chao Ho-Tom. To his only son, Sao Hun-Hpā, he assigned the Yaw country west of the Kyendwen. In the State of Mogaung itself it was not his son but his Minister Sao Sui-Hpā who succeeded to the throne in A. D. 1520. Sao Sui-Hpā was known by his title Sām-Lông-Paw-Möng (Sām-Lung-pawmaing) and, as indicated by Ney Elias, was not of the Mao line of *Sawbwas*. He ruled for six years and was succeeded in A. D. 1526 by one Chao Sui-Kwei, surnamed Chao Peng, whose relationship to his immediate predecessor or earlier *Sawbwas* of Mogaung is not known from the Chronicles. In the thirteenth year of this prince's reign (Shan *Lakli-Rungmao* 28 = A. D. 1556) a Burmese army despatched by the king of Hantha-Wadi (Skt. Haṁsavatī), by which name Pegu (Shan *Pai-Ko*) was known, invaded Mogaung and conquered it. These Burmese conquerors also established priests and teachers in Mogaung to convert the rulers and the local population to Buddhism.[330] The *Sawbwa* Chao-Peng offered his submission and was allowed to continue as a tributary chief. Mao glory had departed. For an appraisal of how the Shan power in Burma ultimately succumbed to the Burmese assaults it is necessary to know the fresh rise and expansion of Burmese power in their new centre in the south. The fall of Pagan and consequent Shan predominance in Upper Burma led numerous Burmese families to quit their country in the Irrawaddy valley and trek across to the valley of the Sittang. Far to the south-east of Pagan and around Toungoo (or Taungu or Taung-ngu) on the bank of the Sittang, a place safer and happier than any in the Irrawaddy valley, a Burmese settlement began to grow up which owed nominal allegiance to Pagan. In A. D. 1280 a village of these settlers had to be fortified on a hill spur (*taung-ngu*) as an outpost against slave hunting by the Karens who had their States nearby to the east. Constant flow of Burmese population to this area from the Irrawaddy valley made Toungoo so strong that its chief Thinhkaba (1347-58) asserted the independance of Toungoo and proclaimed himself king and built a palace in traditional style. This small monarchy was destined to develop into a mighty power in course of time. In 1358 Thinhkaba was succeeded by his son, Pyanchi. During his reign a fresh wave of of Burmese immigrants entered his kingdom from Sagaing and Pin-Ya in the Irrawaddy basin which had been destroyed by the Mao-Shans in 1364. In an inscription erected by him at Pagan he recorded his visit to that place to make offerings to the temples there and also stated how he and his wife had welcomed refugees from the Shan terror.

Though the Burmese political aspirations found expression in this little State of Toungoo, yet in the first one hundred and thirty-nine years

330. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

of its existence it had no stability. No single ruling family in this early period was able to hold its power for long. The second ruler Pyanchi (1358-77), who was on friendly terms with the neighbouring Mon State of Pegu, fell a victim to the machination of the ambitious Āvā king, Mingyi Swaswake, who was anxious 'to revive the traditional Burmese policy of subduing the Mons of the south', but had been restrained from doing so in the early part of his reign by the aggressive activities of the Mao-Shans. But a desperate moment in A. D. 1383 he secured Chinese support against the raiding Mao-Shans, which relieved him of the northern pressure. In Pegu, on Razadarit's accession in A. D. 1385, his uncle made a plot to seize power by dethroning him and appealed to Mingyi Swaswake for support offering to rule as his vassal. This opportunity, as noticed already, Mingyi Swaswake wanted to exploit to fulfil his ambition and a long-drawn war ensued between Āvā and Pegu with no tangible gain for the former. In this struggle the Toungoo rulers did not always observe neutrality. At times they fought on the side of Āvā against the Mons. Attempts were also made from time to time by both Āvā and Pegu to wipe off the independence of Toungoo.

This state of things in Toungoo was brought under control by the first important ruler, named Minkyinyo, who came to the throne in A. D. 1486. He was the real founder of the Toungoo dynasty. His accession synchronised with the bad days of Āvā. Narapati's son Thihathura (1469-81) was the last of the Āvā kings in whose reign there was comparatively more peace. The peace that Āvā had from the time of surrendering Sao Ngan-Hpā to the Chinese was due to Narapati's formal acceptance of Chinese overlordship which guaranteed security to Āvā against the rebels and Shans and invested Narapati with a gold seal of appointment as 'Comforter of Ava'. Earlier China was glad to make common cause with Āvā at the request of Mingyi Swaswake against the Mao-Shans whose growing power became a matter of concern for both. The Shans quarrelled among themselves, but also formed powerful confederacies and alliances against external enemies, particularly the Chinese and the Burmese. The Chinese failed to break the process of Shan consolidation and had to be contented with warning the *Sawbwa* of Mohnyin against obstructing the route between Burma and Yün-nān. The Ming dynasty reached the apex of its power under Yung Lo[331] (1403-1424). Yung Lo was aggressive in his foreign policy and received tributes from most of the South-east Asian countries including Java and Ceylon. Under him the petty

331. Chu-Ti was more correctly called by his dynastic title Cheng Tsu. He is best known to us by the name of his reign period, Yung Lo..

chiefs of Upper Burma acquiesced more or less in Chinese authority.[332] These were mostly Shan chiefs. But by the middle of the fifteenth century there was a marked decline of the Ming power and most of the countries asserted their independence and stopped the tributes. Friction with the Japanese further weakened the Ming in the first half of the sixteenth century. Thus when the Chinese control weakened Upper Burma and the neighbouring regions to the north and east became, as Harvey puts it, 'a bedlam of snarling Shan States'. The Shans became strong and aggressive after Thihathura's death in A. D. 1481.

Tmeporary Recovery of Mao-Shan Power : Capture of Āvā :

His two successors Minkhaung (1481-1502) and Shwenankyawshin (1502-27) were unable to stem the tide of mounting disorders. Mohnyin would not forget the past. When the restraining hands of China were found weak or withdrawn, it made a series of attacks on Āvā, which, in A. D. 1527, culminated in the capture and sack of the city and the death of Shwenankyawshin. The *Sawbwa* of Mohnyin then put his son Thohanbwa (Hsö-Hān-Hpā) as the ruler of Āvā. This Mohnyin Prince was a 'full-blooded savage', says Harvey. He had no respect for the Buddhist religion. It seems he had no faith in the integrity of the Burmese Buddhist monks. He wanted to suppress them on the ground that they conspired against the Shan Government and fomented rebellions to overthrow it. He, therefore, 'pillaged pagodas, massacred monks, and made bonfire of the precious contents of monastic libraries'.[333] Tho-

332. Latourette : *op.cit.*, p. 287.

333. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 140. Hallett notes the point of view of a then Shan *Sawbwa* of Burma, who, he says 'certainly seems to have considered the safety of his dynasty more than religion: but the poongyees, or monks, in those days may have been as dangerous in conducting rebellions as those in Thibet have frequently proved.' Hallett also quotes in this connection the following from the Royal History ; "He (apparently referring to the Shan ruler of "Ava", Thohanbwa) was of a cruel and savage disposition. He spared not men's lives. He respected not the three treasures (Buddha, the law, and the assembly). Pagodas, he used to say, are not the Bhoora (Paya), but merely fictitious vaults in which the Burmese deposit gold, silver, and jewels; so he dug into and rifled those shrines of their treasures. The poongyees too, he used to say, having no wives and children, under pretence of gathering disciples, collect guards around them ready to rise in rebellion. He therefore built a number of sheds on the plain of Toung-ba-loo, and pretending to do honour to the poongyees, invited all those around Ava, Tsagaing, and Panya to a feast. Then surrounding them with an army, he had them all slaughtered. He then seized all the books in their monasteries and had them burned. But some of the Shans had pity on the poongyees, and many thus escaped to Prome and Toungoo. More than three hundred and sixty were killed, but more than a thousand escaped". Hallett's *Historical Sketch of the Shans*, *op.cit.*, pp. 336-37.

hanbwa was succeeded by several other Shan *Sawbwas*,[334] who ruled Āvā until in A. D. 1555 it was conquered by Bayin Naung (1551-81), the greatest of the Toungoo rulers, and incorporated into the reunited kingdom of Burma under him.

The Rise of the Toungoo Dynasty : Its Political Expansion:

King Minkyino of Toungoo took advantage of the weaknesses and disorders in the kingdom of Āvā that followed the death of Thihathura to extend his territories northwards. His greatest territorial gain was the acquisition of the Kyauksè area. When Āvā was sacked by the Mohnyin Shans many Burmese chiefs fled from there to take service under him which simply added to his strength. At that time the northern Shan States were so divided among themselves that a threat to the Sittang valley from that quarter was no near possibility. This gave Minkyinyc an opportunity to prepare for the conquest of the rich Mon kingdom of Pegu in the south, but, before the preparations could be completed, he died in A. D. 1531. The Mon country of Thaton and Pegu, which Anawrahta of Pagan had conquered in the middle of the eleventh century, regained independence during the Mongol invasions of Pagan, when, by a concerted action, Wareru and Tarabya expelled the Burmese in A. D. 1287 from Pegu and the country as far as Tavoy south of Prome and Toungcc.

Tabin Shwe T'i (1531-50), the son and successor of Minkyinyo, was a brilliant and enterprising ruler. At the time of his accession Burma was divided into four kingdoms, namely; (1) the remnants of the original kingdom, with capital at Āvā; (2) Prome; (3) Pegu; and (4) Toungoo[335]. The kingdom of Āvā was then ruled by the Shan *Sawbwa* Thohanbwa (1527-43), a scion of the Mohnyin Shan dynasty. The countries to the north, northwest and east of Āvā belonged to the Shans, who had their own principalities in them. Tabin Shwe T'i first annexed the Irrawaddy delta in A. D. 1535 with the towns of Bassein and Myaungmya, and then proceeded to conquer Pegu, then under an equally brilliant ruler Takayupti. Pegu was so well defended that Tabin Shwe T'i's four years of campaigning could not bring about its fall. It was finally taken by him by stratagem in A. D. 1539 and King Takayupti fled to Prome closely followed by the Burmese king and his brother-in-law, Bayin Naung. When Tabin Shwe T'i attacked Prome the Shan *Sawbwa* of Āvā, Thohanbwa, sent against him a force downstream by a large flotilla which, by a powerful counter-attack, defeated the Burmese and relieved the city and the

334. Hkonmaing, usurper (1543-46) ; Mobye Narapati (1546-52), son of Hkonmaing; Sithukyawhtin, usurper (1552-55). -See Hall : *A History of South-east Asia.* Appendix, P. 732.

335. Wood : *A History of Siam* (Bangkok, 1933, Revised Edition), p. 102.

Burmese force had to retire. Failing to take Prome Tabin Shwe T'i decided to attack Martaban. He therefore reinforced his army with Mon levies and Portuguese mercenaries. These mercenaries were armed with muskets and light artillery and commanded by Joao Cayero. With this mixed force he, in A. D. 1541, marched against the port-city of Martaban and attacked it. The city was defended by a Portuguese garrison. Tabin Shwe T'i had a tough job to break through the stout resistance put up by the city's forces , but the Portuguese soldiers later deserted the post and the defence collasped. Tabin Shwe T'i then took the city by storm and gave it over to horrible massacre and plunder by his mercenaries which continued for three days. This frightful act of savagery had such demoralising effect on the rest of the Mon country that the Burmese king received the surrender of Moulmein on the opposite bank without having to strike a blow and the remainder of the Mon country 'as far as the Siamese frontier at Tavoy fell into Burmese hands'.[336] He celebrated his victory by adding commemorative spires to the principal Mon pagodas of that country. The famous Shwe Dagon Pagoda[337] received a special thank-offering of ten *viss* (36.51b) of pure gold.

In the course of his campaign against Pegu Tabin Shwe T'i occupied a town called Chieng-Krai or Chieng-Kran, now called Gyaing or Kya-in on the bank of the Ataram river in the Moulmein district. This town was then subject to Siam. King P'rajai of Siam, heading a strong force, attacked and utterly defeated the Burmese and drove them out of his dominions.[338] Here, too, the Portuguese mercenaries in the service of Siam played such a notable part in turning out the Burmese that they were rewarded with various commercial and residential privileges. This Chieng-Krai incident became the original cause of a long and bitter struggle between Siam and Burma later 'bringing death, famine and unspeakable misery to both countries'.[339]

The conquest of the Mon country encouraged Tabin Shwe T'i to renew his invasion of Prome in the following year (1542). In the meantime, the Mon king Takayupti had died and many of the Mon chiefs offered their allegiance to the Burmese king, who, they thought, would be able to guarantee peace and a settled government after

336. Hall : *Burma*, p. 39.

337. The Burmese legend is that two brothers, Tapusa and Palikat, received from Gautama eight hairs of his head, which they brought by sea to Suvannabhumi and enshrined under the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, which stands just outside the small fishing village of Dagon, named after it, and renamed Rangoon by Alaungpaya (1755).

338. Wood; *op.cit.*, p. 102.

339. *Ibid*, p. 103.

long years of chaos, bloodshed and miseries from which their country had suffered. On the other hand, the Burmese king, too, treated the Mons as equals with the Burmese and respected the Mon customs and institutions. It is believed that behind such conciliatory policy Tabin Shwe T'i had a larger plan of conquest in the east with the support of the Mons, otherwise it is in sharp contrast to the scenes of massacre and plunder which he had enacted at Martaban.

Reaching Prome with his army he laid siege to the city and, by causing an exhaustion of its food stocks, compelled it to submit after five months. As a punishment here, too, he allowed the population to be slaughtered and their properties robbed by his soldiers. By the capture of Prome he got an outlet to the Irrawaddy waterway to move his troops to attack the Shan country of the north. When this danger presented itself at the door of the quarrelling Shan States, they sank their differences and prepared themselves for a concerted action to recover Prome from the Burmese occupation for their own security. In A. D. 1544 the king of Āvā, Hkonmaing and the *Sawbwas* of Mohnyin, Momeik (Möng-Mit), Hsen-Wi, Bhamo, Yawnghwe and Mone united and organised a combined force to drive off the Burmese from Prome by a counter-attack. The force moved down the Irrawaddy in a flotilla of war-boats and launched its counter-attack on the Burmese. The Shans were also joined in this expedition by the Arakanese. But, with the help of his Portuguese gunners Tabin Shwe T'i won a decisive victory over the Shans and forced them to retreat. He then advanced northwards and occupied the country up to the north of Minbu and Myingyan districts, but did not proceed far enough to attack Āvā. He had enough territories in southern and central Burma which he wanted to consolidate and become strong before exhausting himself in a war with the Shans.

He also wanted to see himself acknowledged as a true Burman king. He was therefore duly crowned king of Burma with ancient ceremonial at the old, though ruined, capital of Pagan. After that he returned to the south and reached Pegu, which city he made his capital instead of Pagan or Toungoo. At Pegu he held a second coronation in A. D. 1546 using both Burmese and Mon rites. His ambition rose high, for he wanted to become a great Emperor ('Chakravarty Raja') and earn the distinction of being the possessor of white elephants. The king of Siam, he learnt, possessed a number of such elephants and he was determined to have them. He also remembered that Siam was no friend of the Burmese as the latter had already a clash with that country at Chieng-Kran.

Arakan Expedition :

Soon after his coronation at Pegu an Arakanese prince appeared at his Court for help to remove the ruling chief of his country, named Minbin (1531-53), and secure the throne for him. This prince offered to rule as a Burmese vassal if the help was given. Tabin Shwe T'i was simply glad to give the help and have that country as a part of his dominions. But the fortifications of the capital city Mrohaung were so strong that his expedition failed to break through them. He therefore called off the expedition on the plea that the Siamese were raiding the Tavoy region and the military needs in that area were more urgent. His Arakan expedition was just an opportunist venture. His main objective had been Ayuthia and for its conquest he made massive preparations. He also knew that Siam was weakened by domestic troubles. From A. D. 1534 to 1549 the Siamese Court was in a state of turmoil with scandalous stories, intrigues, conspiracies and murders.

First Burmese Invasion of Ayuthia : An Unsuccessful Adventure :

In A. D. 1534 king Phra Jai Rajat'irat (Jaya Rajadhiraj), a half-brother of King Boromaraja IV (Parama Raja), occupied the throne of Ayuthia by killing off a boy king of five years and five months. According to a Siamese Chronicle[340] he twice invaded Chiengmai during A. D. 1525-26 without success and died in A. D. 1527 while returning to his capital after the second invasion. Thus the dates of the Chronicle do not agree with those given by Wood. On the death of King Phra Jai Raja-T'irat, the ministers, nobles and royal Brahmin astrologers raised his elder son Phra Keo Fah, then only eleven years old, with the title of Phra Yotfah and appointed the Queen Mother, Sri Sudachan as Regent to assist the young King. In the usual course, the deceased King's younger half-brother, Prince T'ien Raja would have been appointed Regent. But the choice of a female for this position was exceptional. This lady, who was one of the senior non-Royal Consorts of King Phrajai (1534-46), must have obtained the nomination to regency from the King during his life time. But her scandalous character, as soon as proved, led to a bloody revolution in the capital, which also brought invasions from outside. While acting as Queen Regent she carried on illicit love affairs with

340. See the Siamese Chronicle *P'ra Raj P'onsawadan Chabab P'ra Raj Hat'alek'a* (or the "Royal Autograph Edition" as called by Wood) as translated by Phra Phraison Salarak (U Aung Thein) under the title "Intercourse between Siam and Burma" in *JBRS* XXV, II, 1935, p. 59.

a palace attendant, named P'an But Srit'ep (Putra Sridev), whom, in course of time, she promoted to the title of K'un Worawongsat'irat (Varavaṁsadhiraja) and then raised to the throne. She cleared the throne for him by executing the boy king, though she spared his younger brother Phra Sri Sin who was then seven years old.[341] She also caused those nobles of her Court to be murdered who could not approve of her conduct. There were also certain disturbances at this time in the northern Provinces of the kingdom.

All these serious internal troubles produced such instability of the Siamese Government that Tabin Shwe T'i saw in it a good opportunity to strike and annex that country to his dominions and be the master of the white elephants. He therefore marched on Ayut'ia with an army of 30,000 foot-soldiers, 2000 cavalry and 300 elephants. He was joined in the expedition by the king of Prome and the Governor of Bassein. The army followed the route through the frontier outpost of Three Pagodas. Entering the Siamese territory Tabin Shwe T'i attacked and captured Kanchanaburi (Kanburi) and learnt from the local officers that Somdet Phra Maha Chakrap'at Rajat'irat (Maha Chakrabarty Rajadhiraj) had ascended the throne of Siam and that there was peace and order throughout the kingdom under him. At this news, he hesitated to proceed further, but as he had already advanced so far, he decided to move forward. He next attacked and took Muang Sup'anburi and then reached Lump'li in A.D. 1530, a date earlier by several years, and then marched to the vicinity of Ayuthia. The Siamese King became ready to meet him. But the Burmese King, finding the fortifications of the city too strong, preferred to retire. The Chronicle says that he 'remained in camp for three days and having seen the walls of the city and the royal palaces inside it, he broke camp, and returned by the same route by which he had come'.[342] This invasion is not mentioned in the *Hmannan* history. Harvey and Wood also make no reference to it in their works. H.R.H. Prince Damrong in his *Our Wars with the Burmese, Ayut'ia Period*, gives two invasions of Siam by Tabin Shwe T'i, but his account of the first invasion says that it took place during the reign of King Phra Jai Rajat'irat in Cula Sakkaraj 900 (A.D. 1538), when the two monarchs met at Chieng Kran, a place identified by H.R.H. Prince Damrong himself as 'the modern Gyaing in the Amherst district'. As already said, Chieng Kran belonged to Siam, but when the Burmese King made aggression upon it the Siamese King recovered it

341. *Ibid*, p. 60.
342. *Ibid*, pp. 67-68.

by defeating the Burmese. It was only an incident of encroachment when Tabin Shwe T'i was engaged in the conquest of the kingdom of Pegu.

Early in the year 1549 Tabin Shwe T'i made a grand preparation for a second invasion of Ayuthia and then marched for attack with a huge army of 300,000 men, 3,000 horses and 700 elephants. He proceeded with the king of Prome, who was his grandson, and the Governors of Bassein, Toungoo and other provinces by way of Martaban, Kanbui and Sup'an and by June encamped himself in the neighbourhood of Ayuthia. In the meantime, some six months earlier the usurper K'un Worawongsa and his wife, the notorious Queen Regent, had been beheaded by the nobles, and Prince T'ien, the younger half-brother of King P'rajai, was crowned King with the title of Somdet Phra Maha Chakrap'at Rajat'irat or Maha Chakravarty Rajadhiraj (1549-69). During his twenty years of reign there was much improvement in the internal political situation and the country enjoyed comparative peace and was better organized for defence.

Tabin Shwe T'i[343] laid siege to the capital, which according to Pinto, lasted for nearly four months. The Burmese repeatedly delivered fierce assaults on the capital, but were repulsed every time. It is of historic significance that in this war the Siamese Queen Suriyot'ai and one of her daughters fought valiantly wearing men's dress side by side with the men against the Burmese and laid down their lives leaving behind immortal fame for both heroism and patriotism.[344] Having failed to break through the defences of Ayuthia the Burmese had to retire as their provisions had run short and the army was so badly equipped that it suffered untold distress and privation. Further reasons for the retreat of the Burmese army were that Phra Maha T'ammaraja (Mahadharmaraja), the vassal king of P'itsanulok, who was also the son-in-law of the Siamese King, was about to descend and attack it with a large force[345]

343. Who is usually referreed to in the Chronicle as the King of Hanthawaddy (Haṁsavatī : Pegu).

344. The description in the Chronicle is that, in going to rescue her husband from a bad position in the fighting, Queen Suriot'ai was thrown off her balance and her head and body fell back supine when the elephant, she mounted, was pierced with the tusks through the throat by that of the king of Prome. In this situation the king of Prome cut her with his long-handled sword, and the blow was delivered with such force that the weapon cut through the shoulder and reached the breast. According to Wood the Queen and her daughter were both pierced through by Burmese spears (which may have followed the sword stroke).

345. Maha T'ammaraja mobilised a force of 50,000 men from the five northern Muangs, namely, P'itsanulok, Sawank'alok. Sukhot'ai, P'ichai and P'ichit,

and also that there were reports of disorder in the Burmese kingdom itself. Hence His Burman Majesty, first to avoid the routes vulnerable to Siamese attacks during retreat and secondly, to seize the food stocks collected for Maha T'ammaraja's army, decided to proceed northwards along the bank of the river Menam and fight the northern army at Chainat where it was encamped. As the Burmese left in that direction King Chakrap'at's two sons, Phra Ramesuan and Phra Mahint'rat proceeded to attack them in the rear which was guarded by Bayin Naung, called Maha Uparaja, in the Siamese Chronicle. Maha T'ammaraja failed to resist the numerically superior Burmese army and both Phra Ramesuan and Phra Mahint'rat were captured by Bayin Naung by an adroit manoeuvre of the rearguard. Later they were released on request by the Siamese King, who gave in exchange two white elephants as desired by the Burmese King. These elephants, however, had to be soon returned being uncontrollable. The Burmese returned to Pegu by way of Kamp'engp'et and Melamao.[346] Tabin Shwe T'i, after his retreat from Siam, fell under the influence of a Portuguese, named Diego Suarez and became a confirmed drunkard and debauchee. While yet a youngman of thirty-six only his evil association and vices caused such a breakdown of his morals that he became absolutely unfit to govern the country and left the conduct of affairs to others. He was assassinated in A. D. 1550.[347]

After the death of Tabin Shwe T'i Burma was thrown into confusion. Bayin Naung,[348] the brother-in-law of Tabin Shwe T'i, was the next aspirant to the throne. But the Burmese chiefs of Toungoo and Prome refused to recognise his claim. One Smim Sawhtut, said to be a Mon prince who procured the murder of Tabin Shwe T'i, became a patriot and liberator in the eyes of the Mon people. He was at once accepted by the Peguans as their ruler. Another Mon leader became strong at Martaban. Thus Burma was once again split up into a number of independent States. At the same time another prince of the old line, Smim Htaw, became the leader of a Mon rebellion against the Burmese rule. He marched on Pegu and eliminated his rival Smim Sawhtut in A.D. 1551.

In face of this disintegration of the dominions of Tabin Shwe T'i, Bayin Naung seized Toungoo and proclaimed himself king. His immediate task was to recapture the Mon country from Smim Htaw. In A.D.

346. "Intercourse between Siam and Burma" : *JBRS*, XXV, II, 1935, pp. 73-82; Wood : *op.sit.*, p. 113.

347. Wood : *op.cit.*, p. 116; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 212.

348. also called Bhureng Noung.

1551 he marched on to Pegu with a mixed army of Burmese, Mon and Portuguese mercenaries and fought a battle outside the walls of the capital. Smim Htaw was defeated and the Mon resistance collapsed. Smim Htaw fled to Martaban, where he was later searched out and killed. But his memory is venerated by the local people as a great patriot. He was the thirty-seventh ruler of Wareru's line. After the victory Bayin Naung was crowned at Pegu 'with the grandest ceremonial'. He also built there a magnificent capital city where he established his Court and built his palace.

Burmese Conquest of Shan States :

Bayin Naung was one of the foremost leaders of the Burmese and as Harvey puts it, "the greatest explosion of human energy ever seen in Burma". Four years after the re-establishment of his rule in Pegu he directed his attention to the north with the determination to conquer the Shan country. With that object in A.D. 1553 he sent up the Irrawaddy an army of observation. The Shan chiefs took it to be a definite precursor of an invasion of their States by the ambitious and powerful Burmese King. This caused them to give up their mutual quarrels and spirit of hostility and unite to meet the common danger.

Bayin Naung was conscious of the strength of Shan resistance that he would meet with. He, therefore, raised the largest force he could muster for the purpose and decided first to subjugate Āvā before invading the Shan States. With that object, late in A.D. 1554, he launched simultaneously a two-pronged attack on Āvā from the bases of Toungoo and Pagan. The city fell in March, 1555 and opened up the way for a drive farther north. He next annexed Bangyi in Monyua district and Myedu in Shwebo district, both under Āvā.

In April, 1556 he invaded the Shan States of Hsi-Paw[349] and Ungbaung (Shan : Ong Pawng),[350] both being *Sawbwa*ships of Möng-Mit (Momiet), the parent State. These Shan States were conquered and Möng-Mit became feudatory to Burma. The State of Möng-Mit, previous to its conquest by the Burmese, exercised sway over the following

349. Burmese Thibo, Shan Tai-Po and Pali Thiri-Rata (Śri Rāṣṭra). It was founded by a local chief named Udina in 423 B.C. and in the thirteenth century captured by the Mao-Shans. The city of Hsi-Paw consisted of three forts or walled compounds joined together. -See N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 55.

350. Some two miles to the westward of Thibo and an oblong city on the Nāmpo 600 o by 300, containing three gates on each face, or twelve in all.

eight minor *Sawbwa*ships, namely, (1) Bamo; (2) Molai (to the south-east of Bhamo); (3) Ungbaung; (4) Maing-lung (Möng-Löng); (5) Thongzei; (6) Hsi-Paw (Thibo); (7) Tagaung; and (8) Singu. He next attacked Möng-Nai (Monei) and subdued it. The States claimed by Mong-Nai as its dependencies were : (1) Nyaung-Yuei; (2) Mobyei; (3) Yauk Sauk; (4) Legya; (5) Tigyit; (6) Kyaing-Taung; (7) Maing-Seik, and sometimes the Mre-Lap Shans.[351]

Conquest of Chieng-mai (Lan-Na-T'ai) : Temporary Subjugation of Ayuthia :

He then pushed on towards Chieng-mai[352] to conquer that kingdom, then under Maharaja Mekut'i, a Prince of Möng-Nai. Bayin Naung found an excuse to attack Chieng-mai and it was that its ruler Mekut'i had been helping the Shans of Burma against him. He, with his huge army, besieged Chiengmai and took it in April, 1556 without having to face any serious resistance. Mekut'i was reduced to submission and compelled to acknowledge the Burman Majesty as his suzerain and to agree to pay an annual tribute of elephants, horses, silk and other products of his kingdom. Thus the independent Tai kingdom of Chieng-mai or Lān-Nā-T'ai, established in A.D. 1296 by king Mengrai, once master of almost the whole of North Siam, fell never to rise again. Further, between A.D. 1563 and 1570 Bayin Naung twice invaded and seized Ayuthia and made its rulers surrender. He also twice attacked the Laos kingdom. With the seizure of Ayuthia Siam had to remain under Burma for an interval of fifteen years.

Möng-Mao Reduced to Vassalage :

In his general plan of conquest of the Shan States Bayin Naung did not spare Möng-Mao, which was then a prosperous country. But showing a cause of Burmese invasion of Möng-Mao the Burmese chroniclers "pretend", as pointed out by Ney Elias, "that shortly before 1560 the Maos had seized some villages within the borders of Möng-Mit, and the *Sawbwa* of the latter place had appealed to the Burmese for aid, but as Möng-Mit had up to within a year or two of this time been a part of the dominion of the Mao Kings, and the Burmese had been steadily advancing in their conquest of the Shan States from south to north, it is scarcely necessary to look for any special cause for quarrel".[353]

351. N. Elias : *op.c.it.*, pp. 54-56; Hall; *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 212.
352. Burmese Zimmé.
353. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, pp. 24.

It appears that Bayin Naung, with Chieng-mai as his ultimate objective, did not go so far north as to invade Möng-Mao. The actual invasion of Möng-Mao took place, according to the Burmese Chronicles, in the year 924 B.E. or A.D. 1562, and hence during the interval between the conquest of Chieng-mai and the invasion of Ayuthia in A.D. 1564 by the Burmese king. Sao Hôm-Hpā[354] was then the king (1516-1604) of Möng-Mao. Bayin Naung, the Burmese king of Pegu, is reported to have sent an army to Möng-Mao, numbering two hundred thousand men, under the command of his son, Nanda Bayin,[355] who was heir-apparent to the throne, and three of his younger brothers, rulers respectively of Prome, Toungoo, and Āvā.[356] They attacked the Möng-Mao territories from the north, burning and destroying the *Sawbwa*ships of Santa, Möng-La and other neighbouring towns in the valley of the Nām-Tapeng, and then moved south entering the Nām-Mao (Shweli) valley and attacking the capital, where, after little or no fighting, reduced to submission the ruling *Sawbwa*, Sao Hôm-Hpa, and made him accept the status of a vassal chief under the Burman Majesty. Sao Hôm-Hpā had also to send the Burmese King a princess in token of homage.[357]

Bayin Naung's reign (1551-81) was crowded with wars and expeditions. After a long struggle with the Shans since the fall of Pagan in A.D. 1287 for supremacy over Burma, the Burmese, from their new centres in Lower Burma, succeeded gradually in pressing northwards and, under the leadership of Bayin Naung, firmly establishing their suzerainty over the Shan States of Upper Burma. There was thenceforward no recovery of Shan power over Upper Burma or any part of it. In Lower Burma, though Bayin Naung relentlessly crushed all Mon opposition for establishing his authority, yet, on the whole, like his predecessor, he treated them with respect. His commander-in-chief, Binnya Dala, and a number of other principal officers of State were Mon.

Bayin Naung was a devoted disciple of Pali Buddhism. He built pagodas in many places, distributed Buddhist scriptures and promoted the study of *Dhammathats*. Though he was a great killer of human

354. He was the 44th *Sawbwa* of the Möng- Mao line of Mao-Shan rulers and is to be distinguished from Sao Hom-Hpā, the 41st *Sawbwa*.
355. also called Nanda Bhureng.
356. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p. 24.
357. *Ibid.*, P.24.

beings, yet his conscience revolted against animal sacrifices. He even prohibited such practices as the killing of goats by the Muhammadans in celebration of Bakr Id, offering of white animals to the Mahagiri spirit on Mount Popa in Myingyan district and the burial of slaves, elephants and horses at the death of a Shan *Sawbwa* along with his body. He sent offerings from time to time to the famous Tooth of the Buddha at Kandy in Ceylon and also lights and brooms made of hair of his own head and that of his chief queen to be used there. He wished to be connected matrimonially with the house of Ceylon with the result that he received a princess and a tooth, claimed as genuine, from Raja Dhammapala of Colombo. The tooth was enshrined in a jewelled casket beneath the Mahazedi Pagoda, which he had founded at Pegu. After the conquest of Möng-Mao Nanda Bayin did not destroy the city, on the other hand, 'teachers of Buddhism were left there to instruct the Shan priests in the worship of Gaudama and to convert the rulers and peoples'.[358]

In A.D. 1581 Nanda Bayin succeeded to the throne of Pegu only to see the whole empire from Āvā to Moulmein bristling with rebellions. "Bayin Naung had sown the wind", as Hall aptly remarks, "his son reaped the whirlwind". But for the time he quelled all rebellions with a stern hand. The most powerful revolt was led by his brother-in-law, Thadominsaw, ruler (Governor) of Āvā. It arose from a private family affair. The Burmese Crown Prince Min Chit Swa,[359] married a daughter of this Prince of Āvā, but very much maltreated her. The latter complained to her father of the maltreatment. The Prince of Āvā was upset at the report and determined to revolt against Nanda Bayin and wrote to the Governors of Prome and Toungoo seeking their joint action aiming at independence.[360] When this was made known to Nanda Bayin he proceeded to attack Āvā in A.D. 1584 leaving the Crown Prince as Regent at Pegu (Hanthawadi). He fought a duel with the Prince of Āvā on elephants and defeated him and suppressed the revolt ruthlessly. He also ordered mass execution of those of his Court nobles and their families who were found to be in collusion with Āvā. A Venetian

358. *Ibid.*, ; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 216

359. Wood : *op.cit.*, p. 142.

360. Wood. *Ibid.*, p. 131; Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p. 219. According to Hall the Prince of Ava, Thadominsaw, was Bayin Naung's brother and hence Nanda Bayin's uncle, but Wood mentions that he was Bayin Naung's brother-in-law. Ney Elias's statement is that the rulers of Prome, Toungoo and Ava were respectively the younger brothers of the king of Pegu (Bayin Naung). -See *op.cit.*, p. 24. From the matrimonial relation between the two families Wood appears to be correct.

jeweller, named Gasparo Balbi, who was an eye witness of the ghastly execution, gives a vivid description of it, an English translation of which was published by Richard Hakluyt in his *Principal Voyages*.

While Nanda Bayin was busy trying to put his father's empire in order, Siam found in P'ra Naret a very brilliant young Crown Prince, called also "Black Prince", who played a glorious role in liberating Siam from the Burmese yoke. It was he who declared Siam independent and hit back with devastating effect the Burmese attempts to subdue that country. He was the elder son of king Maha T'ammaraja and had to spend a part of his early life as a hostage in Burma. As a king he was given the title of Naresuen the Great, which he eminently deserved. This part of the Siamese history is described elsewhere.

With the death of Bayin Naung in A.D. 1581 and outbreak of rebellions in his empire, the Burmese control over the northern Shan States ceased to become real and from the extant accounts it appears that the northernmost kingdom of Möng-Mao became virtually free. The Shan land was like a buffer State between China and Burma and hence had to bear the brunt of both Chinese and Burmese pressure. The Shans, too, were a vigorous race but, being divided into many small principalities, had to form confederations from time to time to organize resistance against the powerful Chinese in the north and east and Burmese in the south. Yet for over two centuries and a half after the destruction of Pagan in A.D. 1287 the Shans held a predominant position in Burma except the Sittang valley about Toungoo, Arakan and, for a period, Āvā. The Shans were in friendship with the Mongol rulers of China and collaborated with the latter in destroying and driving off the Burmese rule at Pagan. But when the Mongols declined the Shans asserted their independence and threw off their allegiance to China. With the coming of the Ming the old alignment changed and both the Chinese and the Burmese turned against the Shans who had to fight on two fronts maintaining their almost constant pressure on the Burmese until A.D. 1556 when Bayin Naung, for the first time, started subduing the Shan States.

But soon after the accession of Nanda Bayin and some twenty years after the first conquest of Möng-Mao in A.D. 1562by the Burmese king Bayin Naung, that is, in A.D. 1582 (Shan date *Mong Msau* 54=B.E. 944=A.D. 1582) and apparently during a time of peace between China and Burma, but with the latter's power of control over the northern Mao-Shan States gone, the Maos were again attacked by a Chinese army of three hundred thousand men, a figure which may well have been exagge-

rated. Three great battles were fought without any decisive result and the Chinese are said to have sued for peace, an indication of Chinese reverse at the last moment. The Möng-Mao king, Sao Hôm-Hpā, accorded it and the Chinese army returned to Yün-nān. There is no mention of the Burmese in this war.

After this Sino-Shan peace settlement Möng-Mao remained undisturbed for the next twenty years. But in A.D. 1604 (Shan *Kat Mao* 16 or B.E. 966), when Sao Hôm-Hpā became very old and had just made over the government of the country to his son Sao Poreng (or Sao Boreng), the then reigning *Sawbwa* of Hsen-Wi, a Chinese general named Wang-Sang-Su, with a large force, appeared on the borders of Möng-Mao. At this time Sao Hôm-Hpā died, but the Chinese army commenced invasion of his country. The Shans could not put up any effective resistance and Sao Poreng fled to Mogaung with a party of Chinese pursuing him. At a place called Kat-Kyo-Wing-Maw on the left bank of the Nām-Kiu (the Irrawaddy) his followers mutinied, in consequence of which he, in despair, ended his life by drowning himself in the river. Since then Möng-Mao remained in the permanent occupation of the Chinese. At Mogaung the last independent *Sawbwa*, Chao Hum-Hpa, died leaving no son to succeed him. The next *Sawbwa* chosen was then Sao Tit-Hpa,[361] the grandson and only remaining descendant of Sao Hom-Hpa.[362]

With Sao Poreng's death the Mao-Shan kingdom came to an end. About that time also the Burmese for the first time came to exercise authority over Hsen-Wi. The kings of Burma had been, of course, controlling successions to the *Sawbwa* ships in the Southern Shan States from a much earlier date and used to receive tribute from them.[363] Thus the northern Shan country was divided between China and Burma. Since then the power and prosperity of the Tai principalities steadily declined. They were worn down not only by the aggression and rapacity of the Burmese and Chinese, and by the intestine wars, in which there is abundant proof that they always indulged, but also by the advances of the Kachins'.[364] It may be noted that the pressure of the Chinese, Burmese and Kachins drove the Tai from much of the territory between China Proper and Burma, until Shan names of mountains, streams, and villages are the only remaining witnesses of former occupation. It is recorded in the

361. surnamed Chou-kaa-maing.
362. N. Elias: *op.cit.*, P. 25.
363. *GUBSS*, 1.1, pp. 280-81.
364. *Ibid*, p. 281.

Upper Burma Gazetteer that 'the once powerful States west of the Irrawaddy now only possess a meagre and much Burmanized population, while the border principalities to the east from Hsum Hsai to Yawng Hwe, and in a lesser degree even to Möng Nai, have suffered almost as much from the deliberate policy of the Burmese Kings and have only survived because they had the mass of their fellow-countrymen behind them' The policy of Burmanization, followed by the Āvān Kings, ruined the Shans politically and culturally. 'The sons or brothers of the ruling *Sawbwas* were always kept at the Āvān Court, not only as hostages for the good behaviour of the Chief of the State, but that they might be reared under Burman influence and withdrawn from sympathy with those of their own race, so that when they in time came to rule, their loyalty to the suzerain might be ensured; moreover, the policy was to foster feuds between the different *Sawbwas*, and rival aspirants were left to settle their claims to the succession in a State by force of arms. The victorious claimant might be confirmed as *Sawbwa* by Royal patent, but he would not be, unless he was able to pay for it, and when the civil war was over, his forces were too exhausted to permit him to resist Burman demands'.[365] Rev. Father Sangermano, who was at Āvā and then at Rangoon from A.D. 1783 to 1807, says that from the time of Alaungpaya (1752-1760) all the *Sawbwas* were subjects and tributaries of the Burmese, but 'the cruel despotism, the continual vexations and oppressions of their masters have forced many of them to rebel; all of whom have leagued themselves with the Siamese'.[366]

The first Anglo-Burmese war ended with the Treaty of Yandaboo, which was ratified on 24 February 1826. Under the Treaty His Majesty the King of Āvā had to give up Arakan, Tenasserim, Assam and Manipur, together with the payment of an indemnity which was equivalent to one million sterling. Early in 1886 the whole of Upper Burma, including the Shan States, was declared to be a part of British India. As the eastern frontiers of the Shan States of Burma were not well defined the British government had to carry on prolonged diplomatic negotiations with France and Siam before they could be finally settled. By Section 8 of the Upper Burma Laws Act, 1886, the local Government was empowered, with the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, to define the Shan States from time to time. Before the passing of the Shan States Act, 1888, the only way in which enactments could be extended to the Shan States was by notification under the Upper Burma

365. *Ibid*,
366. Sangermano : *The Burmese Empire*, (John Murrary, 1833), p. 34.

Laws Act. The Shan States Act came into force on the 1st. February 1889. By it the civil, criminal, and revenue administration of every Shan State is vested in the Chief of the State subject to the restrictions specified in the *sanad* granted to him. The Act respected the customary law of each State so far as it was in accordance with justice, equity and good conscience, not opposed to the spirit of the law in the rest of British India. On 17 October 1947, a treaty was signed by which the Republic of the Union of Burma was recognized by the British government as a fully independent State and on 4 January 1948 the republic's first president, Sao Shwe Thaik, the Shan *Swabwa* of Yawnghwe, assumed charge from the military governor Sir Hubert Rance.

CHAPTER V

Political Expansion of the Tai in the Menam and Mekong Valleys

Early Kingdoms in Siam (Now THAÏLAND : *Muang Thai*) :

In the Menam-Mekong region of South-east Asia Siam (Thailand) is the home of the independent Tai or Thai peoples. It extends southwards into the Malay Paninsula and is bounded on the west and north by Burma and on the north-east and north by French Indo-China. It is about 1,200 miles long from north to south and about 500 miles from west to east at its greatest width comprisiong an area of 200,234 sq. miles with the Menām Chao P'ya flowing from the north to south, of which the chief tributaries are the Mè Ping, the Mé Yom, the Mé Wang and the Mé Sak. It is chiefly lowland with the valley of the Menam in the west and the valleys of the Mun and the Mekong in the east. North Siam is a combination of mountains, streams and forests, and the north-eastern part forms a large plateau about 800 feet high.

Setting aside the question of the pre-historic cave-dwellers with flint tools and weapons, which are still dug up, we find that the earliest known aborigines of Siam belong to three races, the tall and fair complexioned Was or Lawas in the north and the curly-haired Negritos and wavy-haired Indonesians in the south. The Semangs and Sakais of the forest of Malay are said to be the remnants of the last two races. They wander about naked and squalid. Then there came in the early centuries of the Christian era the Mons, or Talaings as they are now called in Burma, from their main habitat in the region of Thaton and Prome (Ramannã-deśa) and occupied Central Siam to the west of the Menām Chao p'ya called the country of Dvāravatī. There spread westwards from the Mekong delta, Cambodia and the middle Mekong region another race of people, called Khmers, who occupied alomst the whole of eastern Siam and, by the beginning of the eleventh century, established their sovereignty over the Mon country of Louvo and Dvāravatī. Under the pressure of the advanced Mons and Khmers the Lawas mostly took refuge in the hills and the southern aborigines migrated to farther south.

The most powerful impact on the Mons and Khmers was that of the Tai. The Tai political pressure on Siam came from the north. The origins of this pressure are to be traced to certain events of historic importance in the earlier abodes of the race in the north. It may be remembered that the section of the Tai population of the ancient State of Lo that followed the Marquis of Lo to Shu (Sze-chuan) had to suffer terribly under the most rigorous conditions of forced labour imposed by Shih-Wang-Ti. Many perished under those conditions and those who survived escaped to the wilds of Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Kwei-chow. A great bulk of them crossed the frontiers of the Chinese dominions and settled in southern Sze-chuan and western Yün-nān with their central seat in Ta-li Fu where they became known by their generic term Ngai-Lao. There were also Tai settlers of earlier times in that area who had been driven from the north by the Ch'in army in the first quarter of the third century B.C. They consolidated their power under their Chiefs and tried to expand. After a lapse of about two centuries and a half the Ngai-Lao came into clash with the Chinese who then rediscovered them in this southern region. The Ngai-Lao Chiefs, however, accepted the suzerainty of China and received Imperial Prefects appointed for their country.

But during General Chu-Ko-Liang's military campaigns in Yün-nān in A.D. 226 for quelling a rebellion against the authority of the Shu Han, a mass evacuation of people, predominantly Tai, took place and a great wave of these refugees from Sze-chuan, Yün-nān and Keiw-chow moved southwards down the valleys of the Mekong and Salween rivers. As a result, numerous Tai colonies began to spring up from the third century A.D. in the upper or rather middle Mekong region and in the Salween valley of East Burma.

Those Tai people, who settled themselves in this region, built up a State called Hsip-Hsawng-Pānnā in the area of Keng-Hung[1] on the western bank of the Mekong river (Lan-Tsang-Kiang of the Chinese). In the ninth century A. D., if not earlier, this State comprised a part of southern territory of Yün-nān, a part of the eastern Shan country of Burma, a part of the northwestern territory of the Laos kingdom and the northernmost part of Siam with Chieng-Sen, Chieng-Rai and Muang-Fang as its principal cities.[2] In the whole of this area the first city to become prominent historically was

1. Also called Kiang, Xieng-Hong or Chieng-Rung.
2. Hoontrakul : *op.cit.*, p.100.

Chieng-Sen, a capital of a Tai State on the bank of the Mekong. Hallett points out that the Tai or Shans migrating southwards from Yün-nān took pessession of the country which before their arrival had been occupied by the Yuns, or Karens, as they were called by the Burmese who, on their part, had driven the Lewa, or Lawa, the aboriginal inhabitants, to the south and into the hills. The Yuns occupied the country to the east of the Salween at the time of the arrival of the Shans. Kiang-Hung, he says, is still called Kiang Yun-gyee, or the large Yun town, by the Burmese. The Shans who inhabit the Yun country are called Yun Shans.

Though the earlier history of Chieng-Sen is shrouded in the mists of legends, yet from the ninth century onwards it played the main role in directing the course of early political development of the Tai colonists in the Upper Menam valley. Wood says that a list of kings, presumably Tai, belonging to the ancient Chieng-Sen dynasty, is available, but most of the early kings appear to be more mythological than historical. But one Prince P'rohm (Skr. Brahma), said to be a scion of that dynasty, appears to be a historical figure from the accounts of his deeds. He was a Tai political adventurer of the ninth century A.D. He crossed the Mekong river and founded the first Tai colony at Chai Praka in the district of Chieng-Rai. Next he founded, to the west of Chieng-Rai, the city of Muang-Fang on the bank of the river Mé Fang, a southern tributary of the Mekong, about A.D. 857.[3] He then invaded the Cambodian empire with a powerful drive down the Menam valley. He defeated the Cambodian forces, broke their defences and conquered their territories right down to Sawank'alok (Skr. Svargaloka) where he built a city called Jalieng or Chaliang.[4] The great numbers of earlier Tai settlers, whom he found in the conquered territories, welcomed him on his victorious advance to the south. Prince P'hrohm's was probably the first major war of liberation of the Tai in the Upper Menam valley after Phra Ruang's temporary victory over the Cambodians at Sawank'alok in the seventh century A.D. and of proclamation as a sovereign of Zimmè. That the early Phra Ruang Dynasty was overthrown soon after the founder's death by the 'king of Kiang Tsen' is significant and may well be connected with the Chieng-Sen rulers' design on this southern country with Tai subjects under Cambodia, which, in the ninth century, culminated in the conquests of Prince P'hrohm.

3. According to some writers it was founded about or after A.D. 881. Reginald le May thinks that Brahma (P'hrohm) crossed the Mekong river about A. D. 860.-*Ibid*, p.156.
4. Wood : *op.cit*, p.50.

How long the Tai State formed by Prince P'hrohm in northern Siam continued to last is not known and there was a gap of about three centuries and a half without a regular history of the kingdom of Chieng-Sen. Dodd says that the kingdom of Chieng-Sen has a history as brilliant as that of Nān-Chao. But at one stage the Tai abandoned the capital at Chieng-Sen and founded a kingdom farther south-west, of which the capital was Phou Kam,[5] a town situated on the Salween river. This new enterprise, however, proved to be ephemeral. Prince Damrong also made mention of an independent Tai State in the valley of the Salween river,[6] but owing to the pressure of population, a number of them migrated farther westward and settled in Burma, while others went towards Tongking and Luang Prabang. The exact date of foundation of the State in the Salween valley remains unmentioned.

K'un Chom T'amma, a descendant of Prince P'hrohm, founded the city of P'ayao in A.D. 1096 to the south of Chieng-Sen. This city became the capital of an independent Tai State in North Siam created at the cost of the Cambodian empire.

By the middle of the eleventh century some of the Tai communities penetrated Central Siam (Thailand), but they were minorities with no political significance. They formed themselves into semi-independent villages (*bān* or *wān*) or towns (*muang* or *möng*) each with its own chief called *Hpaw muanh* (father of muang). Early in the twelfth century A.D. the Tai in the Upper Menam valley made of their *muangs* small States under their chieftains called *Chaos*. It had all been a slow process so long, but in the thirteenth century there was what has been described by Coedé's an 'effervescence' among the Tai in the upper and middle Mekong area which includes also the northern part of North Siam. Kublai Khan's conquest of Ta-li in A.D. 1253 caused a further mass movement of Tai population into Upper Burma and 'the no-man's-land bordering on Siam'.

It is necessary here to look into the background of the expansion of Cambodian dominion over Siam, called archaeologically Cambodian or Khmer period. The pre-Khmer ancient kingdom of Funān (or B'iu-nam), which was confined originally to Cambodia and Cochin China, developed into an extensive maritime empire in the third century A.D.

5. Dodd : *op.cit.*, chap XXI.
6. Reginald le May : *op.cit.*, p.156.

stretching from the Bay of Bengal in the west to Champā in the east. It also included a major part of the Malay Peninsula. Funan was undoubtedly the first great power in South-east Asia in the early centuries of the Christian era. But near the middle of the sixth century A.D. it was conquered by the Khmer State of Chenla, which was to its north. Chenla had been a vassal State of Funan. It was a revolt by Bhavavarman and his brother Chitrasena of Chenla, probably to restore the legitimate line, that led to this conquest. According to Briggs Funān still continued to enjoy autonomy until A.D. 627, when it was incorporated with Chenla by Isānavarman.[7] During the seventh century A.D. Chenla seems to have conquered the valley of the Sé Mun and all that is now eastern Siam and Laos up to the border of Yün-nān.[8] The eighth century in Khmer history was a period of unrest and confusion. It is not until the early ninth century A.D. that stability was restored by king Jayavarman II, who succeeded in bringing the whole country under his control. Jayavarman II came to the throne in A.D. 802 and was the first king to transfer the capital to Angkor in the north-western region of the Great Lake. Briggs says that after the establishment of the Empire of the Kambuja in that year, the Khmer monarchs of the ninth and tenth centuries seem to have re-established their authority over the region of eastern Siam and the neighbouring areas to the east. But the Mon States Louvo[9] including probably the old Dvāravatī and its colony, Haripurjai (Lamp'un) in the north—apparently extending over the whole of western Siam, from the gulf on the south to the Mekong on the north, remained independent nearly to the close of the tenth century A.D.[10]

Funān proper, which occupied the Mekong delta, conquered most of south Siam as well as much of the Malay Peninsula early in the third century A.D. According to Reginald Le May even North-East of Siam appears at about that period to have formed part of the Hinduized kingdom of Funān.[11] There was also the ancient country of Dvāravatī or Dvāravadi which extended over a large part of the region at the head of the Gulf of Siam. It was originally a Mon Kingdom and was Buddhist. It occupied the region around the north-east corner of the head of the Gulf, near the mouth of the Meklong. The land here was above the

7. Lawrence Palmer Briggs : *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, p.42.
8. *JAOS*, vol. 65, 1945, p.104.
9. Also Lavo, Lvo, Lopburi, Lophburi, Lophaburi or Lavapura (Navapura). The Chinese called it Lo-hou or simply Lo. Lefevre-Pontalis quotes the *Vongsavadan Muong Neua* as saying that Louvo was founded by a son of the King of Takkasila (Takṣaśilā) in the last quarter of the 5th century. (JAOS, vol.65, 1945, p.103).
10. Briggs in *JAOS*, vol .65, 1945, p. 104.
11. *Op.cit.*, p.62.

highest flood-level and the soil was fertile. It was also free from the fevers of the Menam delta. These natural advantages probably attracted the early Indian immigrants to make their settlements in this area which also became in Siam the most important centre of Indian culture and civilization. "The earliest settlement of Dvāravatī", describes Briggs specifically, "of which we have knowledge was at the present village of P'ong Tuk, a few miles north of the head of the Bay, at the cross-roads between Petchaburi and Rathburi on the south, Kanburi and Muang-Sing on the west, Uthong (Suphan ?) on the North and Nakhon Pathom on the East, and about a day's march from each."[12] Whatever may be the accuracy of the distances there is little doubt about the general position of the earliest Indian settlement. In 1927, on receiving information about finds obtained by the natives at P'ong Tuk, the Royal Institute of Bangkok deputed its Secretary, George Coedès, to investigate. Excavations revealed ruined monuments characteristic of Buddhism, particularly of the Thera-vāda school. They show no resemblance to Khmer architecture and antedate the known advent of the Thai into this region by many centuries. As most of the inscriptions of Dvāravatī and Louvo are in Mon and none in Khmer before the eleventh century A.D. nor in Thai at any time, Coedès holds that P'ong Tuk was an ancient Mon city and that it was abandoned before the Khmer conquest of this region in the eleventh century A.D. either due to an epidemic of cholera or a change in the course of the river Meklong.

Nothing definite is known about the relations of ancient Dvāravatī and Funān. All that can be surmised is that Funān was the overlord. It was during the seventh century A.D. that the name Dvāravatī first appeared in history. The Annals of the T'ang relate how during what was called the *cheang-kuan* era (A.D. 627-49), ambassadors from *Po-li-lo-cha* visited the Chinese Court. They also mention *Te-houan-lo-p'o-ti* as a vassal State of Burma (probably the Pyu) which is doubtful. Hiueng-Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century (A.D. 629-45), mentions the kingdom of *To-lo-po-ti* in his enumeration of eastern countries. I-Ching, writing in the latter part of the seventh century A.D. tells of a youth from the Annamite country who was taken as a boy to *Tou-ho-louo-po-ti*. These names : *Po-li-lo-cha*, *Te-houan-lo-p'o-ti*, *To-lo-po-ti*, and *Tou-ho-louo-po-ti*, are considered transliterations of the Sanskrit name Dvāravatī.[13] From the geographical

12. See also 'The Excavations at P'ong Tuk and Their Importance for the Ancient History of Siam' by George Coedés (*JSS*, 1928, XXI, Part B), pp.208-9.

13. Briggs : 'Dvāravatī, the Most Ancient Kingdom of Siam', in *JAOS*, vol.65, 1945, p.102. Coedes has restored *T'o-lo-po-ti* as Dvāravatī. Rev. E.J. Eitel in *Chinese Buddhism* has interpreted it as Dvāra-pati (Lord of the Gate). E.J. Thomas takes it to be same as Dvāravatī (Dwarakā), the city of Krisna, in Kathiawar.

descriptions of the Chinese writers Dvāravatī seems to have embraced all the territory between Prome and Chenla, including the Irrawaddy and Sittang deltas, the region which the Pali writers call Ramañña-deśa, the Mon country. Though it is well-known that the Mon country was under the hegemony of Sudhamma-pura (Thaton), yet probably in some earlier period Dvāravatī was supreme with its capital at Phra Pa Thom (Nagara Pathama). Charles Durciselle says that the Mons had conquered Prome from the Pyu and ruled over all of what is Lower Burma. Is it the overthrow of Pyu overlordship ? The record in the T'ang Annals that Dvāravatī (*Te-houan lo-p'o-ti*) was a vassal of P'iao (Pyu) may indicate this. The question requires further investigation.

The Mon kingdom of Dvāravatī extended more to the east and north in the seventh century A.D. and founded a colony at Louvo. The latter developed into the kingdom of Louvo with its capital at Lopburi and began to overshadow old Dvāravatī. Whether the capital was shifted from Nagara Pathama to Lopburi, or Dvāravatī and Louvo remained as two seperate States, no definite assertion can be made. An important event is that about the middle of the seventh century A.D. Lopburi in its turn founded a Mon settlement at Lamp'un, 17 miles south-east of Chieng-mai, on the Mé K'uang, a tributary of the Méping in what is now north-western Thailand (Siam). It was then occupied by the Lawas, who were apparently animists, pure and simple with a primitive form of culture. This with other settlements side by side developed later as the Mon kingdom of Haripunjai (Haripunjaya). An account of the founding of this kingdom is contained in one of the Laotian Chronicles translated by the Pavie Mission of 1879-95. Pontalis, a French diplomat and later Minister to Siam, who was with the Pavie Mission, believed that in A.D. 574 both Louvo and Haripunjai were Khmer kingdoms, but Coedès definitely established that these kingdoms were both Mon.[14] Further, in the districts round Lamp'un, Lampang and P're, which is at a distance of 60 miles to the east of Lampang, Mon tradition is very strong even to this day and the seven inscriptions found at different temples in Lamp'un are all in Mon language and written in a script similar to that of the Mon inscriptions of Pagan. The earliest epigraphical evidence, however, does not take us back much beyond the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. The *Hamsa* bird, which was the emblem of Mon sovereignty, is often found to adorn the summits of the flag-poles of the monasteries in this area. Two Chronicles in Pali,

14. *JAOS*, vol. 65, 1945, p.103.

namely, *Camadevivaṁsa* ('The History of Chāma Devi')[15] and *Jinakālamālinī* (The Garland-maker of the Times of the Buddha'),[16] translated and annotated by Coedés a few years back, throw further light on the imperfect history of Lamp'un and its development. According to *Jinakālamālinī* Cāma Devī (Chām T'ewi) was the daughter of the king of Louvo (Lavo) and married the king of Ramaṇña-nagara,[17] which was undoubtedly the capital of Ramaṇña-deśa or the Mon country of Lower Burma. She is said to have left her husband, probably as a widow after her husband's death, about A.D. 661-3 and led a missionary expedition of emigrants from Lopburi to North Siam and founded Lamp'un. Her mission was probably the first to introduce Hinayāna (Theravāda) Buddhism in that region. There was a series of wars with the indigenous Lawas for the possession of the country. The *History of Nāng Kiaṁ Mahā Tevī*[18] also confirms that Nāng Kiam (i.e. Nāng Ciam or Cām or Cāma Devī) was the daughter of the king of Louvo. She held the title of Mahā Tevī (Maha Devī). It is said that Cāma Devī was already pregnant at the time of proceeding to Lamp'un, and soon after her arrival there, gave birth to two sons, one of whom became king of Lamp'un, and, the other king of Lampang (K'elang). To this region of Lamp'un also flowed many Mon-speaking immigrants from Thaton and Pegu carrying with them Indianized culture and Buddhism of the Hinayāna (Thera-vāda) school and soon set up a Mon kingdom under the name of Haripunjai. In northern Siam no traces of an early Chinese influence are to be found except in the temple structure.

Cāmadevivaṁsa says that Cāma Devī founded five monasteries in Lamp'un, one being the Mahāyāna. Reginald Le May says that there is still a temple of that name near the west gate of Lamp'un. Cāma Devī is said also to have built another city at Alambanganapuri (Lampang Luang), 10 miles south-west of Lampang and erected a temple there which is one of the finest in Thailand. She retired to Haripunjai after her second son became king of K'elang and died.

About the end of the tenth century A.D. Louvo and Haripunjai were at war with each other and Tai Chronicles refer to it.

15. Written by a monk named Bodhiramsi early in the 15th century either at Chiengmai or Lamp'un. A large part of his narrative is of a legendary character.
16. Written by Ratanapanna, a monk of the Rattanavana Mahāvihāra monastery a Chiengmai in A.D. 1516.
17. Probably Thaton, the ancient seat of the Mon kingdom in Lower Burma.
18. *Histoire de Nang Kiam Maha Tevi* (Pavie Mission), p.147.

Jinakālamālinī also gives an account of this war. It says that Trabaka, the king of Lamp'un made an attack by river on the kingdom of Louvo (Lavo). When Ucchitta-Cakkavatti, the king of Louvo, advanced with his army to meet him, Jivaka, king of Tāmbralinga,[19] an Indianized Malay State on the Malay Peninsula, advanced northwards with a large force and many ships and seized Lopburi and conquered the kingdom of Louvo. Unable to enter his kingdom Ucchitta-Cakkavatti fled towards Lamp'un and occupied it before Trabaka could arrive. The latter then made a second attempt to seize Louvo but it failed and he disappeared from the scene. It is further related in the *Jinakālamālinī* that the king of Louvo invaded Lamp'un, but was repulsed with heavy losses. Briggs refers to a Pali Chronicle of Western Laos as saying that, shortly after the conquest of Louvo (Lavo), a king named Kambujaraja tried to conquer Haripunjai, but was defeated and forced to flee.[20] Who was this Kambujaraja ? Nothing definite is known from the records. But Briggs is of the opinion that he was Jivaka's son Sūryavarman I, king of Kambuja (Cambodian kingdom).[21] This king's failure to conquer Haripunjai can also be inferred from several Khmer inscriptions which testify that he remained ruler of Louvo, while later inscriptions found at Haripunjai are in Mon. Sūryavarman I, whose father came from Tambralinga, a centre of Mahāyāna Buddhism, is apparently a Buddhist of that school and with his advent Mahāyāna Buddhism found a place in Central Siam, while the Mons of Haripunjai were essentially Hinayānist and remained politically independent. From the Lopburi inscriptions of the first half of the eleventh century A.D. it appears that the Khmer kings also allowed Brahminical faiths to come into the kingdom. These inscriptions granted equal protection and privileges to both kinds of Buddhism and the various forms of Hinduism. The people followed the Buddhist faith but the royal Court was surrounded by Brahminical rites and ceremonies, though the king was Buddhist. The royal Buddhist monks, for instance, gave to Sūryavarman I the posthumous name of Nirvāṇa Pada, while the Brahmins called him Sūryavaṁśī, that is, one born of the god Sun and as possessing the grace of Vishnu.[22]

19. Tan-mei-liu, which is the Tambralinga of the Pali *Niddeśa*, was an Indianized ancient kingdom, known to have been existing from the beginning of the 2nd. century A.D. Its first formation is difficult to trace. The region of modern Ligor, then called Nakor Sri T'ammarat (Nagara Śri Dharmarāṣṭra), was its centre.
20. *JAOS*, vol.65, 1945, p.104.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Briggs : *JAOS*, vol.65, 1945, p.104 ; Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, p.146.

In the middle of the eleventh century A.D. the northern kingdom of Lamp'un suffered from a great calamity. *Cāmadevīvaṁśa* contains an account of how an epidemic of cholera broke out in that region at that time and the people fled *en masse* to Thaton. But Anawrahta's invasion of that Mon country in A.D. 1057 drove many of them further to Haṁsawadi (Haṁsavatī : Pegu) where they were welcomed by their brethren, as they spoke the same language, that is, Mon,. The same Pali work also refers to the people of Lamp'un as Ramaṇña. *Pongsawadan Yonaka* records that when the epidemic subsided these people returned to Lamp'un and with them came many Mon-speaking people from Lower Burma who introduced the Mon script in northern Siam. It was from this script probably that the modern Lao script has been developed.

In A. D. 1001 Jibaka's son, Sūryavarman I, found, as the story goes, an opportunity to seize the throne of Cambodia at Angkor by virtue of his descent through his mother. Just at that time the Khmer throne was in dispute and he proceeded with a loyal band of followers either by the river Sé Mun (Nām Mun) or by sea and landed in the eastern part of Cambodia. After a protracted civil war the ephemeral rule of the then ruling king Udayādityavarmaṇ I (A.D. 1001-2) was extinguished and Sūryavarmaṇ I installed himself at Angkor in C.A.D. 1010. An inscription at Lopburi claims that Sūryavarmaṇ's empire also included the Mon kingdom of Dvāravatī and the Malay kingdom of Tāmbralinga, later Ligor.[23] This part of the History is not all based on authentic records.

The eleventh century was for the Khmers a period of violent civil strife, revolts and wars. It was Sūryavarmaṇ II (A.D. 1113-50), the most powerful king of Khmer history, who not only restored stability to the empire, but also brought more territories under his sway by his conquests on the east and the west. But the Tai Chronicles say that his attempt to annex the Mon kingdom of Haripunjai was foiled. Hall points out that the *Sung History* described the Cambodian frontiers as the southern border of Champā, the sea in the south, the borders of Pagan in the west, and Grahi on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, Sūryavarmaṇ II was the founder of the world-famous Angkor Wat (Temple of Angkor).[24]

23. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia.* p.100.

24. It was conceived and dedicated to Vishnu by Sūryavarman II. A gold statue of Vishnu is mounted on a garuḍa. Coedés makes it clear that the Vishnu venerated in Angkor Wat was not the ancient Hindu god, nor one of his *avatāras*, but the King Sūryavarmaṇ II himself, identified with Vishnu after his death. The majestic shrine was erected in order to become his mausoleum when he died. The mausoleum is decorated with beautiful figures of *apsarās* just like Vishnu himself in his heavenly residence. The image of the king is seen on the bas-reliefs of the south gallery where he is twice represented, once as seated in the midst of his court and the other as standing erect on his war elephant. The Wat to the moat covers about 500 acres of land and the topmost tower is of 220 feet above the ground. Reginald Le May, who paid two visits to Angkor, says that "the Great Temple of Angkor dwarfs every other ancient building one is likely to see, and has no compeer for sheer magnificence and richness of decoration". *Op.cit.*, pp.98, 125, 134-5.

By the time Sūryavarmaṇ II ascended the throne of Cambodia the Tai had already infiltrated into the Menām valley and had settled in the State of Louvo. According to the Tai Chronicles Sūryavarmaṇ II's campaigns against Louvo failed, but it is doubtful in view of the contemporary architecture of Lopburi expressing strong Khmer influence. The Khmer failure may be only a particular phase in the campaigns. But after Sūryavarmaṇ II's death very little is known of the events in the Khmer dominions for three quarters of a century. All that is known is that Dharaṇindravarmaṇ II, who was the cousin of Sūryavarmaṇ II, came to the throne in A.D. 1150. Unlike his predecessors he was a Buddhist, who, as Hall points out, 'broke the long tradition of Hinduism.'

Inspired probably by the Tai successes in the north under the leadership of Prince P'hrohm, the Tai in Central Siam also became rebellious and threatened to overthrow the Cambodian rule in the middle of the thirteenth century. The King of Cambodia, Jayavarmaṇ VIII (A.D. 1243-95),[25] sent General Khlon Lamphong, the governor of the Upper Menām valley, to restore order. But two Tai Chiefs, Hpaw Hkun Bāng Klāng Thao who had married a daughter of Jayavarmaṇ VII[26] and Hpaw Hkun Hpā Muang, rulers respectively of two petty States, Muang-Bang-Yang and Muang-Rat under Khmer sovereignty, rose in revolt. The cause of the rising is obscure. With the united strength of their forces the Tai Chiefs defeated the Khmer General in a pitched battle. They then launched simultaneous attacks on Sukhot'ai (Sukhodaya), the northern sub-capital of the Cambodian Empire, and its sister-city Sachanālai (Sajjanālaya), the name

25. He ruled for the longest period in Khmer history, but was without any achievement as a ruler or a builder. He was notorious for committing 'acts of vandalism on the Buddhist images'. Under him Brahman dominance was re-established.

26. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p.112. Jayavarmaṇ VII is supposed to have been the greatest of all Khmer monarchs. He was a Buddhist and under him Mahāyāna Buddhism became dominant in Cambodia. He introduced the Buddha-raja cult. His chief queen Jayarājadevī 'filled the earth with a shower of magnificent gifts'. He was the builder of Angkor Thom, an impregnable city fortified against Cham invasions, and also the Bayon. He ruled from about A.D. 1181 to 1218. One of his predecessors Jayavarman II, who ruled from A.D. 802 to 854, was the builder of the famous stone temple at Angkor Thom.

for merly given to Sawank'alok (Svargaloka).[27] They captured the two cities, which offered little resistance, and also wrested the northern part of the Western Cambodian Empire. At Sukhot'ai Hpaw Hkun Bāng Klāng Thao, the Chief of Bāng-Yāng, was crowned king under the title of Śri Indrapat-Indrāditya (or Hkun Śri Indrāditya or Int'arat'itya) by his friend and ally Hpaw Hkun Hpā Muang.[28] The title Śri Indrapat-Indrāditya was originally given by the Cambodian King to Hpaw Hkun Hpā Muang who transferred it to Hpaw Hkun Bāng Klāng Thao when the latter became king as recorded in the Sukhot'ai Inscription No. 2. The exact date of Śri Indrāditya's coronation is still a matter of controversy. According to Phya Anuman Rajadhon it is about A.D. 1252 or 1257.[29] Sri Indrāditya is identified with Śri Sūrya Phrā Mahā Dharmarājādhirāja of the Siamese Annals.[30] His capital was Sajjanālaya Sukhodaya.

The Western Cambodian Empire at that time had its capital at Lavo or the present Lophaburi (Lavapuri). Sukhot'ai was probably its western frontier town or sub-capital of strategic importance. What happened to Lopburi when Hsien or Sukhot'ai-Sawnak'alok fell ? The question remains as yet unsolved. Probably it continued to maintain its precarious existence as a Khmer city until it was absorbed in the next century by the fast rising State of U-T'ong (Supanburi) under a Prince descended from the famous Chieng-Sen Tai dynasty.

The Tai or Thai who conquered Sukhot'ai are called archaeologically Thai Noi i.e. Little or Minor Thai in contrast to the Shans who are called Thai Yai i.e. Great or Major Thai vulgarly called Ngio, a word coming probably from the Ngwe Shan as called by the Burmese. Traditionally the Thai Noi are supposed to have come either from among the Thai of Chiengmai (Zimmé) or from among the Laos of Muang Luang Phrā Bāng. But neither the Thai of Zimmé nor the Lao call themselves Thai Noi. Yet the possibility of the Thai Noi being an offshoot of the Major Thai cannot be ruled out. It will be further discussed below.

The events in upper Central Siam leading to the historic conquest of Sukhot'ai by the Thai in the middle of the thirteenth century were followed by a fresh development in the north. A Lü (Tai) Prince named

27. Raginald Le May *op. cit.*, p. 169.
28. *Ibid*,, p. 169.
29. Personal Note from Phya Anuman Rajadhon.
30. *BEFE-O*, XVI, 3, 1916.

Meng-Rai,[31] who succeeded his father as king of Chieng-Sen in A.D. 1259, commenced a brilliant series of campaigns subjugating northern Siam. Reginald Le May says that Meng-Rai (or Mang-Rai) was born in A.D. 1239 and was the son of the last Lawa Chief of Chiengsen by a Tai mother.[32] Legend says that he was born under miraculous circumstances and possessed superhuman qualities. But this prince is always regarded by the Tai as a Tai and was the son-in-law of the Lü (Tai) prince of Keng-Hung[33] (or Chieng-Rung). He was a Buddhist. He moved up a southern tributary of the Mekong and founded Chieng-Rai after his own name in A.D. 1263. He then founded Muong-Fāng in A.D. 1273, after which he crossed the divide to the upper Meping. In this campaign of conquest in A.D. 1287 Meng-Rai suddenly came into a violent clash with Wareru, the Tai ruler of the kingdom of Martaban (which included Thaton and Pegu), over a frontier dispute as referred to above. The dispute was peacefully settled in the end. In A.D. 1292 he captured the Mon capital Lamp'un, thus putting an end to the kingdom of Haripunjai, which was until then a vassal State of Cambodia. He founded there the famous kingdom of Lānnāt'ai[34] (Chieng-mai), called Pa-pe or Pa-pai-hsi-fu by the Chinese and Yonakarāttha in the Pali Chronicles, and established his first new capital at Wieng Kumkan (or Kum-kam) the remains of which, says Wood, can still be seen five miles from Chiengmai. But as this site was a lowland and subject to inundation, in A.D. 1296 he transferred the capital to the present city of Chieng-mai, after selecting the site in co-operation with his brother princes, Ram Kamhaeng of Sukhot'ai and K'un Ngam Muang of P'ayo.[35] By his conquest Prince Meng-Rai made himself master of the major part of north Siam and his kingdom Lānnāt'ai comprised Chieng-mai, Lamp'un, Nak'on Lamp'ang, Chieng-Rai, Chieng-Sen and the State of Keng-tung (then called K'emarāt). The only other independent State under a powerful ruler in the north-western part of Siam at that time was P'ayo. P'ayo was originally a small independent Thai principality, which came into existence in A.D. 1096 and whose location was at the junction of the Méping and the Méwang rivers.[36] But by A.D. 1296 it rose to be one of the three powerful States not subject to Cambodia.

31. Briggs : *JAOS*, vol. 69, 1949, p.71.
32. Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, p.167.
33. Briggs in *JAOS*, vol. 65, 1945, p.105.
34. Coedés, *Laos Occidental*, pp.28-9. f
35. Wood : *op.cit.*, p.56.
36. Hall : *A History of South-east Asia*, p.144.

The impact of the Mongols was felt by the Tai kingdoms of the south soon after the conquest of China by Kublai Khan (Emperor Shih Tsu). Haughty embassies were sent by Kublai Khan to these kingdoms demanding submission. His relations with Siam were two-fold : in the south, by sea with Hsien (or Sien-Syam, Sukhot'ai in Central Siam) and Lo-hu (or Lo-hou, Lavo, Louvo, Lavapura or modern Lopburi in the old Mon kingdom of South Siam or Dvāravatī); in the north, by land with Pa-pai-hsi-fu (Lān-nā or Yonakarāttha) of which Chieng-mai was the capital and Ch'e-li (Chieng-Rung or Keng-Hung and the Hsip-Nsawng-Pān-nā), the country of the Lü (Tai) people.[37] According to the *Yuan-shih*, as translated by Pelliot, the Mongol Emperor established his first contact with Lo-hu in A.D. 1289 and with Hsien in A.D. 1292 through Canton. Ram Khamhaeng was then the ruler of the Hsien country. In the north the first invasion of Pa-pai-hsi-fu was led in A.D. 1292-93 by Mangu Turumish. Under pressure of repeated attacks by the Mongols 'Great Ch'e-li' (Chieng-Rung) submitted in A.D. 1296, but 'Little Ch'e-li', said to lie to the east, or rather south-east, and called by the Tai Lannāt'ai, resisted refusing to become a part of Ch'e-li or, according to the Mongols, revolted.[38] The Mongol conquerors then organized the Hsip-Hsawng-Pānnā region as the Chinese province of Ch'o-li (Ch'e-li). It is noteworthy that, probably in anticipation of a possible Mongol danger, in A.D. 1287, the year of the destruction of Pagan by the Mongols and their Shan allies, the three potentates Meng-Rai, Ram Kamhaeng and Ngām Muang, the Chief of P'ayo, met together and concluded a pact of friendship. The pact was apparently to estabilish a strong Tai confederacy to resist the Mongols on the one hand and fight the Cambodians on the other. Lānnātai's power to resist the Mongols may be traced to this pact. It appears that Mongol suzerainty, if it was extended at all to the Tai kingdoms of Northern and Central Siam, was only nominal.

In September, 1297, on the other hand, pa-pai-hsi-fu (Lānnāt'ai) invaded Chinese Great Ch'e-li. There is mention of a Chinese expedition of February, 1301 against Pa-pai-hsi-fu, for which the Emperor gave paper money reckoned altogether at over 92,000 'Shoes' (*ting* in Chinese or Tai). On May 21st. of that year 'the Emperor moved the Yün-nān army to invade Pa-pai-hsi-fu'. Those persons of Yün-nān, who volunteered to go on the expedition, were given 60 strings of *cowries* each. Even the various 'southern barbarians' on the borders of Pa-pai-hsi-fu agreed

37. Luce's "The Early Syam in Burma's History" in *JSS*, XLVI, 2, 1958, p.139
38. *JAOS*, vol.69, 1949, p.71 : also *Nan-Tchao ye-tche*, 118, 120-2.

among themselves not to pay taxes and imposts to the Chinese authorities, and they robbed and killed the government officials under the Chinese. On account of the ruin of the expeditionary army in the war in April, 1303, the Emperor put to death Liu Shen, and sentenced to flogging He-la-tai and Cheng Yu. There were raids and counter-offensives by Pa-pai-hsi-fu and Great and Little Ch'e-li from time to time for the next seven or eight years until in March 1312 Pa-pai-hsi-fu appears for the first time to have offered as tribute two tame elephants. Raids and temporary submissions on the part of the Tai States on the borders of Siam went on for many years as described in the *pen-chi* of the *Yuan-shih*.

The relations between the Tai rulers of Siam and the Chinese imperial authority of that time can be inferred from certain facts. There is, for instance, no mention anywhere of Meng-Rai, the King of Lannat'ai, visiting the Chinese Court. He only visited Pagan in A.D. 1290, which was then ruled over by Shan (Tai) Chiefs under nominal suzerainty of China. He brought back from Pagan a number of artists and artizans for his kingdom. Under Pagan's influence he was also inspired to found in A. D. 1292 the temple of Chieng-man at Chieng-mai.

The son and successor of Indrāditya was Ram Kamhaeng (C. 1275-C. 1317)[39] of Sukhot'ai, whose full title being Pho Khun Ram Kamhaeng Chao Muran Śri Sajanālaya Sukhodaya. He maintaied cordial relations with China. The Chinese Annals say that he paid two visits to the Imperial Court, the first in A.D. 1294 while Kublai Khan was alive, and second in A.D. 1300. During his second visit he married a Chinese princess. While returning from China he brought to Sukhot'ai Chinese potters. It is recorded in the Chinese dynastic histories that in A.D. 1289, 1292, 1296 and 1299 Lo-hou (Louvo), Sien (Sukhot'ai) and Pape sent embassies to the Mongol Court. Chinese embassies also visited the Courtof Ram Kamhaeng in A.D. 1293 and 1295 with imperial orders.[40] Ram Kamhaeng paid tribute to the Emperor regularly all through his reign and also applied for Chinese white horses with saddles and bridles and also gold-thread garments as had been given to his father.[41] Ram Kamhaeng was a great statesman and a brave soldier.

39. Indrāditya had three sons, of whom Ram Kamhaeng ("Rama the Brave") was the youngest.
40. Pelliot : *Deux itinerairos*, 240-4,
41. Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, p.70.

The details of Ram Kamhaeng's dominions are known from a postscript[42] to his inscription. According to the postscript account his dominions extended northwards up to Muong P'le (P're), Muong Man, Muong P'lua on the river Nan, and on the other side of the Mekong up to Muong Chava (Luang Phrā Bāng) which marks the frontier ; southwards they extended to the sea and included Sup'annaphum, Ratburi, P'echaburi and Śi Thammarāt (Ligor); Westwards they reached up to Muong Chot (Me Sot) and the sea ; and eastwards, as far as Vieng-Chan and Vieng-Kham which marks the frontier. He also established his suzerainty over Pegu and Martaban when Wareru had to acknowledge his overlordship. But Wood in his *History of Siam* points out that 'it must not be assumed that King Ram K'amhaeng exercised effective control over all these regions. For instance, the Prince of Sup'an had by this time already attained to a powerful position, and the Tai rulers of Lopburi and the ancient city of Ayodhia (both related to King Ram K'amheng) were either independent or were subject to the King of Cambodia'.

Ram Kamhaeng extended his conquests to the Malay Peninsula in A.D. 1294 and subjugated a considerable part of it then under the Empire of Śrivijay. The Tai had already penetrated into that region about the middle of the thirteenth century A.D. and since then intercourse had been maintained by them with Sukhot'ai. Had it not been for the Chinese imperial intervention, probably the whole of the Peninsula would have come under the rule of Sukhot'ai. The *Yuan Shih* says that 'the people of Hsien and Ma-li-yu-erh (Malayu) had long been quarrelling and fighting with each other. Now both submitted'. Ram Kamhaeng's attack on the northern possessions of Śrivijaya had begun about A.D. 1280 as recorded in the Mon Chronicles. The new Emperor, Ch'eng Tsung, ordered Hsien : 'Do not injure Ma-li-yu-erh. Do not trample on your promise'. On February 2, 1299, Hsien, Mo-la-yu (i.e. Ma--li yu-erh) and Lo-hu came to the Imperial Court together, and the Crown Prince of Hsien was specially honoured. In the Chinese record Sukhot'ai is mentioned by name as *Su-ku-tai* when on June 15, 1299 several embassies of southern sea came to the Chinese Court with tributes of tigers, elephants and boats made of *sha-lo* wood. One of these embassies, that of Hsien, is described in the 'Section on Hsien' in the *Yuan-Shih*.

Malayu (Malay-Land) is known to have been the first Hindu kingdom established in Djambi in Sumātrā in A.D. 644. A short time afterwards

42. Hall gives a translation (vide his *A History of South-east Asia*, pp. 147-49) of Coedès's French version in *Les Etat hindouises*, p. 342.

the Buddhist kingdom of Śrivijaya in the Palembang River valley of Sumātrā became powerful and conquered Malayu and Banka and gained a foothold on the Malaya Peninsula.[43] This expansion of Śrivijaya is attributed to king Jayanasa (Jayanāga). The famous Chinese Buddhist pilgrim I-tsing (I-Ching), while on his way to India, came on a Persian ship to Śrivijaya and spent six months there studying Sanskrit. He then made his onward voyage to India in a ship belonging to the king of Śrivijaya. During his stay at Śrivijaya he found there over a thousand Buddhist monks. Mahāyāna Buddhism, mixed up with Tantric mysticism, was the prevailing religion of the kingdom, the source of which may be traced to Nālandā of the period of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal and Magadha. The Chinese royal edict of A.D. 695 mentions ambassadors from Śrivijaya.

It is important to note that the Ligor (Vieng Sā) stele, bearing a *Śaka* date corresponding to 15 April, 775, at the Wat Sema-muang contains ten Sanskrit verses commemorating the foundation of a Mahāyānist sanctuary and celebrating certain victories by a king of Śrivijaya of the Śailendra family, thus indicating Śrivijaya's conquest of the Malay Peninsula. The Arabs found in A.D. 844 a powerful kingdom, called Zabag, or later Javaka, in the Malay Peninsula with its capital in the Ligor (Śritammarāt) region of which the king styled himself 'The Mahārājā'. In the eleventh century A.D., the Śailendras were still ruling over Sumātrā and the Malay Peninsula, though they had lost Java. King Chandrabhānu of Javaka twice invaded Ceylon in A.D. 1236 and 1256 without success. Though Dvāravatī continued to exist in the eighth century A.D. its influence was not in evidence from that time in the south, where inscriptions in Sanskrit or Khmer are only found between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D.[44] Śrivijaya, with Malayu as its subject State, continued to flourish until in the last decade of the thirteenth century the Tai pressure from the north ousted its authority from the northern part of the Malay Peninsula.

Sukhot'ai under Ram Kamhaeng is called the 'cradle of Siamese civilization'. The king was a devout Buddhist and adopted Thera-vāda Buddhism as the official religion. This he did by inviting a renowned teacher of Sinhalese Buddhism from Nakon Śritammarāt. There were venerable monks and a Mahāthera who had their residence to the east of the city where there were temples. The king could be approached

43. Edwin M. Loeb and Robert Heine-Geldern : *Sumatra*, (Vienna, 1935), p.7.

44. *JBRS*, vol.XIV, Part III - 'Dvaravati'. Also Reginald Le May : *op.cit.*, pp. 79-80.

by all his subjects for the redress of their grievances. "Go ring the bell which has been hung up" was the order for calling the king who decides every case righteously. He was the ideal king of Siam. In A.D. 1283 Ram Kamhaeng instituted the present Thai alphabet and its earliest specimen is exhibited in the Stone Inscription[45] of the same monarch, now preserved in the National Museum, Bangkok. Until his time various forms of the Cambodian alphabet had been in use in Siam. The alphabet of king Ram Kamhaeng was adopted throughout Siam, including the Chieng-mai dominions.[46] The inscription is on a large flat slab of stone set in masonry on the terrace beside the ruins of an old palace at Sukhot'ai. The stone was an object of reverence and fear to all the people. It was brought to Bengkok in A.D. 1838 by King Mahā Mongkut while he was a priest. Dr. O. Frankfurter remarks that 'it is a typical Buddhist inscription, recording, not so much deeds of war and conquest, but the happiness which the people of the realm enjoyed in the reign of Phrā Ram Kamhaeng, what he did for the culture of the people, how he understood the Buddhist religion, what are the maxims of Government by which he was guided, how he was the first to use the written Thai character for record.'

'Though modelled on the Indian one', says Phya Anuman Rajadhon, 'through the medium of the Khmer or Cambodian characters, the Thai alphabet differs from the Indian and the Cambodian sources'.[47] The Stone Inscription of Ram Kamhaeng in the National Museum, Bangkok, first presents this early form of Thai alphabet.

It is presumed that the majority of Ram Kamhaeng's subjects, particularly in the southern part of his realm, were Mons and Khmers. While Ram Kamhaeng established his dominion over western Thailand (Siam), which was until then under the Khmers; on the east, Louvo regained independence in the beginning of the last decade of the thirteenth century, or probably earlier, as evident from the Chinese records mentioning embassies from that State. Louvo continued to exist as an independent State to the middle of the fourteenth century when it was absorbed by the Thai kingdom of Ayuthia.

45. The translation and transcription of this Inscription are given in (i) *Le Siem Ancien* of M. Fournereau, (ii) *Etudes diverses* of the Pavie Mission, (iii) Dr. Bradley in *JSS* (1909) and (iv) *BEFE-O*, 1916.

46. Wood says that the present western Lao alphabet is a more modern form corrupted by Burmese influence. The Luang P'rabang alphabet is a form of the Ram Kamhaeng alphabet.

47. Phya Anuman Rajadhon : *Thai Language*, (Thailand Culture Series, Bangkok, 1954), p.28.

How much of culture and civilization Thailand owes to Cambodia and hence indirectly to India is indicated by Coedés who wrote thus : 'From Cambodia the Siamese assimilated its political organization, material civilization, writing and a considerable number of words. Siamese artists learn from Khmer artists and transformed Khmer art according to their own genius, and above all under the influence of their contact with their western neighbours, the Mons and Burmese. From these latter the Siamese received their juristic tradition, of Indian origin, and above all Sinhalese Buddhism and its artistic tradition'.[48] This is true of the Thai even to-day. But for this inherent power of assimilating the elements of progress, discovered in the new environments, and yet maintaining distinctive national identity, the Thai would have long fallen into the background and lost the position that they occupy to-day.

The tradition is that Ram Kamhaeng lost his life in the rapids of the river at Sawnk'alok and this happened about A.D. 1317, and in this year also died King Meng-Rai of Chieng-mai. The throne was then occupied by his son Loe T'ai. Loe T'ai is comparatively an obscure figure. That he was an utterly weak and incompetent ruler is proved by his inability to defend his father's dominions. Immediately after his accession the king of Pegu threw off his allegiance and attacked and occupied Tavoy and Tenasserim. Loe T'ai also proved absolutely no match for the rising power of U-T'ong. The Prince of U-T'ong annexed large portions of the dependencies of the independent Sukhot'ai kingdom without any strong action by Loe T'ai. According to Wood Loe T'ai died in A.D. 1347 and was succeeded by his son Lu T'ai, who was until then Phrā Mahā Uparājā (the great Viceroy) at Śri Sajanalaya and had to march with a force and occupy the throne by overcoming the rebels and conspirators. He was also known as Hṛdaya Rājā. On account of his great devotion to religion he was called Śri Dhammarājā. The Brahmins and *mantrins* consecrated him and gave him the title of *Phrā Bat Somdet Phrā Chao Kamraten an Śri Sūryavaṁsa Rama Mahā Dhārmikarājādhirāja*. During his reign the power and glory of Sukhot'ai rapidly declined and she lost her independence.

Lu T'ai was also a scholar. He wrote a book called *Traibhūmikathā* (*Traiphum P'a Ruang*) in A.D. 1345. He was a specialist in the science of astronomy and corrected the calender. Under his rule both Buddhism and Hinduism flourished in the kingdom, both Śramaṇas and Brahmins were respected. He tried to conduct the people on the way to *Nirvāṇ*,

48. *Les 'Etats hindouises*, p. 370 (Translated by Hall in his *A History of Southeast Asia* p.147).

and constructed many *Kuti Vihāras* (monasteries) and a Cetiya (coitya, *stūpa*) to enshrine the sacred relics. He set up a statue of the Buddha made of different metals and consecrated two statues of Hindu gods, one of Parameśvara and the other of Viṣṇu, in the *devālaya* of Mahākṣetra. He studied both Buddhist and Brahminical scriptures. He invited a Silācārya of Ceylon called Mahāsāmī[49] Sangharāja to his capital and received him with great respect. On an appointed day, the king invited to his royal palace (*hema prasāda rāja mandira*) the Mahāsāmi Sangharāja and the whole assembly of *theras* and *bhikṣus* for taking the *pabbajjā*. The king sat bowing down before the golden image of Lord Buddha and said- 'I thus enter into the religion of our Lord Buddha. I do not either desire *Cakravartisampatti* or *Indrasampatti* or *Brahmasampatti*, etc.'[50] He desired to become a Buddha and to take every creature beyond the ocean of the affliction of transmigration.[51] Even as a ruler he tried to become a living ideal of *ahiṁsā* showing kindness to all creatures and forgiving offenders instead of punishing them according to law. While thus religion dominated the minds and hearts of these later rulers, the administration became too weak to deal effectively with the enemies, internal and external, and the kingdom succumbed to the newly growing political forces of the time. According to the Brahmins, the Sukhot'ai dynasty was of the famous *Sūrya Vaṁsa*, and Lu T'ai was known by the Brahminical title Sri Sūryavaṁsa Rama.

The Kingdom of Ayuthia :

Early in the fourteenth century A.D. a Mon king was ruling at U-T'ong (near the modern town of Sup'an) over a remnant of the old kingdom of Dvāravatī. A Lü prince of Chieng-Sen, a scion of the illustrious royal family to which Meng-Rai belonged, wandered down the Méping to Southern Siam and set up a small kingdom at or in the neighbourhood of the ancient capital Phrā Pathama and married the daughter of the old Mon King of U-T'ong. On the death of the latter, the throne of U-T'ong fell vacant, probably for want of an heir, and the deceased king's son-in-law, the Lü prince of the neighbouring kingdom, then succeeded to it and became P'ya U-T'ong (Prince of U-T'ong).

49. The title of *Sami* (*Svāmī*) or *Mahasami* was conferred by the king of Ceylon on foreign Bhikṣus, who came there to study Sinhalese Buddhism. The present Mahāsāmi came to Sukhot'ai probably from Pegu where he lived after obtaining the title.

50. quoted by Bose in his *The Indian Colony of Siam*, p.47.

51. Hall's translation of Coedès's French version. See *A History of South-east Asia*, p.151.

The old Mon king of U-T'ong was a great warrior, who, during the reign of Ram Kamhaeng's immediate unwarlike successor Loe T'ai (A.D. 1317-47), subjugated the southern dominions of Sukhot'ai, particularly Nak'on Śrit'ammarāt (Ligor)' Ratburi, P'etchaburi, Tenasserim and Tavoy. When his son-in-law, the young Chao, became the king of U-T'ong with the title P'ya U-T'ong, this Mon kingdom rapidly developed into a powerful Tai kingdom absorbing Sukhot'ai and a large part of the Cambodian territory in the Menam delta and extending suzerainty over the Tai principalities of the central Mekong valley.

In A.D. 1350, this young Chao of U-T'ong founded a new capital at Ayuthia, 45 miles north of Bankok and on an island formed by the confluence of three rivers, the Pa Sak and two tributaries of the Menām Chao P'ya. It is said to be on or near the site of the ancient city of Dvāravatī The Sanskrit name of the capital in full is said to have been 'Dvāravatī Śri Ayodhya' or Thawarawadi Śri Ayudhya of Prince Dhani Nivat.

The formal accession of this prince at the new capital Ayuthia is described in the *P'rā Raj P'onsawadan Chabab P'rā Rāj Hat'alek'ā* as follows : "On Friday the 6th waxing moon of the 5th Siamese month (April), in the year of the Tiger, the 2nd year of the decade, of Sakkarāj 712 (A. D. 1350), at the auspicious hour given by the Brahman astrologers, the city of P'rā Nakon Ayut'ia (Nagara Ayodhya) was built and Phrā Chao Ut'ong came from Sup'anburi (Suvarṇapurī) and ascended the throne at Ayut'ia at the age of 37. The Brahmans proclaimed his title as Somdet Phrā Rama T'ibodi Śri Sunt'on Borom Bop'it' (Rāmādhipati Śri Sundara Paramapavitra), King of Krung T'eb Mahā Nak'on Bowon T'warawadi Śrī Ayut'ia Mahādilok P'obnop'arat Rājat'ani Burirom (Deva-Nagara Mahā Nagara Pravara Dvāravatī Śri Ayodhya Mahātiloka Bhava Navaratna Rajadhani Purīramya), in the same style as the Somdet Phrā Rāmnaraī who accended the throne in Ayuthia in ancient days".[52] (the reference here is to Rama and Ayodhyā of the famous Indian epic.).

This first king of Ayut'ia is more commonly known as Rama T'ibodi Suvannadola. The last part of his name *Suvannadola* is exactly the

52. Ms. called "Royal Autograph Edition" of the History of Siam by W.A.R. Wood, C.I.E. It begins with the foundation of Ayuthia. Translated by Phra Phraison Salarak (U Aung Thein) under the title "Intercourse between Siam and Burma" in *JBRS*, vol. XXV, Part II, 1935, pp. 49-108 and vol. XXVIII, II, 1938, pp.109-176.

popular equivalent of U-T'ong.[53] It should be known that the names of the kings of Siam are generally titles rather than real names. It was customary not to refer to a Siamese king by his name during his life time. Wood informs us that each king had his full style and title inscribed on a golden plate, but these were all lost when Ayuthia was destroyed by the Burmese in A.D. 1767.

Then he conferred on K'un-Luang-P'a-ngua, who was the elder of his chief queen and whom he called his elder brother, the title of Somdet Phrā Borom Rājāt'irāt-Chao[54] and appointed him as ruler of Muang Sup'anburi. He sent his son Phrā Ramesuan[55] to rule over Luang Lopburi.

According to *P'rā Rāj P'onsawadan Chabab P'rā Rāj Hat'alekā'* at the time of his accession to the throne at Ayuthia Rama T'ibodi I held sway over the following towns; Malaka (Malacca), Jawa (Java), Tanaośri (Tenasserim), T'awai (Tavoy), Mawtama (Martaban), Mawlamleng (Moulmein), Songk'la, Chantabun (Candrapura), P'itsanulok (Viṣṇuloka), Sukhot'ai (Sukhodaya), P'ichai (Vijaya), Sawank'alok (Svargaloka), P'ichit (Vicitra), Kamp'engp'et (Kamben Vajra), and Nak'on Sawan (Nagara Svarga). Wood says that he was the first king of Siam to rule over the Malay State.

When Ayuthia was founded in A.D. 1350, the Tai principalities of the central Mekong valley were dependencies of Sukhot'ai, which the year before (A.D. 1349) had become subject to Ayuthia.[56] In the second half of the fourteenth century A.D. two other independent Tai kingdoms flourished in the north and they were the Yün kingdom of Lān-nā with Chieng-mai as its capital and the Laotian kingdom of Lān-Chang or Laos in the middle Makong valley. The kingdom Lān-nā maintained its separate existence for several centuries, acknowledging at different times the suzerainty of Lān-Chāng, Burma and Siam. It was annexed to Siam finally in the second half of the nineteenth century. Regarding the Laotian kingdom it may be noted that from early in the the second half of the thirteenth century the Laotians (Pai-yi), moving

53. U-T'ong in popular sense means 'a golden cradle' (Suvarṇadola) because the prince was given a cradle of gold by his father. But Prince Damrong says that U-T'ong is simply the Siamese equivalent of Suvarṇabhumi (Supan).

54. Parama Rājādhirāja-Chao.

55. Rameswara.

56. "The Appearance and Historical Usage of the Terms, Tai , Thai, Siamese and Lao" by Briggs in *JAOS*, vol .69, No. 2, 1949, p.73.

into the middle Mekong valley from the north, established their principalities at Muong-Swa (later Luang-Pra-bang), Muong-Pu-Ŧun (Tran-Ninh), and Vieng-Chan (Vientiane). At first the Tai of these areas were under the suzerainty of Angkor and later under that of Sukhot'ai.

The Kingdom of Laos :

But in A.D. 1353 the energetic Tai prince of Muong-Swa (future Luang Prabang) named Fa Ngoun (or Fa Ngum), with the assistance of the king of Cambodia, deposed his grand-father Phaya Souvanna-Kham-phong, who had driven out from Muong-Swa his Son Thao Phi-Fa for loose living. Thao Phi-Fa, accompanied by his young son Fa Ngoun, had to seek refuge in Cambodia.[57] The King of Cambodia placed Phi Fa and Fa Ngoun at the head of an army for capturing the throne of Muong Swa. Phaya Souvanna-Kham-phong was defeated at Pak-Ming and the throne captured by them. Fa Ngoun proclaimed himself King and gave the country he conquered, the name of Lān-Chāng (or Lān-tang) meaning "Million Elephants". He consolidated the small Laotian principalities of the Mekong from the border of Nān-Chao to Cambodia and declared his independence of Sukhot'ai. He seized the plateau of Korat and much of what is now Siamese Laos in defiance of Rama T'ibod I of Ayuthia. He waged war against those princes who refused to surrender and defeated them at Phai-Nām (Vientiane).[58] Fa Ngoun was renowned for his military prowess and earned the title of "the Conqueror". On the west, his extensive kingdom touched the territories of Chieng-mai and Ayuthia and on the east those of Ānnām and Champā.

The Tai of this kingdom had already come under the influence of Indian culture through Angkor and Sukhot'ai and under Fa Ngoun they were converted to Hinayāna Buddhism. Fa Ngoun had been brought up at the Court of Angkor under the care of a Buddhist monk and scholar and was married at about sixteen to a Khmer princess named Nang Keo-Lot-Fa. Jayavarman Parameśvara was then the King at Ankor. A mission of monks, sent to King Fa Ngoun of Lān-Chāng in 1358 by his father-in-law, presented to him the Pali scriptures and

57. Phaya-Souvanna-Kham-Phong, who was the thirty-fifth king of Muong-Saw, father of Thao-Phi-Fa. See Hall, *S-E. Asia*, pp. 751-52 and Le Boulanger, *Histoire du Laos Francais*, pp. 39-40. Rene de Berval : *Kingdom of Laos*, p.34.

58. "The Appearance etc." by Briggs in *JAOS*, vol.69, No. 2, 1949, p. 73; Renede Berval : *Kingdom of Laos*, P.34.

a famous statue of the Buddha called the Phrā-Bāng (Protector of the kingdom), which had been originally sent by the king of Ceylon as a present to the Cambodian king. It was installed at Lān-Chāng in a temple specially built for it. The city was named after it as Luang Phra-bang[59]or, as is now called, Luang Prabang.

Fa Ngoun, being essentially a soldier, ruled as an autocrat, and drained so much of blood and toil of his subjects for his ambitious plans of conquest that he became extremely unpopular until in A.D. 1373 he was exiled by his ministers and his son, Thao Oun-Hueun, a youngman of seventeen, placed on the throne. The young king assumed the official title of P'aya Sām-Sen-Tai (the 'Lord of 300,000 T'ais'), the latter being a figure which he obtained from the census of the male population of his kingdom. The census was made by him after three years of his accession. He was married to a Siamese princess of Ayuthia. He reorganized the administrative system on an efficient basis and in this he was influenced by the Siamese methods. He also built temples and schools and encouraged the study of Buddhism. He maintained good relations with his neighbours and under him the country became prosperous and happy. Lān-Chāng became a prosperous country during his reign.

In A.D. 1421 the Chinese invaded Ānnām. The great Yung-Lo (1403-1424) of the Ming was then the Emperor of China. King Lane-Khām-Deng (1416-28) of Lān-Chāng sent a force to the assistance of the Annamites in their defence, but unfortunately it went over to the Chinese. The Ānnāmites beat the treacherous Laotians back into their own country, but could take no further action immediately as they were defeated and held in subjection by the Chinese until A.D. 1428. This opportunity was seized by the Chams to recover their province of Indrapura (Quang-nam) from the hands of the Ānnāmites who had annexed it in A.D. 1402. But in A.D. 1428 the great Ānnāmite leader Le Lo'i liberated his country from the Chinese, proclaimed himself King of Ānnām and founded what was called the second Le dynasty. To avoid friction he accepted the nominal suzerainty of China then under the powerful Ming and initiated friendly relations with the erstwhile enemy Champā[60] obviously to rebuild the shattered strength of his country. But later civil war weakened Champā and Ānnām delivered the decisive blow in

59. Hall : *A History of South-East Asia*, p.207.

60. Early kingdom of the Chams and Lin-Yi of the Chinese. The Indianized name Champa for this kingdom firstappears in epigraphy only early in the seventeenth century A.D. It was lying just south of Annam in the eastern seaboard. Its dynastic origins are unknown.

A.D. 1471 and annexed her down to Cap Varella leaving only a small chunk beyond it which, too, she absorbed finally in A.D. 1720. Ānnām became now an empire and the Chams were either largely exterminated or were driven into the mountains.[61] Having thus quashed Champā Ānnām turned on Lān-Chāng whose past betrayal she remembered. Le Thanh-Ton (1460-97), the greatest Le monarch of Ānnām, in A.D. 1478, made a violent attack on Lān-Chāng and drove its king, P'aya Sai-Tiakap'at (1438-79), into exile. P'aya Sai-Tiakap'at was the youngest son of Sam-Sen-T'ai and his real name was Thao -Lu-Sai.

But a son of the exiled king, T'ene Kham, (Thao Theng-Kham) rallied the Laos forces and drove out the Ānnāmites. He then succeeded to the throne under the name of Souvanna-Palang in 1479 and reorganised the country on a far more efficient basis which rapidly brought prosperity to the people. T'ene Kham was not only a matchless warrior but also showed great statesmanship in the management of the country's affairs. His policy was to strengthen the position of his country by promoting better relations with the powerful neighbours Ānnām. As a result the Laos people enjoyed a long period of peace during which commercial relations were developed with the Menām valley and the kingdom prospered. The peace was seriously affected in A.D. 1545 when the Laos king P'ot'isarat (1520-47), 'a peaceable and profoundly religious sovereign', meddled in the succession question of Lān Nā (Chieng-mai). Prince T'ai-Sai-K'am of Chiengmai seized the throne in A.D. 1538 by deposing his father Muang-Kesa, the fifteenth king of that country in the direct line from Meng-Rai. But his misrule and tyranny became so unbearable that a serious rebellion broke out and he was killed in A.D. 1543. King Muang-Kesa was then restored to the throne by the nobles, but after two years he became insane and was assassinated by a group of conspirators headed by one Sen Dao.[62] Sen Dao, who became master of the situation for the moment, selected the Prince of Kengtung as the next successor, but the latter declined the offer. The throne was then offered to Prince Mekut'i of Muangnai, a 'descendant of Prince K'rus, one of the sons of king Mengrai, the founder of Chiengmai'. But the nobles opposed to Sen Dao, met at Chieng-Sen and made a powerful counter-move requesting the Laos king to accept the throne of Chiengmai for his eldest son, Prince Jai Jett'a of Settha (or Sett'at'irat,[63]) then

61. K.S. Latourette : *A Short History of the Far East*, (Macmillan, New York), 1957, p.273.

62. Wood : *op.cit.*, p.103.

63. Jyesthadhiraj ?

a boy of twelve, whose mother was a Chieng-mai Princess.[64] The chief men of the kingdom immediately appointed a regent in the person of a very capable princess called Maha T'ewī.

When Chieng-mai was in trouble king P'rajai of Ayuthia appeared on the scene with an army apparently to punish Sen Dao, the murderer of Muang-Kesa. This expedition of P'rajai was probably before Settha's accession to that throne. But Princess Maha T'ewī somehow averted war by persuading him to retire without a blow as Sen Dao was no longer in power. As soon as P'rajai left Chieng-mai Prince Mekut'i of Muang-Nai with the help of the Prince of Yawnghwe invaded Chieng-mai with the intention of seizing the throne, but the invaders were beaten back by the Regent Maha T'ewī. Soon a powerful army from Lān-Chāng arrived to defend Chieng-mai for the Laos prince who was to succeed. The prospect of Prince Sett'at'irat's succession to the throne of Chieng-mai then became a certainty. To P'rajai it appeared as a matter of grave concern as it would mean extension of Laotian power to North Siam. He therefore proceeded with a large army to intervene in the succession question. This time Princess Maha T'ewī put up a stout resistance and repulsed the Siamese army. As the army retreated to Ayuthia it was harassed and routed on the way by the Laos army which was already there.

During King P'rajai's absence his palace became a hell of scandals and intrigues. On arrival home he was poisoned to death in A.D. 1547 by his notorious non-royal consort T'ao Sri Sudachan who had in the meantime become pregnant by a lover. What followed afterwards has already been related. Prince Sett'at'irat (also called Prince Jai Jett'a) was crowned in 1546 as Māhārājā of Chieng-mai shortly after P'rajai's death.[65] He ruled at Chieng-mai only for two years when by a hunting accident his father P'ot'isarat died. P'ot'isarat was a firm believer in Buddhism. He tried to eradicate primitive beliefs in animism among his subject and establish the pure form of Buddhism. But the experiment did not quite succeed. He was the first Laos King to develop the commercially more advantageous city of Vieng-Chan (Vientiane) considerably down the Mekong. His death created a scramble for the partition of the kingdom among his other sons. Sett'at'irat preferred to leave

64. Wood : *op.cit.*, p.104, Hall says Chieng-mai princess was the mother o P'ot'isarat. Probably Wood is right.

65. According to Hall P'rajai's second invasion was after Sett'at'irat's accession. Hall : *A History of South-East Asia*, p.209. See Wood : *op.cit.*, 2nd.Ed.f.n. p.116.

Chieng-mai to go and save his paternal kingdom from disintegration.[66] With his departure Chieng-mai was again reduced to a cock-pit of rival pretenders to the throne. Sett'at'irat announced his intention of remaining at Luang P'rabang (Lān-Chāng). The chieftains of Chieng-mai then brought in Prince Mekut'i of Muang-Nai and installed him as Maharaja in A.D. 1549.

In the second half of the sixteenth century the rise of Bayin Naung (Bureng-Naung) put the whole Tai world from the Mekong valley to the sea in jeopardy. During his conquests of the Shan States of Hsi-Paw and Mōng Nai (Monè) in A.D. 1556 he found that Māhārājā Mekut'i was assisting the Shans. Though actually he was aiming at Hsi-Paw and Mōng-Nai in this expedition he made Mekut'i's assistance to the Shans of these States a pretext to invade Chieng-mai in the same year. He besieged Chieng-mai and the city fell after a few days' resistance. Māhārājā Mekut'i had to accept the suzerainty of Burma with a Burmese army of occupation stationed in Chieng-mai. Mekut'i also agreed to pay an annual tribute of elephants, horses, silks and other valuable products of his country.

On Bayin Naung's return to Pegu Sett'at'irat invaded Chieng-mai and by A.D. 1558 would have overthrown his old rival Mekut'i, but the situation was saved at the critical hour by the reappearance of Bayin Naung with a large Burmese army. Bayin Naung not only drove out the invaders from Luang Prabang, but also proclaimed the deposition of Sett'at'irat from the throne of Luang-P'rabang. Faced with this serious threat from the greatest Burmese conqueror he formed a large confederation of Shan States. Sett'at'irat then led an expedition against Chieng-Sen. But Bayin Naung's rapid occupation of the territories of some of the Shan allies of Sett'at'irat led to the liquidation of his defensive organization after a year and Sett'at'irat gave up the expedition.

Though at the fall of Chieng-mai other Shan chiefs of the neighbouring States hastened to acknowledge the suzerainty of Burma, Sett'at'irat did not submit and tried to strengthen his position by alliances with other independent Shan States. Bayin Naung returned to Pegu without invading Luang P'rabang. The cause for it is not known. He might have returned for more urgent call from home. As the Burmese danger became

66. According to Hall the hunting accident with death of P'ot'isarat occurred in A.D. 1547, but according to Wood it should be 1549. 1547 was approximately the date of Sett'at'irat's accession in Chieng-mai. Hence there is a difference of two years between the dates given by Hall and Wood.

very real and might come at any moment in the near future Sett'at'irat made an alliance with Ayuthia and secondly transferred his capital to Vieng-Chan (Vientiane) which was built up with strong fortifications. Vieng-Chan was more conveniently situated for intercourse with Siam away from Burmese interference. He also erected a famous shrine in the new capital and installed in it the celebrated Emerald Buddha (P'ra-Keo) which he had taken away to Luang P'rabang from Chieng-mai while finally leaving that city. His *That Luong*, a pyramidal structure, still remains the finest monument of Lactian architecture, though partly damaged by raiders from Yün-nān as late as A.D. 1873.

Bayin Naung's supreme ambition was to become the overlord of all the Tai States. It was partly fulfilled by his conquests of the Tai (Shan) States of Burma and subjugation of Chieng-mai. His arms were now turned to efface the existence of Ayuthia and Luang P'rabang as independent kingdoms. For an attack on Ayuthia he can now use Chieng-mai as the spring-board. While these Burmese plans were maturing, king Chakrap'at of Siam captured a number of elephants including seven white elephants. The elephants were meant for strengthening the defence of his realm, but being a possessor of so many white elephants he assumed the title of "Lord of the White Elephants". The king of Burma now found a good pretext to precipitate war with Ayuthia. He sent envoys to king Chakrapat demanding two of the white elephants, but got a negative reply. This was what he had expected to his advantage.

In the autumn of A.D. 1563 Bayin Naung marched with a vast army to invade Ayuthia by the route of Chieng-mai collecting more troops from that country. He led the army via Kamp'engp'et and Sukhot'ai subjugating both. Sawank'alok and P'ichai easily submitted. The Burmese king passed through Pitsanulok, a country ravaged by famine and pestilence, and made its Governor Maha T'ammaraja acompany him with a force of 70,000 men. Thus making a clean sweep over northern and central Siam the Burmese reached Ayuthia in February 1564. The forces under king Chakrap'at were no match for the numerically much more superior army of the king of Burma. When the Burmese commenced the attack both the nobles and the general population of Ayuthia realized the futility of resistance and therefore pressed the king to come to terms with the Burmese king. Accordingly when the two kings met for peace talks the Burmese king demanded immediate delivery of four white elephants instead of the original two and payment by Siam of an annual tribute of thirty elephants together with a large quantity of silver. He also exacted certain customs rights. Further it is said that king Chakrap'at of Siam, his queen and his youger son

were taken away as captives by the Burmese, and the Crown Prince Bra Mahein (Prince Mahin) was proclaimed and installed as a vassal king of Siam.[67] But Prince Damrong gives strong reasons to show that this statement in the Burmese history is wrong. In fact, king Chakrap'at continued to rule and Bayin Naung, being informed of a serious Mon rebellion in his country, hurried back to Pegu by way of Kamp'engp'et leaving an army of occupation in Siam and probably giving a controlling hand to Maha T'ammaraja. Prince Ramesuen of Siam, who accompanied the Burmese king, died of illness on the way. The Raja of Patani, who came to the assistance of king Chakrap'at with an army and a fleet of two hundred boats during the Burmese invasion, arrived after the Burmese had left, but finding the Siamese king ill-equipped for defence after the Burmese attack suddenly revolted and attempted to seize the throne. King Chakrap'at, who had to flee from the palace for the time being, succeeded in putting down the rebellion.

An event of importance which became a cause of extreme bitterness between king Sett'at'irat of the Laos kingdom and Maha T'ammaraja son-in-law and Governor of P'itsanulok, both related to the House of Ayuthia, needs mention here. King Sett'at'irat, soon after establishing his new capital at Vieng-Chan, asked for the hand of Princess T'ep Krasatri, daughter of king Chakrap'at by Queen Suriyot'ai of historic fame, although he had already married one daughter of the same king. At the appointed time fixed for Princess T'ep Krasatri's journey to Vieng-Chan she fell ill and hence king Chakrap'at sent another daughter by another wife to the Laos king. Then came the Burmese invasion of northern Siam and Ayuthia during 1563-64 blocking all communications between the Laos kingdom and Ayuthia. But when the communications were restored after February, 1564, Sett'at'irat returned the newly sent princess of Ayuthia and insisted on sending Princess T'ep Krasatri. The Pro-Burmese Governor, Maha T'ammaraja, kept the Burmese king informed of all these developments. In April 1564, when Princess T'ep Krasatri was on way to Vieng-Chan, she was intercepted by a Burmese force near P'etchabun and carried off to Burma.[68] Since then Maha T'ammaraja became the most hated enemy of Sett'at'irat.

Reaching Pegu Bayin Naung found to his dismay that the whole city with his palace was burnt down by the Mon rebels aided by the Shan

67. "Burmese Invasions of Siam" in *JSS*, V, 1908, I, pp.21-29. It may be noted that according to the Burmese history the date of the first Burmese invasion of Siam is A.D. 1548, but in the Pali Chronicle of Siam, it is A.D. 1563. The second Burmese invasion is dated A.D. 1563.

68. This account, says Wood, is contained in two oldest versions of Siamese history.

and Siamese prisoners who had been settled in the province. By a vigorous handling of the situation with the help of his army he put down the rebellion and captured thousands of those who took part in it. He would have burnt them all alive had not the Buddhist priests intervened. He rebuilt the capital and his palace even more magnificently than before using at places gold plates for the roofs. The richness of the city is also described by two European writers, Caesar Fredericke of Venice and Ralph Fitch of England, who saw it in all its splendour.

In the later part of the year 1564 Bayin Naung discovered a move on the part of Mekut'i to throw off the Burmese overlordship. He therefore sent an expedition under his son and heir-apparent Nanda Bayin (Nanda Bureng) against Chieng-mai. Mekut'i fled to Vieng-Chan and Chieng-mai was occupied by the Burmese, who thereafter followed Mekut'i to the kingdom of Luang P'rabang and also occupied Vieng-Chan. Sett'at'irat had left the capital. The Burmese captured Mekut'i and also the queen and Cupahat (or Cuparat) or heir-apparent of the Laos kingdom but they failed to capture its king who exhausted them by guerilla warfare. With the prisoners the Burmese returned to Chieng-mai, where they appointed Princess Maha T'ewi as Regent for the second time with a Burmese garrison stationed there and then reached Pegu in October 1565.

In Siam towards the close of the year 1565 king Chakrap'at placed his son prince Mahin as Regent and himself retired into private life.[69] But the Laos king Sett'at'irat, by his successful defiance of Burmese imperialism, aroused hopes in other Tai rulers, who, with all their patriotic traditions of the past, were restive under the Burmese. It was only the strange conduct of Maha T'ammaraja that caused a temporary set-back to the growth of a strong front among them capable of overthrowing the Burmese domination. Prince Mahin was bent towards the Laos king for support. But Maha T'ammaraja became the watch-dog for his Burmese masters and opposed every measure of Prince Mahin if it was thought to be anti-Burmese. P'ya Ram, Governor of Kamp'engp'et, wanted to get rid of the Burmese and hated the Raja of P'itsanulok for his pro-Burmese policy. The Regent, Prince Mahin, appointed P'ya Ram as his chief adviser, who initiated a policy of alliance with the Laos king and of inviting the latter to attack

69. According to Hall Prince Mahin was appointed Regent by Bayin Maung before returning to Burma after the second invasion of Siam in 1564 and was placed under the control of the pro-Burmese Raja of P'itsanulok, Maha T'ammaraja. See his *S-E Asia*, pp.214-15. This would be doubtful if king Chakrap'at was not taken as hostage to Burma. This part of the Siamese history is confusing.

P'itsanulok. When these were done, Sett'at'irat at the end of 1566 marched on P'itsanulok at the head of a large army and invested the city. According to plan Prince Mahin moved from the south with a strong force and a fleet of boats ostensibly to the assistance of Maha T'ammaraja but actually to help his northern ally to take the city. The reports of the attack by Sett'at'irat having reached Burma earlier, a Burmese army had already arrived and relieved the siege driving off the Laos back to Vieng-Chan and defeated Prince Mahin and destroyed his fleet.

In July 1567 king Chakrap'at became a Buddhist monk. Maha T'ammaraja now became strong enough to demand the surrender of P'ya Ram. The Prince Regent refused to comply with his demand. Maha T'ammaraja then visited Burma probably to report the adamant attitude of the Siamese Regent and in doing so he undoubtedly agreed to serve as a vassal Raja of Burma, for the Burmese king conferred upon him the title of *Chaopha Song K'we*. During his absence there were certain secret communications between Prince Mahin and Princess Wisut Krasatri, wife of Maha T'ammaraja , at P'itsanulok. It is said, with her children she was brought to Ayuthia as a hostage against any possible action against Siam by her husband. Prince Mahin also made a misadventure against Kamp'engp'et then under Burmese control. Prince Mahin was from the beginning a weak and incompetent ruler betraying only his incapacity to deal with every big problem. Anticipating another Burmese invasion he invited Chakrap'at back to the throne and relinquished his charge.[70]

In December 1568 Bayin Naung himself marched with an army which is said to be the largest ever landed on the soil of Siam. This huge mass of troops set out from Martaban and passed through P'itsanulok towards Ayuthia, which was determined to resist. The Pro-Burmese Maha T'ammaraja, as expected, accompanied Bayin Naung to the attack. Bayin Naung failed to take the city by storm. He laid siege to it as the alternative course. King Chakrap'at died of illness in January 1569 during the siege at the age of sixty-two. A force was sent by Sett'at'irat to fight the Burmese on the side of his ally, but it was attacked and beaten off. King Mahin, who succeeded to the throne again on the death of his father, proved utterly incompetent and irresponsible in the matter

70. Hall says that the captive king Chakrap'at was allowed to return to Siam on a pilgrimage in 1567. This was a policy to pacify Siam. But on reaching Ayuthia the pilgrim threw off the yellow robe and joined Prince Mahin in another attack on P'itsanulok. See *S-E Asia*, p.215. Probably the removal of Princess Wisut Krasatri to Ayuthia as a hostage is referred to by this second attack on P'itsanulok.

of conducting the defence. P'ya Ram and a few other nobles alone really fought and proved their mettle by inflicting severe losses on the enemy. The siege lasted about nine months until in August 1569 the city fell, not as a result of defeat in the fight but through treachery of the King of Burma. When the city's defences could not be broken through even after a prolonged siege Baying Naung caused his puppet, Maha T'ammaraja, to secretly write to his wife, then at Ayuthia, accusing P'ya Ram, the virtual leader of the defence, as the instigator of the war and assuring peace simply if he was delivered up to the Burmese. This was enough for the foolish and spineless king Mahin to play into the hands of the enemy. He surrendered P'ya Ram and with it the defence collapsed. He also ordered the execution of another bright and brave fighter, his tenderaged brother Prince Sri Sawraja, his fault being his siding with the defence party. With all these suicidal acts he got no quarter from the Burmese monarch. He and all the members of the Royal family were taken away as captives to Burma 'together with a vast concourse of prisoners and a large number of cannon'. King Mahin died of fever on the way. Before leaving Ayuthia Bayin Naung placed on its throne his puppet Maha T'ammaraja who was to rule as a vassal of Burma. At the formal coronation, which Bayin Naung attended, Maha T'ammaraja assumed the title of P'ra Sri Sarap'et, but he was better known as King Maha T'ammaraja. The Burmese levelled down the defences of the city so as to cripple the Simese power to resist them in future, but exposing the city to other enemies.

For the next fifteen years Siam remained under Burmese tutelage. Thus the Burmese having enormous control over Siam made, among others, two changes of major significance during this period in the system of Siamese Law and in the prevailing Siamese Era. First, many Burmese laws and institutions were imposed upon the Siamese and the Burmese *Dhammathāt*,[71] based on the Laws of Manu, was also introduced and grafted on to the Siamese law,[72] though at present 'the Siamese have freed themselves almost wholly from Manu's paralysing influence'. Secondly, the Burmese Era beginning in A.D. 638 was introduced into Siam where it came to be called *Chulasakarat* or Little Era replacing the prevailing *Mahasakarat* Era. The *Mahasakarat* was introduced in southern India by Kanishka in A.D. 78. It is believed that it was introduced into

71. Introduced into Burma by Wareru of Pegu in the 13th century A.D. A later version was prepared in the reign of T'ado T'ammaraja or Thalun (1629-48), brother of Anaukpetlun (grand-son of Bayin Naung) of Toungoo.

72. Wood : *ibid.*

Siam and Cambodia by Kanishka's missionaries. *Chulasakarāt* continued to be used officially until 1887 when King Chulālongkorn adopted the European calender.

The only Tai king, who was still reigning as a sovereign ruler and successfully defied the greatest Burmese conqueror, was Sett'āt'irāt of Vieng-Chān. This fact gave Bayin Naung no mental rest. He therefore directed his arms the very next year, A.D. 1569-70, to the invasion of the Laos kingdom. But Sett'āt'irāt frustrated his desperate attempt to take Vieng-Chān by a kind of mobile tactics creating artificial scarcity of supplies and compelled the Burmese troops-exhausted by famine and disease, to beat a retreat. In A.D. 1571 Sett'āt'irāt, while engaged in a war in Cambodia, was untraced. His infant son was placed on the throne and one P'ya Śri Suren K'wang Fa[73] appointed Regent. Bayin Naung wanted Sett'āt'irāt's brother, the Oupahāt, who had been a hostage in Burma since A.D. 1565, should come back and succeed Sett'āt'irāt as a vassal ruler under Burma. The Burmese envoys sent with this humiliating proposal to Vieng-Chān were murdered by the Laotians. This precipitated a second flare-up.

Bayin Naung despatched his Mon Commander-in-chief with 'an army composed of levies drawn from Chieng-mai and Siam' to attack Vieng-Chān.[74] It was defeated and the Mon Commander is believed to have been punished with death or exile by the Burman monarch. In the dry season of A.D. 1574 the King of Burma himself undertook the invasion and made Prince Naresuen of Siam, the elder son of King Mahā T'ammarājā, accompany him. Prince Naresuen fell ill with small-pox on the way to Vieng-Chan and was left behind with his Siamese auxiliaries to return home. Vieng-Chān was taken, the Regent driven out, young Prince Nokeo Koumāne captured, and Oupahāt placed on the throne as a vassal of Burma. Bayin Naung's dream was fulfilled, however short, and the eastern limits of the Laos kingdom marked also the extreme limits to the east attained by Bayin Naung's Empire. He returned to Burma with Prince Nokeo as hostage.

But from A.D. 1575 to 1592 there was no stability in the Laotian Kingdom. A series of revolts broke out and the Oupahāt could not control the situation. In A.D. 1581 Bayin Naung died and his son Nanda Bayin ascended the Burmese throne immediately to fight the powerful disintegrating forces of his empire at work. In A.D. 1591 the leading monks

73. The name is given as General Sene Soulint'a by Hall.

74. Hall : *A History of South-East Asia*, p.217.

of the Laos kingdom represented to Nanda Bayin that if peace was to be restored the legitimate heir, Prince Nokeo, be returned for the throne and under Siamese pressure it was readily complied with. In A.D. 1592 Prince Nokeo Koumāne formally succeeded to the throne of Vieng-Chān and united Luang P'rābāng which in the meantime separated itself. After having firmly settled the government he proclaimed the independence of the kingdom.

The destruction of Ayuthia offered an opportunity to King Boromarājā of Cambodia to invade Siam in A.D. 1569. But the Cambodians suffered a bad defeat contrary to their expectations and retired. This was a good ground without Burmese opposition to reconstruct the defences of Ayuthia and also to purchase heavy arms, such as cannon, from the Portuguese. Mahā T'ammarājā felt deep aversion to Burmese subjection. He had two sons. The elder P'rā Naret (later Prince Naresuen), called Black Prince, was a brilliant general and clever; the younger Prince Ekat'otsarāt, called White Prince, was a man of peace, unwarlike and to the foreigners a 'corteous man'. P'rā Naret earlier proved his perfect generalship by putting down a rebellion of the Shan State of Muang Kum for Burma which the Burmese generals failed. The Burmese Court looked upon his talents as a future menace to Burma and conspired to kill him. In A.D. 1584, when the Prince of Āvā revolted Nanda Bayin invited P'rā Naret to help him, but employing two Peguan nobles to meet and kill the Prince on way to Burma at a place called Muang K'reng. The nobles moved by his personality divulged the plot to him. P'ra Naret at once held a conference of his Generals and the Peguan official at Muang K'reng and declared the independence Siam in May 1584. Border populations soon joined him and he marched on Pegu and laid seige to the city, but withdrew when the news of the defeat of Āvā's Prince arrived.

Muang K'reng Declaration and the siege of Pegu terribly upset Nanda Bayin on return from Āvā. He immediately sent an army after P'rā Naret headed by the Crown Prince. The Siamese Prince inflicted a crushing defeat on the Burmese on the banks of the Sittang[75] and himself shot dead the Burmese General, Surakamma. With the Siamese Prince came away from Burma large numbers of Shan prisoners to P'itsanulok. Nanda Bayin failed to take back the prisoners even by sending a force which was beaten back. Only two Governors, those of Sawank'-

75. Hall says Menām valley, but the musket used by P'rā Naret in this action was known as "the Musket of the Battle of the Sittaung River". -Wood : *op.cit.*, p.133.

alok and P'ichai, remained loyal to the Burmese king in fear of punishment. The Black Prince stormed these cities and executed both the Governors. Nothing succeeds like success. For the first time Cambodia voluntarily formed an alliance with Siam and even helped the latter with an army to attack Chieng-mai.

As his eastern dominions were being wrested from his hands by the rising star, the Black Prince, Nanda Bayin made a big-scale preparation for the invasion of Siam. He was to be joined by the Governor of Chieng-mai, Tharawadi Min, and the Governor of Sukhot'ai. In December 1584 Nanda Bayin marched on Ayuthia across the Three Pagodās Pass, but the energetic Black Prince inflicted a number of defeats on the Burmese and drove them off across the frontiers. The Chieng-mai army which arrived late at Chainat met with a similar fate and retired. Nanda Bayin made the Governor of Chieng-mai responsible for the defeat and ordered him to attack Siam again and the Crown Prince was sent to his aid. Wood refers to *Chieng-mai Annals* as saying thus, "In the year 947 (1585-6) the king of Burma ordered Chieng-mai to attack Ayuthia. When the Chieng-mai army got near Ayuthia, the Siamese defeated and scattered them". This defeat is not mentioned in the Burmese history. Nanda Bayin planned a fresh invasion of Siam for which an army of 250,000 men was made ready. The Black Prince was prepared for it. He stocked enough food and ordered the destruction of what could not be harvested. In January 1587, the Burmese made a three-pronged attack on Ayuthia. The Black and the White Princes resisted with wonderful vigour and fortitude inflicting disproportionately heavy losses in men and material on the invaders who also ran short of rations and suffered from diseases. With no hope of victory Nanda Bayin raised the siege and retired to Burma. He, relieved of the Burmese siege, also drove out the Cambodians, who, under King Satt'a, tried to stab Siam from behind by an attack in disregard of the basic agreement of alliance. The Black Prince, whose personality and genius regained independence for Siam by setting at naught the Burmese might, eminently deserves to be called Prince Naresuen, the Great.

In A.D. 1590 King Mahā T'ammarājā died and P'rā Naret became King of Siam as King Naresuen at the age of thirty-five. He appointed his brother Prince Ekat'otsarot Mahā Uparāt.[76] Siam's liberation

76. The first appointment of 'Mahā Uparāt' or Crown Prince is known to have been made, according to Wood, in the Siamese history in A.D. 1485 by King Trailok of Siam. The idea was borrowed from India. Mahā Uparāt, says Wood, held 40,000 acres of land or ten times as much as the highest officials.

encouraged a series of revolts in the Shan States aganist the Burmese. Nanda Bayin, therefore, wanted anyhow to curb Siam's power and twice invaded Siam with very large armies. But the Burmese were defeated by King Naresuen and his brother who killed several Burmese Princes including the Crown Prince in combats. Nanda Bavin lost all hope of conquering Siam. Thrills of the personal combats of these Siamese war-leaders are described in the *Annals*. For lagging behind in the charge in the second of the above two Burmese wars two reputed Siamese Generals, Chao P'ya Chakri and P'ya P'rak'lang, were despatched by the King for capturing Tavoy and Tenasserim from the Burmese, these being Siamese dominions from the time of Ram Kamhaeng but lost to the Burmese in A.D. 1568 with the fall of Ayuthia. The Generals advanced in A.D. 1593 and annexed both the areas by defeating the Burmese on land and in a number of naval engagements. The towns of Tavoy and Tenasserim were important centres of foreign trade. In the same year King Rāmesuen made a drive against Cambodia and occupied Bāttāmbāng. The Cambodian King fled to Luang P'rābāng and his brother Prince Śri Sup'anna, placed on the throne with a Siamese army of 6,000 men, remained a faithful vassal of Siam until his death in A.D. 1618. Wood says he introduced in Cambodia 'Siamese customs, garb and ceremonial'. After A.D. 1592 Siam under Ramesuen played the aggressor against Burma, brought under its control the whole of Pegu by A.D. 1604 and took under protection the Shan States of Hsen-Wi, Möng-Hang and Möng-Nai. The rest of the nineteen Shan States became virtually free. Meanwhile Chieng-mai, which had become split into two parts, was reduced to vassalage and the Siamese boundary reached the frontiers of China.

Next King Ekat'otsarāt was less prone to wars and more interested in working for the financial stability of the kingdom. He allowed many Japanese to settle in Siam and even had body-guards from amongst them. It is said that these Japanese later massacred officials, sacked Ayuthia and departed with treasures.

With the accession of the Alaungp'āyā or Konbaung Dynasty in Burma in A.D. 1752 there were serious threats to the eastern Tai kingdoms. Alaungp'āyā's ambition was to revive the glories of Bayin Naung. He sent a punitive expedition against the raiding Manipuris creating havoc amongst them, received the submission of the Shan States and completed the conquest of the Mons. His last enterprise was the invasion of Siam on the pretext that the Siamese refused to surrender Mon rebels who had gone to their country for refuge. He swept northward over Tavoy and Tenasserim and encircled Ayuthia in A.D. 1760. Boromorājā V

(Ekat'at) was then the king of Siam . During the siege which was directed by Alaungp'āyā himself an explosion from a siege gun mortally wounded him. Neither were the Burmese prepared for a long siege. The siege was abandoned and the Burmese went back to their country. It was left for the third king Hsinbyushin (1763-76), son of Alaungp'āyā, to complete the unfinished task.

In A.D. 1766 the Burmese armies made a three-pronged drive on Ayuthia, one from Chieng-mai, the second from the Three Pagodās Pass and the third from the south occupying Mergui, Tenasserim and the whole of Siamese territory in Malay. The column marching from the south was held in check only by the redoubtable half-Chinese General, P'ya Taksin.[77] But when the Burmese closed in upon the capital the Siamese Generals had to fight for its defence. The historic assault was delivered in February 1766. "While the Burmese, scattered over all the provinces, were carrying on a war against men and nature", says M. Turpin, "the King (Ekat'at) and his superstitious ministers put all their trust in their magicians. The officers and soldiers followed their example and consulted them as to how they might render themselves invisible in order to attack the enemy unawares, and the hope of learning a secret so favourable to their cowardly nature, prevented them from going out to fight before it had been revealed to them".[78] There is a substratum of truth in this statement, otherwise except P'yā Taksin's no real resistance was offered on other fronts until the blow fell on the capital. Even small settlements of the Christians with their churches succeeded in most cases in protecting their properties by defeating the Burmese raiders. At one place the Portuguese sabred a crowd of Burmese who had attemted to storm their college and drove them off.[79] Not that the Siamese inherently lacked courage, but were steeped in superstition which undermined their vigour and initiative. The chief characteristic of Burmese invasions was always their inordinate greed for loot and for that they resorted to all manner of barbaric tortures.

The Burmese made good arrangements for supplies and reinforcements arrived after the rains. There was a difference between the king and P'yā Taksin who incurred displeasure for firing some of the cannon at the enemy without waiting for royal permission. The General then forced his way out with 500 brave followers and took refuge at Rayong

77. P'aya Tak in Burmese history. His father was half-Chinese and mother Thai.
78. Turpin's *History of Siam*, vol. II, (Translated from French by Cartwright. Bangkok), 1908, p.161.
79. *Ibid*, pp.163-64.

on the Gulf of Siam. The city fell on April 7, 1767[80] under violent attack with cannon fire from all sides. The Burmese carried out its complete destruction, the palace, principal buildings and thousands of private houses being burnt to ashes. The King's mortal remains are said to have been found at the royal gate. There was a great sack. The townsfolk irrespective of age and sex were flogged and tortured to make over their treasures or savings. They burnt the soles of their feet in order to make them reveal where they had concealed their wealth. Rape and plunder became the order of the day. Gold images of the gods were melted down for the metal. All books on Siamese history and culture and other records were consumed by the fire set to them by the enemy. This Burmese vandalism will ever remain a blot on the history of the race. Glutted with Siamene treasures the Burmese returned home with a large number of captives including some members of the royal family and high officials only to face a Chinese invasion under General Ming Jui which threatened Āvā, the Burmese capital. Early in A.D 1768 the situation in Burma became critical.

P'ya Taksin seized this opportunity to make a drive for the liberation of Burmese dominated areas. He soon established his control over the neighbouring districts of the south with his small force and captured Chantabun in June 1767. This success drew around him thousands of followers. In October, with a fleet of boats, he sailed up the Menām and attacked T'anaburi opposite Bangkok and occupied it. Its Governor Nai T'ong In, a renegade Siamese, appointed by the Burmese authorities was captured and executed. A force was despatched against P'yā Taksin from the main camp of the Burmese army of occupation at Three Bo Trees close to Ayuthia. The Siamese section of the force deserted and joined P'yā Taksin who pursued the rest and delivered a fierce attack on the camp winning a complete victory.

But for this portion of the Siamese territory the rest was then split up into four independent kingdoms. The Governor of Nakhon Śrit'-ammarāt assumed the title of King Musika and ruled over the Peninsular provinces. Korāt and the eastern privinces were under a son of King Mahā T'ammarājā II (Boromokot) of Siam. P'itsanulok was under King Ruang who was its Governor previously. The extreme north was made into a theocratic kingdom of Fang by a vicious Buddhist monk. Rātaburi was still under Burmese control. But P'yā Taksin assumed royal power and established his capital at Dhonburi on the west bank

80. According to Turpin 28th April 1767. *op.cit.*, p.167.

of the river Menām instead of at the ruined city of Ayuthia whose reconstruction would have been costlier and started his campaigns for the reunification of Siam. He had no rest. But he achieved the goal of reuniting Siam by defeating the monarchs of the dismembered country and ousting the Burmese. In the north General Chao P'yā Chakri[81] distinguished himself by repulsing the Burmese in a series of engagements when the latter made yet further attempts through Chieng-mai during 1775-6 to reconquer Siam, the last major attack being led by the fomous Burmese General, Mahā Thihathura. Earlier some of the Burmese generals went over to Chao P'ya Chakri and enacted a great slaughter of the Burmese, who then fled in disorder across the frontier and Chiengmai fell into the hands of the Siamese. Cambodian monarch Narai once again tried to stab Siam in the back when P'yā Taksin was busy in his northern campaigns. P'yā Taksin retaliated by driving him out and placing his rival Rāmā T'ibodi on the throne as a vassal of Siam. In A.D. 1777 Chao P'yā Chakri crushed another rebellion in K'orāt and executed the rebel leader. When he returned to Bangkok from this expedition he was given the rank of a Royal Prince with the title of "Supreme Warlord". About this time King Taksin under enormous strain developed insanity and the direction of affairs passed more and more into the hands of General Chakri.

After certain rebellions were put down General Chao P'yā Chakri assumed the crown with popular support with the title of Rāmā T'ibodi or King Rāma I (1782-1809). 'To ensure the internal tranquillity of the country', says Wood, 'all the principal officials urged Chao P'vā Chakri to agree to the death of the ex-King; he finally accepted their counsel, and King Taksin was executed'. King Taksin was then forty-eight and ruled over the whole of the former Kingdom of Ayuthia without Tavoy and Tenasserim and was suzerain over most of the Lao States, including Luang P'rābāng. He was one of the most remarkable figures in Siamese history, who, from a humble position as a leader of a guerilla band, reunited on a firm footing a completely shattered kingdom within the space of a decade and a half. King Rāma I founded modern Bangkok as the capital of Siam and with it the modern period of Siam begins. Since then the kings of the Chakri Dynasty have been ruling over Siam to this day.

As regards the Laos kingdom it was split up into two independent but mutually hostile States in A. D. 1707 with capitals at Vieng-Chān

81. Not to be confused with General Chao P'ya Chakri under King Naresuen.

and Luang P'rābāng. When Alaung-P'āyā, the Burmese conqueror (1752-60), marched eastwards Vieng-Chān saved herself by helping the Burmese to conquer Luang P'rābāng. In A. D. 1773 the Siamese General Chulalok[82] captured Vieng-Chān and carried off the Emerald Buddha to Bangkok which was afterwards installed in a temple within the palace precincts. Since A. D. 1782 the State of Vieng-Chān remained a vassal of Siam. But in consequence of an aggressive attack by the vassal ruler Anou of Vieng-Chān on Bangkok in 1827 the Siamese devastated it and kept the kingdom under their control. Later history is one of adjustments of boundaries between Siam and the French and British controlled areas. The French expansion in Tongking became a matter of grave concern for Siam and when in 1881 Vietnam was reduced to a French protectorate, King Chulalongkorn of Siam sent strong reinforcements to defend Luang P'rābāng upto the basin of the Black River. Luang P'rābāng had been under Siamese suzerainty for about a century and in the French official maps it was shown as part of Siam until 1886. The French authorities, by appointing Auguste Pavie as Vice-counsul in the Laos capital on May 7 of that year, also indirectly recognized Siamese suzerainty over that State. The famous Pavie missions,[83] particularly the second one of 1890, were for exploration and scientific study of the geography of the Laos country and to 'produce a definite statement on the nature and value of the products of the Mekong basin'. But their ultimate object was 'to pave the way for another big annexation of territory by France'. The French demanded all the territory east of the middle Mekong as Ānnām, now their protectorate, had 'incontestable rights' over it. The presence of Siamese authority there was dubbed as an invasion by Pavie. After prolonged disputes and a clash with the French warships at Paknām resulting in casualties to both sides, Siam in 1893 had to yield with payment of indemnity and the French blockade was called off. Yet pending the Siamese evacuation of the east bank of the Mekong the French occupied Chantabun. Under the Anglo-French agreement of January 1896 Möng-Sing went to France and both countries guaranteed the independence of the Menām Valley, other parts of Siam being excluded from the scope of the agreement. By a Franco-Siamese treaty of 1904 Siam renounced her rights over Luang P'rābāng and France evacuated Chantabun, . By further agreements subsequently boundaries between Siam and British and French territories were adjusted stage by stage until we have the present maps.

82. Named Phrā Buddha Yadfā Chulalok.

83. *Mission Pavie : Indochine* 1879-1895, 11 vols., 1898-1919. It is a monumental and scholarly work of great importance.

The kingdom of Laos with 17,00,000 population became independent of France in 1954. To-day it possesses a democratic form of government and a king who lives in the Royal Capital at Luang P'rābāng, the Administrative Capital being Vientiane. Laos is underdeveloped in every respect. In recent years there have been internal troubles between Laos under royal control and the north (Samneua and Phongsaly) under communist dominated Pathet Lao. The things have not yet come under settled conditions by a complete unification of the country.

In Siam the early years of the Chakri dynasty were marked by frequent but indecisive wars with Burma and by expeditions to the northern Malay States over which Siam claimed suzerainty. These wars came to an end in the middle of the nineteenth century after the annexation of Burma by the British. King Mongkut (1851-68) first opened the door for European influence by the treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Britain in 1855. Sir John Bowring from England played the main role in it and occupied a key position in shaping Siam's foreign relations and concluding treaties for her with European powers. Mongkut had a group of Europeans around him—Bishop Pallegoix, Caswell and Bradley—from whom he learnt astronomy, mathematics, English and Latin. He employed Europeans to reorganize the government services. A distinguished Belgian lawyer, Rolin-Jacquemins, reformed the legal system and Major Gerini of Italy organized the military cadet school. Unlike other oriental monarchs Mongkut had the unique foresight to set the process of a silent revolution along European lines and in it he utilized the best available European talents. It was during the reign of Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) that the greatest development and modernization of the country took place. Employing British experts he placed the country's finances and the fiscal system on a sound basis. Princes, educated in Europe, undertook reforms in the education and judicial systems. Chulalongkorn abolished the debt slavery, reformed Court etiquette, established many kinds of modern scientific, technical and research institutions and the Civil Service.

Until 1932 Siam was an absolute monarchy. The successful *coup d'etat* of 24 June, planned by a group of foreign-educated young civilians under the leadership of Luang Pradit Manudharma, transformed it into a constitutional monarchy. The Constitution, signed by King Prajādhipok (1925-35) on 10 December 1932, provided that sovereign power emanated from the Siamese nation and the

king was to exercise the legislative power by and with the consent of the Assembly of People's Representatives, the executive power through the Council of Ministers, and the judicial power through the Courts duly established by law.[84] The existence of a comparatively large standing army, coupled with contests between personalities, and not any major differences in policy, is at the root of the recent crises and governmental changes in Thailand. Yet she preserves her freedom and prosperity more through diplomatic tact than by the power of her arms.

84. W.D. Reeve : *op.cit.*, p.26.

CHAPTER VI

The Tai Kingdom In Assam : The Ahom Dynasty

Even as early as the eighth century A.D. the Tai Empire of Nān-Chao is known to have extended its sway over Upper Burma and Assam. This light has been thrown by the T'ang history as already referred to above. But the exact nature and period of this Tai control over all or a part of the present Assam can not be known from the records as yet available. But the foundation of an independent Tai kingdom in Assam was laid for the first time only in the early part of the thirteenth century A.D. when there was a great westward movement of the race.

1. Hsö-Kā-Hpā (1228-68) :

Chao-Lung Hsö-Kā-Hpā, the founder of the Tai-Ahom Dynasty in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam, was the third son of Phu-Chāng-Khāng *alias* Chao Chāngnyeu, a scion of the Möng-Ri Möng-Rām line of kings of Hkun-Löng's family and not the younger brother of Pā-Meo-Pông as Ney Elias thinks. Phu-Chāng-Khāng, who married the daughter of Chao Tai-Pông of Hsen-Sē, was made Chao-Hpā of Möng-Mit Klingdao[1] (Möng-Mit Keng-Lao) in A.D. 1202 or 1204.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā was born while his mother, Nāng-Möng-Blak-Hkām-Hseng or, in short, Nāng-Pā-Möng, was putting up with her father, Chao Tai-Pông, at the latter's residence. He was born not later than A.D. 1189 during the life-time of Chao Tai-Pông, who named the grandson Hsö-Kā-Hpā.[2] According to the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* Phu-Chāng-Khāng (or Sao Hpö-Hsāng-Kāng) had four sons, Hkun-Tai-Hkon, HkunTai-Hkai, Hkun-Tai-Tao, and Hkun-Sām-Awn. Hkun-Tai-Hkon had a daughter and a son named Nang-Ye-Hkon and Ai-Pu-Hkam.[3] In Tamuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji* as well as Ney Elias's *History of the*

1. Called in Burmese and Assamese Buranjis Mung-Mit-Kup-Kling-dau (or nau). The *Hsen-Wi Chronicle's* version that this vacancy was caused by the death of Hkun-Yi-Kwai-Hkām, who had left no issue, can not be accepted as it is not supported by chronology.
2. *AB*, p.43.
3. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, *CUBSS*, 1.1 p. 237.

Shans, Hsö-Kā-Hpā is said to have had two elder brothers, Hsö-zot-Hpā and Hsö-Hkām-Hpā.[4] These may have been titles assumed by the sons of Phu-Chāng-Khāng, as mentioned in the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, on being made Chao-Hpās.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā was brought up at Hsen-Sē, the capital of Mao-Lung, by his maternal grand-mother. As Pā-Meo-Pông, his maternal uncle and ruler of Möng-Mao, had no son, he was nominated as the successor to that throne. He passed his early nineteen years[5] at the capital of Mao-Lung. But, when later on, Pā-Meo-Pông's wife gave birth to Hsö-Hkan-Hpā, Hsö-Kā-Hpā abandoned the hope of the Möng-Mao throne.

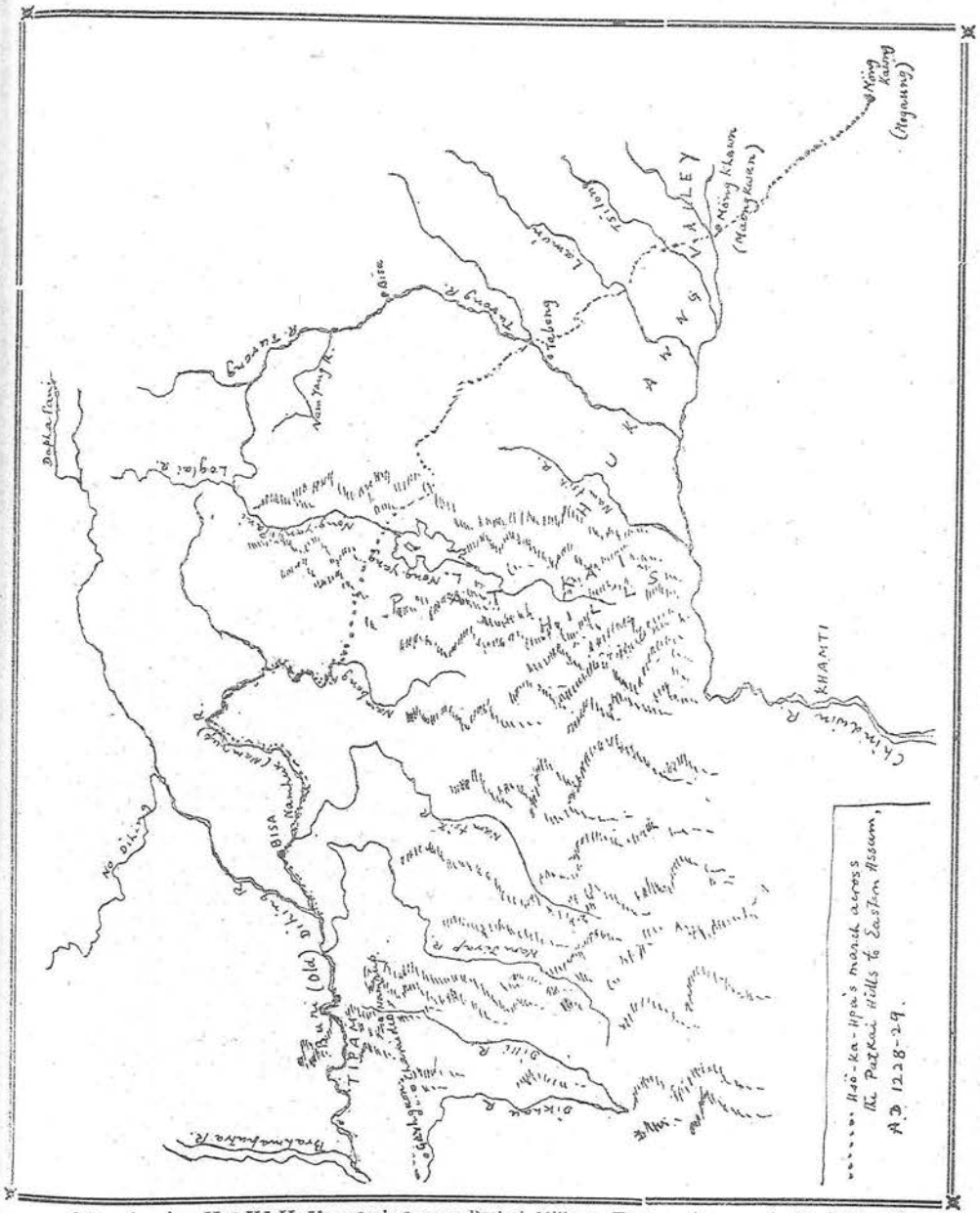
Phu-Chāng-Khāng ruled his States for seven years from A.D. 1202 to 1209.[6] Before his death he divided his kingdom among his sons. Both Ney Elias and Kasinath Tamuli Phukan agree in the fact that he gave to Hsö-Zot-Hpā the country called Tai-Po (or the State of Hsi-Paw or Burmese Thibo) and to Hsö-Hkām-Hpā Tai-Pông or the Narā country, of which the capital was probably in the Upper Chindwin valley and not at Möng-Kawng as indicated by Kasinath Tamuli Phukan. For it was Sām-Löng-Hpā who built the first known capital at Möng-Kawng (Mogaung). But Phu-Chāng-Khāng's third son, Hsö-Kā-Hpā,[7] who was twenty-three (*Lakni Katrao*), was installed as the king of his father's States, Möng-Mit and Keng-Lao (or Möng-Mit Kupklingdao) in A.D. 1209. Ney Elias says Chau-Kang-pha (Hsö-Hkām-Hpā) was the elder and Chau-zot-pha (Hsö-Zot-Hpā) the second son. He further says that Tai-Pông was the southern maing or district of Theinni (Hsen-Wi); but it is doubtful. Even to this day the Hukawng Valley is known to the Tai people as Mao-Pông. Tai-Pông, it is believed, is another name for Mao-Pông and it extended from Kāmeng (Kā-maing), which was twenty-five miles north-west of Möng-Kawng, to the Pātkai. But there was a time when Mao-Pông or Tai-Pông comprised the whole area

4. Tamuli Phukan : *Assam Buranji* (Calcutta, 1906), p.9 ; Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, p.50

5. These years or *Laknis* of the Tai Sexagenary Cycle (or Hpé Wan) are mentioned in the original Tai-Ahom text as Möngkeu, Plekcheu, Kātplao, Kutngi, Rungmao, Taoshi, Kāsheu, Kāpshingā, Dāpmut, Raishan, Möngrao, Plekmit, Kātkeu, Khutcheu, Rungplao, Taongi, Kāmao, Kāpshi, and Dāpsheu.

6. N. Elias : p. 52. But *DAB*, (p.215), 17. Dynastic List gives the period of rule as A.D. 1204-1211. N. Elias's period appears to be correct, and here both the Shan and Burmese eras agree. It also fits in with the dates of Hsö-Kā-Hpā's subsequent movements. *Hsen-Wi Chornicle's* version that he ruled only for two years can not be accepted as it differs from several other records that agree that it was seven years.

7. *AB*, p. 24.



Map showing Hsö-Kā-Hpā's march across Patkai Hills to Eastern Assam A. D. 1226—29

of the present Mogaung, Hukawng and Khamti. Thus Tai-Pông was the early Narā country of wider extent.[8]

Hsö-Kā-Hpā ruled over the kingdom of Möng-Mit Kuplingdao with great ability for eighteen years. Meanwhile Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, who had succeeded to the throne of Möng-Mao in A.D. 1220 according to Ney Elias and A.D. 1215 according to *Ahom Buranji* (P.43) and *Deodhai Asam Buranji* (P.6), soon entered upon an ambitious career of conquests with the help of his brother, the renowned General Sām-Lông-Hpā and his mightier arms reduced, among others, the kingdom of Möng-Mit Klingdao and Sung-Ko to vassalage under Möng-Mao.[9] The eldest son of Phu-Chāng-Khāng named Sao Tai-Hkon (Hsö-Zot-Hpā?), who refused to surrender, was executed at Sung-Ko, the capital of the kingdom, on the east bank of the Irrawaddy.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā had the first disappointment when his prospect of being chosen as the king of Möng-Mao was doomed, and the second and greater disappointment came when, after an interval of eighteen years of peaceful reign in his paternal kingdom, he had to surrender its independence to the Möng-Mao Chief. The latter event seems to be the major cause of his reluctance to continue in his home country, and further it seems, when he had left it, his elder brother Sao Tai-Hkai (Hsö-Hkām-Hpā ?) was appointed by Hsö-Hkān-Hpā as its ruler. The immediate cause of Hsö-Kā-Hpā's departure from his kingdom was a conflict, in A.D. 1227, between Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and the ruler of the country called Jun-Lung (or Yun-lung or Yun-lon) over the boundaries of their respective kingdoms in which he was asked to join. Probably the conflict arose from Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's expansionist policy. His ambition was to consolidate under his leadership the entire Tai (Shan) world, including the land of the Yun Shans in the middle Mekong and the Upper Menām valleys. He must have visualised that this would vastly increase the strength of the Tai-Shan nation politically and militarily by eliminating the quarrels between the independent or semi-independent petty Shan principalities. Hsö-Hkān-Hpā summoned his vassal, Hsö-Kā-Hpā, by a letter to help him with his forces in the campaign against Junlung. But the the latter did not respond to his call. At this, Hsö-Hkān-Hpā thought of forcing him to take part in the war. When Hsö-Kā-Hpā suspected this intention of the Möng-Mao Chief, he wrote a reply to

8. P.K. Buragohain : *Ahamar Ādi Buranji* (Jorhat, 1946), pp. 26, 28, 35, 48.
9. *Hsen-Wi Chronicle*, in *GUBSS*, 1.1. p. 239 Tai Hsö-Hkām-Hpā is in the Burmese form Hsö-Hkān-Hpā. In Tai-Ahom Chronicles the latter form is also used.

him in these words : "The king of Jun-Lung is my relation just as you are. If I take your side and help you, all kings, descended from the same original family with us, would blame me. Hence I did not go when you called me".[10] Having received this letter Hsö-Hkān-Hpā determined to capture him and the latter became aware of it. Hsö-Kā-Hpā also knew that Hsö-Hkān-Hpā was too powerful for him. Hence he decided to quit his country. He left his country with his wife or wives and followers for Magaung 'where prince Noi-Hsān-Hpā (alias Hsö-Hkām-Hpā) was ruling.[11]

Who was Noi-Hsān-Hpā? Ney Elias says that Noi-Hsān-Hpā or Chau-Kam-hpa was the son of the great Möng-Mao king Hsö-Hkān-Hpā and became *Sawbwa* of Möng-Kawng (Mogaung : Pali Udigiriāta or Skr. Udayagiri-rāṣṭra). But, as already said above, the *Hsen-Wi Chronicle* says that Hsö-Hkān-Hpā had only one son, named Hkun-Pu-Hkam. He was born in China as his mother had gone to live in that country owing to a quarrel with her husband. After Hsö-Hkān-Hpā's death, the ministers of Möng-Mao approached Hkun-Pu-Hkam and offered him the *Sawbwaship* of Möng-Mao, but the latter refused the offer and suggested the name of his son, Hkun-Pu-Kaw or Ai-Pu, for it. Secondly, it can not be expected that Hsö-Kā-Hpā, after having offended Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, would go to his son for refuge. Further, there are indications that Hsö-Hkām-Hpā of the Narā country was the elder brother of Hsö-Kā-Hpā and that they belonged to the same family.[12] Thus it is difficult to accept the relationships as described by Ney Elias. Hsö-Hkām-Hpā was given the Narā country (Tai-Pông or Mao-Pông) by Phu-Chāng-Khāng prior to its occupation by the Möng-Mao general Sām-Lông-Hpā. After the conquest of Möng-Mit Kupklingdao, Hsö-Hkān-Hpā probably appointed him to rule that country and subsequently, about A.D. 1227 or earlier, transferred him to Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) as its *Sawbwa* when Sām-Lông-Hpā was engaged in his western campaigns. Tamuli Phukan says that 'this very king Noi-Hsān-Hpā is called Sukhranphā in the Assamese Buranji', and is also called 'Narā Rājā'.[13] Under Sām-Lông-Hpā a major part of the old Narā country was included in

10. Naoboicha Phukan's Buranji, *DHAS*, Transcript, vol. IX, pp. 175-76; A brief reference in Tamuli Phukan's Buranji, p.9.

11. Naoboicha Phukan's Buranji, Tr. *Ibid*, p.176.

12. Tamuli Phukan : *op.cit.*, p.12; *Banhgadia Buragohainr Buranji* in *DAB*, p.89. Here the Narā king could not be the son of Hsö-Hkān-Hpā, the Great, of Möng-Mao who had already turned an enemy of Hsö-Kā-Hpā. He must be the Māgaung *Sawbwa*.

13. *Ibid.*, p.12

the State of Möng-Kawng and the Möng-Kawng State became identical with the Narā Country.

When Hsö-Kā-Hpā came away from his original kingdom of Möng-Mit Kupklingdao, he brought with him 'a large force composed of cavalry and infantry armed with cannon, guns and gun-powder so as to be able to fight his enemies and also there were other followers and servants'.[14] On arriving at Möng-Kawng, he sent ahead messengers to inform its king (Chao-Hpā) Noi-Hsān-Hpā and the latter, on getting the information, welcomed him and arranged for his stay in the capital with his army and followers.

King Noi-Hsān-Hpā learnt from Hsö-Kā-Hpā all about the political developments in Mao-Lung and the reason why he had to quit his kingdom. Noi-Hsān-Hpā desired that Hsö-Kā-Hpā should possess a kingdom in this new country. As Hsö-Kā-Hpā had a large army with superior weapons Noi-Hsān-Hpā suggested to him that it would be possible for him to found a kingdom by subjugating the south-western part of the Narā country, apparently the Upper Chindwin region, which was inhabited by tribes, who used only bows, arrows, swords and spears in fighting.[15] Probably at this time Hsö-Kā-Hpā received an invitation from Sām-Lông-Hpā and decided to proceed to Assam (then Saumār.).

Sām-Lông-Hpā, while he was still engaged in his Eastern Assam campaigns, was perhaps aware of Hsö-Kā-Hpā's flight from his native country. But after his defection from his brother, he seems to have invited Hsö-Kā-Hpā to join him in the Tipām-Nāmrup area, otherwise the reason of Hsö-Kā-Hpā's crossing of the Patkai remains unaccounted for in history. It may, however, be assumed that Hsö-Kā-Hpā had already some knowledge of Eastern Assam during his Chutiya expedition referred to both by Ney Elias as already described and also in the Tai-Ahom Chronicles at least at two places. Now probably Sām-Lông-Hpā's invitation brought him new hopes and he took leave of his brother, the Chao-Hpā of Möng-Kawng, to try his fortune in the land of his dream.

Both Francis Hamilton (Dr. Buchanan) and Pemberton refer to a Hkuntai (Tai Prince), who remained near the hill Charai Khorong to the south of Garhgaon and Pemberton makes the significant statement that the place mentioned 'was probably the site chosen for a residence by Samlongpha'. This Hkuntai was no other probably than Sām-Lông-

14. Naoboicha Phukan : *op.cit.*, p.176.

15. *Ibid.*, p.177.

Hpā, who made Charai Khorong his residence. This Charai Khorong is between the Nām Ching hill and Borśāl some 12 miles from Śimaluguri to the South on the west bank of the river Dikhau. Pemberton's account further says that Hkuntai's brother is called Narā-Rajah by the Singphos or tribes occupying the mountains south-east of Assam to this day and that Narā-Rajāh was the tributary prince of Mogaung. These statements as well as the Bānhgaḍia Burāgohain's Buranji confirm the facts related above.[16]

Some of the Assamese Chroniclers write that Hsö-Kā-Hpā stole away the statuette of the royal tutelary deity *Chum-sheng* from the place of Noi-Hsān-Hpā. When, after Hsö-Kā-Hpā's departure for Assam, Noi-Hsān-Hpā could not find the statuette, he suspected Hsö-Kā-Hpā and sent after him men to capture him. But they could not overtake him and returned from a place, which, on that account, is called Narā-Ulatā (the place from which the Narās returned). This story has no foundation, rather it is an unnecessary reflection on Hsö-Kā-Kpā's character. In the original Tai-Ahom text Hsö-Kā-Hpā is said to have brought the statuette trom the place of his grand-father, and not that of Noi-Hsān-Hpā.[17] Narā-Ulatā may be a place from which the Nara-Raja himself accompanying Hsö-Kā-Hpā or his escorts and guides sent with the latter returned. Narā-Ulatā is a place not far from Margherita up the Burī Dihing. There is also a popular belief that Narā-Ulatā is really Larā-Ulatā, that is, the place from where the Larā- Raja returned after pursuing Prince Gadādhar Singha upto the foothill and this is an event of a much later date. But it is not to be had in any old record.

In this arduous journey across the wild country of mountains, inhabited by warlike aborigines, such as the Nagās, he was accompanied by a distinguished body of faithful and valiant nobles and chiefs (Phu-Kin-Möngs)[18] from a number of Shan States who joined with their own contingents of armed forces. They might have joined him from time to time and some might have been even tributary to Möng-Mao. Among the States, from which military aids arrived for him under the command of their chiefs, the names of five are specifically mentioned in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle and they are Möng-Hkan, Möng-Hkru-Đai, Mong-Hkā

16. Fr. Hamilton : *An Account of Assam* (*DHAS*, Gauhati), 1940, p.1; Pemberton : *op.cit.*, p.110 , *DAB*, p. 89.

17. *AB*, p.44; *DAB*, p.5.

18. *Phu*-a male, *kin* eat or enjoy, *möng*- a town or a kingdom, meaning 'a kingdom-eater', that is one who administers a country. It is translated into Assamese as 'Raj-Khowa'.

Möng-Pun, Möng-phu and Möng-Li.[19] Hsö-Kā-Hpā also had with him many great men and nobles of his Court, of whom the Chronicle mentions the names of Hkun-Bā, Hkun-Phrāng, Hkun-Ring, Hkun-Hseng and Hkun-Phu-Kin. All these chiefs and nobles cast in their lot with Hsö-Kā-Hpā and quitted their countries for good and therefore could not have left their families behind to the mercies of the enemies. Then there were a few members in the party who appear to be of the priestly families. The names of these members are given as Thao-Möng-Lung-Kāng; Thao-Khen-Lung ; Thao-Möng-Bān-Rai; Chao-Phrāng ; Thao-Möng-Masham,[20] who descended from Shāngbun, who, in his turn, was a descendant of Laokhri ; Thao-Möng-Mashai[21] who descended from *Mamung* ; Thao-Möng-Kāng-Khru-Möng; and Lan-Tai-Möng. Of the above personages Thao-Möng-Bān-Rai or Thao-Möng-Klin-Mān-Rai was the Chao-Phrāng-Möng (Burā Gohain) and Phu-Kin-Möng or Chief, Kāng-Ngan or Thao-Möng-Kāng-Ngan, was the Chao-Thao-Lung (Bar Gohain) of Chao-Lung Hsö-Kā-Hpā, or they were appointed to those offices by the king.[22]

As to the total strength of the party of armed force that moved with him, various numbers are given in the Assamese accounts of a much later period. Not only the numbers themselves are based on wrong calculations, but they vary also from 480 to 1080. The Tai-Ahom Chronicle and the *Deodhai Assam Buranji* give a number of nine thousand and it seems to be a reliable figure from the circumstances described in the accounts of Hsö-Kā-Hpā's westward march. From the manner of description it appears that, barring other followers, the regular fighting force of Hsö-Kā-Hpā was estimated at nine thousand strong with three thousand *matangs* or cooking vessels, made of copper, each for a squad of three men.[23] He had with him also three hundred war horses fitted with saddles and blinkers and one tusked elephant, named, Khām-Kaw-Möng, one female elephant, named Chu-Kip-Kat and an elephant-

19. *AB*, p.44. Phu-Kin-Möngs coming from these States were respectively Tā-Hkun-lák, Hkun-Klang, Phá-Lung-Hkun-Lāng, Kang-Hku-Mun, and Kāng-Ngan.

20. The fore-father of the Deodhais. See *AB*, p.25.

21. The fore-father of the Maw-Hung or the Mohans. See *Ibid.*, p.25.

22. Tamuli Phukan : *op.cit.*, p.10. 'Bura Gohain' and 'Bar Gohain' are the Assamese equivalents of the original Tai-Ahom titles of the two ministers of Hsö-Kā-Hpā.

23. The Tai text says 'Shām ring matang ding maw khau chām kin lé shām kun'. (See *AB*, p.44) meaning three thousand red cooking pots (red being of copper) bent low on one side. (Each cooking pot) boiled rice also eat (to lick) just enough three men. *DAB*, says conveying the same idea—'bhātar tekeli tāmar, tintār bhāt eketāté sijé, ene tekeli tini hezār, prajā na hezār'. pp.5-6.

keeper, named Phrăng-Pem. Records are silent about how the heavy arms were carried along the difficult mountaneous routes. Probably they were borne by these men as well as elephants and horses.

It is also said that there came with Hsö-Kā-Hpā his three wives including the chief queen and they were Ai-Mè-Chao-Lo, Nāng-Sheng-Chum-Hpā and Yi-Lo-Weng-Ching-Chum-Hpā.[24] Of these Ai-Mè-Chao-Lo was probably his chief queen. There followed in the wake of the marching army parties of sturdy and adventurous village folk-men, women and children-from various places along the route, not only in the hope of getting better amenities of life in the newly conquered lands, but also out of profound faith in the ability of Chao-Lung Hsö-Kā-Hpā, the veteran Chief of Mao-Lung. P.K. Burāgohain, who spent about twelve years in Upper Burma and collected, among other businesses, a considerable amount of information about the history of the Tai, once visited the Tai villages in the Hukawng valley and learnt that most of the Tai people of the valley, and in some areas entire villages, followed Hsö-Kā-Hpā to Waiśālī (Assam).[25] That may be one of the reasons why there are now only a few Tai (Shan) villages in the Hukawng valley proper.

As Hsö-Kā Hpā advanced from Möng-Kawng towards the Patkai via the Hukawng valley he reduced to submission the local tribes found along the routes he followed and their neighbouring areas. The places he marched through were the villages of Kat-Rung-Möng-Wan, Möng-Nā-Möng-Ti, Khok-Chāng-Bing-Min (Hātikhakia) and Tā-Bing-Men (Opar chakua) of the Nagas, Chak-Chāng-Khrai (Sākhai), and Shauké. He also attacked the principal village of Möng-Kham, one hundred and eight miles from Möng-Kawng, in the Hukawng valley and conquered it. Möng-Kham (or Mainkwon) was, it is said, called Mung-Kham after the name of a Naga chief of the Yong-kuk Nagā tribe. It was his headquarters from where he controlled the whole neighbourhood. It became Möng-Kham after its conquest by Hsö-Kā-Hpā.[26] Then he proceeded on to Lang-Mi-Ché-Kau and then to Maw-Lā-Khrăng. Then he came to Möng-Khau Möng-Pān and thence to Phā-Kè-Chè-Ring. Phā-Kè-

24. P.K. Burāgohian in *Tai Sanskriti*, (Gauhati), 1.2., 1956, p. 81. The names are also mentioned as Ibin Chaolu (Chief queen), daughter of Thaomöng Kānangan or Kāng-ngan, Aimé Chaolu and I-Yong-Siluing. Translated by Kripanath Phukan from *Lailik Buranji*.

25. Buragohain : *op.cit.*, pp. 46-47.

26. This piece of information is supplied to me by Pho Mya of Sang-Ka-ling Khamti in Upper Chindwin. Of course, I have not been able to verify it. I found Pho Mya, a well-informed person, who could give me certain other pieces of very correct information regarding the Tai of Upper Burma.

Chè-Ring (State or country of the Phākè people), the area to the south of the Doi-Khām hill and just to the west of the Loglai river, through which the stream called Digam Pani seems to flow, was the earlier home of the Tai-Phā-Ké community, the name being Assamised into Phakeal in Assam. The Tai-Phā-Kè had originally come form Möng-Mao to Möng-Kawng and then to that place. After leaving this place he appeared at the principal pass of a mountain ('Doi') which he then crossed ('Khām'). Thus the mountain, which Hsö-Kā-Hpā had to cross before reaching the Patkai, became known as Doi-Khām. In the Tai-Ahom text the words are 'Khām Doi' which means 'cross mountain'. Later European explorers wrote the name as Digam or Digum. Digam or Digum Bum[27] (Doikhām in Shan) stands conspicuously to the south of the Pātkai. To the north of Digum Bum and south-west of the summit of the Pātkai there is a large triangular valley having a vast sheet of water in it called "Nong-Yang" several miles long, and a wooded island towards the eastern extremity. But Macgregor, who visited that area, says that 'the lake appeared to be $\frac{3}{4}$ miles long by $\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide'. Digum Bum is not less than 3,000 to 4,000 ft. high, the surrounding hills north and south being lower by 1,000 to 2,000 ft. than it.[28] He crossed the Doikhām hill and came to the boundary of the Naga country. He then crossed the river Khām-Jāng or Khām-Yāng and stopped near the Nong-Yang Lake. As he proceeded down from Khām-Jāng, the following persons and families accompanied him, namely, Thao-Möng-Hkun-Tăng, Thao-Möng-Kè-Hkām, Thao-Möng-Hkun-Tā-Lā, Thao-Möng-Hkun-Tai-Ren (*Ren*-house i.e. family), five Kā-Lăng-Shu families, Lān-Tai-Möng and Luk-Phi-Mā families.[29] The community, called Khām-Yāng (Hkām-Yāng), who later migrated and settled in the Margherita area of Eastern Assam, had their earlier home in Khām-Jāng (Khām-Yāng). The Assamese know them to be Khāmjangias. In the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* Hsö-Kā-Hpā is said to have crossed next the Nām-Jāng river or stream and encamped on the bank of the Nong-Jāng (Nöng-Jāng) Lake. The waters of this great lake on the Pātkai is regarded as sacred by the hill tribes. The Nong-Jang or "Nongyang River" falls in from the west after a course of twelve or fourteen miles, mainly between two high and continuous ridges, each called Pātkai and then passing through the lake flows out east into the Loglai or Laklai which, in its turn, flows south and east to the Turong.[30] Major

27. In Singpho it means mountain. Macgregor crossed it at an altitude of 4,000 ft.

28. See S.E. Peal's Note on the old Burmese route over Patkai via Nongyang in *RASB*, 1873-81 Selections - K.A.S. pp. 69-82.

29. *AB*, p.39.

30. Peal's Note : *Ibid*, p. 74.

C.R. Macgregor, who surveyed the passes over the Patkai range during 1884-5, mentions in his *Military Report on the Khamti-Singpho countries* 1885, (pp. 34-5) of "an old inscription in the Ahom language, which is said to have been cut on a rock at this ford (the Nongyang[31] river) in 1228 A.D. when the Ahoms, coming from Maifikwon, invaded Assam. The Ahoms are said to have brought elephants and ponies with them". Whether the inscription, mentioned in this statement, refers to one during the reign of Hsö-Dāng-Hpā (1397-1407), or was a separate one of the time of Hsö-Kā-Hpā , it is not clear. From his encampment on the great lake he subjugated the Naga villages called Khārukhu, Pungkāng, Tithāng, Binglao, Lātemā, Lāngpāng and Tāroo. The two villages, Luknām and Lukā were destroyed. He also conquered the Nagas of Tāputapa. The whole region between the Doikhām and the Pātkai with the river Khām-Jāng in the central area was made into a province called Khām-Jāng (Khām-Yāng) or rather Upper Khām-Jāng over which Kāng-Khru-Möng was appointed Governor by Hsö-Kā-Hpā.[32]

He then declared Khām-Jāng as his territory of which the eastern limits formed the boundary between the Narā country and his realm. He also fixed annual tributes to be paid by the inhabitants in local produce. It may be particularly noted that there moved with Hsö-Kā-Hpā a miniature secretariat manned by scholars, which was directed by him at this place 'to maintain a full written record of whatever is discussed at any time, whenever a death occurs to anybody, whomsoever we happen to meet.'[33] It was nothing but the traditional method of systematically recording events and the Tai-Ahom Chronicles are based on such records.

Having settled the administration of the area of Khām-Jāng, Hsö-Kā-Hpā resumed his march and arrived at Doi-Kao-Rang,[34] where he made his next camp. Here he ordered his generals to conquer the Nagā country of the high and low hills. The Nagas of the villages, Pāpuk, Tengkhām, Khunkhat, Khunteng, Tengching and Jākhāng gave battle, but were defeated with heavy casualties and their villages were destroyed.

31. *nām*, water or river; *Yāng* from *Jang*, sparkling or clear; *nong*, lake. Ahom *J* becomes *Y* in Hkāmti or Shan.

32. *AB*, p.45.

33. *BBB* in *DAB*, p. 98.

34. *Doi*, mountain, *Kao*, nine, *Rang*, unite, meet i.e. collection of nine hills or nine ranges converge. The name was given by Hsö-Kā-Hpā and it is a Tai-Ahom word. Peal, who travelled that area, says "At the site in question, but one range is crossed from water to water, whereas to the west at least 8 or 9 conspicuous ridges must be crossed ere the plains are reached beyond. The name 'Doikaurang' was bestowed by the first Ahom Raja 'Chukhapha'. "*RASB*, 1873-81, K.A.S., p. 75.

Uncompromising hostiles were at times severely dealt with to serve as a deterrent. The inhabitants of other villages then voluntarily submitted. Having thus subjugated the Patkai region and forced his way to the northern side of the Range by the Nong-Yang-Patkai Pass he moved towards the Nām-Ruk (Nām-Huk) *via* Khām-Nang-Pu along the bank of the river Nām-Pong or Nām-Bong. The Nām-Ruk, which is a river of six tributaries, falls into the Old Dihing (Buri Dihing, a Boḍo name). The Old Dihing and the New Dihing (No-Dihing) in the upper courses bifurcate from one river rising from the Daphā Bum, north of the Hkāmti-Lông valley. It flows over a certain distance and then divides itself into two streams, the upper one being called No-Dihing which falls into the Lohit and the lower and western one being called Burī Dihing which flows westwards and falls into the Brahmaputra below Dibrugarh.

At the confluence of the Nām-Pông and the Nām-Ruk rivers Hsö-Kā-Hpā ordered his men to make a number of rafts, and when they were ready, he, with his whole party including his armed forces and the three hundred horses, got on them. Just before starting, he said prayers to the river for granting a safe voyage. They then rowed down and came to the river Dihing (Buri Dihing). From the confluence he rowed up the Dihing with his force and encamped in the area called Möng-Lā-Kheñ-Teñ-Shā. According to the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* Lā-Kheñ and Ten-Shā or Tel-Shā were two villages. The inhabitants of this area appear to have voluntarily submitted to Hsö-Kā-Hpā. who then placed Hkun Tang as the Governor of that province. Thereafter he came downstream the Dihing (Nām-Jin of Hsö-Kā-Hpā, because of the water being very cold)[35] and arrived in Möng-Tipām through the present Tirap Frontier Division (now District.)

Though we do not know much about the position of Möng-Kham, which he had subjugated, and the Hukawng valley, his whole series of conquests from the Doi-Khām hill to Möng-Lā-Kheñ-Teñ-Shā, brought under his control enough terrtiory, resource and population, to constitute a kingdom of those days. This part of the region between Burma and Assam is not known to have been conquered either by Ko-lo-fêng or Sām-Lông-Hpā. It therefore became a real domain of the Tai prince Hsö-Kā-Hpā originally acquired by dint of his arms. The descriptions in the Chronicles show that Hsö-Kā-Hpā's fightings were not so much to eliminate hostile elements from his way as to conquer this hill country and place it under the administration of his own officers. Nagā peoples

35. *AB*, p.46.

of many areas also voluntarily submitted to him and accepted his rule as a matter of preference to purely tribal life. The new regime guaranteed to them not only greater security and peace, but also brought to them a culture and forms of political and economic organization far more advanced than hitherto known to them. Hence, after the initial opposition to the unknown adventurer, the hills peoples soon began to appraise the enduring benefits that Hsö-Kā-Hpā's government could bestow upon them. Even to this day, the names of Hsö-Kā-Hpā and Hsö-Pāt-Hpā (Gadāpāṇi) are lovingly uttered and treasured up in the traditions of the Hills peoples from the Nagā Hills to Garo Hills.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā, with his army and followers, came by the riverway of the Dihing and entered the valley of the Brahmaputra in the region called Tipām, an area of low hills. The great Mao general Sām-Lông-Hpā already made himself master of the Tipām-Nāmrup area after conquering the Chutiya kingdom, of which it was a dependency. Hsö-Kā-Hpā had there a consultation with Sām-Lông-Hpā and the result was that he succeeded the latter in this country, called by the Tai Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām[36] and by the Buddhists of Burma Wei-Śāli-Lòng. In corroboration of more extensive conquests of Sām-Lông-Hpā in the area of modern Assam including the North-East Frontier Agency there is mention in the Assamese sources that before the arrival of Hsö-Kā-Hpā the Narā Raja collected tributes not only from the Chutiyas, but also from the Kacharis, Marāns, Nagas, Barāhis and Kamateswar and for the collection of such tributes three officers were sent—one for the Kamatā and Barāhi countries, one for the Chutiya and Marān countries and one for the countries of the Kacharis and the Nagas. The last officer, after collecting the tributes of his area, joined Hsö-Kā-Hpā, who out of affection named him Bimun Pātar. Bimun Pārar's family is known as Marān Pātar. The other two officers also soon joined Hsö-Kā-Hpā and later became Garhgañyā Handikoi.[37]

36. *Mong*, country, *Dun or Nun*, full, *Hsün*, garden, *Khām*, gold or golden i.e. 'country full of golden gardens'. In another sense, Suvarṇabhumi yielding rich golden harvests (golden-coloured rich paddy fields). Both this name and weisāli were applied to Eastern Assam. Burmese called the country Athan (*th* for *s* in Burmese) and early European geographers like Van Den Brouke *Asam*. Gait points out that in the *Vaṁśāvali* of the Koch kings the word "Asam" referred to the Ahoms and not to the country. He rejects, and rightly, the sense of 'uneven' as distinguished from Samatata, for the term nowhere occurs prior to the Ahom occupation. *op.cit.*, p.245.

37. *The Ancient Chronicles of Assam* (K.A.S., 1922) Ed. by H.C. Goswami, p. 32.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā made his headquarters in Möng-Tipām,[38] the present Jaipur-Nām-Phākeal area of Eastern Assam, and his Tai people formed their first settlements in Assam in this locality on the Dihing bank. He held his court at this place aided by his two able ministers, Thao-Möng-Klin-Lān-Mān-Rai and Thao-Möng-Kāng-Ngan, who were the Bura Gohain and the Bar Gohain respectively and received the tributes collected under Sām-Lông-Hpā (the Narā Raja). He lived there for three years, but finding the country subject to inundation by the waters of the Dihing during the monsoons he shifted his headquarters to Abhoipur[39] down from there. Before leaving Tipām he appointed Kang-Ngan (or Kan-Ngan) as the Governor of that province. Abhoipur was superior in fertility but densely forested with a few scattered villages. He lived there for five years trying to develop the area so as to attract more population. As the plans failed to attract population he crossed over the Brahmaputra (Lohit) to the north bank and landed in the country called Hābung. After three harvests he abandoned that country owing to damaging floods during the monsoons and crossed back to the south bank, this time entering the Dikhau[40] river which flows into the Brahmaputra[41] to the west of the Dihing. He advanced upstream to Dilihmukh[42] during the flood season. At this place he tested the water of the Dilih river by dipping his hand into it and holding it in his palm and found that it was flowing from Tipām. As he had no doubt that the area around Dilihmukh was of a lower level than Tipām and hence subject to inundation, he went farther up the river Dikhau to a place called Möng-Rin Möng-Ching[43] which was a valley at a higher level. Here he took the weight of the water of another stream, called Śilpāni, flowing into the Dikhau and that equal quantity of water of that stream weighed twice that of the

38. *Deodhai Asam Buranji*. (Gauhati, 1962), P.8; G.C. Barua : *Ahom Buranji* p.46.

39. Halaguri in some Assamese Buranjis, but both seem to refer to the same area nearer to the Brahmaputra.

40. Evidently an earlier Boḍo name. The Tai-Ahoms called it Nām-Shao (*nām*, water, *shao*, clear, which means a river of clear water).

41. Called Nām-Dao-Hpi (*Nām*, water, river, *Dao*, star, *Hpi*, god i.e. river of the Star-God) or simply Nām-Ti-Lao which means the river Lohit. *Ti-Lao* appears to be a Tai form of Boḍo *Di-Lao*.

42. River Dilih Boḍo was named Nām-Khun by the Tai-Ahoms. (*Nām*, river or water, *Khun*, muddy i.e. a river of muddy waters). If flows from the northeast *via* Tipām-Nāmrup and falls into the Dikhau (Nām-Shao).

43. *Möng*, country, *Rin*, stone. *Möng*, country, *shing*, high level, the highest layer. Hence the country of the high valley.

Dikhau river. From this Hsö-Kā-Hpā named the river Śilpānī Sang-Tak,[44] which name later became applicable to the whole area.

There is a significant mention in the *Deodhai Asam Buranji*[45] that king Hsö-Kā-Hpā sent an envoy from Sang-Tak with valuable presents[46] to Hsö-Khran-Hpā's place to inform the latter that "we are at this place". Then Hsö-Khrān-Hpā in return sent his greetings with a number of presents.[47] In this way, the two kings ruled in amity and friendship. This reference to Hsö-Khrān-Hpā in the Assamese Buranji undoubtedly means Hsö-Kā-Hpā's brother Hsö-Hkām-Hpā or Noi-Hsān-Hpā, the ruler of the Narā kingdom. Such communication between Assam and Burma was made possible by Hsö-Kā-Hpā's conquest of the hill country over which he firmly established his rule by appointing Governors.

Hsö-Kā-Hpā spent two years at Möng-Run Möng-Ching and then, leaving Tā-Hkun-Lāk as Governor of this province he proceeded downstream the river Dikhau and arrived at Simaluguri. There he halted and offered a feast to his nobles and followers by killing cows. Here he sent spies all around to make an idea of the place and found that "there were three thousand and three hundred ghats[48] in the Nām-Deng[49] river" This indicated a strong concentration of population in the neighbourhood and a source of potential danger to his nascent State. Hence he left Śimaluguri soon for Ti-Mau[50] (present Dimau to the east of the town of Sibsagar), but, to his disappointment, he found that place, too, subject to inundation and the earth full of clay. Yet he somehow dwelt there for six years and then advanced *via* Timak to Lang-Te-Phā where he built a town and set up his head-quarters. As that place was also not free from inundation he finally decided to choose a high ground to establish his capital. He searched for such a place and found the present

44. *Sang* ,two, *Tak*, a balance, meaning double the weight, or twice heavy. Place and river names were given by Hsö-Kā-Hpā according to their significant characteristics. It was a Tai practice. The Sang-tak stream, which flows from the east, falls into the Dikhau river at a distance of five miles from Simaluguri to its south.

45. *DAB*, p.8.

46. The presents, among others, were a sliver watervessel with a spout, pieces of Court dress and fine cotton pieces.

47. Some of these presents were cross-bows, gold embroidered shoes, gold-embroidered head-dresses.

48. *Ghat* is a foot-way to the river from the bank used for carrying water, washing, bathing, etc.

49. *Nām*, water, *deng*, red or reddish i.e. a river of red-coloured water.

50. from Boḍo *dimau*.

Charaideo[51] hill to the south-east of Śimaluguri in the sub-division of Sibsagar more suitable than any other place so far. The *Deodhai Asam Buranji* says that in the year Möng-Keo King Hsö-Kā-Hpā built his first capital on a permanent basis on a small hill including the high foot-hill area adjacent to that of Lāng-Ku-Ri Deo.[52] He there propitiated the gods, sacrificing one horse in the north and another in the south, both being striped ones[53] according to some *Buranjis*. He also made an altar under a tree[54] and worshipped the gods Khām-Lé, Rang-Lé and Rang-Bang by offering a vesselful of silver. From his sources of information Dr. John Peter Wade writes that the inhabitants of this country presented Hsö-Kā-Hpā with nine thousand tolas of gold and one hundred pieces of cotton cloth or *Tao*. Hsö-Kā-Hpā also erected a fort at Charaideo.[55] The Chronicles say that Chao-Lung Hsö-Kā-Hpā crossed the Patkai and descended on the plains on the Assam side in A.D. 1228 and reached Tipām in A.D. 1231 after subjugating the whole area. After about twenty-one years of search for a suitable site he ultimately constructed the capital city of Charaideo in Lākni *Möng-Reo* (A.D. 1252) and ruled his kingdom from there for sixteen years and died in *lākni Tao-Ngi* (A.D. 1268). He called his kingdom Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām which then extended to the Pātkai. Thus from *lākni Möng-Mao*, when Hsö-Kā-Hpā first set his foot on Tipām in the Upper Assam valley and made himself master of it, to *lākni Tao-Ngi* the total period of rule in Assam or Saumar-pith, as we know it to-day, was thirty-six years. On this computation Hsö-Kā-Hpā died at the age of seventy-seven years or in A.D. 1268. Referring to Charaideo Colonel Shakespear says that in the centre of the Dihing Company's tea plantation stands a large ancient temple with a splendid avenue of Nahor trees and also exists evidence of sites of towns and villages, artificial irrigation channels, tanks and groves of fine old mango and jack fruit trees which are unmistakable signs of a former thriving population. (See his *History of Upper Assam, etc.*, pp. 87-8.).

51. Tai *Che-Rai-Doi*, Assamised into *Charaideo* or *Charai-khorong* and Sanskritized into *Bihagachal*. *Che*, city, *Rai*, shining, It was at first called Sé-Tām-Doi-Phi meaning city-hill-god i.e. city of the sacred hill. It was here that the royal cemetery was made.

52. God *Lāng-Ku-Ri* is identified with Siva.

53. Horse sacrifice by the early Tai-Ahoms is significant and comparable to similar sacrifices among certain early races including the Aryan rulers in India.

54. mulberry tree according to Gait.

55. Wade : *An Account of Assam* (North Lakhimpur, Assam, published by B. Sarma, 1927), 1800, p.18.

The race with the territories under their sway in the Brahmaputra Valley were as followes :—

Local Ruling Races in Hsö-Kā-Hpā's Time : *

Prior to the advent of Hsö-Kā-Hpā the whole of Eastern Assam was under tribal rule. Almost all the tribes in occupation of the various localities in the valley belonged to the Mongoloid Boḍo race. A powerful section of this race, locally called Chutiya,[56] ruled the country east of the Subanśiri and Disang rivers, probably with a strip of territory upto the confluence of the Dikhau and the Brahmaputra. The Chutiyas had their capital at Sadiya. In this connection it is important to refer to the Assamese *Kachari Buranji* which relates in a legendary fashion that one Mānik of the Kachāri tribe became the first king of the Sadiyal Kachāris and he owed his kingship to the talismanic power of a golden cat born of his wife from her union with an unknown Sannyasi. He was also told in a dream by that Sannyasi that the possession of that cat would bring him prosperity and raise him to kingship, and in due course the prophecy was fulfilled. Curiously enough, the Chutiyas have an identical tradition of a golden cat.

*Races with their Teritories	Political boundaries			
	North	South	East	West
1 Chutiya Kingdom	Mountain	Burī Dihing river	Brahma-Kunda	Sisi river
2. Marān State	Burī Dihing river	Disāng river	Suffry river	Brahmaputra river
3. Barāhī State	Disāng river	Dikhau river	Nagāhāt	Barāhī Fikā
4. Kachāri Kingdom	Dikhau river	Hills	Hills	Dhanśirī river
5. Bāra Bhuyan Territories	Mountain	Brahmaputra river	Sisi river	Gang Bihāli
6. Sungi (Daphla) Territory	Mountain	Brahmaputra river	Gang Bihāli	Bhairabi river
7. Darangi King's Kingdom	Mountain	Brahmaputra river	Bhairabi river	Manāhā river

—From an authentic transcript copy of an old Assamese manuscript, entitled *Borgohain Vaṁśāvalī*, Kindly given to me for use by Shri Jogendranath Phukan M.A., Lecturer in History at Gauhati University.

56. The real tribal name of this section of the Boḍo race was probably Diorā, whom the early Ahoms called Tiorā or simply Rā. The term Diorā seems to have been later Hinduised into Deori with a different meaning, that is, *Deo* or Spirit worshippers or priests who constitute the non-Hindu section of the tribe. The rest of the tribe was converted to Hinduism as noted.

An account called *Chutiyar Kathā* says that in A.D. 1189 there was a prince named Birpāl of the family of Bhirmoka, an ancient king of the Chutikā tribe, who ruled Sadiya, the country of the Korjokas. Some read Bhirmoka as Bhiṣmaka. Birpāl (or Birabar) became the Chief of sixty Chutiya families in the neighbourhood of the Sonagiri Hill and assumed the name of Gayāpāl. His wife Rūpavatī worshipped the god Kuvera for a son. Kuvera one day appeared in the form of Birpāl and had an intercourse with her. Birpāl was told in a dream all about it by Kuvera and was directed to go to a tree under which certain objects would be found. Accordingly Birpāl went and found under the tree a shield, a sword and a golden cat. In time a son was born to him and was named Gaurinārāyan. He conquered all the Chutiyas in the neighbouring hills called Rāngaligiri, Kālgiri, Dhavalgiri and Chandragiri with the help of these god-given weapons. He then became king over all assuming the title of Ratnadhvajpāl. This is actually a legend of Vidarbha (Berar) according to which the Bhoja dynasty of that country succeeded Bhismaka's line. This tradition was grafted on the Kachāri-Chutiya dynasty of Sadiya by priestly ingenuity with a slight modification at the time of first initiation of the ruling family into Hinduism. From this Sadiya became Vidarbha and the Chutiyas successors or descendants of Bhiṣmaka, the great king of ancient Vidarbha.

It is also stated in the *Kachari Buranji* that the Sadiyal Kacharis established a kingdom in the easternmost part of Assam by subjugating the country from Sadiya in the east to Dikhau-mukh in the west and from the Dihing (the modern Dihang) in the north to Kenduguri on the bank of the Dilih river in the south. This is almost exactly the area over which the Chutiyas were ruling. Further the goddess called *Kechaikhātī*, of which there is a copper temple at a place eight miles north-east of Chunpura near Sadiya, was worshipped with human sacrifices both by the Kachāris and the Chutiyas. All these go to show that the Sadiyal Kacharis and the Chutiyas, if not the same tribe, are cognates belonging to the common Boḍo[57] race. Dr. B.S. Guha says that the Deori Chutiyas are a sub-tribe of the Kacharis.[58] He also points out that the Deori Chutiyas of Lakhimpur up to a comparatively late times offered human

57. The word *Boḍo* (or Boro) seems to come from the Tibetan word *bod* or *pot* meaning the land of snow, thereby meaning the Himalayan region. Thus the Boḍos migrated originally from the northern highlands into the plains of the great rivers of India. See *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia* by C. Wessels, S.J. (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), 1924, p.99.

58. *JAS*, vol. XVII, 1951, pp.28-29.

sacrifice at the Sadiya temple.[59] It is only the Deori Chutiyas who still preserve their old racial culture and forms of worship. The rest of the Chutiyas are now merged with the general Hindu population except a minor section. If the Chutiyas descended later from the northern hills and pushed the earlier Kachari rulers to the west of the Disāng, then they must have seized the Golden Cat from the latter and preserved it until the conquest of their kingdom by the Ahoms. This part of the history requires further investigation for a definite conclusion.

To the west of the Dikhau another very powerful section of the Boḍos, called in the *Kachāri Buranji* Heḍambial Kachari, was ruling with Dimapur on the bank of the Dhansiri as the capital. The term *Heḍambial* has reference to the first Kachari king of legendary origin who is said to have been a descendant of the son born of a union of the second Pandava Bhima and Hiḍimbā Rākṣasī. The inference seems to be that this legend of the dynastic link with Hiḍimbā of the Indian epic was a priestly invention necessitated by the Kachari King's acceptance of Hinduism. The kingdom of the Heḍambial Kacharis extended from the Dikhau on the east to the Kallang, or beyond south of the Brahmaputra and included the valley of the Dhanśiri and the tract of country constituting the North Cachar subdivision. These Kachāris call themselves not Kachari [60] but *Diṃāsā*, or more properly *Diṃā-fisā*, 'Sons of the great river', that is, the Dhanśiri. The Tai-Ahoms called them *Timāsā*, a Tai phonetic variatian of Boḍo *Diṃāsā* corresponding to *Tiorā* from Boḍo-Chutiya *Diorā*. The Boḍo name of the river Dhanśiri is *Dimā* which the Tai-Ahoms called Nām-Timā (River Timā).

59. *Ibid*, p.29; Endle, S : *The Kacharis*, pp. 93-94. The Shrine stands on a little stream called Dalpānī. The shrine is popularly called by the local people Tāmasāri Mai. It was dedicated to Kāmākhyā and the Yoni; but Shiva and Lingam were worshipped with all barbarous rites, including human sacrifices. There is another temple called Bura-Boorī Temple which lies ten miles from Sadiya up the bed of the Dikrang river. Hannay, who discovered these temples, was certain that the Burā-Boorī Temple, Mahādeo Temple according to orthodox Hindus, was of Buddhist origin. See Shakespear's *History of Upper Assam, etc.* pp. 84-86.

60. Risley (*Tribes and Castes of Bengal*) refers to a Limbu legend which says that the early habitat of the Koch, Mech and Dhimal tribes was the Khachar country, a name given by the Nepalese to the foot-hill region between the Brahmaputra and the Kosi rivers. Kachar in Assam may have taken its name from Khachar from its first settlement by Khachar tribes, who had spread over the Brahmaputra valley in the pre-historic period and later migrated to the present Kachar Hills quitting the Dhanśiri valley under the Ahom pressure. These peoples were known by the collective name Kachari in Assam, though some of their sub-tribes have different names.

The Dimāsā king Bisārpatiphā, said to be a son of the god Mahādev, was a contemporary of Hsö-Kā-Hpā.[61] His kingdom included Mahang[62] in the east, but Hsö-Kā-Hpā wrested that area by driving him into the hills[63].

In the neighbourhood of Charaideo were the Marāṇ the and Barāhī tribes. According to the *Bānhgaḍia Buragohainr Buranji* their total population was about four thousand and their country lay to the south of Shairing and north of the Kacharis. The Marāṇ or Matak Chief Badauchā and the Barāhī Chief Thākumthā, whom Hsö-Kā Hpā 'had subjugated through friendship',[64] must have contributed their strength to the campaign against the Kacharis. It is said that the Marāṇs and the Barāhīs first used the word Asam ('peerless') in referring to Hsö-Kā-Hpā's race, from which the Tai kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley got its name. Though it may be a parallel development of the name of the country, the real source seems to be the word *Sām* from *Shān* with the Boḍo formation *Āsām* (or Assam) meaning the countary of the *Sāms*. The local tribes presented Hsö-Kā-Hpā with local vegetables and certain edible roots to which the latter was not used. He therefore employed expert Barāhī cooks (*Chāng-mai*) for the purpose and the Barāhī Chāng-mai clan became famous from that time. Cooks for the Ahom nobles were also appointed from this clan.

To the west of the Chutiyas on the north bank were the independent or semi-independent petty chiefs called Bhuiyans with their respective domains. They used probably to form loose confederacies among themselves for their defence when threatened with invasions by powerful external enemies. To the extreme west was the kingdom of Kāmarupa, or Kamatā of the later period, with the Karatoya as its western boundary. The capital of the kingdom of Kamatā is, according to *The Cooch Behar State* (p.81) 'represented by modern Gosānīmarī, lying on the banks of the Singimārī, fourteen miles south of the town of Cooch Behar and only eight miles west of the railway station at Chawra Hāt'. Eminent authorities of Indian history point out that the Ahoms, a section of the great Shan tribe, had appeared as a new element in the history of the Brahmaputra valley in the north-east early in the thirteenth century just as the Mughuls (Mongols) from the north-west appeared as a new element to the Indian population in the sixteenth, or three hundred years later.

61. *Assam Buranji* —'Swarganārāyaṇ Mahārājar Janma Charitra, (*DHAS*), p.13.
62. To the east of Barhāt and south of Jaipur.
63. *AB*, —'*SMJC*', p.13.
64. *Op. cit.*, p.11.

2. Hsö-Teu-Hpā (1268-81) :

Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā left behind three sons. Hsö-Khāng-Hpā, Hsö-Teu-Hpā and another,[65] and of them Hsö-Teu-Hpā succeeded to the throne. In his reign the Kacharis yielded to the Ahoms the remnants of their territories east of the Dikhau. Being worsted in a war with the Burmese, the king of Möng-Kawng, called also *Narā-deś* by the Assamese, appealed to Chao Hsö-Teu-Hpā for assistance, but the latter was offended by the Shan king by refusing to comply with a request for a princess. Hsö-Teu-Hpā sent an expedition against the Narās under the command of his Bura Gohain. But the Ahom army was defeated and the Burā Gohain lost his life. At this another force was despatched with the Bar Gohain in command, but the latter preferred an amicable settlement which was accordingly made. The Bar Gohain was imprisoned for showing his weakness, but later released.[66]

The Narās :

It may be noted that Narā is not a Tai word, nor is it known in Burma. Ney Elias thought that the Narās were an aboriginal people with their early home in or about Khamti which was formerly a much bigger province divided into two districts called Ai-kham in the north and Ai-Ton in the south, the present Sankring (Singkalin) Khamti being the western part of the old one.[67] In short, the independent Narā State was roughly co-extensive with Möng-Kawng (Mogaung State) of the Mao-Shans. There were undoubtedly scattered Tai settlements in the Narā country before its conquest by Sām-Löng-Hpā, but with Shan supremncy the real Narās gradually lost their identity. Pemberton says "The Shan Chieftain of Mogaung is also called the Narā Raja by the Singphos, and it appears that the term is also applied to the Shans".[68] This is also what we find in the Assamese Buranjis. Francis Hamilton's reference to the country of Narā also places that country on the east of the Tiklyia Nagas, Manipur and its dependencies. Further, according to the same writer who investigated the subject, the Narā country belonged to the brother of the first Tai king (Khuntai) of Assam and that 'the language and customs of the people of Narā are the same with those which formerly

65. Harakanta Sarma-Barua : *Assam Buranji* (*DHAS*), Ed. by S.K. Bhuyan, 1930, p.14.

66. Gait : *op. cit.*, p.79. The king of Möng-Kawng mentioned appears to be Chao-Hkun-Law according to N. Elias's Table of Mögaung Tsaubwas.

67. N. Elias : *op.cit.*, p.39.

68. Pemberton : *op.cit.*, p.68.

prevailed among the proper Assamese', that is, the Tai-Ahoms. He also found that between the two peoples there was still a friendly intercourse and many natives of Narā were always to be found at the King's Court at Jorhat.[69] It may be noted that Francis Hamilton was appointed in 1807 by the authorities of the Honourable East India Company to report on Assam and at that time the capital of the kingdom was at Jorhat.

The community called Narā in Assam is called by the Tai *Mān Nām*[70] and the *Mān Nām* are Tai. Another section of the Tai is called *Mān Noi*[71] meaning hill-dwellers. The Narās in Assam are mostly Buddhists. There are a few non-Buddhist Narā villages also and they are merged with the Ahoms. The Tai Narās are a cultured people and their special study is astronomy. King Gaurinath Singha's Commission to Mogaung cansisted of Narā astronomers and other learned persons. It is these astronomers who worked out the chronology of the Ahom history.

3. Hsö-Bin-Hpā (1281-93) :

Chao Hsö-Teu-Hpā died in A.D. 1281 leaving four sons. Hsö-Bin-Hpā, the eldest amongst them, ascended the throne. He made no addition to the territory of his father's kingdom. He died in A.D. 1293.

4. Hsö-Khāng-Hpā (1293-1332) :

Chao Hsö-Bin-Hpā had two sons of whom Hsö-Khāng-Hpā succeeded him in A.D. 1293. It appears that at the initial stage the Ahom monarchs and their ministers devoted more attention to putting their small State on a firm footing than to war and expansion and, for that purpose, avoided major conflicts with their powerful neighbours, such as the Chutiyas and the Kachāris, and took into their fold men of merits and calibre from among the local tribes. As the Tai were not strong in Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām, Hsö-Kā-Hpā's policy was to maintain active intercourse with the Shan country of Upper Burma and keep the road open for a flow of immigrants of his race from that country.[72] Thus Chao Hsö Khang-Hpā became ruler of a State much stronger than in the beginning.

First Kamatā War :

Chao Hsö-Khāng-Hpā's reign is noted for the first Kamatā war which broke out probably after 1324 and continued for a number of years.

69. F. Hamilton : *An Account of Assam* (Ed. by Bhuyan, *DHAS.*) 1940, pp. 78-79.

70. *mān*, village, *Nām*, water, river, river-side, hence river-side village dwellers.

71. *Mān*, village, *Noi*, hill, mountain.

72. Hamilton, *Op.cit.*, p.12.

Being exhausted the Raja of Kamatā,[73] whose name remains unmentioned, sued for peace by offering his sister Rājanī to the Ahom king in marriage. A treaty was made and the princess Rājanī (Tai-Ahom Rājeni) was brought to Hsö-Khāng-Hpā's palace. Some Assamese Buranjis[74] say Kamateswar made peace by offering two daughters, Rājanī and Bhājanī. Bhājanī, the younger, had no son. Rājanī had a son named Chao-Pu-Lai.[75] Actually princess Bhājanī (Tai-Ahom Nāngphrā-Jini) was sent by a later Kamatā king and was married to Chao Hsö-Dāng-Hpā. Hence the mentoin of Bhājanī with Rājanī is a mistake. Moreover nothing was there in the record to suggest that two princesses had to be offered at the same time to the same king. It is clearly stated in the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* that Rājanī was the daughter of Sekhang and Bhājanī that of Mānik. Sekhang was probably the father of Bharmapāla and Mānik brother of Dharmapāla and Rājanī. Though Mānik's name is missing in the extant genealogical table he probably became a ruler of Kamatā during Hsö-Dāng-Hpā's reign.

Gait refers to a Buranji which says that the Sawbwa of Möng-Kawng (Mogang)[76] demanded tribute from Hsö-Khāng-Hpā on the ground of his being the lineal descendant of the king of Mac-Lung in whose reign Hsö-Kā-Hpā had emigrated. The Ahom king refused to comply with the demand, but soon afterwards the Sawbwa died and the demand was never renewed.

Chao Hsö-Khāng-Hpā died in A.D. 1332 leaving four sons Hsö-Khrām-Hpā, Hsö-To-Hpā, Tao-Khām-Thi and Chac-Pu-Lai.

5. Hsö-Khrām-Hpā (1332-64) :

Hsö-Khrām-Hpā, the eldest son, succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1332. He made his younger half-brother, Chao-Pu-Lai, Governor of Shairing,[77] called by the Assamese Sāring Rajā. The area of Shairing

73. K.L. Barua's Table of Kamatā Kings with approximate dates shows that Rup (1285-1300), Singhadhvaj (1300-1305), Pratāpadhvaj (1305-1325), Dharmanārāyan (1325-1330), and Durlabhnārāyan (1330-1350) were contemporaries of Chao Hsö-Khāng-Hpā. (see K.L. Barua's *Early History of Kāmarupa* (Shillong), 1933, p.250. Of these Kamatā Rajās one who was at war with the Ahoms cannot be definitely known for want of the necessary dates. Probably he was Dharmanārāyanā *alias* Dharmapāla.

74. *Op.cit.*, p.13. *BBB.* in *DAB*, p.96.

75. Mentioned as Tao-Hsö-Lai in Assamese Buranjis.

76. Contemporary Sawbwas were Chau-Kun-law (1248-1308) and Chau-Pu-Reing (1308-44) of N. Elias's Table. The Sawbwa mentioned should be one of these.

77. In the Tai text 'Kin-möng Shairing', not Chao-Hpā of Shairing.

on the west of the Dikhau must have, in the meantime, been added to the Ahom kingdom by Chao Hsö-Khrām-Hpā, for which this new office of Governor was created for the first time. But soon there were also the first signs of Court intrigues in the kingdom. Bargohain Tā-Phī-Khün and Chao-Pu-Lai entered into a conspiracy against the king. When the conspiracy was detected both fled to Kamatā and persuaded Kamateswar, Durlabhanārāyan, to invade the Ahom kingdom. Kamateśwar marched with them and encamped at Āthgaon. Then he advanced to Shairing where he made fortifications. When this news reached Chao Hsö Khrām-Hpā, a messenger was sent to Hkun Kamtā (Kamateśwar) to ask the reason of his hostile advance to Shairing Nāmdeng and demanded that the two traitors, Tā-Phī-Khen and Chac-Pü-Lai, under his shelter be surrendered. Chao-Pu-Lai, being informed of King's order, said 'I shall neither fight with the king nor go home'. This was an expression of his fear of death penalty and of being drawn into the conspiracy by the Bargohain. Though the Buranji is silent about Kamateśwar's reply, it is clear that the Ahom King got back the two offenders and Kamateśwar retired without attacking. The king forgave Chao-Pu-Lai, but ordered Tā-Phī-Khün, the real culprit, to be executed. But Tā-Phī-Khün made his escape and concealed himself until later he, too, was excused. Chao Hsö-Khrām-Hpā ruled for thirty-two years and died in A.D. 1364, just a century after Hsö-Kā-Hpā's death, probably without leaving a son.

6. Hsö-Tö-Hā (1369-1376) :

There was an interregnum for five years, the State being under the management of the ministers. The nobles then invited Hsö Tö-Hpā, younger brother of Hsö-Khrām-Hpā, who was in the village Lāhānjing and placed him on the throne. Chao Hsö Tö-Hpā made his residence at Chapāgurinagar. Thao-Phrang-Dām Burāgohain and Tā-Phī-kün Bargohain aided him in the conduct of affairs of the kingdom. After a long period of silence there arose frequent disputes with the Chutiyas over border and other problems during his reign. But the Chutiya king came to terms with Hsö-Tö-Hpā and became his friend with a design. For on a well-planned day in A.D. 1376 he took the Ahom king into his royal barge professedly for a pleasure trip on the Safrai river and treacherously murdered him in a helpless condition.

7. Tao-Khām-Thī (1380-1389) :

After the death of Hsö-Tö-Hpā the country was in interregnum for four years for want of a suitable successor. During this period the affairs of the State were conducted by the ministers. In A.D. 1380 the choice fell on Tao-Khām-Thī, the third son of Hsö-Khāng-Hpā, who was then

raised to the throne. He appointed Chao-Thai-Thum as Burā Gohain[78] and Tyā-Tān-Bin as Bar Gohain.[79]

He was determined to punish the Chutiya King for the treacherous murder of his brother, Hsö-Tö-Hpā. Thus soon after his accession he marched with a strong force against the Chutiya King placing the older of his two wives in charge during his absence, but the Chutiya king fled into the hills and he returned victorious to the capital. In the meantime, the elder wife, being envious of the younger one, ordered her execution on a false charge, but the Burā Gohain had pity on her as she was pregnant and managed secretly to set her adrift on the Dihing on a raft. At Hābung down on the opposite bank of the Brahmaputra she was rescued by a Brahmin and given shelter in his house. In due course the lady gave birth to a son and after some time died. The young prince was affectionately brought up by the Brahmin with his own children. At the capital all the joys of victory vanished when the king learnt upon enquiry the misdeeds of the queen, particularly the tragedy of his beloved younger wife. But with all this the king was so much under the influence of the elder queen that he failed to prevent her from continuing to commit acts of oppression. The indignation of the nobles rose to such a pitch at the inaction of the king that he was dethroned in A.D. 1389 and assassinated not sparing the queen.[80]

8. Hsö-Dāng-Hpā (1398-1407):

Tao-Khām-Thī seems to have left no son by his elder queen. Hence after he was deposed the administration of the country was assumed by the Council of Ministers and run for nine years. Chao-Pu-Lai's claim to the throne, however legitimate, was not considered, probably because of his past records. Meanwhile one Thao-Hsö-Khen, who had gone to Hābung in connection with his cattle trade, happened to meet a youngman, who, from appearance, seemed to be of royal origin. He learnt that he was the son of Tao-Khām-Thī by the younger wife. Returning from Hābung he reported the matter to the Dāngarias (ministers) who, after discussion, brought the prince and placed him on the throne. He assumed the title of Hsö-Dāng-Hpā. He was then fifteen years of age. He was so much attached to the Brahmin family that he had brought with him the old Brahmin and the members of his family to the capital.

78. In Tai *Chao-Phrang-Möng*.
79. In Tai *Chao-Thao-Lung* or Thao-Möng-Lung.
80. T.P. : *op.cit.*, 14-15; *BBB*, op.cit., p.96.

An Assamese Buranji adds that he looked upon the sons of the Brahmin, who were seven, as his own brothers and therefore he gave them the status of princes and settled them at Dihing granting probably princely estates with elephants and horses.[81] Hence these sons of the Hābung Brahmin including prince Hsö-Dāng-Hpā are referred to by the Assamese Hindus as 'Bāmunī Konwar'. It is also believed that the Brahmin acted as the confidential adviser of the king.[82] With the Brahmin came also his *Lakshmi-Nārāyaṇ Śalagrām* into the palace.[83] For the first time Brahminical religion and rites found an honoured place and patronage under this king.

Capital At Charagua (Dihing) :

He transferred his capital to Charagua up the river Dholā and near the Dihing. He is the first monarch who is known to have built what is called *Śingari- har* or Coronation Hall with a high floor at Charagua and ascended it. It is beautifully constructed with planks made of a kind of timber locally called *śingari* from which it derives its name. Probably this hall was just what is called in Tai-Ahom '*Hāng-ren*', a house with a raised planked platform called in Assamese 'Pāt-Ghar'. It is decorated with the best materials. On the appointed day the King with his chief queen, wearing the royal coronation robes, insignia and ornaments, ascends the *Śingari-Ghar* with all the pomp and grandeur and sits on the throne placed in it surrounded by the officers and nobles of the Court, the royal priests called Deodhais and Bailongs performing the installation ceremony. The King and Queen then give rewards to all according to rank and precedence. It is the custom for the kings to issue royal coins or *mohars* in their names only after completing the ceremony of ascending the *Śingari-Ghar*, although it is not always strictly observed.

Narā War :

As there was no son and successor of Tao-Khām-Thī and his younger wife was taken to have been executed by the order of the elder queen, the Shairing Raja Chao-Pu-Lai (or Tao-Hsö-Lai), the youngest son of Chao Hsö-Khāng-Hpā naturally expected to succeed to the throne after his brother Tao-Khām-Thī, but the ministers did not trust him for his past actions and had therefore to assume to themselves all functions of government. Being deprived of his right to succession Chao-

81. T.P., : *op.cit.*, p.15, *BBB, op.cit.*, p.97.
82. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.83.
83. T.P. : *Ibid*, p.15.

Pu-Lai left for Möng-Kawng (Mogaung), the capital of the Narā kingdom and reported to the Narā Raja or Möng-Kawng *Sawbwa* Chau-Hung-Hpā (1381-1411)[84] that there was no king of his (Narā King's) family in Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām and that all powers had been usurped by the ministers.[85] He probably requested help to win the throne for himself as the next legitimate heir to rule as a vassal of Möng-Kawng. The Möng-Kawng *Sawbwa* then sent an expedition under the command of Tā-Hsin-Pau[86] to annex Assam. The Shan general encamped near Kuhiarbārī at Tipām. By that time Hsö-Dāng-Hpā had already ascended the throne and ruled for nearly three years. When the news of the Möng-Kawng army's advance was reported to him, he marched on an elephant, named Pairin, against the enemy and his general Tā-Chān-Bing Bor-Gohain also riding on a horse advanced with his army. A battle was fought at Kuhiarbāri and the invaders were worsted and forced to retreat and come to terms. Chao-Hpā Hsö-Dāng was slightly wounded by an enemy spear. A treaty was then concluded in A.D. 1401 (*Śak* 1323) between the two generals by which the Pātkai was fixed as the boundary between the two countries, Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām and Möng-Kawng. The treaty was solemnly made by both the generals dipping their hands into the waters of the hill stream called Nong-Yang[87] and sacrificing fowls on the spot. They then departed as friends to their respective capitals after engraving their figures upon the rock which was to demarcate the boundary so fixed.[88] From that time onwards the hills called Doi-Kao-Rang by Chao Hsö-Kā-Hpā became famous as Patkai or mountain of fowl sacrifice (*pat*, cut, *kai*, foul).

Rvol of the Tai-Tipām :

Soon after Hsö-Dāng-Hpā's formal accession at Charagua the Tai Tipām community (Tipamiyas) rose in revolt. The cause of the revolt is not clear. L.W. Shakespear in his *History of Upper Assam, etc.* says that the change of capital from Charaideo to Charagua brought about hostilities with the Tipām tribe, whose lands they (the Ahoms) now

84. Ney Elias's Chau-Hung-Hpa is actually Hsö-Hung-Hpā or Hsö-Hun-Hpā in Shan and Hsö-Run-Hpā in Tai-Ahom in which 'R' often stands for Shan 'H'. See also T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.15.

85. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.17.

86. or appears to be same as Tao-Hsin-Pau. He is said to be the Bar-Gohain (minister) of the *Sawbwa* in Tamuli Phukan's Buranji.

87. Gait says that the Nong-Yang lake into which the stream of the same name falls in the neighbourhood is twenty eight miles south-west of Margherita. (Gait : *op.cit.*, p.83).

88. The expression is *Pātkai-Shengkan* i.e. took oath by sacrificing fowls. See T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.16-17.

occupied. The aborigines of Tipām were probably Kachins. But when Hsö-Kā-Hpā came a Tai settlement was also formed there and since then the local governors of Tipām had been from among the Tai princes or nobles.

The king captured many of the rebel leaders at a deliberately planned feast in which a white buffalo was killed and beheaded them. The revolt then subsided. The heads of the rebels were exhibited as a trophy by placing them on a large slab of stone in the form of a garland at Tipām. The Bānphā (or Bānpherā) Nagās, who created trouble, were also suppressed after killing their leaders.

Chao Hsö-Dāng-Hpā had married Chao Nāng-Hseng, the daughter of a Tipām Hkun-Tai named Tao-Blak-Hseng and made her queen. Earlier when she was at her parents' home she had, in all probability, illicit connection with the Chief of Tipām, Tā-Hsö-Lai, and at the time of her marriage the latter presented her with two gold chains.[89]

Later one day while Chao Hsö-Dāng-Hpā was dining with Tā-Hsö-Lai, his queen Chao Nāng-Hseng cast a glance at the latter. Shortly after this Chao Tā-Hsö-Lai presented the queen with a ring set with precious stones through a Likchau (attendant). The king received a report of all these secret amours, but desisted from taking any immediate action. But apprehending danger Tao-Blak-Hseng escaped to Möng-Kawng. Soon Chao Tā-Hsö-Lai and his associate Temerā also fled to Möng-Kawng and sought the protection of the *Sawbwa* of that country.

Conflict With Kamatā :

When the Narā expedition against Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām ended with a treaty and friendship between the two countries the rebel chiefs Chao-Pu-Lai,[90] the Tipām Chief and Tao-Blak-Hseng[91] became helpless and fled to Kamatā for assistance. Grand old queen Rājanī, daughter

89. *The Ancient Chronicles of Assam* (K.A.S., Gauhati), 1922, ed. by Pandit Hem Chandra Goswami, p.49.

90. A confusion is noticed in the Buranjis, both Assamese and Tai-Ahom, about the two chiefs Chao-Pu-Lai and Tao-Hsö-Lai. Here the prince who fled to Kamatā should, in all probability, be Chao-Pu-Lai, a relation of the Kamatā Rajā and not Tao-Hsö-Lai who has apparently no relation with that Rajā and who according to *Lai-Tu Buranji* came from the Lao country.

91. This is the only name mentioned in *AB*, (p.49), who fled to Narā in consequence of the Tai-Tipām rebellion and probably joined Chao-Pu-Lai against the Ahom King.

of the former Kamatā king and sister of the then reigning one, being aware of the intention of her son Chac-Pu-Lai and apprehending trouble from that kingdom, sent one Rupai Laskar to her brother, the king of Kamatā, to convey to him her request not to quarrel with the Ahom king and destroy the good relations subsisting between the two countries since the time of her marriage. She also suggested in her message that the friendship should be further consolidated for future good by an offer of another princess.[92] But the Kamatā Rajā[93] first refused to comply with her wise advice and to extradite the rebel princes as demanded by the Ahom king. The Ahom authorities took a serious view of the unexpected attitude of the Kamatā rulers who were supposed to be friendly. An expedition was then prepared under the command of the Bar-Gohain, General Tāchānbing, for the invasion of Kamata.[94] At this crucial moment Kamatā was attacked by the Muslims from Bengal, then under Ghiyas-ud-din A'zam (1393-1410), the son of Sikandar Shah and correspondent of the celebrated poet Hāfiz. In this situation the Rajā of Kamatā quickly submitted to Hsö-Dāng-Hpā and sought his assistance against the invading Muslims. He also wished to offer his daughter, princess Bhājanī, to him to confirm their former friendship. Hsö-Dāng-Hpā then despatched a force under the command of General Tā-Chān-Bing to the aid of Kamatā with instructions to bring the princess if offered.[95] The allied forces then fought and drove off the Muslims across the Karatoya, the western boundary of the Kamatā kingdom.[96] The Rajā then gratefully offered his daughter Bhājanī in marriage to the Ahom monarch with a dowry consisting of elephants, horses, gold and silver and a number of attendants and servants both male and female.[97]

Question of The Eastern Dependencies :

It may be recalled that Hsö-Kā-Hpā, during his march from Upper Burma to Saumār, conquered the region from Khām-Jāng to Tipām,

92. *DAB*, pp.11-12.

93. appears to be Mānik, Rājani's brother from the contents of Rājanī's message to the Kamatā Rajā whom she addressed as brother. Bhājanī was king Mānik's daughter.

94. According to G.Barua's translated *Ahom Buranji* the expedition was already sent and Gait takes it as such, but the statement appears to suffer from a lacuna and hence defective. *Deodhai Asam Buranji* fills a part of the lacuna and suggests that a proposal for peace and alliance had already come from the Kamatā Rajā before the march of the expedition.

95. *DAB*, p.12.

96. *Swarganārāyan Mahārajār Akhyān* in MS.

97. *AB*, p.51.

both inclusive, along the route and appointed governors to manage and control the different parts of it and to collect annual tributes from the local inhabitants. This arrangement continued, with occasional interruptions, for over one hundred and seventy years. But during Hsö-Dāng-Hpā's reign the Tai-Tipām (Tipamiyas), whose Chief was a brother or a cousin of the Möng-Kawng *Sawbwa*, revolted and, it is presumed, at their instigation the inhabitants of Möng-Khām-Jāng, Möng-Ai-Ton and Möng-Tipām stopped payment of tributes for eight years. They however did not transfer their allegiance to Möng-Kawng. Thus they virtually asserted their independence. Hsö-Dāng-Hpā, lest there be a misunderstanding on the part of the friendly Mong-Kawng *Sawbwa* Hsö-Run-Hpā, sent his envoy Tāpangmau to him with a letter stating the attitude of the above subject peoples and reiterating his claim over those territories. 'I wish, therefore', he wrote, 'to destroy these countries which are in a rebellious spirit'.[98] Being so informed Hsö-Run-Hpā[99] sent Möng-khubān to the Tipām Chief, whom he addressed as brother, with instructions to pay tributes to the 'King of Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām'. To the Ahom king he sent with Tāpangmau a number of presents[100] with a reply containing his instructions to the Tipām Chief, a step probably sufficient to make all others pay tributes as before. But unfortunately Chao Hsö-Dāng-Hpā died in A.D. 1407 before the arrival of his envoy from Möng-Kawng.

9. Hsö-Jāng-Hpā (1407-1422) :

Chao Hsö-Dāng-Hpā had three sons of whom Hsö-Jāng became king in A.D. 1407. He appointed Khen-Pong (or Khen-Löng) and Nang-Hsö-Khām as Burā-Gohain and Bar-Gohain respectively. Nothing more is known about his reign from the available records. He died in A.D. 1422 leaving behind four sons.

10. Hsö-Phök-Hpā (1422-1439) :

One of his sons Hsö-Phök-Hpā succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1422 and ruled for seventeen years. He married the daughter of a great man of Tipām named Chao Nāng-Jey-Kang. She was the mother of Hsö-Hsen who succeeded Chao Hsö-Phök-Hpā when the latter died in

98. *AB*, p. 51. Gait thinks these peoples received encouragement from the Narā Rajā in their refusal to pay tributes, but there is no proof of it.

99. also called Chao-Hpa Bānak.

100. Presents mentioned were 'a white horse, a *Tāngkāk* (*a Pirā*), *a Tāngan* (a cushioned stool or chair), an embroidered rein, and an embroidered saddle'.

A.D. 1439. During his reign Khen-Pong or Khen-Löng continued to be the Burā-Gohain, but the Bar-Gohain appointed was Lāng-Nim. Nāng-Nim. The king left behind two sons.

11. Hsö-Hsen-Hpā (1439-1488) :

Hsö-Hsen-Hpā ascended the throne in A.D 1439. The ministers of his father, Khen-Pong and Lāng-Nim, continued to hold their respective offices. In his reign the Nagās of the Tongshu (or Tengsā) village in the Central Nagā Hills committed raids. The king himself marched against them with a force.[101] The Nagās then made a plan to overpower the king's men by a show of surrender to be followed by a sudden attack. Accordingly they had hidden their weapons in the forest close to the king's camp and sent some of them to the king. The group that approached the king made a pretence of submission to his Majesty by surrendering three *Nākoi Dās*[102] and promised to remain loyal by the customary way of dipping their hands into water. But while the king was so engaged, the main body of the Nagās took up their hidden weapons and made a sudden attack upon the king's men for which the latter were not prepared and killed as many as one hundred and forty of them including the Bānrukia Gohain and Parbatia Hāzarika.[103] Yet it did not take long for the king and his son by a vigorous counter-attack to defeat the Nagās, occupy their village and compel them to submit.[104]

In A.D. 1480 Hsö-Hsen-Hpā rebuilt the Nāgaśankara Temple on the north bank of the Brahmaputra.[105] It was erected in the last quarter of the fourth century A.D. by a king named Nāgaśankara, who is said to have come from the valley of the Karatoya river and established his capital at Pratāpgarh near Biswanāth in the Darrang District in Assam.[106] The first king of the Chutiyas in Sadiya, whose descendants consolidated the Chutiya power, is thought to be an officer of the Court of Pratāpgarh, who on the downfall of the Pratāpgarh dynasty, founded to the east a kingdom of his own. Further the assumption of the title 'Pāla' by the Chutiya kings coupled with the Chutiya traditions about the founder of the dynasty of kings of the Chutiyas suggests some sort of a link with

101. *AB*, p. 52.
102. A kind of weapon or *dāh* to cut with used by the Nagās.
103. *DAB*, p.13; *AB*, p.52.
104. *AB*, p.52. Gait refers to another account which says that the king fled, but the Bānrukia Gohain took command and defeated the Nagās. But the account is not specifically mentioned.
105. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.21.
106. *The Cooch Behar State* by H.N. Chowdhury. pp.217-18.

the western Pālas. This was probably a later development of the Chutiya rule. But there is little doubt that the Chutiyas came under the western Hindu influence at an early date as shown by the Hinduised legends about the origins of the ruling dynasties of their country. Hsö-Hsen-Hpā died in the summer of A.D. 1488 after a long and comparatively peaceful reign of forty-nine years.

H12. sö-Hān-Hpā (1488-1493) :

On the death of Hsö-Hsen-Hpā I his son Hsö-Hān-Hpā succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1488. Tyac-Kāng-Bān-Ruk was appointed Bar Gohain and Khenpong continued in the office of Burā-Gohain. The king constructed a fort at Tangshu and stationed a garrison there under an officer named Khü-Nāng-Hseng to control the Nagās of that area.

War With The Dimāsā Kachāris :

In A.D. 1490 the Dimāsā (*Timisā*) Kacharis attacked the Ahom territory. Chao Hsö-Hān-Hpā despatched a force under the command of General Chao-Phün-Löng Khām-Peng who proceeded mounting the famous war elephant Pairen. Khü-Nāng-Hseng was appointed war Neog.[107] They crossed the Dikhau river and waited for the enemy beyond Tangshu. The Kachāris suddenly appeared and attacked the king's army and overwhelmed it killing one hundred and twenty soldiers. Khām-Peng made a hasty retreat but the Neog was overtaken and killed. The army fell back to Tangshu. The king made peace with the Kachāris by offering a girl, named Jekhring,[108] to the Kachāri Rajā. Without further pressure the Kachāris then returned home. According to another account[109] there was no victory for any side. Both sides then preferred coming to terms and the king made friendship with the Kachāris by offering a girl to their Rajā.

The Tangshu Nagās again raided the Ahom territory and Bar-Gohain Chao Tyao Kāng-Bān-Ruk was sent with a force to subjugate them. Bar-Gohain was killed in the fight and his head was cut off and carried away by the Nagās. Chao Nāng-Rang was then appointed Bar-Gohain and put in command of the expedition sent against the Nagās. Nāng-Rāng defeated the Nagās killing many of them and occupied their village. He then brought to the capital three Nagās, Tangshu, Nepherā and Maupiya with their families as hostages.[110]

107. Tai *Neu shek* (*neu*, finger, *shek*, war).
108. Lāngji in *DAB* probably from Nāng-Jekhring in *AB*.
109. T.P. *op.cit.*, p.18.
110. H.S.B. *op.cit.*, p.21.

One Tairubān of a Hkun-Tai family, a petty officer in charge of the royal paddy-field, was charged for theft of paddy belonging to the king. He was arrested and fined one hundred silver coins.[111] Later the same person was allowed to enter the palace with the permission of the Burā-Gohain Khen-Peng to do some clearing work in the upper chamber (*mesh-āng*) occupied by the king. This revengeful man suddenly attacked the king at an unguarded moment and pierced him to death with a spear which he had brought concealed inside a bamboo piece and escaped.[112] Hsö-Hān-Hpā ruled only for five years.

13. Hsö-Pem-Hpā (1493-1497) :

Hsö-Hān-Hpā's son Hsö-Pem-Hpā then succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1493. His first act was to capture Tairubān, the murderer of his father, and execute him. The members of the family and other relations of Tairubān were then ejected from the neighbourhood of the capital and settled at Daria. The king also charged the Burā-Gohain Khen-Peng with complicity and dismissed him from office. General Chao Phün-Löng-Khām-peng was appointed Burā-Gohain in his place.

A youthful Nagā Chief (Hkunbao[113]) of handsome appearance came to pay usual homage to Chao Hsö-Pem-Hpā. One of the Chamua queens,[114] who saw him from inside, appreciated his handsome figure before the king when the latter went into the apartment. This offended the king who thought himself less handsome in her eye. She was then pregnant. But yet the king presented this queen to the Nagā Chief who could not reject. In due course a child was born in the house of the Nagā Chief in his hill village.[115] Chao Hsö-Pem-Hpā died in the year A.D. 1497.

14. Hsö-Hum-Möng (1497-1539):

On the death of Chao Hsö-Pem-Hpā his son Hsö-Hum-Möng or Hsö-Hum-Hpā succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1497 by ascending the *Śingari Ghar* in the capital city of Charagua on the bank of the Dihing.

111. In Assamese Buranjis Tairubān is variously called Tai-Turungbān, Lān-Turbān Ahom, etc. The amount fined is also different in different Buranjis, such as 'one seer of silver', 'one hundred rupees', 'four rupees', etc.

112. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.21.

113. *Hkun*, prince, *bao*, youngman.

114. Chamua queens were married from the ranks of a class called Chamua which is below the ranks of the nobles and above those of the labour class. Such a queen could not become the chief queen.

115. T.P. : *op cit.*, p.21.

As he was the king from the Dihingia Royal House (*Phoid*) he was also called Dihingia Rajā by the local people. He erected an embankment along the Dihing for the protection of the capital and the areas on that side from the annual floods. By the time of Hsö-Hum-Möng's accession Brahminical influence considerably increased in the Ahom Court and the country and the Brahminical title of Svarga Nārāyaṇ, a variant of Svarga Dev, was conferred on the king and, as Gait points out, this new designation was henceforth used by the Ahom Kings in their official documents. Hsö-Hum-Möng was also the first Ahom king to use *Saka* era in the official calendar. According to a Hindu version *Śri Śri Svarganārāyaṇdevar Janmakathā* the first Svarganārāyaṇa, said to be the ancestor of the Ahom kings, was of thé Mleccha origin being born in A.D. 1119 (*śak* 1041) of a clandestine union of the god Indra in *his* Mlecha life under the curse of Vaśiṣtha with the heavenly damsel Śyamā as wife of the Narā Rajā Chengtām. This is how the Ahom kings are said to be descended from Indra, a version foreign to the Tai-Ahom Chroniclers and obviously absurd in the form in which it is presented, it being the first step towards conversion of the race to the new faith.

Hsö-Hum-Möng settled the princes, descended from the former kings, with estates or demesnes according to clans in the districts of Dihing, Shairing (Sāring), Tipām, Tungkhung and Nāmrup. From this arrangement there arose five Royal Houses called Dihingiā, Sāringiā, Tipamiyā, Tungkhungiā and Nāmrupiā[116] and the successors to the throne were chosen according to talents and capacity from among these Houses. Each of these districts was made into a subordinate principality under a Governor called Rajā who was invariably a prince of the ruling family where such princes were there. Thus Hsö-Hum-Möng appointed his eldest son Hsö-Klen-Möng as Rajā of Tipām, second son Hsö-Leng (called also Deo-Rajā) as Rajā of Shairing and the third son Hsö-Teng as Rajā of Nāmrup. The fourth son Hsö-Khring remained without any estate.[117]

The king had in his reign Phun-Long-Khām-peng, Thao-Möng-Chang-Rāi and Thao-Möng-Nāng-Dhu-Pu-Rā as Bura-Gohains successively and Phrā-Shen-Möng, his uncle Ka-Li-Khām and his son Ton-Khām as Bar-Gohains. Phrā-Shen-Möng was made Rājmantrī. The three Ministers were of equal status. As described in Tamuli Phukan's Buranji the Rājmantrī simply goes first among the Ministers and has under him

116. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, *DAB*, p.15.

117. *DAB*, p.15.

one thousand men called Jakāisukiās. Except for this there is no difference in position with his other two colleagues. Hsö-Hum-Möng also created an office of a third Minister called Barpātra Gohain for Kan-Seng, a name given by the king to the son of Hsö-Pem-Hpā, who, on his mother being presented to a Nagā Hkunbao, was born in the latter's house in the Gābharu Hill and whose identity was now revealed to the king. According to another version Kan-Seng was the son of Seng-Kan, the latter being the son of the Hkunbao of the Bānpha Nagās, named Karengpā, by the queen who had been presented by Hsö-Hum-Möng of whom the Nagā was a fast friend. It may be noted that the Bar-Gohain, Bura-Gohain and Barpātra-Gohain are equal in status. To the Barpātra-Gohain were allotted the Barāhis, Chutiyās and Marāns as subjects.

Husain Shah's Invasion :

At this time Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, an Arab ruler of Bengal from A.D. 1493 to 1518, who reconquered Magadha and brought under his sway territories touching the frontiers of Orissa, turned his arms to the east and conquered Kamatā-Kāmarūpa in A.D. 1498 killing in the war its king Harup Nārāyaṇ (or Rup Narayaṇ). He then invaded the Ahom kingdom with initial success. The reference to this Muslim invasion in "Buchanan Manuscripts" says that the Ahom king (Hsö-Hum-Möng) eventually 'destroyed the whole invading army, who were all either killed or made prisoners'. But there is no reference in the extant Ahom history to any such war of the Ahoms with Husain Shah in A.D. 1498. The only earliest war of importance with the Muslims of Bengal was that of A.D. 1532-34 when Turbak Khan invaded the Ahom territory.

Revolt of The Itons (Āitons) and The Khām-Yangs :

The Itons and the Khām-Yāngs, tributary to the Ahoms since the time of Hsö-Kā-Hpā, once again rebelled in A.D. 1504 and the king sent an expedition against them under the command of Nang-Rāng Bar-Gohain and Khām-Peng Burā-Gohain. The rebels submitted after a fight and made peace by offering a girl and four elephants and agreed to pay annual homage to the king with offer of large gongs, amber and Narā dāhs. It appears the Gohains were in the Iton-Khām-Yāng country for six years setting up the administration for control and collection of tributes, for they returned to the capital only in the year 1510.

Pānbārī Expedition :

In A.D. 1512 king Hsö-Hum-Hpā had to lead an expedition into the Hābung country probably to put down a revolt of the Bhuyans or

petty feudal chiefs in the western district called pānbārī.[118] He returned after restoring order. Though the extant records are not very clear about the expansion of the Ahom territories on the north bank of the Brahmaputra up to this time, yet they indicate by referring to Hsö-Kā-Hpā's occupation of the eastern part of the Hābung country and Hsö-Hsen-Hpā's construction of the temple of Nāgasankara that large areas there had already come under the control of the Ahoms.

Conquest of the Chutiya Country :

The first clash with the Chutiyas in the reign of Hsö-Hum-Möng arose from a boundary dispute. The boundary between the Ahom and Chutiya territories was fixed along the midstream of the Dihing. One day a *barāli* fish was coming adrift along the midstream and the Ahoms, who saw it, chased it with a boat and caught it. The Chutiyas rushed at the Ahoms to seize the fish from their hands alleging that it had been illegally caught by them from the part of the river within the Chutiya territory. There was a scuffle on the boat for the fish in which the Chutiyas were overpowered and two of their men with the fish were taken a way by the Ahoms.[119]

The incident was reported to the Chutiya king Dhirnārāyaṇ and the latter determined to attack the Ahoms. He proceeded with a force and arrived at Dikhaumukh in A.D. 1513. When Hsö-Hum-Hpā received this report he despatched a naval force against him with Hsö-Khring, Hsö-Chang and two Railung Gohains in command of its different units. A land force was also ordered by the king to advance to the attack and the king himself moved in person and conducted the operations from a strong base. A pitched battle was fought near a lake called Nong-kang-Möng in which a large number of the enemies fell and the rest took to flight.[120] The king then returned victorious to the capital.

In A.D. 1520 the Chutiyas made a second invasion of the Ahom kingdom.[121] The Chutiya king Dhirnārāyaṇ (Dhitnārāṇ of the Tai-Ahom text) this time carefully cut his way through the wilds and arrived at Cheruākatā from where he, with his minister Kāchitārā, advanced to Dikhaumukh and attacked the Ahoms and plundered the local people. The Ahom forces then launched a counter-attack on the Chutiyas both from land and water and the latter had to withdraw to Dihingmukh.

118. *AB*, p.54; *ACA*. p.51 ; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.22.
119. *AB*, - '*SMJC*' ; pp.9-10.
120. *DAB*, p.16 ; *AB*, p.54.
121. *Ibid*, ; K.T.P. : *op cit.*, p.19.

Dhirnārāvan attempted to take the Ahom fort at Dihingmukh which was in charge of General Khen-Möng. Instead of fighting from inside the strong defences of the fort Khen-Möng rushed out of it with some of his men and charged the Chutiyas, but was killed in the action[122]. Khen-Möng's men were then compelled to retreat and the news was communicated by the Bar-Gohain to the king who was at Nangkamöng.[123] The Chutiyas made a war base at Sessāmukh. The Ahom king collected a large army and sent generals Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain and Chao Kling-Löng with an army up the Brahmaputra to Dibrumukh where they were asked to build a fort.[124] This was a manoeuvre to encircle Dhirnārāyaṇ. The king himself marched to Dihingmukh with a strong force. Dhirnārāyaṇ retreated before the Ahom force and reached the neighbourhood of the mouth of the Dibru river. He encamped at Rupa and sent a detachment to lay siege to the Ahom fort at Dibrumukh.[125] After five days' fighting to capture the fort the Chutiyas suffered defeat and fled to Sadiya. The Chutiyas lost 5000 men of whom 1000 were captured and slaughtered by the Ahoms.[126]

Meantime Chaophā[127] Hsö-Hum had come to the big town[128] and offered sacrifices to the gods. Thereafter he collected a large army and marched to Sessāmukh. The Chutiya Rajā was pursued to Sadiya by the reputed Ahom generals Bar-Gohain Phrā-Shen-Möng, Ghar-Handhikoi Kan-Seng and Kling-Löng Rājmantrī, (probably. Phun-Löng Burā-Gohain). Chutiya Rajā tried to take his stand at Lāruparā, but the Ahom king by a rapid march throughout the night appeared at Lāruparā next morning. The Chutiya Rajā retreated to Kang-Khām, but Hsö-Hum-Hpā pursued him with his army and navy. The Chutiya Rajā found himself in an irretrievable position and opened negotiations for peace and sent valuable presents to the Ahom king and the Ahom generals. He agreed to remain as trbiutary to the Ahoms promising to pay in future annual trtbutes in return for the protection given.[129] The

122. *ACA*, p.51. In it Khen-Mong is mentioned as Eo-Möng.
123. *AB*, p. 54.
124. *AB*, p.55.
125. *AB*, *ibid*. According to some Buranjis the Chutiyas encamped at Ladpara.
126. *AB*, - '*SMJC*' : p. 10
127. meaning 'heavenly king' literally : The Brahminical version derived from it is *Svarga-dev* or *Svarga-nārāṇyaṇ*. In the Assamese Buranjis the Ahom king is always referred to as *Svargadeo*.
128. said to be Charaideo, though the word is 'town' and not Charaideo in the text.
129. *DAB*, p.16.

envoy, who had been sent by the Chutiya Rajā with this peace proposal and presents, was sent back by Hsö-Hum-Möng to inform the Rajā that if peace was wanted he should hand over in addition the golden cat, the golden parasol, the golden sceptre, the golden couch and a princess. The above insignia of sovereignty and a princess were asked for probably to test the genuineness of the peace proposal. When the envoy intimated the demand to the Chutiya king, the latter adopted a delaying tactics by sending fresh presents with a princess other than the precious ancestral articles and praying for peace, but at the same time raising a fort at the mouth of the river and concentrating troops there obviously for war. Another account indicates that these fortifications were raised around the capital city of Sadiya at the mouth of the great river called Lohit.[130] With the princess was sent a knife concealed inside the fold of a mat, which was taken as a further proof of the Chutiya king's signal for war, Hsö-Höm-Möng then had a consultation with his generals and ministers. They could all see through the plan of the Chutiyas and decided immediately to attack them without further negotiation. Hsö-Hum-Möng, directing his navy to attack the enemy, himself advanced on a black horse with his army and stormed the above fortifications of the enemies and captured the city in A.D. 1522 in the month of *Pauṣa* (Dec.-Jan). After a day's stay here the Ahom force made a hot pursuit of the fleeing Chutiya Rajā as far as the Kaitārā Hill but could not overtake him. The Rajā with two hundred men next climbed the hill Chandan-giri (Chantan of the Tai) in the interior. Leaving General Kan-Seng in charge of Sadiya General Ton-Khām, son of Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain, pursued the Rajā with a strong force and attacked him in his hill refuge. His force began to climb up Chandan-giri but the Chutiyas rolled down big blocks of stones and also pelted showers of stones from the hill tops. The Ahoms were forced to retreat with a loss of hundred men in the struggle to climb up the hill. The Ahom Generals then held a Council and decided on a three-pronged attack. General Nang-Hsung and General Kling-Khām moved to attack from the front, General Shenbā from the left flank and General Bān-Löng from the right flank.[131] One officer named Chao-Hseng-Rūpāk (Saikia) proceeded on an elephant called Aikhring to the left and reached an unguarded side of the hill. He there climbed up a *Ghilā* creeper (*Entada scandens*) followed by thirty of his men and reached the top of the hill and after close observation sighted the Chutiya king and about forty people at a place called Barduar.[132]

130. *AB*, - '*SMJC*' : p.11.
131. The strategy of this attack is described differently in different accounts, but the one given in *DAB* appears to be more reliable as it is corroborated in part by others.
132. *DAB*, p.17 ; *AB*, p.56 ; *ACA*, p.54.

He with his small force advanced to the attack, but was soon repulsed by the Chutiya archers who came out in larger numbers and fought fiercely killing most of his men. Jāng-Möng-Khāng Hātibarua, who had witnessed the defeat of the Ahoms, expeditiously climbed up the hill with two thousand men and delivered a powerful assault on the Chutiyas who had, as a result, to flee in disorder. Jāng-Möng-Khāng captured the Chutiya Rajā in his flight by giving him a mortal thrust with his spear. The Rajā's son was also killed by the same hand. He then brought their heads and placed them before his Generals. Soon after, the head of the queen was also brought in by one Āi-Khang-Hkun.[133] Other members of the royal family were searched out on the hill and brought to the Ahom camp.

According to short Chronicles entitled *Chutiyar Kathā* the Rajā Dhirnarayaṇ *alias* Khunta Rajā, unable to find a suitable groom for his beautiful daughter Sādhanī alias Dekhanī, promised to give her away in marriage to anybody, high or low-born, who would be the first to hit with an arrow a target, a squirrel, on a tree in front of his Court next morning. A Chutiya young man, who used to supply wood fuel and happened to pass that way, was asked to try his luck when others failed. He 'with some hesitation' came forward and hit the animal with a single arrow and in fulfilment of his promise the Rajā arranged for the marriage of his daughter with him. But Sādhanī complained 'why should I get myself married to a man of humble origin ?' She agreed to the marriage, though reluctantly, only after extracting a promise from the father to give her whatever she might ask for in future. The marriage was performed only after making the groom undergo *prāyacitta*, a purificatory ceremony. All these indicate that in the eyes of the ruling dynasty the Chutiyas were of low origin. Was the ruling dynasty of a superior caste different from the Chutiyas ? Mere poverty of the groom could not certainly be the ground for *prāyacitta*. The account as narrated provokes genuine curiosity calling for deeper probing into the origin of the ruling house.

Shortly afterwards Sādhanī demanded the Golden Cat of her father who was then upset by it, yet as promise-bound he took out the Cat from the prayer-house and gave it to her with a curse for such a demand. Being deprived of the Cat Rajā Dhirnārāyaṇ relinquished the throne for the son-in-law and went into the forest with his chief queen never to return.

133. According to *BBB* in DABP. 126 it was Chao-Hseng (cheusong) who killed the Chutiya Rajā with his spear. Jāng-Möng Hātibarua brought the heads of the Rajā's queen and son. *DAB* p.116. But the mention of Āi-Khang-Hkun makes it unlikely.

The son-in-law then became Rajā assuming the title of Nitya Pāl. It was during his oppressive and lawless rule that Hsö-Hum-Möng invaded the Chutiya kingdom driving Nitya Pāl or Anitya Pāl, as called by the subjects for his misrule, to Chandra-giri where the latter being hard pressed by the Ahoms escaped capture by jumping with Sādhanī from the hill-top into a stream down below which resulted in their death. Whatever might be the truth the last resistance of the Chutiyas completely collapsed at Chandan-giri and the Chutiya kingdom of Sadiya became after that an Ahom province. Among the spoils collected from the royal stores and other places were the Golden Sceptre, the Golden Couch, the Golden Cat, the Golden Parasol, the royal palanquins, and a large quantity of firearms. All these were brought to Chao Hsö-Hum-Möng who was at Sadiya, the chief town, making in it his war-time camp. With the king's orders the spoils were loaded in boats and sent down to the capital, Saragua, at Dihing. There were also large acquisitions of elephants, horses, cattle and artizans such as bell-metal workers and gold-smiths. There lived in the Chutiya kingdom many Brahmins, Kāyasthas, Kalitās and Ganaks who, too, were transferred to the Ahom capital.[134] The remaining members of the Chutiya royal family and all nobles connected with it were settled at Pākariguri.

After the war was over Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain was appointed the first Ahom Governor of the Province of Sadiya (Sadiya Khowa Gohain or Chao Bongen). The Chutiya monarchy was never restored. Phrā-Shen-Möng was given by the king an armed force of three thousand men and three elephants for controlling the north-eastern frontier province.[135] Having settled the affairs of Sadiya the king with all his men returned to the capital. The heads of the Chutiya King and his son and wife were buried at Charaideo in the usual way.[136] The victory

134. *DAB*, p.18 ; *AB* - '*SMJC*' : p.11 ; *BBB*, *op.cit.*, pp.116-117.

135. *DAB*, p.18.

136. About the disposal of the heads the *Buranjis* give conflicting versions. In *AB*, p.57 the text says 'they all returned and came to the hill with the heads of the Chutiyas' (*'tāng möng pak mā lèmā doi rū tiurā'*) and nothing more. The author's translation here is apparently wrong. *DAB* says that the king's head was hung up on a string in the hill. Kashinath Tamuli Phukan's version is that the two heads - one of the king and the other of the minister - were buried under the steps of the two temples at Charaideo so that the Ahom king might walk over them while entering the temples, which Gait accepts. Wade says in his account that the king directed the heads of the Rajāh and his son to be exposed on lofty poles on the spot. *ACS* and *SMJC* relate that the heads were buried near the Deo-Ghar raising two mounds or tumuli on them, a version more in accord with royal customs.

was then celebrated in the Ahom capital by the king by performing the usual *Rik-Khan*[137] ceremony.

Phu-Kloi Möng attacks Sadiya :

Phu-Kloi-möng, a Narā chieftain,[138] with a band of armed men, made an inroad into the Sadiya territory. The invader entered into the Bar-Deoliyā village and attacked and plundered the inhabitants killing three men of the temple (Deo-Ghar) and also took away an elephant named Plailum. Phrā-Shen-Möng, the Governor, unable to deal effectively with the enemies with his small force, immediately reported the matter to the Svargadev and the latter despatched General Shenbā, Chao-Hsö-Löng-Kung-Rin and General Kan-Seng with one thousand men to reinforce the frontier garrison. The Svargadev himself marched after them with another force and joined them at Rurum. Phu-Kloi-Möng mounting an elephant proceeded to attack the Ahom forces and was confronted by Thao-Möng-Khām-Jāng and Teng-Khām Barduarī Saikia. In the combat that took place one Lākā-shung wounded Phu-Kloi-Möng in the thigh with his spear. The latter was next found on a horse, but soon the horse was speared to death by three men of the Ahom army. Phu-Kloi-Möng then gave up the battle and sent an envoy to the Svargadev suing for peace offering his sister, Nāng-Khām-Deng, and two best horses. The Svargadev accepted the peace proposal and the Narā chieftain sent princess Nāng-Khām-Deng and the horses with two envoys, Phu-Shen-Cheu and Phun-Möng in A.D. 1525. Chao-Hpā Hsö-Hum-Möng reciprocated the friendship by sending him a girl' named Nāng-Khām-Pai, a tusked elephant and twenty *Jāpis* (hats) with silver tips.[139] The Narā chieftain, mentioned here, was not the *Sawbwa* of Mogaung, but some neighbouring chieftain, probably a Tai-Khamti Chief from Khamti Lông. Mogaung *Sawbwa* was at that time Sām-Lung-paw-maing (1520-26). Neither was he the Kachārī King as wrongly said in *AB*, (p.58).

Hsö-Hum-Möng then returned to the capital from Rurum. In A.D. 1526 the king made a number of new appointments. He gave to Klang-Hseng of the Dhanudharia family the designation of Bhātyalia Gohain and appointed him governor of the district

137. *Rik*, call, *Khan*, life. An Ahom ceremony invoking long life or well-being for all in the kingdom. It is officiated by Ahom priests.

138 *DAB*, p.19.

139. *AB*, p.58 ; *DAB*, pp.18-19.

of Hābung on the north bank. His place was filled by appointing Hseng-Pem as Dhanudharia Gohain. Next Kheo-Khen Bānlungia Gohain was made Dihingia Gohain and Chao-Pet-Khām-Kling was made Bānlungia Gohain.[140]

War With The Kachārīs :

A brief account of the expansion of the early Kachāri kingdom, which at the zenith of its power comprised a greater part of the district of Śibsāgar, the northern part of the United District of Mikir and North Cāchār Hills and the eastern part of the Newgong district in the present map of Assam, is contained in the *Kachārī Buranji*, a version of which is also translated by Wade in his book. The names of early Kachāri kings known from these Chronicles are successively Bisārpatiphā, Vikramādityaphā, Mahā-maniphā, Maniphā, Larphā, Khorāphā and Dershungphā (or Detshung). Of these Bisārpatiphā was a contemporary of Hsö-Kā-Hpā and the last two ruled during Hsö-Hum-Möng's reign.

Bisārpatiphā, says Wade, conqurered and added to his principality large areas of territory. Vikramādityaphā further extended the kingdom along the southern hills as far east as the borders of Nāmchāng and Barhāt and at the cost of the Nagās and the Marāns. He worshipped the goddess *Thākurāni* (ten-armed *Durgā*) of whom a statue of pure gold was installed in the town where he made his evidence and the town was thenceforward called Sonāpur. He also made a gold statue of *Bāneswar* (*Mahādev*) and set it up in another town, called from that time Bānpur. They had two chief cities Lakshindrapur and Herembapur. Generally the heir-appearent to the throne was the Prince of Lakshindrapur, but Vikramdiātyaphā and Larphā had their royal capital at Lakshindrapur.

Hsö-Hum-Möng extended his dominions eastward to the farthest limit of the Brahmaputra valley by his conquest of the Chutiya kingdom. He also had well under control the Hābung country on the north bank. But, on the west, the Kachārīs still held sway over the territories west of the Dikhau. After having settled the territorial problem of the east Hsö-Hum-Möng now seriously turned his attention to the west. He invested General Kan-Seng Barpātra Gohain with the supreme command to conquer the western

140. *AB*, p.59 ; *DAB*, p.19.

country under the powerful Kachārīs. Kan-Seng crossed the Kikhau with his army and started operations against the Kachārīs whom he successfully drove off to Nām-Dāng and from there to the next stronghold at Śilpukhurī. He occupied Śilpukhurī and the Kachārīs retreated to the Gābharu Hill. Then he swung the main part of his army to the north-west and conquered Śital-Negherī thus rounding off the boundary with the Kachārī country. Among the arms that fell into the hands of the Ahoms during this campaign guns are mentioned in the Chronicle.[141] Beyond these limits the Kachārīs so consolidated their position that further conquests became well-nigh impossible by a single sweep. But the Kachārīs were very much demoralised by the Ahom successes.

The Ahoms next claimed Dergaon but resorted to conciliatory tactics and invited the Kachārīs to settle mutual rights over the disputed territories according to divine mandates as manifested through certain acts. As a first experiment the Ahom General proposed sacrifices to be offered to the famous Deity at Dergāon both by the Ahoms and the Kacharis. The party whose sacrifice would be accepted by the Deity would get possession of Dergaon and the acceptance would be indicated when the head of the sacrificial animal is severed by a single stroke of the weapon. The Kachārīs agreed to it and when on the appointed day sacrifices were offered it was the Ahoms whose sacrifice was accepted, that of the Kachārīs rejected. The Kachārīs found themselves in the wrong and therefore ceded Dergaon and withdrew to the western bank of the Dhanśirī, the river forming the new boundary between the two countries.[142]

General Kan-Seng next laid claim on Marangi. Here, too,by another dexterous device, that of digging two tanks on the Marangi Hill, one of the Ahoms and the other of the Kachārīs, and showing how the Ahoms were favoured first by Heaven with water in their tank, and making at the same time a false bird declare the Ahoms as the rightful owners of that part of the country Kan-Seng occupied Marangi driving away the Kachārīs to Dijua[143]. Thus the shift from a battle of arms to a battle of wits exploiting the

141. *KB*, p.11.
142. *KB*, p.12 ; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.63.
143. *KB*, p.13; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.64. Dijua or Mahang-Dijua is situated on the bank of the Jamunā river to the west of the Manipur Road Railway station in the present United District of Mikir and North Cachar Hills.

superstitious beliefs of the Kachārīs was crowned with wonderful success in acquiring vast tracts of new territory and the records show that there was in fact no war over Dergaon (Devar-Gaon) and Marangi in the present Golaghat Sub-Division in their first occupation by the Ahoms. All these happened in the reign of the Kachāri Rajā Khurāphā. Was the insistent claim of the Ahoms upon the part of territory upto Marangi backed also by any previous commitment of the Kachārī Rajā ? One account says that in the reign of Hsö-Hān-Hpā there was a war between the Ahoms and the Kachārīs and as there was no victory for any side both made peace. The Ahom king gave the Kachārī Rajā a girl and the latter ceded his territory upto Marangi.[144] Whether this part of the territory was actually vacated by the Kachārīs and later reoccupied by them when the Ahoms had to throw all their might agianst the Chutiyas in the war with them the Chronicles are not clear. But one thing is definite and that is that Khurāphā's reign is marked by a great withdrawal of the Kachārī power from a large tract of their country against the Ahom pressure and it is also equally clear that the Ahoms built a fort at Maranki (Marangi) in A. D. 1531[145] under the supervision of General Phrā-Shen-Möng and Chao-Shang-Lông-Klang-Sheng and another at the mouth of the Jāngtimā (the Dayang)[146] and garrisoned them. These forts indicated the limits of the Ahom territory at that time in that direction.

Khorāphā died and was succeeded by Dershungphā[147] at Dimāpur (Hiḍimbapur). He was determined to fight the Ahoms and asked his people to be ready for action. Before coming to any armed clash straightway he first sent to the Ahom camp Demeriā Sadar Daloi as his envoy to convey his request to fix up permanently by a treaty the river Dhānśirī as the boundary between the Ahom and Kachāri territories and thus restore good relations for future. But the General Kan-Seng Barpātra Gohain did not entertain the request as the Kachārī envoy failed to come with proper etiquette. Hoping no good results from peace negotiations with the Ahoms, who were elated by recent successes, Dershungphā sent an expedition with his brother detchā (or Derchā) in command to attack the Ahom fort at Marangi and capture it. Chao-Hpā Hsö-Klen-

144. K.T.P. : *op cit.*, p.18.
145. *AB*, p.64.
146. *AB*, pp. 64-65.
147. not Dersongphā as in some accounts.

Möng and the Shairing Rajā Hsö-Leng rushed out of the fort with a large armed force and fell upon the Kachārīs and defeated them. In the battle Shairing Rajā killed Detcha.[148] The Ahoms seized a considerable quantity of materials including some swords and cloth. When the report of this clash reached king Hsö-Hum-Möng he despatched reinforcements under Thao-Möng-Katak and the king himself moved by boats upstream the Dhanśirī to the mouth of the Dayang where a fort was constructed. At this stage there is some confusion in the accounts. Probably an upstart named Khun-Kharā seized the Kachārī throne and started the offensive against the Ahoms. The Kachārīs under the command of the Dekā Rajā (heir-apparent) launched a powerful attack on the Ahoms and the war continued with unabated fury for three months with heavy casualties on both sides. Hsö-Hum-Möng was worried when after so much figthing the Kachārīs could not be defeated. He invited the diviners, the Deodhāis and Bāilungs, to tell him by examining the fowls' legs the name of the person capable of defeating the enemies. They unanimously gave the name of General Phrā-Shen-Möng then at home after being dismissed from the governorship of Sadiya. The dismissal was in consequence of an unusual delay on the part of the Governor in reporting in person to the king in spite of being summoned several times, the explanation every time being that the enemies were nearby.[149] The result of the divination compelled the king to appoint General Phrā-Shen-Möng as Commander-in-Chief of the Kachārī campaign. Phrā-Shen-Möng then paid his usual homage to the king and proceeded to direct the operations against the Kachārīs.

General Phrā-Shen-Möng constructed a bridge over the Dhanśirī and took his army to the west bank. He also built a war camp on that bank for the king who advanced to that place. From that base Phrā-Shen-Möng launched a three-pronged attack on Dijua outpost where the Kachārīs were ready for action. There was a bloody battle which continued for seven days. Numerous Kachārīs fell dead in the battle field. Yet they continued to fight with wonderful bravery which earned the admiration of the Ahoms. Phrā-Shen-Möng then deployed a part of his army and manoeuvred it to reach the rear of the Kachārīs from where he delivered a powerful assault on the Kachārī Rajā, who being unable to hold out against it, fled into the jungle and the Kachārīs were

148. *AB*, pp.64; *DAB*, p.24 *SMJC*, p.13. Here the killer is said to be his servant.

149. *AB*, - '*SMJC*', p. 12.

routed.[150] The Ahoms pursued the Kachārīs and defeated them in a series of engagements and reached the brick-built capital city at Dimāpur[151]. The Kachārī king Khun-Kharā and his brother Dekārajā[152] fled to Burma.[153] Gait seems to mean by Dekārajā the Kachārī king's son. Fortifications were now erected at Marangi and king Hsö-Hum-Möng appointed an officer named Lāshām *alias* Turpāk (or Shurpā) Barchetiā as Governor of Marangi or Marangi Khowā Gohain (Chao Marangki) of that province with a garrison of four thousand troops to guard the Kachārī frontier of the Ahom territory.

After the flight of Khun-Kharā and his heir-apparent the Kachārī kingdom was without a successor. At this moment the Kachārī ex-king Detshung (or Dershungphā) deputed his brother to the Ahom king with an offer of two hundred Kachārī rupees to pray that the Svargadev be graciously pleased to restore to him as his vassal the ancestral kingdom, which had been unjustly seized and until then held by Khun-Kharā. The Ahom kings always looked upon the Kachāri princes as descendants of a great dynasty of a great race. Hsö-Hum-Möng regarded Detshung's offer with due consideration and sent his own envoy to him with a message that the kingdom would be restored if the latter would offer his sister, one thousand rupees and an elephant.[154] Within a week Prince Detshung and his brother came to the Ahom Court with all that were demanded and additional presents of five hundred swords, five hundred pieces of cloth, one thousand napkins and one hundred sedans (*Doolies*) and offered them to the Svargadev and paid their homage. King Hsö-Hum-Möng then proclaimed Detshung as the Rajā of the Kachārī kingdom and presented him with a diamond ring saying "Be loyal to the Svargadev and be free from crimes as long as this diamond is not turned to lead, tin or silver. Be like the diamond and not like lead, tin or silver which are easily melted. We are now friends and

150. *KB* (p.15) mentions Dershungpha as the Kachārī Rajā, but all other accounts point to Khun-Kharā as the king. Further the statement in the *KB* (p.16) that Dershungphā was pierced to death is obviously wrong in the present context. Dershungphā was killed as a result of an Ahom-Kachārī war during his reign at a later date.

151. *AB*, p. 65 ; *DAB*, p.25 ; *ACA*, p.56 ; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.92.

152. AB, p.65 ; *DAB*, p.25 ; *ACA*, p.56.

153. *DAB*, p. 25. According to *AB* (p.65) Lākat, *ACA*, (p.56) Nāhar, *AB* - '*SMJC*' : (p.14) Nāharaṇī.

154. Sending of an envoy or Kaṭakī by the Ahom king is an indirect recognition of the position of the Kachārī Prince. Presents demanded and sent slightly differ in different texts.

you must not quarrel with us any more".[155] The king then made many valuable presents to Rajā Detshung and permitted him to return to his kingdom and take charge of it as tributary to Svargadev directing at the same time to send to the Ahom Court the golden sceptre, the golden throne, the golden parasol, the golden jar, the golden plates and other paraphernalia belonging to the last king Khun-Kharā.[156] Hsö-Hum-Möng also made provisions for the three Manipuri queens of the fugitive king. The annual tributes to be paid by the Kachārī Rajā were fixed at one thousand rupees, 500 fine embroidered cloth pieces, 550 unembroidered pieces, 1000 swords, and 100 *sāngīs*[157] of iron and iron scraps. Hsö-Hum-Möng also asked the new Kachārī Rajā to effect a capture of Khum-Kharā. At the time of taking leave Rajā Detshung said, "It is learnt that Khun-Kharā has entered Bengal. If I can capture him I shall bring him to the Svargadev'.[158] Rajā Detshung was thereafter duly installed as Rajā at Dimāpur.

The escape of Khun-Kharā remained a matter of concern and speculation for Hsö-Hum-Möng. Rajā Detshung, too, on his part neglected to make any serious effort to capture him as promised, which strained Hsö-Hum-Möng's feelings towards the Kachārī Rajā. Added to that arose a boundary dispute between the two countries. Governor Shurpāk Barchetiyā of Marangi captured a number of Kachārīs for carrying on depredations into the Ahom territory. The tension further developed when, as a reply to this incident, the Kachārī Rajā claimed all the territories south of the Dikhau.[159] Hsö-Hum-Möng also got the report that the ex-king Khun-Kharā was moving about unmolested in the Kachārī territory, yet no attempt was made to capture him. It was suspected that behind this adventure of the fugitive Kachārī ex-king there was some kind of support from Bengal.

155. Wade : *op.cit.*, pp. 28-29 *AB* - '*SMJC*', p. 14 *AB* p.66 ; *DAB*; p. 26

156. *DAB*, p.26.

157. *Sāngī* is a burden or load suspended from the middle of a pole and at both ends carried by two or more persons on their shoulders. See *AB* - '*SMJC*', p. 14. Sometimes two such poles are used horizontally wide apart connected by bamboo or wooden pieces. Such a Sāngī with a load on it is carried by four persons on shoulders.

158. *DAB*, p.26 *ACA*, p.57.

159. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p. 2. The Dikhau descending from the hills takes a turn to the west and falls into the Brahmaputra. The area claimed, according to the text, seems to be the original Kachārī territories extending up to the Dikhau, but that is most unlikely. Probably the river mentioned should have been the Dhansirī.

Muslim Invasions of Assam :

Hsö-Hum-Möng, as expected, received a report that Khun-Kharā and a Bengal force under the command of one Luipat (or Luput) were sailing up the Brahmaputra into the Ahom territory with a flotilla of fifty war-boats. It was probably a filibustering expedition led by one Nawab Bit Mālik[160] and the great Ujir.[161] Hsö-Hum-Möng immediately despatched General Kan-Seng Barpātra-Gohain (Shenglung) and General Shenbā to encircle and capture Khun-Kharā[162] and drive off the Bangāls. At a place called Temanī in Nowgong district a big battle was fought with the invaders. The Ahoms captured Khun-Kharā[163] and defeated the Ujir, who then left his boats and fled on a horse. Kan-Seng came to Kunwariparā and fortified it and Shenbā returned to the capital. General Sheng Hanan collected from a temple threatened by the Muslims a quantity of dedicated articles such as a golden sceptre, a silver pitcher, gold and silver ornaments adorning the deity, some money and an elephant and submitted them to the king at Dihing. The latter issued orders directing the disposition of Ahom forces at different centres and asked all to make a concerted attack when the enemies would advance.[164] Bit Mālik and the Ujir, with a large army and a naval force, laid siege to the fort at Kunwariparā. Kan-Seng sallied out of the fort on his war elephant and made a fierce attack on the enemy, who in turn cut off the tail of his elephant and wounded it in one leg. At this, two other reputed warriors forced their way to his assistance on their own elephants. In the combat that ensued General Kan-Seng severed Bit Mālik with a stroke of his sword and the latter fell dead. When the leader was killed the Muslims completely lost their morale and fled in disorder hotly pursued by the Ahoms as fas as Khāgarijān (Nowgong). Numerous Muslims were killed and a large number of guns, horses and other valuable materials captured by the Ahoms. Bit Mālik was probably some petty chieftain of Bengal who had been persuaded by Khun-Kharā to lead an expedition to the rich country of the Ahoms more for plunder than for any permanent conquest, but Hsö-Hum-Möng's generals smashed their effort killing the Nawab himself.[165]

160. Bir Mālik. Mit Mānik in some Assamese *Buranjis*. Ahom *t* for *r*, *n* for *t*.

161. or Vazir. S.N. Bhattacharyya in his *Mughal North-East Frontier Policy* (p.86) writes he is Ruknuddin. Rukn Khan was the 'Wazir and general of Alau-d din Husain Shah.' But it cannot be taken as definite.

162. *DAB*, p. 26 : *AB*, p.66.

163 *ACA*, p. 57.

164. *DAB*, pp.26-27 ; *AB*, p. 67.

165. Nawab Bit Mlāik's invasion was not of such a magnitude as can be called a part of Ala-ud-din Husain Shah's or of his successor's eastern campaigns for conquest.

The rise of Ala-ud-din Husain Shah of Bengal (Gaur) and his memorable capture of Kamatāpur in Koch Behar in AD 1498, then under the Khen King Nilāmbar, which made him soon master of the whole tract of country as far east as the Barnadī opposite the present town of Gauhati put the Ahom rulers on guard. This Muslim conquest, which took place about one year after Hsö-Hum-Möng's accession, is proved beyond doubt, not so much by any good literary evidence as by the coins and inscriptions of Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, who is called in them 'the Conqueror of Kāmru (Kāmarupa) and Kamatā' His coins bearing a date as late as 924 A.H.(A.D 1518) and styling him the conqueror of Kāmru (Kāmarūpa) and Kamatā have been found.[166] The date and the fact of the destruction of Kamatā are also confirmed by a contemporaneous inscription found by Mr. Westmacott at Māldah, bearing the date 907 A.H. corresponding to A.D. 1501-2, which belonged to a Madrasa built by Husain Shah in commemoration of his conquest of Kamatā and Kāmarūpa.[167] Before leaving the country Husain Shah appointed his son, Governor of Nilāmbar's territories, to follow up the conquest still further into the east. (*The Cooch Behar State, p.*225). He then pushed the conquest to the eastern limit of the Kamatā-Kāmarupa kingdom and made his headquarters at Hājo, placing at Kamatā probably Durlav Indra, a son of the last king, as a vassal ruler to be related below. Gait also points out that Husain Shah left behind his son who became Governor at Hājo for the newly conquered territory. This son was probably Husain Khan, who was later killed by the Ahoms in the battle of the Dikrai which is described below. This ruler made a settlement of Muslims in the neighbourhood of Hājo in Kāmarupa, started construction of a grand mosque on a hillock and is believed to have brought to Hājo a Muslim saint named Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Awliya for propagating Islam in this country. After the death of Husain Shah's son in the war with the Ahoms two Muslim chieftains managed the affairs of Kāmarupa, Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Awliya being the last Governor at Hājo, who was buried near the mosque. This place is held in great esteem by the Muslims to this day as a place of pilgrimage and the mosque is called *Poā Maccā* (i.e. one-fourth of Mecca). Mirza Nāthān refers to this 'hillock of Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Awliya' in his *Baharestan-I-Ghaybi* in connection with a massacre in its shrine committed by the Ahoms. Gait further says that some years after Husain Shah's conquest of Kāmarupa

166. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *A History of Mughal Northeast Frontier Policy*, (Calcutta, 1929), p. 71.

167. *JASB*, 1874, p.281 ; Stewart's *History of Bengal*, p.112. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp·43-45.

an attempt was made to annex the Ahom country, which the Ahoms replied by such a powerful counter-attack as eventually led to the annihilation of the whole Muslim army and entire loss of the newly conquered Kāmarūpa and Kamatā territories.

This deliberate Muslim attempt to conquer the Ahom kingdom is undoubtedly represented by Turbak Khan's invasion of April 1532[168] during the reign of Hsö-Hum-Möng. Turbak marched on Assam with 301 elephants, 1,000 horses, many cannon, guns and other arms and a large force. Nasir-un-din Nusrat Shah (1518-33), the eldest son of Ala-ud-din Husain Shah, was then the ruler of Bengal,[169] who is supposed to have directed this enterprise. From the numismatic and epigraphic evidences it is clear that Husain Shah's hold on Kamatā and Kāmarūpa was not lost during his life time. Though records, throwing light on the happenings of the next thirteen years, are lacking, yet the fact is there that the first most important war between the Ahoms and the Muslims under Turbak Khan was the one that broke out in April 1532 (*Lākni Raingi*) according to Ahom history and it took more than three years for the Ahoms to defeat and drive out the Muslims from Kāmarūpa and Kamatā. This was a protracted war with heavy losses to both sides. Its main theatre was the western front of the Ahom kingdom comprising Kaliabar and the Kapili Valley in Nowgong, the Dikrai and Bharali valleys of the present Sub-Division of Tezpur and the Brahmaputra in between them. In the battle of Kaliabar near the confluence of the Kallang and the Brahmaputra General Phrā-Shen-Möng killed the Muslim General Hayat Khan.[170] The Ahom army pressed the Muslims hard and compelled them to retreat to the Kapiligangā. Then Turbak issued forth from his fort with a force using elephants, horses and guns and made a powerful counter-attack on the Ahoms. A bloody battle was fought in which eight great Ahom generals including the redoubtable Commander-in-Chief Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain fell[171] and Hsö-Klen-Möng Tipām Rajā (also called Garhganyā Rajā) received a wound from an enemy arrow and his

168. *AB*, p.68 ; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.92 : *DAB*, p.27. *Lākni Raingi* is the date mentioned which is A.D. 1532.

169. Mazumdar,Ray Chaudhuri & Datta : *An Avdanced History of India* (Machmillan, London, 1956), p.347.

170. An *MS.* History of Assam.

171. It is narrated in one *MS* History of Assam that when Hayat Khan fell his wife came forward to fight but General Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain refused to strike a lady and at this moment the enemy killed him. When the news of Phrā-Shen-Möng's death reached his wife, Nāng-Son-Hsen-Khām (the famous ever adored Mulā Gābharu), who was a daughter of king Hsö-Hum-Möng, she mounted the war elephant Langji (or Nangji) and sallied forth into the thick of the battle and fought

horse was also killed. Prince Hsö-Klen-Möng, therefore, left for the capital for treatment. The generals of the Ahom army then retreated and met king Hsö-Hum-Möng in the fort at Salā (Tai-Ahom Shaolā between Dergaon and Kaliabar), where he had made his camp to be in touch with the progress of the war. The king immediately appointed Kan-Seng Barpātra-Gohain as Commander-in-Chief of the Ahom army and ordered the generals to attack the enemies acting under his supreme command. Troops were stationed at all strategic fronts right upto the Barnadī in North Kāmrūp. There is mention of the Kachāris fighitng on the side of the Ahoms against the Muslims.[172] The Muslims advanced to Kaliabar and in November 1533 some of them reached Ghilādhāri.[173] Meanwhile Prince Hsö-Klen-Möng, with his wound healed up, returned to Salā. The Muslims further advanced and pitched their tent opposite the Ahom fort at Salā. After sometime they also took the offensive against the Ahom garrison at the fort and burnt three lines of houses of the Ahom camp. The Ahoms replied by pouring on the attackers boiling water from the fort. This was followed by a regular battle between the two sides, the Muslims making a series of cavalry charges under a barrage of thier cannon and gun-fire. The Ahoms, unable to hold their ground, retreated into their fort which was then besieged by the enemies. A Muslim naval unit also attacked the Burol fort on the north bank where the three princes, Hsö-Klen-Möng Tipām Rajā, Hsö-Teng Nāmrupiyā Rajā and Prince Hsö-Khring engaged the enemies. The Ahom generals by a flanking attack and simultaneous frontal charge overwhelmed the Muslim navy which was then forced rapidly to retreat. Soon after this the Ahoms also won a great naval victory at Duimuniśilā killing two thousand and five hundred Muslims including a general named Shyamnāth and capturing many of their boats and materials. Having defeated the Muslims in the northern theatre the three princes crossed to the south bank with their navy and fiercely attacked and defeated the Muslim force besieging the fort at Salā and relieved it.

At this crucial moment reinforcements consisting of six elephants, 100 horses and 1,000 troops arrived from Bengal to help Turbak under a general named Husain Khan. The Muslims then concentrated their forces for attack at the mouth of the Dikrai on the north bank.

the enemy with wonderful bravery killing many of them before she herself was killed in action. It is further said in a number of *Buranjis* that for too short a time to come out for the war both the husband and the wife could not provide themselves with the proper war uniforms which made their persons vulnerable to the enemy, otherwise they could not have been so easily killed.

172. *AB*, p.69.

173. in the Sub-Division of Golāghāt.

Hsö-Hum-Möng transferred his royal camp to Duimuniśilā between Salā and Kaliabar. The Ahom-army waited for action at Dikraimukh for two months and a half face to face with the enemy line. Meanwhile under the direction of the king it constructed a fort and erected ramparts extending from it The Muslims started the attack with cavalry and guns. Other Ahom generals soon reinforced their army at this fort. From the Muslim side one Bharat Singh and a Koch Katowal first attacked the Ahoms and in the encounter the enemies were surrounded and driven up the Dikrai which gave an advantage to the Ahoms who then fell upon them both from the rear and the front. The enemies were massacred in great numbers and those that survived were routed. In the run many with elephants were bogged down in a lake where they were slaughtered *en masse* by the Ahoms. Turbak made a cavalry charge on the Ahoms, but the latter discharged their arrows at the horses with such deadly effect that most of them fell and the rest fled away with their men on their backs, who lost all control, and reached the Bharali. Many Muslims left their horses and sailed off down the river Brahmaputra. It was in this battle that Husain Khan was killed. The Ahoms seized 28 elephants, 850 horses, a great number of big and small guns and cannon, a box full of gold and 80 bags of silver coins. All these were presented to the king at Duimuniśilā. Among the persons captured was also Turbak's daughter Princess Sawalci whom the king took under his custody. The king was pleased for the victory and presented the elephants and horses to the generals. In the Tai-Ahom Chronicle it is said that the heads of Turbak and Husain were entombed on the hill Charaideo,[174] but nothing is said about how and where Turbak was killed. One version in some Assamese *Buranjis* is that, unable to kill Turbak even after three years' fighting, Kan-Seng pretended to submit to the Muslim chief and obtained permission to enter his camp for offering submission. Kan-Seng and some of his officers entered his camp with swords and spears carefully concealed and at dead of night, while Turbak was kept engaged in conversation, they suddenly fell upon him and speared him to death. As pre-arranged other officers also, by simultaneous attacks, killed Turbak's officers and many of his men.[175] In another account Kan Seng is said to have entered Turbak's camp under the pretence that the king was going to put him to death for his failure to win victory as Commander-in-Chief and having entered it pierced him

174. *AB*, p.73. In *DAB* (p.32), the head of Turbak's general Husain Khan is said to have been entombed on the hill.

175. *ACA*, p.61.

to death.[176] Gait says that Turbak tried to save the day by leading a cavalry charge in person in the Barali battle, but was transfixed by a spear, and, when he fell, the defeat became a rout.[177] This appears to be the correct version and gets support from Tāmuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji*.[178]

Liberation of Kāmarūpa-Kamatā by The Ahoms :

The Ahom expeditionary force, headed by General Ton-Khām[179] and aided by General Kan-Seng and General Khām-Peng, pursued the retreating enemies across the Muslim dominions of Kāmarūpa and Kamatā receiving little resistance in them and reached the Karatoya, the eastern boundary of Gaur proper, where the victors washed their swords. In this retreat the remnants of the Muslim invading army was practically wiped out by the Ahoms and in this the latter must have received the co-operation of the Kamatās against their earstwhile enemy. In the extant Tai-Ahom literature there is no mention of Husain Shah's invasion of the Ahom kingdom, nor of any Ahom expedition sent for Kamatā or Kāmarūpa against that ruler. Turbak, said to be a scion of the family of Gaureswar, made the first serious effort to annex Assam during the reign of Hsö-Hum-Möng.[180]

176. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.22.
177. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.94.
178. See p.22.
179. Sometimes written Shon-Khām. He is the son of the great Phrā-Shen-Möng Bar-Gohain.
180. In one account of Assamese history Turbak is said to have been sent by Gaureswar to rescue his daughter Sushuddhi called also Gauramā or Garamā, noted for beauty, from the place of her husband Kamateśwar on the report that Princess Garamā was being maltreated by the latter on the alleged ground that she had had a scandalous connection with the son of the royal priest. Unable to resist Turbak Kamateśwar submitted to Svargadev Hsö-Hum-Möng for help leaving behind his chief wife Sulochanā and son Durlav Indra. Garamā fled to the Kachārī king, who accepted her as his chief consort, but she was later captured by the Ahoms and presented to the Svargadev with her son Madan after the Kachārī king was killed in the Ahom-Kachārī war. Turbak invaded the Kachārī kingdom for her and then proceeded to attack the Ahom kingdom where she had been taken. (See *AB*-'*SMJC*', pp.18-22). In the account the names of Gaureśwar and Kamateśwar are not mentioned. It may be noted that king Nilāmbar's youngest queen Vanamālā had a similar episode in which the Minister Sashi Pātra's son Manohar was involved. The king with rage put the Minister's son to death, had a dish prepared of his flesh and made the father partake of it. At this Sashi Pātra went to Husain Shah and persuaded him to march against Kamatāpur. Husain Shah then destroyed and sacked Kamatā; but Garamā finds no mention in the Tai-Ahom *Buranjis*. Why should a great conqueror like Husain Shah give his daughter in marriage to Kamateśwar, a Hinduised king? Garamā's flight to the Kachārī kingdom at the approach of the rescuing party is again unaccountable. Thus the story of Garamā does not seem to have any historical basis in this context. See also *KBI*, pp.36-37, and f.n.

When the Ahom army of black-uniformed and terrible-looking soldiers appeared on the border of Gaur in pursuit of the Muslims, the Sultan of Bengal (Gaur) became frightened and immediately made overtures for peace by offering two of his daughters Khānbibi Hārmatī and Khānbibi Dārmatī to Svargadev's seraglio with five eastern Parganās as dowries,[181] namely, Ghorāghāt, Pātla-doh,[182] Eghāra-Sendur, Fariabād and Sherpur[183], the last being not far to the north of Dacca. All these Parganās are in the districts of Rangpur and Mymensingh on the west of the Sonkosh river. It shows that the part of Gour territory lying to the east of the Karatoya and just south of the kingdom of Kamatā came under Ahom sovereignty under the new relation with the Bengal Sultan. Thus in the beginning of A.D. 1534 the Ahoms became master of a vast expanse of territory extending from the eastern extremity of Assam to the Karatoya on the west embracing within it Kāmarūpa and Kamatā and beyond right down to the neighbourhood of the Dacca district in Eastern Bengal (now East Pakistan).

At the instance of General Tor-Khām a small brick temple was constructed on the bank of the Karatoya and a tank was also excavated by the side of the temple in commemoration of the victory.[184] This momument also demarcated the boundary between Kamatā and Gaur.[185] At the same time a vassal chief of Kamatā, who was probably no other than one Durlav Indra, who became free from the Muslim domination and placed himself under the protection of the Ahom king, offered a daughter of his to the Svargadev.[186]

181. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.24 *ACA*, pp.62-63 ; A brief and incomplete reference in K.T.P.'s *Assam Buranji*, p.22. The Chronicles also show discrepencies in mentioning the names of the Parganās. *BBB* (p.99 of *DAB*) mentions Sherpur, Kairābāri, Dashkounia, Bāhirbundh and Bhitarbundh, all of which are said to be 'localities in the present districts of Rangpur and Mymensingh'. Curiously enough *ACA* calls Gaureśwar's daughter Rajanī Kunwarī and *BBB* calls her Bhājanī, but, as said above, these were the daughters of Kamateśwar married to earlier Ahom kings.
182. now a locality in the Ghorāghāt Parganā of Rangpur district, not to be confused with village Pātilā-dohā in the Barpetā Sub-Division of Kāmrup.
183. in the Mymensingh district.
184. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.28 ; An *MS* History of Assam.
185. K.T.P. *op.cit.*, p.22.
186. An *MS* History of Assam. Here Durlav Indra is to be distinguished from Durlavnārāyaṇa, a 14th century Kamatā king, a contemporary of Śri Śankar Deva's great-great-grandfather Chandibar.

Ahom Embassy To Orissa :

An Assamese Chronicle[187] also contains an account that a six-man embassy that accompanied General Ton-Khām proceeded to Orissā and met king Vikramasena of that country, a descendant of Indradyumna, and said, 'It is the command of Svarga Mahārajā of Udaygiri that we should wash our swords in the Karatoya after winning victory in the war (with Bengal) and having made friendship with Gaureśwar come and salute the (Jagannāth) Thākur and excavate a tank and consecrate it (to the god) and then return. For this purpose 200 gold *mohurs* are sent with us'. Having learnt all this Vikramasena was pleased to conduct these new visitors from distant Möng-Dun-Hsün-Khām (Assam) to the Jagannāth Temple and throw open its doors, whereupon they duly saluted the Thākur and then excavated a tank nearby, the banks of which were paved with bricks, and performed the consecration ceremony by offer of gold *mohurs* of Svargadev Hsö Hum-Möng to the Thākur, the Vairagī Brahmins and king Vikramasena receiving in return the Thākur's *mahāprasād* and *nirmālya* for the Svargadev. Vikramasena also laid on the forehead of the Jagannāth Thākur a lustrous jem offered by the visitors who had secured it on being left behind by a cobra during their encampment on the march by the side of the Śrī Suryya Hill between the town of Goalpārā and Dalgomā on the south bank in the Goalpārā district of Assam. It is said that the jem is still to be seen glittering on the forehead of the Thākur. In this account king Vikramasena is described as son of Purusottama which shows that Vikramesena was but another name of king Pratāparudra (1497-1540) of Orissā a contemporary of Hsö-Hum-Möng (1497-1539) and a disciple of Śrī Chaitanya who flourished at that time. Pratāparudra, whose territories once extended from Hugli in West Bengal to Guntur in Andra Pradesh, may be called the greatest king of the declining phase of the Orissā royal power and this decline is attributed by many to the loss of martial spirit under the influence of Vaishnavism preached by Śrī Chaitanya.

This pilgrimage to the Jagannāth Temple at Puri had probably a political mission behind it. The conjecture is that, either at the instance of Hsö-Hum-Möng or that of Vikramasena, the mission aimed at some form of an alliance between Assam and Orissa primarily against Muslim expansions. For Hsö-Hum-Möng or his Generals, who followed their ancestral religion, had nothing to do with Hinduism or the Jagannāth

187. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp.24-28.

Thākur as such. The pilgrimage was therefore a cover for the secret political mission. In this context we may remember how Orissā was attacked and weakened by the Hindus of Vijaynagar and the Muslims of Golkunda in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

Vishva Singha's Submission to Hsö-Hum-Möng :

While the Ahom generals were returning with the Gaur princesses, the Koch chief Vishva Singha of Mount Chiknā[188] wanted to intercept them,[189] but his ministers[190] warned him against any such rash adventure at a time when there was yet much to be done for internal consolidation while the powerful Ahoms had further strengthened their position by establishing friendship with Gaureswar. They advised him therefore to make friendship with the Ahoms. He accepted the advice, met General Ton-Khām and presented to him for Śrī Śrī Svarganārāyaṇdev (Hsö-Hum-Möng) one pot of gold, one pot of silver, five red *shawls* and two all-white whisks as tokens of homage. In return Ton-Khām gave him all the territory west of the Sonkosh offered as dowries by the Pādshā of Gaur and asked him to pay annual tributes to the Svargadev from whom he would receive all protection against foreign enemies.[191] He so settled the newly acquired territories because he knew that the Ahom monarch had no desire for more territories.[192] The expedition went

188. A Koch chief named Hājo had two daughters Jirā and Hirā, who were married to a Mech named Hāriyā or Haridās who lived in Mount Chiknā (Chikanai Parbat of *Kamrupar Buranji*, 2nd. Ed. *DHAS*, p.10), probably Chikrājhār in Goalpara district near the Bhutan Hills. The elder Jirā had two sons Chāndan (elder) and Madan (younger) and later Hirā had two sons by god Mahādeva named Shishu and Vishu. Chandan and Madan fought the Governor of Chiknā and killed him, but then Madan was also killed in the fight. Chandan proclaimed himself king of Chiknā in A.D. 1510 or *Rāja Śaka* 1, the Era of the Koch Behar family. On Chandan's death Vishu, the younger brother, became king in A.D. 1522 (*R.S.* 14) at the age of twenty-two under the title of Vishva Singha.

His brother Shishu served as the *Raikat* i.e. 'head of the family and hereditary Prime Minister'. Vishva Singha appointed twelve other ministers from the twelve families of Meches of the locality. The coil of a serpent's tail, said to be Śiva's Serpent, formed his throne and the hood his umbrella. The sceptre he wielded was called *Hanumānadanda* with a silver head of a monkey. (See *Rajopakhyana*, Chaps. VII and VIII as referred to in *The Cooch Behar State*, pp. 225-27.) There exist traces of the ruined monuments called 'Viśva Singha's *killā* (fort)' in Bhutan some ten to twelve miles north of Chiknā. See *KBI*, p.90.

189. *Ibid*, p.28.

190. Kālketu and Dhumā Sardar of the Assamese account.

191. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.28 ; An *MS* History of Assam; *KB*, p.11. The statement in Gaits *Koch Kings of Kāmarupa* (See also H.S.B. : *op.,cit.* p.28) that Vishva Singha went to make war on the Ahoms, but fell short of provisions on the way and returned home is unconvincing in the light of the facts presented by documents collected recently.

192. *ACA*, p.63 ; An *MS* History of Assam.

so far only to assist Kamateśwar to be free from the Muslim yoke.[193] After this when Ton-Khām arrived at the capital and reported the achievements of the expedtition to the king, the latter highly appreciated his actions and conferred upon him the title of *Bar A'zam*.[194] Others who accompaniedhim were also rewarded for their meritorious services. One result of the war with Turbak was that a considerable number of Muslims could not escape from Assam. They were captured and put to the work of supplying grass to the royal elephants. As they proved inefficient and ignorant in this job they were transferred to the paddy fields for growing food. Here, too, they equally failed. Then they took to the trade of making brass vessels and became known as Mariyās, probably from the nature of the trade.

There broke out a great pestilence among the cattle population of kingdom in March 1534 which took a heavy toll of their life during the next three months of its spread.

Nagā Disturbance in Khām-Jāng :

In A.D. 1535 Hsö-Hum-Möng received reports from the Khāmjangia Gohain (Governor of Khām-Jāng) that the Nagās of the lower and higher regions were joining together to attack him. So he immediately despatched a force under General Hsö-Leng, the Rajā of Shairing, and General Shenglung (Barpātra-Gohain). They attacked the Nagās from different directions. Hsö-Leng proceeded by the route of Nāmruk making his first camp at that place and fought and subdued the Nagas of Jākhang and the neighbouring areas. Sherglung reduced to submission the villages of Phākai, Tashiteng and Shireng. Hsö-Klen-Hpā Tipām Rajā and Prince Hsö-Teng, Ton-Khām, and Shenab occupied the Jāktung Nagā area and then encamped at Nām-Chāng. Most of the Nagās from these areas fled to Tāblung and then to Barkalā. Early in 1535 the Ahoms also annexed Mahang with its brine springs by subjugating the local Nagās. The Ahom Generals then returned to the capital and, not long after, the Nagās submitted to the Ahoms presenting the four big guns left behind by the latter. In the Province of Khām-Jāng complete tranquillity was restored and the king received an elephant and about a hundred bisons (*methon*) brought from those areas.

193. *ACA*, p.63 ; An *MS History of Assam.*
194. Great Ā'zam (the Powerful one).

Kachārī Rebellion of 1536 :
End of The Kachārī Rule (Early Period) :

There was a fresh Kachārī rising in A.D. 1536 in contravention of the terms of peace concluded between Hsö-Hum-Möng and Detshung (Dershungphā) in A.D. 1531. General Hsö-Leng was invested with supreme command by the King and sent against the Kachārīs with an army. Other generals placed under him were Katak and Hanan. They marched to Marangi and then to Hāmdoi where they encamped. The king himself moved up to Marangi. Three other generals, namely, Prince Hsö-Klen-Möng, Ton-Khām and Tai-Möng-Lung soon joined the king at his camp. Princes Hsö-Teng and Hsö-Leng encamped in the fort at Bānphu and occupied the area. Ton-Khām, Katak and Möng-Klang advanced up the Dayāng to attack the Kachārīs from their right, General Hanan and a few others proceeded to attack them from their left and General Nang-Lao and General Kleng-Ret advanced straight by boats upstream the Dhanśirī and delivered a frontal attack on the Kachārī fort. The Kachārīs opened fire from their large guns wounding a number of Ahom soldiers. The state of the battle was reported to the Princes Hsö-Teng and Hsö-Leng who with General Shenglung speedily marched against the Kachārīs and reinforced their army engaged in the battle with them. The Kachārīs unable to hold out began to flee in disorder with the result thata great number of them were killed by the Ahoms. The pursuing Ahom soldiers traced out the Kachārī Rajā Detshung in the fort on the Doimari Hill preparing to cross the river Khāmdām. Rajā Detshung was nearly encircled when he escaped to Lenguriyā and then to his capital Itā-Nagar. As the Ahom forces advanced up the Dhanśirī in the pursuit, the Rajā fled from his capital to the town Demerā (or Jangmarā). Hsö-Klen-Möng, with his officers and troops, reached the town but it was virtually deserted. After a search the Kachārī Rajā was found and killed. Some members of his family including one of his sons were also slain in the attack. The Rajā's golden sceptre, throne and treasures were seized and brought to king Hsö-Hum-Möng, who was at Kuhiarbārī at the time.[195] Hsö-Hüm-Möng also received a queen of the late Kachārī Rajā and her son who was probably very young at that time. The king then returned to the capital with the nobles and the army and performed the ceremony of *Mé-Dām Mé-Phi*.[196] He admitted the queen into his palace and treated her son with favour.[197]

195. *AB*, pp.75-77; *DAB*, pp.33-53.
196. A ceremony in which oblations are offered to the dead and sacrifices to the gods.
197. Wade : *op.cit.*, p.66.

In the month of *Dinchit* (May-June), Rajā Etshung's head was buried at Charaideo in a separate grave by the side of Turbak's tomb.[198] Hsö-Hum-Möng then appointed General Shenglung as Governor of the Kachārī country, which was then made into a new Ahom province, and sent a number of generals to assist him. Thus ended for the first time the last vestiges of the Kachārī kingdom.

There is mention in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle that in the winter of 1537 the vassal Koch king Bishu (Vishva Singha) and his minister Shishu (Shishva Singha) of the hill kingdom of Chiknā paid a customary visit to the Ahom capital to offer homage to Svargadev Hsö-Hum-Möng. They brought as presents to the suzerain 'two horses, one white and the other gray, a pictured girdle, a large spotted whisk, twenty white whisks, a chain of pearls and a string of coral beads'.[199]

Another important reference in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle is that Hsö-Hum-Möng made friendship with Rajā Chaomen of Manipur and offered to him a girl of the Lānmākhru family. In gratitude the Rajā in return sent to the Ahom monarch a Manipuri princess, who was received with honour.[200] There were also exchanges of valuable presents between the two kings.

At a later date the Kachārī nobles made representation to Hsö-Hum-Möng through the Chao Marangki (Marangikhowa Gohain) stating the semi-anarchical condition of the Kachārī country and praying for appointing the captive Kachārī Prince in the Ahom Court as a vassal king of their country under the Svargadev. The question was discussed by the king with his ministers who advised him to pacify the Kachārīs by granting their prayer. The Prince was then married to a lady of the Court and sent with his mother to Lakshindrapur where he was installed

198. *AB*, p.77.

199. *AB*, p.77. Here the *Deodhai Asam Buranji's* version that an embassy of two men were only sent to the Ahom court is obviously contradicted by the next statement after one sentence that Bishu himself prayed to the Ahom king saying "If I, your vassal, am protected in both adversity and prosperity I shall every year pay homage to you". See *DAB*, p.35.

200. *AB*, pp. 77-78, *DAB*, p.35.

as a feudatory prince of the Kachārī country under the title of Nirbhoynārāyaṇ.[201] It is not clear whether General Shenglung (Kan-Seng Barpātra-Gohain) still continued in the Kachārī capital as a Resident Governor, but it appears that his responsibility did not immediately cease of installation of the Kachārī Prince.

About May in the year 1537 Hsö-Hum-Möng did the disgraceful act of marrying a daughter of one *Sonāri* (goldsmith), a man of low social status, and making her his chief queen with the result that the heir-apparent Prince Hsö-Klen-Möng's mother left the palace and went to live at Charaideo. This caused a bitter difference between the king and his son Prince Hsö-Klen-Möng. The latter left his father's place and proceeded to live in the town of Garhgaon. The king sent for him several times, but Hsö-Klen refused to come to Dihing (Charaguā) to pay respects to his father on the ground that he could not pay the same respects to his low-born consort. On one occasion the king went to Bakatā and summoned Prince Hsö-Klen's mother and made her take an oath of fidelity in the name of the gods. This fact brought the matter to a head and Hsö-Klen became furious. He employed a group of men to kill off the king and one Kachārī amongst them managed to enter the king's bed chamber and stab him to death in A.D. 1539 in the month of *Dinshām* (Māgh or January-February). The assassin was afterwards arrested and executed as a dangerous element by Hsö-Klen-Möng himself.

Hsö-Hum-Möng, with all his enterprise and resounding successes in extending his dominions from the eastern extremity of the Brahmaputra valley to the Karatoya and the neighbourhood of Dacca, the greatest extent of territory ever acquired, failed at an advanced age to uphold the full dignity of his royal office owing to a sudden lapse of personal character. Besides other causes of dissatisfaction his passion for a girl of non-noble origin, whom he went so far as to raise to the status of the chief queen, disrupted his household leading to the tragic consequence of his own end at the hands of an assassin. But for this his glorious achievements in eliminating the powers of the two rival kingdoms, those of the Chutiyas and of the Kachārīs, and in repulsing the dreaded Muslim

201. *KB*, pp.19-20 ; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.22 ; *Wade* : *op. cit.*, p.68. *KB* (p.15) says Nirbhoynārāyaṇ's real name was Madan and both *KB* and *AB* - '*SMJC*', (p.20) say that the queen's name was Garamā, but her identity is a matter of controversy as already pointed out.

invasions with complete success are to be credited with laying the real foundation of the Ahom kingdom in Assam. He was the greatest conquerer among the Ahom monarchs. He also reorganized the social structure on the basis of clans and crafts and improved the defences of the country. Growing influence of the Brahmins and of the Vaiṣṇava reformation undertaken by Śrī Śankar Dev was another feature of his reign.

15. Hsö-Klen-Möng (1539-1552) :

After the assassination of his father the Tipām Rajā Hsö-Klen-Möng (Hsö-Klen-Hpā) ascended the throne in A.D. 1539 and made his capital at Garhgaon at the site of Hemenābārī for which he is also popularly called Garhganyā Rajā. In A.D. 1541, according to the *Deodhai Asam Buranji*, he appointed his brother Prince Hsö-Leng, the Shairing Rajā, as the Rajā of Tipam, second brother Prince Hsö-Teng, the Nāmrupia Rajā, as the Rajā of Shairing and the youngest brother Prince Hsö-Khring as the Rajā of Namrup under the title Prince Lān-Chāng. These arrangements were necessitated by the vacancy of the office of Rajā in Tipām when Hsö-Klen-Möng became king. The transfers made also caused a vacancy of the Rajā's office in the Province of Nāmrup to which the youngest brother, who was without that honour, was posted.

During Hsö-Klen-Möng's reign Lajan and Lāpet Chao-Phrang-Dām were successively Bura-Gohains ; and Ton-Khām Bar-Gohain was the Rājmantrī. Hsö-Klen-Möng did not favour the idea of having both *Chumdeo* and *Lakṣmi-Nārāyaṇ* deities representing two different faiths inside the palace. He therefore installed the *Chumdeo* in a separate temple outside the palace but inside the main Gate of the palace compound.

Chao Hsö-Klen-Möng at least thrice visited the Kachārī country between A.D. 1541 and 1544 for a fuller knowledge of the state of affairs in that country and for making arrangements in it for a more efficient administration. He first appointed Prince Hsö-Tām as the Governor of the Kachārī country (Chaolung Timā) at Dimāpur. He was later replaced by Prince Hsö-Leng, for he marched for action against the Chutiyas who had, in the meantime, made a sudden attack on General Hanan on the bank of the Disāng river killing him and carrying off his wife and son. The Chutiya country was devastated by the Ahom general as a reprisal during A.D. 1543-44 until he was called back by the king.

The petty chiefs called Bhuyans of the Kapili valley seem to have become turbulent and a threat to the smooth running of affairs of the Kachārī province. Chao Hsö-Klen-Möng then took action against them, transferred their abode nearer the capital and placed them under supervision. The Bāra Bhuyans then paid their homage to the Svargadev.

Conflicts With The Koches :

Three Koch princes,[202] Ramchandra, Dip Singha and Hemadhar, all brothers of Naranārāyaṇ, sailed up the Brahmaputra in A.D. 1546 with 3,000 Koches and after performing purficatory ablutions at Bhramarakunda[203] proceeded up to Salā in Nowgong where they encamped. The Koches there created an incident by seizing and taking away a boat with five men belonging to an Ahom officer called Bar-Handikoi.[204] This exposed the real purpose of the pilgrimage and there was at once an armed conflict between the Ahoms and the Koches. In the first phase of the war, which took place on the Dikrai, a number of Ahom generals fell with a large number of their troops at the hands of the Koch archers who collected at least 100 heads at Bharalimukh. The Ahoms unable to hold their ground, retreated in a disorderly manner and crossed to the south bank of the Brahmaputra. They rallied themselves at Karangā and proceeded by boats to Kaliabar, but from the latter place they were again driven back by the Koches to Salā where a bloody battle was fought. Ahoms used elephants against the Koches and defeated them.[205]

202. Gait writes that Vishva Singha 'married in one day eighteen wives according to *Gandharva* ceremony. Two of these wives came from Nepal, two from Kāmarūpa, one from Kashmira, four from Benares, three from Sonitapura (the modern Tezpur), two from Mithilā. Ten months later, each of his wives gave birth to a son, the names of whom were Nara Singha, Malla Deva, who was afterwards known as Naranārāyaṇ, Sukladhvaja, Gosain Kamalā, Maidan, Rāmchandra, Śura Singha, Māna Singha, Mecha, Vrishaketu, Rāma Nārāyaṇa, Ananta, Dipa Singha, Hemadhara, Megha Nārāyaṇa, Jagat, Chandra, and Sūrya'. - His *Koch Kings of Kāmarūpa*. Whether Vishva Singha really married his wives from so many different countries at a time or not, that he had some eighteen sons is a fact. According to *Kāmrūpar Burañji* (p.11) the names of his sons are first Mal and Śukla who were followed by sixteen others, namely, Gohain Kamal, Gohain Maidan, Gohain Rāmchandra, Gohain Śura Singha, Vriṣaketu, Rāmanārāyaṇ, Ananda, Digu Singha (?) probably Dipa Singha, Hemadhar, Meghnārāyaṇ, Jagat, Rupchand, Hari Singha, Mān Singha, Mecha and Sūryyasan.

203. in Darrang north of Odalguri. See *KBI*, map, p.123.

204. *AB* - '*SMJC*' p.30. H for S as pronounced.

205. *AB*, p.80; *DAB*, p.38.

Then there assembled at Jabakā by order of the king the veteran generals Prince Hsö-Leng and Shenglung with forces. In A.D. 1547 the Koches advanced to Nārāyaṇpur where they erected a fort. The Ahom generals then by a powerful pincer movement delivered onslaughts on both flanks of the enemies, with one column making a frontal attack. This appears to be the first major engagement at a place called Chāngini-mukh according to *AB* - '*SMJC*' (p. 30) in which the Koch prince Dipa Singha was killed. King Hsö-Klen-Möng himself with the Bura-Gohain followed the generals in the centre and arrived at the fort at Pichalā. At the same time Lān-Chāng (Prince Hsö-Khring) was put in charge of the war boats. The Koches then took the offensive and there was a fierce battle at Pichalā. Generals Hsö-Leng, Shenglung and all others surrounded the enemies, pressed them into the Pichalā river and massacred them winning a decisive victory.[206] Thereafter the king performed the *Rik-khan* ceremony.

There was a very violent earthquake in A.D. 1548 which threw up to the surface sands and ashes.

Hsö-Klen-Möng also intervened in a boundary dispute between the Shan *Sawbwa*, probably Sao-Sui-Kwei (1526-58) of the Narā country (Mogaung), and the Burmese and the former, whose family was related to the Ahom royal family of Assam, in a desire to maintain intact that age-old relationship and alliance, offered his daughter, Nāng-Tyep-Khām *alias* Chao-Sing, with valuable presents to Hsö-Klen-Möng who admitted her into his palace after formally marrying her according to the Tai-Ahom custom of *Chaklong*. This Shan Princess was unsurpassed in beauty and scholarship in Tai in the Ahom Court and it was at her suggestion that the city of Garhgaon was fortified with strong ramparts all around.[207] It was then called *Sè Hung*, City of Fame. The Chronicle also says that it was at her instance again that Hsö-Klen-Möng created the office of a third minister called Bàrpātra.[208] But the office of the *Shenglung*, otherwise called *Barpātra* or *Rājmantrī*, existed as early as the fifteenth century A.D. before Hsö-Hum-Möng became king.

206. *AB*, p.81 ; *DAB, ibid.*

207. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp.31-32. Some of these ramparts still exist in a rectangular form. There were inner walls and outer ramparts with moats. Total area covered within the innor walls is 1156 *bighās* or about 385 acres.

208. *Ibid.*, p.32. See also *AB*, p.53.

According to the Tai-Ahom Chronicle Hsö-Han-Hpā (1488-1493) appointed Phun-Long-Khām-peng Burā-Gohain as *Rājmantrī* in A.D. 1491. But Tāmuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji* (p.18) says with good reason that Phun-Long-Kham-peng was made *Rājmantrī* by Hsö-Pem-Hpā (1493-1497). Khām-peng is known to be the first *Shenglung* or *Rājmantrī* from the extant Ahom Buranjīs. Further all Buranjis say that the office of a third minister was created by Hsö-Hum-Möng for Kan-Seng, who was also made *Shenglung* i.e. *Barpātra* or *Rājmantrī*. Whatever the truth, there is no doubt that the Shan Princess of Hsö-Klen-Möng exercised considerable influence on him in the matter of improving the defences and administration of the kingdom and the king invariably accepted her learned advice. Her learning and physical charms endeared her most to the king who never offended her even with strong words. It was during her time that a Narā astronomer visited the Ahom Court at Garhgaon who was received with honour and given a suitable lodge by the king who gave him the title of Sāgar-Khari. This astronomer is said to have undertaken a census of the population of the province of Nāmrup.

In A.D. 1549 the Nagās of the village Bānchāng attacked the Nagas of Bānphā (Bānferā). The latter appealed to the Ahom king with an offer of a number of buffaloes, bisons (*Methon*) and hunting dogs for help. The king at once intervened in this inter-tribal feud in favour of the Bānphās and despatched the Burā-Gohain with a force to deal with the Bānchangias and ordered General Lān-Chāng to march to Mahang. The king himself moved on to Bānrui where he made his camp. The Burā-Gohain attacked the Bānchangias and defeated them and captured the Chief (*Khunbao*) Chaokingpong of the clan. The Nagā Chief with the spoils of the expedition was presented before the king. The Chief surrendered and peace was restored in the Nagā area.

In A.D. 1550 the Governor of Timā (i.e. Dimā or Kachārī province) died. In the same year died also Prince Hsö-Teng, the Governor or Rajā of Shairing, and a few other top-ranking officers. Hsö-Klen-Möng died in A.D. 1552 as a result of protracted illness for one year leaving behind two sons. Among his public works the most important were the excavation of the Garhgaon tank, the construction of the Nagā Āli which runs through the Gadhuli Bazār Mauzā of Sibsāgar from the Bar Āli to the Nagā Hills and the embankments at Kāhikuchi

and Chānginímukh.[209] The earliest extant Ahom coins bear a date corresponding to A.D. 1543, and were struck by Hsö-Klen-Möng.[210]

16. Hsö-Khām-Hpā (1553-1603) :

On the death of Chao Hsö-Klen-Möng his son Hsö-Khām-Hpā ascended the throne of Assam in A.D. 1553. Earlier he was hurt in one of his legs while he journeyed on an elephant. As he walked with a slightly limping gait from its effect he was popularly known as Khorā Rajā.[211] It is known from two manuscript records[212] that his chief queen Bar Mechlow of Assamese Buranjis or more properly *Mè Shao* (or Assamese *Gābharu*) was the daughter of Ton-Khām Bar-Gohain and his Parbatiā Kunwarī, called Saru Mechlow (younger *Mè Shao*) was the daughter of Leshāng Gohain of Māduri. They were not the daughters of a Sonārī (goldsmith) as described by Kashinath Tamuli Phukan (*Assam Buranjī*, p.24). A daughter of a goldsmith named Kāchan or Kāchanmatī was a female attendant of the chief queen Bar Mechlow and, after her death in A.D. 1577 (*Lākni Rungkeo*), of Haru Mechlow. When the latter died in A.D. 1579 the king was enamoured of her and took her as his queen and soon made her the chief queen. This young queen of non-royal origin exercised great influence on the king who married her in his advanced age. She having no son adopted a boy named Nāhar as her son, but the latter was suspected to be actually her paramour whom she wanted to make the king's successor. She played the part of Princess Regent, Śrī Suḍā Cāṇ, of the Siamese Court who flourished in the same century. Nāhar, who wanted to pose as a real prince, extracted from the queen the indulgence to construct a high road and a tank[213] in his name. The road he made connected Mahang with Garhgaon and is called Nāhar Ali and the tank was excavated near Barhāt. He made a garden also called Nāharbārī in Jaypur. He also did many other things which amounted to usurpation of royal authority. The queen also offended the nobles and ministers by false accusations against some of

209. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.99 ; K.T.P. *op.cit.*, pp.23-24.

210. *Ibid*, p.99 ; see also *Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet, Assam* ed. by A.W. Botham. vide sec. *XXXIV*, and Ed. 1930.

211. K.T.P. *op.cit.* p.24.

212. quoted by Shri Ardheswar Gogoi in his valuable article entitled *Sonārī Kunwarī āru Nāhar* to *Natun Asamiya* of 28 October 1958.

213. in Sibsāgar, now known as Nāhar Āli and Nāhar Pukhurī.

them and got the king's son and heir-apparent removed to Revatī village on a got-up charge. Many were killed at her behest. The nobles of the Court took a serious view of Nāhar's conduct and when it became extreme they, with the king's permission, put him to death at the principal gate of Garhgaon. The queen in grief then committed suicide. This unhappy series of events happened in the last part of the king's long reign.

Within a year of Hsö-Khām-Hpā's accession a group of seven princes and Lāpet, son of the Shenglung and Lāshāmpeng, son of the reputed general Shenbā, rose in rebellion against him. The rebels were soon rounded up and put into prison but, on the intercession of Bar-Gohain Ton-Khām for mercy, were let off with necessary warnings. In A.D. 1559 they rebelled again, but this time they were all captured and executed.

Vishva Singha's Expedition To Assam :

From the first establishment of the Koch king Vishva Singha as tributary to Assam embassies had been regularly sent by him to the Ahom Court carrying annual tributes. But in a period of two decades he extended his conquests far and wide. He conquered a large part of Bhutan and was about to storm the capital when the Deva and Dharma Rajās sued for peace and agreed to pay tributes annually to the Koch monarch. It was also further agreed that the Deva Rajā would help him with troops in times of war and the administration of affairs in Bhutān would be carried on under his orders.[214] The Khen dynasty ended with the death of Nilāmbar and the country of Kamatā and Kāmarupa was then split up into innumerable small areas which were ruled by petty Bhuyan chiefs most of whom were Brahmins. Vishva Singha subdued these Bhuyans right up to the eastern limits of Kamatā-Kāmarūpa. One Pratāp Rai, a powerful Bhuyan of Pandu, fled to the Ahom capital for refuge when Vishva Singha advanced to his district and conquered both South and North Kāmarūpa. *The Darrang Rāj Vaṁśāvalī* by Suryyakhari gives an account of how the Bhuyans of Kāmarūpa were subdued by Vishva Singha.

Next he turned his arms towards Bengal when Selim Shah, son of Sher Shah, was the Emperor of Delhi, and Bengal, as a independent

214. *The Cooch Behar State* : p.228.

State, was under Muhammad Khan or Muhammad Shah (A.D. 1552-54) of the Sur tribe who was a relation of the Emperor.[215] Vishva Singha reduced to submission the country of Gaur except perhaps the capital and annexed the western part of the modern Jalpaiguri district. He even settled at Bykunthapur (Jalpaiguri) in that district. He removed his capital from Mount Chiknā to Hingulavasha on the plains and consolidated his kingdom and settled in it Brahmins from Mithilā. K.L. Barua refers to *Behulā Upākhyan* as saying that Vishva Singha became first known as the Lord of Kamatā or Kamateswar and subsequently removed his capital to Koch Behār where he built a fine city. Thus being strong he neglected to send tributes to the Ahom king with former regularity and the latter wanted to know why it was so. Vishva Singha felt it to be a humiliation and just to remove this stigma of vassalage made preparations for war and sailed up the Brahmaputra as far as Śingari-parbat in Darrang. But as the provisions were exhausted at that place he retreated with his army to his country Koch Behār without having any clash with the Ahoms.[216]

Soon after that he fell ill and before his death he invited his sons to his bed-side and expressed his desire to annex the beautiful and prosperous country of Assam,. Now as he was ill and had no hope of survival he asked his sons to conquer that country and remove the humiliation of being tributary to the Ahom king. He also selected his second son Naranārāyaṇ to succeed him and his third son Sukladhvaj *alias* Chilārai to be the commander-in-Chief of the Koch army. He directed his eldest son Narasingha to rule the hill country of Bhutan.[217] He died in A.D. 1554.[218] Naranārāyaṇ[219] ascended the throne in the year 45 *Rāja Śaka* (A.D. 1555). The eldest brother Narasingha or Nri Singha relinquished it, being bound, it is said, by the words of his blessings namely, 'you will be the queen-consort', offered earlier to Naranārāyaṇ's wife.[220] Parganā

215. Stewart : *History of Bengal*, pp.145-6; S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, p.76
216. H.S.B. : *op. cit.*, pp.30-31.
217. *Ibid*, p.31. Narasingha was probably a Resident Prince to superintend and control the affairs of Bhutan under Deva Rajā.
218. Vishva Singha is said to be still alive immerged in meditation (*Yoga*) in a mountain above Mt. Chiknā. (see *Yoginī Tantra, Patal* XIII, *Sloka* 170).
219. He was called also Malla Dev or Malla Nārāyaṇ as he was plysically very strong and a wrestler.
220. *Rājopakhyana*, Part II, Chap.I, pp.29-30 as quoted in *The Cooch Behar State*.

Pāngā, which forms part of the District of Rangpur, was set apart for his maintenance, and his family dwelt there. Both gold and silver coins were struck and issued by Mahārajā Naranārāyaṇ and were called *Nārāyṇī* or *Nārāyaṇī* coins. These coins (*Nārāyaṇī Rupees*) had on one side the name of Mahādeva, and on the other, the name of Śrī Śrī Mahārajā Naranārāyaṇ, both in Deva-nāgarī character. A few of them, still preserved by the government, bear the date 1477 *Śak* or A.D. 1555 which shows that Naranārāyaṇ became king in that year. For according to the custom of the Koch Behār family *nazars* have to be given by the officers and subjects to the new king in coins so struck at his coronation.[221]

Not long after his accession the Muslims of Gaur invaded the Koch territories and Naranārāyaṇ had to organize a large army composed of Koch and Bhutanese troops and also of Rajput, Mughal and Pathan mercenaries and send it with Śukladhvaja as the Commander-in-Chief against the aggressors. The Koch general defeated and drove off the Muslims as far as the Ganges.

Naranārāyaṇ also granted *Brahmottar* lands to many Brahmins under his seal of the *Singha Chhāpa*. He and Śukladhvaj also rebuilt the temple of Kāmākhyā after its destruction by Kālāpāhār? Śaktism was the state religion, but Vaishṇavism was tolerated.

In A.D. 1555 an expedition was sent by the king with the Shairing Rajā, the Bar-Gohain and the Burā-Gohain (Chao-Phuphrang) as generals against the Nagās of Hātikhok. One detachment led by the Shairing Rajā and the Bar-Gohain (Thao-Monglung) advanced towards the Nagā village called Īton. The Hātīkhokia Nagās retreated by the Tilao (Lohit river) leaving behind their women and children and the Ītonias fled to Pāpuk. The Ahom forces pursued them and reached Pāpuk. All Nagas fled into the interior area of Khāmteng. In the meantime the Bar-Gohain fell ill and was carried back. The Nagas assembled at Khāmteng and made an attack on the Bar-Gohain on the hill Tadaibungmung and captured him by killing his men. But two Ahom princes Chao Hsö-Bān and Chao Shām-Chu with their troops

221. *The Cooch Behar State*, p.230.

speedily marched to the scene, fell upon the Nagās and put them to rout. The Bar-Gohain was freed and conveyed to the capital.[222]

New Appointments Of Ministers :

In A.D. 1557 the famous general Kan-Seng Barpātra-Gohain and the Burā-Gohain died. The king appointed Chao Aikhek as Bura-Gohain and Rājmantrī under the title of Chao Shāng-Rai and Kan-Seng's son Klan-Jāng was made Barpatra-Gohain (Shenglung).[223]

After his accession Mahārajā Naranārāyaṇ of Koch Behār sent an embassy[224] to the Ahom Court at Garhgaon conveying the usual homage and goodwill, which had been the practice ever since Vishva Singha's installation as tributary to the Ahoms. But Naranārāyaṇ also communicated through the embassy his complaint that the Ahoms, in utter disregard of the old friendship between the two countries, had killed his brother Dīp Singha when the latter with two other brothers had been on a pilgrimage to the east. The Burā-Gohain Āi-Khek, who was asked by the king to receive the ambassadors, not only found fault with the latter's etiquette, but also made very adverse comments on the manners and customs of the Koches in reply to a few questions asked by one of the ambassadors. Futher he told them with a firm tone that if they maintained the friendship ignoring such incidents among *Kshatriyas* it would be to their good. This was the first cause of tension between the Koches and the Ahoms.

Aolā Bhuyan's Invasion :

One Aolā Bhuyan,[225] probably a Bhuyan chief earlier removed from the Kapili valley to Sibsāgar by Hsö-Klen-Möng, escaped to the

222. *AB*, pp.82-83 ; *DAB*, p.40.

223. *AB*, p.83; *DAB*, p.40. Here Tāmuli Phukan's statement that Ai-Khek and Klan-Jāng became Burā-Gohain and Barpatra-Gohain resectively during Hsö-Klen-Möng's reign is evidently wrong and was a result of confusion. See his *Assam Buranjī*, p.24.

224. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.34-36. The members of the embassy were four, namely, Udbhanda Chauliya, Shyamrai Chauliya, Kālketu Sardar and Dhumā Sardar, who were accompanied by 22 Dhekeris. The embassy carried a letter from the Koch Rajā and presents it to the Ahom Court.

225. Aluya Bhuyan of *DAB* (pp.40-41); *AB*, p.84. Aolā is also another name for Viśvanāth on the north bank of the Brahmaputra (see *AB*, p.61). Hence the invader may be a Bhuyan or local chief of Viśvanāth.

Bhuyan country down beyond the territory of the Ahom kingdom and planned with another chief, said to be a grandson of Pratāp Rai, for the invasion of the kingdom. They sailed upstream the Brahmaputra in A.D. 1560 with a force as far as Dikhaumukh where they made their encampment. An Ahom army led by the Bar-Gohain Ton-Khām, Burā-Gohain Chao Shāng-Rai and Klan-Jāng Barpātra-Gohain made a fierce attack on the invaders at that place and completely defeated them. Thereafter the king constructed a fort with strong ramparts at Bukā (present Bukākhāt in the Golāghat Sub-Division) to the west of the Dhanśirī and also strengthened the defences of Salā.

First Invasion of Assam by Tepu :

Tepu was some chief or general under the Koch king Naranārāyaṇ. He made repeated incursions into the Ahom territories between A.D. 1562 and 1571. The first incursion was a reply to an accusation made by the Ahoms that the Koches had been raiding villages in violation of the Ahom territory in the course of their operations against the Kachārīs.[226] Thus in A.D. 1562 a Koch army under Tepu proceeded with a fleet of boats up the Brahmaputra reaching first Salā and then Dikhaumukh. When this report reached the capital the Shairing Rajā, the Bar-Gohain-Ton-Khām, Burā-Gohain Ai-Khāk[227] and Barpātra-Gohain Klang Jāng marched with a force to fight the enemy. After a brief engagement in which some men of the Ahom force were killed by the enemy's bullets the latter retreated to the north bank and encamped at Hārhimukh in the present North Lakhimpur Sub-Division. A detachment of the Ahoms pursued them right down to that place. There was an engagement at Hārhimukh in which the Ahoms were worsted and a number of their officers were killed. The Chronicle makes no mention of any of the chief Ahom generals having gone over to Hārhimukh. Tepu returned to his country without any tangible success.

Koch Invasion Of Assam :

When the Koch embassy returned from the Ahom Court and submitted its report on the imperious attitude of the Ahom minister in dealing

226. *DAB*, p.42; also Gait : *op.cit.*, p.100.

227. He is more known by this name than Chao Shāng-Rai.

with it Naranārāyaṇ decided upon the conquest of Saumār, which was Eastern Assam forming the Ahom kingdom at that time. Naranārāyaṇ is said to have taken this decision after having ruled for about five years,[228] that is A.D. 1560 which also indicates the date of the embassy's visit to Garhgaon, the Ahom capital. The Koch king then directed his brother Gohain Kamalā to construct a road just south of the Bhutan boundary and north of the Ahom territories all along the north bank of the Brahmaputra for the Koch army to march. The road was constructed by levelling the high and low lands and, when the work was completed, it stretched from Behār to Nārāyaṇāpur in Hābung in the present North Lakhimpur Sub-Division.[229] According to *Śrī Śrī Svarganārāyaṇdev Mahārajār Janma Charitra* (in *AB*-'*SMJC*', p.36) the road passing by the side of Juria reached as far as the great Dhal river near the Kumatiya which forms the eastern boundary of the North Lakhimpur Sub-Division. It seems the road ran mostly through uninhabited areas of those days and was completed in about two years' time. Further it must have been constructed in an unspectacular manner and without any fuss or demonstration of enmity towards the Ahoms, otherwise the whole project would have been nipped in the bud by the latter. When by the end of 1562 the army and the road were ready, both Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai[230] started with a large army[231] for invading the Ahom kingdom. All the Bhuyans joined them and, in addition, the Koch king secured the collaboration of the Bhutanese and the Daphlās who supplied him with large reinforcements. The vast combined army headed by the renowned Koch general Chilārai moved forward along the newly built road, which was called *Gohain Kamalār Āli*, and reached Nārāyaṇpur on the north bank in the Sub-Division of North Lakhimpur where the local Brahmin Bhuyan presented an elephant to Naranārāyaṇ and joined him against

228. K. L. Barua, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

229. *Kāmrūpar Burañjī* p.12.

230. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.38; *AB*, (p.85) mentions 'the Koch king invading our country' in *Lākni Mungrao* i.e. A.D. 1565. K.L. Barua says that according to the *Darrang Rāj Vansavali* also the Koch army was led by Naranārāyaṇ and his brother Śukladhvaj. It is said that Chilārai had patches of *leucodermis* throghout his whole body for which he was called Śukladhvaj, but they all vanished except in the navel on his dedicating a *math* for the installation of the god *Śree Sūryya*. See *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.38.

231. According to *AB* - '*SMJC*', (p.36) 600,000 men, which, if it means the regular army, appears to be an exaggerated figure.

232. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp.38-39.

the Ahoms. Then they all advanced to Chinātali and made their camp near Juria in the Hābung country.[232]

At the approach of the Koch army the Hābung Brahmins, who knew the Koch royal family to be most pious and respectful to Brahmins, rode on cows by prominently exhibiting the sacred lines on their foreheads and raising the sacred threads up on their ears in order to save their lives from the invaders. Many Śūdras also made a similar demonstration in imitation of the Brahmins to escape from the enemy's attacks.[233] Some accounts say that knowing the sentiments of the Hinduized Koch Princes who would never shed Brahmin blood the Ahom king sent forward an army of Śūdras dressed as Brahmins and riding on cows. Seeing the Brahmin army before him Chilārai retreated without striking. But later, learning that he had been outwitted by the Ahoms by this ruse, Chilārai marched again in A.D. 1563 with a large force against them.[234] He crossed to the south bank of the Dihing (the Brahmaputra) from Hābung opposite Dikhaumukh and fought and drove the Ahoms back in a series of engagements for seven days. Chaoring Aikhring was the Ahom Commander-in-Chief appointed by the king and was ordered to defend the fort at the mouth of the Sessā river which falls into the Burī Dihing not far from the Brahmaputra. With him was placed the Tipām Rajā Hsö-Leng (or Hsö-Reng), who was the king's uncle and named by the Hindus Deo Rajā and by the Deodhais Phichao.[235] He had soon to come down to oppose the enemy.

As a warrior Deo Rajā was as powerful as his adversary Chilārai whose further advance he effectively checked. But when one day during this campaign the Deo Rajā put off his amulet for bathing it was snatched away by a kite and dropped amidst Chilārai's army. Considering it to be a curse of God he left the campaign and proceeded to Shairing (Sāring), his old demesne, where he made a grave and voluntarily entered it with his followers.[236] The grave still stands and is called

233. *Ibid*, p.39.

234. K.T.P.: *op.cit.*, p.25; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.32.

235. *AB*, p.26. Hsö-Leng, second son of Hsö-Hum-Möng, was first Shairing Rajā and afterwards Tipām Rajā under Hsö-Klen-Möng. The youngest brother Prince Hsö-Khring was called Dop Rajā by the Hindus.

236. K.T.P. : p.26.

Deo Rajā Maidām. His disappearance from the battle-field cleared the way for Chilārai who then pushed forward to Mechāgarh and encamped there with Naranārāyaṇ in the month of April in 1563. The place is said to have been named Mechāgarh (*garh*, fort) or Mechāghar (*ghar*, house) from the bent (mechā) roof of the camp house that Chilārai built at it. It is also said that the Koches excavated a tank there with spears and bow ends[237].

In the meantime the province of Marangi was devastated by the Koches after overrunning the Kachārī territory. Another Koch army under General Tepu advanced up the Brahmaputra to attack the strategic Ahom fort at Dihing. Hsö-Khām-Hpā sent couriers to communicate his stern orders to its garrison not to leave the fort on any account. But before the couriers could reach the place the garrison deserted the fort under enemy pressure and retreated to Abhoipur.

These riverses coupled with the encampment of the powerful Koches in the vicinity made it untenable for Hsö-Khām-Hpā to continue any longer in the capital and so he left it with all his officers and armed forces for the Nām-Chāin Hill, from where he entered the Nagā Hill for refuge and stayed at Klang-doi Hill for three months.[238] The king's absence demoralized the population of the undefended capital with the result that many people including a prince called Tāmul-Nukhuā Gohain went over to the Koches, who also received from them supplies for the army. The prince was treated as a brother by Naranārāyaṇ and was honoured with presents. The Bhuyans, who were under the control of the Ahoms, immediately sided with the Koches against the Ahoms. Garhgaon itself was occupied by the victorious Koches.

There was thus a collapse of the defences on all fronts. Hence the king in his hill refuge held a council of the officers and generals and decided to make peace overtures with the Koch king. Hsö-Khām-Hpā

237. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.39. This does not appear to be the main tank called *Mechāgarh Pukhuri*, for that the latter was excavated by Hsö-Hseng-Hpā (Pratāp Singha) and dedicated to the God of Heaven (Lengdon) by sacrificing buffaloes and cows according to Ahom customs is described in the same Buranjī. (See p.61).

238. *AB*, p.87. It is said the Ahom king caused an iron goat to be made and sent to Naranārāyaṇ saying that if he could sever the head by one stroke he should have his kingdom. When Naranārāyaṇ succeeded with a sharp sword to sever it, the king knew his prowess and left for the hills leaving the kingdom to him.

then deputed as envoy Chao-Phuphrang Ai-Khek[239] with valuable presents consisting of gold and silver vessels and a jar to meet Rajā Naranārāyaṇ, who was then at Mājuli, and negotiate for peace. The result of the peace talks was that the Koch Rajā agreed to go back if hostages named by him be given by 'the Udaygiri Rajā' (the king of the East by which the Ahom king was meant) as also the best elephant named Khāmring and the swiftest horse Pakshirai possessed by him. Unable to resist the Koch power the Ahom king yielded to the demand. Among the hostages were the three sons of the three Gohains, and the Bar-Gohain Ton-Khām's nephew named Āpasu Gohain *alias* Sundar Gohain.[240] The Bar-Gohain's son Chaopet was brought from, Tiru, but he was accompanied by his mother, Chaoshao Nāngbu,[241] who was the daughter of the late great sovereign Hsö-Hum-Möng and aunt of Chao Hsö-Khām-Hpā. She protested against her son being sent to the down country, Koch Behār. She severely reprimanded the king and her husband for acknowledging defeat at the hands of the Koches who should not have been any match for them and demanded the general's uniform to fight the enemy. Referring to the king she said 'Why should he reign when he is unable to save his subjects from the enemies'. She then wrenched her son away with the remark 'My son can be offered as a hostage only when the current of the river Dikhau can be reversed'. The king and the nobles, because of their moral weaknesses, dared not interfere with the action of this respected and energetic lady. The king then ordered his brother Prince Hsö-Gām to go in place of Chaopet.[242] The Burā-Gohain presented to the Koch king at the latter's Mājuli camp the hostages, of whom Āpasu Gohain was the chief, and also the five cubits high elephant Khāmring and the horse Pakshirai as demanded. At a test

239. mention of Chao-Phuphrang (Burā-Gohain) Ai-Khek here in the Tai-Ahom text, contrary to the account in *AB* - '*SMJC*', (p.36), shows that he was in office till after this great Koch invasion. There is no reason to doub tit as his name is specifically mentioned as an envoy who was alone entrusted with the responsibility of negotiating peace with the Koch king.

240. K.T.P. : p.26. *Āpasu* means ugly, but actually he was most handsome for which he was referred to as Sundar Gohain by the people of Koch Behār and since then he became known by the latter name. In some Buranjīs Āpasu is distorted into Ākasu.

241. *Chaoshao* is *gābharudeo* in Assamese, a respectable term of address applied to the wife of an Ahom of high descent, usually a Gohain. *Nāng*, lady, woman *bu* a lotus. In *DAB*, the name is Nangblak' *blak* meaning a flower which appears to be the translator's or copyist's distortion of the original.

242. *AB*, p.87-88 ; *DAB*, p.44.

fight the five-cubit Khāmring defeated Chilarai's elephant Śukladhvaj famous for its height of seven cubits.[243] Khāmring was then returned to the Ahom king.

The great consequence of this war was, as Gait points out in his *Koch Kings of Kāmarupa*, that the Ahom king agreed to acknowledge himself a feudatory of Naranārāyaṇ. In that year of Koch victory, records the Tai-Ahom Chronicle, all the tributes were paid to the Koch king.[244] Three officers named Ujir Bāmun, Tapasvi Laskar and Mālā-mulyā Laskar were also appointed by the Koch king as governors (Rāj-khowas) of the provinces near the river Brahmaputra on the north bank.[245]

Having subjugated Assam Naranārāyaṇ marched back with the hostages. But Chilārai, with the intention of proceeding to Hiḍamba, forced a large number of men of Assam skilled in crafts to accompany him. This unfriendly act of Chilārai after the settlement of peace not only displeased the Ahom authorities but also undermined their confidence in the Koch king.[246] Both Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai first proceeded to Morang (probably Marangi) and thence to Demerā. For the Demeria (or Dimarua) Chief Pantiswar sought the protection of Naranārāyaṇ against the depredations of the Kachārīs and became tributary to him. Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai reduced to submission the Kachārī Rajā of Hiḍimba and the Rajā of Manipur without a war, but fought and killed the Rajās of Jayantā, Tipperā and Sylhet.[247] Viryya-vanta, the Chief of Khairam,[248] voluntarily submitted when he heard of Naranārāyaṇ's prowess and sought permission to mint coins in his name. But Naranārāyaṇ said 'stamp coins in my name only, not in your name' and, when the Chief agreed he presented him with a mint of his own for the purpose.[249] The coins minted were of silver. It is an instance of how Nārāyaṇī coins circulated in countries outside Koch Behār proper. It seems they were current sometime or other in all the

243. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.40.
244. *AB*, p.88.
245. *DAB*, p.44; *AB*, p.80.
246. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.40.
247. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.43; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.40; *KB*, p.12.
248. Rajā of Khairam is said to be a Gāro in *Kāmrupar Buranjī*, p.12. But the present Khāsis were also sometimes referred to in some Buranjīs as Gāros. The reason is not known.
249. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp.40, 45 ; *KB*, p.12.

Koch dominions. After conquering the hill States and subduing the petty chiefs of the south bank and settling the tributes to be paid by them Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai crossed the Lohitya (the Brahmaputra) to the north bank from Pandu in Gauhati. Finding the bracelet-like bend of the river at Hajo they ordered their men to excavate a straight canal connecting the two ends of the great bend which they did with their spears, swords and digging tools. The main current of the river then took the course of the canal and the Hajo current shri-velled up into a rill.[250] Both the brothers then went to Koch Behār crossing the Lauhitya at Karoibāri.

Naranārāyaṇ was not allowed to reign in peace by the Muslims who made repeated incursions into the Koch territories. According to Stewart in A.D. 1569 Soliman Shah Kerany, Sultan of Bengal, invaded and plun-dered Koch Behār.[251] Again in A.D. 1578 one Hossein Kooly Khan[252] is said to have forced the Rajā of Koch Behār to pay tribute and acknow-ledge himself as a vassal of the Mughul Empire.[253] In some Buranjis it is said that sometime after the Assam campaign the Koch Rajā pro-ceeded to fight against Gaur (called also Bāre Bangalā) but the Koches were defeated and Chilārai taken prisoner and kept in captivity by the king of Gaur.[254] The king, who so defeated the Koches and captured the Commander-in-Chief, was probably Soliman Shah Kerany (or Sulai-man Kararani) who, after devastating some of the Koch territories, besieged the capital itself and would have destroyed it had he not to abandon it and proceed to put down an insurrection in Orissa. The Koch power of fighting greatly diminished when their redoubtable general Chilārai was removed from the scene and Naranārāyaṇ passed his days in great anxieties. Having passed about one year in captivity without any hope

250. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.40.
251. Stewart : *History of Bengal*, p.150. It is wellknown that the Kararani Sultans of Bengal ruled from A.D. 1564 to 1576. Sulaiman Kararani, Governor of South Bihar, who acknowledged the suzerainty of Akbar, was also the Sultan of Bengal in A.D. 1572. He must have therefore led his expedition against Koch Behar when Taj Khan Kararani (1564-72) was the ruler of Bengal with capital in Gaur. Sulaiman is said to have removed his capital from Gaur to Tanda in U.P.
252. to be distinguished from Hussain Quli Khan, a contemporary of Siraj-ud-daulah.
253. Stewart : *op. cit.*, p. 166. The Koch Behar Chronicles are said to be silent on these two Muslim invasions.
254. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.14; *KB*, 12. This Koch-Muslim war is omitted in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle.

of early release and apprehending an invasion of the Koch kingdom by the Ahoms at any moment Chilārai sent a message to Naranārāyaṇ advising the latter to send back the Ahom hostages and to promote friendship with Assam at this hour of adversity.[255] In appreciation of this prudent suggestion Naranārāyaṇ decided to release the hostages, but without betraying his real weaknesses. He therefore hit upon a plan and invited Sundar Gohain to a game of dice betting that if the latter could win all the hostages would be released. Sundar won by nineteen to twenty. Naranārāyaṇ then rewarded him for his success and allowed the hostages to return to their country sending with them a number of men of his own country, mostly artisans, such as goldsmiths. When they reached Garhgaon these men from Koch Behar were settled in a particular area called thenceforth *Bhatiapār* and the goldsmith and blacksmiths who came with them became known as *Bhatia Sonāri* and *Bhatia Kamār*.[256]

At Gaur Chilārai is said to have cured the pādshāh's mother, who was about to die from snake-bite. Since then Chilārai became a great favourite of the Pādshāh's family and was even married there and entrusted with certain responsible functions of the Court. Meanwhile Naranārāyaṇ advanced with a force to release him. According to the account in the *Śrī Śrī Svarganārāyaṇdev Mahārajār Janma Charitra* Chilarai, who had a secret understanding with Naranārāyaṇ, obtained the Pādshāh's permission to take his army under a false pretence to fight his brother the Koch king, who had deprived him of his share of the kingdom. Chilārai thus led the Pādshāh's army away and joined his brother. Both then attacked and subjugated Gaur and the Pādshāh fled from the capital. Thereafter Chilārāi was referred to by the title of Sangrām Singha.[257] If this story can be trusted then this Koch conquest of Gaur must have been the real cause why Sulaiman Kararani had to transfer his capital from Gaur to Tāndā in the present Uttar Pradesh whatever other excuses for it might be cited.

In the Chronicle *Śrī Śrī Svarganārāyaṇ Maharajar Janma Charitra* it is indicated that by the time Chilārai sent the massage to Naranārāyaṇ

255. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp.32, 45.
256. *Ibid*, p.45; Transcript 84 (*DHAS*), vol.II. Part I, pp.1-6.
257. *Ibid* p.43.

from his prison at Gaur advising the latter to release the Ahom hostages Hsö-Khām-Hpā had died and Hsö-Shen-Hpā (Pratāp Singha) ascended the throne at Garhgaon. But it cannot be reconciled with the date of Hsö-Khām-Hpā's death, that is, A.D. 1603, and Naranārāyaṇ's period of reign which was from *Rāja Śaka* 45 to 78 corresponding to A.D. 1555-1587. If Chilārai was in captivity at Gaur from A.D. 1569 to 1570 when he sent his message, then the hostages must have been released by A.D. 1571 at the latest, when in the Ahom kingdom Hsö-Khām-Hpā was ruling and not Hsö-Shen-Hpā who ascended the throne in A.D. 1603.

Both the Ahoms and the Koches had been friendly nations since the time of Vishva Singha and the latter owed a great deal to the sacrifice of the Ahoms in founding his greatness. The Ahoms never contemplated any invasion of the Koch territories even when Naranārāyaṇ neglected to pay his tributes fully and regularly. There was nothing to displease the Koch king except a few castigating replies given by a minister of the Ahom Court to an improper and irrelevant set of questions asked by the Koch ambassadors. The common enemies of both the Koches and the Ahoms were the Muslims who had already established their domination in the neighbouring country of Gaur and had shown what they could do by the devastations carried out in Nilāmbar's Kamatā. Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai being elated by Vishva Singha's temporary conquests of parts of Gaur thought themselves too strong for their Muslim neighbours and so started for breaking the power of the Ahoms in the east. The Koch-Ahom combined strength, which had served as a bulwark against the steadily growing Muslim menace, was disrupted by Naranārāyaṇ's short-sighted policy and it was not too long for him to reap the consequences of this political miscalculation when the fearful impact of Muslim expansion overwhelmed the Koch kingdom in the years that followed leading to the break-down of its power in the very next generation.

Lesser Invasions :

During the period from A.D. 1564 to A.D. 1566 there were a number of lesser invasions of the Ahom territories. First, the Chutiyas started their predatory activities in Nāmruk and Kherām which had to be dealt with. At the same time, a Dhekeri Rajā, named Paman, or Pavan invaded the Ahom territories on the north bank. Hsö-Khām-Hpā sent, among others, the Burā-Gohain, the Barpātra-Gohain and the Sadiyakhowa-

Gohain against him. In the battle of Mûrābhagā (or Moorābagor), a place famous for a temple of Kāmākhya,[258] a great number of enemies fell dead and the Dhekeri Rajā fled on an elephant. Being chased by the Ahoms he fled away on a horse leaving the elephant, horses and guns and then sailed down to his country. All the animals and war weapons that he had left behind were collected by the Ahoms. Another chieftain called Dhelā Rajā invaded the Ahom territory but he was captured. Tepu again appeared in A.D. 1565 as an invader, but was defeated with heavy losses. The Ahoms gained many war-boats, guns and other things belonging to the enemy. The Thaomung Bongen (the Sadiyakhowa-Gohain) died in A.D. 1570. In A.D. 1571 another chieftain, Bhitarual, and Tepu sailed up the Brahmaputra to the mouth of the Nām-Timā (the Dhanśiri) to attack the Ahom territory. The king, with the Shairing Rajā and his three ministers, fell upon them killing innumerable Koch soldiers and forcing the rest with their chiefs to retire hastily. The Ahoms gathered large boats, guns and other weapons left behind by the enemies. Then two Nagās named Pungbāng and Pungkhu created trouble, but they were soon captured and brought to the king. In A.D. 1572 the king was capturing elephants at the mouth of the river Tibang (the Dibong). This might have caused a friction with the local Chutiyas, referred to as Mataks also. The Sāring Rajā and the Sadiyakhowa-Gohain proceeded with a force to fight with their Senāpati (chieftain), but as the Ahom force approached the latter fled to Kānchai. The Nagās of Īton again revolted in 1573, but were put down after defeating them at Kherām. In A.D. 1574 there was an epidemic of small-pox throughout the country which took a heavy toll of life.

Narā Expedition :

In the beginning of *Lāknī Khutmit* or A.D. 1575 the Narā Rajā, referred to also by the people of Assam as the king of the East, fled to Khām-Jāng (or Khām-Yāng) as the Burmese invaded his country and devastated it.[259] The Narā Rajā mentioned in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle was the Mogaung *Sawbwa* Sao-Kaa-Hpā II (1564-83) who waged the most formidable war against the greatest Burmese conqueror and king

258. Wade says that this temple is greatly frequented by the mountaineers as well as by the inhabitants of Upper Assam. See *His Geographical Sketch of Assam*, p.13, appended to *Account of Assam*.

259. *DAB*, p.48 : *AB*, p.92.

Bayin-Naung (1551-81) of the Toungoo dynasty who was crowned at Pegu 'with the greatest ceremonial'. Mogaung was already conquered by an army despatched by Bayin-Naung in A.D. 1556 (Shan *Lākli-Rungmaw* 28) and made its *Sawbwa Sao*-Sui-Kwei a tributary chief.[260]

At the time Narā Rajā made his camp at Khām-Jāng being driven from his kingdom by the Burmese, the Bar-Gohain Ton-Khām, the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain were busy constructing the fort (*garh*) of Pangrao (Pengerā). Hence Hsö-Klen-Hpā sent with some other officers one thousand gold *mohurs* to the helpless fugitive Rajā of Narā.[261] He also asked for the sister of the Narā Rajā in marriage and sent for the bride customary presents with those officers. The Narā Rajā favourably responded and sent his sister with a dowry of elephants, horses, attendants and other things. A few days after that the Narā Rajā further retreated towards Assam and came to Īton where he halted.[262]

The very next year (1576) Hsö-Khām-Hpā sent his emissaries to contact the Narā Rajā's daughter, Princess Jesuk,[263] and persuade her to come over to his palace at Garhgaon. Coming to know of this secret and scandalous communication at the instance of the Ahom king, who had married his sister only a year back, the Narā Rajā was extremely offended as such a connection was unprecedented in the history of the family and, in rage, captured and severed with an axe the chests of two of the emissaries who visited his place with such an evil purpose and gave over their livers to crows and kites, the third having escaped to inform the king of the action taken by the Narā Rajā.[264] As an immediate sequel to this rupture with the king of Assam 'the king of the East' (Narā Rajā) invaded the latter's territory and devastated the districts of Rurām, Kherām and Nāmrup killing the son of Chaolung Rurām.

According to the Tai-Ahom texts and the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* Hsö-Khām-Hpā sent an army with the Tipām Rajā, Shairing Rajā and the three ministers leading its different units against the Narā Rajā.

260. Ney Elias : *op.cit.*, pp.42-53. See also for dates his Table of Mogaung Sawbwas.

261. *AB*, p.92.

262. *DAB*. p.48; *AB*, p.93.

263. *DAB*, p.49; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.37.

264. *DAB*, p.49..

The Bar-Gohain, the Barpātra-Gohain, the Tipām Rajā and Chao Rurum advanced along the right bank of the Sessa river and the Burā-Gohain advanced along the left bank and the Shairing Rajā proceeded direct on an elephant named Pangri. The enemies rushed out of their fort and attacked the Shairing Rajā, who, being unable to resist the onslaught, fell back and dashed into the Sessā river with all his men. On the flank Ai-Khek Burā-Gohain was killed and a number of other Ahom officers also fell. But General Ton-Khām Bar-Gohain delivered such a powerful assault from the right on the side of the Dihing that the enemies were defeated with heavy losses and the Narā Rajā fled to the hills.[265] After this the Narā Rajā submitted and handed over his daughter, Jesuk, to General Ton-Khām for the Ahom king and also surrendered, among others, his own sword and the head-dress in lieu of his person being captured and taken to Garhgaon.[266] Hsö-Khām-Hpā at first charged Ton-Khām for not capturing the Narā Rajā, who had fallen into his clutches, but was pleased to have the princess and excused the veteran general.

Koch Princess for Hsö-Khām-Hpā :

In *Lākni Plekshingā* or A.D. 1584, the Koch king (called also Dhekeri Rajā), who must have been Naranārāyaṇ, sent an embassy consisting of Bhuban Guru and Srī Sula Laskar to Hsö-Khām-Hpā with a proposal to offer his sister, Princess Chāndkalā (Chandrakalā), to him. It might have been the result of a belated realization, on the part of the Koch king, of the mounting Muslim danger from the west. The Ahom king reciprocated this gesture of friendship with a warm heart by sending as presents to the Koch Rajā two elephants, two horses and envoys to settle the marriage. Soon after this the Ahom king sent by two trips several times more elephants and horses to the Koch Rajā. In *Lākni Kātmut* (i.e. 1585), by a previous arrangement, the Koch Princess was escorted by the Bar-Gohain, the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain to Garhgaon. Hsö-Khām-Hpā with great regard for the Koch royalty named her Khām (gold) or Nāng-Hung. Between A.D. 1587 and 1593 the chief queen, the Parbatīa Kuwanrī and the Raidangia Kuwanrī of the king died.[267]

265. *AB*, p.93; *DAB*, pp.49-50.
266. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.37.
267. *AB*, p.94 : *DAB*, pp.50-51.

Hsö-Khām Hpā's Nominee as Mong-Kawng Sawbwa :

In the *Deodhai Asam Buranji* there is a significant reference to the installation of a king (*Saobwa*), named Hsö-Ben, at Möng-Kawng (Mogaung) by Hsö-Khām-Hpā in *Lākni Taomit* or A.D. 1588. According to Ney Elias's account Chau-Sui-Kwei (Sao-Sui-Kwei) was surnamed Chau-peng which may well be Hsö-Ben in the Assam Chronicle, but Chau-Sui-Kwei's period of rule is A.D. 1526-58. The only possible *Sawbwa* who may be Hsö-Ben was Chau-Hum-Hpā (1591-1605) of Ney Elias who established his capital at New Mogaung and was temporarily independent of Burma. Probably Chau-Hum-Hpā, too, was surnamed Chau-peng or Hsö-Ben and was the grandson of Sao-Kaa-Hpā. But a statement in the Buranji indicates that Hsö-Ben was neither a brother nor a son of the Narā Rajā. In that case Hsö-Ben must have ruled between the reigns of Sao-Kon-Khām and Sao-Hum-Hpā, but is missing in Ney Elias's Table of Mogaung *Tsaubwas*.

Locusts and Great Earthquake of 1596 :

During Hsö-Khām-Hpā's reign there was a great destruction of plants by locusts coming from the west.[268] There was also a great earthquake in A.D. 1596. Hot water, sands, lavas and pebbles burst out from the interior of the earth all over the country.[269]

Hsö-Khām-Hpā died in the spring of A.D. 1603. One account says that he was unable to eat for a disease in the mouth and died.[270]

17. Hsö-Hseng-Hpā (1603-1641) ;

On the death of Hsö-Khām-Hpā in A.D. 1603 his ministers Ton-Khām Bar-Gohain, Chaopet Burā-Gohain and Bān-Jangi Barpātra- Gohain with the co-operation of Leshām Phukan and other nobles brought in, as desired by the deceased king, his son Lāngi Gohain and placed him on the throne in the same year.[271] On his accession this prince assumed the title of Hsö-Hseng-Hpā. He was called by the Hindus Prachanda

268. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.41.
269. *AB*, p.94; *DAB*, p.51.
270. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.43.
271. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.44.

Singha or Pratap Singha.[272] He was also nicknamed Burhā Rajā for his accession at an advanced age.[273] He was a king who pessessed exceptional wisdom and intelligence and hence was called by the Hindus Buddhi Svarganārāyaṇ.[274]

One of the first acts of Hsö-Hseng-Hpā after he became king was to catch elephants at Lāikha (Lāikhat) in A.D. 1605.[275] At a later date he developed an ambition to earn the title of *Gajapati* by possessing one thousand elephants. He wanted to create a city of elephants to be named Gajpur after Hastināpur of the Bangāls. He actually founded a city called Gajpur in which he collected the elephants though their number did not quite reach one thousand. He also excavated a tank called Rupahī in this city and constructed a road connecting the city with Garhgaon.[276]

Jayantā Princess for Ahom King :
Its Political Significance :

Rajā Dhanamāṇik of the Hill State of Jayantā[277] offended the Kachārī Rajā by taking Prabhākar, the Chief of Dimaruā, captive. But the Kachārī Rajā Jaśanārāyaṇ,[278] supposed to be a descendant of Nirbhoynārāyaṇ, demanded Prabhākar as a conspirator and enemy.[279] The Jayantā Rajā expressed his inability to release him as he had to pay arrears of revenue for lands long enjoyed by him. Whether Prabhākar was given shelter by the Jayantā Rajā with the above plea against the Kachārī Rajā is not very clear from the text of the Chronicle. But it

272. *DAB*, p.51.
273. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.27.
274. *Ibid*.
275. *AB*, p.95; *DAB*, p.51.
276. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.67.

277. Jayantiyā in modern Assamese. The kingdom of Jayantā included a plains tract to the south of the Jayantiyā Hills proper. The plains country extended as far as the Surma river and was first called Jayantā. The inhabitants of Jayantiyā country are known as Syntengs who constitute a cognate branch of the Khasis.

278. Nirbhoynārāyaṇ, who was set up as the tributary Rajā of the Kachārī kingdom by Hsö-Hum-Möng, was succeeded by Durlabhnārāyaṇ and Meghanārāyaṇ one after another and all these rulers maintained good relations with the Ahoms. Jaśanārāyaṇ, who was a contemporary of Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, seems to be the successor of Meghanārāyaṇ. see *KB*, pp. 20-21.

279. *AB* - '*SMJC*' ,p.48.

gave enough excuse to Jaśanārāyaṇ to invade Jayantā. Unable to resist the Kachārīs the Jayantā Rajā fled to the hills from where he made peace overtures with the Kachārī Rajā. The latter demanded tributes and hostages in the persons of Dhanamāṇik's elder sister Muktārāni, his nephew and Muktārāni's son Jaśamāṇik and Amarsena. In the greater interest of his country Dhanamāṇik accepted the peace terms and sent the tributes and the hostages as demanded. Probably the Jayantā Rajā himself was taken captive and brutally treated by the Kachārī Rajā. Since then Jayantā became a vassal State of the Kachārīs. Jaśanārāyaṇ, it is said, assumed the title of Arimardan after subjugating the Jayantā king and also changed the name of his capital into Khāspur in commemoration of his victory over the Khāsi Rajā.[280] After sometime, Dhanamāṇik died and Jaśanārāyaṇ placed Jaśamāṇik on the throne of Jayantā and permitted Muktārāni to accompany her son to Jayantāpur, the capital of the kingdom. Amarsena remained in the Kachari capital at Maibang.[281] In one account it is also said that Dhanamāṇik offered his daughter Sandhyāvali with a dowry to Jaśanārāyaṇ.[282]

But Jaśamāṇik was soon disgusted with the Kachārī domination. He had also the bitter memories of thede vastations of his kingdom and of the treatment meted out to his father Dhanamāṇik by the Kachārī king. He therefore decided to make an alliance with the more powerful Ahoms and with that purpose sent an embassy[283] to the Ahom king seeking his protection against the Kachārīs.[284] When he found the Ahom king's attitude favourable he proposed to offer his daughter[285] to him with a dowry. Chao Hsö-Hseng-Hpā accepted

280. *Jayantiyā Buranji* (p.11) says 'The Jayantā Rajā (Dhanamaṇik) was captured and taken away and castrated naming him thereafter '*Khāsi* and was then sent back'. This means that the term 'Khāsi' came to be applied to the Khāsis from that time and the town in which the Jayntā Rajā was castrated became thenceforth known as Khāspur which is very close to Maibang. The Khas people of southern Yün-nān and the Khas tribe mentioned in ancient Indian literature are not known to have any connection with the Khāsis of Assam. *Jayantā* or *Jayantiyā* is a Hinduized term by which the Syntengs are meant, who lived on the hill Jayantā.

281. *AB* - '*SMJC*', pp. 48-49; *KB*, p.21; *JB*. p.13.
282. *JB*, p.13.

283. Rup Rai and Pu Rai are mentioned as the Jayantā ambassadors. See *JB*, p.21.

284. *KB*, p.21.
285. *Ibid*, p.23.

the offer and sent his envoy[286] to Jayantāpur with the customary clothes and ornaments (*Juran*) for the bride. Jaśamāṇik saw in this friendship an opportunity to bring about a clash between the Ahoms and the Kachārīs so that the latter might be crushed. He therefore requested the Svarga Mahārajā Chao Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, through the latter's envoy Damodar (Sonābar?), to take down the bride by the route of Sātgaon and Teteliguri in the Kachārī territory, the plea being that journey by the usual Gobhā road was not possible owing to the presence of the great enemies, the Yavans (Muslims), in that State.[287] As Jayantā's rupture with the Kachārīs became complete Jaśamāṇik changed his policy towards the State of Dimarua. He released its captive Chief Prabhākar and restored the old friendship with him by showing him due honour and offering him presents.

Hsö-Hseng-Hpā sent his envoy Śitalial to Jaśanārāyaṇ to ask for passage through Sātgaon. But the Kachārī Rajā refuged to comply with the request and pointed out that the same road, by which the bride would travel, would be used by his antagonist, the Jayantā Rajā, to invade his country.[288] Hsö-Seng-Hpā made a further request for passage by sending his envoys Sitalial and Srikanta who were asked to remind the Kachari Rajā of his status as a tributary Chief installed and protected by the Svarga Mahārajā.[289] The envoys were this time detained without reception by the Kachārī Rajā, who also used strong words against the Svargadev.[290] Such a challenging attitude of the Kachārī Rajā was probably encouraged by the defeat of the invincible Ahoms at the hands of Naranārāyaṇ and Chilārai. The king then held a council with his ministers and nobles on this issue and decided with the consent of all to bring down the Jayantā Princess over the Kachārī territory even by using force in the event of obstruction and that no permission of the dependent Kachārī Rajā was necessary for cutting the jungles for a road through his country.[291] It appears from the accounts that in those days there were no good roads for communication with the hill countries and in most cases riverways were used.

286. Dāmodar Kaṭakī. See *JB*, p.14. But according to *AB*,- '*SMJC*', (p. 49) the envoy's name is Sonābar.
287. *KB*, p.22.
288. *Ibid*, p.22.
289. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.50.
290. *Ibid*, p.22.
291. *JB*, p.14.

An army was then sent by Hsö-Hseng-Hpā in the summer of A.D. 1606 by the Dhanśiri to occupy the Kachārī country.[292] It was headed by General Lāku Barpātra and the other generals, who accompanied him, were Chaopet Burā-Gohain, the Shairing Rajā, the Tipām Rajā, the Sadiyakhowā Gohain, the Marangikhowā Barchetiā and Rup Handikoi. They all advanced up the river and reached the outskirts of the brick city (Dimāpur) of the Kachārīs and encamped opposite the Lion Gate (*Singha-Duar* or *Bar Duar*) of the city.[293] Another army was sent down by the way of the Kallang Suti to Rahā, and thence up the Kapilī under the command of General Sundar Gohain.[294] With this army the king also sent the Salāl Gohain, Khām-Shen Bar-Gohain, Madnokhowā Hāzarikā and Neog Phukan (or Lāngi Rāj-Neog), the brother of Nāng-Blak (or Nāngbu), to fetch the Princess of Jayantā.[295] General Sundar Gohain and the other generals, during their advance, captured one Rajā Lāhar (Tai-Ahom Lākat), who was a protected chief of the Kachārīs, and sent him as a prisoner to the king.[296] The Ahom generals then halted in the field called Hanan for a night and prepared themselves to attack the Kachārī province of Sātgaon. In the next morning the assault was delivered and Sātgaon devastated and occupied. The Ahoms also captured many guns, swords and spears from the defeated Kachārīs.[297] The Kachārīs beat a precipitate retreat to Maibang. After that the Ahom generals made their next camp at Demerā.[298]

Sundar Gohain then sent Parbatia Barua to inspect and repair the road where necessary. The latter proceeded with his men and came upon the Kachārī fort at the confluence of the Kapilī and Maridayāng rivers where a garrison was stationed to resist the advance of the Ahoms. He attempted to capture it by an assault but was repulsed. The Kachārīs

292. *RB*, p.22.
293. *RB*, p.22; *AB*, pp.95-96; *DAB*, p.52; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.50.
294. *DAB* mentions as Sundar Naoboichā Phukan.
295. *AB*, p.95; *DAB*, p.52.
296. *DAB*, p.52; *AB*, p.95.
297. *AB*, p.95; *DAB*, p.52. The Kachārī villages occupied by the Ahoms in the province of Sātgaon in this campaign were 1. Tiyori, 2. Devargaon, 3. Dharmapur, 4. Nāmar, 5. Bāki (Sākin in *KB*, p.23), 6. Lāhor and 7. Sātgaon--See *AB*, - '*SMJC*', p.50. From the accounts Sātgaon appears to be an area between Kāmpur and the confluence of the Dayāng and the Kapilī.
298. *KB*, p.23. In *DAB*, (p.52) the place mentioned is not Demerā but the confluence of the Dayāng and the Kapilī. These two places seem to refer to the same area as Demerā is very close to or almost in the same place.

seized him and another named Shilā in the engagement and put both of them to death.[299] Some of the men returning from that place reported to Khām-Shen Bar-Gohain and Sundar Naoboichā-Phukan all about the reverse. They then held a council and decided to advance up the Kapilī. Accordingly they ascended that river and encamped at its junction with the Dayāng.[300] With the advent of the dry season (October-November) the king proceeded down to Thekerābārī and made his camp at that place.[301]

When the road for the Jayantā Princess's journey was made clear by the occupation of the Kachārī territory she was escorted from Jayantāpur to Dharamtikā in a royal palanquin by the party sent by the king for the purpose in the month of *Dinching* (November-December). In the next stage of her journey from Dharamtikā to Rahā she was escorted by Madnokhowā Hāzarikā. From Rahā onward to Thekerābārī she was escorted by Lāshām Bharālī[302] who had been sent thither for the purpose by the king and Śobha Tamuli with Dāmodar Kataki escorted her to Garhgaon.[303]

Ahom-Kachārī War : Prince Bhimbal's Success :

Sundar Gohain had been instructed by the king not to leave his camp and come down until further orders.[304] After the Jayantā Princess had been safely brought down the king directed Sundar Gohain and Khām-Shen Bar-Gohain to advance and attack the Kachārīs. They accordingly moved forward and crossed the Dayāng and made their next camp with his army on the opposite bank.[305] In these encampments many of Sundar Gohain's men fell ill, probably because of the mosquito-infested inhospitable surroundings. But yet with the king's order the Gohain opened up a route by clearing jungles up to a village called Bāligaon to march his troops to attack the Kachārī capital, Maibang.

299. *AB*, p.95; *DAB*, p.52.
300. *AB*, *ibid.*; *DAB*, *ibid.*
301. *AB*, *ibid.*: *DAB*, *ibid.*
302. He was otherwise Lāshām Gohain. See *AB*, p.96.
303. *JB*, p.14.
304. *JB*, p.14.
305. *JB*, p.14; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.51.

Jaśanārāyaṇ also advanced to his fort at Jātrāgarh. There were skirmishes from time to time between the Ahoms and the Kachārīs without any decisive victory.[306]

But Jaśanārāyaṇ thought it expedient to come to terms with the Ahoms and sent envoys to Sundar Gohain requesting him not to attack Maibang and proposing to give hostages for his return. Sundar Gohain demanded the Rajā's eldest son Bhimbal Konwar (or Bhim Darpa) and the elephant Pavan as hostages. When Jaśanārāyaṇ told Bhimbal about the terms of peace, the the latter refused to submit and resolved to fight, but advised Jaśanārāyaṇ to take from the Gohain seven days' time to give hostages under the pretence of submission so that preparations to fight the Ahoms could be completed in this interval.[307] At this stage Sundar Gohain learnt from Bhāndarī Gohain that the king was carrying on illicit amours with his chief wife.[308] The report killed all enthusiasm of the general for war and he apprehended risk to his life on his return home. 'Is there any hope of my life ?' he murmured, 'death is there whether I fall in war or go to Garhgaon'.[309] He therefore became more or less indifferent to his duties. This love affair of the king, which had commenced soon after Sundar Gohain's departure for the Kachārī campaign, might be another reason why the Gohain was asked not to return home early. The Kachārīs, too, by a gesture to submit created complacence in his mind and he allowed them to come to his camp in and out of time.

Taking advantage of this slackness in vigilance Jaśanārāyaṇ sent many spies to his camp in company with the fire-wood suppliers and water-carriers to offer rice, gourds and other vegetables.[310] These spies reported to him how the Gohain was living in the camp without taking proper security measures. He therefore prepared himself to attack the Gohain in one night and just before that engaged some men to enter the Ahom camp as usual in the company of the fire-wood suppliers and water-carriers with potfuls of water and to be poured into the muzzles of

306. *RB*, pp.23-24.
307. *Ibid.*, p.24. According to a manuscript account Bhimbal was younger brother of Jaśanārāyaṇ. (Vide vol. II, Part I, Tr. 84 in *DHAS*.)
308. *JB*, p.15; *RB*, p.24; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.51.
309. *JB*, p.15.
310. *KB*, p.24.

the guns there undetected and also to block the barrels with grass. The instruction was successfully carried out and in the small hours of the morning that night Prince Bhimbal with 500 picked warriors attacked the Ahom fort. His famous war elephants, Śatrudaman and Pavan, dashed off parts of the ramparts of the fort opening up passages through which the fighting men of Bhimbal entered the camp and started killing the Ahom garrison. General Sundar Gohain ordered his gunmen to open fire at the Kachārīs, but the guns did not fire as the Kachārīs had already poured waters in them. Two-thirds of the Ahom garrison with the officers fell under the Kachārī swords and only one-third escaped. Sundar Gohain being helpless fled and hid himself inside a thorny thicket on the side of the Dayāng river in the neighbourhood of the Kapilī, but was found and pierced to death with a spear by a Kachārī. Khām-Shen Bar-Gohain was also pierced to death by the enemies. The Kachārīs acquired a large amount of war materials. The heads of both the Gohains were then cut off and presented to the Kachārī Rajā Jaśanārāyaṇ. This event is dated *Śak* 1528 (A.D. 1606) in the Chronicle.[311] Jaśanārāyaṇ executed the two Kachārīs who, instead of capturing alive the two Gohains, killed and severed their heads, for, otherwise, such great generals and nobles of the Assam Rajā 'would have, by their presence in my Court'.. said he, 'enhanced my fame and prestige as conquerors of the Ahoms in the eyes of foreign ambassadors visiting this country'.[312]

After this victory over the Ahoms Jaśanārāyaṇ assumed the title of Pratāpnārāyaṇ and the name of Maibang was changed into Kīrtipur (city of Fame). Since that time (A.D. 1607) the Kachārī Rajā became independent of the Ahoms and hence stopped all feudal dues in terms of services and tributes which used to be offered so long to the overlord, the Svargadev.[313] When the Ahom king received the shocking news of the great disaster in which the two veteran generals, Sundar Gohain and the Bar-Gohain, lost their lives he wanted to invade the Kachārī

311. *RB*, pp.24-25; *JB*, pp.15-16; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.52. According to the version in *AB* - .*SMJC*', Sundar Gohain ran towards the river when the watchman's hut, in which he was hiding, was set fire to by the Kachārīs, but was chased and killed by the latter with a spear as he jumped into the waters. The date of his death as mentioned in this account is *Śak* 1557 (A.D. 1615), but this date is unacceptable being different from the date A.D. 1606 as given in the Tai-Ahom and other Chronicles.

312. *KB*, p.25.: *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.52.

313. *KB*, p.25; *AB*-'*SMJC*', p.53.

kingdom, but he also anticipated Muslim invasion of Assam some day or other in the near future. 'The Bangāls are my greater enemies' said he and therefore he was unwilling to exhaust his resources in a Kachārī war. He therefore decided to conciliate the Kachārīs and harness his strength against the Muslims. He ordered Lāku Barpātra to leave his camp near the brick city and withdraw his army from the Kachārī territory. He himself left his camp at Thekerā finally for Gorhgaon only in *Lākni Taoshingā* (A.D. 1608).[314] At Garhgaon he offered oblations to the dead and sacrifices to the gods.[315]

Koch Affairs : Princess Mangaldoi for Hsö-Hseng-Hpā :

When Chilārāi died,[316] his son Raghudevnārāyaṇ lived under the care of Naranārāyaṇ. Gait refers to the *Akbarnāmāh* as saying that Naranārāyaṇ lived the life of an ascetic and did not marry till late in life, but he at last married only on the urgent representations of his brother Chilārāi and, in due course, had a son.[317] Until then Raghudev was regarded as the heir to the throne. But according to *Rajopākhyana* Naranārāyaṇ had married before he became king and it was through his wife that he got the throne from his elder brother Nara Singha.[318] It might be that Naranārāyaṇ had his son born long after his marriage. This son, named Lakshminārāyaṇ, was the only son of Naranārāyaṇ who succeeded to the throne and ruled over Koch Behār from A.D. 1587 to 1627.

Well before Lakshminārāyaṇ's accession the old officers and councillors of Chilārāi expressed their feelings to Raghudev that it would be better for him to become an independent ruler at Ghilāvijaypur than to ramain as a dependent prince in Naranārāyaṇ's Court. They also

314. *DAB*, p.53.

315. *AB*, p.97.

316. In course of an expedition against the Muslims Chilārāi was attacked by small-pox and died on the banks of the Ganges. (See Gait : *op.cit.*, p.55). The story given in *AB* - '*SMJC*', (p.43) says that after his release from captivity at Gaur he died at the sight of his son Raghudev as predicted by an astrologer of Rajā Naranārāyaṇ, but it appears to be a fable interpolated into the narrative from hearsay. But that Chilārāi died before Naranārāyaṇ is a fact.

317. Gait's *History of Assam* pp. 55-56.

318. Rājopākhyana, Part II, Chapter I, pp.29-30 as quoted in *The Cooch Behar State*, p.229, Foot-note.

reminded him how Vishva Singha himself made a partition of the kingdom giving the territory east of the Bar Sonkosh to Chilārāi and the western part to Naranārāyaṇ. Raghudev felt encouraged by the advice and with Naranārāyaṇ's approval and good wishes he, with all the followers and councillors, left Koch Behār and became king at Ghilāvijaypur, which was itself probably called Barnagar or capital in Assam Chronicles.[319] He strongly fortified the city. Just to eliminate causes of future disputes over the kingdom Naranārāyaṇ formally made over to Raghudev the territories east of the Sonkosh, the western part forming the kingdom for himself and his descendants. This partition of the kingdom was made on the basis of Raghudev's acknowledgement of the overlordship of his uncle Naranārāyaṇ to whom he would pay tributes.[320] Muslim writers called this eastern kingdom of Raghudev Koch Hājo, while the western one, ruled by Naranārāyaṇ and his successors, Koch Behār.

Gait describes Raghudev's kingdom as comprising the present Mangaldoi Sub-Division and the districts of Kamrup and Goalpara with a southern strip extending to eastern Mymensingh.[321] On Naranārāyan's death Raghudev declared his independence of Koch Behār. Lakshminārāyaṇ, who succeeded Naranārayaṇ, was a weak Rajā and could not compel Raghudev to pay tributes. All that he could contrive to do was to stir up a rebellion headed by Raghudev's son Parikshit himself. Raghudev quashed it capturing Parikshit and executing his associates. After a time Parikshit escaped from prison and fled to Koch Behār where he was cordially received by Lakshminārāyaṇ. But hostilities arose between Raghudev and Lakshminārāyaṇ, and finding Raghudev more powerful the latter sought protection from the Mughul Empire by becoming its vassal in A.D. 1596. He also gave a daughter in marriage to Rajā Mān Singha, the then Governor of Bengal, in 1597.[322] A force was then sent by Mān Singha for the protection of Koch Behār.

319. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.13-14. This Buranji (p.18) says that the capital-city was established at Vijaypur on the bank of the Ghilā river in Ājārā village. It is also called Ghilāvijaypur and is located on the east of the Bar Sonkosh, which flows into the Brahmaputra on the west of Dhubri as the Gangādhar, and west of the Gadādhar about ten miles up from its mouth. There is also the river *Saru* or small Sonkosh east of Dhubri.

320. Gait : *History of Assam*. p.56.

321. *Ibid.*, p.62.

322. *Ibid.*, pp.64-65.

Raghudevnārāyaṇ died about A.D. 1603, the year of Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's accession, either from snake-bite or poison administered by the mother of his second son, Indranārāyaṇ.[323] He left behind eighteen sons[324] of whom the eldest one, Parikshitnārāyaṇ, was in Behār and Indranārāyaṇ was about to succeed to the throne. The ministers being opposed to it invited Parikshit, who immediately proceeded to Ghilāvijaypur and was placed on the throne. He captured Indranārāyaṇ and executed him.[325] Mān Singha, the uterine brother of Indranārāyaṇ, fled to the Ahom capital with his followers and placed himself under the protection of king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, who, knowing him to be a Koch prince treated him honourably and settled him at Nāmrup with a princely position.[326] Parikshit removed his capital to North Gauhati and built a palace near the Aśvakrānta Hill.[327]

Parikshit having settled himself firmly refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Lakshminārāyaṇ. Clashes occurred between the two rulers and both sought the friendship of the Ahoms. In the Tai-Ahom Chronicle it is related that in *Lākni Tāoshingā* (A.D. 1608) Hsö-Sheng-Hpā sent Sagar Kandali and Bar-Bāmun's son to ask the Koch king to offer a princess to him.[328] Gait says that in 1608 Parikshit gave his daughter Mangal Dāhī (Mangaldoi) to Pratāp Singha (Hsö-Hseng-Hpā).[329] The Koch king mentioned in the Tai-Ahom Chronicle was thus Parikshit and not Raghudev as said in some Assamese Buranjis, for the latter had already died by that time. The Koch king also sent with his daughter twenty families of slaves and twenty families of domestics as dowry. Parikshit's son Vijitnārāyaṇ was the founder of the Bijni dynasty of Goalpārā. Of the other sons of Raghudev Balinārāyaṇ became the Rajā of

323. *Ibid.*, p.64. Gait says A.D. 1603 is the year in which the coins of his successor Parikshit were issued.

324. Sons are : 1. Parikshit, 2. Indranārāyaṇ, 3. Jadurai, 4. Bhava Singha, 5. Makundadev, 6. Balinārāyaṇ, 7. Mān Singha, 8. Mahindra Singha, 9. Gohain-Mogal, 10. Gohain-Raichānd, 11. Sundarnārāyaṇ, 12. Gohain-Maidan, 13. Gohain-Mehanārāyaṇ, 14. Mdhunārāyaṇ, 15. Vrisaketu, 16. Anantanārāyaṇ, 17. Pratāpnārāyaṇ and 18. Vijay Singha. - See *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.14.

325. It is said in the *Kamrupar Buranji* (p.14) that Meches, engaged by Parishit, killed Indranārāyaṇ by wringing his neck.

326. *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.47.

327. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.64.

328. *AB*, p.97.

329. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.64.

Darrang and Gajanārāyaṇ, not identified among Raghu's sons in the *Kamrupar Buranji*, became the Rajā of Beltolā in South Kāmrup.[330]

Taking advantage of the struggle for succession between Parikshitnārāyaṇ and Indranārāyaṇ Lakshminārāyaṇ invaded Ghilāvijaypur. By that time Parikshit had secured the throne with the support of the nobles. In the war Lakshminārāyaṇ was worsted and his beloved brother Balidevnārāyaṇ was killed. Lakshminārāyaṇ fled to Koch Behār. Thereafter Parikshit led a series of attacks on Lakshminārāyaṇ's territories which the latter found it difficult to defend. This led Lakshminārāyaṇ to approach Islām Khān at Ghorāghāt in A.D. 1608 and then the Mughul Emperor Jāhāngir[331] for help by offering his daughter to him. Jāhāngir sent Mukarram Khān with twenty-two Omraos to capture Parikshit alive if possible and bring him to Delhi. Parikshit advanced to Dhubri and entrenched himself there to fight the Mughul general. On arrival at Dhubri the enemies besieged the Koch fort, 'the foremost of all the forts in the Koch territory'. Parikshit gave a great fight against the mixed Mughul army attacking under the supreme command of Mukarram Khān and it was only after a long and heroic struggle and the defeat of the Koch navy that Parikshit had to retreat. According to *Kamrupar Buranji* (p. 19) Parikshit fought from his fort at Dhubri for one year before he could be defeated. He retreated to Ghilā and then to Pāndu but was pursued by Mukarram Khān reinforced by Lakshminārāyaṇ on the Sonkosh. The Mughuls occupied Ghilāvijaypur (Bar-Nagar)[332] and the imperial fleet reached Pāndu.

Parikshit appealed to the Ahom king for assistance and the latter invited him to Garhgaon assuring him of all protection. But at the instance of his interested ministers he suddenly changed his mind and negotiated for peace with the leader of the Muslim expedition, Shaykh Kamāl, who also accepted *peshkash*, and was inclined for peace against the wishes of the imperial officers. At Shaykh Kamāl's suggestion Parikshit negotiated with Mukarram Khān by sending his envoy Rāmdās informing him of his willingness to submit and pay regular tributes if his honour

330. Genealogical Table of the Koch Kings of Kāmarūpa and Feudatory Chiefs of Cooch Behār in *The Cooch Behar State*, p.603.

331. not Shāh Jāhān, as mentioned in *Kamrupar Buranji*, who became emperor in A.D. 1628. See *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.14-15; *AB*, - '*SMJC*', p.54.

332. called thereafter Gilānay (New Ghilā) or Jāhāngirābād by the Mughuls.

and security were guaranteed.[333] Mukarram Khān and Shaykh Kamāl assured them by touching the Qurān and the former advised Parkshit to accompany him to the Pādshāh, an interview with whom would be of great benefit to him. He agreed to it and procceded with Mukarram Khān, first, to meet Islām Khān, the Governor of Bengal (called Subahdār of Bengal). The victorious Mughul imperial army was left in the conquered country of Kāmarūpa under the command of Abdu's-Sālām, the second brother of Mukarram Khān. Mirzā Quasim was directed to occupy all the Thānās of Pāndu that had already come into his hand. The Mughul fleet was left at Pandu under the command of Rajā Satrājit. Thus placing Kāmrūp under the Mughul military commandars Mukarram Khān proceeded with the Koch Rajā to Dhākā (Jāhāngirnagar as renamed by Islām Khān), the head-quarters of Islām Khan. It is recorded in the Chronicles of Kāmarūpa that from that time Kāmarūpa came under the Mughuls.[334] Islām Khan had left for Bhawal through which Mukarram Khan and Parikshit would come, but died before their arrival. Parikshit reached that place only to pay respects to the dead-body of Islām Khān as it is recorded in *Islām Nāmā*. Parikshit was presented to the next Governor of Bengal Qasim Khān who simply remanded him to the custody of his officers together with Lakshminārāyaṇ, who had been also brought in from Khuntānagar by Rajā Raghunāth sent for the purpose.

They were later on taken to Delhi. In Delhi Pādshāh Jāhāngir tried to bring about a reconciliation between Parikshit and Lakshminārāyaṇ and for the purpose asked the nephew to bow down to his uncle touching the latter's feet, but it was thought by Parikshit to be a humiliation and was not complied with.[335] The Pādshāh then sent back Lakshminārāyaṇ to Koch Behār with presents of Iraqi horses and swords. In order to be restored to power Parikshit was asked to pay a sum of four lakhs of rupees and send his four sons[336] as hostages to Delhi. Accepting

333. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.15-16, 19 ; *BG*, I. p.252. A fuller detail of this Mughul campaign against the Koch country is given in the *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi* (see Dr. M.I. Borah's translation, *DHAS*, vol. I, Chapter XI, pp.222-253).

334. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.16-19; *BG*. I, p.253.

335. *Ibid.*, pp.16-17, 19; also *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.54.

336. sons were Dhirnārāyaṇ, Darpanarayan, Bhimnārāyaṇ and Śurnārāyaṇ. Accoring to the accounts in *Kamrūpar Buranji* (p.19) and *AB* - '*SMJC*', he gave the sum and the hostages and then returned. (See also *DHAS*, Tr. 84 in vol.II, P.I. MS. p.14).

these terms while Parikshit was returning home he fell ill and died at Prayāg.[337] His dominions, as far as the Bar Nadī, were then annexed to the Mughul Empire.

But rebellions broke out here and there in Kāmarūpa which had to be dealt with by the Mughuls. Qasim Khān, the Governor of Bengal, appointed Mīrzā Imām Quli Beg Shamlu as the Chief Administrative Officer in Kāmarūpa and the latter arrived at Jāhāngirābād (Ghilāvijaypur). Mīrzā Imām Quli and Mīrzā Nāthān with other officers and a force attacked the rebels at Dalgaon and defeated them and Mīr Abdu'r-Razzāq recaptured from the rebels the fort at Rangāmāṭi.[337a]

Qusim Khan then appointed Saiyid Abā Bakr,[338] Zamindar of the *mauza* of Kishar, who was the chief of his officers, to command an expeditionary force for the conquest of Assam (Ahom kingdom), but before that he was instructed to make a clean sweep of the Koch rebels of Kāmarūpa and establish Thānās.[339] He was also ordered by Qasim Khan to proceed farther from the Thānā of Hājo, the head-quarters of the Mughul *Thānādārs* or Chief Administrative Officers for Kāmarūpa. He therefore advanced to Kuhhātā to the east of Srighāt or modern Amingaon and was joined there by other Mughul commanders taking their garrisons from their respective Thānās of Kāmarūpa. But Kāmarūpa at the time bristled up with rebellions, particularly at Khuntāghāt and Dhamdhamā, and more forces had therefore to be immediately sent by the Bengal Governor to keep the country under control. The Mughuls also put pressure on Shingari in Darrag and two years had thus elapsed.[340]

Though the vital centres of the Koch country were occupied by the Muslims, yet Parikshit's brother Balinārāyaṇ refused to submit to them. He appears to have taken his refuge in Darrang, but was helpless and so went to Garhgaon and prayed for protection of the Ahom king

337. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.19 ; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.54. *Kamrupar Buranji* contains also a different version of Parikshit's death according which he was sent back again to the Emperor by Islām Khan after which to appear before the latter with a Pādshā's portrait and receive a salute. This time Parikshit, while on way to Delhi, committed suicide at Triveṇī Tīrtha (i.e. Prāyag or Allāhābād).

337a. *BG*, I, pp.316-318.

338. Saiyad Bābākar of Assamese Burañjīs.

339. *BG*. I, p.319.

340. *Kāmrūpar Burañjī*, p.19.

Hsö-Hseng-Hpā in A.D. 1615. The latter blamed Parikshit for the Koch misfortune ; for, instead of responding to his invitation to put up a joint front against the Mughuls Parikshit resorted to the foolish policy of submitting to them and reaped the consequences that he had. Yet Hsö-Hseng-Hpā treated the fugitive Koch prince with a generous hospitality and installed him as Rajā of Darrang with the title of Dharmanārāyaṇ. At this his brothers Chandranārāyaṇ and Rupnārāyaṇ with other Koch princes came and paid their homage to the Svarga Mahārajā and were settled at Jānji with offer of wives, attendants, servants and villages for their maintenance.[341]

Ahom-Mughul Border Incidents :

The sudden collapse of the Koch power and Parikshit's abject surrender to the Mughuls left a large part of the Koch territory in the east without a ruler. Balinārāyaṇ and other princes of his family did not support their brother's policy of surrender and continued to resist. In the hope of salvaging at least the unoccupied eastern part of the Koch kingdom of Kāmarūpa Balinārāyaṇ approached the Ahom king for help and protection against the advancing Mughuls. The Ahom king, too could not allow the Muslims to lay claim to all the territories of Parikshit as inheritors on the latter's surrender to them. Such a claim the Ahom government would never recognise. When therefore the Muslims advanced towards the east and annexed the kingdom on the west of the Bar Nadī, the Ahoms brought under their control the Koch territory between the Bar Nadī and the Bharali which was then outside the effective occupation of the Mughul army. Thus the part of the present Darrang district west of the Bharali came under Ahom control and the Ahom officer called Hābung Chetia, who was in charge of the north bank territories of the Ahoms, was required to extend his control and supervision to the western Darrang area also. Whether the Ahom government could so immediately set up a complete and effective machinery with a network of *chawkis* in this area is not clear from the accounts.

In this situation a merchant known as Ratan Shāh (or Ratna Shāh) purchased aloes wood for the Emperor at Śingari in western Darrang which was within the jurisdiction of the newly acquired territory of the

341. *AB*, p.98; *DAB*, p.54; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.19; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.60.

Ahoms. The Ahom officer Hābung Chetia came to know about it and reported the matter to the king. With the king's order he seized the contraband stocks of wood, purchased by the foreign merchant, and expelled him from the territory under his control and supervision. The merchant Ratan Shāh complained to Saiyid Abā Bakr at Hājo about the incident. The latter asked Rajā Satrājit about where lay the boundary between the territories of the Ahoms and of Parīkshit. Satrājit said that it was the river Bharali. This led Abā Bakr to conclude that the territory as far as the Bharali then belonged now to the Mughuls and Ratan Shāh was quite within the jurisdiction of the Mughul territory in carrying on his commercial transactions at Singari, which was to the west of the Bharali. This claim was rejected by the Ahom government.

Meanwhile king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā suspected hostile moves of the Mughuls on the border. So he sent out an officer called Shengdharā with a force to survey the western Ahom territories up to the frontier *chawki* at Kājali, inspect the *chawkis* and take punitive action against foreigners (*Bangāls*), or capture them, if found within the Ahom borders. While going out in his reconnoitring tour he actually found, as expected, some unauthorized persons of Bengal with boats inside the Ahom territory. At this time these persons were buying pulses, mustard and other commodities on the north bank river side. He attacked them and captured two boats and killed two persons. This incident was also reported by Ratan Shāh and others connected with them to their Chief Abā Bakr and the Omraos at Hājo.[342]

Abā Bakr's assertion that after Parikshit's surrender the Mughuls became the rightful successors of the entire former territory of the Koch Rajā was not recognized by the Ahom government. Abā Bakr was sent by the Bengal Subāhdār with the definite order to invade and annex the Ahom territory after quelling the rebellions in the Koch kingdom of Kāmarūpā and the Ahom king had already forestalled this Mughul policy and therefore did not waste his military resources in another Kachārī war. The border incidents only served as an immediate cause of hostility between the Ahoms and the Mughuls.

342. For the two border incidents see *Kānrūpar Burañjī* p.20; *ACA*, pp.81-82.

Mughul Invasion of Assam :
The Ahoms Annihilated Abā Bakr's Expeditionary Force :

In the month of *Dinchit* (May-June) in A.D. 1616 Saiyid Abā Bakr appeared with his navy at the mouth of the Kalang to invade the Ahom territory. He found there at Kājali *chawki* an Ahom fleet of three hundred war-boats on guard duty.[343] The local Ahom commanders immediately attacked the Mughul force, but suffered a defeat and retreated with the loss of some boats. Satrājit entered Salā by the Kalang, killed a few men and looted a royal store. He also forcibly seized three female templedancers and sailed off.[344] In full appraisal of the gravity of the situation Hsö-Hseng-Hpā despatched a powerful force under Thakbak Burā-Gohain, Guimelā Bar-Gohain, Lāku Barpātra, the Sadiyākhowā Gohain and the Shairing Rajā against the Mughuls. They made a fort at Dikhaumukh and were prepared to meet the enemy. In the month of December 1616, the king himself advanced with an army and landed at Visvanāth. Then under the king's uncle, Prince Chao-Lai as Commander-in-Chief, Khāmprat Bar-Gohain, Lāku Barpātra and the allied and tributary Rajās proceeded with their men to the main base at Sāmdharā, and then moved forward to the east bank of the Bharali where they raised a fort. Within a fortnight the Mughul imperial army, by six marches from Kalangmukh, reached the Bharali on the north bank and made its landing with cavalry on the sand beach of the Brahmaputra in the month of January and pitched their camp on the opposite bank of the Bharali facing the Ahoms.

Soon after their landing the Mughuls made a cavalry charge across the Bharali along the sand bank against the Ahoms killing some of them and capturing an officer called Ringsā Barpātra. The Mughul cavalry's attack caused the Ahoms to retreat to their main fort of Sāmdharā.[345] The Ahom king wanted to execute General Chao-Lai for such a cowardly retreat but was spared only on the intercession of the queen. He also reprimanded the other officers and sent a reinforcement of 14,000 troops. This time the Bharali fort was reoccupied and repaired by the Ahom officers under the supreme command of Leshām Chiring. The king

343. *BG*. 1, p.395.
344. *DAB*, p.54 ; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.20.
345. *DAB*, p.55; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.21 ; *BG*. 1, p.395.

himself advanced to Kathālguri fort and served a severe warning on his officers and men in the front never to fall back a step or remain idle even for a moment when the enemies were about to launch their attack for the conquest of their country. He represented his severity by sending to the front some instruments including hoes for cutting the flesh of the body to pieces. The king's messenger announced—'The heavenly king has ordered that he who would retreat from the field of battle or would run away, would be severely punished. The flesh of his body would be cut to pieces in presence of all others'.[346]

The Ahom officers then constructed three bridges[347] over the the Bharali and towards the end of the month of January all the princes, Khāmprat Bar-Gohain and other army officers marched their army under the supreme command of Sengdharā Rāj-Neog (Commander-in-Chief) to attack the enemy and there were with them 120 war elephants forming the vanguard. The naval force advanced under the commands of Lāshām Hāzarikā, Pikchai Hāzarikā, Lāngu Neog, Bharālī Chetia, Lāluk Gohain and a few others. Early at dawn of saturday, the 15th *Māgh*, the Ahom army and navy delivered simultaneously fierce attacks on the Mughuls, the war elephants demolishing the enemy fortifications at the same time. The onset of the attack was so terrific that it overwhelmed the Mughuls and they began to flee towards the sand beach of the Brahmaputra. In the mêlèe the proud general Abā Bakr was recognised and killed. In one account he is said to have been pierced to death by an arrow. The larger part of the Mughul army and navy was destroyed by the Ahoms and the rest with a number of Omraos were surrounded on the sand beach and made prisoners. Satrājit narrowly escaped with two boats.[348] The Ahoms also lost a number of army officers among whom the Hāti-Barua (Superintendent of the elephant corps), Lao-Barua and Lechai-Hkun were the chief and the naval officers lost were

346. *AB*, p.99 ; *DAB*, p.55 ; *Purani Asam Buranji*, pp. 83-84.

347. *BG*, (p.395) says that they were bridges of boats'. The Mughul historian says that the bridges could not be completed. The Mughuls probably did not know the points where such bridges were successfully constructed. They were constructed somewhere far up the river.

348. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.21-22 ; *DAB*, p.56; *AB* - '*SMJC*', p.60.

Lāshām-Thaomöng and Chiringdāng's son Lao. Lāshām-Hkun-Tong of the navy had a bullet wound, but did not die.[349]

Mirzā Nāthān describes more vividly this defeat and destruction of the invading Mughul army by the Ahoms. He narrates that 'when the enemy entered the fort and killed the Sardār, a confusion arose among the land-force on the bank ; they became perplexed and did not know what to do'. He further says 'the fleet of the enemy fell upon the fleet of the zamindars' and 'dashed against many of the boats of the zamindars and threw gangways over them, and thus the whole fleet of the Zamindārs was attacked. A confusion arose among the Zamindārs of Bengal and their fleet and they suffered a defeat. Those who survived fled half-dead, each receiving ten to fifteen wounds'. 'But the enemy without giving up their obstinacy and counting on the full strength of their army, advanced forward and gave no respite. The intoxicated heroes considered their loyalty to be only another name for martyrdom and again and again with great exertions they sallied forth, and thrice gave battle without caring for the stiffness of the struggle. The enemy fell upon the army of Islām from all sides in different groups and batches and made the brave warriors drink the wine of martyrdom. The market of the angel of death became very brisk and it became a veritable Day of Resurrection'.[350] The casualties on the Mughul side, as described by the same author, were about 1,700 men killed on the spot, double this number escaped wounded and died in the adjoining places and 9,000 men taken as captives. In addition about 3,000 men came out half-dead and concealed themselves in the jungles.[351] Moreover the Ahoms collected 13 elephants, 900 horses and a large quantity of war equipments from the defeated Mughuls.[352]

The Ahom generals threw all the captives of the Mughul army into a temporary prison made of triple stockades of reeds (*Khāgari*) on the beach at Sāmdharā and placed guards around it. This information was sent to the king who had come forward to Āgiabandhā and awaited the

349. *DAB*, p.56; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.23.

350. *BG*. I, pp.396-97.

351. *BG*. I, p.399.

352. *DAB*, p.57 ; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.23.

results of the attack. Meanwhile next day there was a general massacre of the Omraos and the other prisoners of war which ended the hostilities. Ten Hindu Rajās (Bengal Zamindārs)[353] eacaped death by surrendering to the Svarga Mahārajā and praying for sparing their lives. On the other hand, the king, having sent ahead messengers to the Ahom officers asking them not to kill the prisoners till his arrival at that place, proceeded to Samdharā with a desire to see how the Omraos and the Mughul officers looked, but the messenger was too late to arrive. The king on arriving after the messenger found to his disappointment that all the war prisoners had already been killed. He became enraged at it and went back to Āgiābandhā. All the materials that had been seized were brought to him. Some of the officers responsible for such a hasty action were even executed by the king and one among them was the Shairing Rajā, Prince Chao-Lai. The explanation of the three Gohains (ministers) was that they were not in favour of prolonging the war and remaining confined there, but they too were reprimanded. The account shows that king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā had not previously seen Mughul Omraos or officers, they being a new race of people making their first appearance as invaders of Assam. It was therefore the duty of the Ahom officers to give an opportunity to their sovereign to satisfy his curiosity by having a look at them and learn how they were than to describe them to him. This lack of imagination on the part of responsible officers calls for correctives. It is also questionable whether it was within the powers of the army officers to put to death the war prisoners without orders from the king after a decisive victory had been won. If it was within powers, then the sending of information to the Svargadev about how the war prisoners were kept would become purposeless.

Episode of Ākhek Gohain :

It was ākhek Gohain (Bhāndārī Gohain) who reported to his father Sundar Gohain during his Kachārī campaign about the king's amorous relations with his wife. In consequence of this unhappy news Sundar

353. 1. Rājā Jagdev, 2. Gandharva Ray, 3. Rājā Ray, 4. Kālā Rājā, 5. Hara Rājā, 6. Pratāp Singha, 7. Indramani, 8. Nara Singha Ray, 9. Bhagavān Ray, 10. Karmachānd. The last Rājā Karmachānd, said to be son of Satrājit, was later sacrificed before the Goddess Kāmākhyā (Kāmākṣā) of the Bhandari (Bharalī). This Kāmakhyā appears to be of Tezpur Bharali and not of Gauhati Bharali. See *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.22 and *AB - 'SNJC'*, p.59.

Gohain became depressed and indifferent and the Kachāris under Bhimbal taking advantage of it won a decisive victory and became independent. Akhek Gohain who, in the meantime, had been placed in command at Dikhaumukh but who was aggrieved at the king's conduct, was found to have failed in the proper discharge of his duties and was therefore dismissed from his office. He thereafter went over to the north bank and inspired the local chiefs with a spirit of revolt against the king. These chiefs wanted to make him their king. But Ākhek's courage failed when the king wanted to capture him and he fled to the place of Parīkshit, the Koch Rajā of Kāmarūpa, for protection and soon afterwards met the Muslim Governor of Bengal.[354] He had another companion with him and he was his brother Kerā Gohain. They came back to Assam with Saiyid Abā Bakr and took part in his invasion of Assam. At the instance of the king Khāmprat Bar-Gohain managed to contact in the Bharali camp both Ākhek Gohain and Kerā Gohain and requested them fervently to come over to the Ahom side. In this the Bar-Gohain solemnly guaranateed their personal security and assured pardon from the king. Ākhek Gohain then deserted the Muslim camp and came over to the midst of the Ahoms, but Kerā Gohain did not come.[355] It is said that the victory of the Ahoms over the Mughuls at Bharali owes a great deal to Ākhek Gohain's advice and plan of attack.[356] He thus fairly compensated for his lost reputation.

Restoration of Ahom-Kachārī Friendship :

At Kīrtipur (Maibang) king Jashanārāyaṇ was succeeded by Naranārāyaṇ and the latter was succeeded by Bhimbalnārāyaṇ. As already said the Ahom king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's main concern was to restore friendship with the Kachārī Rajā so as to maintain intact the resources of his kingdom to fight the Mughuls (Bangāls) whose designs on Assam he foresaw. He was also apprehensive lest the Bengal Chiefs should form an alliance with Bhimbalnārāyaṇ who at the moment arose as his powerful adversary. He therefore sent a goodwill mission of five men as a feeler to Rajā Bhimbalnārāyaṇ with the instruction to say that it was sent by the Gohains. This procedure was a safeguard against any betrayal of weakness on the part of the king. When they reached the Kachārī

354. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.107-8.
355. *AB - 'SMJC'*, pp.58-59.
356. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.108.

capital and presented themselves before the Rajā the latter asked the object of their mission and by whom were they sent. As instructed they said that they came to solicit friendship and alliance and were commissioned by the Gohains. At this he raised the question of Sundar Gohain's invasion of his kingdom and asked whether it was a sign of friendship. The members of the mission replied that Sundar Gohain had been sent only to escort the Jayantā Princess down to the plains and they did not know how he could march forward to attack the Kachārī country. The king had remained in utter ignorance of the hostilities and was pleased at the defeat and death of the Gohain which was a right punishment for waging war against the Kachārī Rajā without his authority. Bhimbal was satisfied with the explanation and acceded to the proposals of friendship and alliance, for he himself was equally eager to establish friendship with the Ahom king. He expressed his desire that an Ahom princess be given in marriage to him in order to make that friendship real and strong just as the Svargadev favoured his ancestors with such compliments. This desire of his he transmitted to the Ahom king through his envoys. This was fulfilled by the offer of Sāringiā Handikoi's daughter as a princess from the Ahom king. Rajā Bhimbal was pleased to have the princess and the subsequent period was marked by exchanges of embassies and amity between the two countries.[357] All this preceded Saiyid Abā Bakr's invasion of Assam. The success of his policy in securing the alliance of the Kachārī Rajā enabled Hsö-Hseng-Hpā to deal a crushing blow to the Mughuls in their first major effort to conquer Assam.

Dimaruā (Demeriā) Became a Dependency of the Ahoms :

The small principality of Dimaruā was originally a dependency of the Kachāis, but the latter's oppression drove its chief Pantisvar (Panthesvar) to seek the protection of Naranārāyaṇ when the latter extended his conquests to Assam. Naranārāyaṇ had subdued eighteen hill-side chiefs. He placed the Dimaruā chief at the head of all these chiefs and installed him as a tributary Rajā under the Koches on the Jayantā frontier with jurisdiction over a tract inhabited by about 18,000 people. Pantisvar's son Chakradhvaj was imprisoned by Naranārāyaṇ for neglecting to pay the usual tributes, but was later released on the intercession of Raghudev. He was reinstated in his former position by Raghudev when he became Rajā of the eastern Koch kingdom. Since then Chakradhvaj paid tributes to Raghudev. Chakradhvaj's descendants Poal Singha, Ratnākar and Prabhākar were tributary to Parikshit. The arrest of Prabhākar by the Jayantā Rajā Dhanamānik led to a conflict between Dhanamānik and the Kachārī Rajā Jashanārāyaṇ in which the former was defeated. But when Parīkshit surrendered to the Mughuls Prabhākar's son Mangal, who succeeded, met Hābung-Pikchāi, the Ahom officer at Kājalī, and sought the protection of the Svarga Mahārajā and the latter was pleased to give the protection prayed for. Thus Dimaruā became an Ahom dependency and Mangal a feudatory chief of that State to whom the Svarga Mahārāj made presents of a *Hengdān* (Ahom sword), a wife and an elephant.[358] All other chiefs of the south bank also came with their families and submitted to the Svargadev.[359]

357. *KB*, pp. 26-29; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.73.

Modification of Mughul Policy :
Last Days of Lakshminārāyaṇ :

The disastrous defeat of Abā Bakr and Satrājit at the battle of the Bharalī was a great blow to the pride and prestige of the Mughuls which sobered down the aggressive policy of their rulers towards their eastern neighbours. Another effect of it was the replacement of Qāsim Khān by Ibrāhim Khān Fāthjāng in April 1617 as Subāhdār of Bengal. On the advice of the new Subāhdār, who was both able and tactful, the Emperor, in order to secure Koch co-operation against the Ahoms, the formidable rivals of the Mughuls, whose rise and successes inspired the aggrieved Koches to revolt constantly, released Lakshmīnārāyaṇ by the end of 1617 after a long detention of over three years and reinstated him to his kingdom. Lakshmīnārāyan was now a nominal vassal ruler pledged to serve the cause of the Mughuls. He was in the very next year required to transfer his residence to Hājo to help the Chief Administrative Officer, Shaykh Kamāl, of whom he was a favourite and who undertook to realise from him the tribute of one *lakh* of rupees. Lakshmīnārāyaṇ helped the Mughul commanders from time to time with his own contingents in the campaigns against Assam. He helped particularly his friends Mirza Nāthān,[360] who was the Mughul *Thānādār* of the south bank territory, with a small contingent of horse and foot soldiers or *paiks* when

358. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.23-24; Tr. 84 (*DHAS*); *BBB* in *DAB*, p.106; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.109.
359. *BBB* in see *DAB*, p.106.
360. also called Mirzā Nāthulā in the Assamese Chronicles.

the Ahom, in aid of Rajā Balinārāyaṇ, Māmu Govinda and Shumarood Kāyth (probably Samudra Kāyastha) made a series of attacks in September, 1619, on Ranī Hāt, Minari, Hātigaon and other *Dakṣhinkul* thānās. Lakshmīnārāyaṇ's help did not count against the massive attacks of the Assamese which not only forced Mīrzā Nathan to flee away from the occupied country but also put the Assamese in possession of a vast quantity of war equipments and 35 horses of Lakshmīnārāyṇ sent as aid to the Mughul *Thānādār*.[361]

As a sequel to these reverses Lakshmīnārāyṇ offered to mediate for peace between the Ahoms and the Muslims, who were constantly engaged in hostilities. The offer was probably accepted by the Bengal Governor. Lakshmīnārāyaṇ then selected one Biru Qazi to go as his representative to Garhgaon for mediation. Biru Qazi first contacted Shaykh Kamāl and told about it. He also pointed out how its success would open up the door for obtaining ivory and aloe wood from Assam. With Shaykh Kamāl's consent he proceeded to Āgiathuti and sent messengers to Lāngi Phukan, the Ahom officer in charge of Kājali Station, who, in turn, informed the king of the object of Biru Qazi's mission. The king asked Lāngi Phukan to bring the ambassador to Garhgaon.[362]

Then in the month of *Dinchit* (*Jaiṣtha*) in A.D. 1620 Biru Qazi appeared at Garhgaon with Lāngi Phukan as a mediator and conveyed to king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā the wish of the Muslim king (Mughul Emperor) 'to make peace'. He also said that 'I, your slave, have been sent to you by Lakshmīnārāyaṇ to inform you of the matter'. Hsö-Hseng-Hpā detained this ambassador of peace as a hostage with the remark, 'If Lakshmīnārāyaṇ can manage to put a stop to the war that has been going on between us by making peace, I shall allow you to go back to your country as early as possible, but if Lakshmīnārāyaṇ cannot bring peace, I shall not allow you to go back'.[363] He was then given quarters at Bāghchuā to live under proper supervision.

361. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, pp.159-61.

362. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp. 25-26. Qazi means a judge, one who decides cases finally.

363. *AB*. pp.107-8; *BBB* in *DAB*, p.108 ; *DAB*, pp.62-63. Biru Qazi's mission remains unmentioned by Mīrzā Nathan who had been just driven off from Assam by the Ahoms and was in a desperate situation having little or no notice of this affair, particularly when nothing was known about what happened to Biru Qazi after his departure to Garhgaon. Biru Qazi's activity was known more to the Ahom Court than to the Muslims after he had left Hājo. Hence the record in the Assam Chronicles.

Mīrzā Nathan, as will be related below, tried to subdue the south bank during 1619-20 but was driven off by the Ahoms. Lakshmīnārāyaṇ sent a contingent of 40 cavalry and 300 *paiks* to help Mīrzā Nathan in this campaign. In January 1620, Mīrzā Nathan again attacked the Dakṣhinkul and won a victory over the Assamese.[364] To help Mīrzā in this campaign Lakshmīnārāyaṇ sent his cousin Rām Singh with a force from Hājo. In May 1624, the rebellious Mughul Prince Shāh Jāhān defeated the Bengal Subāhdār with the result that Lakshmīnārāyaṇ transferred his allegiance to the victorious Prince probably with the hope of getting permission from the latter to go back to his own kingdom. But, this opportunity did not come as Shāh Jāhān was defeated and had to quit Bengal. The Koch Prince again joined the ranks of the old Emperor. The Jesuit travellers Stephen Cacella and John Cabral, who appeared at Hajo in August 1626, had audience with Lakshmīnārāyaṇ, but Cacella writing on October 4, 1627 says that he 'is now dead'. Thus he died between these two dates. But according to the *Ahom Buranji* (p. 112), as translated by G.C. Barua, he died in A.D. 1632 and could not offer his daughter to Hsö-Hseng-Hpā in marriage which was about to take place. Both the accounts are very definite but irreconcilable. Lakshmīnārāyaṇ was succeeded by his son, Bīrnārāyaṇ, but the latter was not in favour of marrying his sister to Hsö-Hseng-Hpā. At this, Biru Qazi took the opportunity of offering his daughter Lakshmīpuriā (Lakshmipriyā ?) to the king and the grand-daughter Hempuriā (Hemapriyā ?) to the king's son Chao-ngi Gohain with rich presents of dowries.

Mughul-Ahom War Continued :

The debacle of Abā Bakr's Assam expedition was followed by a series of campaigns by the Ahoms against the Mughuls who had their strongholds in Kāmrūp. Meanwhile Hsö-Hseng-Hpā reconstructed and improved the fortifications at different places, particularly at Sāmdharā, Kaliābar, Chinātali and Deopāni. In A.D. 1618 during November-December (*Dinching*) the Ahom king received at his camp at Yātrā-Ghat the Koch princes Chandranārāyaṇ, Hemnārāyaṇ and Sangrāmjit who came to pay their respects to him. They left with presents received from the king. In the following month the vanguard of the Ahom army

364. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, pp.160-61.

365. *Early Jesuit Travellers*, (The Hague) by C. Wessels, S.J., 1924, p.126.

pushing west-ward reached Pāndu where it erected a fort and reported about it to Svargadev. Next, when the king was at Jolāibandhā, two Dhekeris, named Joynārāyaṇ and Rāmdev, paid their homage to him. There came also to the Ahom king large numbers of leading men of Parīkshit's kingdom, both from the north and south banks, offering their whole-hearted co-operation in expelling the Muslims from Hājo.[366] The king felt encouraged at this support and drew up plans to attack the Muslims.

The affairs of the Mughuls in Bengal and Kāmrūp about this time deserve notice. Shaykh Ibrāhim, who had served as the Karorī (Mughul revenue collector) in the Koch country of Kāmarūpa, misappropriated rupees seven *lakhs* of the imperial revenues and also caused other losses. He had under him an army of more than three thousand men. Being afraid of investigation into the accounts he sent men to the Ahom king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā with the following message; 'As the great imperial army had been annihilated in your country (referring to Abā Bakr's defeat) the only course left open (to the imperialists) to achieve the purpose of extirpating you root and branch, is to send, in near future, a big army against you from Delhi. Under the circumstances, if you help me with men and money and make me the king of Kuch (i.e. Koch country) I will exert my utmost valour to my last breath, and I will be devoted to you and will never allow the armies of Delhi to proceed against you as long as I live'. The Ahom king welcomed the proposal but could not trust the Mughul officer to place at his disposal men and money. He therefore replied - 'Until you first lead the war against the imperial army in this country and send to me one or two of their men alive or dead, I cannot in my farsightedness believe you all on a sudden. Under the circumstances, if you are firm in this proposal you should utilise this opportunity and put it into execution. The country of Kāmrūp, nay even (the country of) Mānchabāt will be given to you. I will give you even my daughter ; and I will give you from my treasury, elephant-stable, artillery and the fleet in such large quantities the like of which you have never seen even in your dreams, not to speak of the hours of your wakefulness'.[367]

Inspired by this encouraging reply from the Ahom king the Shaykh sent a Koch force to attack the Mughul Thānā of Dhamdhamā in the

366. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.24.
367. quoted by Mirzā Nathan in his account. See *B.G.* II, p.443.

present Sub-Division of Nalbāri and got a Koch rebel chief, named Sanātan, to command it, Mīrzā Sālih Arghun, who was in charge of the garrision of Dhamdhamā became aware of the march of the rebel force and remained prepared with the co-operation of the local Zamindārs with whom he was on very friendly terms. Sanātan made a very heavy night attack on the fort and twice entered it, but Mīrzā Sālih repulsed the attackers on both the occasions. Yet the Mīrzā fell into a desperate situation and sent urgent messages to Mīrzā Nathan, who was then the chief of Kāmrūp and was at Hājo, the provincial head-quarters, asking for reinforcements. Mīrzā Nathan spared no moment to despatch Mīr Abdu'r-Razzāq with a force to the assistance of Mīrzā Sālih but he failed to reach the destination as the road was blocked by the rebels at Jharighāt. But Mīrzā Nathan managed to send war-weapons to the beleaguered garrison by a secret route and also wrote to Mīrzā Sālih to return to Hājo immediately. The supply of arms enabled the latter to fight the enemy and proceed to Hājo, Mīrzā Nathan escorting him from the river Barliā. The rebels did not succeed. At the same time the Mughul imperial authority, on receiving the report of the rebellion, despatched a fleet and a large artillery under the chief command of Chishti Khān and the generalship of Shaykh Kamāl Islām Khāni for punishing Shaykh Ibrāhim, whom the Emperor ordered to be captured and sent alive to the imperial Court. The rebel leader successfully eluded capture for a time but eventually, after a hard fight, died at the hands of 'Abdu'r-Razzāq, who cut off his head and sent to Dacca.[368]

Shaykh Ibrāhim's death hastened the preparation at Garhgaon for sendinga powerful army to Gauhati to punish the Mughuls and drive them out of Kāmrūp. Hsö-Hseng-Hpā bitterly criticised the conduct of the Lower Assam generals in allowing the Shaykh to be killed in that way. 'The destruction of the Shaykh is', he wrote to them, 'due to your treacherous conduct. Now if you do not compensate for it, you will feel its consequences'.[369] This news was reported to Mirzā Nathan and the latter communicated it to Ibrāhim Khān Fatḥ-jang, the Mughul Subahdar of Bengal. Sometime back Baldev, the brother of Rajā Parīkshit, came

368. *BG.* (Book III, Chap.I) gives full details of Shaykh Ibrāhims rebellion and ultimate tragic end.
369. *BG.* II, p.479.

with a force of 18,000 hill-men and attacked and besieged the fort of Pāndu. Though initially there was no success, later it was captured by him after its evacuation by the Muslims.[370] Meanwhile the Ahom king despatched Lāngudām Abhoipuria Barua as the Commandant of the Pāndu garrison and he himself proceeded down to Visvanāth and thence to Sāmdharā. He also ordered an army unit with a few officers including Lāngudām to advance to Āgiāthuti on the north bank. The Muslims sailed up to that place and engaged the Assamese garrison there in a skirmish. The Muslims being fired at by the Ahom artillery retreated to Hājo. On receipt of the report of this success the Ahom king sent the Burā-Gohain, the Bar-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain to Pandu with a large reinforcement.

On the Mughul side the prospect of the Ahom invasion made Mīrzā Nathan inform the imperial authorities in Dacca and Delhi all about the developments in Assam and ask for necessary reinforcements. Mīrzā Yusuf was ordered to recapture Pāndu well before the arrival of the Ahom army which was on way. He then pitched a camp on a *char* (island) situated between Hājo and Pāndu and made a survey of the Assamese forces. Rajā Satrājit with his Hindu officer Badridās was sent to the aid of Mīrzā Yusuf. But in face of the Assamese forces their courage failed and they returned to Hājo abandoning the *bālichar* camp.

The imperial Court appointed Qulij Khān to the post of the Jāgirdār and the Chief Administrator of the Koch country. He arrived at Barnagar in Kāmrūp but could not proceed further as the rumours of enemy activities were very strong. But he was urged by Mīrzā Nathan by a letter to come to Hājo immediately as 'the Rajā of Assam is advancing in triumph'. Qulij Khān then hastened to Hājo and on arrival was received by Mīrzā Nathan, who also requested the Khān to take over all powers from him. But Qulij asked Nathan to act as the *de facto* Chief under his advice. For the cowardice of Satrājit Badridās was appointed over him. At that time Shaykh Kamal, with some imperial officers, was away from Hājo as he had been deputed to punish Shaykh Ibrāhim. Shaykh Kamāl returned to Hājo but did not enter the city owing to his hatred towards Mīrzā Nathan. He alighted and put up near the Hayagriba Mādhava Temple. Under his direction the construction of a fort at Taliā or Talayā of the Assamese Buranjīs, some five miles north-east of Hājo, was commenced but, it is said, it could not be completed.

370. *Ibid.*, p.480.

The Ahom army and navy with their hill auxiliaries arrived at Gauhati. The king himself issued directions to Gauhati from his Sāmdharā camp in consultation with his war experts. At this time the Commandant Lāngudām fell ill and had to retire from Āgiāthuti. The king immediately appointed Lāluk, son of Madhokhowā Hāzarikā, and Lāshām Chiring as Commandants (war Neogs) with powers to behead any body disobeying them. On the north bank the Muslims retreated to Hājo where lay their main fort. The front line of the Ahoms reached Sessā, Āgiāthuti and Talayā hill. In the background up to Sarāighāt all necessary fortifications were made. The Ahom navy commanded the waterway. Regarding the strength and disposition of the Assamese forces the writer of the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* gives a graphic description as follows : 'The Burhā-Gohain (Thakbak) at the head of one hundred thousand infantry was to move along the hilly and jungly bank of the Brahmaputra, leaving the hillock of Sultān Ghiyāsu'd-Dīn Awliyā (*Poā Muccā*) to his right and the temple of Kedār to his left, in order to attack Qulij Khān, Mīrzā Nathan and those who were in the fort of Hājo, and to finish them. Hāti Barua (probably Lāngudām Abhoypuriā Baruā), Rajā Baldev and Shumaruyed Kāyeth with a force of two hundred thousand infantry, one hundred and eighty elephants....were to go along with him by the other side of the river in order to fall upon Shaykh Kamāl, to sweep him off and not to allow even a bird to fly out of the cordon by a charge from the rear. The Rājkhowā and the Khārghukā (Khārghariā Phukan) were to take the command of the fleet consisting of four thousand war-boats of the class of *mand, bāchāri, kusa* and *kus* in order to attack the fleet of the Twelve Bhuyāns who were loyally supporting the imperialists, - to seize them and not to allow any of them to escape by the river with his fleet. The Eighteen Hill-Rajās, who sided with the enemy and rebelled against the imperialists, were to take their position with all their hill-men on the bank of the river to the left of their fleet in order to aid it and not to allow any body to escape towards the Dakhiṇkul (south bank). One thousand war-boats were sent to the mouth of the river Rāwrowā to the rear of the imperial army in order to block the passage of ration and communication from Jahāngīrnagar *alias* Dhākā during the days of the siege. In short, the imperial army was brought to bay like games in a hunt'.[371] Though certain

371. *BG.* II. p. 488.

figures in the Mugul estimates seem to be exaggerated there is nothing to doubt about the general disposition of the Ahom and the allied forces.

The Ahom generals had strict orders not to hasten to the attack before certain tests and their results were known to be favourable. The king therefore advised the officers and the soldiers not to take aggressive part till they would get final order from him 'No body must advance from the fort at Sessā', said the king in a message to the three Gohains and other officers, 'until my order reaches you'.[372]

Battle of Hājo, 1618 : (Emperor Jahāngīr's Reign A.D. 1605-1627)

From the Ahom camp at Āgiāthuti reconnoitring parties were sent forward in disguise to watch the activities of the Muslims at Hājo and these parties went very close to the enemy fort and returned safely. One day one hundred Muslim horses (see *DAB*, p.59) approached the Ahom fort which gave the impression of a move for an attack on it and so the Commandants, in utter disregard of the advice of the Gohains and the the Deodhāi Pundits to wait for the king's orders, drove out the troops from the fort at night and made an attack on the Muslim fort on the Hājo hill. There was a bloody battle. According to the version in the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* (p.488) the Burā-Gohain advanced at midnight to deliver his gigantic attack with his mighty army by the hilly and jungly tracks. He first massacred the devotees of the holy shrine on the hillock of Sultān Ghiyāsu'd-Dīn Awliyā and swept through the side of that hillock smashing the resistance of a group of Mughul officers among whom was also Qulīj Khān's son and finally fell upon the stockade of the Khān. One Mughul general named Dust Beg, who lately arrived at Hājo with a contingent of twenty thousand men, ran to the aid of the Khān. The Ahoms converged from all sides. 'Every one of them was skilled wherever he was found', but a great resistance was offered by the Khān to their further progress.

Mīrzā Nathan with his Usmānī Afghān Manṣabdārs and other warriors was posted in the reserve by Qulīj Khān in the main fort of

372. *AB*, p.103; *DAB*, p.59. In the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* (II.p.487) the king's order was just the opposite of it. It quotes the king as saying :— "As the armies of Delhi have not yet begun their attack and as you have already reached near them with a large army, it is proper for you to begin the battle without further delay, according to the maxim-'He never loses who strikes first', and watch its results".

Hājo in order to help any regiment if overpowered by the Assamese. While the Burā-Gohain, the supreme commander of his division, the Barpātra-Gohain, Mani konwar, Mau Hāzarikā and other gallant fighters were, in co-ordination with their navy, hammering the defences of Qulīj Khān, the Hātī Barua, Rajā Baldev (Raja Balinārāyaṇ), Shumarud Kayeth, the Bar-Gohain, Lāi Gohain and the Rāidangiā Baruā, advancing along the side of the Tilao (Lohit,) ascended the Hajo hill at dawn with their huge infantry divisions strengthened by innumerable war elephants in awe-inspiring formations. At that moment Shaykh Kamāl was getting ready to go to the assistance of Qulīj Khān, who was fighting in a precarious state, but he had to abandon that idea at the sight of the Assam army which commenced firing guns and discharging showers of arrows at the Muslim army he commanded. Now Shaykh Kamāl and Rajā Satrājit with their imperial Manṣabdārs had to face this overwhelming danger. In the battle that raged with all fury Shaykh Kamāl was pressed so hard that he had to send messenger after messenger to Mīrzā Nathan frantically asking for help. At the last moment a Hindu officer named Rāmdās ran desperately to the Mīrzā and cried, 'If aid is delayed by a moment everything will be lost'. Those who were watching the progress of the battle on horseback from elevated places cried out, 'Alas ! Alas ! the enemy has swept the regiment of the Shaykh'. The Mīrzā then lost no moment in spurring his horse and rushing forth with his cavalry brigade to help the Shaykh. As the Assamese have now come out into the open ground the Mīrzā made fierce flank attack on them with his cavalry causing large numbers of them to roll down on the ground in a moment's notice. Yet the morale of the Assamese was kept up and their generals fought with dogged tenacity till their arms were all exhausted. The account of this battle as described in the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* says in admiration 'the generals of Assam fought so hard that all their quivers became empty of arrows and the *dutadāns* (bags for keeping short javelins) became empty of *dutas* i.e. a kind of javelin which they throw with the strength of their arm and which is always used by them in battles. The affair came to such a pass that they began to hurl from elephant's back their naked *hengdāns* i.e. a kind of half-swords, which they carry in their belts'.[373] Soon the tide

373. *BG*. II, pp.490:92. *Hengdān* is a Tai-Ahom word meaning a kind of sword used by the Ahom nobility. *AB*. pp.103-104; *DAB*, p.60, *Kamrupar Buranji* pp.24-25; Brief reference in *AB*—'*SMJC*', p. 61.

of the battle was changed and the Ahom and allied generals, the Hāti-Baruā, the Bar-Gohain, the Koch leaders and a Chutiyā Prince Jadu Dekā, being helpless without weapons, had to leave the battlefield to safer places, and the battle was lost. This victory was regarded by the Mughuls as one of their foremost military conquests.

In the meantime, the news came of a signal naval victory of the Assamese over the imperial fleet. The Assamese navy derived its main strength from the army of the Burā-Gohain which, fighting on the hill, forced Qulij Khān to fall back on the temple of Mahādev. By an adroit manoeuvre followed by a vigorous attack the Ahom navy completely overpowered the imperial fleet driving ashore more than half of Mughul boats. Thereafter the imperial commanders, Sunā Ghāzī and Islām Qulī, were instructed by Qulij Khān not to take their boats away to deep waters over which the Assamese navy had now established complete mastery.[374]

Qulij Khān was engaged in a death struggle with the possibility of being wiped out at any time by the Burā-Gohain, and he saw no good in retreating any further. Shaykh Kamāl and Mīrzā Nathan being free after liquidating their adversaries ran to the aid of the Khān. The Ahom infantry was still in the hills and jungles helping their navy in its attack. At the same time a plan had to be evolved immediately for the defence of the main fort at Hājo which was the last resort of the Muslims. According to the plan decided upon Mīrzā and the Shaykh came to inspect and strengthen the main fort leaving their regiments with the Khān for his help. The Zamindārs, who were on the river bank, being driven ashore, were asked to leave the bank and concentrate in the fort. The Muslim generals were anxious to end the battle before nightfall as the Ahoms, noted for night attacks, would have then all the advantage and the cavalry would not work effectively in the dark. For a survey of the walls of the main fort at a glance Shaykh Kamāl and Mīrzā Nathan went up on an elephant to the mansion of the Khān on the top of the hillock accompanied by another officer named Mīr Ghiyāsu'd-Dīn Maḥmūd who took a horse, as from that position they could have a commanding view of everything including the fort which was at a lower elevation. When they reached the top

374. *BG*. II. pp.490, 495.

of the hillock they began to reconnoitre and saw the victorious Assam navy triumphantly passing by the hillock within the range of big guns. The Assamese naval officers did not expect any danger from that quarter. But this bit of carelessness on their part brought a sudden turn of fate ; for, in the mansion of the Khān were kept ready a number of imperial cannon. Mīrzā Nathan shouted to the *gulandāz* (cannoniers) to discharge their cannon at the navy. He pointed out two boats, in particular, in which the chiefs of the navy were coming. The cannoniers at once discharged two loaded cannon at them, but they overshot the targets. Not knowing who attacked them the soldiers and boatmen of these two boats jumped into the river. At once an utter confusion prevailed and fear overtook all in the navy with the result that many of those who jumped into the river were drowned while the others drove fast to the bank where they disembarked in desperation and ran away for safety into the forests. The imperial commanders then fell upon the vanquished navy and seized a large booty. The Muslims took it to be a 'God-given victory'.[375]

At the sight of the defeat of their navy the Burā-Gohain's army began to lose heart. At this weak and exciting moment the Muslim generals, raising a cry of *Allah-u-Akbar*, appeared on the scene and made a furious cavalry attack on the Ahoms, who had by that time advanced to the open plains emerging from the hills and jungles. The Muslims first charged and routed the Abhoipuriās of Lāku Barpātra-Gohain killing many of them. The Gohain retreated on an elephant, but Maṇi Konwar was killed. Kerā Gohain, who was found with the Mughuls, captured a well-known war elephant of the Ahom generals, but the elephant flung him off and returned to the Ahom camp.[376] Soon afterwards Thakbak Burā-Gohain had to make precipitate retreat on an elephant when his troops were dispersed by the onset of the enemy cavalry charges, but was wounded by a stray bullet and fell down from the back of the elephant and his loin was fractured. He was carried off by the Muslims and unknowingly killed by one of the officers of the Manṣabdārs.[377] Thus the victory was at last won by the Mughuls and the kettle-drums of conquest were sounded. The Ahoms then

375. *BG*, II. pp.494-95.
376. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.25.
377. *AB*, pp.103-4 ; *DAB*, p.60; *BG*. II, p.496.

withdrew to Kājali.[378] It was an unfortunate discomfiture for the Assamese which is to be attributed to the miscalculation and rash adventure of the Ahom war-Neogs, who allowed themselves prematurely to be manoeuvred out of their strongholds by a few Mughul horsemen, who sought an opportunity to pounce upon the Assamese in the open field with their chargers before their strength was exhausted. The Ahom commanders fell into this trap by not waiting for the king's final order as to what was to be done.

According to the Mughul estimates the Assamese lost to the Mughuls three thousand and eight hundred boats with their booty out of the total strength of four thousand in the whole navy. On the battle-field their loss was three thousand and seven hundred men killed and double of this number died in the adjacent places and more than ten thousand wounded men fled away half-dead. On the Mughul side the total killed were shown to be two hundred men and double of this number were wounded. From the graphic description of the battle as given by the author of the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* the Mughul losses seem to be highly minimized. It is also mentioned that the heads of the Assamese soldiers, killed in the battle, were cut off and sent to Daccā.[379] In the Buranjīs of Assam no mention is made of the Mughul losses but it is admitted that there were heavy casualties among the Assamese and also that the Mughuls seized a large number of guns and shields, a large quantity of booty, killed eight elephants and sank many large ships including thirteen gilded ones.[380]

When the reports of the Ahoms' defeat at Hājo reached the king he again returned to Sāmdharā and ordered the defeated generals to be brought there. All the leaders and Commandants, who had brought the defeat on them by disobeying the king's timely warning against being rash and aggressive, were variously punished according to the gravity of their offences. The Chief Neogs (Commandants), Lāluk Gohain and Lāshām Chiring, who were mainly responsible for the defeat, were put into a solitary confinement near the Dikhau river and were

378. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.26; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.61.
379. *BG*. II, p.497.
380. *AB*, p.104; *DAB*, p.60.

starved to death in it.[381] According to another version they were pressed to death.[382] A number of other officers including Lāngudām, Abhoipuriā Baruā were also punished with death. The exact offence for which Lāngudām was executed is not clear from the text. Probably it was that he being ill had left his station for home before a substitute was appointed. Even for illness he being the chief commandant at the fort of Pāndu should not have gone home all at once leaving it to the mercies of the enemies at that crucial time.

Offices of Bar-Phukan and Bar-Barua Created :

As Thakbak Burā-Gohain fell in the battle of Hājo the king appointed Śukulā Hudu as the next Burā-Gohain and substituted Piling as Bar-Gohain for Guimelā who had proved an incapable general at Hājo. Further, he found that the generals and officers, whom he had appointed, did not act in concert and according to royal commands with the consequence that they suffered defeat. It was only Lāngi Pāṇisiyā who proved his leadership by rallying the fugitive troops and officers and restoring order and morale in the army. He alone could give true report of the state of affairs of the Lower Assam campaign. Hence the king felt the need of a viceroy of his for the whole of Lower Assam with supreme military and civil authority over all to prevent future disruptions in the ranks and appointed Lāngi Pāṇisiyā as the first Viceroy under the title of Phu-Kan-Lung or Bar-Phukan with jurisdiction over all the territories west of Kaliabar in the present district of Nowgong. This Bar-Phukan's headquarters were at Kājalī. The tracts east of Kaliabar, outside the jurisdiction of the Bar-Gohain and the Burā-Gohain, were since then placed under the administration of another functionary called Phu-Ké-Lung or Bar-Barua. The king's uncle Momāi Tāmulī was appointed as the first Bar-Barua.[383]

Dissensions in the Mughul Camp :
Sarkar of Dakshinkul Assigned to Mirzā Nathan :

The Mughul victory at Hājo led to two consequences ; first, it became a cause of immediate dissension in the Mughul camp at Hājo and

381. *AB*, pp.101-104; *DAB* pp. 58-61; *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.24-25. Lāluk Gohain was of the Maduriāl Bar-Gohain family and was also known as Saru Phukan.
382. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.25; *ACA*, p.91.
383. *AB*—,*SMJC*', pp.61-62, 65; Gait; *op.cit.*, p.110; *ACA* p.91; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.27.

secondly,for those very dissensions Mirza Nathan had to be sent by the Sūbāhdār to conquer the *Dakshiṇkul*. The dissension arose from Shaykh Kamāl's report of the victory at Hājo to the Sūbāhdār of Daccā, Ibrāhīm Khān Fath-jang, in which the Shaykh had taken all the credit for it and the Mīrzā's contribution had been shown to be nothing. Following the report the Sūbāhdār appointed Chisti Khān to take the chief command in the Koch country. In this Mīrzā Nathan's case was not considered though he had been aspiring to the highest place in the conquered country of the Koches. Further, as alleged by the Mīrzā, the Shaykh had instigated the top-ranking imperial officers including Qulīj Khān against him. The quarrel between the Shaykh and the Mīrzā would have broken out into open violence had not the former retrained himself. Mīrzā Nathan proceeded to Daccā to report his version of the affairs at Hājo, but the Sūbāhdār was displeased to see him at Daccā as he went there by leaving the imperial affairs at Hājo in a state of chaos and asked him at once to return to his head-quarters. To this the Mīrzā showed a violent temper as if to kill the Sūbāhdār and commit suicide rather than to go back to Hājo to serve under others. The Sūbāhdār found a solution for him according to which he was deputed to conquer the as-yet-unoccupied Sarkār of *Dakshiṇkul* of the Koch country and take it as his assignment. So settled, he proceeded to conquer that part of the country with a force consisting of his own regiment and an auxiliary force of more than seven hundred horsemen and matchlockmen, fifty war-boats and ten war elephants.[384]

Chishti Khān and the Amīrs arrived at Hājo but as Mīrzā Nathan returned from Daccā 'they could not proceed further in their work'.[385] In this situation Shaykh Kamāl went alone to Daccā and after incurring an initial displeasure of the Khān Fath-jang 'he offered a *peshkash* of Rs. 80,000 to the Khān Fath-jang and secured for himself an increase of 200 in his Manṣab and the office of the chief administrator (Sardar) of Assam'.[386] As mentioned above he also obtained permission to have Rajā Lakshminārāyaṇ as one of his followers at Hājo and undertook to realize the Rajā's *peshkash* of Rs. 100,000 in cash and kind and send to Daccā.

384. *BG*. II, p.502.
385. *BG*. II, pp.521-22.
386. *Ibid*., p.522.

Mīrzā Nathan Invades Dakshiṇkul :

Mīrzā Nathan established his main Thānā (head station) at Bālijānā[387] and invaded *Dakshiṇkul*. There were several Koch rebel chiefs, who still owed their allegiance to their Rajā Balinārāyaṇ (Baldev of Mughul history) and refused to submit to the Mughul authority. The most powerful of these opponents were Paraśurām, Māmu Govinda, Shumarud Kayeth and Balinārāyaṇ himself. The Mīrzā attacked them one by one and put them to flight. The Mīrzā had in his army, besides the Bengal forces, 4,000 Gāros, at least 700 Rābhās and also a number of hill chiefs. These soldiers he recruited locally. The plains below the Gāro Hills, particularly Amjungā, Rangjulī and later Rāṇihāt were the main scenes of war which was fought for over nineteen months. A great part of his success Mīrzā Nathan owed to the aid of one Govinda of the village of Bachadhari, who was simply terrorized into submission for safety of his life by enacting a scene of massacre of captives before him. The details of the progress of the war were reported every week to the Khān Fath-jang. The Khān directed the imperial officer posted at Hājo not to show any negligence in sending reinforcements to the Mīrzā. Accordingly, Rajā Satrājit proceeded to the assistance of the Mīrzā with one hundred horsemen and three hundred brave infantry.

The Mīrzā also attacked the hill-chiefs of the lower and higher hills and sent his predatory bands almost regularly to raid and plunder the peaceful hill-villages. In this respect, unlike the great Mughul generals like Mīr Jumlā, Mīrzā Nathan was a warrior devoid of any consideration and scruples. The allied hill-chiefs (Rajās) were disgusted with the Mīrzā for his savage treatment of their own people in the villages. These chiefs rebelled and quitted his camp and raised a strong fort at Rāṇihāt appealing at the same time to the Ahom king for help against the Mughuls. In the appeal the hill-chiefs said 'If you help us, we shall bar Mīrzā Nathan's progress towards the kingdom of Assam;[388] otherwise, if this year he becomes victorious over us, nothing will

387. In Mechpārā, south Goalpārā. Martin refers to mud forts raised by the Mughuls at that place of which the traces are still to be seen. (See *Eastern India*, III, p.479).

388. Only the Ahom kingdom was called Assam. (Āssām) in those days and the term Āshām (Assamese) meant the Ahoms only.

prevent him from destroying Assam next year'.[389] In appreciation of this prospective danger the Ahom king despatched an expeditionary force of eighty thousand[390] men under the command of the Hāṭibaruā to the aid of the hill Rajās, and the Rājkhowā and the Khārghariā Phukan were also attached to his company.[391] Rajā Baldev and Shumarud Kayeth, who had suffered several defeats and whose wives and children were now captives in the hands of the Mughuls, also accompanied the Ahom force.

The Mīrzā Expelled by the Ahoms from Dakshiṇkul :

The main fight between the Ahoms and the Mughuls led by Mīrzā Nathan took place in the new fort area of Rāṇihāt. After a trial of strength with the Mughuls which took the form of siege and counter-siege of the respective forts in the area, the Ahoms operating from the Rāṇihāt fort tried to encircle the Mughul forts by building a series of forts around them in the teeth of enemy opposition. There was no decisive victory for any side for some time.

For the delay in the conquest of the Muslims the Ahom king, Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, severely censured the Hātībaruā and other commanders and sent two hundred *Hengdān Dharās* (Ahom swordsmen) with the following orders - 'whoever falls back this time will be cut into two at the waist by the *Hengdān* Dharās'. The Ahom and allied commanders and Rajās then held a conference and decided upon a new plan of attack according to which they came out with their armies to a place situated on the side of Ganjbāib to the south-west of Rāṇihat at a distance of one big-cannon-shot from the imperial fort. There they erected within a night a lofty fort with a deep moat around and its walls and towers were mounted with cannon. More than fifty thousand men, it is said, were engaged in the construction of this mighty fort so close to the Mugul fort, but the Mughuls had no scent of it till the work was completed. When the report of this danger reached Mīrzā Nathan he

389. *BG.* II, pp.571-72.

390. This appears to be another exaggeration of the actual number by the Mughul writer.

391. *BG.* II, p.572. According to the Ahom account in *AB.* (p.105) the chief commanders sent were Labo Baruā (probably Hātībaruā), Lāngi Abhoipuriā, Kaliā Rāidangiā Baruā and a few others.

also erected a defensive stockade with towers. In the meantime Qulīj Khān, who was addicted to excessive drinking, was replaced by Shaykh Kamāl to the Sardārship of the Thānā of Hājo by the Sūbāḥdār of Bengal. The Mughuls could not defend their stockade and the Ahoms entered it and set fire to the houses within it. The Mughul army became so thoroughly demoralized by the Assamese attacks and strategy that it began to disperse and fall back from the front into their main forts in a state of confusion and panic. The Ahom plan was to encircle the Mughul forts by an extension of the high fortification from one end of the hill surrounding all the three forts of Mīrzā Nathan 'like the prey in a ring-hunt'. All people in the Mughul camp felt themselves doomed to death and decided to perform *jawhar* and die after killing their wives. The Assamese then shouted thus : 'Soldiers of the imperial army, behold, how we have surrounded you. If you want to live, the best course for you is to surrender to our Rajā of Assam, otherwise, we shall not allow even a bird of yours to escape and we shall make a general massacre'.[392] In this doomed condition the Mīrzā made the Musalmans take an oath by the Qu'rān and the Hindus in his camp take the same according to Hindu custom, to the effect that they should not leave one another's company and should accept martyrdom following one another's foot-steps. The Ahom plan was not to fall upon the imperialists all at once, which would mean a considerable loss of life to their own side also, so long as the enemies had any effective power of resistance, but to exhaust them and their gun-power and bullets by a long-range attack to be intensified as the enemies become weaker. The effect of it they clearly foresaw when the imperialists were shut up from the outside world without supply. From hour to hour therefore the Assamese became more and more aggressive, and gun-powder, bullets and cannon balls of the Mīrzā's army ran short. The Assamese spies carried this news from time to time to their chiefs. In spite of the solemn resolve not to leave one another many dispirited men of the Mīrzā's camp deserted from the fort at night through certain escape routes. Many again, in utter helplessness, performed *jawhar* inside the fort. The defence of the Muguls completely collapsed. The Mīrzā himself sent away at night some of his women on an elephant under the escort of two trusted officers. He also transferred most of the artillety by means of other elephants, thus disarming the defenders of the

392. *BG.* II, pp.585-87, 596.

fort. But soon after daybreak the Assamese rushed from all sides, broke into the fort of Mīrzā Nathan and started killing the enemies inside it. There was no other alternative for the Mughuls but to fight the losing battle or perform *jawhar*. In fact, the Mughul army was literally massacred. The Assamese also set fire to the fort and the foot soldiers cut off the legs of innumerable horses and men in the camp. It is dramatically described by the author of the *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* how at the last moment the great warrior Mīrzā Nathan and four other officers alone forced their way out through the formidable cordon of the vast besieging army. The Mīrzā, joined by a few more companions, escaped to the north bank of the Brahmaputra by means of boats timely sent by Satrājit, who commanded the navy in this campaign. The Mīrzā first fled to Śuālkuchi and thence to Rāmdiyā. He did not go to Hājo, the Mughul head-quarters, as he looked upon Shaykh Kamāl, the Sardār or military Administrator, as his foe.

A large number of men and officers of the Mughul camp fled towards Hājo hotly chased by the Ahoms and their Koch and tribal allies, but for want of boats many were drowned in the Brahmaputra. The Ahoms gained from the victory two brass cannon, eight large cannon, twenty-seven hand-guns, a pair of shields, sixty horses, a drum and other things.[393] All these were brought to the king at Garhgaon. Mīrzā Nathan's flight from the *Dakshiṇkul* after his disastrous defeat at the hands of the Ahoms not only undid the heard-earned results of his earlier successes against the Koch rebels and the hill-Rajās but also seriously affected the prestige of the Mughuls in the east.

Mīrzā Nathan next attempted to retrieve his lost prestige by recruiting a force at Rāmdiyā and raising a loan at Gilahnay and invading afresh the *Dakshiṇkul* early in A. D. 1620. From Jumuriā he sent some booties including elephants to the Sūbāhdār of Bengal. He conquered the fort of the rebels at Minari and constantly raided the hill-villages for supplies. One consequence of these plundering raids was that an insurrection broke out in Khuntāghāt, to suppress which Nathan was deputed after investing him with the Sardārship of the expedition. His force, among others, had 140 Firingis (Europeans). At Hāngrābārī, the Ahoms, who appeared on invitation from Shumarud, defeated the

393. *AB*, pp.105-6; *DAB*, 61-62.

Mughuls killing seven hundred brave men of the cavalry and infantry of the Mīrzā. It is mentioned in *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybi* (pp. 623-24) that the Ahoms effectively checked the galloping charge of the Mughul cavalry by setting a big net before it and they also used a kind of rocket-like weapon called *chandrabāns*. It is said that Satrājit, out of hatred for Mīrzā Nathan, instigated Shumarud to call in the Ahoms, who took the opportunity to strike this blow on the Muslims. Though Nathan claims to have succeeded in capturing Shumarud and subduing the hill-chiefs his hold on the *Dakshiṇkul* was only temporary. This second invasion of Nathan finds no mention in the extant Burañjis of Assam.

The Koch princes and then frontier Rajās then went to Garhgaon and paid their grateful homage to Chao-Hpā Hsö-Hseng and the latter wanted all to join the Ahoms in a general campaign against the Mughuls. The king also sent the frontier chiefs by giving them choicest presents to be prepared for it. Now it was at this stage that Rajā Lakshminārāyaṇ offered to mediate for peace between the Ahoms and the Mughuls and sent Biru Qāzi to Garhgaon with this mission in the summer of 1620.

Mamu Govinda and Satrājit :

It appears that Mīrzā Nathan's second invasion of *Dakshiṇkul* did not give him any permanent hold on that region against the constant pressure of the Ahoms. For soemtime between A.D. 1620 and 1627 Mamu Govinda, uncle of Parīkshit and the chief (Baruā) of Beltalā, became a feudatory ruler of that region with Karaibāri as its western boundary under the Ahom king. This was possible because Māmu was an ally of the Ahoms in fighting the Mughuls. Satrājit, the naval commander of the Mughuls and a friend of Shaykh Kamāl attempted an invasion of *Dakshiṇkul*, but the timely arrival of 2,000 *kāḍīs* (archers) from the Ahom kingdom in aid of Māmu warded off the danger. Satrājit next made friendship with the Bar-Phukan and secretly communicated with king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā through the latter apparently making his submission by professions of filial obedience. Satrājit also sent his wife and his ten-year-old son to pay homage to the Ahom King.[394]

394. *BBB*, pp.108-9. The date of Satrājit's wife's visit to Garhgaon is mentioned in this Chronicle as *Sak*. 1553, *Chaitra* (A.D. 1631) which appears to be post-dated by about 3 years when compared with the Tai-Ahom Buranji. See *AB*, p.110; *DAB*, p.64. According to *DAB* (p.64) there were two meetings of the Bar-Phukan, and it was only at the second meeting that the Bar-Phukan went prepared to seize Rajā Satrājit.

Māmu's good relations with Dharmanārāyaṇ (Balinārāyaṇ) were lost when the latter put his son Madhu Nāyak to death for rebellion. Both Dharmanārāyaṇ and the Ahom king repeatedly summoned Māmu Govinda to their presence, but Māmu, feeling insecure after what had happened to his son, refused to leave Luki where he took refuge at the instance of the Bar-Phukan. He was also suspected of making overtures to Nawab of Daccā and transmitting secrets of Assam to him.

Satrājit being aware of this estrangement of Māmu Govinda wrote to the Ahom king volunteering to seize the refractory chief and despatch him to Garhgaon. The king then sent Ratna Kandali, Jabar Khari and Ekādah to fetch Māmu and gave permission to Satrājit to proceed to capture him. Māmu was soon surrounded from the east by the Ahoms and from the west by Satrājit. But he escaped to Bengal where he was seized by Satrājit and sent to the Nawab of Daccā, Abdul Islām, not to Garhgaon.[395] His wife and children, whom he had left behind, were removed to Jākhali. Satrājit now proved faithless to the Ahom king and the latter advised the Viceroy of Lower Assam to capture him by any means and inform.[396] The Bar-Phukan succeeded in arranging a meeting through Bhelāi with Rajā Satrājit on the sands of Umānanda apparently for mutual friendship. The Rajā, however, came with proper security guards in sixty boats. The Bar-Phukan, accompanied by other officers, proceeded down from Kājalī with one hundred and five boats. Both the chiefs very cordially received each other by embraces, sat on the same carpet, talked and exchanged presents.[397] But Satrājit, suspecting the show of freindship by the Bar-Phukan to be an affectation, was all the time on guard. After a brief talk he rose and hurriedly sailed off to Hājo and the Bar-Phukan, too, returned to Kājalī failing to seize him.

Three Mudois and Ambassadors from Daccā :

On another occasion three traders named Sonāri Mudoi, Narahari Mudoi and Jayhari Mudoi, doing trading business at Śrī Suryya, volunteered to help in settling peace with Assam and communicated the same

395. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.30; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.66; *BBB*, p.110. Abdul Islām is mentioned in *BBB* as the Nawab of Daccā at that time.

396. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.29; *BBB*, p.110; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.64.

397. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.65; *AB*, p.110. But *Kamrupar Buranji* (p.29) says that Satrājit met the Bar-Phukan and talked with him. from his boat in fear of the Ahoms and did not come out of his boat to the beach.

to the Nawab of Daccā. The Nawab agreed and sent with them his own ambassadors, Bazit Khān and Gopāl, as a peace mission to the Ahom Court to request the king to allow him to establish a *hāt* (exchange mart) at the mouth of the Sonkosh. They carried with them necessary credentials, plenty of presents and an epistle from the Nawab addressed to the Ahom king. They arrived at Kuruā and Sonāri Mudoi informed the Bar-Phukan at Kājalī about it. But Satrājit, who had learnt about the arrival of the Daccā mission, immediately dissuaded the Bar-Phukan from entertaining it as it would eventually lead to the disclosure of all that he had been doing in Assam, including his own peace moves, without proper authority from the Bengal Governor. His ulterior object was to play off the Ahoms against the Mughuls for his gain in position in Kāmrup. The Bar-Phukan at his instance made a travesty of the peace mission and informed the king that Sonāri Mudoi, after reporting to the Muslim Governor at Daccā all about the internal affairs of the Ahom kingdom, had come leading a Bengal embassy with necessary ambassadorial papers to make peace with the Swargadev. The king could not tolerate such meddlesomeness in politics on the part of traders and remarked that 'he is a trader and should therefore mind his business of trade alone, why should he bring Bengal ambassadors' ? With the king's orders all the three traders were executed at Kuruā and the Bengal ambassadors were sent back from that place.[398]

Fall of the First Bar-Phukan :

The Ahom king was very much dissatisfied with his viceroy, Lāngi Bar-Phukan, who failed properly to discharge the responsibilities of his high office. When the king learnt more about the way in which he handled the affairs of Lower Assam he charged him on three counts: First he failed to seize Satrājit though the latter came and met him. The allegation against the Bar-Phukan by the other officers of Lower Assam was that he did not seize Satrājit as that would have destroyed the friendship built up between them; secondly, he had sent Māmu Govinda to Luki with the object of creating a rupture between him and Dharmanārāyaṇ; and thirdly, he deliberately misrepresented the embassy that had been sent from Daccā and did not send to the king the presents brought by them. Hence the king punished the Bar-phukan and his

398. *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.66-67; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, pp.27-28, *BBB*, p.110-111.

associate Parbatiā Baruā with death by starvation. Next Bar-Phukan appointed was Abhoypuriā Neog Gohain (called also Neog's son), who assumed charge in August, 1931.[399]

War with the Mughuls Renewed (1637-41) :

In the next year the king also reconstructed the fort of Marangi and strengthened it by transferring many people to that area from Abhoipur, Dihing and Nāmdāng. With these new settlements the king appointed Kan-Seng Barpātra's grandson Ākhek as Marangikhowā Gohain (Governor of Marangi). Frictions with the Mughuls on the western border continued to occur. About A.D. 1635 a number of Hindu chiefs including Gābharu Ray and Harikesh came over to the Ahom side and sought protection of the Svargadev. Nawab Abdul Islām of Daccā demanded the extradition of Harikesh who had owed to him rupees five hundred. The Ahom king refused to hand over a person who had submitted to him for protection and, in this respect, reminded the Nawab of his action of not returning the offender, Māmu Govinda, who had fled to Bengal.[400] Then Shayakh Farid and Māmud proceeded up the Barliā (Baraliyā) to seize Harikesh but were chased out of the Ahom territories by Kalanchu Handikoi. These incidents developed high tension in the Ahom-Mughul relations, which, not long after, broke out again into open warfare.

In the meantime, knowing that major operations would be neccssary to clear the land of the Muslim menace, king Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, in the spring of 1637, ordered the son of Neog Phukan (Bar-Phukan) to summon all the frontier Rajās and chiefs[401] to Kājalī and inform them of the king's desire that they should all proceed against the Muslims with their regiments in the company of the Ahom army. Accordingly, the summons were issued, the Rajās and chiefs assembled and held a war council

399. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.67; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.30; *AB*, p.110; *BBB* 111. Here there is mention of three Dāngariās (nobles) being punished with death. Neog Gohain Bar-Phukan was also called '*Neogar Putek Bar-Phukan*,' see. *DAB*, p.69.

400. *BBB*, p.112; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.34.

401. The names of the Rajās and chiefs were, 1. Dharma Rajā (Dharmanārāyaṇ) of the Koch country, 2. Dimaruā Rajā, 3. Hangarabariā Rajā, 4. Hojāi Rajā, 5. Gukar Rajā, 6. Mān Singha Rajā, 7. Hāladhibariā Rajā, 8. Bāmun Rajā, 9. Barduaria Rajā, 10. Kantam Rajā, 11. Mogor Rajā, 12. Rup Singh Rajā and other minor chiefs. These Rajās and chiefs all received presents and went to their principalities to prepare for the war. See *AB*. p.113; *DAB*, p.66.

at Kajālī and at the appointed time marched against the Muslims. The combined army, under the supreme command of the new Bar-Phukan, attacked and drove back the Mughuls from the areas of Pāndu, Śarāighāt and Āgiāthuti to Hājo. It was discovered that there were European mercenaries in the Mughul army. The naval force of the enemy retreated to Śualkuchi. But the Muslims made attacks from time to time on Śarāighāt and Pandu, but they were all repulsed. While conducting operations from a high ground at Amarājuri the Neog Bar-Phukan was killed by an enemy bullet which shot through his mouth. When the king received this news he appointed General Lān-Möng-Shen[402] as the next Bar-Phukan with supreme command over the army and the navy and Lāshām Baruā as the naval commander under him. In a bloody battle on Mājulī between Pāndu and Hājo, in which the Ahoms used guns and cross-bows besides other arms, the Muslims were defeated with heavy casualties and forced to retreat to Śualkuchi. At Śualkuchi a Firingi (European),[403] who came out of his fort and fired his gun, was made captive by the Ahoms, who, hearing the report of his gun, rushed at him frustrating his attempt to escape. This was the the first European ever captured by the Ahoms and taken to Garhgaon and presented to the king.

On request from the Bar-Phukan the king sent a strong naval squadron of sixty large ships and ten thousand men consisting of the king's own picked archers and gunners under the command of able officers. The whole force with the land army assembled near the enemy fort at Śualkuchi, where Satrājit was at his post with his army, and laid siege to it. The Muslims made a number of unsuccessful attempts to break the siege with the result that great many of them lost their lives. Those who escaped alive fled away. Satrājit himself fled with one hundred ships pursued by the Assamese up to Kalahimukh (Koolsi-mukh). One officer named Bajit Khān was captured alive while he was dashing out of the fort. The fort fell to the Ahoms. A frantic naval attack was made by a Muslim commander, called Khānkhānā, with sixty boats, but he was defeated and forty of the boats, laden with provisions, captured

402. Lānmākharu or Hāladhithengā Bar-Phukan of Assamese Buranjis.

403. *AB*, p.112; *DAB*, p.77.

by the Ahoms. The enemies were pursued to Chandrakoth. The Ahoms seized three hundred ships, three hundred large and small guns and other materials.[404]

Battle of Hājo : Mughul Head-quarters Devastated, 1636 :

Having captured Śualkuchi the Ahoms next besieged and attacked the Mughul fort at Hājo. The Ahoms made such a powerful assault on the fort that the Nawabs Muhudi (the chief of Hājo) and Abdul Islām of Bengal were wounded, and their elephant receiving bullet shots ran back. A great confusion reigned in the Mughul camp and many attempted to escape from the besieged fort, but they were all surrounded and their supplies cut off. The Mughuls began to die of starvation. At last Nawab Muhudi came out of the fort and surrendered to Lān-Möng-Shen (Lānmākharu) Bar-Phukan followed by Nawab Abdul Islām and other high officers. They were all sent as prisoners to Garhgaon. The Mughul head-quarters of Hājo were then devastated and many Muslims captured and a large booty acquired by the Ahoms. According to *Kāmrūpar Buranji* (pp. 36-37) the date of this Ahom victory over the Mughuls was *Māgh*, *Śak* 1558 (i.e. A.D. 1637). The Ahoms and their Koch and hills allies also made a series of successful attacks on the enemy forts of Nimisā, Rabhikundh, Shondā[405] and other places forcing the Muslim and Hindu forces of Bengal to retreat. Itākhuli and Śarāighāt had already been occupied by the Ahom officers, Lāi-Phang-Jāng and Lāshām Phukan respectively.

Subsequent Developments :

In the spring of 1639 the king ordered the Bar-Phukan Lān-Möng-Shen, Khānglā (Khanglai Chetiā) and Rajā Dharmanārāyaṇ to capture Uttam, who was at Hājo commanding a force for the Muslims. Gait points out that Uttamnārāyaṇ was a Zamindār of Barnagar in Kāmrup. But the latter fled to Bengal and under the Bar-Phukan's orders the Assamese set fire to his buildings and properties including a granary. It is stated Lān-Möng-Shen setting aside the orders of the king removed

404. *AB*, pp.118-19; *DAB*, p.71; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.36.

405. Shondā (Sāndā) is about 12 miles north of Hājo.

twenty families[406] of Śualkuchi and established them at Bāmunkuchi. For this disobedience he was replaced by Chiring Piksāi as Bar-Phukan who was stationed at Pāndu as the supreme commander of its garrison. The new Bar-Phukan on assuming charge further extended the conquests on both banks of the Brahmaputra and captured several important strategic posts of the Mughuls. On the north bank, being driven off from Hājo, the Muslims took their stand at Madhupur, about 16 miles north-west of Hājo, but even from there they were forced to fall back to Barpetā. The Assamese made their forts at Nimisā and Kālāpānī and made a series of attacks on Muhammad Zāmān, the *Faujdār* of Sylhet, who had arrived with reinforcements. About the beginning of A.D. 1640 the Muslims evacuated Jākhalikhanā and retreated to their next post at Bhatakuchi (Bhatkuchi).

In the autumn of 1640 three *Katakīs* Ratna Kandali, Mādhav Kandali and Biriṇā gave an adverse report to the king about the Bar-Phukan. They said that the Bar-Phukan had no capacity to conduct the affairs of his office efficiently. It is said that earlier these three *Katakīs* had asked the Bar-Phukan for some gifts, but met with a refusal and since then they maintained a grudge against him. On receipt of the report the king ordered that the Bar-Phukan be arrested and chained and brought to Garhgaon.[407] In the Tai-Ahom record the offence is pointed out to be that he acted whimsically without regard for the directions of the king in conducting wars. In *Śak* 1559 (A.D. 1637) one Lāngu *alias* Saruchakuā Gohain, son of Khāmpet (Khāmprat) Bar-Gohain, was then appointed as Bar-Phukan and was directed to make his camp at Pāndu.

During the Bar-Phukanship of Lāngu the enemy fort at Bhatakuchi was captured by the Ahoms. In a battle there the Muslims suffered heavy casualties. At this stage Lāshām Baruā and the brother (Pālongā?) of Lāngu fled to Bengal, but were fettered and put into prison by the Bengal Subāhdār. The Muslims now received reinforcements from Bengal under the command of Mīrzā Zāhinā (i.e. Mīr Zainud-Din, brother of Islām Khān) assisted by Āllāh Yār Khān and defeated the

406. According to *AB*—'*SMJC*', (p.70) fifty families of weavers were transferred to *Dakshiṇkul* and settled there and the Bar-Phukan seized from them all the silk cloth woven by them for the Pādshāh but did not send them to Svargadev.

407. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.70.

Ahoms, who also ran short of ammunition, at Bārepaitā. Several Ahom officers fell fighting at that place.[408] Lāngu was found inexperienced [409] and hence removed from Bar-Phukanship. In his place two officers, Chaongu and the Marangikhowā Gohain were sent to Pāndu which was being firmly held by the Ahoms since the time of Satrājit's retreat from there. After Bārepaitā the Muslims advanced with strength pushing back the Ahoms from Hājo and Āgiāthuti to Śarāighāt. In a naval engagement near Pāndu the Ahoms were equally worsted. Gait says that some five hundred sloops of war and three hundred guns fell into the hands of the victors. The Muslims continued to push forward upto Kājalīmukh where they raised a fort, but it was soon captured by Hāri Dekā and Maruā Konwar. In face of these developments the king repaired and strengthened the fortifications of Kaliābar. He also sent his three ministers (Gohains) to oppose the Muslims at the Kājalī fort and soon after them sent also the Bar-Baruā, Momāi-Tāmulī, with a force to that fort. The Bar-Gohain, the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain actually did not come to Kājalīmukh. An attempt by the Muslims to capture the Kājalī fort was foiled by the Bar-Baruā. This success encouraged the Bar-Gohain, the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain to march against the Muslims with their large cannon and other weapons and a number of boats, but to everybody's surprise, at the approach of the Muslims by boats the army fled away leaving their cannon and boats. From the beginning to end these Gohains were acting in contravention of the king's directions and suffered the loss. In the flight Balinārāyaṇ (Dharmanārāyaṇ), the Rajā of Darrang, was hotly pursued by the invaders. He was isolated and killed in the neighbourhood of Śingari Parbat.

Battle of the Bharali, 1638 :

All retreated to Kaliābar and Sāmdharā. The Gohains were simply reproved by the king for their irresponsible conduct and were next ordered to proceed to the fort at Sāmdharā. An important battle was fought on the banks of the Bharalī. In A.D. 1638 (*Kāplao*) the Muslims, advancing both by land and water, reached the mouth of the Bharali river and erected a fort adjacent to the fort of the Ahoms. At

408. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.71.

409. According to the version in *AB*—'*SMJC*', (p.72) he suffered from rheumatism and hence could not become very active.

the time fortifications undertaken by the Ahoms were yet to be completed. The Bar-Baruā suggested at the Council of Nobles a resort to a dilatory course so as to gain time to complete the works. With the consent of all he sent envoys to the Muslim camp making an enquiry as to the object of their coming. If they came for war the matter might be plainly stated through the envoys. The Muslim general's reply was that they were prepared to go back without war to their country if 'elephants of their jungles, aloes wood, pepper and gold' be offered to them. The nobles then took time to send the proposal to the king and get the reply. In the meantime, the fortification works were expedited and completed. Thereafter the nobles, as already planned, communicated to the Muslim general the king's positive refusal to give anything of the kind.[410] Then after a few days of daily skirmishes the Muslims made a major attack on the Ahom fort with elephants, horses and war-boats, but were repulsed and four of their boats destroyed. Next morning they made a heavy attack on the Burā-Gohain's fort and the battle raged for the whole day. A vast number of Muslims fell dead with only twenty men killed in the fort of the Burā-Gohain. The following morning the Muslims crossed the Bharali and built a fort very close to the Ahom fort. In the meantime reinforcements arrived from Garhgaon. In the morning of the fourth day the Muslims came out of their fort and made a powerful attack on the forts of the Ahom Generals at Sāmdharā. The Koch king Prānnārāyaṇ accompanied the Mughul army. This was their last bid for victory. The battle was fought with unabated fury for the whole day and the ditches were filled up with the dead bodies of the Muslims. For two more days the Muslims fought with great losses to themselves, but being heavily defeated by the Ahoms they retired to Gauhati where, after placing Āllāh Yār Khān in charge of Kāmrūp as Faujdār, Mīrzā Zāhinā sailed down to his country.

The Ahoms advanced in the winter of 1639 to Kājalīmukh and made their station there.[411] In this campaign the supreme command was vested in Piksāi Chetiā for the north bank and in Momāi Tāmuli Bar-Baruā for the south bank. After this victory king-Hsö-Hseng-Hpā wanted to snatch an opportunity to make peace for a few years not only

410. *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.72-73.

411. *AB*—'*SMJC*', the Bharalī battle and the Ahoms' reoccupation of the Kājalī fort are antedated by 3 years. But the dates in *AB* appear to be systematic.

for rest and recuperation of the country after twelve years of almost incessant fighting, but also to make up for the exhaustion of war materials in the stock to meet fresh challenge. They therefore opened negotiation with Āllāh Yār Khān and in A.D. 1639 a treaty was concluded whereby the Bar Nadī on the north and Asurar Āli on the south bank were fixed as the boundary between the Ahom and Mughul territories.[412] This was a momentous settlement of the Ahom-Mughul boundary problem though it became a bone of contention in subsequent developments.

It may be noted that Rajā Satrājit lost the confidence of the Mughul Subāhdār of Bengal by his nefarious activities and secret deals with the Ahom authorities. He was captured at Dhubri, and then tried and executed at Jahāngirnagar (Dacca).

Bhutan Frontier Settlement :

On the death of Dharmanārāyaṇ in A.D. 1638 his son Sundarnārāyaṇ was made Rajā of Darrang in A.D. 1639 by the Ahom king with the Bar Nadī as the western boundary of his territory. Sundarnārāyaṇ established his residence at Mangaldoi. He was a capricious ruler who, by his wild acts and projects, offended even his subjects and attendants. He carried on depredations into Sātdooār[413] and plundered the villages and seized the lands belonging to the Rajā of Bhutan.[414] The people and the Bhutanese chiefs of Sātdooār asserted their rights over the districts to the north of the Gohain Kamalār Āli, but agreed to make the usual presents of musks and cow-tails (*Sowar*) to the Rajā of Darrang and to pay the stated tribute of horses, cow-tails, musks and blankets to Svargadev. Sundarnārāyaṇ consented to it. Such alienation of

412. *Ibid*, pp. 73-74. A good narrative of the Mughul-Ahom war of the period is given in *AB* and also in *Pādishānāmāh*.

413. In his *Among the Himalayas* Major L.A. Waddell defines *dooārs* as 'passes' i.e. shallow passes or entrances from the plains into the hills. These shallow valleys or *dooārs* are usually estimated at 18 in number, of which 11 lie on the frontier of Bengal and the other seven are on the corresponding frontier of Assam. (pp. 289-90, 436). Robinson says that the 'duwars' (*dooārs*) were assigned to the hill-chieftains, who were responsible to the Ahom king for maintenance of peace of those tracts. There was another term *desh* with a similar meaning used for certain tracts on the south bank and they are Desh Dumuriā, Desh Pānbārī, Desh Beltallā and Desh Rāni and nine *dooārs*. (See his *Descriptive Account of Assam*, p.283, etc.).

414. Wade's *Account of Assam*, p.225.

Darrang territory, which was a part of the Ahom dominions, was resented by the Ahom king who sent a force to take possession of the border lands as far as Bhoomoorākundah and directed Sundarnārāyaṇ to join it in an action against the Bhutanese. There was a border war for seven months with the Bhutanese who advanced on horseback. The Bhutanese were defeated and had to sue for peace with offer of tributes, such as gold dust, cow-tails and horses. But they represented to the Ahom king their demand and prayed for a grant of the seven *dooārs* and seven districts belonging to Bhutan. An agreement was eventually signed with usual formalities. The Bhutanese chiefs of the *dooārs* agreed to pay the annual tribute for the ceded country as far as the Gohain Kamalār Āli which was fixed as the southern limit. The Darrangī Rajā's territory was also strictly defined with the Dhanśirī on the east, the Gohain Kamalār āli on the north and the Bar Nadī on the west.[415] Sundarnārāyaṇ was accused of alienating the king's domain and was therefore deprived of his right over the province of Kāmrūp, which was immediately put under the charge of the Bar-Phukan. The Rajā was granted one hundred and sixty 'got paiks' by the Ahom king.[416]

Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's Character and Achievements :

Chao Hsö-Hseng-Hpā may be regarded as the greatest king of the early period of the Tai-Ahom rule in Assam. Though he became king at an advanced age of about fifty-eight, yet he ruled for nearly forty years—one of the longest reigns--maintaining the vigour of his mind and body to the end and was one of the most beloved of his subjects who prayed for his long life. He was a contemporary of the Mughul Emperors, Jahāngir and Shāh Jāhān, whose ambition it was to push the frontiers of the Mughul Empire to the farthest limit in the east. Lakshminārāyaṇ's approach for help in A.D. 1608 gave Jahāngīr the desired opportunity to bring the Koch kingdoms of Koch Behār and Kāmrūp under his heels thereby reaching at once the borders of the Ahom kingdom. Hsö-Hseng-Hpā could forestall the destiny of the Koch kingdoms from the internecine wars between Parīkshit and Lakshminārāyaṇ and eventual imperialist expansion of the Mughuls to the Ahom border. He therefore closed up his war with

415. *Ibid*, p.230.
416. *Ibid*, p.231.

the Kachāris by effecting a friendly settlement and became ready to meet the more dangerous enemy, the mighty Mughuls. He devoted all attention to the reorganization of the country's manpower and resources so as to be able to place on the field a well-trained and efficient army. When the Mughuls, after having swept across the Koch territories started invasions of the Ahom kingdom, they found the Ahoms unlike the Koches too tough and capable of dealing hard blows. The recuperative vigour of this race was such that particular reverses, such as that at Hajo, could not cow down their spirit and doggedness of tenacity in continuing to fight to the finish.

King Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's experiences from his wars with the Mughuls dictated the necessity of certain elaborate and fundamental reforms in the entire administrative system. He created two very important posts, those of the Bar-Phukan and Bar-Baruā, the first being essentially a functionary in charge of the defence of Lower Assam and of diplomatic relations with foreign countries of the west and the second being a functionary at the head of the secretariat and the judiciary immediately under the king. A census of the population was taken and where this had not been done already the people were grouped into clans with officers appointed over them.[417] The common free population, which was regimented for civil and military purposes, was neatly divided into brigades of one thousand men or *got paiks* each commanded by a Hāzarikā and a gradation of other subordinate officers. Under the Hāzarikā were for instance, the *Saikiās* and *Barās*. A *Saikiā*, as the term denotes, commands one hundred and a *Barā* commands twenty men (*paiks*) respectively. In addition there were Neogs, Phukans and Rājkhowās who held more important positions.[418] The king introduced certain innovations in the field of land settlements. He divided the territory of the kingdom into twelve districts (or provinces). He assigned to theBar-Gohain, the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra-Gohain for their

417. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.119.

418. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.76. *Ru-ring*, Hāzarikā, *Ru-pāk* Saikiā, *Ru-sāo*, *Barā*, *Phu-kin-möng*, Rājkhowā, *Phu-kan*, Phukan, *Niu-chām*, Neog. Tai-Ahom was then the language of the Royal Court. The Assamese forms of these official titles were rendered from Tai-Ahom. This organizational pattern is not to be understood to have been first introduced by Hsö-Hseng-Hpā. As noted above, it was there in much earlier times in the Tai kingdom of Nān-Chao.

exclusive enjoyment certain well-defined areas or districts.[419] The king transferred the Bhuyans to the *Dakshiṇkul* by abolishing their *Uttarkul* (North bank) settlements between the Bharalī and the Subansiri rivers; for, since Naranārāyaṇ's invasion of Assam these Bhuyans, it is alleged, stopped payment of tributes to the Ahom king and one Bhuyān, named Uday, even revolted and declared his independence. This transfer considerably reduced the power of the Bhuyāns.[420] A similar transfer of eight thousand families, in the order of one family out of twenty, from Upper Assam to the sparsely populated border area of Marangi was made building it up into a town in order to strengthen the defence of the country on the Kachārī frontier.[421] In planning and executing all these various reforms the king had the assistance of his talented key man, Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā.[422] While at Kāliabar, once the Bar-Phukan was addressed in a diplomatic epistle as Nāmjāni Rajā[423] by the Kachārī Rajā Indrabalnārāyaṇ. Though the Bar-Phukan took exception to being called Rajā, the Ahom king took pride at his viceroy being given such a high compliment by another Rajā.

Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's reign is notable for the development of backward tracts and construction of many important roads, embankments, tanks and forts. He reconstructed the impregnable fortifications of Sāmdharā under his direct supervision. When completed they extended on the north bank from the Lohit to the Sāmdharā Hill and on the south from the Lohit to Bhayaraguri. Solā was fortified by the Bar-Baruā again in A.D. 1620 with its ramparts extending from the Chandī Temple to Kapālikātī on the north bank and from the Lohit it was joined to

419. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.76; Tr. 84 (*DHAS*), p.45 for the *belaits*, or districts, that were formed.

420. *Ibid*, p.76-77; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.119.

421. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.68.

422. The name Momāi is from Tai *Mu*, areca-nut and *mai*, weed out, trim up. The story is that this particular man of the Lukhrākhan family raised a beautiful and well-trimmed areca-nut garden. The king happened to pass by it and was impressed by the sight of the well-ordered garden. He then rewarded the owner, who was from that time called Momāi, and appointed him as his *Tāmulī*, an attendant who takes care of the king's own areca-nut garden and prepares and serves betel-nut to him. From that humble job, in which this man's great merit was observed by the king, he was rapidly raised to the position of the Bar-Baruā.

423. Probably same as *nām-dāni*, meaning the plains near the highlands of hills. Here it means *nāmani-Rajā* or the Raja of Lower Assam.

the Pākariguri Hill[424] on the south. Under orders of the king the Bar-Baruā also constructed the temples of Visvanāth and Dergaon. In A.D. 1617 the king excavated the well-known Mechāgharh tank and consecrated it to the God of Heaven (Lengdon) on the *Saṁkrānti* day of *Māgh* according to the Tai-Ahom custom by sacrificing cows and buffaloes.[425] It is said that the king, in high appreciation of Momāi Tāmulī's construction of the ramparts at Bānhgarāh and the *Singha-Dooār* (Lion-Gate) of Garhgaon, made him the first Bar-Baruā.[426] In A.D. 1632 a road was built connecting the hills with the town of Mekurī-khowā, and in the next year made the *Lā-doi garh* of the Nām-dāng. Thereafter southern defence outposts were strengthened by raising ramparts called *Dopdarar garh*, to the inside of which the Nagās had no access except when escorted by the Chaodāngs. An exchange-mart was also established there for the benefit of the Nagās and the people of the plains.[427] The king also built as many as twelve towns and they were the towns of Darikā, Mathurāpur, the hill (not identified), Tāokāk, Garhgaon, Gajpur, Abhaypur, Mekurīkhowā, Chinātali, Nām-dāng, Merāgarh and Śākbārī.[428]

The foreigners who came to Assam were registered. During Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's reign the names of those persons, who came from *Bhātī* or *Nāmrājya* to Assam with their families apparently to settle here, are in record. They were Māṇik Kāth, Kshetriya, Bhaṭṭa Guru, Śreṣṭha, Jayantīrām, Patranasi, Bangāl Chakravarty, Jadunandan Mishra and Kangpātra. In addition Chandrāi Barkāth, Chalihā and Malrāj came from Kāmrūp Dhekerī. As diplomatic intercourse rapidly developed with Dacca and other Eastern Indian States the king selected from among the Hindus, particularly Brahmins, of his kingdom such persons as were found competent to act as envoys or ambassadors by reason of their knowledge of the languages, customs and cultures of those countries. The names of as many as eighteen such persons are known to have served the Ahom Court as envoys and ambassadors and they were: 1. Dharādhar, 2. Bar Kandali, 3. Chota Kandali, 4. Sagar Kandali, 5. Chandī Guru, 6. Thakari Gopāl, 7. Gopāl Kaṭakī, 8. Ratna Kandali,

424. different from one on the north bank.
425. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.61.
426. *Ibid*, p.64. (also Tr. 84. p.29).
427. *Ibid*. p.68.
428. *Ibid*, p.76.

9. Ekādah, 10. Mādhav Kandali, 11. Birṇa (or Biriṇa), 12. Śitalial, 13. Śrikānta, 14. Sonābar, 15. Nirah, 16. Sanātan, 17. Nārāyaṇ and 18. Rāj Guru.[429] The Tai-Ahom language was predominant during Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's reign (vide Shakespear's *History of Upper Assam*, etc. p.38).

King Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's reign was marked by certain unforeseen happenings. In A.D. 1618 his palace was struck by lightning and partly burnt. Again in A.D. 1621 his Temple of *Chum-Seng* (Chumdeo) was struck by lightning and damaged. In the same year the Visvanāth Temple on the north bank was partly charred by lightning stroke and had therefore to be rebuilt by the Bar-Baruā. There was also an epidemic of cattle disease in the year 1618 causing death to innumerable cows and buffaloes. Constant wars and the cattle disease led to a brief period of food shortage and growth of famine conditions.

Hsö-Hseng-Hpā was inexorable in the enforcement of discipline and cowardice or disobedience on the part of his officers was severely dealt with. Though himself not a Hindu he was tolerant of the Hindu religion. He looked to the interest of common people. On hearing complaints from the weavers, goldsmiths and other people against the Bhāndārī Gohain and his sons that the latter were oppressing the people and were of depraved character the king enquired into the grievances and being satisfied executed the offenders. The great king, Hsö-Hseng-Hpā, died of illness at his ripe old age in A.D. 1641.

18. Hsö-Ram-Hpā (1641-1644) :

At the time of Hsö-Hseng-Hpā's death his three sons were present at his bed side. The youngest son, Chao-Shai, conspired to seize the throne, but his attempt was foiled by the second brother, Chao-Hpā Hsö-Ching. The eldest son, Prince Hsö-Ram-Hpā, was reluctant to ascend the throne as he had 'no sons or grandsons'. The choice of the ministers and nobles fell on the second prince, but the latter refused to be king when his elder brother was alive.[430] Chao-Hpā Hsö-Ram was at last installed as the king.

429. Tr. 84. (*DHAS*), p.45.
430. *AB*, p.127; *DAB*, p.79.

It was soon found that this king was unworthy of the throne. He was weak and depraved and suffered from mental perversion. He was not ashamed to live with his step-mother as man and wife.[431] He brought into his palace a woman married to a Chutiyā and made her his queen. She adopted a boy of her former husband's elder brother and influenced the king to agree to her adopted son being made king after him.[432] But to the relief of the nobles of the Court, who were indignant at such a preposterous proposal, the adopted son died before the king. The queen's allegation was that it was Hsö-Ching-Hpā's son, Lāpet *alias* Lāplup Gohain, who had poisoned her adopted son to death. This led to a friction between the king and his brother.[433] The king was overwhelmed with grief at the death of his pet child and asked the three ministers, the Phukans and the Baruās to offer a boy of each to be buried along with the deceased son. His brother Hsö-Ching-Hpā warned the king against pressing such a demand, but the foolish king still insisted on it. "We never hear of such a thing", said the nobles, "in the days of our fathers and grand-fathers". They then united and deposed the king in A.D. 1644 for which he was also called Bhagā Rajā (deposed king). He was first banished to the hills and interned and later he was put to death at Tipām under orders of Hsö-Ching-Hpā by giving him food mixed up with poison.[434]

When Hsö-Ram-Hpā ascended the throne the Kachārī Rajā addressed a diplomatic epistle to him which bore for the first time the lion-seal instead of the usual flower seal. With the king's command Lāku Barpātra tore off the epistle and pushed out of the Court the envoys of the Rajā who brought it. From this incident Kachārī-Ahom freindship again broke off.[435]

Hsö-Ram-Hpā built a road in Salaguri which is sometimes called Takubārī Āli.[436]

19. Hsö-Ching-Hpā (1644-1648) :

Hsö-Ching-Hpā (or Hsö-Ching-Möng) was next placed on the throne by the nobles. But this prince was sickly for which he was also

431. *AB*, p.127; *DAB*, p.79.
432. *AB*, p.127; *DAB*, p.80.
433. *AB—,SMJC'*, p.79.
434. See Tr. 84 (*DHAS*); *DAB*, p.81.
435. *Ibid*; also *AB—'SMJC'*, pp.78-79.
436. *DAB*, p.79.

known as Nariyā Rajā. He married the daughter of Lāku Barpātra whom he made the chief queen. One of his wives, who was the sister of Hui-Phak *alias* Sariah Burā-Gohain, warned the king against the activities of his eldest son, Lāpet (Lāplup), who, in collusion with Lāku Barpātra, had effected the murder of the former king and was now conspiring to overthrow him. The king tested the allegation and found proof. He therefore invited Prince Lāpet (Lāplup) to a dinner and treacherously put him to death at Bhogbārī. Next he executed Lāku Barpātra and his brothers and sons in A. D. 1645 and deposed his daughter from the position of the chief queen. Sariah Burā-Gohain's sister was then made the chief queen.[437]

Sungi Expedition of 1646 :

An important event during Hsö-Ching-Hpā's reign was an expedition sent aginst the Sungis[438] of the northern border hills. It was led by three generals, namely, Dilihiyāl Sukulāhudu Burā-Gohain, Kenduguriā Barpātra and the Ghorā-Kunwar Piksāi. The expeditionary force was divided into two regiments, the first headed by the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra started from Rangāchāpari and then marched up the river Dikrang and encamped at Māghnowā (or Bāghnowā), and the second, headed by the Ghorā-kunwar, followed up the course of the Buroi[439] river and came out after setting fire to the villages of the Sungis and destroying their crops. As the Ahoms were preparing to construct palisades the Sungis attacked them killing a number of troops. The Ahom force at Māghnowā then advanced to Bāndardewā. The Burā-Gohain sent one Ruprāi with seven hundred men to attack the Sungi villages, but the Sungis, who were excellent archers, killed him and repulsed his men. At a place called Hānhcharā some five hundred men of the Bura-Gohain's force were killed. Being much harassed by the elusive Sungis the Burā-Gohain and the Barpātra retreated after destroying a fort of the Sungis, but the king dismissed both for their

437. *DAB*, p.82; *AB*, p.129, 142.

438. Gait assumes the Sungis to be Daflās as the latter call themselves 'Sing' or 'Nyising' and also because the locality described is that now inhabited by thiis tribe. See his *Hisory of Assam*,, p.124, f.n.

439. The Dikrang is a river in the North Lakhimpur Sub-Division of Upper Assam, and the Burai, a river to the east of Tezpur in the district of Darrang.

failure to subdue this small tribe and appointed Sariah of Tepartal as Burā-Gohain and Bānchangiā Temā as Barpātra.[440] He next sent Mechāgharia Bar-Gohain and Hātimuria Phukan with a second expeditionary force against the Sungis. They proceeded to Āthiabārī, but did not meet the Sungis for a regular fight. They adopted guerilla tactics of harassing a strong army. Hence no Sungi could be captured. The Bar-Gohain then destroyed their villages with all the granaries and standing crops and took away their cattle leaving the Sungis without food and means of cultivation. The Sungis being helpless and at the same time terribly suffering from starvation submitted to the Ahom king and obtained relief.

Relations with the Kachāris :

The Kachārī Rajā Bīradarpanārāyaṇ made a fresh move for friendship by sending an embassy to the Ahom Court. The Ahom king, Hsö-Ching-Hpā, reminded in his reply to the Kachārī Rajā that the latter's dynasty had been established and protected (*Thāpit-Sanchit*) by the Ahom kings and as such the old friendship had been in force. The Kachārī Rajā could not brook the use of the term *Thāpit-Sanchit* in the Ahom king's reply and wrote back to him that the term *Thapit-Sanchit* was properly applied to Heḍambeswar (Kachārī Rajā of Heḍamba) as he was established by the Ahom king by offering a bride to him,[442] but the present use of the term would be inappropriate unless it was the intention of the Ahom king to offer a bride again. This interpretation of *Thāpit-Sanchit* was highly resented by Hsö-Ching-Hpā. Added to that the bitter memory of the indifference with which the Kachārī Rajā Bhimbal received a bride of an Ahom noble family was still fresh. Yet, as precedent had already been set, the king and the

440. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.36. Later Hātipoāli was made Burā-Gohain and again he was replaced by Sukulāhudu and Saru Burā was made Bar-Gohain and Rājmantrī, but for a short interval Chaparākhowā was made Bar-Gohain. The office of the Bar-Baruā was offered to Tangasu Handikoi and that of the Bar-Phukan to Piksāi. See K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.36; H.S.B.; *op.cit.*, p.45.

441. *AB.* pp.132-33; *DAB*, pp. 82-83; *AB*,—'*SMJC*', pp.80-81; Tr. 84 (*DHAS*).

442. Reference here appears to be to Dershungphā (Detshung) to whom the Ahom king, Hsö-Hum-Möng, offered a daughter of one Sonāri. (See *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.22).

nobles decided to offer the hope of a bride and sent a letter accordingly to Bīradarpanārāyaṇ so that friendly relations might be maintained and trades with the Kachārīs carried on.

There were further disturbances in the Sungi country and the Khāmjāng Nagās sought protection of the Ahom king against the Khāmteng and other Nagās. The Sungis were again punished and brought to order and the troublesome Nagās were subdued. Khāmjāng Narās raided Nāmrūp, but they fled away when the Rajā of Tipām marched against them. The Rajā stopped paying the usual tributes and organized a revolt of the Tipamiyas. The revolt was put down and the Tipām Rajā captured and executed. King Hsö-Ching-Hpā constructed what is called the Mishimi-garh.

CHAPTER VII

The Tai Kingdom in Assam : The Ahom Dynasty—II.

(Hindu Period)

The sister of Sariyah Burā-Gohain, who is now the chief queen of Hsö-Ching-Hpā after the first chief queen had been degraded and her son put to death, made it a plan to place her son, Chao-Shāi,[1] on the throne after her husband. But even as a Prince he made himself extremely unpopular by his wild and devilish frolics. The ministers and nobles of the Court then invited Prince Chao-Shām to succeed his father.

20. Chao-Hpā Hsö-Tām-Lā *alias* Jayadhvaj Singha (1648-1663) :

In *Lākni kākeu* (A.D. 1648) Prince Chao-Shām[2] ascended the throne under the title of Chao-Hpā Hsö-Tām-Lā. On the 7th day of the month of *Dinruk* (*Baisākh*), as described in *AB* (p.144), the king ascended the Śingari-Ghar and placed the *Chum-phā* on the throne opening the casket containing it. He made innumerable presents to the people of the country including the ordinary labourers, attendants, the Ahoms and the Brāhmins. The amusements continued for seven days and nights and cannon were fired, harps played and flutes blown. He planted an *Āubar* or *Āyubar* (a life giving banian tree) on the Charāideo Hill. He also assumed the Hindu title of Jayadhvaj Singha. It must be remembered that he was the first Tai-Ahom king to be converted to Hinduism, but whether he assumed the Hindu title after or before his initiation into that religion is not definitely known. According to an account of Āunīātī Satra of Assam (*DHAS*. Tr. 94, vol. V, Part V, p.309) he became a disciple of Nirañjan Dev, the first Satrādhikār

1. Kukurekhowā Gohain in some Assamese Buranjis.

2. called Khahuā Gohain in some Assamese Buranjis. Sec *DAB*, p.87; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.83.

of that Satra, in the *Śak* 1576 (A.D. 1664), that is, in the sixth year of of his reign. But he came undoubtedly under the Brahminic influence at a much earlier date.

Soon after his accession he took measures to get rid of his chief opponents. His bed-ridden father, Hsö-Ching-Hpā, who had been deposed, was interned at Ranjākhām (or Ranshekhām). As conspirators against his accession Sariyah Burā-Gohain, his two sons and Nākkaṭā (or Cheleng) Bez were executed at Barhāt under orders of Hsö-Tām-Lā. Chao-Shāi and his mother were also executed at the same place and buried together in the same grave.[3] The ex-king was poisoned to death in the same year (1648). Following the advice of the deceased king to change the pillars of the State, Hsö-Tām-Lā appointed Kunwaiganyā Lāshām as his Burā-Gohain in place of Śukulāhudu, who was put to death. Later Lāshām was succeeded by Bānhgarhiā Ātan as Burā-Gohain. Hsö-Tām-Lā had Leshāi of Pilingā's family and Bārukiāl Lāngisong as Bar-Gohains one after another and Lāi, Chereliā and Bhagā as Barpātra Gohains successively. The king's father-in-law Naoboichā Phukan was appointed Rājmantrī.[4] Tangasu of Handikoi family served as the Bar-Baruā for a part of his reign, but finding him incompetent to conduct the affairs of diplomatic relations the king removed him and appointed Sengdharā[5] as Bar-Baruā. Garhganyā Rajā-Śaśur[6] was made Bar-Phukan.

3. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.85; *DAB*, p.87.

4. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.38.

5. Sometimes referred to as Bengkhowā. For Sengdharā see *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.85.

6. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.38. In *AB* (pp.173, 175) Phukanmöng or Bar-Phukan is shown by the translator to be Bādulī Phukan. In Kāshināth's Buranji (p.117) and Harakānta's Buranji (p.135) Bādulī is shown to be the only Bar-Phukan during Jayadhvaj Singha's reign. In Kāshināth's Buranji (p.39) it is stated 'Cheuni Āli was constructed by Bādulī Bar-Phukan'. Shaista Khān addressed his letter (*Kāmrupar Buranji*, p.58) to 'brother Bar-Nawab (Bar-Phukan), Śaśur of Svarga-Rajā'. In the Buranjis there are references to Garhganyā Rajā-Śaśur, Rajā-Śaśur Neog Gohain Bar-Phukan, Nāmaniāl Rajā-Sasur, etc. It appears from the accounts that Bādulī Phukan, who was appointed Neog Phukan or the Commander of the army at Mānāhāmukh (*AB*, p.162), was different from Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan who is identified with Chengmun Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan by S.K. Bhuyan (*Atan Bura Gohain and His Times*, p.22). It may be that Chengmun was himself Bādulī, an Assamese term. Nāmaniāl Rajā-Śaśur was, of course, not Bar-Phukan. The point requires further investigation.

One Buranji says that Jayadhvaj Singha was the first Ahom king to introduce octagonal silver *mohars* or coins bearing legends in Hindu script. His coins have actually Sanskrit legends in old Assamese script.[7]

Mughul-Ahom Relations (1639-1658) :

It may be remembered that after the conclusion of the Mughul-Ahom boundary Treaty of 1639 Āllāh Yār Khān was appointed as the *Faujdār* of Kāmrūp. The branch of the river Brahmaputra that was flowing by Hājo reduced its strategic importance by being silted up year after year and becoming dry in the winter and dry summer seasons. Hence with the acquisition of Gauhāti the Mughul head-quarters were transferred to that place by Āllāh Yār Khān. Though there were no wars with the Mughuls during Āllāh Yār's *faujdārship* from A.D. 1639 to 1645,[8] yet the Ahoms' relations with the Mughuls were not without frictions. To cite instances, the Bar-Barua wrote to Āllāh Yār Khān for repatriating an Assamese official who happened to cross the Bar Nadī and reach the Śaraṇiā Hill whence he had been sent to Dacca. Instead of complying with the request the Mughul *Faujdār* made a counter-charge that the Ahom authorities had put into confinement sixty-three Mughul subjects who had strayed into their territory on the north bank. Again in November, 1645, a batch of one hundred and seven Mughul soldiers made an unauthorized entrance into the Ahom territory by crossing the Bar Nadī and proceeded as far as Śingarī in Darrang in order to catch elephants. They also killed an Assamese officer of the frontier post with the consequence that these Mughuls were arrested and put into a prison by the Baruā. The *Faujdār* tried to get these men released but the Bar-Baruā apparently refused to set them free as the nature of the offence was grave and the *Faujdār* found no strong ground to insist on returning them. Early in 1641 Āllāh Yār Khān demanded the extradition of the traitor Chandranārāyaṇ, son of Parīkshit, who had been given political asylum by the Ahom king and wrote a letter to the Bar-Baruā regretting the refusal of the king

7. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.84.

8. The *Purani Asam Buranji* indicates that there were exchanges of letters between Āllāh Yār Khān and the Bar-Barua for seven years from *Śak* 1551 to 1557, but on a comparison of these dates with those of other Chronicles and of *Pādishānāmā* they are found to be earlier by full one decade and hence subject to correction.

to deliver him up to the imperial authorities. The Bar-Baruā retorted by saying in his reply that the imperialists have no reason to make such a demand after refusing to deliver the four sons of Balinārāyaṇ who had gone over to them as deserters from the side of the Assam king. In April, 1646, the Bar-Baruā in a letter accused the Mughuls of their action in harbouring Māmu Govinda, an underling of the Ahom king, who had fled to Bengal betraying his suzerain. Numerous similar cases of violations of rights and privileges on both sides were alleged in a series of diplomatic letters exchanged between the Ahom and imperial authorities. These letters are but evidences of a state of tension that continued to exist between the Ahoms and the Mughuls throuhout this period of apparent peace.

Āllāh Yār Khān retired in A.D. 1645 and there followed a decade of comparative obscurity ecxept that we know the names of as many as five Mughul *Faujdārs*[9] who ruled Kāmrūp with head-quarters at Gauhati. Āllāh Yār was succeeded by :

1. Naw Khandari (less than a year, 1646),
2. Mīrzā Husain (1647),
3. Sayyid Husain (died at Gauhati at the end of 1648),
4. Sayyid Kutub (1649-51),
5. Sayyid Saleh (1651-53).

Then came the eventful period of Mir Lutfullāh Shirāzi, who was appointed *Faujdār* of Kāmrūp in A.D. 1654. In the Assamese Buranjis he is referred to as Mīrzā Nāthulā or simply as Nāthunnā.[10]

We know that Shāh Jahān's reign, which was supposed to be the golden period of Mughul rule in India, came to a tragic end with the commencement of the war of succession among his sons[11] during 1657-58. Taking advantage of this intestine war Rajā Prānnārāyaṇ of Koch Behār, so long loyal to the Mughuls, prepared himself to overthrow the Mughul suzerainty and deliver the Koch country. He sent

9. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, pp.294-95.

10. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.52: *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.89; Gunābhirām Baruā in his Buranji gives a slightly different list of *Faujdārs* and refers to Mīr Lutfullā as Nāthunnā.

11. Shāh Jahān had four sons, namely, Darā Shukoh aged 43, Shujā aged 41, Aurangzeb aged 39, and Murād aged 33 at the time of the struggle for the throne. See *An Advanced History of India* by Majumdar, Raychaudhuri and Datta, p.481.

envoys to Durlabhnārāyaṇ of the same Koch family with himself and who was the son of Uttamnārāyaṇ and a chieftain (Rajā) under the Mughuls at Barnagar at that time, with a request to join hands with him to liberate the Koch kingdoms from Muslim domination. But Durlabhnārāyaṇ sent words in reply reminding Prānnārāyaṇ how he was put in charge of Koch Behār by the Mughul authorities with *Sanad* under proper arrangments and, as for himself, he expressed his inability to collaborate with Prānnārāyaṇ to fight the Mughuls. On the contrary, he professed his loyalty and gratefulness to the Pādshāh who by a *Sanad* made him a Rajā in Kāmrūp.[12] Enraged at such a reply Prānnārāyaṇ despatched Bhabanāth Qāzi with an army to bring him as captive together with another chief named Harinārāyan, and destroy their homes and head-quarters.[13] Bhabanāth occupied Khuntāghāt and proceeded to Madati. Durlabhnārāyaṇ and Harinārāyaṇ fled *via* Darrang to Beltalā. Dharma Rajā's son, Mohidharnārāyaṇ, probably the then chief of Beltalā, after consultation with the Phukans of the Lower Assam head-quarters of the Ahoms, sent report of the matter to the Ahom king and the latter ordered Tangasu Handikoi, who was then constructing bridges over the Kallang river, to escort the fugitive chiefs to Garhgaon. Tangasu then sailed down with a flotilla of armed boats to bring Durlabhnārāyaṇ under protection. At the same time Bhabanāth Qāzi advanced towards Hājo. The Mughul *Faujdār* of Gauhati sent his son Jarullā to oppose Bhabanāth. Jarullā encamped at Mohkhuti and fought Bhabanāth at Madati but was defeated and forced to retreat to Gauhati and Bhabanāth arrived at Hājo. Mīr Lutfullāh Shirāzi himself then made an attempt to check the advance of Bhabanāth but it was unsuccessful. Being frightened by the advance of two armies—one of Bhabanāth Qāzi from the west and the other of the Ahoms led by Tangasu Handikoi from the east—Mīr Luftullāh Shirāzi fled by boat to Dacca 'with the speed of lightning and wind' under cover of darkness of a night in February, A.D. 1659 after governing Kāmrūp for about five years. The very next morning, by a rapid advance, General Tangasu Handikoi reached Gauhati and occupied in quick succession the town of Gauhati and the forts of Pāndu and Śarāighāt and seized 140 horses, 40 pieces of cannon, 200 matchlocks and a large quantity of property in the imperial stores. Rajā-Śaśur

12. *AB*, p.158; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.13-14.

13. *Ibid*, p.14.

Bar-Phukan and Piksāi Chetiā remained in charge of Pāndu and Śarāighāt and Tangasu Handikoi and Lāpet Phukan advanced to Sessā between Śarāighāt and Hājo and constructed fortifications at that place.[14] Bhabanāth Qāzi, whose further advance was checked by the Ahoms, tried to consolidate his position at Hājo.

At this time Prānnārāyaṇ sent envoys to Jayadhvaj Singha with a proposal which runs thus—'Let Mahārāj take *Dakshinkul*. I take *Uttarkul*. What can the Bangāls do if your men and our men offer a joint front at Hātichalā ?'[15] Jayadhvaj Singha rejected the proposal with the remark : 'He did not send such a proposal before, the Dhekeri wants now to put salt into the boiled curry' and asked his officers to dismiss the envoys. Bhabanāth Qāzi then marched from Hājo to take Gauhati and reached Āgiāthuti. Here he had to encounter the Ahoms who engaged him in a battle which was fought with casualties to both sides, but Bhabanāth suffered a severe defeat and his son, Aniruddha Qāzi, was killed. Bhabanāth fled to Champāguri and thence to Koch Behār leaving Chandranārāyaṇ in charge of the Champāguri fort. Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā's brother Bāḍulī Phukan and Phul Baruā captured Madati. The Ahoms pursued the remnants of the Koch Behār army, called Bardewaniā or Bardewaliā by the Assamese, to the Barliā (the river Baraliā) and then to Vishnupur. The Koches being unable to maintain their stand at Vishnupur crossed the Sonkosh and entered their own territory. One advance guard under Bāḍulī Phukan and Lāpet Phukan attacked Champāguri, killed Chandranārāyaṇ in the battle and captured the fortifications. Then Lāpet Phukan and Phul Baruā proceeded down by boats and seized the fortified town of Vijaypur. Bāḍulī and Lāpet with Phul Baruā devastated and annexed Hātichalā and Baritalā. The Bar-Phukan and Piksāi Chetiā ordered a mass evacuation of the Dhekerīs of Kāmrūp as far as the Saru-Sonkosh with the result that the whole of that region became covered with jungles and remained in that condition for one year and a half.[16] Rajā Premnārāyaṇ, an ally of the Ahoms, attacked Dhubri with the help of a Barāhi Hāzarikā, defeated the Bardewaniās and

14. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.52; *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.89-90.

15. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.90; *Kāmrupar Buranji*, p.53. 'Mahārajā' refers to the Ahom king and 'Bangāls' to the Mughuls. Hātichalā is down Pancharatan on the south bank of the Brahmaputra.

16. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.54.

captured the town acquiring a large booty of war materials. A regiment under Tāmulī Daloi's son crossed the Sonkosh, fired shots and returned to Vijaypur in the autumn of 1659. The Ahoms made their encampments on the eastern bank of the Sonkosh which then formed the boundary between Koch Behār and the Ahom territory. Thus the entire old kingdom of Rajā Parikshit came under the Ahoms.[17]

In the meantime, Chandranārāyaṇ's son Jaynārāyaṇ deserted from the Mughuls and came and submitted to the Svargadev, who gave him shelter and settled him as the Rajā of Vijaypur. He was also offered a bride, attendants and other requirements befitting his position. Durlabhnārāyaṇ, who had submitted to the Svargadev, was also given protection. Gandharvanārāyaṇ, a son of Bīrnārāyaṇ,[18] was made Rajā of Beltalā by Jayadhvaj Singha.[19] Mohidharnārāyaṇ, son of Dharmanārāyaṇ (Balinārāyaṇ), was also appointed Rajā of Vishnupur, but he did not continue long there. Numerous Ahom soldiers, who were engaged in western campaigns, suffered from fever, dysentery and diarrhoea. They were therefore brought to Kājali, whilst the others continued to guard the frontier.[20] Having report of the withdrawal of the Ahom troops Bhabanāth Qāzi returned with a force and encamped on the west bank of the river Mānāhā. When this news reached Garhgaon the king ordered the Bar-Phukan Rajā-Śaśur and Piksāi Chetiā to advance to the mouth of the Mānāhā, another body headed by Dihingiā Lāpet Phukan was stationed at Dhubri and a third body with Bāḍulī and Durlabhnārāyaṇ was placed at Vishnupur.[21]

At this stage Jaynārāyaṇ volunteered to bring about a rapprochement between Koch Behār and Assam, but he failed. The Koches (Bardewaniā) and the Ahoms exchanged fire across the Māhānā for three days, after which in the month of *Chaitra* Bhabanāth retired to Koch Behār. When Jaynārāyaṇ was asked by the Ahom king to explain for his failure he took fright and fled away from Pancharatan to

17. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.16-17; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.53 ; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.90.

18. Bīrnārāyaṇ was the son of Lakshminārāyaṇ, Mahārajā of Koch Behār, and Prāṇnārāyaṇ was the son of Bīrnārāyaṇ and ruled from A.D. 1625 to 1665.

19. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.17.

20. *Ibid*, p.17.

21. *Ibid*, p.18.

Bengal in *Baiśakh*, A.D. 1660.[22] Tangasu Handikoi was charged by the Svargadev on two counts, first, that he had allowed the Mughul *Faujdār* to escape though he could have captured him with a little more effort, and secondly, that the properties seized by him at Gauhati, Pāndu and Śarāighāt were not sent to the king. For these offences Tangasu and his associates were put under chains at Rajāhāt.

Mīr Jumlā's Invasion of Koch Behār and Assam (1661-1663) :

After the second coronation of Aurangzeb in June, 1659, Mīr Jumlā,[23] who came to eastern India in pursuit of Shujā, was appointed Governor of Bengal in May, 1616 with orders to 'punish the lawless Zamindārs of the province, especially those of Assam and Magh (Ārrācān) who had caused injury and molestation to the Muslims'.[24] It is pointed out by the Venetian writer Niccolao Manucci (*Storia Do Mogor*, Indian Texts Series, vol. II, p. 98) that 'it was the common belief that Aurangzeb ordered Mīr Jumlāh into Assam that he might be got rid of, dreading that, as he had thrown the kingdom of Gulkandah into confusion, and had known how to arrange for the conquest of Darā and the destruction of Shivāji, he might likewise attempt by his devices to place someone else on the Mogul throne'. Shaistā Khān told Mīr Jumlā, when the latter saw him at Daccā being ordered by the Emperor just before his expedition to Assam, that he had no bread in this country unless he earned it by conquest of Assam. At the same time all that

22. *Kamrupar Buranji*, pp.53-54; *AB*--'*SMJC*', p.91.

23. Mīr Jumlā's real name was Muhammad Sa'id, a Persian merchant-adventurer and son of Mīrzā Hanā who made an immense fortune by trading in diamonds and precious stones. He was noted for his great administrative ability and military genius. He soon rose to the position of prime minister under the Sultān of Golkundā, conquered Karṇāṭak, helped Aurangzeb during the war of succession and became a Mughul general. He was appointed Governor of Bengal in 1660. He is referred to in the Buranjis of Assam by various names such as Mitjānāthulā (*AB*. p.158, etc.), Majumkhān (*AB*—'*SMJC*', p.91, etc.), Mirjāmulā (*AB*—p.175; *Assam Buranji*, Ed. by Dutta, p.18, etc.). He was also given the title of *Yar-i-wafadār* or Faithful friend of the Emperor by Aurangzeb on his accession and created *Khān-i-khānān* and *Sipāh -Salār* (Commander-in-Chief) on 15th July, 1660.—See Shihabuddin Talish's *Fathiyā-i-Ibriyah* as translated into English by Prof. Jadunāth Sarkār and published in the *Journal of the Bihār and Orissā Research Society*, vol. I, Part II, December, 1915, pp..179-195.

24. As quoted in *History of Aurangeb*, III, by J.N. Sarkar, p.156.

Mīr Jumlā had been doing so long was only to help the emperor to settle the internal problems without making any new annexation to the empire. Hence his desire to conquer Assam was strong and he even pitched his ambition so high as to conquer China after Assam which was also the dream of some of the earlier Muslim conquerors. The Ahom king and his officers were quite aware of Mīr Jumlā's impending invasion and made preparations accordingly to oppose him. Yet the king, in consultation with his ministers, tried to avert the war or at least to postpone it through negotiation and with that view sent two experienced envoys, Sanātan and Mādhavcharan, to Shaistā Khān, the Nawab of Dacca and maternal uncle of Aurangzeb. But Shaistā Khān impressed on the envoys Aurangzeb's imperialist designs on Assam and Mīr Jumlā's might and devastating power. From the envoys' report the Ahom king had nothing to doubt about the inevitability of a big war with the Mughuls.

Before proceeding to Assam Mīr Jumlā first wanted to conquer Koch Behār and punish the Rajā, but in the meantime he despatched from Dacca two envoys, Lāloo and Harirām,[25] to the Phukans of Assam at Pancharatan protesting against their usurpation of the imperial domains of Hātichalā, Baritalā and Gauhati and asking them to withdraw form those areas for the good of Assam. The Phukans referred to were Bāduli Phukan, Lāpet Phukan, Lāhan Phukan and Phul Baruā Phukan who were then at their advance post at Pancharatan opposite Jogighopā after having devastated and annexed Hātichalā and Baritalā. The matter was referred to the Svargadev and the envoys had to wait there for eight days for the reply. The Svargadev sent the reply through the Phukans that Kāmrūp was not usurped by the Ahoms, it was seized from the Bardewaliās, who, led by Bhabanāth Qāzi, had usurped it. With the Bengal envoys an Ahom *Kaṭakī* named Sanātan was sent by the Phukans to convey this reply to Mīr Jumlā. But Mīr Jumlā was not satisfied with it. He insisted on releasing Kāmrūp and threatened invasion of Garhgaon in the event of non-compliance.[26]

25. Distorted sometimes as Lālooa and Hārām.

26. *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.91-93; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, pp.59-60; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.18-19.

Mīr Jumlā then proceeded to conquer Koch Behār in A.D. 1661 and also to recover several Mughul districts adjoining the territories thereof which had been seized by Prāṇnārāyaṇ. At the same time he appointed Rashid Khān to lead an expedition against Assam and sent another force under Rajā Sujan Singh to conquer Koch Behār. Rashid Khān advanced unopposed to Rangāmāṭi at the western end of Kāmrūp and made his encampment there. Sujan Singh with his detachment reached Ek Dooār, a fortified gateway leading to Koch Behār, in May, 1661, but he was defeated by Prāṇnārāyaṇ. Then Mīr Jumlā himself assumed the command to conduct the war in person and marched upon the town of Koch Behār at the head of a large army not by Ek Dooār nor by the known way of Khuntaghat but by an obscure and unguarded way. The Rajā being taken by surprise fled from the capital and concealed himself in the woods and hills. He was not defeated in a battle Bhabanāth Qāzi also did not face the Mughul army, but conspired to help it to capture the Rajā so that he might get the favour of being appointed as a tributary chief of Koch Behār under the Mughuls. Vishnunārāyaṇ, the eldest son of the Rajā, also turned a traitor and co-operated with Mīr Jumlā with the ambition to seize the throne from the father. The Rajā, in the meantime,had taken refuge in the hill-fort of Bāskā in Bhutān. The Dharma Rajā of Bhutān, who was his friend, received him with hospitality and gave him protection. Mīr Jumlā asked the Bhutan Rajā to deliver the fugitive Koch Rajā, but the latter refused to do so. Mīr Jumlā however captured the prime minister and occupied the capital of Koch Behār on the 19th December, 1661, and changed its name into Alamgīr-nagar. He settled the revenues of the country at ten lakhs of *Nārāyaṇī rupees* and set out to conquer Assam leaving at the capital Isfundiar Beg with 1,400 horses, and 2,000 musketeers and Sayyid Mahammad Saduk as the chief judge.[27]

After sixteen days' stay at Koch Behār Mīr Jumlā set out with his loyal follower Dilir Khān on 4th January 1662 to invade Assam. He absorbed Rashid Khān's detachment at Rangāmāṭi on the way. According to J.N. Sarkar the army of Mīr Jumlā, when he first started from Dacca on 1st November 1661, consisted of 12,000 horses, and 30,000 foot. In addition there was a vast flotilla of war-vessels (according

27. H.N. Chowdhury : *The Cooch Behar State*, pp.236-37, Prānnārāyan's letter to Jaydhvaj Singha-see *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, pp.76-77; J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.157.

to *Fathiyāh* at least 323 boats of all kinds) the most powerful of them being *ghurābs* or floating batteries, each towed by four long row-boats called *Koshās* and carrying 14 guns and a crew of 60 men. The most striking feature of his naval force was that the naval officers and sailors were Portuguese or half breeds, with a number of English and Dutch sailors. This fact accounted for the superiority of the Mughul navy over the Ahom navy which had remained unbeaten to this time. All these forces except what was left in Koch Behār are supposed to have proceeded to the invasion of Assam.[28]

When the Phukans learnt that Mīr Jumlā was advancing to invade Assam with a large army they withdrew from Hātichalā and Baritalā to Jogighopā at Mānāhāmukh where they, with Bādulī Phukan appointed as the Neog Phukan or Commander-in-Chief of the army there, made a strong fort, which the author of the *Fathiyāh-i-Ibriyāh* describes as 'a large and high fort on the Brahmaputra. Near it the enemy had dug many holes for the horses to fall into, and pointed pieces of bamboo (*pānjis*) had been stuck in the holes. Behind the holes, for about half a shot's distance, on even ground, they had made a ditch, and behind this ditch, near the fort, another one three yards deep. The latter was full of pointed bamboos. This is how the Ahoms fortify all their positions. They make their forts of mud. The Brahmaputra is south of the fort, and on the east is the Monas'. The fort was about two miles in circumference with strong and thick walls which were mounted with guns. Some accounts say about 5,000 soldiers assisted by 320 war-vessels guarded the fort. At Pancharatan, opposite Jogighopā, Phul Baruā Phukan and Lāhan Phukan made a similar defence fort and took their position against the advancing enemy. Rajā-Śaśur and Piksāi Chetiā defended Pāndu and Śarāighāt. Bānrukiā[29] Bar-Gohain was put in command of the garrison in the fort of Sāmdharā on the north bank and the south bank was guarded by the Burā-Gohain,

28. Buranjis and Muslim records give different figures of the forces of Assam war. In some Assamese Buranjis cavalry is mentioned as 60,000. in *Storia* 40,000 horsemen, the Dutch sailor in Glanius (p.145) an incredible number of 300,000 horse and 500,000 foot, *Riyā -us-salatin* mentions 20,000 efficient cavalry and numerous infantry. But what has been stated by Sarkar above appears to be correct and never less than the actual numbers.

29. Called also Bārukiāl in Assamese.

Barpātra-Gohain, Nāmaniāl Rajā-Śaśur Barchetiā,[30] Shairing Rajā, Rup Handikoi and other warriors of repute with Ghorā Konwar Phukan as the supreme commander over all.

At this stage, according to one account,[31] Manthir Bharāli Baruā, son of Bez Daloi, appeared at Gauhati with power to enquire into the offences of those persons, who were associated with Tangasu Handikoi in misappropriating the properties seized when the Mughul Faujdār, Mīr Lutfullāh Shirāzi, fled to Dacca. He was, at his own instance, appointed by the king not only to adjudicate upon this matter, but was also made Parbatiā Phukan and Commander-in-Chief (*Sardār*) of the Lower Assam army above the Bar-Phukan. Not much is known about the Bez-Daloi family and Manthir Bharāli Baruā[32] previous to this except that they were in the past instrumental in getting four Thākuriā Medhis (Gosains) of the *Kāl-Saṁhati* executed at Rajāhāt by the order of the Svargadev. But now equipped with the powers as above Manthir came down to Gauhati, sat as a magistrate with supreme authority at the Bar-Phukan's court and inflicted cruel punishments, such as death and mutilation, on many people.

When this news reached the Ahom officers at Mānāhāmukh and Pancharatan all were upset at such unprecedented supersession of powers. The Bar-Phukan asserted 'It is properly within my jurisdiction to decide the question of the booties seized. Bez-Dāloi's son alone becomes trustworthy, we the Phukans and other officers have become untrustworthy. Very well, let other responsibilities also be taken by the Bez-Daloi'. The Phukans remarked : 'As Bez-Daloi Bhāndārī Baruā has come as *Sardār* (Commander) above us, let him now do the fighting'.[33] Thus expressing their grievance all the officers and soldiers gave up war and withdrew to Pāndu and Śarāighāt without shooting a single bunch of arrows.[34] Mīr Jumlā sent one detachment

30. obviously different from Garhganyā Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan.

31. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.93. This is the only account available in which Manthir Bharālī Baruā's appointment as magistrate and supreme commander for Lower Assam with consequent defection among the Ahom generals is described.

32. S.K. Bhuyan says that he was a Hindu and Kāyastha. See *AB*—'*SMJC*'. Analysis, p.xxii.

33. Tr. 84 (*DHAS*), vol. II, Part I. p.72.

34. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.93.

under the command of Nasiru-'d Din Khān to march up along the south bank of the Brahmaputra, while he himself with the main force advanced along the north bank and crossed the Mānāhā unopposed 'by a bridge of boats'. The Mughul fleet sailed up the Brahmaputra keeping pace with the land armies.

But the version of the Tai-Ahom text is different. It makes no mention of any defection among the Ahom officers on the eve of the invasion. It simply says that when the Mughul invading army in its advance was not far beyond Mānāhāmukh cholera broke out in the camp of the Assam army and twelve thousand men died of the disease in the area.[35] The rest of the army had to be removed to an unaffected area to the east of the Mānāhā. Here, too, they could not get rid of the pestilence. Just when this sudden calamity seriously weakened the Ahom vanguard a part of the Mughul fleet was sighted and the generals immediately reported the matter to the king. On receipt of this information the king sent Tamuli Daloi's grandson to inform the army officers to take their stand there and not to retreat any farther. But before the arrival of the king's messenger 30,000 Muslims with forty horses laid siege to the Mānāhā fort. The remnants of the Ahom force in the fort gave battle, but when the enemy batteries manned by European personnel went into action inflicting heavy casualties and demolishing the fort they had to retreat to Śaraighāt and take shelter under Kaliabariā Phukan.[36] The fort of Pancharatan was also seized without having to meet any opposition.[37]

Mīr Jumlā continued his victorious march leaving Ataullā in command of the fort of Jogighopā. Meanwhile the news of the fall of Jogighopā had reached king Jayadhvaj Singha who then sent a large reinforcement under the command of his ministers, frontier governors and several other high officers to make a combined attack on the enemies at Śarāighāt. But Mīr Jumlā marched with such speed that he took without opposition Hājo and Śarāighāt, the latter being a bigger and stronger fort than that of Mānāhāmukh protected by a palisade of large logs of wood, before the arrival of the Ahom reinforcement. One advance wing of the Mughul army under Rashid Khān reached

35. *AB*, p.162.

36. *Ibid*, p.162.

37. *PAB*, p.121 ; *Alamgīrnāmāh*, pp.696-97.

Shāhburuz behind the back of the Ahom forces at Śarāighāt and Pāndu. Apprehending an encircling movement by the enemy the Ahom forces of those posts rapidly sailed upto Kājalī without fighting leaving behind the bulk of their materials which could not be carried. The news of the loss of Śarāighāt and Pāndu made the veteran officers leading the reinforcement fall back and concentrate their strength at the two impregnable forts of Sāmdharā at the mouth of the Bharalī on the north and Śimalugarh opposite to it on the south bank of the Brahmaputra. The Lower Assam forces of the king became for a time scattered and those who were at Kājalī retreated to Kathālbārī, but they all assembled at Sāmdharā in the middle of March, 1662.[38]

King Jayadhvaj was extremely pained to see the mass retreat of the forces under Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan and other commanders. In face of this great danger he made a new disposition of the generals and the forces as a last measure for the defence of the country. He removed his father-in-law from the office of Bar-Phukan but was asked to help in the south bank. He appointed Bānrukiā Bar-Gohain as Commander-in-Chief of the *Uttarkūl* army and he was to be assisted by Kenduguriā Barpātra-Gohain, Bādulī Phukan, Tipām Rajā and Dihingiā Rājkhowā. For the *Dakshinkūl* army Ghorā Konwar Nyāisodhā Phukan was given the supreme command and the officers appointed to assist him were Bānhgarhiā (or Bānhbariā) Burā-Gohain, Nāmaniāl Rajā-Śaśur Bārchetia, Rūp Handikoi, Sadiyākhowā Gohain, Shairing Rajā, Lāhan Salaguriā Rājkhowā, son of Khāmpet Bar-Gohain, Nāmdangiā Rajkhowa and a few others. Lāpet Dihingia Phukan and Luthuri Dayangiā Phukan were to guard a fort on the side of the river Brahmaputra. In the north the grandson of Tāmulī Daloi, Lāpet Phukan and a few others were placed in charge of the fort at Guṭighuruā to resist the advance of the Mughuls. Hari Dekā, the son of Bāngchā Gohain and Chao-chit, these three persons were ordered to repair the fort at Salā[39].

In the meantime the Muslims made a sudden night attack on Beltalā, massacred the Assamese force there and occupied the area. According to a Muslim account the Rajās of Darrang and Dimaruā

38. *AB*, p.163 ; *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.93-94 ; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.62; S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, pp.324-25.

39. *AB*, pp.163-64; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.62; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.94.

now deserted to the Mughuls at Gauhati. The Rajā of Darrang is mentioned as one Makardhvaj but, as Gait points out, it was the name of the Rajā of Rāni while the name of the Rajā of Darrang of this period was Sūryyanārāyaṇ. Mīr Jumlā passed three days at Śarāighāt and on the 4th February 1662, occupied Gauhati which, says Gait, was at this time wholly or chiefly on the north bank of the river.[40] He then advanced triumphantly along the north bank with the main army, but half way to Sāmdharā he crossed over to the south bank. It took two days for him to effect the passage of the whole army in boats. On a stormy night some of his boats were upset and many horses jumped into the Brahmaputra. On the south bank, Rajā-Śaśur, who had been dismissed from his post, became revengeful and in co-operation with one Bhotāi Dekā of Nowgong showed to the enemy the path through Diju leading to the plains of Central Assam. Four chiefs of Bengal named Bhabanāth, Bhabānanda, Bhabadev and Bholānāth with twelve sepoys advanced through the mouth of the Diju river south of the Kallang and scaled the ramparts. The Assamese garrison of that frontier post retreated to Salā.

With the crossing of Mīr Jumlā's army the whole brunt of the enemy pressure fell on the south-bank defences and there was no fighting on the north bank. Explaining this situation Ghorā Konwar Phukan, who was in southern command, requested the Bar-Gohain, the Commander-in-Chief of the *Uttarkūl*, to send some of his troops to reinforce the southern army. But the Bar-Gohain, still apprehending danger, refused to weaken his strength by sending over any troops on the ground that there were vast numbers of men in arms on the south bank compared with those on the north.[41] At this time a Muslim naval force reached Potākallang near the Diju river and attacked its fort. Leshām Hātībaruā, the commandant of the garrision, put up a gallant resistance and halted the Muslims here. It appears from the account that when with Rajā-Śaśur's aid Muslim land forces entered the area of Potākallang from Diju and reinforced the besieging army the defenders of the fort, who fought with great bravery for six days, fled to Salā under overwhelming pressure. Meanwhile Leshām Hātībaruā fell fighting.

40. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.130.

41. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.62.

The fort thus passed into the hands of the enemy.[42] Dilir Khan, advancing along the south bank, reached Śimalugarh and encamped with his army within the range of cannon shots from the famous strategic fort of that place. The fort was situated between the Brahmaputra on the north and a range of hills on the south. It was protected on the east and west by battlements on which numerous cannon were mounted. Outside the walls were moats studded with spikes (*pānjis*). The Muslims raised mounds within gun-shot and laid siege to the fort. But the walls of the fort were so tough and thick that cannon balls discharged by the enemy could not penetrate through them. Hence on the 25th February Dilir Khān stormed it, scaled the walls and broke open the gate. The garrison after offering only a feeble resistance fled precipitately leaving behind all of the heavy artillery and other materials. The fall of this giant fort was a fatal blow to the defence of the country. A determined resistance by the brave Ahom generals from this impregnable fort would have changed the course of the war. It remains a puzzle to this day why such a resistance was not put up.[43]

Its repercussion was serious on the north bank. Apparently being unnerved at the fall of the great bulwark of defence on the south bank the Bānrukiā Bar-Gohain destroyed his munition stores at night and evacuated from Sāmdharā[44] and the deserted fort was occupied by the triumphant Mughuls. Mīr Jumlā placed his own garrison at Sāmdharā under Kishen Singh and marched on to Kaliabar, a little to the south-east of Śimalugarh. He stayed at Kaliabar for three days settling its affairs and appointed Sayyid Nasiru-'d-Din as the *Faujdār* of this province. From here Mir Jumla's army on its onward march had to take a turn to the right away from the bank and his fleet as there

42. *AB*, p.164.

43. Was it the result of defection in the Ahom camp arising from Manthir Bharālī Baruā's appointment as described or the evil influence of Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan who turned hostile after his dismissal and helped the Mughuls to advance ? These facts, if true, might have some indirect influence but they certainly could not have undermined the patriotism of the nation and paved the way for the enemy's easy march forward. The main reason of Mughul victories seems to be superior skill and generalship of Mīr Jumlā coupled with his European complement of the army using superior weapons, like mortars, and superior war tactics.

44. *Assam Buranji* (648- 68 A.D.), p.20. The Sāmdharā fort is on the Bhomorāguri Hill to the east of Tezpur.

were hills skirting the river Brahmaputra. The Mughul fleet now became isolated and hence vulnerable to attack. It was commanded by admiral Ibn Hussain assisted by Munawwar Khān. The Ahoms now planned the destruction of the fleet so as to be able to eat up the land army of the Mughuls by cutting off its supplies. Thus in the night of 3rd March 1662 a very powerful Assamese navy of over seven hundred ships[45] attacked the Mughul fleet above Kaliābar and it looked as if it would swallow up all the Portuguese and their boats. But the Portuguege warded it off making 'a great din with their mortars and matchlocks', and meanwhile the Assamese boats were carried down past their goal by the force of the strong currents of the river. Though the Assamese veered round to attack the Portuguese the latter fell upon them with such impetuousity that after a few hours of fierce fighting the Assamese were vanquished and a number of their 'ships' sunk and three hundred captured.[46] The collapse of the Assamese navy was hastened when a force, despatched by Mīr Jumlā under the command of Muhammad Mumin Beg, came to the assistance of the Mughul fleet in action. This naval discomfiture of the Ahoms was to be mainly attributed to the superior technique and arms of the European mercenaries in the Mughul army. This was the first great disaster the Ahom navy had ever suffered in its history and it decided the fate of Assam in her struggle against Mīr Jumlā.

The Muslims had to fight at a number of places in order to clear their way to Garhgaon, the capital of Assam. At Janmung the Mughuls attacked the fort which was under the Barchetiā. The attack was repulsed. The Mughuls then attacked the fort under the Bar-Gohain but could not take it. Another engagement took place at Guṭighurua near Sāmdharā in which Lāpet Phukan and Tāmuli Daloi's son fought the Mughuls for several hours but, being defeated, retreated to the fort of Sāmdharā.[47] There was also an Assamese naval attack on the Mughuls at Kukurākaṭā, but it was repulsed and the men of the navy fled to Garhgaon.[48]

45. Glanius (p. 54) mentions six hundred ships.

46. *Storia*, vol.II, pp.98-99; though the author does not mention the place of the naval battle the period of 28 days from Hājo as mentioned in the account leaves no doubt about the place being above Kaliabar. S.N. Bhattacharyya: *op.cit.*, pp.328-29.

47. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.94; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.62. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, pp.160-61.

48. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 *A.D.*), p.20.

Mīr Jumlā advanced to Salāgarh, a few miles above Kaliabar. At his approach all the Ahom officers—the Gohains, Phukans and Baruās—evacuated Salā with their wives and children and reached Garhgaon.[49] At Salā several Ahom nobles met Mīr Jumlā with letters from Jayadhvaj Singha asking for peace. But Mir Jumla rejected it suspecting the peace move to be a dilatory one to gain time for effective resistance.[50]

Meanwhile, on the north bank the Bar-Gohain resorted to a kind of scorched-earth policy against the enemy's advance. He retreated eastwards with his whole army making the inhabitants leave their villages with whatever they could carry and destroy the rest of their properties. Mīr jumlā, whose immediate objective was Garhgaon, could not do more than to send occasional detachments across the Brahmaputra to harass him; but, they were beaten off by the Bar-Gohain.

In view of the seriousness of the situation king Jayadhvaj Singha sent Sanātan Kaṭakī to inform the Bar-Gohain and the Nyāisodhā Phukan, Commanders-in-Chief respectively of the northern and southern armies, to collect their forces and concentrate at Lakhaugarh.[51] But, the Kaṭakī was captured by the Mughuls on the way.[52] However, the generals got the report of the capture and the king's order to proceed to Lakhau. They accordingly hastened to that station. The Bar-Gohain, with his army, crossed the Brahmaputra in one night and reached

49. Their date of reaching Garhgaon is given in *AB*—'*SMJC*', (p.94) as Tuesday, 7th *Chaitra*, *Śak* 1583 (A.D. 1662) and that of the king's flight as 9th *Chaitra*. J.N. Sarkar, by reference to *Fathiyāh*, says that Mīr Jumlā entered Garhgaon on the 17th March, 1662. See his *History of Aurangib*, III, p.161. If *Fathiyāh* is correct 7th and 9th *Chaitras* (roughly 21st and 24th or 25th March respectively) seem highly unlikely. The question requires further investigation. Other available Chronicles make no mention of the dates of these events.

50. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.132.

51. *AB*, p.165. According to Gait Lakhau lies at 'what was then the confluence of the Dihing and the Brahmaputra. At the period in question, the latter river flowed down the course of what is now called Lohit river, along the north of the Mājulī island, while the Dihing followed the present channel of the Bramaputra to the south of it, and after receiving the waters of the Disāng and the Dikhau, united with the Brahmaputra at its western extremity'. (*op.cit.*, p.133). Wade (*Geographical Sketch*, p.12) shows Lakhaw (Lakhau) on the *Uttarpār*, probably of the Dihing as described by Gait, and says that it was on an elevated tract.

52. *Ibid*, p.165.

Kukurākaṭā. The Muslims first retreated from that area but advanced again with their boats and surrounded his army. Bar-Gohain seems to have fled to Garhgaon and many officials took refuge in the Mājulī.[53] Lakhaugarh was strongly guarded under the command of the Dihingiā Phukan. The other officers present there were Rajā-Śaśur, the Bhitaruāl Phukan, Kaliabariā Phukan, the Hātibaruā and Tāmulī Daloi. Spies were sent about to watch the advance of the Muslims. The Muslims arrived at Lakhau in force on the 9th March and attacked and defeated the Ahoms assembled there. This was a signal for the king to fly from the capital.[54]

King's Flight and Garhgaon Occupied by Mīr Jumlā (17th March, 1662):

Unable to hold their ground against the irresistible advance of the Mughuls almost all the nobles and ministers (Dāngariās) assembled at Garhgaon in a depressed spirit. The enemies swept along with great speed and now nearly knocked at its gates. There was all gloom in the capital. The king realized the impossibility of halting the enemy after the main bastions of defence had gone. He was overcome with profound grief at this overwhelming national calamity.[55] He at last decided on a flight from the capital to the secluded hill resorts in the easternmost province of Nāmrūp. He called in the grandson of Tāmulī Daloi, Kāndu Khāmon and Sonā Phukan and ordered them to collect one thousand boats for removing the goods to a secluded place before the Muslims encircle the capital. The boats being engaged they could not collect the required number of them, but yet whatever number could be placed at his service carried away the royal stores as far as possible. The boats worked incessantly for two days in removing at least the more important of the goods before the departure of the king himself.[56] The Neog-Phukan, son of Mau-Baruā, was sent to Rājmao to escort the king's mother, wives, brothers, sons and daughters to a hill

53. *AB*, p.165; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.134; J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.767.

54. *AB*, p. 66

55. The account in *AB*—'*SMJC*', (p.95) says that the king went up to his private chamber and began to weep by holding the hand of his chief queen and the queen consoled him with many words.

56. The destinations are not mentioned in the Chronicles, though the king's halting places during the flight are mentioned.

station. He then placed the capital under the care of Bānrukiā Bar-Gohain, Ātan Burā-Gohain, Bhagā Barpātra-Gohain, Nāmaniāl Rajā-Śaśur, Bhitaruāl Gohain, Tāmulī Daloi's son and a few others and left on Friday immediately for Charāideo accompanied by Sengdharā Bar-Baruā, Rajā-Śaśur, the Dihingiā Phukan and the Nagariāl Phukan.[57] He was anxious to save from the enemy's raids the sacred articles of the two royal temples (*Deo-Shāls*) of god *Khām-Lai* and god *Tai-Kaw-Phi*.[58] Having taken into his custody all the articles in them he first proceeded to Raishāt.[59]

The three ministers (Dāngariās), who were in charge of the capital, employed one hundred elephants and two thousand men to remove from it the materials left behind by the king before the arrival of the Mughuls, yet all could not be removed.[60] At the same time, Mīr Jumlā proceeded by the way of Salāgarh and Lakhaugarh, the latter place being reached on 8th March.[61] The Dihing and the Dikhau, which falls into it, being too shallow for the Mughul fleet to sail up beyond Lakhau Mīr Jumlā halted there for three days. A number of deserters from the side of the Ahoms joined him at that place. Leaving his fleet at Lakhau, some 18 miles north-west of Garhgaon, he set out with his land forces along a high road and reached Dewalgaon (Devargaon) on the 13th March after two days' journey and, after ousting the local garrison, seized a large booty. At this place, as related in the *Kāmrūpar Buranji* (p.63), he received a five-man peace mission from the nobles of Garhgaon. The mission brought the request that tributes would be paid if they (the Mughuls) advanced no farther. As not a single minister or noble was present in the mission the offer was rejected by Nawab Mīr Jumlā. The nobles at Garhgaon, on being apprised of it by the members of the mission, sent a fresh four-man mission headed by Phul Baruā Phukan. Meanwhile Mīr Jumlā appointed

57. *AB*, pp.166-67; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.95.

58. It may be remembered that Chao H ö-Kā-Hpā worshipped at Charāideo the gods *Khām-Lè*, *Rang-Lè* and *Rang-Bang*. These were probably the traditional gods or spirits worshipped by the race from early times with sacrifices of animals. *Khām-Lai* was probably the same god as *Khām-Lè* and *Tai-Kaw-Phī* might have been installed after or during Hso-Ka-Hpa's reign.

59. Raishā of Assamese Buranjis.

60. Bhuyan : *Mir Jumlar Asam Akraman*, pp.47-48.

61. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, pp.158-161.

Āli Rezā Beg as the *Thānādār* of Devargaon and resumed his onward march reaching Gajpur on the 15th March. Phul Baruā's mission met the Nawab at Gajpur. But the latter now coming within easy reach of Garhgaon, where a rich booty awaited him, refused to consider the peace offer. Here the news came of the Rajā's flight from the capital. He immediately despatched a force to proceed ahead and seize the elephants and other properties of the king at Garhgaon.[62] Nāmdāng was occupied by the Mughuls on the 16th March and on the 17th Mīr Jumlā made his triumphant entry into the deserted Ahom capital.[63] The historian Shihābuddin Tālish, who accompanied Mīr Jumlā in this expedition, described the spoils gained in Assam as enormous. He mentions among them 82 elephants, 3 lakhs of Rupees in cash, 675 pieces of artillery, 1343 camel-swivels, 1200 *Rāmchāngis*, 6750 matchlocks, 340 maunds of gunpowder, a thousand and odd boats, and 173 store-houses of paddy, each containing from 10 to 1000 maunds of grain.[64] Mīr Jumlā also seized a cannon which threw balls weighing more than two hundred pounds.[65] He occupied the king's palace and, it is said, he also opened a mint and caused money to be struck at Garhgaon in the name of the Delhi Emperor.[66] But the Nawab preferred to make his residence in the town of Mathurāpur, which was situated on a high ground, some seven miles south-east of Garhgaon. He entered his quarters at that place on 31st March with his main army. The Ahom capital with the collection of the vast booty was held by a strong garrison under Mīr Murtāzā. The local civil population came under the new regime of the Mughuls and could not resist the occupation of villages by their armies. Besides Garhgaon the Muslims concentrated themselves in three strategically important centres, namely, Lakhau, Sonārinagar and Tiok.[67] Gradually and steadily they spread out in all directions setting up a regular series of outposts : northwards from the city of Garhgaon at Nāmdāng and Trimohani (Tiromanī); westwards at

62. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, p.332; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.134.

63. *Fathiyāh*, 47-48 as quoted by Sarkar.

64. *Fathiyāh*, 49-50 as quoted by Sarkar. *Rāmchāngi* is a kind of field-gun borne by men.

65. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.134.

66. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.134. It is doubtful whether Mīr Jumlā had this power unless it was specially conferred upon him by the Emperor, of which there is no evidence.

67. *AB*, p.167.

Gajpur and Devargaon on the way to Lakhau; southwards at Deopānī and Śilpānī at the skirt of the Tiru Hill; and eastwards at Abhoipur, 16 miles from Garhgaon towards Nāmrūp. There were also a line of posts from Lakhau to Gauhati along the Brahmaputra (the Dihing and the Lohit) to control the whole supply route. The Dihing bank was guarded by Jalāl Khān with a body of sturdy men from Dariābād.[68]

Jayadhvaj Singha's Harassing Summer Campaigns against the Mughuls (May to September, 1662) :

At Rāishāt (Rāishā) Jayadhvaj Singha was joined by the Bar-Gohain and a number of other nobles and officers. He there held the first war council with them all and drew up plans to fight the Mughuls. Among others, the king's father-in-law, the Kaliabaria Phukan, the Bhitarual Gohain, the Bar-Phukan, Lāhan Āhataguriā Phukan, Lāpet Dihingia Phukan, Hāriā Dekā, the Bar-Gohain, the Dayangiā Rājkhowa, Pelon Sāringiā Phukan, the Bar-Baruā and the Nagarial Phukan were present in the council and helped the king in drawing up the war plans relating to strategy, disposition of the forces, method of attacks and liaison with the civil population.[69]

The first step was to employ some officers to negotiate for peace with the Muslims. For this purpose Hāriā Dekā, Kaliā Gohain, one Rājkhowā and the son of Tāmulī Daloi were deputed. But the peace overtures were again rejected by Mīr Jumlā just before his occupation of Garhgaon. This made the king move to Tipām and then to Nāmrūp. Meanwhile all the inhabitants of the deserted villages and the Baruas were brought to Taimung (Dihing : Charaguā) where they were given relief and refuge. One son of Latao Phukan was stationed at Shairing (Sāring). The Bhitaruāl Gohiān, the Hātibaruā and Kāndu Khāman were sent across the Lohit to conduct operations on the north bank. The Kaliabariā Phukan and Bāduli Phukan engaged themselves in collecting provisions for the army and the king's camp. When these preparations were in full swing Hāriā Dekā, who was asked to take his station at Barduār with Kaliā Gohain, went across to the Muslim camp at Sinā (Sinātali) and, either under pressure or temptation, returned with

68. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, pp.162-63.
69. *Ibid*, p.167. The Bar-Phukan's identity is not definitely known.

Mīr Jumlā whom he guided to Taimung (Dihing). As Mīr Jumlā advanced to that place Lāpet Dihingiā Phukan with a few other officers fled to Āhataguri and the Bar-Gohain fled to the Tiru Hill. When the king heard that the Muslims had taken Taimung he, with all the things, transferred his camp to Tipām. During all this time many people surrendered to the Mughuls and some deserters from the Ahom camp also joined them as the latter steadily spread out over the country. The king next shifted his camp to Pākdāng and then to Uchang in the Nāmrūp region. At Uchang he ordered his officers to count the number of men that were with him and soon the exact number of 4,980 men were counted out. Among them were some of the king's most trusted officers and great generals like the Bānhbariā (or Bānhgarhiā) Burā-Gohain named Ātan, the Bar-Phukan, Sengdharā (Bengkhowā) Bar-Baruā, the king's father-in-law, the Neog-Phukan, the Śalaguriā Rājkhowā, Bharālī Baruā[70] and Momāi-Tāmuli of Lānphimā family. With the king were also the Tai-Ahom scholars and high priests of the temples such as Labak Bāilūng, Timāk Narā Bāilūng, Sengdharā Bāilāng of Charāideo and a few others. In addition there was a large body of expert *kārīs* (archers) and *hiloidārīs* (gunners) ready to follow the king's command.[71]

Having done this stock-taking of his manpower and collected enough provisions king Jayadhvaj decided to attack the Mughuls undaunted by the fact that the enemy forces were far superior numerically to his own and whose advantages increased with the surrenders of more and more Assamese people including officers and combatants. The king divided his forces and sent them off under his patriotic generals and officers to attack the enemy at various posts. At Āhataguri Bāduli Phukan, Lāpet Phukan and Dihingiā Phukan launched an attack on the Muslims massacring a large number of them, while the remnants retreated to Sessā. Bhitaruāl Phukan distinguished himself by dislodging the Muslims from their stronghold of Sonārinagar by a fierce attack and driving them off to Tiok on the west bank of the Dihing and again from the latter place to Sinā or Sinātali in the eastern part of the Mājulī. The Muslims were hotly pursued down to Sinā where he surrounded them with the assistance of reinforcements that came under the command of Lāpet Dihingiā Phukan, Kāndu Khāmon and the grandson

70. probably Manthir Bharālī Baruā.
71. *AB*, pp.168-172.

of the Tāmulī Daloi, who had been directed by the king to come back from their Chāorā (Thāorā) campaign to help him. Only a Muslim reinforcement arriving from Lakhau relieved the besieged Muslims at this place. The Muslim garrison at Madārguri was attacked by Chiring Phukan, Rajā-Śaśur's son and the Śalaguriā and Āhataguriā Ahoms, but only after a hard fight the Ahoms could be repulsed. The Bar-Gohain and Tāmuli Daloi fought the Muslims at Sessā but could not oust them from their strong position. Tāmulī Daloi and his men were forced to make a precipitate retreat towards the Sessā river where some of his men were drowned. Shāiring (Sāring) was another battle-ground. Pelan Phukan, Rangāi Chetiā and the son of Lātau Phukan marched against the Muslim concentration here and attacked them in such a way that though with their superior numerical strength they succeeded in driving back the Ahoms, yet they had to withdraw to their main stronghold at Barhāt. Lāhan Gohāin raided the Muslims at Nikā and acquired a large booty including one hundred thousand rupees. The Muslims of Kaliā Hill suffered a defeat at the hands of Bāduli Phukan and the Bar-Gohāin and retreated to Barhāt. Bāduli Phukan followed and attacked them at Barhāt and put them to flight towards the Bar Nadī (Brahmaputra). He then set fire to the Muslim dwellings of that area,[72] though in a subsequent engagement the Ahoms were worsted by a stronger force of the enemy and Badulī Phukan had to make a quick retreat. Thus the whole country under Muslim occupation was once again boiling up with violent commotions of constant fighting, massacres, plunders and marauding activities and the Mughul invaders had no rest,[3] peace or stability. 'The Ahoms had been scared away and not crushed'.

With the advent of the rainy season roads and fields became awfully muddy and flooded immobilizing the Mughul cavalry, but for the Ahoms it afforded an opportunity to intensify their offensive against the beleaguered enemy. The Abhoipuriās, the Āhataguriās and the Dihingiās surrounded Tāokāk and constructed a strong fort near the Tāokāk river. The Muslims of Devargāon retreated to Lakhau, when the Bhitaruāi Phukan marched down on them from Sonārinagar. The Muslims made an attack on the Ahom fort at Damarāi, but the grandson of Tāmulī Daloi repulsed them killing one of their leaders. Lakhau was subjected to repeated attacks by the Ahoms. A group of Ahom officers including

72. *AB*, pp.173-176.

the son of Kaliābariā Phukan made a combined attack on the Muslims at Suffry killing a large number of them, while those who escaped took to their heels. A detachment of the Ahom army fell upon the Muslims of Nabārī. Here Mīr Jumlā and Dilir Khān appeared on horseback and made a charge on the Ahoms. At the sight of the vast number of the enemies the Ahoms retreated. According to Niccolao Manucci (*Storia*, vol. II, p.99) the Assamese finding that the Mughuls were not easily deterred from boldly advancing used frightful instruments of killing by degrees captured Mughuls thereby terrorising the army of Mīr Jumlā. His men dared not go to a distance without great precaution.

One officer named Buruk marched against the Muslims at Charāideo, but the latter fled to Tengābārī leaving behind their properties. The Ahoms seized many horses and cows and a large quantity of war materials. Buruk next marched against the Muslims of Tāimung. At his approach the latter fled to Jatarā and Buruk's men set fire to their dwellings. The Muslims of the fort at Dihing were subjected to repeated attacks. Mīr Jumlā, under the stress of food shortage for his army, sent a messenger named Makutbun to Bharālī Baruā (Manthir), the son of Bezbarua, with a request to assist him with some provisions. If provisions be supplied Mīr Jumlā promised to go back from Assam with his army. But Bharāli Baruā refused to help the Nawāb. The Ahoms also raised a strong fort at Kākajān mounted with cannon. New dispositions of forces were made from time to time by the Ahom king. The Bhitaruāl Phukan with two other officers won a victory over the Muslims, who attacked the Ahom fort at the mouth of the Dīghali river. The Muslims were also defeated at Chatāi after a prolonged engagement.[73]

Early in May a big assault was made by the Ahoms on Devargāon which was about to fall when Mughul reinforcements arrived to save it, but on the 10th of that month Gajpur fell to the Ahoms. By a resolute thrust the Ahoms severed the link between the army and the navy of the enemy and established their supremacy over the north bank of the Dihing from Trimohanī to the neighbourhood of Lakhau, the Muslim naval port. A naval squadron of ten war-boats and a number

73. *AB*, pp.177-183.

of merchant vessels sent by Mīr Jumlā to reconquer Gajpur about the third week of May was attacked and seized by the Ahoms with all the materials. The commanders of the Muslim war-boats fled in a panic. The Ahoms next mustered up their courage to attack Garhgāon and Mathurāpur and kept their garrisons under perpetual alarm.

As the rains increased, Mīr Jumlā's communication with his fleet being cut off and the supply of provisions stopped, the Mughul cavalry horses and draught cattle began to die by thousands for want of proper food. Food stocks for the army decreased; wheat, pulse, ghee, sugar and such things were exhausted. The soldiers had to eat the flesh of horses and camels and anything of that sort they could find. 'The soldiers', says Sarkar, '-Rājput and Muslim alike, were opium-eaters to a man, and they underwent unspeakable agony at being deprived of the accustomed drug'. In the last week of May a desperate attempt was made by Mīr Jumlā to reopen communications with the fleet. He sent out Farhād Khān, said to be the best fighter in the Mughul army, with a picked force to restore the line of communication by destroying the Ahom strongholds on it and fetch supplies from Lakhau. He somehow reached Tiok when he was intercepted by the Ahoms and a relieving party sent for him failed to advance on account of rising floods. After one week's untold suffering Farhad fought his way back to Trimohani about 6th June narrowly escaping from his own destruction and without being able to carry out his mission. Farhād Khān's failure encouraged the Ahoms to block all roads making it most perilous for the Mughuls to come out of their outposts. Mīr Jumlā, therefore, withdrew all his *thānās* and the Ahoms recovered all their country east of Lakhau.[74] The Mughuls were now confined to Garhgāon and Mathurāpur alone without much contact with one another. At the same time the noisy night attacks of the Ahoms daily increased in frequency and ferocity. Delhi ceased to hear anything from Mīr Jumlā and hence the Emperor gave up the Assam expedition as completely lost. It is said that at Delhi 'funeral rites were performed for the Assam expeditionary force'.[75]

Jayadhvaj Singha advanced from Nāmrūp, his last resort, to Salaguri, which was at a distance of four days' march from Garhgāon. He was

74. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, pp.166-67.
75. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.168, *Storia*, vol.II, pp.100-101.

out this time to make a supreme effort to drive out the enemy from Assam and for the purpose appointed Bāduli Phukan, a veteran general and brother of the famous Momāi Tāmuli Bar-Baruā of the Lānphimā family, as Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief.[76] The Phukan built up a six-mile long wall on the bank of the Dilih river, east of Mathurāpur and some 20 miles south-east of Garhgāon, connecting the southern hills with the Dihing, obviously to defend the Tipām-Nāmrūp area. The wall is said to be 'broad, high, turretted and strong'. He then commenced a series of night attacks on Mathurāpur, while at the same time the Rajā of Shāiring pressed on Garhgāon. Dilir Khān, the great pillar of the Mughul army, thwarted the attacks on Mathurāpur, while Sujan Singh beat off the Rajā of Shāiring. Unable to take Mathurāpur General Bāduli Phukan next tried his arms against Garhgāon. In face of this threat Mīr Jumlā had already sent Farhād Khān to that city. Bāduli's powerful assault on Garhgāon in the night of 8th July routed the Buxari matchlock-men posted on the north side of the palace enclosure. The Ahoms smashed the bamboo railings and occupied half the enclosure causing great 'confusion and tumult' inside. At this stage some among them made a great blunder by setting fire to the thatched roof of a mansion. The blaze enabled the Mughul cavalry men to locate the Ahoms to charge and drive them off beyond the outer walls. In the fight Farhād Khān was wounded.[77]

While the usual night attacks on Garhgāon were continued a massive preparation was made by the Ahom General and final assault was delivered on 12th July simultaneously from all the four sides of the capital. But on all fronts the Muslims under the new commandant, Rashid Khān, held their ground and repelled the attackers. Thereafter only minor encounters continued. But in August a very virulent type of epidemic broke out in the Mughul camp at Mathurāpur, the daily death-roll running to hundreds. The waters of the streams running down from the hills became poisonous. Many people also suffered from fever. It is shown that Dilir Khān's corps was reduced from 1,500 troopers to about 450. The epidemic was not confined merely to the Mughul camps; spread far and wide. It is said that in Bāduli Phukan's estimate 2,30,000 people died in Assam in that year. Sufferings in Mathurāpur

76. *Ibid*, p.168.
77. *Ibid*, pp.168-9.

became so acute that the whole army camp was shifted to Garhgāon.[78] But much of the stored rice and many of the sick had to be left behind for want of transport. The Ahoms immediately reoccupied Mathurāpur. Again the tempo of militant activities of the Ahoms increased and a third and last grand attack was made on Garhgāon on 15th September, but this, too, was destined to fail as the previous ones. But pestillence overtook Carhgāon too. It is said that 'all kinds of food-stuffs disappeared except course red rice (*āhu*), without salt'.

Mughuls Resume Offensive after Rains (October-December, 1662) : Bāduli Phukan's Desertion Hastened Peace Move :

With the cessation of rains from the later part of September 1662, the floods subsided and the communications began to improve. When in the rainy season Mīr Jumlā lost touch with his fleet the admiral Ibn Husain acted on his own initiative at Lakhau. He withdrew the constantly attacked *thānā* of Devargāon, which was needlessly expensive, and strengthened the vital line of communicatin with Gauhāti and Bengal. Now in September Mīr Jumlā resumed his offensive. Yadgar Khān, sent to deliver Devargāon, attacked the Assamese garrison under the Bhitaruāl Phukan at that post and recaptured the town. The Bhitaruāl Phukan, owing to the king's mistake in not giving him naval support, retreated to Rāngali Chāpari in the Mājulī.[79] The communication between Lakhau and Garhgāon was once again restored and supplies came in plenty from the former to the latter place. As the lands dried up the Mughul cavalry took the field and resumed the offensive. Lāchit, son of Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā of the Lānphimā family, who was stationed in command of a fort on the side of the Tilao (Lohit), was attacked by the Muslims. Lāchit gave battle, but was forced to quit the station by the numerically superior enemy, who then seized the fort.[80] Shāiring (Sāring) was reoccupied by the Muslims and the local population surrendered to them.[81]

78. *Ibid*, p.171.
79. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, p.343; *AB*, pp. 181, 182.
80. *AB*, p.181.
81. *Ibid*, p.181.

It may be noted that the Assamese peasantry demonstrated their wonderful power of mobility in times of national crisis. Threatened with enemy occupation of their localities they left deserted vast tracts of country and went up to hill shelters with all their movable properties including food stocks and cattle. In this movement co-operation and hospitality of the hill tribes, particularly of the Nagās, can be well imagined. During the rainy season of 1662, when the Mughuls were pressed by the Ahoms inside their main forts and their garrisons of the outposts withdrawn, these peasants came down to the plains undoubtedly to harvest their *rabi* crops, such as *āhu* (*ous*), which they had sown in the winter before the invasion began. But with the commencement of the dry season they again deserted their fields and huts and betook themselves to the hills.[82] Thus the Mughuls could not expect much succour in the form of food grains and other materials from the villages.

Having cleared the line of communication with Bengal Mīr Jumlā turned his attention to the east to invade the last stronghold of the Ahom king. He ordered Ābul Hāssān to proceed up the Dikhau with a flotilla from Garhgāon to destroy the fortifications of Bāduli Phukan on the Dilih river and compel him to submit. Accordingly Ābul Hāssān set out on the 10th November and reached the Dilih river which he ascended and launched an attack on the defence lines of Bāduli. He defeated the Ahoms after a very hard struggle. Mīr Jumlā made his camp at Bakobārī and sent one Omrao to Balaktum. On the 16th of that month Mīr Jumlā himself advanced to the Dilih and captured the fortifications of Bāduli. In his attempt to hunt out the fugitive king in the Nāmrūp area he arrived at the Dihing on the 20th of November.[83] On this day he suffered from a fainting fit. Yet after recovery he resumed the command of his army. At this time Garhganyā Rajā-Śaśur was at Kenduguri guarding the Darikā front. For the defence of the territory on the opposite bank of the Dihing Ātan Burā-Gohāin was stationed at Mūrkaṭā with his men. Rajā-Śaśur took his station at Tipām. When the remnants of the army of Assam were pursued by the Mughuls beyond the Dilih river to a place called Hilikhātal the Burā-Gohāin turned on his pursuers at Mūrkaṭāphāt where a fierce fight ensued between Mīr Jumlā and the Burā-Gohāin, both by land and water, which

82. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.175.
83. *Ibid.*, p.175.

raged for the whole day. All the Omraos of the posts of Tipām, Sinātalī, Sāring, Śilpānī, Kaliā Hill, Garhgāon, and Charaguā (Dihing) with their men joined in a combined attack on the Bura-Gohain's fort at Mūrkaṭā. In the evening the Burā-Gohāin's munition was exhausted and, in consequence, he was forced to retire from the battle-field to Pānīphāt yielding his defence post to the Mughuls.[84]

Bādulī Phukan's last hope vanished when the Burā-Gohāin was defeated. He preferred submission to the Mughuls to carrying on a futile war. On the 30th November, 1662, the Ahom Commander-in-Chief, Bādulī Phukan, made his submission to the Mughuls at Hilikhātal.[85] One account says that a deputation of Bādulī, Saruchakuā Gohāin and Salā Kaṭakī appeared before Dilir Khān, who commended the prudence, which induced them to depreciate the impending destruction in the interest of the kingdom.[86] Bādulī promised even to 'capture the king and the officers' and pay tributes to the satisfaction of the Mughul masters if the kingdom can be saved and tranquility restored and for the purpose he be made Rajā. Mīr Jumlā was requested by him to proceed with him to the place of refuge of the king and the nobles. Bādulī had behind him a large body of followers including some distinguished nobles who all joined the side of the Mughuls when Bādulī had gone over to that side.[87] Mīr Jumlā made Bādulī ascend the royal *pālki* called *Kākurādolā* and proceeded with him to Salaguri and then to Tipām.[88] The king entered Nāmchāng.

84. *PAB*, p.125 ; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.304; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.97.

85. *Fāthiyah*, H. Blochmann's translation in *JASB*, 1873, p.92. Apparently Bādulī acted as a traitor. One account suggests there was a serious dissension between him and the Gohāins for which he left the Ahom camp. (Wade : *op.cit.*, p.304). The account in *PAB* (p.125) says that when the king, after the Burā-Gohāin's defeat, was retreating to more interior hill recesses Bādulī Phukan fell behind him in the march. At this the king became angry with Bādulī suspecting him to have submitted to the Mughuls. This was secretly communicated to Bādulī on way by the queen, who was his sister, by sending a messenger, a Kukurāchoā. Hearing this Bādulī Phukan submitted to Khān Khānā (Mīr Jumlā) at Hilikhātal. The reason cited here, for which the great general Bādulī joined the Mughuls, is not strong enough and hence not acceptable. Most probably he saw no alternative to submission to save the country from utter ruin. It is doubtful whether he deserves the blame usually placed on him. His submission, of course, created misunderstanding about him.

86. Wade : *op.cit.*, p.304.

87. *AB*, p.183.

88. *AB*—'*SMJC*' p.97; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.304.

Bādulī's example at once aroused the cupidity of Manthir Bharālī Baruā to make a bid for a high place under the Mughuls. He sent to the Mughul generals Nanda, Hati and Harigati to convey his promise to capture the Ahom king for them. But king Jayadhvaj Singha, who came to know of this plot, seized Manthir and executed him on the sands of Mulātalī.[89]

Mughul generals agreed to make Bādulī Phukan Rajā. They all proceeded to Āhataguri where a royal house was built and Bādulī Phukan installed as Rajā.[90] When this news reached the king's camp, half the men, who followed the king, came over to Bāduli's side. This greatly perturbed the king. After Bādulī the king made Ātan Burā-Gohāin Rājmantrī and urged the Burā-Gohāin and the Garhganyā Raja-Śaśur to accomplish the expulsion or voluntary departure of the invaders by any possible means. In the event of a failure of this task the king had it in his mind 'to seek an asylum in the country of Narā'. His readiness to go to Narā indicates the relations he maintained with the Shan States of Upper Burma, paticularly with Möng-Kawng (Mogaung). The Rājmantrī then despatched a peace mission of four persons, namely, a Muslim named Sultan, Chandrāi, Kamal and Chaturbhuj, with presents to Dilir Khān, offering to pay tribute to the Pādshāh if Mīr Jumlā agreed to evacuate the kingdom and restore the country to its former tranquillity. Dilir Khān declined the presents from a vagrant king and informed the mission of Bāduli's promise to seize the Pātra-Mantrī and the king, but gave it the hope that he himself would soon proceed to Nāmrūp to settle that province and receive any proposals if placed there.[92] He thus took time to consider the matter with Mīr Jumlā. About this time an outpost belonging to the Burā-Gohāin had seized three emissaries whom Bādulī had sent with important intelligence to the enemy's camp. They were taken

89. *AB*—'*SMJC*' p.98.

90. *AB*, p.185. Gait (*op.cit.*, p.138) says that he was only appointed *Subādār* (Provincial Governor) of the country between Garhgāon and Nāmrup. Did Bādulī ask for *Subādārship* of a small tract only ? Probably he was made Rajā of Assam and he occupied the king's palace at Garhgāon.

91. *AB*, p.185.

92. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.98 : Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.304-5.

to the Svargadev in the hill resort where, after an enquiry, they were found guilty and punished with death.[93]

Koch Behār in Revolt :

Meanwhile the serious trend of events in Koch Behār expedited the settlement of affairs in Assam. During the absence of Mīr Jumlā in his Assam campaign the Mughul *Karorī* imposed an exhorbitant tax burden on the people of Koch Behār and set up an elaborate machinery to realize the same. Rigorous exactions of the taxes, which were beyond the capacity of the people to pay, and other oppressions of the Mughul officials drove the country to the verge of revolt. A body of representatives of the people went and met Prānnārāyaṇ at Bāskā and asked for his orders to fight the Mughuls and drive them out of the country. They also requested the Rajā to come down to assume the power. The Dharma Rajā of Bhutān, however, advised Prānnārāyaṇ to proceed cautiously and not to precipitate at that stage a war against the powerful Mughuls. Prānnārāyaṇ was just biding time, and when Mīr Jumlā reached Garhgāon and became irretrievably locked up in his struggle with the Ahoms he gave the call for an attack on the army of occupation. The people surrounded the *Karorī*, the *Thānādār* and the *Faujdār* and killed many Mughuls. Isfundiar Beg in his helplessness pointed out that he was on duty there under the Pādshāh and not under Mīr Jumlā and further that he had no quarrel with the people of Koch Behār. He, however, asked for allowing him to quit the country unmolested. His request was granted. Prānnārāyaṇ came down with a powerful army and reoccupied his capital. The report of this revolt at the back was another matter which weighed in favour of peace with Assam. But, unfortunately for the Mughuls, even after peace, owing to serious illness and death of Mīr Jumlā, they could not interfere with the affairs of Koch Behār. Dilir Khān had to proceed straight to Daccā and then to Delhi.[94]

Peace Treaty of Ghilājhārighāt, 22 January, 1663 :

Dilir Khān had now advanced to Tipām when another peace delegation of two *Kaṭakīs* and one Suham Gariā (a Muslim) from the

93. Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.305-6.
94. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, pp. 75-79 (See Prānnārāyaṇ's letter to Jayadhvaj Singha); *The Cooch Behar State*, p.237.

Burā-Gohāin met him with a proposal to offer a war indemnity of 90 elephants and three lākh rupees in return for the Mughul generals' withdrawal from Assam. When the proposal was discussed with Mīr Jumlā the latter pointed out the enormous cost at which the Mughul army was raised and brought over to Assam and so there could be no question of returning from the proximity of the Svarga Mahārājā who must be pursued to his last refuge.[95]

'But the entire army refused to enter Nāmrūp, whose very air was said to be fatal to all forms of life'. The obstacles inside that region would be insurmountable as the cavalry would not work in the wilds of the hills and the Mughuls could not move without their horses. They fully realized that as foot-soldiers they were no match for the Ahoms and in the hills they would be an easy prey to their guerilla bands. Further, no provisions could easily come to the inaccessible hilly regions from outside by land or water. This fear was aggravated when just at this time the news arrived of a famine in Daccā, whence the bulk of the provisions used to come for the Mughul army in Assam. The gloomy prospect of another flood season made the invaders shudder and give up the hope of survival when the king and his loyal warriors were still secure in their mountain fastnesses to pounce upon them with the burst of monsoons and floods. On top of all the Koch rising in the rear worried the minds of the leaders. The net effect of all these adverse factors was that the soldiers and officers alike plotted to desert their General and return home. Dilir Khān' mediation and counsel alone made Mīr Jumlā give up the wild-goose chase and agree to peace proposals.

But Bāduli was opposed to any peace talks between the Ahoms and the Mughuls inasmuch as a conclusion of peace would mean his overthrow from the position of Rajā. He asserted that his coming over to the side of Mīr Jumlā alone so weakened the Ahom king that the Rājmantrī now had to sue for peace. But Dilir Khan and Mīr Jumlā were not convinced and demanded from Bāduli the fulfilment of his promise to seize the person of the king and also the Gohāins and for that purpose gave him the assistance of the Mughul army. As the last attempt to compel the king to submit Bāduli's brother Maupiyā

95. Wade : *op.cit.*, p.305 : *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.98.

proceeded with the Pādshāh's men to Mekurīkhowā and fought the Ahoms with casualties to both sides, but the Mughul force of the renegade suffered a defeat at the hands of the Ahoms and fled to Tipām.[96] This extinguished the future of Bādulī and his followers and hastened the move for peace. 'All that the bastard Bādulī had boasted', remarked Mīr Jumlā, 'proved all false'.[97]

The terms of the treaty were negotiated by Dilir Khān and the Burā-Gohāin representing their respective governments.[98] Over and above a huge war indemnity in terms of gold, silver and elephants and hostages for the unpaid part of it Mīr Jumlā also demanded a daughter of the Ahom king for the Emperor's son. Jayadhvaj Singha was at first mortified to have to send his daughter to the Muslim Emperor's harem at Delhi, but he was persuaded by the Burā-Gohāin to concede it in the greater interest of peace and tranquillity of the country and also for creating an opportunity to ask for the restoration of the kingdom with some defined boundaries free from the Muslim army of occupation. Thus an informal agreement was reached on the terms of the proposed peace treaty and Nawab Mīr Jumlā communicated them to Emperor Aurangzeb and received his approval in a congratulatory reply for such a successful termination of his Assam campaign. The Emperor was also pleased to confer on him the title of *Shirurshāh Nāsir Maulī*.[99] The treaty was finalized and signed on the following terms :[100]

1. King Jayadhvaj Singha shall offer his daughter[101] to the Emperor's son accompanied by the daughter of Tipām Rajā, Princess Gābharu.[102]

96. *Kāmrupar Buranji*, p.64.
97. *Ibid*, p.65.
98. At one place in *AB* (p.185) it is stated that Bādulī told the Muslims to make peace after having talk with the Kaṭakīs, an obvious reference to Rājmantrī's peace mission to Dilir Khān. But this appears to be wrong, for such a consent by Bādulī would mean undermining his own position as Rajā or Governor
99. *AB*—'*SMJC*' p.100.
100. The terms of the Treaty are embodied very explicitly in Mīr Jumlā's letter to Aurangzeb. See *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.99-100.
101. In Wade's account the name of the Princess is given as Lāngsingh or Nāng-Seng as properly spelt, daughter of his queen Pākharī, Momāi Tāmulī's daughter. (*AB*, ed dy Dutta p.22.)
102. Gābharu was sent at the suggestion of the Burā-Gohāin and Rajā-Śaśur. See *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.101.

2. The king shall deliver immediately a war indemnity of 20,000 tolās of gold, 1,20,000 tolās of silver,[103] and 20 elephants (14 tuskers and 6 female elephants).

3. Rupees 3,00,000 and 90 elephants shall be delivered during the course of one year with effect from the month of *māgh* (January), 1663 in instalments of one lākh rupees every four months and 30 elephants (10 big and 10 small tuskers and 10 *mākhundīs*) at the end of three months and the remaining 60 elephants (20 big and 20 small tuskers and 20 *mākhundīs*) in twelve months' time from *māgh* (January), 1663.[104]

4. Thereafter Assam shall pay annually a regualr tribute of 20 elephants (10 tuskers and 10 *makhundis*).

5. Pending the full payment of the indemnity, the Bar-Gohāin, the Burā-Gohāin, the Barpātra-Gohāin and the Garhganyā Rājmantrī Phukan shall each send a son[105] as hostage to be held by the Nawab.

6. All territories of Assam including the province of Darrang, west of the Bharalī river on the north bank and those including the States of Dimaruā, Beltalā and Rānī of the Nākkāṭī Rānī west of the Kallang river on the south bank were to be annexed to the Mughul empire.

7. The people carried off as captives by the Ahoms from Kāmrūp and other parts of the Mughul dominions were to be released, as also the wife and children of Bādulī Phukan detained in prison.

The Burā-Gohāin proposed that the Mughul army, after the emancipation of all Assam prisoners, should retire beyond the Bar Nadī and the Asurar Āli and receive the hostages on the frontier. The imperial General promised to liberate all the king's subjects except Bādulī and

103. In Mīr Jumlā's letter to Aurangzeb 12,000 rupees (one rupee-1 tola) are only mentioned. See *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.99. This figure is also mentioned in Tāmuli Phukan's *Assam Buranji*, p.39.
104. *mākhundī*, female elephant. Mīr Jumlā's letter to Aurangzeb—*AB*—'*SMJC*', p.100. This part of the indemnity could not be paid at a time as the resources were all exhausted in the war and the country became desolate.
105. In Mīr Jumlā's letter to the Emperor Burā-Gohāin's nephuw is mentioned as a hostage, not his son, who died in the meantime. S.K. Bhuyan gives his newhphew's name as Ramrai.

a few others. He also said that confident of the pleasure that the Emperor would have at the valuable acquisition of the Princess he would venture to establish the Bar Nadī and the Asurar Āli as the limits of the kingdom reminding at the same time that in the time of Parikshit the Bharalī and Kājalīmukh formed its boundary. Mīr Jumlā meant thereby that the entire territory of the old Koch kingdom of Kāmrūp should now come immediately under the Mughuls, the conquerors of the Koches, but he would see that the Emperor agreed to the territorial claim made just before the invasion. Hence by arrangement the Princesses[106] were escorted by the Burā-Gohāin and Rajā-Śaśur to Pāniphāt in Tipām, whence a body of envoys and attendants escorted them away to the place of the Nawab. On 5th January, 1663, the Ahom king's daughter, the hostages and a part of the indemnity reached the Mughul camp. With the Princesses were sent one hundred male and one hundred female attendants and also large dowries consisting of gold, silver, valuable apparels and ornaments. The Mughul generals and high officers were also appeased with presents. Nawab Mīr Jumlā was presented with fifteen elephants and Dilir Khān with five elephants. Both Shaista Khān and Rashid Khān were offered one elephant each. Even the imperial envoys (*Ahādis*) and messengers of high officers received some presents for their good services.[107] Dilir Khān also sent a number of presents to Jayadhvaj Singha and his officers.

Before their departure the generals sent a message to the Ahom king to assume the reins of government with the assurance that the Emperor's fame would be greatly enhanced on the arrival of the Princess. Mīr Jumlā also expressed his full confidence in the sincerity of the king and his nobles to see them implement the terms of agreement to their entire satisfaction.

On 10th January, 1663, Mīr Jumlā began his return march and his army became jubilant at it. The Assam campaign so seriously told

106. The Buranji accounts are confusing whether one or two Princesses were sent and whether they were sent together. But from Mīr Jumlā's letter to the Emperor and other statements in the Buranjis the fact becomes clear that there were two Princesses sent at the same time, but only the Tipām Princess's dowry of 20 elephants was delivered to Godāi at Mekurikhowā in the month of *Chaitra* of A.D. 1663 and of these elephants 19 died on the way. See Tr. 84 (*DHAS*), vol. II, Part I, p.81.

107. The Emperor's envoys (*Ahadis*) Dur Beg and Rastum Beg received each 200 tolas of gold and 1,000 rupees and Dilir Khān's messenger Godāi Barkāth received 100 tolas of gold and 500 rupees.

upon the Nawab's health that he had to travel by *pālki* to Pāndu through many obstacles on the way. He reached Pāndu on 11th February and halted there for eleven days to settle the administration of Kāmrūp. Rashid Khān was already appointed *Faujdār* of Kāmrūp. He, however, expressed reluctance to continue in this post, but being reprimanded by the Emperor he held the post and Muhammad Beg was appointed *Thānādār* of Kājalī under the *Faujdār*.

Meanwhile the Rājmantrī returned all the people belonging to the Pādshāh. Dilir Khān was so pleased to see the released masses of people returning to their own country that he immediately sent presents of precious things to the Ahom king and announced 'Worthy Rājmantrī; he did not deviate from his words'. The Pādshāh's men also highly praised the Ahom rulers. But Mīr Jumlā, contrary to his agreement, compelled 12,000 subjects of the king including women and children to leave Assam and accompany him to Bengal. Among them were some of the important officers of the kingdom, such as Luthurī Chetiā of the Upper Dayāng, the Rājkhowā of the Lower Dayāng, the son of Bhelāi, Lāluk Gohāin, Dighalā Hāzarikā, Jalākariā Hāzarikā, Marangiāl Hāzarikā, Jakāisukiā Lahkar Rājkhowā had to go with their families. Tālish says some Muslims and a few Assamese of the Nāmrūp area voluntarily accompanied the Mughul army and it may be true. In addition, the Dhekeris, who had been transferred from Kāmrūp to Assam by the Bar-Phukan and Piksāi Chetiā after the flight of Lutfullāh Shirāzī (Nāthulā) from Gauhati and defeat of Bhabanāth Qazi, were also summoned and taken away. There were others, who sided with the Mughuls during the worst days of the Ahom king and hence had to quit Assam with the Mughuls. In this group were some of the leading figures like Bādulī Phukan, his brother Maupiyā, Hari Dekā's sons Jagat and Raghunāth Majundār, Raghunāth's son Manohar Kākati, and a few others who went away with their wives and children. Earlier Mīr Jumlā's expedition drove the Barchetiā of Marangi into the Kachārī country. Bānrukiā Lānguchong Bar-Gohain continued to stay on the Tiru Hill of the Nagās. Leaving Rashid Khān at Gauhati as *Faujdār* of Kāmrup and the Ahom hostages with him Mīr Jumlā sailed down.[108] On 28th February he reached Baritalā where his

108. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.66; *AB*-'*SMJC*', p.102 ; *PAB*' p.128. A list is given in *PAB* (p.128) of the Muslim chiefs and Hindu Rajās who fought on the side of the Nawab and accompanied him in his return journey. Some of them were

condition became very serious. He suffered from pleurisy and fever and in the last stage alarming complications developed. Niccolao Manucci says that he fell ill with a retention of urine.[109] He gave up the idea of reconquering Koch Behār in person. On the advice of his physicians he went to Khi ẓrpur and died on 31st March, 1663. Aurangzeb expressed regret for his death but he also got rid of a very wealthy and powerful general whom he had feared. He once said 'I have not seen any efficient person like Mir Jumla'. (*Storia*, I, p. 237)

Mīr Jumlā was probably the greatest general of Aurangzeb and a owner of twenty maunds of diamonds. He usually mounted on a hardy pony. Added to the strength of his renowned Mughul cavalry were his warships constructed for him by the Dutch and English experts manned by European sailors, admirals and soldiers. There is mention of even Muscovites (Russians) in the Mughul army in his Koch Behār and Assam campaigns.[110] His victory in Assam was chiefly due to the destruction of the Ahom navy mainly of *bāchāris* which had to this day complete mastery over the Brahmaputra, the main artery of supplies from Bengal to Assam, a riverine geographical trough. That destruction is to be attributed to the European co-operation in the Mughul army with their advanced types of European-made war-ships and European weapons and methods of fighting to which the major Ahom forts, all on river sides, became vulnerable for assaults. In Koch Behār, it is said, and also in Assam he forbade plunder of property and rape of women by the soldiers and camp-followers and severely punished such offenders. But in Assam it was not much in evidence, though the issue of such orders might be true. He, of course, once denounced Farhād Khān's atrocities on the villagers and released the prisoners under the Ahoms and did such other things, but Muslim soldiers overran the whole territory plundering away even household articles and domestic animals and, where possible, committed savage outrages and

Dilir Khān, Rashid Khān, Menā Khān. Farhād Khān, Āgar Khān, Manohar Khān, Mansur Khān, Isli Husain, Azgar Khān, Rajā Indranārāyaṇ, Rajā Indramaṇi, Rajā Indra Ghosh, Kalā Rājā, Rajā Jadgev, Raja Gandharva Rāi, Mān Singh, Jayanta Singh, Dal Singh, Pratāp Singh, Jay Singh and others.

109. *Storia*, vol. II, p.101.

110. *English Factories in India, XI*, Dutch records (7th March and 10th Oct., 1661) and *EFI*, X, 193, as referred to by Jagadish Narayan Sarkar in his research work ; *The Life of Mīr Jumlā*, (Thacker Spink, Calcutta, 1951.), pp.219-220.

inhuman massacres of the inhabitants. The Ahoms captured by Mughul scouts were cruelly scourged and then beheaded. The object of inflicting such horrible torture on the Ahoms was to force them to join the Mughuls.[111] The Ahoms too retaliated by frightful methods of torture and killing. According to the unnamed Dutch sailor, Mīr Jumlā offered the Dutch Rs. 50 for 'every Head' they 'brougth him' and Rs. 100 for each prisoner captured alive. On the other hand, those who helped the Mughuls were treated kindly.[112] In short, he adopted all manner of wily methods to overcome the resistance of the people and conquer Assam. Talish regrets that in spite of the Rajā's cruelty and Mīr Jumlā's kindness, the Assamese 'did not at all become submissive to the people of Islam'.

He had no respect for the Hindu religion. As in the Karnāṭak, so in Assam, he amassed enormous treasures by sacking temples.[113] He shot down the pinnacle of the famous temple of Dergāon, razed the temple to the ground and pillaged it. He also made the *thākur* take beef and embrace Islām.[114] He was a man with inordinate greed for wealth, power and fame. According to Monsieur de Thevenot (*Travels into the Levant*, Ch. 8, p.102) he had the ambition to become king of Bengal and Thomes Bourey says (*A Geographical Account*, 143-44) that after the conquest of Assam he proposed to march 'against S. Tartaria'. With the aid of the traitors, who joined him, he even dug out the treasures offered to the dead from the graves (*moidām*) of the Svargadevas and shipped them away to Daccā. He did not spare even their skulls and bones.[115] Among the graves excavated were those of Barjanā Gohāin,

111. Glanius, 163-64. Also E and D. VII (for Khāfi Khān's account) referred to by prof. Jagadish Narayan Sarkar.

112. Sarkar's *Mir Jumla*, p.250.

113. Sarkar : *Life of Mir Jumla*, p.249.

114. *AB*, P.173; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.95; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.301.

115. *Ibid*,. p.96; *Storia*, vol. I, p.100. It was the practice of the Ahom kings to bury the dead bodies of the Svargadevs, queens, nobles of the highest rank and even of great generals of enemies, who fell in Assam, in a specified sacred area adjoining the Charāideo Hill. All belongings of the deceased which included enormous amounts of treasures (gold, silver, diamonds, coins and precious utensils) were buried along with the dead body. Over these graves huge mounds of earth were raised. The vault inside was made of bricks and wooden frames with a door. The whole structure is a costly one and with the high mound is a great monument. There were more than a hundred such graves in rows and still there are about twenty standing with their majestic appearance in the silent and solemn atmosphere of the hill-side.

Lāchit Gohāin, Lāluk Gohāin, Chao Hsö-Hseng-Hpā or Burhā Rajā, Garhganyā Rajā, Khorā Rajā, Bhagā Rajā and Nariyā Rajā.[116] The unnamed Dutch navigator Glanius, who came to Assam with the naval force of Mir Jumlā, wrote—'As for riches, we wanted them not, having found good store in Graves'. Tālish states that from the ten vaults which were dug open nearly ninety thousand rupees on all accounts were realized. One of the marvels to the Mughuls was that from the vault of one of the queens, who had been buried 80 years ago, a gold betel-casket was extracted, within which the betel-leaf was still green.[117] Mir Jumlā sent to Daccā huge boats loaded with the booty taken at Garhgāon and other places of Assam and Manucci, who wrote about it, was an eye witness of them at Daccā. These boats had extremely high poops, carved with ugly, fear-inspiring faces'.[118] The booty sent was one mainly of treasures and armaments seized in the course of the invasion. He also seized and sent to Daccā some of the expert Ahom manufacturers of guns and gunpowder. For, he was struck to see the high quality and efficacy of Ahom artillery and gunpowder. He, of course, failed to secure, in spite of his best efforts, any Assamese elephant driver of repute. (*Fathiyah*, 34, 56, 64 ; *JBORS*. I, 186, 192 ; *JASB*, 1872, p.78).

At Delhi Princess Nāng-Seng *alias* Ramani Gābharu (K.T.P. p.39) was, according to *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* (73), as referred to by Sarkar in his *Mir-Jumla* (p.270), married to Prince Muhammad 'A'zam, Governor of Gujarāt, and was made to assume the name of Rahamat Bānu. But, later on the death of Aurangzeb on the 3rd March, 1707, 'A'zam died in the battle of Jajau near Agrā during the fatricidal war of succession by fighting against his brother Mu'azzam, later Shah 'Alam I. As to the position of Tipām Rajā's daughter nothing is known. Tālish mentions Tipām Rajā's sons and not a daughter, but *Alāmgīrnāmā* and most of the Buranjis of Assam and also Mir Jumla's letter to Aurangzeb, as reproduced in the Buranjis, speak of 'the daughter'.

Jayadhvaj Singha Back to Bakathā, March, 1663 :

After the departure of Mir Jumlā king Jayadhvaj Singha returned to Nāmrūp from Nāmchang and then to Tongchāng (Tangachā) by

116. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.96.
117. *JASB* (1872), p.66.
118. *Storia*, vol. II, p.100.

the way of Lechāng. At Tongchang he made his first camp and took rest. Thereafter he came to Mekurikhowā in February. As the capital at Garhgāon had been devastated by the Mughuls the king next moved to Bakathā (also Bakatā), which he made the seat of government. All officers of the State, who had been scattered during the war, were then summoned by the Rājmantrī to assemble at Bakathā. The king proceeded to punish those who betrayed the country to the enemy. The Rajā-Śaśur,[119] who, after his dismissal from the Bar-Phukanship, helped the Mughuls to enter central Assam by the Diju road, pretended illness and committed suicide by swallowing poison instead of facing the trial. Bānrukiā Lānguchong Bar-Gohāin, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the north-bank army, was accused for not reinforcing the southern army, which had to bear the main brunt of the enemy pressure. The Bar-Gohāin, who was not wholly unjustified in his stand as regards this question, was also charged for not returning in time from the Tiru Hill to help the king and was therefore put into prison. The Ghora Konwar, the son of Tāmulī Daloi and Gajpuriā Hātībaruā were scourged and chained for deserting the king.[120] Kath Narottam was dismissed from his post of Majindār and Nazirāhatiyā Mayur Ganak was appointed Majindār in his place. Domāi Dekā (Neog Gohāin) was appointed Bar-Phukan and sent to Kaliābar where his office was established. He died at Kaliābar and the vacancy was filled by Lāngi Bar-Phukan.[121] This way of punishing people was deprecated by Rajā-Śaśur Rājmantrī Phukan, who pointed out to the king how it would affect great numbers of his subjects, high and low, resulting in wide-spread disaffection in the society and consequent loss of internal stability of the kingdom. Jayadhvaj Singha realized the significance of the Rājmantrī's timely warning and gave up the hunt for offenders under the abnormal war conditions.

When Jayadhvaj Singha was at Nāmrūp Prānnārāyaṇ was at Bāskā, both fugitive. In their adversity they both exchanged

119. The identity is not quite clear from the versions of the different texts. According to S.K. Bhuyan he was Nāmaniāl Rajā-Śaśur, elder brother of Garhganyā Rajā-Śaśur Rājmantrī Phukan. But for the reasons already cited and also for different versions in the records left by the Muslim historians the identity of the Bar-Phukan as well as of the Rājmantrī is still not established beyond doubt.
120. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.101; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.67.
121. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.23.

letters[122] in sympathy for each other and making a clean breast of the mistakes they committed under the influences of treacherous and ambitious ministers. During Mīr Jumlā's campaigns in Assam Rajā Jashamatta Rāi of Jayantā, called Landhā Sultan, sent two messengers, Ramai Daloi and Niroi, to Jayadhvaj Singha, but they could not reach the Ahom king as they were captured with the letter by the Mughuls on the way. But just after Mīr Jumlā's departure in May-June of 1663 the Jayantā Rajā wrote to the Svargadev expressing his deepest feelings of sympathy for him. 'Jayantā and Garhgāon are not two different cities', said Rajā Jashamatta, 'I feel afflicted in my mind, as if, it was my country and not yours that was invaded (by the Mughuls)....now let us be united in friendship so as to be able to retaliate upon the Bangāls.' Another letter in a similar tone was addressed by the Nartangiā Chief, Māṇik Singha, to the Ahom king. He wrote—'If ten to twenty thousand men (of my State) would have fallen at your service yet I would not have been sorry'. These letters were delivered to the Svargadev at his Court at Bakathā.[123]

Jayadhvaj Singha had a great desire to have a look into the condition of the ruined capital of Garhgāon. Accordingly he went there in spite of the advice of his priests to the contrary and when the main gate of the city was opened for him he became choked with grief and wept bitterly at the condition of the beautiful city from which he had been away so long in the wilds of Nāmrūp. It is said that he was so much shocked at the sight of Garhgāon that his tears of grief, which did not stop, developed into a disease and he did not long survive. He came back to Bakathā and fell ill with severe diabetes. Knowing his end drawing near he called into his side the three ministers (Dāngarīās) of State, the Phukans and Rājkhowās and made an appeal to all to be united and to reconstruct the shattered kingdom delivering it from the yoke of the enemy. He died on the 25th of *Kārtik*, *Śak* 1585 (A.D. 1663).

122. See for some of these letters *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, Chapter 10. They also give a picture of the political developments of Assam and Koch Behār prior to and during the invasions of Mīr Jumlā.

123. See for the letters *JB*, pp.22-25.

Jayadhvaj Singha's Character and Miscellaneous Events of His Reign :

Jayadhvaj Singha was the first Tai-Ahom king to embrace Hinduism of the Vaiṣṇava cult in A.D. 1654. In that year he performed a *yajna* at Gālpur Ghāt by installing the image of the deity, *Govinda Thākur*, at that place and received initiation (*śaraṇ*) from a Vaiṣṇava priest called Nirañjan Bāpu. He there dedicated to the service of the god (*Govinda Thākur*) extensive tracts of land free of revenue and many workers (*paiks*). This was recorded in a copper-plate grant of the king. It is said that he was the first Ahom king to introduce the system of copper-plate grants which was followed by his successors.[124] He also visited the Viṣvanāth temple on the north bank and made many presents to the Brahmiṇs. Another great *Satra* king Jayadhvaj Singha established was that of Dakṣiṇpāṭ, of which the first Satrādhikār was Vanamālidev Gosāin. He was the spiritual preceptor of Mahārāj Prānnārāyaṇ with his residence at Madhupur. In the *Śak* 1575 (A.D. 1653-54) the king invited Vanamālī Gosāin, a well-versed Pundit in the *Śastras* and a distinguished disciple of Dāmodardev, from Koch Behār and settled him with a *Satra* (Vaiṣṇava monastery) at Jakhalābandhā (in the Nowgong district), whence the *Satra* was transferred to Jatākarā after some days. The Gosāin continued there until he was finally established as the *Satrādhikār* of the *Satra* of Daksiṇpāṭ at Rāngalībāhar in the Mājulī[125] of Upper Assam. The main deity of the Dakṣiṇpāṭ *Satra* is *Yādavarāi* (Viṣṇu). Jayadhvaj Singha granted revenue-free land, *pāiks* and *sevāits* to the *Satra* in the name of *Yādavarāi*. At the time of his death the king invited Vanamālidev to his residence at Bakathā, took blessings from him and, as he had no son, made over the rule of the kingdom to the Gosāin, Vanamalidev, just before he breathed his last. According to the records of the *Satra* Vanamālidev ruled the country until after a brief period, a successor in the person of

124. H.S.B., *op.cit.*, p.47; *AB*—'*SMJC*' ,p·89; Tr. 94 (*DHAS*), vol. V, Part IV, p.309. Nirañjan Bāpu or Nirañjan Dev was the son of Vasudev and grandson of Kavisuryya Kandali Goswami who came from Kanaujpur. Nirañjan was a desciple of Bar Gopāldev and became the first Satrādhikār of the Āunīaṭī Satra, which was established by his royal disciple, Jayadhvaj Singha, with the installations of *Govinda-murti*.

125. Amanatulla Ahmed : *Koch Biharer Itihas*, I, p.164; *Śrī Śrī Vanamālī Dev Charitra*, pp.52,59. The word *mājulī* means a large island in the Lohit or Brahmaputra. There is one in Upper Assam formed by the Lohit and the Brahmaputra and another between Hajo and Pāndu in Kāmrūp.

Chakradhvaj Singha was placed on the throne.[126] Jayadhvaj Singha's initiation to Hinduism did not affect much his faith in the traditional religion of the Ahoms. Even during his flight from the capital his first concern was to save the Ahom priests and the sacred articles of the temples at Charāideo erected for the worship of his racial gods (*phis*). He duly worshipped *chum* and *sheng* and made offerings to Lengdon. But there is no doubt that he was the first Tai-Ahom king to give official recognition to the Hindu religion and shower benefits on the Brahmiṇs, whose influence began to increase in the royal Court. He paid more attention to the new faith and neglected the worship of this ancestral gods.

As the eleventh Pagan king Narathihapate was *Tarokpye-min*, 'the king who ran away from the Taroks (Tartars)' in the eyes of the Burmese people, so king Jayadhvaj Singha was, by analogy, *Mughul-pye-min*, 'the king who ran away from the Mighuls' in the eyes of the Assamese people, who since then called him by the nickname of Bhaganiyā Rajā, 'The Rajā who took to flight'. It is no stigma to take to flight when the enemy is too powerful. 'When it is impossible to ward off danger from all sides', says Kautilya in his *Arthaśāstra*, 'a king should run away, leaving all that belongs to him; for, if he lives his return to power is certain as was the case with Suyatra and Udeyana'.[127] In the case of Jayadhvaj Singha there was no question of his surrender in spite of his being forced to leave the capital. He continued to direct his operations from the midst of the hills and jungles which at once formed a bastion beyond the capacity of the proud Mughul Omraos to surmount. He could have probably held his ground well and starved the Mughuls to surrender in the next flood season, had not, in the meantime, some of the stalwarts like the Rajā-Śaśur Bar-Phukan, Hāriā Dekā, Bādulī Phukan and Manthir Bharālī Baruā gone over to the enemy thereby undermining the morale of large sections of the Assamese population.

126. Tr. 94 (*DHAS*), vol. V, Part IV, p.319. It is said that the management of the destructible temporal affairs of the State was not thought by the Gosāin as a proper function of the spiritual *gurus* and hence he handed over that charge to Chakradhvaj Singha when he was chosen for the throne.

127. D.R. Bhandarkar's *Lectures on the Ancient History of India* (Calcutta University, 1919), p.358.

Jayadhvaj Singha's private life may have suffered from lapses,[128] but that he was a great patriot is beyond doubt. He had also a burning ambition to extend the frontiers of his kingdom to the Karatoya, which was once reached during the reign of Hsö-Hum-Möng by the redoubtable Ahom general, Ton-Khām. According to the *Ālāmgīrnāmāh* the Ahoms, during Jayadhvaj Singha's reign, plundered and laid waste the country almost as far as Daccā itself.[129]

During Jayadhvaj Singha's reign the Kachāris occupied Bāghargāon in the Ahom territory. The Bar-Phukan wanted to seize the Kachārī Rajā Biradarpa. It was communicated to the Kachārī Rajā by the Garhganyā Sandikoi, who also advised the Rajā to revive old friendship with the Svargadev for averting such an eventuality. Thereafter regular exchanges of embassies between Biradarpanārāyaṇ and Jayadhvaj Singha continued to the end of the latter's reign. During this period the Ahom Court laid special stress on the enforcement of proper diplomatic formalities in the relations between the two countries. The Kachārī Rajā, on his part, repeatedly reminded the Ahom king to implement his assurance to give a princess to him in marriage for the formal establishment of the claim on him as a protected Rajā of the Svargadev. The Ahom nobles throughout adopted dilatory tactics in this matter as the Kachārī Rajā avoided coming in person to take the bride under various pretences. It was a question of prestige on both sides. The matter continued to be negotiated through diplomatic channels but remained unfulfilled owing to the outbreak of war with the Mughuls.[130]

Jayadhvaj Singha subdued the Lākmā Nagās who had hunted the heads of two men and four children in the Ahom territory. There were troubles from them several times. At last an amicable adjustment was reached and the Lākmā Rajā offered tributes to the king and the latter

128. For instance, he kept as his wife the chief queen's elder sister, who had been married to the Pukhurīpariā Burā-Gohāin, Poāli (*Assam Buranji* : 1648-1681 A.D., p.5) and had a male child. She was later made Parbatīā Queen and, in the meantime, procured the murder of her former husband. The Chief queen was Rajā-Śaśur Naoboichā Phukan's daughter. *AB—,SMJC'*, p.87.

129. See also Stewart's *History of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1903), p.324. The available Assamese sources, however, do not present a clear corroborative evidence of this advance. (See also Gait : *op.cit.*, p.128).

130. For fuller details see *Kachārī Buranji*, pp.37-49.

allowed him the possession of the hill called Shāngdoi-mlān-doi as prayed for. In 1655 the Miris of the village, Mārekebāt in Sadiyā killed a few subjects of the Ahom king. The Ahoms attacked the Miris who then sent their Miri *Kaṭakīs* suing for peace and argeeing to pay tribute to the king. A group of persons with the Bar-Gohāin conspired against the king but they received deterrent punishment.

In 1660 there was a feud between Jaśamāṇik, the Jayantā Rajā and his grandson Pramatha. The latter asked the Gubhā Rajā to come over to his side with his army. But the Gubhā Rajā offered shelter to Pramatha without himself going to him as he wanted. This enraged Pramatha who devastated four villages of Gubhā Rajā. Gubhā Rajā then appealed to the Kachārī Rajā for help and the latter wanted to send to his assistance the army of 7,000 men stationed in the Kachārī country by the Ahom king, obviously to remove the army from the country. But the Ahom king's men refused to leave their station. Gubhā Rajā being helpless, intended to join with the Koches, but the Ahoms threatened him that in that case he would not be allowed to rule that country. The Gubhā Rajā then joined the Ahoms in 1660 and paid homage to Jayadhvaj Singha whose suzerainty he acknowledged. The Ahom king then gave him protection and presents and established him at Khāgarijān (Nowgong) with bounderies fixed.[131]

During the rainy season of 1652 Jayantā guests visited the Ahom Court and paid homage to the king by offering many large boats, eight gold seats and one hundred and forty umbrellas. The Jayantā guests made a prayer to Jayadhvaj Singha to give back to their Rajā the part of their dominions ceded to the 'king of Mungdunshunkhām' as also the provinces of Dimaruā, Kuphānali[132] and Kaobān. The Ahom king replied that all those areas and provinces were merged in the territory of his kingdom and distributed among some of the frontier Chiefs and so it was not possible to return the provinces. But the guests were given a quantity of gold as a price for them.[133] Yet during May-June of 1663 Jayantā Rajā wrote to Jayadhvaj Singha letters expressing his deep sympathy for and co-operation with Ahom Rajā. There is

131. *AB*, pp.156-57.
132. probably Gubhā.
133. *AB*. pp.146-7.

mention of visit of a Sām *Kaṭakī*[134] (Sām ambassador) to the Court of Jayadhvaj Singha in 1652. The *Kaṭakī* 'pledged fidelity' to the king 'by drinking'.[135] He presented to the king of Möng-Dün-Hsun-Khām a gold flute, a silver plate, a quantity of vermillion, a satin cloth, a stand, a drum and an under-cloth. The king also gave many presents and necessary instructions to the *Kaṭakī* before his departure.

One of the notable achievements of Jayadhvaj Singha's reign in the internal affairs of the country was the planned settlement of villages from Narā to Bengal border making a suitable distribution of the artisans and men of different professions all over the country. The author, of this plan was the talented Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā. Some of the important public works of Jayadhvaj Singha were the Cheuni Āli, a high road, well-known to this day constructed under the supervision of Bādulī Phukan, Keri-meri *garh* and Māchkhowā *garh* with bastions and gun emplacements. He also built the Bhomorāguri Ali and excavated the Bhatiāpārā tank.[136] After his terrible experience of Mīr Jumlā's invasion he cleared the jungles of the old fortifications and temporary residence of king Hsö-Dāng-Hpā near the Pātkāi Hills, the south-eastern extremity of the kingdom proper, and widened the area constructing more houses and a new royal residence in it. He made it a powerful defence post with fortifications mounted with large cannon and equipped with stores of other war materials before he came to see Garhgāon, the sight of which cut short his life.[137]

Mīr Jumlā's invasion resulted in devastation of almost the whole valley of the Brahmaputra and for a brief period the Mughul General may be said to have held sway over the country except for the last stronghold of the Ahom king in the region of Nāmrūp Hills. But it was also realized by the Mughuls that they could not have a permanent footing in this land.

134. The word is *Shām kun* and the name of the *Shām kun* is Phu-pai-möng. The translator writes that the ambassador was sent by the 'king of Siam'. See *AB*, p.147. He may have come from the Shan States of Burma also.
135. *AB*, p.147.
136. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.38-39; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.140.
137. K.T.P. : *op·cit.*, p.39.

Shihābuddin Tālish's Account of Assam :

Shihābuddin (poetically called Tālish), who accompanied Mīr Jumlā to Assam as *Waqiahnavis*,[138] wrote an account of the country in Persian which reveals many such things about Assam in the seventeenth century A.D. as are not contained in the Burañjis. A few important extracts of the account only can be given here. The following extracts are as translated from Persian Mss. by Prof. J.N. Sarkar in the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, (vol. I, Part II, Dec., 1915, pp. 179-95). He points out that throughout his account Tālish uses the the word "Assamese" for the Ahoms only. Tālish says :—

'Assam is a wild and dreadful country, abounding in danger....

'The length of Assam from west to east, Gauhati to Sadiyā, is about 200 *koś*, its[139] breadth, north to south, from the hills of the Gāros, Miris, Mishmis, Daflās, and Landāhs to those of the Nagā tribe is seven or eight days journey at a guess..... The land on the north bank of the Brahmaputra is called *Uttarkol*, and on the southern bank *Dakhinkol*. *Uttarkol* stretches from Gauhati to the home of the Miri and Mishmi tribe, and *Dakhinkol* from the kingdom of the nāk-kāti Rānī to the village of Sadiyā. 'The Rajāh of Assam brought to the field an army whose large number became a cage on earth;

138. The office of *Waqiahnavis*, or writer of events, was introduced by Akbar. His duty was to report to Court whatever happened in the district to which he was appointed. (H. Blochmann-'Koch Bihar and Asam' in *JASB*, I. 1872. p.51). Tālish's book is named *Fathiyah-i-ibriyah* (or *ibratia*) ("The victories that give warning") or *T'arikh Fath-i-Āshām* ("History of the Conquest of Assam"). The author's name is known to be Ibn Muhammad Wāli or Shihabuddin Tālish who wrote the account of Assam between the 9th August, 1662 and the 13th May, 1663. An abstract of this work was published by Blochmann in the *JASB*, 1872, Part I, pp.63-96. From a transcript of Bodleian Ms. 589 (Sachau and Ethe's *Bodleian Catalogue*, No.240) Sir Jadunāth Sarkār published a summary of the whole in the *JASB*, of 1906, pp. 257-267 and of 1907, pp.405-425. A translation by him of the portion on Assam in the *JBORS*, (vol. I, Part II, Dec., 1915, pp.179-95), is reproduced by Gait in his *History of Assam*, pp.140-51. The description of Assam and its people fills 19 pages in Tālish. There is also a translation of Tālish's book into French, through the Urdu of Mīr Bāhādur 'Ali by Theodore Pavie (Paris, 1845). See also Rieu, British. Museum catalogue, I, 266 (Additional Ms. 25.422).

139. 1 *Koś* (or *Krosha*)—2 English miles (about). Hence 200 *Koś*=400 miles. *Jogini Tantra* says Kāmarūpa was triangular in shape, 100 *Yojanas* in length (from the Karatoya) and 30 *Yojanas* is breadth. 1 Yojana—4 *Kroshes*—8 English miles.

'(They were) tumult-raising and sudden (in attack) like the eyes of the fair sex ;

'Hurling arrows and (other) missiles, and making a (firm) stand in the battle-field.

'Their bodies full of life, they robbed lives on plain and hills.

'All of them were terrific like the demon I'frit (a ganit in Persian mythology) in the river.

'If one of them made a charge on the battle-field,

'Their bodies would be severed from their heads, and their heads from their bodies (before they left it).

'They seem to be Ahrimans (The Satan or evil spirits in Zoroastrian mythology) come out of hell,.....

'They are strong-lived to such a degree that if they are turned into dust

'Their viens do not become the least slack.

'All of them are without light (Light=knowledge of the Muhammadan religion) like the eyeballs of the blind ;.....

'They resemble men in nothing beyond this that they walk erect on two feet in the lanes and bazars.

'They can practise tricks so well that they can,

'Confine the wind in the limbs like bubbles in water.

'The number of their population is larger than the Field of Resurrection can hold.

'Their kingdom extends from the farthest east to the farthest west.

'Its rivers are more numerous than the waves of a river.

'Calculation has been beggared by the large number of its forts.

'The forts are granite-based like the hearts of heroes.

'Although most of the inhabitants of the neighbouring hills pay no tax (*baj*) to the Rajāh of Assam, yet they accept his sovereignty and obey some of his commands. The Daflā tribe alone does not place its feet in the skirts of obedience, but occasionally encroaches on his kingdom.

'From the village of Kaliābar to the city of Garhgāon houses and orchards full of fruit trees stretch in an unbroken line; and both sides of the road, shady bamboo groves raise their heads to the sky. Many varieties of sweet-scented wild and garden flowers bloom here, and from the rear of the bamboo groves upto the foot of the hills there are cultivated fields and gardens. From Lakhaugarh to Garhgāon, also, there are roads, houses and farms in the same style; and a lofty and wide embanked road has been constructed upto Garhgāon for traffic.

'In this country they make the surface of fields and gardens so level that the eye cannot find the least elevation in it up to the extreme horizon. *Uttarkol* has greater abundance of population and cultivation; but as there are more inaccessible strongholds and defensible central places in *Dakhinkol*, the kings of Assam have fixed their abode in the latter.[140]

'The people of his country are free from certain fatal and loathsome diseases—such as leprosy, white leprosy, elephantiasis, cutaneous eruptions, goitre and hydrocele, which prevail in Bengal. They are also immune from many other lingering maladies.

'Gold is washed from the sands of the Brahmaputra. Ten to twelve thousand Assamese are engaged in this employment, and they pay to

140. The description, as given here nullifies Tālish's earlier statement that 'Assam is a wild and dreadful country, abounding in danger'. Certain outlying areas like Nāmrūp might have been wild and dreadful, but the sweeping remark appears to be an exaggeration. In rain and flood Assam is not more dreadful or dangerous than eastern Bengal (now East Pakistan). In point of diseases Assam was in many respects better and produced a vast manpower as is affirmed by Tālish himself. FurtherAssam knew no regular famines like Bengal or Mughul India. Not being able to be acclimatized in this country in a single season is another matter.

the Rajāh's government one *tolā* of gold per head per year. But this gold is of a low-standard of purity; a *tolā* of it fetches only eight or nine rupees.....but the only people who know how to gather it are those Assamese. The currency of this kingdom consists of *cowries* and *rupees* and gold coins stamped with the stamp of the Rajāh. Copper coins are not current.... Silver, copper and tin are also obtained in the hills of the same tribes (Miri and Mishmi).... The aloe wood which grows in the hills of Nāmrūp, Sadiyā and Lakhaugarh,[141] is heavy, coloured and scented.

'If this country were administered like the Imperial dominions, it is very likely that forty to forty-five lakhs of rupees would be collected from the revenue paid by the raiyats, the price of elephants caught in the jungles and other sources. It is not the custom here to take any land tax (*kharāj*) from the cultivators; but in every house one man out of three has to render service to the Rajā, and if there is any delay in doing what he orders, no other punishment than death is inflicted.

'In all the past ages no (foreign) king could lay the hand of conquest on the skirt of this country, and no foreigner could treat it with the foot of invasion. Narrow are the gates by which outsiders can enter or issue from this country, and lame are the feet on which its natives can go to other countries. Their kings neither allow foreigners to enter their land nor permit any of their own subjects to go out of it.[142] Formerly once a year, by order of the Rajāh, a party used to go for trade to their frontier near Gauhati; they have gold, musk, aloe wood, pepper, spikenard and silk cloth in exchange for salt, saltpetre, sulphur and certain other products of India which the people of Gauhati used to take thither. In

141. It is 27 miles due east of Visvanāth on the north bank near the western point of the big island of Mājulī.

142. Envoys, ambassadors and traders were certainly permitted to go abroad to visit the important cities and capitals of Mughul India, such as Delhi, Dacca, Gaur, Kaṭak, Purī etc. both on official duties and in connection with trade and commerce and pilgrimages. Such other places as Kāshī, Pātnā, Vrindāvan were also visited. Most probably even spies, too, were sent abroad to collect information about other countries. All these different categories of travellers and visitors brought information about political developments in Mughul India from before Mīr Jumlā's invasion on the basis of which books like *Pādshāh Buranjis*, *Bhāgawat*, *Rāmayan*, *Mahābhārata* were written.

short, every army that entered this country made its exit from the realm of life ;.... In former times whenever an army turned towards this country for raid and conquest, as soon as it reached the frontier, the wretches made night attacks on it. If success did not dawn on the night of their enterprise, they used to drive away to the hills the peasantry along the route (of invasion), leaving not a man to inhabit a house or kindle a fire in that tract. The invaders neglecting caution and watchfulness, reached the centre of the country after passing unobstructed roads full of danger, raging torrents and frightful valleys covered with deadly forests. And by reason of the distance (traversed), the winter expired on the way and the rainy season began. The wretches, descending from the hill tops like a flood, invested the army on all sides..... So, that imprudent army, on being beseiged has no power left to confront and repel the enemy, and grows weaker through failure to procure supplies of food, and is soon exterminated or taken prisoner.[143]

'And as no one who entered this country ever returned, and the manners of its natives were never made known to any outsiders, the people of Hindustan used to call the inhabitants of Assam sorcerers and magicians and consider them as standing outside human species. They say that whoever enters this country is overcome by charms and never comes out of it.

'The Rājāhs of this country have always been self-confident and proud by reason of the large number of their followers and attendants and the abundance of their property, treasure and armed force; and they have always maintained vast bodies of fighting men and mountain-like ferocious-looking elephants. Although he (Jayadhvaj Singha) is attached to the Hindu religion,.... he does not bow his head down in worship to any idol.

'And all the people of this country, not placing their necks in the yoke of any faith, eat whatever they get from the hand of any man, regardless of his caste, and undertake every kind of labour that appears

143. This shows how the Ahoms shaped their war strategy against external enemies utilizing to the full the topographical advantages of the country and drilling the people in the art of quick mobility. This further indicates how the Hills people gave their unstinted support to the Ahom king, particularly against the Muslim invaders. The Hills and the Hills peoples' friendship constituted the main safeguard of Assam's independence in the last resort.

proper to their defective sight. They do not abstain from eating food cooked by Muslims and non-Muslims, and partake of every kind of meat, whether of dead or of slaughtered animals, except human flesh. .. Their language differs entirely from that of all the people of Eastern India. Strength and heroism are apparent in the peoples of this country; they are able to undertake hard tasks; all of them are warlike and blood thirsty, fearless in slaying and being slain, unrivalled in cruelty, treachery and rudeness, unique in the world in deception, lying and breach of faith. The persons of their women are marked by beauty and delicacy of features, blackness and length of hair, softness of body, fairness of complexion and loveliness of hands and feet. From a distance their general appearance looks perfectly beautiful, but disfigured by the absence of proportion in the limbs... The wives of the Rājāhs and peasants alike never veil their faces before anybody, and they move about in the market-places with bare heads. Few of the men have two wives only; most have four or five, and they mutually exchange their wives, or buy and sell them. ..They shave their hair, beard and moustaches. If any of their natives acts contrary to this practice in the least particular, they say that he has adopted the manners of the Bengalis[144] and they cut his head off.

'They (the Assamese) are greatly frightened by horses, and if they catch one, they hamstring it. If a single trooper charges a hundred well-armed Assamese, they all throw their arms down and run away, and if they cannot flee, they put their hands up to be chained as prisoners. But if one of them encounters ten Musalman infantrymen, he fearlessly tries to slay them and succeeds in defeating them. The Assamese consider the sale of an elephant as the most disgraceful of act, and never commit it.

'They build war boats like the *kosāhs* of Bengal, and call them *bacharis*. There is no other difference between the two than this that the prow and stern of the *kosāh* have two (projecting) horns, while the head and base of the *bāchāri* consist of only one levelled plank; and as, aiming solely at strength, they build these boats with the pith of timber

144. Here 'Bengalis' or more properly 'Bangāls' mean the Muslims whom no Assamese was allowed to imitate. By putting 'Bengali' for 'Bangāl' meaning any foreigner Sir Jadunāth restricts the sense of the term. Even Europeans were called "Bagā Bangāls'.

(qalb-dar), they are slower than *kosāhs*. So numerous are the boats, large and small, in this country that on one occasion the news-writer of Gauhati reported in the month of *Ramzān* that up to date of his writing 32,000 *bāchāri* and *kosāh* boats had reached that place or passed it. The number of boats that conveyed the Imperial army and those inhabitants of Assam who accompanied the Nawab (Mīr Jumlā) in his return, probably exceeded the number mentioned by the news-writer. It is most probable that one-half of this number, or rather more than that, was owned by the wretches (i,e. the Assamese). They build most of their boats of *chambal* wood; and such vessels, however heavily they may be loaded, on being swamped do not sink in the water. Many nobles (of our army) repeatedly witnessed this fact; and the author has also had experience of it.

'They cast excellent matchlocks and *bāchādār* artillery, and show a great skill in this craft. They make first-rate gunpowder, of which they procure the materials from the Imperial dominions. In the whole of Assam there is no building of brick, stone or mud, with the exception of the gates of Garhgāon and a few temples. Rich and poor alike construct their houses with wood, bamboo and straw. The original inhabitants of this country are of two races, - the Assamese (i.e. the Ahoms) and the Kolitā. In all things the latter are superior to the formerr but in performing difficult tasks and making a firm stand in battle, the opposite is the case.

'Six or seven thousand Assamese always stand guard round the abode and bedroom of the Rajā, and these are called *Chaudāngs*. They are the devoted and trusted servants of the Rajā and are his executioners. The weapons of war of the people of the country are matchlocks, *Rāmchāngis*,[145] cannon, arrows with and without iron heads, half-swords, spears, bamboo bows and cross-bow (*takhsh*) arrows. In times of war, all the inhabitants of the kingdom,—artizans, farmers, the well-to-do and common people, free and unfree—have to go to battle, whether they wish it or not; like jackals they set up a concerted howl, all at the same time and deliver a great assault.... A very small number of their soldiers often checkmate thousands in battle. But those of their warriors and heroes who attack the enemy with swords and arrow and

145. 'Some sort of light field-piece' (Irvine's *Army of Indian Myghals*, p.137).

boldly pierce the enemy's ranks, belong to the race of genuine Assamese,[146] and these probably do not number more than 20,000 men. They mostly engage in battles and night attacks in the night of Tuesday, which they consider an auspicious time. The common people either fight and are defeated, or flee without fighting. Fixing in their minds eye the purport of (the holy verse), "Those who had fear gained safety, while fearless were destroyed", they throw away all their arms and escape.

'The common people bury their dead with some of the property of the deceased, placing the head towards the east and the feet towards the west. The chiefs build vaults for their dead, and place therein the wives and servants of the deceased, after killing them, together with necessary articles for a few years, including various kinds of gold and silver vessels, carpets, clothes, and food-stuffs..... From the ten vaults which were dug opened (by the Mughals) nearly ninety thousand rupees on all accounts were realised.....

'As for the Musalmans who had been taken prisoner in former times and had chosen to marry (here), their descendants act exactly in the manner of the Assamese, and have nothing of Islām except the name; their hearts are inclined far more towards mingling with the Assamese than towards association with Muslims. The Muhammadans who had come here from Islāmic lands engaged in the performance of prayer and fasting, but were forbidden to chant the call to prayer or publicly recite the 'Words of God' (i.e. the Muhammadan confession of faith).

'The city of Garhgāon has four gates of stone set in mud from each of which to the Rajāh's palace for a distance of three *kos* an extremely strong, high and wide embankment (*āl*) has been constructed for the passage of men. Around the city, in the place of a wall, there is an encompassing bamboo plantation running continuously; the bamboo-grove is about two *kos*, more or less across. But in the city the habitations are not regularly laid out. The houses of the inhabitants have been built in a scattered fashion within the bamboo-grove, close to the *āl*, and every man's orchard and plough-land are situated in front of his house, one end of the field touching the *āl* and the other the house.

146. 'genuine Assamese'—'*ācal* Asamese,' of Blochmann.—*JASB*, 1872, p.82.

Near the Rajāh's palace on both banks of the Dikhau river the houses are numerous, and there is a narrow bazar-road. The only traders who sit in the bazar are betel-leaf sellers. It is not their practice to buy and sell articles of food in the market-place. The inhabitants of the country store in their houses one year's supply of food of all kinds; and (therefore) are under no necessity to buy or sell any eatable.

'In short, the city of Garhgāon appeared to us to be circular (*mahuta*), wide, and composed of some villages. Round the Rajāh's house a (second) *āl* has been run, and above it strong bamboos have been planted close together, to serve for a wall. Round it a moat has been dug, which is deeper than a man's height in most places, and is always full of water. This enclosure is one *koś* and 14 chains in circumference. Inside it high and spacious thatched houses have been built. The Rajāh's audience hall,—called *Solang*,.. is 120 cubits long and 30 cubits broad, measured on the inside. It stands on 66 pillars, each of them about four cubits round. They have smoothed such huge pillars so well that at first sight they seemed to have been turned on a lathe. Though the people of Assam pretended to have (knowledge of) the art of turning on lathes, yet reason refuses to believe it. My pen fails to describe in detail the other arts and rare inventions employed in decorating the woodwork of this palace. Probably nowhere else in the whole world can wooden houses be built with such decoration and figure-carving as by the people of this country. The sides of this palace have been partitioned into wooden lattices of various designs carved in relief, and adorned, both within and outside, with mirrors of brass, polished so finely that when the sunbeams fall on them , the eye is dazzled by the flashing back of light. This mansion was completed by 12,000 men working for one year. At one end of this palace, on four pillars facing each other, rings have been fixed, nine rings on each pillar. Whenever the Rajāh wished to live in this house, a throne was placed between the four pillars, and nine canopies, each of a different stuff, were fastened to the rings above the throne. The Rajāh sat on the throne under the canopies; the drummers beat their drums and *dands*. The *dand* is a circular flat instrument of brass like our gongs (gharial) which (our) gong-men play upon. When the Rajāh holds court or rides out, or the nobles (phukans)set out for the places to which they have been newly appointed, the drums and *dands* are beaten. That perfect (scholar) Mulla Darvish of Herat, who had explored the Persian tongue more than the Arabic language, used to say that the *tas-ruin* (brazen gongs) mentioned in *Shāhnāmāh* signified this very *dand*. Verily God knows the truth.

'As for the many other wooden mansions, .. carved, decorated, strong, long and broad, .. which were inside the enclosure (of the palace), their elegance and peculiar features were fit to be seen and not heard of. But may not (even) an infidel have the lot of beholding those houses, unless this country is annexed to the Imperial dominions, so that he might not be involved in the calamities that overwhelmed us.

'Outside the encloure of the palace, a perfectly neat and pure manison has been built for the residence of the Rajāh; and the nobles have built very fine and strong houses near the royal palace. The Bar Phukan, who was the Rajāh's son-in-law,[147] had laid out an extremely elegant and fresh garden round a very pure and sweet tank within the grounds of his mansion. Truly it was a pleasant spot and a heart-ravishing and pure abode. Owing to the excees of damp, it is not the custom in this country to make the courtyards of houses on the surface of the ground; but they built their houses on platforms resting on (wooden) pillars.'

Shihābuddin Tālish's account, barring a few caustic remarks against his enemies, the Ahoms, and exaggerations here and there, is confirmed by the Burañjis of Assam in so far as such accounts of the period are contained in them. It would ever remain a classic document furnishing an authentic picture of Assam in the seventeenth century of the Christain Era. It presents the picture of a country in which the rivers and hills, jungles and seasonal floods and the support and allegiance of the hardy hill tribes gave additional strength to the defence organization of the country and the vigour of the race. The Ahoms conceived the defence plan according to the geographical condition of the land. Unlike their forefathers, who depended chiefly on the cavalry for offence and defence in Yün-nān, the Ahoms, in the conditions of the Brahmaputra valley, shifted the emphasis to the navy and forts, and the elephant

147. It is a mistake, for it was the Bar-Phukan who was the father-in-law of the king and not the Bar-Phukan the king's son-in-law. See K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.38 ; *AB—'SMJC'*, p.97 ; *Assam Burañji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.5.

was found more useful than the horse as a war animal for the army. Tālish highly speaks of the physical superiority and bravery of the Ahoms, their hardiness and enterprising spirit. 'A still stronger proof of Ahom valour', says Professor J.N. Sarkar, 'is the abuse he (Tālish) applies to them (the Ahoms)'. Tālish was also charmed to see the decorations and woodcarvings of the Ahoms on the palace buildings and on the beautiful houses of the Ahom nobles. That Hinduism had little influence in changing the habits and customs of the race is evident from the fact that untouchability was completely absent and the observance of the rules of caste and restriction of food and drink according to the Hindu system was nowhere to be seen among them. The Ahoms were still a 'hardy, meat-eating, bear-drinking, fighting race'.[148]

21. Hsö-pöng-Möng alias Chakradhvaj Singha (1663-1669) :

After Jayadhvaj Singha's death in November (*kārtik*, 25), 1663, the ministers and other officers held a council in the month of *Agrahāyaṇa* (November-December) and, as desired by the deceased king, who had no son, sent *Kaṭakīs* to call in the Shāiring Rajā, son of Jayadhvaj Singha's uncle,[149] to succeed to the throne. The Sāiring Rajā was also the grandson of Hsö-Leng,[150] a former Shāiring Rajā called Deo Rajā. One Burañji says that Jayadhvaj had two sons,[151] none of whom was chosen as his successor, but this appears to be a mistake in the context of the succession question. Other Burañjis definitely assert that he had no son. When Jayadhvaj Singha fell ill at Bakathā and proposed the name of the Shāiring Rajā as his successor, Rajā-Śaśur opposed the selection and, after consultation with his two queens,[152] tried to influence the king to nominate his adopted son, Lāisong. Lāisong was the son of the Parbatiā queen[153] by her former husband. But the king dared not accept the suggestion against the wishes of his ministers and nobles of the Court. Rajā-Śaśur's opposition to Shāiring Rajā's (Chakradhvaj Singha's) succession had far-reaching consequences with the tragic end of himself and his associates.

148. From a letter by Col. Dalton. Vide *Ethnology of Bengal*, last group.
149. *PAB*, p.130 ; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.85.
150. *AB*, p.186 ; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.40.
151. K.T.P., p.40.
152. both being the daughters of Rajā-Śaśur, Nāoboichā Phukan.
153. Elder sister of the chief queen and former wife of the Pukhuriparia Burā-Gohain, Poāli.

The ministers (*Dāngarias*) and other nobles installed the Shāiring Rajā as king at Bakathā with the necessary ceremonies. He, however, formally ascended the *Haw-löng* at Lāshāng with the *Chumdeo* tied round his neck in the month of *Dinruk* (*Baisākh*, April-May, 1664) and underwent the coronation ceremony assuming the title of Hsö-Pông-Möng as conferred on him by the Deodhai Pundits. His Hindu name is Chakradhvaj Singha. One Burañji says that he ascended the *Śingari-Ghar* in the town made in the area of the munition go-down near the Śalakhāmarā *ghāṭ* on the south bank of the river Pesāng[154] where he held his Court. He also built a treasury (*Golā-Ghar*) in this town and collected in it rupees seven lakhs for paying war-indemnity to the Mughuls. Since that time the *Golā-Ghar* became a permanent institution of the State which was always kept well-guarded. But a horned owl happened to sit on the King's house. As it was an ill omen he formally ascended the Pāt-Ghar at Garhgāon.

Increasing Tension in Mughul-Ahom Relations : (1663-1667) :

Soon after his accession Chakradhvaj Singha was faced with the problems of vassalage as well as the war-indemnity and tributes to be paid to the Mughuls under the Treaty of Ghilājhāri Ghāt. A group of four Muslim envoys named Dur Beg, Rastum Beg, Tājā Khān and Shaykh Kamāl arrived at Lakhau with presents from the Emperor for Jayadhvaj Singha. Of these the first two *ahādis*[155] came from the Court of Aurangzeb at Delhi and on their way they met the party with the Ahom Princess Nāng-Seng at Patna and Dilir Khān sent back with them Bānhbariā Bhabānanda *Kaṭakī* and Gadāi, who were accompanying the Princess to Delhi. On their arrival at Gauhāti the Faujdār, Rashid Khān, sent with them Tājā Khān and Shaykh Kamāl in their onward journey to the Ahom Court.[156] When Chakradhvaj Singha was informed of the arrival of the Muslim envoys at Lakhau he sent two *Kaṭakīs*, Mādhavcharaṇ and Gariā, to inform them of the death of Hsö-Tām-Lā (Jayadhvaj Singha) and of his brother's accession to the throne of Assam and hence wishing them (Muslim envoys) to go back.[157] Rastum Beg then returned to Gauhāti and met Rashid Khān

154. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.40. Pesāng must be Lāshāng. See *AB*, p.193.
155. *ahādi* is a Persian word meaning 'one man', and hence two *ahādis* or two men.
156. *AB*, p.186; *PAB*, p.130; *Kāmrūpar Burañji*, p.85.
157. *AB*, p.186.

at Tāmulihāt. He gave the *Faujdār* the information of Jayadhvaj Singha's death and sought his advice as to the disposal of the imperial presents sent for the deceased king. The *Faujdār* said : 'The king's brother has now become king; what difference is there ? Give the the presents to that (new) king'. Rastum Beg then proceeded back to Lakhau. In the meantime, Bānhbariā Bhabānanda and Gadāi had arrived at Bakathā and reported to the king that the Pādshāh had sent for him *Sirpao*[158] and other presents with two *Wakils*, Dur Beg and Rastum Beg. Having heard the report the king exclaimed : 'My father, grand-father and forefathers did never put on Bangāl Pādshāh's dress. Now that I have to put it on is worse than death ' The envoys then came up to Kujibāli and sent a message to the king stating the object of their visit. They were permitted to come to the Court at Lāshāng and were presented with 400 gold *Rājmohars* in a silver *śarāi* at the steps of the Court building. They were then led into the royal presence. Instead of falling prostrate at the feet of the king, as was the usual etiquette of the Court, the two imperial *ahādis* simply saluted the king with a *taslim*[159] and made over the presents, which were then arranged in a golden *śarāi* and placed before the Svargadev by the Rājmantrī. One account (*Assam Buranji :* 1648-1681 A.D., p. 25) says that the imperial *ahādis* desired to see the king wear the *Sirpao* with due respect. But as the king was opposed to the suggestion the ministers and officers of the Court advised the king to pretend illness and be at rest behind a screen. In the meantime the *ahādis* were bribed not to press their point

158. *Sirpao* is a dress of honour. *Sirpao* is from persian *Saropā* meaning 'head and foot', and *Sarāpā*-head to foot. Harakānta Barua's explanation that *Sirpao* was a turban bearing the foot-print of the Emperor signifying vassalage which had to be put on or be prepared for war is wrong and absurd, for there was no such custom in the Mughul Court. See his book *Assam Buranji*, p.48. Chakradhvaj was against wearing a foreign dress however honourable. But as a present from the Pādshāh it was expected to be put on.

159. distorted into *Tasmil* in the Assamese Buranjis. There were three forms of salutation in the Mughul Court and they were called *Sālām*, *Taslim* and *Kurnish*. "*Taslim* consists in placing the back of the right hand on the ground, and then raising it gently till the person stands erect, when he puts the palm of his hand upon the crown of his head, which pleasing manner of saluting signifies that he is ready to give himself up as an offering". As quoted by M.I. Borah in his Notes to *Bāhāristān-i-Ghaybi*, II,p.828. In *Kurnish* "the palm of the right hand to be placed upon the forehead, and the head to be bent downwards". This mode of salutation signifies placing the head "into the hand of humility, giving it to the royal assembly as a present". See *Ain*, I, 158. It was later abolished·

and they agreed. Then leaving Rashid Khān's men outside the screen the imperial *ahādis* with the presents were led to the presence of the king to whom the presents were offered. From there the *Sirpao* was sent to the royal store.

It is of importance to know that under the treaty the Mughuls were to withdraw from the territory of Assam but they still retained the right to hold that part of it which lay to the west of the Bharalī and the Kallang as part of the old Koch country in spite of the original Mughul demand for releasing the territories to the west of the Bar Nadi and the Asurar Ali. Now, as it is, Kājali on the south bank and Bānhbārī on the north bank remained the easternmost posts of the Mughuls until 1667 when they were seized by the Ahoms. Though the agreed war-indemnity could not be paid in one year's time for obvious reasons, it was, almost paid up by May, 1666, only a small amount remaining, and for its full discharge honest endeavours were made all through by the Ahom authorities though the Mughul officers, particularly Faujdār Firoz Khān, wounded their feelings by making repeatedly harsh demands. The Emperor and Dilir Khān alone corresponded with the Ahom king and his ministers in very friendly terms and presents were exchanged between them. The Mughul Government also dealt in an ungenerous and grasping way, as rightly noted by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, with the Ahom king in money matters. Whenever any of the elephants forming part of the indemnity died on the way to the Court after having been delivered to the Mughul agent, the Assam Government had to bear the loss and pay Rs. 2,000 for it thus increasing the burden of the already huge indemnity. Further the Mughuls also did not restore the captive subjects of Assam though the Ahom king released the Mughul prisoners. King Chakradhvaj Singha remarked that the Princess, 3 lakhs rupees and 90 elephants were offered to the Muslims for the welfare of the country and for giving back the Assamese captives that the Muslims had taken, but the latter had not as yet returned the captives, nor had they restored, as expected, the former boundary of the kingdom. Even from *Ālāmgirnāmāh* (p. 1068) it is clear that Darrang was never occupied by the Mughuls. The king wrote a letter to that effect and sent Chandra Kandali and Sanātan with the imperial *ahādis* with the letter and presents of one hundred musks, forty ordinary knives, four knives with gold handles, twenty seers *aloes* wood and nine tusked elephants for the Emperor. He also gave some presents of gold and silver to the imperial *ahādis* and Rashid Khān's two men.

After a few days of the departure of the imperial *ahādis* the *Faujdār* Rashid Khān sent Shaykh Kamāl to Chakradhvaj Singha for realizing the remaining portion of the tributes of money and elephants. The Shaykh 'arrived in Mungdunshungkhām (Assam)' and was escorted 'to the Darbār'. The Muslim envoy was asked by the escorts to follow the proper Court etiquette and fall prostrate at the feet of the Svargadev. But when he reached the city-gate he expressed his inability to fall prostrate and pointed out that when he last came with the imperial *ahādis* he merely saluted the king with a *Taslim* and he would now do the same. The heavenly king, being informed of the matter, said, "the Pādshāh's men, Dur Beg, and Rastum Beg, saluted me without falling prostrate at my feet as they had come in obedience to the order of the Emperor. But this man is simply a Nawab's *Kaṭakī*; so there is no ground that he should not bow down his head at my feet."[160] With this, the king ordered his men to take him back to his camp. Shaykh Kamāl, seeing that the king was enraged, expressed his willingness to greet the king by falling prostrate at his feet. Accordingly the Shaykh was produced before the king who had then a talk with him and dismissed him with presents. Two *Kaṭakīs*, Mādhav Charan and Gariā, were sent with the Muslim envoy.

Chandra Kandali and Sanātan, sent with the imperial *Ahādis* by the Ahom King, met the Delhi Emperor and intimated the grievances of the King. The Emperor replied to the latter through his envoys assuring restoration of any part of the Ahom territory if the Mughul army had encroached upon it beyond the limits of the Koch territory. He also said that orders would be issued to repatriate if any persons had been seized and brought away as captives.[161] The Emperor also directed the *Kaṭakīs* to meet Shāistā Khān on their way back to Assam. Nawab Shāistā Khān, the Amir-al-Omrah, who became the *Subāhdār* of Bengal after the death of Mīr Jumlā,[162] sent with the *Kaṭakīs* his envoy Panditrāi with a letter to the Burā-Gohāin demanding the balance of the war indemnity which had not been paid for the last one year and

160. *AB*, p.187.

161. *AB*, p.191; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.86; *PAB*, p.131.

162. Shāistā Khān was the nephew of empress Nur Jāhān but as he had not then recovered from the wounds he had received at Poona from the assassins of Sivaji he was permitted to govern the province through his deputy Daud Khān until he was fit to run the office himself.

a half nor any reply given by the Ahom Court since his (Shāistā Khān's) assumption of office. As a reply to the letter brought by Panditrāi the three Gohains of the king's Court wrote to Rashid Khān explaining the position in polite terms and communicating their endeavours to pay up the balance. Dilir Khān also wrote to the Bar-Phukan pressing for early implementation of the treaty terms by clearing the arreras of the indemnity, to which the latter replied by a letter, dated 8th Fālgun (Feb., 1664), that already 'in the month of *Kārtik* (October-November, 1663) rupees one lakh had been sent in the hand of Gadai to Rashid Khān's place and now also sent herewith a sum of rupees forty-four thousand and forty-four elephants with this person and whatever amount of rupees and elephants remain to be delivered are being searched for from various sources. We are not able to make them ready. When they will be ready we shall send them, and the delay that has happened is owing to the whole country being laid waste. If we can pay then only our burden is relieved'.[163]

Now at Gauhati Nawab Sayyid Firoz Khān succeeded Rashid Khān in 1666 as the Thānādār of Gauhati and Faujdār of Kāmrup. Firoz Khān, on the assumption of his office, sent Sayyid Jāfar Khān to the Ahom Court with a letter demanding in a haughty and imperious tone the arrears under the stipulation to deliver rupees three lakhs and ninety elephants. Hearing the contents of the letter king Chakradhvaj became furiously indignant and exclaimed—'Better death than be under the Bangāls.'[164]

Chakradhvaj Singha's War Preparations :

He dismissed Jāfar Khān from his presence but detained him at the capital. Determined to make war on the Mughuls he held a council of his nobles and officers. He pointed out to them : 'We have delivered to the Bangāls elephants and money, only a small portion remains to be given.[165] How long can we tolerate their insolence ? I want to

163. Bar-Phukan's letter to Dilir Khān. *Kāmrūpar Burañji*, pp.88-89.

164. *PAB*, p.133; *Kāmrūpar Burañji*, p.91.

165. Barring the amount of 20,000 tolās of gold and 1,20,000 rupees there were repeated demands for clearing 3 lakh rupees and 90 elephants. They were delivered as follows and by the middle of 1666 only a small part, about 20,000 rupees and 30 elephants were overdue. The following table is prepared from the accounts given in *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.165-6 and *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, pp.68-69 :

invade Gauhati. What do you say ?' Bānhgarhiā Burā-Gohāin, Bānrukiā Bar-Gohāin, Bāghchoal Barpātra-Gohain, the Bar-Baruā and the Phukans discussed the question and, though they first hesitated yet noticing the king's firmness and self-confidence, all said, 'Svargadev's grand-father and forefathers were never subject to the Bangāls. Yet by an adverse turn of the times it has happened. Now if Your Majesty be pleased to command we are ready to invade Gauhāti.[166]

In the month of *Chaitra* (March-April), 1667, a screech-owl perched on the top of the king's *Haw-löng* (royal Court) at Leshāng. The king therefore left the *Haw-löng* unrepaired and built one at Garhgāon and shifted his residence and Court to this former permanent capital.[167]

Time of delivery	Christian year	By whom delivered	To whom delivered	Place of delivery	Elephants	Money (Precious metals)
Kartik, Śak 1585	A.D. 1663	Chandrai, Kamai, Gajalā and Gariā.	Khān Khānā (Mīr Jumlā)	Tipām		gold 20,000 tolās. Silver 1,20,000 Rs.
Agrahāyaṇ śak 1585	A.D. 1663	Lākhtakiā Barua, Lao Dekā, Sarkar Barā and Chaturbhuj Kaṭakī.	Dur Beg and Rastum Beg.	Leshāng		Silver 1,00,000 rupees.
Chaitra, śak 1585	A.D. 1663	Gadāi		Mekurī-khowā.	30	40,000 rupees.
Kartik, śak 1586	A.D. 1664	Pāthakchandra, Chaturbhuj Kaṭakī, Kaliā Kaṭakī and Dhekial Hāzarikā.				
Fālgun, śak 1585	A.D. 1664	Kukurāchuā Bānhbariā Kataki, Kaupatiā Kaṭakī and Kānāi Kaṭakī.				40,000 rupees.
Agrahāyaṇ, śak 1586	A.D. 1664				40	
Bhādra, śak 1587	A.D. 1665				10 (5 died)	10,000rupees, (for 5 elephants.)
Jaistha, śak 1588	A.D. 1666			Firoz Khān	50 in lieu of	1,00,000 rupees.

166. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.27.
167. *AB*, p.193; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.26.

The king then proceeded to take stock of the war potential of the country. Once when this matter was being discussed in this Council he enquired of the Tām Daloi, Jayananda, who was the officer in charge of the State arsenal, about the arms and ammunitions in the stock. The Daloi replied that there was a large stock of them in the store. But after the Council meeting when the king retired inside his residence he met him in private and reported that actually there was not a single box of gun-powder in the stock, of bullets there were not even four full boxes and of arrows there was not a single bundle. 'As Your Majesty asked about it in the Council', said he, 'I replied as I did lest the true statement should discourage many and also reach the ears of the enemy'.[168] The king appreciated it and took immediate steps to collect materials for the production of arms and ammunitions. Ware-houses for arms, such as those for arrows (*kāṇḍ-ghār*), gun-powder (*khār-ghar*) and other weapons, were constructed within the enclosure of the capital at Garhgaon. In order that the king might personally supervise the works huge smithy workshops were set up just in front of the main gate (*barduār*) of the Palace compound for the manufacture of all kinds of heavy arms, such as guns and cannon. To speed up production of war-boats the king offered presents and all kinds of facilities to the Nāoshaliyā Baruā (Superintendent of the boat-building yard) to serve as incentives to work. The king personally attended the parade grounds and military training centres and ordered and watched demonstrations of archery and gun-firing by the trainees. Whenever any body was found not properly trained in archery, for instance, the king would call him to his side and show him the way of holding the bow and shooting the arrows. He thus inspired the great masses of troops and recruits under training by his personal association with them. He supplied them with free rations of rice, fish, salt and milk and also gave them clothes and money.[169] One Buranji[170] refers to a reform he made in the command of the army with a view to securing greater efficiency. Each battalion of 1,000 men under a Hāzarikā was split up into two battalions of 500, each officered by a Hāzarikā. This arrangement, if it was at all made, appears to be temporary, for there is no reference to it in later periods. In short, Chakradhvaj Singha was so determined that he was not satisfied with anything less than to organize a vast war effort with all possible

168. *PAB*, p.134.
169. *PAB*, pp.134-35.
170. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.109.

thoroughness under his personal superivision and care with the definite object of dealing a knock-out blow to the Mughuls and drive them out of the occupied territory.

In the meantime there were exchanges of letters between Prāṇnārāyaṇ, the Rajā of Koch Behār, and Chakradhvaj Singha for an alliance between them against the common enemy, the Mughuls. The alliance was formed and Chakradhvaj Singha wrote finally in August, 1667, to Prāṇnārāyaṇ—'Hence I attack the Mughuls who are at Gauhati and let our allied Rajā (Prāṇnārāyaṇ) attack those on his borders'. (*Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.84). Friendship and goodwill were strengthened with the Kachārī and Jayantā Rajās, and a number of border tribes, such as the Nagās of Bānchāng and the Miris and Deories of the north bank, who disturbed the peace of the neighbouring areas, were subdued. A series of forts were constructed at strategic points along the Brahmaputra to support the advance of the Ahom expeditionary forces into Kāmrūp. Further, in order to test the strength of the people the king ordered a raod (*āli*) to be built from Teliādongā to Jānji. He also excavated a tank at Khokorā, probably the present Khonā Khokorā not far from Jānji. He invited four Mahantas and performed a *yajna* and gave them presents for officiating at it. He thus secured the co-operation and blessings of all sections of the population in the country before launching his intended attack on the Mughul imperialists.

When the preparations for war were nearly complete early in 1667 the king, who thought that Jayadhvaj Singha's defeat was no less due to his neglect of his ancestral worship than to other causes. This neglect or rather inhibition was definitely in consequence of Jayadhvaj being a proselyte of a Hindu priest. In the month of *Śrāvaṇ* of that year Chakradhvaj Singha held a council of his three Gohains and other officers. Addressing them, the king said, 'My brother, Chao-Hpā Hsö-Tām-Lā, did not make any offering to our forefathers. He also did not offer sacrifices to Lengdon and all other gods. So the Musalmans could come to our country and devastate the province. The archers and artisans were massacred and all people suffered great misery. Now, I wish to propitiate Lengdon and other gods by offering sacrifices and to make offerings to the forefathers. The people at large should be collected and offerings should be made. I wish to free myself from the subjugation of the Musalmans. I think, I shall be successful in the attempt. I wish to know your opinion'. The Bar-Gohain said in reply,

'In the ancient time, your forefathers used to do the same thing when they were overtaken by any such misfortune. They, thus, regained their former powers. Your proposal is really praiseworthy'. The king with the Gohains proceeded to Charaideo and performed the rites. The Dekā Phukan, son of Guimelā Bar-Gohain and Bhelāi Phukan of Landaomi family also worshipped the gods of Charaideo and made offer of sacrifices. The king asked the Deodhai Pandits to examine the legs of fowls. The Pandits examined them and found the calculation favourable to the king. The king now felt assured of success and came to Garhgaon. He collected his men and gave them necessary instructions.

The king's chief concern was to find out a capable and trustworthy general to be appointed as Bar-Phukan or Viceroy of Lower Assam to deal effectively with the Mughuls. His choice fell on Lāchit, a young and enterprising officer and a younger son of Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā,[171] whom he appointed to this very responsible office. Prior to his appointment to the office of Bor-Phukan he, popularly called Lāchit Dekā, held successively the posts of Ghorā-Baruā,[172] Duliā Baruā,[173] Śimaluguriā Phukan[174] and Dolākākhariā Boruā[175] and he also served as an army officer and fought against Mīr Jumlā's forces 'at the side of the river Tilao (Lohit)'.[176] The son of Ao Gohain, Shairingiā Pelan called Ghorā Konwar, who was the Bar-Phukan at Kaliābar before Lāchit, was appointed Bar-Baruā by removing Bengkhowā from that office.[177] The king also revived the post of Salāl Gohain, which had remained defunct since the time of Leshaidāng Salāl Gohain under Hsö-Khām-Hpā or Khorā Rajā (1553-1603), and appointed Kachalukhowā of the Parbatiā Bar-Gohain family to that post.[178] Rajā-Śaśur Naoboichā

171. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.40; *Assam Burañji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.26, *AB*, p.196, *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.109.

172. Superintendent of the royal horses.

173. Superintendent of the *dolā* or palanquin-bearers of the king and nobles. He was also in charge of the king's palanquins.

174. Phukan or Commandant in charge of Śimaluguri near Gargaon, the capital.

175. or Dolākhariā Baruā, that is, Commandant of the armed guards accompanying the king close to the palanquin during his journey.

176. *AB*, pp.110, 181.

177. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.40-41: *Assam Burañji* (1648-1681), p.26.

178. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.41.

Phukan, who apposed the nomination of Chakradhvaj Singha to the throne, was later executed with his associates at Bāghchu Hāphalu. The complainants against him (Rajā śaśur) were Sanātan Kaṭakī, Ganak Baruā, Ramā Bāmun and Momāi Tāmulī's son Lāluk Dolākākhariā Baruā. Lāluk became Naoboichā Phukan after the extermination of Rajā-Śaśur's family. The two queens of Jayadhvaj Singha with the adopted son also suffered the same fate for conspiring with their father Raja-Śaśur against Chakradhvaj. Bānhgarhiā Ātan Burā-Gohāin was appointed Rājmantrī.

Chakradhvaj Singha Attacked the Mughuls and Recovered Kāmrūp (August-November, 1667) :

With the above changes and new appointments made and the war preparations completed Chakradhvaj ordered a disposition of his forces and generals for commencing attacks on the Mughuls. Marangikhowā Gohāin was stationed near the Kachārī territory. The Barpātra-Gohāin[179] was placed at Kaliabar. Lāngisong Bar-Gohāin and Sadiyā-khowā Gohāin were sent to repair the fort at Sāmdharā. Officers were also sent to carefully inspect the condition of the roads and report. The Dekā Phukan of the Guimelā Bar-Gohāin family and the Dihingiā Phukan of Bura-Gohāin family were ordered to attack the Muslim fort at Bānhbārī on the north bank opposite Kājalī. Naoshaliyā Phukan, the Kaliabariā Phukan and Chaophrang Lāndaomi Phukan proceeded to the Kallang and besieged the Muslim fort at Kājalī.[180] One Rajā Rai Singh commanding the Mughul garrison at Kājalī fell in the struggle and another officer Sayyid Khān was hurt by an arrow. The fort fell to the Ahoms who captured a great number of Muslims and killed the rest and also obtained possession of many horses, guns, shields and other materials. On the north bank the Dihingiā Phukan and the Dekā Phukan marched down along the side of the river Brahmaputra and attacked the Muslims at Bānhbārī and seized the fort. The Ahoms captured the commanders, Lāl Beg and Rosan Beg, of the Muslim garrison and also got possession of many horses, guns and other war materials. There were heavy casualties on the side of the Muslims and many were captured alive and sent as prisoners to Garhgaon with the two commanders and the booty.

179. Lāngi and Lātāo successively. *Ibid*, p.40.
180. See for the disposition of the forces *AB*, pp.196-7; *PAB*, p.135.

After liberating the two easternmost forts of Kājalī and Bānhbārī of the Mughuls the Ahom generals moved down with strong battalions to attack Gauhāti on both banks. General Lāchit Bar-Phukan and ex-Bar-Phukan (now Bar-Baruā) Pelan Shairingiā Phukan occupied Sonāpur and Tātimarā and reached Jay Duār where there was a Muslim post. Here Kalanchu Dualiyā Rajkhowa fought and killed the Mughul, commander, himself losing a finger in the duel. All then advanced to Latāśil,[181] which they made their base of attack on the powerful fort of Itākhuli (Śukleswar) in the present town of Gauhāti. The Ahom generals laid siege to the fort both by land and water in the month of *Kārtik* (*Dinshipsong*) and a part of the army was sent forth to attack the Mughul garrison at Pāndu. The Mughuls tried to oppose the Ahoms on a sand bank near the fort at Pāndu, but being soon overpowered, left the fort and retreated westward. The fort was occupied by the Ahoms. At Itākhuli, the main fort of Gauhāti, the siege continued and the Mughuls were hard-pressed. One day the Mughuls came out of the fort and tried to break through the siege, but in the struggle, which continued for two days, two Muslim officers, Sayyid Khān and Dulāl Khān (probably one Dilir Khān), were killed along with many soldiers of the garrison. Yet the siege became protracted. Hearing this Chakradhvaj Singha sent stern warnings to the Ahom officers for their failure to capture Gauhāti so long. At this the latter assembled and drew up a plan of assault and put Abhoypuriā Rājkhowā Japang Gohāin in charge of it. The Rājkhowā engaged secret agents to pour water into the muzzles of the Muslim guns and cannon and it was successfully carried out one night. In the small hours of that very night the Ahoms scaled the walls of the fort by means of ladders and Muslims failed to prevent it as most of their guns and cannon did not fire. The gates were opened and the Ahom soldiers dashed into the fort in great strength and annihilated the entire garrison except two soldiers who rode off on their horses and crossed over to Ashvakrānta.[182] The Abhoypuriā Rājkhowā was also killed during the assault on the fort.[183] Itākhuli was taken by the Ahoms on 16 *Kārtik* (early November) and of the Mughuls, who survived, a great many surrendered and the rest escaped. The Ahoms seized a large booty including many cannon, guns, elephants,

181. within one mile to the east of Itākhuli.
182. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.28.
183. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.91.

horses and other materials. The fall of Itākhuli brought the present town of Gauhāti into the possession of the Ahoms. After a few days a Mughul naval force arrived with a number of ships and reinforced their navy at Gauhāti. There was then a naval fight for some days, but the Mughuls suffered a defeat and fled away from the area of Umānanda and Barhāt with whatever ships they could save from destruction.[184] On the north the Ahom army under the command of Dihingiā Phukan and Dekā Phukan swept down on Shāburuj. There was a temporary reverse on that front. The Ahom commanders' miscalculations led to the fall of a few Ahom officers and the destruction of the Darangiāl army that gave support. A Muslim commander named Hāyāt Khān crossed to the north bank and attacked the Ahoms at Duimuniā (Duimuniśilā) but was counter-attacked and killed by Mān Hāzarikā and Dikhaumukhiā Rājkhowā and his army routed. The Ahoms then constructed a fort at Duimuniiślā garrisoning it with an Ahom force[185]. One detachment of the Ahom army proceeded up by the Bar Nadī and laid siege to the fort Shāng at Rangmahal. The Mughuls came out of the fort and attacked the camp of the Ahom commander, Lānmungkhru. A terrible battle ensued in which a great number of the Mughuls fell dead. The Ahoms, too, suffered casualties. Their officers, Lānmungkhru, Lānklangche and the grandson of Nāmpun Bar-Gohāin were killed. When the report of the Ahom losses reached Chakradhvaj Singha he sent a message to the Gohāins at Gauhāti that those who would remain inert should be put to death. The Mughuls were, however, dislodged from Rangmahal and their next stand was at Agiāthuti. The Ahoms surrounded the fort at Agiāthuti both by land and water and occupied it taking many Muslims captive and capturing a large booty. The Ahom navy sailed down to Kalahimukh, between Palāshbārī and Nagarberā on the south bank, commanding the whole waterway of the Brahmaputra upto that point. There was a battle at Kalahimukh in which the Mughuls lost many men and on the side of the Ahoms, among others, Dihingiā Phukan's son was killed.

Meanwhile *Faujdār* Sayyid Firoz Khān, the Mughul general Sayyid Sāleh, Mīr Bakshi and other Muslims tried to escape to Bengal, but the Ahoms pursued and intercepted them at Marakiā. A number of

184. *AB*, pp.198, 199.
185. *AB*, pp.197-203; *PAB*, pp.135-37.

engagements took place one after another at Marakiā, Rewā and Lāthāo till at last at Mānāhāmukh the Ahoms effectively blocked the way of the Mughul chiefs and started firing to prevent thier escape. During the exchange of bullets the Dimaruā Prince and Maupiā, son of the Rājmantrī, were on the back of elephants, when accidentally the former was struck by an enemy bullet and fell. At this Maupiā dismounted from his elephant and rode a horse. Unable to pass through the barrage-fire of the Ahoms the *Faujdār* with his companions surrendered. Then the Mughul chiefs, Firoz Khān, Sayyid Sāleh and Mīr Bakshi with many Mughul prisoners were sent to Garhgaon in charge of Maupiā. The Ahoms seized a vast amount of booty consisting of ships, elephants, horses, camels, donkeys, war materials, gold and sliver. Among those who escaped were Sayyid Firoz's son, Pāhār Khān, and Sayyid Husain. But many Muslims were put to the sword. The Ahoms thus completed the recovery of Kāmrūp right down the Mānāhā, which since then remained the boundary between the Ahom and Mughul territories. The Ahoms also liberated those people who had been forcibly taken away by Mīr Jumlā and who were found in Kāmrūp. The king then ordered Bānhgarhiā Burā-Gohāin to strongly fortify Śarāi Ghāt (the present Amingaon) with ramparts. Lāchit Bar-Phukan made his permanent residence at Gauhāti. At Kaliābar what is known as Rāngaligarh (red fort) was constructed. The king, after the victory, went to Viśvanāth where he performed a *yajna*. He then returned to Garhgaon in triumph and said—'Let me now take my morsel of meal with peace of mind'[186]. He richly rewarded the nobles for their victory and distributed the spoils among the common people. He also ordered the officers to be vigilant so that the enemy might not find any weak front to re-enter the country. The Ahom authorities placed their own officers in the various Mughul *parganās* of Kāmrup to manage their affairs under the direction and control of the Bar-Phukan.

Gait refers to an inscription in Assamese on the Kānāi Baraśiboā rock near the Maṇikarṇeswar temple in North Gauhāti as recording the erection of an Ahom fort there in *śak* 1589 (A.D. 1667) 'after the defeat and death of Sānā (Sāleh ?) and Sayyid Firoz'. A stone pillar at Gauhāti bears a Sanskrit inscription testifying to the victory of the

186. *AB*, pp.199-200; *AB*—'*SMJC*. pp.110-111; *PAB*, p.137; *Assam Burañji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.28-29; *Kāmrūpar Burañji*, p.92.

Bar Phukan in 1667 over the Muslims (*Yavanas*). An old cannon at Śilghāt bears the following inscription in Sanskrit : 'King Chakradhvaj Singha, having again destroyed the Muslims (*Yavanas*) in battle in *śak* 1589 (A.D. 1667), obtained this weapon, which proclaims his glory as slayer of his enemies'. Gait mentions another old cannon found at Dikom which bears a similar inscription referring to a victory in the following year. This cannon has also an inscription in Persian, reciting that it was placed in charge of Sayyid Ahmed al Husain for the purpose of conquering Assam in 1074 *Hijri* (A.D. 1663).[187]

In December 1667 the Mughul Emperor at Delhi learnt from the news-reports of Bengal that the Assamese had crossed their own frontier and attacked Gauhāti 'with a vast army and a large flotilla; and that as reinforcement had not reached Sayyid Firuz Khān, the *thānādār* of the place, the enemy had conquered Gauhāti'.[188] He decided that 'one of the great and eminent nobles of the Court should be deputed to Bengal with an army from His Presence to put down the enemy'. Rājā Rām Singh,[189] son of Mīrzā Rājā Jay Singh of Amber, was appointed to perform this exploit. On Friday, the 27th December, 1667 (21st *Rajab*) he was sent off with a robe, a horse with gold trappings and a jewelled dagger with pearl strap. Nasiri Khān, Keśarī Singha Bhurtiā (Rāthor), Raghunāth Singh Mairtia, Brahmadeo Sisodiā and many other nobles and *mansabdārs* with 1,500 *ahādis* or gentlemen-troopers and 500 *barqandāzes* were appointed under him. Rām Singh was directed to join this force to some of the troops serving in Bengal and

187. See for the collection of cannon inscriptions Gait's *Report on the Progress of Historical Research in Assam* (Shillong, 1897), Appendix I. Also Gait's *History of Assam*, p.154 and H.C. Goswami's 'Barphukanar Jayastambha' in the Assamese journal *Ālochanī*, fol. VII, pp.480-81; and 'Kānāi barāśi-boa-śilar gadya', *Ālochanī*, VII, pp.112-113, 535-536.

188. *Maasir-i-Alamgir* (as translated by Sir Janunath Sarkar : Calcutta, *Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1947), p.43.

189. also called the descendant of Māndhātā. On the death of Jay Singh the Emperor gave his eldest son, Kumār Rām Singh, the title of Rājā and took him into favour. Kumār Rām Singh, who was one of the captains on guard over Śivajī during the latter's captivity at Āgrā, was punished when Śivajī escaped. Later, when his father died at Burhānpur on July 12, 1667 (20th Muharram, 1078H) after being poisoned by his younger son, Kirāt Singha, at the instigation of Aurangzeb, Rām Singh was made Rājā. The Emperor publicly declared himself rejoiced at the death of Jay Singh. (See *Storia*, vol II, pp.139, 152-3).

proceed to chastise the 'wicked tribe'.[190] Rām Singha also reinforced his army with 4,000 troopers in his own pay and 21 Rājput chiefs. Shāista Khān, the *Subāhdār* of Bengal, supplied him with 30,000 troops[191] including 2,000 horsemen and from Koch Behār 15,000 Koch archers commanded by Kavi Keshore Baruyā, Sarbeswar Baruyā, Manmath Baruyā and Ghanashyām Bakshi,[192] join the Mughul army. Thus Rājā Rām Singh had only about 8,000 troopers[193] in all round his standards and his losses were seldom replenished. 'The Ahoms being a nation in arms mustered one hundred thousand when mobilised'. On way through Pāṭnā the Rājā took with himself the Sikh *Guru* Teg Bāhādur[194] who was there for a few months away from his abode at Ānandpur. Rashid Khān, the former *Faujdār* of Kāmrūp, was sent with the Rājā for his two qualifications—first, he was a noted warrior, and second, he had a knowledge of the language of the Ahoms. Rājā Indramaṇi, Chadmend Khan-Commander of 2,500. Alām Khān Du-Hāzārī, Bakram Khān Du-Hāzārī, Dewan Sayyid Gajap Khān Ek-Hāzārī, Kayam Khān, Julel Beg, Rājā Prithu, Rājā Māṇīk, Mīr Gazraf Khān Beldari-Commander of 2,500, and Parikshīt's grandson Rājā Jaynārāyaṇ from Koch Behār were among those who were ordered by the Pādshāh to accompany Rām Singh in his expedition to Assam[195]

The Ahoms, on their part, remained prepared to meet the Mughuls in the event of a fresh invasion by them after their expulsion from Kāmrūp. When the news of Rām Singh's advance to invade Assam reached the Ahom Court King Chakradhvaj Singha sent his forces under the command of his veteran generals to Gauhāti to assist the Bar-Phukan in opposing the enemy. The Bar-Phukan, in consultation with the three great Gohāins, Phukans and Rājkhowās drew up the defence plans and placed the generals with their forces at different strategic points from

190. i.e. the Ahoms.

191. *PAB*, pp.138-39.

192. J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.187. See also Āmānatullā Ahmed : *KI*, I, p.169. Prāṇnārāyaṇ died in A.D. 1667 and was succeeded by his son Kumār Modanārāyaṇ who ruled in Koch Behar from 1667 to 1680. Rājā Rām Singh took from Rājā Modanārāyaṇ 15,000 *kāṇḍī* soldiers and proceeded towards Rangāmāti in Goalpārā.

193. According to *PAB* Rām Singh had 18,000 Turkish cavalry which is doubtful.

194. J.N. Sarkar, *ibid*, p.187. Teg Bāhādur was the second son of Har Govind, the sixth *Guru*, and was the father of Guru Govind Singh. For protesting against some of the measures of Aurrangzeb Teg Bāhādur was executed at Delhi in A.D. 1675.

195. PAB, p.138.

the southern to the northern hills after constructing a formidable series of ramparts (*garh*) connecting them. The Burā-Gohāin was placed in charge of the garrison at Śarāi commanding the north bank opposite Pāndu assisted by the Dihingiā Phukan and the Bar-Gohāin was stationed at Pāndu to defend the south bank. Bāghchual Barpātra-Gohain was posted at Kuruā, an important strategic point across the Bar Nadī above Śarai. The Naoboichā Phukan commanded the navy. The Asurar Āli east of the city of Gauhāti, which extended to the Narakāsur Hill on the south bank, was guarded by Kaliābariā Phukan.[196]

A graphic description of the disposition of the Ahom officers with their respective forces in and around Gauhāti is available.[197] General Lāchit Bar-Phukan, who had the main responsibility of defending Kāmrūp and under whose supreme command the Ahom army had to move and fight, made his camp at Āndhāru between Itākhuli (Śukreswar) and the Kāmākhyā Hill on the south bank and awaited Rām Singh's arrival.

196. *Ibid.*, p.139.

197. See *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.112-113. On the south bank of the Brahmaputra: Just down Itākhuli-General Lāchit Bar-Phukan; from Amarājuri to Pāndu with camp at Pāndu-the Bar-Gohāin; from Rāngali Buruz to the western steps of the Kāmākhyā Hill-Tarua Dihingiā Rājkhowā's son; at Duar Garilā-Lātum, son of Dolākākhariā Baruā; from Pārghopā to Dhenukhiruā-Barukiā (Bānrukiā) Gohāin; from Gotānagar (on the hill-side to the south of Pāndu) to the extremity of the Asurar Āli-Hāzarikā Neog, son of Lechāi *kāṇḍī*; at Asurar Āli-Kaliābariā Phukan; on the hill south of the Ausrar Ali-Marangikhowā Chetiā; on the Ushaharaṇ hill-Nāmdayangia Rājkhowā Jātichandan.

On the north bank : From Juriā to Śarāi-Ghāt-Bar Abhaypuriā Rājkhowā; facing Śarāi-nephew of Saru Abhaypuriā Rājkhowā Bar-Baruā; from Kekuri (the bend) to the Lathia Hill-Mājeu Dayangiā Lānmākharu Rājkhowā; at Lathiā Hill-Bānhgarhiā Burā-Gohāin; from the Lathia Hill to Śilā Hill-Miri Sandikoi Phukan Hāzarikā Bar Neog and Gajpuriā Rājkhowā Dhau Gohāin; from Sindurighopā road to Kharāgaruā Āli-Taruā-Dihingiā Rājkhowā Saru Duarā; to the north of the Śilā and Lathiā Hills line-Pānidihingiā Rājkhowā Burā-Gohāin Phukan.

On the Brahmaputra : At Aśvakrānta commanding the river from Rangmahal to Kānāi Baraśīboā-Sīāiringiā Pelan Phukan; at Shāhburuz-Rup Sandikoi; at Kuruā-Bāghchuāl Kalā Barpātra Rāidangiā Phukan assisted by his elder brother Nāmdangiā Rājkhowā. The ramparts were mounted with large-sized cannon and other forms of artillery (such as *Kechā, Toā, Gathiā-Jambur, Pāthar-Kalāi* etc. at regular intervals measured in terms of *beon* or about 7 feet) with troops in the order of one man per *beon* on the ramparts (*garh*) and on the hills two men per three *beons*. A description of the organization of the defence lines with artillery divisions posted on both banks of the Brahmaputra and upto the hills is contained in an old manuscript recovered by Prof. U.C. Lekhāru.

Rām Singh arrived at Rangāmāti, the easternmost head-quarters and main military base of the Mughuls, in February, 1668. The weakness of his expeditionary force lay in the smallness of his fleet of about 40 war-vessels only[198] as against the powerful Ahom navy which had regained mastery after Mīr Jumlā's return from Assam and commanded the whole water-way of the Brahmaputra down to the Mānāhā. The *Feringhi* and Mugh pirates operating in the region of south-east Bengal kept the Bengal navy constantly engaged. Though these pirates were suppressed in January, 1666, yet for fear of a recurrence of their hostile activities the Bengal *Subāhdār* could not spare an adequate number of ships for service in Assam. From Rangāmāti Rājā Rām Singh marched along the north bank of the Brahmaputra leaving behind at this base Rājā Jay Singh, Raja Sib Singh, Tājā Khān and Nasir Khān.[199] When this news reached the Ahom viceroy at Gauhāti three Rājkhowās were asked to go forward and stage a retreat within the sight of the enemy near the Bārepaitā post by the north and south banks and by the water.[200] Rām Singh, seeing the Ahoms falling back before him, continued to advance.

At this stage the Ahom Dāngariās (ministers) and the Phukans opened negotiations with Rām Singh by sending their envoys Sundar and Komorā to the 'Bhāi Rājā' enquiring as to why he was coming, the real motive in this being to gain some time to complete the construction of the fortifications, some of which had yet to be given the finishing touches and also to raise sand embankments on the shores of the Brahmaputra to prevent the Mughuls from landing their forces from their fleet. The Burā-Gohāin and the Phukans also constructed a fort at Shāh-buruz, 'a frontier place to Śarāighāt in the north near the river, Tilao', and 'five other forts at Doirāṇī in the south of the Tilāo (the Brahmaputra)'.[201] The Bar-Phukan's immediate objective was the defence of Gauhāti and the strategic posts around it by a strong concentration of the Lower Assam forces in that area. He therefore withdrew his garrisons from the territories to the west of Hājo and from the forts at Nagarberā, Kalahimukh and Kākphāk on the south bank and placed them in and

198. This number of 40 war-vessels is supported by the account in *AB*. p.204.

199. *AB*, p.205; S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, p.369.

200. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.113.

201. *AB*, pp.201-202.

about Gauhati rendering the whole front impregnable to the enemy. So Rām Singh had an easy march from Rangāmāṭi right up to Hājo which he occupied without a blow. He captured in this march a number of Assamese posts[202] in Rāmdia and Barpetā. On the south bank at Kākphāk,[203] where the Ahom armies of the south assembled, two enemy chiefs, one named Jaynārāyaṇ and another a Muslim commander attacked the Ahoms. After three days' fighting the enemies were repulsed, but the Ahom armies retreated to Śarāighāt according to plan at the approach of Rām Singh. At the news of this reverse Rājā Indradaman, who was probably in command of the garrison at Rangāmāṭi, marched forward and attacked the Ahom forces, but the latter counter-attacked and forced him to retreat to Jakhali.[204]

At Hājo Rām Singh is said to have offered prayers to the god *Hayagrīv Mādhav* and made very liberal presents of gold, silver and cloth to the Brāhmins and Sebāites.[205] From this main base he tried to probe the strength of the forts and defence lines of the Ahoms and in consequence skirmishes here and there began to take place. In order to put off for a time any major conflict two envoys, named Sundar Kaṭakī and Komorā, were sent to Rām Singh from the Bar-Phukan's Court to enquire about the object of his coming to Assam. Rām Singh explained his object and sent with them Firoz Khān to Bar-Phukan's Court to officially demand the evacuation of Kāmrūp to the west of the line marked by the Bar Nadī and the Asurar Āli under the treaty of 1639 signed by Āllāh Yār Khān and Momāi Tāmulī Bar-Baruā.[206] As a Rājā he was also audacious enough to challenge the Ahom king to a duel and communicated it through a messenger named Sonbar Nadial, but the latter refused to fight it with 'a mere servant' of the Muslim Emperor without any umbrella over his head.[207] As a reply to such audacity the Ahom king directed the Phukans and Baruās to come out

202. S.N. Bhattacharyya mentions Baruamukh (probably Baruabari between Hājo and Rāmdia), Chengā (9 miles east of Barpetā) and Taperā (in Rāmdia). *op.cit.*, p.369.

203. not identified.

204. *AB*, p.203.

205. *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.114-115; *PAB*, p.140.

206. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.113.

207. *AB*, pp.208-9.

of their forts and attack the Muslims.[208] Firoz Khān was made a captive and detained at Latāśil and then removed to Kaliabar.[209]

In response to the exhortation of the king the Ahom officers became prepared for a vigorous attack upon the Imperialists. Lāchit himself is said to have realised the folly of such an attack by coming out of the fortified positions into the open ground against the concentrations of the Mughul army with their cavalry divisions. He wanted the enemy to commence the attacks against the barriers built up against them and be exhausted. But the king's orders had to be carried out.

The Bar-Phukan advanced with a fleet to Āgiathuti and sent orders to other officers to march against the enemies. The Burā-Gohāin also moved to that place for a combined attack by land and water. The Dihingiā Gohāin entrenched himself at Sessā and Lāshām Abhoipuriā Rājkhowā, Dihingiā Phukan and others with all the Hāzarikās proceeded by land to the attack. A series of encounters took place in which the Muslims were worsted and many of them captured with their horses and the Muslims at Āgiathuti were massacred.[210] The Ahoms seized a large booty including the domestic animals of the enemies. In face of this reverse Rām Singh himself came up with his Rājput cavalry and attacked the Ahoms and forced them to retreat 'on horses and elephants'. The Rājput cavalry also destroyed the land force and the survivors fell back and dashed into the waters of the Sessā river where they were shot dead by the Muslims. Marān Hāzarikā, the grandson of the Bar-Gohāin, was killed in the battle-field. A Muslim naval officer successfully manoeuvred some of the ships to the rear of the Ahom army with the result that the Bar-Phukan had to escape with his men by leaving the

208. *AB*, p.209. One Assamese Buranji, quoted by S.K. Bhuyan in his *Lāchit Barphukan* (p.64), says that Rām Singhā having failed to obtain the evacuation of Gauhati by negotiation fabricated a letter with the words-'Oh Barphukan, yesterday you accepted from us a reward of one lakh of rupees and you signed a written aggreement to desist from fighting against us. But it appears you have not yet abandoned your war-array. May I know the reason ?' The Rājā, who tried this trick to create dissension in the Ahom camp, tied the letter to an arrow and shot it to the camp of Miri Sandikoi Phukan who, in his turn, forwarded it to the king. The king suspected the Bar-Phukan and himself ordered an attack and sent a warning to the Bar-Phukan against delaying.

209. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.114.

210. *AB*, p.210.

ships behind. This is what is described as the battle of Ālāboi[211] in the Assamese Buranjis.[212] According to these Buranjis the Rājput cavalrymen were led first by a female warrior named Madanāvatị and when she fell being struck by a bullet Mīr Nawab took the command. But Mīr Nawab was defeated and captured alive by one Luthuri Rājkhowā. After this preliminary success, when the Assamese troops of about 20,000 strong were returning to their forts, Rām Singh, with his other commanders, brought out a fresh division of Rājput horsemen, who were equipped with *Yantras* (machines) and long shields, and charged the Assamese army which was unprepared to resist. The Assamese fell an easy prey to the Rājput cavalry in the plains below the Ālāboi Hill. The Rajputs won a complete victory killing off as many as 10,000 Assamese soldiers. This was a major disaster for the Ahoms. It took place, according to *Kāmrūpar Buranji* (p.94), on the 20th of *Śrāvan*, Thursday, *śak* 1591 (August, 1669). When the news of this defeat reached the king a stern warning was sent by him against allowing his army to be killed without fighting and he also found fault with the Bar-Phukan for not making any enquiry about his ships and also for not acting according to his instructions. From the succinct records in the Ahom Chronicle it is not clear where and how the instructions were violated. It might be that the Ālāboi disaster after the initial success, was the consequence of not properly following, the king's instructions. The king made it plain to the Bar-Phukan that he would not even spare him if he neglected his duties and did not make an enquiry as to whether any one 'refrained willingly from fighting'.[213]

Having won the Ālāboi victory Rām Singh thought that it would be easy to make the Ahoms agree to the Mughul demand for evacuation of Gauhāti and Kāmrūp. He then started a new series of peace overtures and 'the negotiation for peace was circulated to our men (the Ahoms). Our men expressed their willingness' for peaace.[214] At this stage king Chakradhvaj Singha became ill and shortly afterwards died in A.D. 1669.

211. Ālāboi is a hill in the neighbourhood of Dalibārī on the north bank between Āmingaon and Hājo.

212. *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.94; *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.116-117; *Rām Singhar Yuddhar Kathā* (Ms. 334, *DHAS*); Bhuyan : *Lāchit Barphukan*, pp. 65-69.

213. *AB*, pp.210-211.

214. *Ibid*, p.212.

Relations with the Neighbouring Rajās :

Chakradhvaj Singha's relation with the Jayantā Rajā Jashamatta Singha was very cordial. Jashamatta repeatedly emphasized in his letters to the Svargadev that the bond of friendship between the two countries was firm and indissoluble and expressed his pleasure at the matrimonial relation that subsisted between the two royal houses. He also made common cause with the Ahoms against the Mughuls. It appears from the correspondences between the two Courts that the Jayantā Rajā helped Chakradhvaj Singha with at least twenty thousand troops, if not more.[215] During Chakradhvaj Singha's reign towards the end of A.D. 1668 Jashamatta Singha died and his grandson Mān Singha became Rajā of Jayantā.[216]

The relation with the Kachārī Rajā Vīrdarpanārāyaṇ was not as cordial, but yet his friendship with the Ahom king was not severed. The Marangiāl Barchetia, who took shelter in the Kachārī country during Mīr Jumlā's invasion, still lived there. Chakradhvaj Singha wrote a letter to the Kachārī Rajā and also related through his envoys the misfortunes that overtook his country during Mīr Jumlā's invasion and under which many nobles and officers had to enter the neighbouring countries for refuge. He further informed the Kachārī Rajā through them that all had returned to the country except the Barchetia and requested that, if he was there, he might be sent back. But the Kachārī Rajā expressed his inability to comply with this request on the ground that the Barchetia had come as a refugee and submitted to him.[217] He also pointed out to the Ahom envoys the various difficulties in the matter of communication with the Ahom Court. Some sort of a tension continued between the Ahom and the Kachārī governments during Chakradhvaj Singha's reign and it may be assumed that Viradarpanārāyaṇ rendered no assistance to the Ahom king during Rām Singh's invasion of Assam.

Chakradhvaj Singha's Character :

Chakradhvaj Singha was a sovereign in the real sense of the term. His spirit of independence was unsurpassed and his patriotism intense.

215. Jayantā Rajā's letters to Chakradhvaj Singha and the letters addressed by the three great Gohāins to the Jayantā Rajā, See *JB*, pp.35-38.

216. *JB*, p.38.

217. *KB*. pp.51-54.

His oft-quoted heroic utterance—'Better death than be under the Bangāls'—remains to this day an inspiring source of patriotism to every cultivated Assamese and brings to mind the whole history of the glorious period of Assam. He literally fulfilled the dying desire of Jayadhvaj Singha that his successor should defend and reconstruct the country devastated by the foreign invaders. It was entirely through his untiring effort and personal supervision of every detail that he achieved this end. No office was more responsible and risky than that of the Bar-Phukan and almost all previous Bar-Phukans had to be penalized either for incapacity or indiscipline. But the historic choice of Lāchit as Bar-Phukan by Chakradhvaj Singha above all others shows his matchless power of judgment. That this monarch could so soon restore the lost prestige of the Assamese by throwing off the Mughul overlordship would ever remain a matter of profound significance in Assam history.

22. **Hsö-Nyat-Hpā alias Udayāditya (1669-1673) :**

The next king to succeed Chakradhvaj was not his son but his brother called Māju Gohāin. On his accession to the throne he assumed the name Hsö-Nyat-Hpā and also the Hindu name Udayāditya. He took as his queen the chief queen of his deceased brother.

In *Lākni Kāpshān* (A.D. 1670) or shortly after his accession the Burā-Gohāin and the Bar-Phukan informed him of the progress of negotiation for peace with the Muslims. The boundary question was being discussed at the time between the Ahom representatives, Kaupatiā Hāzarikā and Mādhavcharaṇ, and the Mughul representatives Paritrāi (Panditrāi) and another person. As instructed the Mughul representatives insisted on the Ahom government's respecting the boundary as settled under the treaty of 1639. They attached too much sanctity to that agreement without regard to the subsequent developments. Rām Singh wanted Gauhāti alone with the territories west of it and promised never to ask for more in future. After a further course of negotiation the Bar-Phukan was inclined to concede to the Muslim proposal and sent it for the king's approval, but the Burā-Gohāin did not support the idea of giving up Gauhāti. Meanwhile the Muslims entered Darrang. The king ordered them to go back and asked his officers to repair the forts. He also ordered the Burā-Gohāin, who was at Kathālbārī, to proceed to Śarāi Ghāt with 20,000 men.[218]

218. *AB*, p.214.

At this time the naval Commander Munawwar Khān with three Omraos arrived with reinforcements, obviously with a naval squadron, for Rām Singh who had been fighting for ten months without success. These Muslim chiefs did not like this stalemate and opposed the negotiations for peace the fate of which were then sealed.[219] Rām Singh had to yield to their pressure. This being against his will he expressed in disgust, 'I could not get victory. But now, I wish to see you get the royal umbrella'. But a dissension arose in Rājā Rām Singh's camp. Rashid Khān, the Tin-Hāzāri and former Faujdār of Kāmrūp, proved insubordinate to the Rājā. Having once lived in this country in great splendour commanding respect from all and being well-known among the Ahoms, Rashid could not tolerate the idea that he should now take orders from Rām Singh. Contrary to the military arrangement of the expedition he claimed equality of rank with Rām Singh and behaved in that fashion. He was suspected of being in secret alliance with the Ahoms. He openly became disloyal to his General, non-co-operated with him and withdrew with his men from Śarāi ghāt to Hājo. He refused to come when he was called back by Rām Singh.[220] At last Rām Singh took the drastic measure of expelling this refractory Muslim officer from his camp by cutting his tent ropes.[221] It seems that the top-ranking Muslim officers did not repose full confidence in the Rājput Chief, Rām Singh, and hence did not allow him a free hand in the vital matters. This is clear from the nature of interference by them in his line of war policy and from Rashid Khān's conduct in defiance of his orders. Probably Rashid Khān was sent with this expedition as a confidential agent by the Emperor to watch and report on the conduct of the Rājput General. Whatever might have been the allegations against him he was confident of his position, otherwise he could not have acted as he had done.

Meanwhile Rām Singh was promoted in his rank by the Emperor.[222] With the arrival of reinforcements he also found himself strong enough to subjugate the Ahoms. He ordered a general attack on Gauhāti. It may be noted that Gauhāti was a fortified city with ten gates—five on

219. *Ibid.*, p.215; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.96.
220. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.115; *PAB*, p.141-142.
221. Sir J.N. Sarkar : *op.cit.*, pp.188-89.
222. *Masir-i-Ālāmgiri*, p.97 as referred to by S.N. Bhattacharyya, in his *Mughal North-east Frontier Policy*, p.375.

the north bank and five on the south in between which there was the great waterway of the Brahmaputra, which flows from the east to west. The five northern gates from east to west were the Kānāi-baraśiboā Chaukī, the Hillār Chaukī, Sindurighopā, Pāt-duār and the Korai or Pānī Chaukī and those on the southern bank in the same order were the Latāśil or Pānī Chaukī, the Joyduār, the Dharamduār, Gurīā or Gorilā and the Pāndu Chaukī.[223] On the north Rām Singh advanced eastward and took his position facing the fortifications. Mansur Khān, Sarip Khān and the *Feringhis* were to break through Pāni Chaukī (or Panībāt). Hāji Beg, Kayām Khān and the whole Koch Behār army of 15,000 *ḍhālīkāṇḍis* led by Kavi Kishore Baruā, Sarbeswar Baruā, Manmath Baruā and Ghanashyām Bakshi appeared before Sindurighopā; one strong detachment under the command of Āli Bakr Khān, Mīr Sayyid Khān, Rājā Indramaṇi,[224] Rājā Barnadiā, Jaynārāyaṇ, Marul Khān Sardar and Isman Khān (probably Osman Khān) was sent to attack on the south bank. One detachment also proceeded towards Darrang. There was constant fighting from April to August of 1670 for the capture of Gauhati, but the veteran Ahom generals like Bānhgarhiā Ātan Burā-Gohāin, Lāngisong Bar-Gohāin, Abhaypuriā Rājkhowā, Tarun Dihingiā Rājkhowā, Shairingiā Pelan Phukan and others, fighting from their impregnable fortifications on different fronts under the inspiring leadership of their supreme Commander General Lāchit Bar-Phukan, baffled all the enemy efforts to enter the city of Gauhāti.[225]

The Mughuls simply suffered losses in men and material. Unable to break through the defences at any point the Mughuls made attempts to blow up the fortifications from underground, first at Pāndu and then at Śarāi, but in them they were frustrated. At Pāndu a breach was created at Rangāliburuz but it was immediately sealed up with materials

223. Robinson : *Descriptive Account of Assam*, pp.286-87. 'During the splendour of the Assam dynasty, Gowhatti was one of the largest cities in the kingdom. It occupied within its fortifications a vast extent of country on both banks of the great stream; the hills on either side forming a spacious amphitheatre, equally well fortified by nature and by art... The entrences into the city were by guarded passes, or chowkies, of which there were five on either bank of the river.... The ruins of the gateways of some of these passes are still to be seen, and the remains of the extensive fortifications may to this day be traced for miles, in the mounds and ditches, that now serve only to mark the extent of the ancient citadel'. *Ibid.*

224. appears to be the same person as Indradaman from the accounts.

225. *PAB*, p.142-43; *AB*, p.216.

kept ready for the purpose. Sir Jadunath Sarkar (*op.cit.*, p.189), from his sources, also refers to the Nagās as coming to the aid of the Ahoms, and these wild warriors proved a new danger to the Mughuls.

At Delhi the Emperor was impatient of the delay in taking Gauhāti. He sent envoys to warn Rām Singh against any kind of peace negotiation with the Ahoms and to ask for war materials if necessary. Rām Singh replied that war materials, such as guns and spears, were not in want and pointed out that the battle-field was not a plain field for the Mughul cavalry to attack; the city was surrounded on both banks of the river by strong lines of ramparts and fortifications; in face of such obstacles land warfare did not succeed; there was possibility of an attack only by water.[226] At this moment Rām Singh got letters from his wife and mother that his son, Krishna Singh, was made to fight with tigers as a sport by the Emperor, the object at heart being to get him killed, but Krishna Singh saved himself by killing the animals with his sword within the lists. The General became depressed to get such a news. Yet, unable to return without doing his job, he determined to fight a naval battle and ordered his commanders to get his fleet ready for action.

In the meantime the detachment that entered Darrang created a state of war in that country. The queen of Darrang secretly communicated to the Bar-Phukan the news of the aggression by the Mughuls into her territory and sought his advice. The apparent objective of the Mughul detachment was to find a passage through that country to attack the Ahom territory in the rear of Gauhāti and a request was sent to the Darrangi Rānī,[227] for granting it. The Bar-Phukan asked her not only not to grant any passage to the Mughuls, but to resist them in their advance in that direction and he assured her of his support if necessary. Being encouraged by Bar-Phukan's reply she led the Mughuls into a hill pass where they were attacked and massacred by her men from a vantage ground and their arms, money and other properties seized. This ended their adventure through Darrang.

The Mughul manoeuvre on the south bank was to proceed to surround the Ahom army in the advance post from the rear and cut

226. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.121.

227. Queen of Darrang.

off its connection with its main bases at Pāndu and Gauhāti. The Ahom spies informed the Bar-Phukan of this enemy plan. The Rāṇī Rajā[228] also sent news to the Bar-Phukan of the movement of Mughul officers with troops to the south bank. The Bar-Phukan immediately despatched a force under the command of Gajpuriā Rājkhowā assisted by one Lāshām of Bar-Gohain family, one Nadadeu and some Hāzarikās against the enemies. Meanwhile at the news of the march of Ahom reinforcements a great number of Muslims hurried to the aid of their army on the *Dakshiṇkūl*. Gajpuriā Rājkhowā secured the co-operation of the Gāro Rāṇī for the defence of the south bank territories and the Gāros joined the Ahom army to fight with the Muslims. The Muslims set fire to some of the dwellings of the Gāros and advanced to the fort at Pamāli and attacked the garrison. At this time the Marangikhowā Gohāin arrived and with Gajpuriā Rājkhowā made a fierce attack on the Muslims and defeated them. The Gāro Rāṇī's men massacred a number of Muslims at Kapili and captured an enemy chief, said to be the son of Rājā Barnadiā. He was made over to the Svargadev with other spoils. Thus the Mughul campaign in the *Dakshiṇkūl* ended with camplete failure. The Ahoms acquired a large booty of war materials and horses which was sent up to the capital.

The Battle Of Śarāi Ghāt (March, 1671) :

Being defeated on all fronts on land Rām Singh had to rely on his navy as the last resort. His original fleet of forty ships was chiefly manned by *Feringhis*.[229] Added to that were a number of ships brought by Munawwar Khān. The Mughul naval commandant Sharip Khān,[230] assisted by a few other officers, was ordered to lead a naval attack on Gauhati. At this crucial moment the two chief naval Commandants, Dauki Pāṇī Phukan and Naoboichā Phukan and also the Bar-Phukan himself fell ill.[231] The Mughuls advanced up the Brahmaputra with their fleet of war-vessels carrying their army and the horses to land at Āndhāru at Gauhati. A few days back the Mughul ambassador Pandit-rai had visited the Bar-Phukan's Court and saw no embankments at

228. The Gāro Queen of the Rāṇī State to the southeast of Pāndu was also known as Rāṇī Rajā.
229. Europeans. S.N. Bhattacharyya : *op.cit.*, p.368.
230. *PAB*, p.147.
231. *Ibid'*, p.147.

Āndhārubāli. This he reported to his General. It was therefore thought by the Mughul Commanders that the landing of their men and horses would be easy at that open shore for an attack on Gauhati. But, in the meantime, high sand banks were thrown up by the Ahoms all along it from the foot of the Kāmākhyā Hill to that of Śukreswar. When the Mughul fleet reached the Juriā Hill the Ahoms retreated to Aśvakrānta. This compelled their land forces also to retreat in order to avert an encircling movement by the enemy.[232] The absence of the chief naval officers from the field of battle, particularly the illness of the Bar-Phukan, worked as a major crisis at the moment in the naval command of the Ahoms and initially dispirited their forces and those, charged with the conduct of the naval warfare, were in hesitancy when the offensive was led by the Muslims with great strength. Even with high temperature in his body Lāchit Bar-Phukan remained alert and had to be informed every few minutes about the advance of the enemy up the river. There was such a concentration of the Ahom navy at Gauhati that it was possible to walk over the bridge of war-boats alone from one bank to the other of Brahmaputra. The Mughuls pressed forward to the open shore of Āndhārubāli and the Ahoms fell back to the Bar-Śilā after an action which did not succeed in stemming the enemy's progress.[233] It seemed as if there was a break-down in the command, though there was no any inherent lack of energy and strength of the Ahom navy, which had regained its supremacy under Chakradhvaj Singha. It did not take long for the Ahom experts, after their conflict with the European naval fighters under Mīr Jumlā, to reorganize their navy on a new and more efficient basis. Some of the Assamese boatmen wanted to retreat to Kājalī and Sāmdharā. The Bar-Phukan was watching this scene from his camp at Āndhāru and was upset at the cowardice and foolishness on the part of his men. When the enemies were sighted not far from Āndhārubāli and a critical situation developed the Bar-Phukan sent *Kaṭakīs* to all the land and naval forces ordering them to attack the enemies. He also called for himself seven war-boats and asked his attendants to take him with his temperature into one of them. His fleet of seven boats with mounted guns sped towards the enemies. This gallant and extra-ordinary act of the Ahom General at once brought back the morale of his army and the navy and

232. *AB*, p.215; *AB—'SMJC'*. p.122.
233. *AB*, p.215.

immediately the shore batteries of the Ahoms and the archers, on the north and south banks, went into action with terrific volleys and their naval forces fell upon the Mughul fleet and threw it into confusion. There was a big battle in the area of Śarāi Ghāt and both the sides called up all their strength. The Shairing Phukan, the Neog Kaṭakī and many Hāzarikās proceeded from Rangmahal and joined their army. In the violent contest the Mughul Commandant Sharip Khān and two other Omraos commanding the navy fell dead. Innumerable Mughul soldiers were killed and many of their boats with men, horses and war materials were sunk. The survivors made a precipitate retreat in their boats.[234] A vast amount of booty came into the possession of the Ahoms. There was no other fighting after the naval fight.[235] This was the historic battle of Śarāi Ghāt fought in the middle of March, 1671, which became Waterloo for the mighty Mughuls in the east and their territorial ambitions in this direction were basically curbed for all time except for a short period on treacherous transfer of Gauhati to them by Lāchit's successor.

According to one Buranji, being unable to take Gauhati by fighting for one year Rām Singh retreated to Rangāmāṭi when still there were six days of *Chaitra* (about 7th April)[236] in the year 1671. In the *Ahom Buranji* also the date of retreat is given as *Lākni Dāprao* or A.D. 1671 in the month of *Dinhā* (*Chaitra* or March-April) and as such early April seems to be the probable date. On his way to Rangāmāṭi Rām Singh again visited the *Hayagrīva Mādhav* temple at Hājo where he made the remarks before the Brahmins that 'the Bar Nawab (Bar-Phukan), too, is a man of extra-ordinary capacity. His fortifications resemble a machine. I found no loopholes anywhere'. The Hengarābārī Thākuriā personally communicated these remarks to the Bar-Phukan, who then inferred from them that the enemies had lost their morale. Rām Singh's retreat was carefully watched by the Ahom spies and the possibility of his return was studied. Some enthusiasts wanted to attack the retreating General with the object of seizing a rich booty, but the Bar-Phukan reminded them of the lesson of Ālāboi against such a hasty proposition. Rām Singh appears to have lived at Rangāmāṭi on the

234. *AB*, pp.215-16; *PAB*, pp.147-49; *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.122-123.
235. *PAB*, p.149.
236. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.31.

Assam border for about five years before he received permission finally in A.D. 1676 to leave Bengal and he reached the imperial Court in June of that year.[237] He was probably too war-weary and weak to return for a fresh attack. After Kāmrūp was brought under order the Bar-Phukan, being directed by the king, made Chandranārāyaṇ Rajā of *Uttarkūl* and Gandharbanārāyaṇ Rajā of *Dakshiṇkūl*.

Minor Events :

In April, 1672, three Daflā chiefs, Hara Gām, Radha Gām and Tari Gām stopped paying tributes to the Ahom king and came down from the hills and raided a village called Taibān at Gāgaldubi in the Ahom territory in the present North Lakhimpur Sub-Division. They cut off the heads of three men in that village and carried off forty inhabitants including children. When the matter was reported to king Udayāditya the latter despatched Āo Gohāin's son Ghorā Konwar Bar-Baruā with one thousand men against the Daflās. He proceeded with his force up the river Subanśiri and encamped at Rangāmātī. Next he advanced to Dulungmukh where he erected a fort. From this place he sent up to the hills his two *Kaṭakīs*, Titā and Tubā, both proprobably Daflās, to ask the offenders to submit and return the king's subjects taken captive assuring them that they would be left unmolested if they yielded. But the Daflās, instead of coming down, went up farther into the jungles and the mission failed. The king, on being informed of the situation, ordered the Daflā *Kaṭakīs* to be arrested and released only if they could assure the submission of the offenders. The Bar-Baruā crossed to Gangmukh and then led his expedition into the Daflā country reaching the side of the stream Somdiri and thence the mouth of the Silking where he erected a stockade. After camping there he farther advanced and reached the mouth of the stream Pati. The Daflās so far eluded contact with him. Then after constructiug a few forts here and there the Bar-Baruā released Titā and Tubā and ordered the Chutiya and Sungi Hāzarikās to proceed with these *Kaṭakīs* to high hills and devastate the Daflā villages. But when they climbed up the hills and reached the villages the Chief or *Gām* of the Daflas,

237. G.N. Sarkar : History of Aurangzib III, p.190. Gait points out that according to the *Ālāmgirnāmāh*, Rām Singh was in Assam from 1667 till 1685, but this is doubtful except as a punishment inflicted on him by the Emperor, of which there is no evidence.

named Kabakara, surrounded with his men the Bar-Baruā's detachment, composed of archers and the Hāzarikās and overpowered and massacred them. Two Hāzarikās—Khaga and Kharāgām—fell dead in the struggle and some were captured alive and made prisoners. The Daflā *Kaṭakīs* were put to death earlier by Daflās of a village. The disaster made the Bar-Baruā retreat to Anglung. When the news reached the king, he ordered the Bar-Baruā's return and wanted to execute him for his failure, but he was spared only at the intercession of the king's mother.[238] It was always difficult to tackle the Daflās because of their jungle habits. Their raiding propensity was strong, but when a regular force would pursue them they would become elusive and vanish into the jungles of high hills leaving their villages. They could be brought to submission only by the destruction of their properties and creating scarcity of food and cattle. The king dismissed the Ghorā Konwar and appointed Shairingiā Pelan Phukan as Bar-Barua.[239]

There was also a Miri trouble, but it was speedily suppressed by Sengdharā Bar-Baruā's son Simaluguriā Phukan. The Miris submitted to the Svargadev with offer of *Patsiyā maṇi, Sikarā dāh, Jim kāpor* and *hunting* dogs.[240]

There was also a clash between the Chutiyās and the Miris, some of whose villages were devastated by the Lukteng Chutiyās and the Mār-boats, made by the Miris to be offered as tributes to the Ahom king, taken away. A Chutiyā Chief, named Narāi Gām, was arrested and chained by the Ahom officers. The Chutiyās were asked to pay their annual tributes which they had not paid. The Taikaphi Chutiyās were arrested and severely dealt with for not returning the king's Mār-boats, which they had illegally seized from the Miris.[241]

The Mishmis of Sadiya also raided the salt-spring area, destroyed a bridge and killed twelve men of Bālihāt. Deberā Hāzarikā was ordered by the king to proceed to Sadiyā and destroy the Mishmi villages,

238. A detailed account of this Daflā expedition is contained in *AB*, pp.218-221. It is also contained in brief in some of the Assamese Buranjis, such as *AB'*, pp.124-125; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681), pp. 31-32.
239. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681), p.32.
239. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681), p.32.
240. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.32.
241. For details see *AB*, pp.224-227.

but he was then engaged in a plot against the king and took time to lead the expedition. Soon afterwards the king was overthrown, and it is not known whether any expedition could be sent.

Death of Lāchit Bar-Phukan :

The news of the Ahom victory at Śarai Ghāt and Rām Singh's retreat was officially communicated to the king by the Bar-Phukan by sending his special representative, Rām Kaṭakī. The king was greatly pleased at the glorious victory achieved by the Assam army and rewarded all as they deserved. The Bar-Phukan then reoccupied Kāmrūp and sent men and officers to take possession of the outpost at Mānāhāmukh and establish a *Chaukī* there.[242] The various forts and checkposts all over this territory, both on the north and south banks, were reconstructed and duly garrisoned.[243] It appears from Lāchit Bar-Phukan's works after Rām Singh's departure from Assam that he did not die of the illness he had at the time of the battle of Śarai Ghāt. His death occurred about April, 1672,[244] that is, about one year after the battle. His elder brother Nimāti Phukan was then appointed Bar-Phukan, who was also known as Lāluksolā Bar-Phukan.

Udayāditya's Religious Fanaticism :
Its Repercussion :

When the hostilities with the Mughuls ceased king Udayāditya appointed Pāpang Chaodāng Baruā to search out and arrest those persons who turned disloyal to the cause of the Ahoms and stopped paying tributes to the king during the long wars with the Mughuls. Persons so arrested were ordered to be deported to Nāmrūp. 'In the course of these enquiries', as pointed out by Gait, 'it was reported that amongst those who had taken the side of the Muhammadans was a priest named Chakrapāṇi, a descendant of the Vaishṇava reformer Śankar Deb, but it was impossible to punish him as he had escaped across the frontier'.[245] The Tai-Ahom account says that 'one of the Dhekeris fled away and remained in a house at Hādirā. He became a Barāgī. For many days,

242. *PAB*, p.150.
243. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.124.
244. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.32
245. Gait : *op.cit.*,, p.158.

he put up in the house of one Dahā and gave him many good instructions. Dahā intimated the king of the Boirāgī'.[246] According to S.K. Bhuyan Dahā was a Brahmin official at Garhgaon.[247] Thus there is little doubt that Chakrapāṇi returned under the guise of a Boirāgī from Brindāvan. Whatever other accounts may say one Buranji[248] clearly states that during Udayāditya's reign three *sādhus*, namely, one Gakulpurī, one Brindāvan Boirāgī and one local Kalitākuchiā Fakir appeared in Kāmrup. The Gakulpurī made his abode on the Nilāchal (Kāmākhyā) Hill just to the west of the town of Gauhāti and the Fakir lived down Hājo, probably in Rāmdiā. It was the Boirāgī alone who visited Bhramarakuṇḍa in the east and then proceeded farther east to Kalābārī from where he either made his way to Garhgaon or was summoned by the king who heard much about his spiritual powers from the Brahmin Dahā under whose protection he was then living and, at the time of being summoned, was on a visit to Kalābārī, an easternmost locality in Darrang. This Boirāgī, after his flight from Assam, might have visited Brindāvan and on return was either thought to be a man of the western country by the local people or introduced himself as such remembering his past offence. The king heard his religious discourses and was so much fascinated that he built for the Boirāgī a *satra* (monastery) on the side of the Chunporāduār.[249] He also gave him a grant of land at Sāmaguri and made him his spiritual preceptor.[250] The Boirāgī further enjoyed the right to convert the king's subjects to his faith and realize a tax[251] from them.

At his instance the king 'ordered the Burā-Gohāin, the Bar-Gohāin, the Barpātra-Gohāin, the Phukans, the Baruās, the Hāzarikās, the Barās and others to pay respect to the Bārāgī and take his *śaraṇ*'.[252]

246. *AB*, p.223. In his *Ātan Burāgohāin, etc.*, Bhuyan gives the name of the Boirāgī as Paramānanda Sannyasi which, if at all, must be an assumed name.

247. Bhuyan : *Atan Buragohain and His Times* (Lawyer's Book Stall, Gauhati) 1947, p.83.

248. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.125.

249. *Ibid.*, p.125; *AB*, says that the king built for him a house near the Dikhau river. (p.223). He became known as Boiragī Bāpu, of whom the name and race were unknown. *Vide Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p. 33.

250. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.158.

251. It was perhaps the beginning of what is called the *gurū-kar* system in addition to the *rāj-kar* or tax to the king.

252. *Śaraṇ* is the initiation ceremony. AB, pp.223-24.

In obedience to the king's order they all became disciples of the Boirāgī by going through the ceremony of *śaraṇ* but the *Dāngariās* (the three great Gohāins) became offended with the king for the compulsion.[253] Not satisfied with this, with the characteristic zeal of a neophyte the king summoned the twelve well-known Thākuriā Mahantas of his kingdom including the Moāmorā Mahanta to be initiated by the Boirāgī, for, in the king's opinion, even these twelve Mahantas could not be equal in spiritual attainments to him.[254] The Boirāgī's ambition knew no bounds. He sent one Brahmin *Kaṭakī* and one Barāgī *Kaṭakī* to the country of the Chutiyās to convert the inhabitants. The two *Kaṭakī*s converted some people of the country and 'realized taxes from half the people'. But the people of the Bardeyaliā Chutiyā village refused to be converted and paid nothing and the Bardeyaliā Phukan did not receive these missionary *Kaṭakī*s, whom he wanted to go back. The conversion itself was unpopular and provoked resentment among the people. The taxation with it only added fuel to the fire.

The Thākuriā disciples could not tolerate the highly unwise and extreme step of compelling their *Gosāins* (religious preceptors) against their will to get initiated with the new Boirāgī. As the Court and the country were seething with discontent at the mad policy of the monarch a group of five people, namely, Lāi Lāpet's brother's son Dakshiṇpaṭiyā Hāzarikā Lāsāi *alias* Deberā of Lukkhākhun family, Mohan Hāzarikā of Ratanpur, Kaliā Chaodāng Baruā, Tāirāi Dolakākhariā Baruā and Luthuri's son Lehu organized an armed band with the object of overthrowing him. They also secured the consent of the king's brother, the Dekā Rajā, (or Sarujanā Gohāin) to succeed to the throne after him. The Boirāgī, the chief queen, the Bar-Baruā, one Pāpang Ranuā-Neog, the grandson of the Barchetiā and the mother of Tasan Baruā, being aware of the ominous developments for an insurrection, consulted between themselves and apprised the king of his brother's 'conspiracy against him'. The king then ordered for the arrest of the Dekā Rajā. In face of this the leaders of the revolutionary group decided to put an end to the king's reign and soon in one night in *Lākni Möngkeu* (A.D. 1673) in the month of *Dinship* (August-September) marched with one thousand men from Dakshiṇpāṭ and Ratanpur to the king's residence

253. *AB*, p.224.

254. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.126; *PAB*, p.150.

at Hāithāguri with the Dekā Rajā as its leader. The Dekā Rajā came to the gate of the city and found it closed. He asked the sentry, Pasan Himeli, to open the gate but the latter refused to comply. The Dekā Rajā then made his way with his band of armed men by breaking open the gate and instantly put the sentry to death. Dahā Brahmin's house was in front of the Panī-duār. Both Dahā and his son were brought out and beheaded. He then made a violent attack on the party of the king and killed Chāringiā Pelan Bar-Baruā, the Ranuā-Neog, the grandson of the Barchetiā, Jayānanda, the Śimaluguriā Phukan and many others and captured the Boirāgī and the mother of Tasan who were heavily enchained. Having thus isolated the king he dismissed his attendants, and put him under strict guards. Next day the deposed king was removed to Charāideo where he was executed and his three queens also suffered the same fate.[255] The Boirāgī was put into a cage and later impaled and set adrift on a raft on the Dikhau river.[256] In this struggle the three great Gohāins, the Salāl Gohāin and many others took the side of the Dekā Rajā.[257]

Rāmadhvaj to Larā Rajā (1673-1681) :
Reigns of Weak Kings :

With the end of Udayāditya's reign the most vigorous and stable period of Tai-Ahom rule in Assam may be said to have virtually ended. There then ensued a period of weak and unstable government during which it was not the kings, but his officers, who controlled the affairs. After the bloody and fatricidal strife occasioned by the religious fanaticism of Udayāditya the Dekā Rajā was placed on the throne by the revolutionary group. The Rajā assumed the Tai-Ahom name Hsö-Klan-Hpā and the Hindu name Rāmadhvaj Singha.

This new king proclaimed the important state policy that no king should go to indulge in matters spiritual and regulate the religious faith of the people as was done by his predecessor, Udayāditya.[258] He offered

255. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.33; *AB*, pp.228-229; *AB*—'*SMJC*' pp.126-127.

256. *AB*, p.228-229; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.33.

257. *AB*, p.228.

258. *Ibid.*, p.229.

to Leshām Deberā,[259] the most powerful leader of the revolutionary group, the post of Bar-Baruā. Such a big lift of Deberā, who at once became all-powerful, was probably not liked by the nobles of the Court. The Bānrukiā Lāngisong Bar-Gohāin, who had so recently supported the Dekā Rajā against the late king, was suspected of having a talk with the Shairing Rajā, the late king's son, in order to make the latter king. This suspicion was based on a report that the king had from Sengmun of a Bar-Gohāin family and Deberā's nephew. Without proper enquiry into the matter both the Bar-Gohāin and the Shairing Rajā were arrested by him and executed. In some Buranjis the charge is said to be false. He then appointed Sengmun as Bar-Gohāin.[260]

During the reign of Rāmadhvaj the Chutiyās, or rather the Deori Chutiyās, defied the authority of the Ahom king. But soon they were brought under control and made to recognise the Ahom king as their sovereign and supply elephant tusks, wild cows, *Sikarādaos* (a kind of *dāh* or big knife), *Jim* cloths and some female slaves as tributes. The Miris offered their tributes, as fixed earlier, to Tāmulidaloi, the officer in charge of the Chutiyā and Miri affairs appointed by the Ahom king. Further Narāigām, the Chief of the Tāikaphi Chutiyās, who had become insubordinate, pledged fidelity to the Ahom king by drinking liquor before the Ahom Basā Baruā and agreed to pay tributes of Mār-boats.[261] The Naga Mishmis, who had raided the Ahom territory and killed some men and with whom the Doaniās also joined, were put down by the Bar-Phukan and compelled to deliver the offenders and also pay tributes.[262]

In the month of *Dinhā* (March-April) in *Lākni Katplao* (A.D. 1675) the king became seriously ill and thought he would not live long. He called in his nephew, son of the late king, and his brothers Tipām and Nāmrūpiā Rajās to see him. On their arrival the question of succession came up for discussion among the nobles and ministers. 'Some of the

259. His Ahom name was Lāsāi. '*Phukelung Lāsāi*' in the Tai-Ahom text. See *AB*, pp.234-238.

260. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.34; K.T.P. *op.cit.*, p.42; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.128; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.97; *PAB*, p.151. According to *AB*, (p.231) the king got the report that the Shairing Rajā had taken Tāimung. The king proceeded there and upon enquiry found the Rajā guilty and hence ordered him to be put to death.

261. *AB*, pp.228-230.

262. *Ibid.*, pp.231-233 for details.

officers wished to make the Tipām Rajā their king, some the son of Chao Hsö-Nyat-Hpā and the others Chao-Lādām', the son of Rāmādhvaj by his chief queen.[263] A strong group headed by Thenkhrungnyeu, son of Tangsu Bar-Gohāin, forcefully advocated the cause of Kaliā Gohāin, the son of Udayāditya and talked with the king about it. Deberā found himself ignored in this discussion though he was 'at the root of Chao Hsö-Nyat-Hpā's deposal'. Deberā's anxiety arose lest the late king's son should be made king, in which case he was bound to suffer. Hence he with his associates, became ready for action. At this threatening attitude of Deberā a group of nobles and officers headed by Thenkhrungnyeu urged the king not to allow the insurgents to go unpunished. The king was unable to tolerate Deberā's audacity and was for putting him to death. But Deberā mustered a larger body of men and challenged the king's party. He attacked and put to death Thenkhrungnyeu. Thereafter he and his armed associates killed and beheaded a large number of officers and men in the capital and liquidated his opponents. He then conspired with the king's cook and the physician Kharmaju and mixed up poison, prepared by the physician, with the king's meal. The king died from the effect of that poison in the month of *Dinhā* (March-April) in A.D. 1675. He ruled the country for one year and eight months.[264]

This king established a *satra* (Hindu monastery) at Gajpur for the Thākur of Norwā. He expiated himself at Gālpurā Ghāt for killing the Brahmins and the Boirāgi and made presents to the Brahmins and Daivajnas. It is said that he also performed *Hari Sevā* (worship of *Hari*) for seven days and seven nights.[265] He rebuilt the town of Sonārī and constructed in it a number of new buildings.[266]

The next king to be raised to the throne by Deberā Bar-Barua was Chao Khām-Jāng of Sāmaguri. At Deberā's instance he made one of the queens of the late king his chief queen. She was a daughter of Momāi-Tāmulī Bar-Baruā[267] and sister of the Bar-Phukan Nimātī

263. *AB*, pp.233-234.
264. *AB*, pp.233-235. A list of important persons p.34 and also in *AB*, as above.
265. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.34; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.128.
266. *AB*, p.233.
267. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.34-36.

alias Lāluksolā. When the Sāmaguriā Prince was made king by Deberā the Rajā of Tipām, accompanied by Kachalukhowā Salāl Gohāin, proceeded with his army to fight the new king and kill Deberā. There was a battle at Sengdhārī between the armies of the Tipām Rajā and Chao Khām-Jāng, but the Tipām Rajā was defeated and compelled to retreat[268] and his men fled away. He and the Salāl Gohāin were seized and put to death by Deberā. Deberā also killed as many as fourteen other princes and Chetiā Patar, who was engaged by Deberā, put to death the Rajā of Nāmrūp at his own place.[269] With him Rāmadhvaj's line is said to have become extinct. Deberā followed a ruthless policy of eliminating all his opponents from the scene and wanted to have a free hand in running the administration at his dictates. He employed his agents to perform this job without regard for any law or principle. Thus he sent one Lao Dekā with a body of men in the name of the king to Gauhati to ask the Bar-Phukan to send to the capital the dismissed Ghorā Konwar Bar-Baruā, one Rājkhowā, the brother of Tangsu and his son, Luthurī Rājkhowā and his son, the grandson of Tāmulidaloi and his son. As they proceeded to Garhgāon they were all put to death at Laotali or, according to some Assamese Buranjis, at Śariahtali, under the orders of the Bar-Baruā,[270] which would normally have been *ultra-vires*.

Seeing that Deberā was all-in-all and could order death penalty at his will the chief queen one day said to the king in disgust, 'If you are king, how Lāsāi (Deberā) Barbaruā can have so much power. The royal umbrella is at the hand of the Barbaruā. If you do not take some measure to do away with him, you will not be able to have supremacy and you will remain mere a puppet at his hand'.[271] This was a significant statement from the mouth of the chief queen which clearly shows that Deberā Bar-Baruā, as the leader of a strong militant group of his own, seized all power and became the sole dictator and king-maker of the time to the exclusion of all others including the great Gohāins. The king realised his position of insignificance before Deberā. He became prepered to get rid of this *de facto* ruler. Deberā had to be always on

268. *AB*, p.236.
269. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.36.
270. *AB*, pp.236-237; *PAB*, p.151.
271. *AB*, p.237.

guard for what he was doing and therefore maintained a network of spies. Thus one of the servants of the king secretly informed Deberā of what was going on against him at the palace. Deberā, then, confined the king in his palace by turning up the ladder. In the month of *Dinruk* (April-May) in A.D. 1675 he brought in from the village Kling khāng[272] Prince Gobar, the son of Chao Ābang, the grandson of Dec-Raja and formally made him king at Maknā near the Dikhau river. Chao Khām-Jāng was put to death. This king was on the throne for twenty-one days only. Both the chief queen and her brother were also put to death by Deberā.

Soon after Gobar's accession Deberā Bar-Baruā sent one Āpax Duarī to the Burā-Gohāin, who was at Gauhati in charge of the gateway to Upper Assam, asking him to send the Bar-Phukan to the capital. This way of inviting the nobles and officers in distant Lower Assam one by one to be treacherously murdered under Deberā's orders, as in the case of the Ghorā Konwar Bar-Baruā and others who had been called to the capital and put to death, acted as a warning to the chief nobles of the kingdom who had come to Śarai Ghāṭ to fight the Mughuls.[273] As the main part of the Ahom army with its veteran generals had to be transferred to Gauhati in connection with the Mughul wars Garhgaon, the metropolis of the kingdom, became militarily weak to cope with any strong insurrectionary force. Deberā took full advantage of it with the help of an armed band to rise to power. Though initially he was probably right in fighting the evil influence of the Boirāgī, yet the chain of events drove him beyond the limits of justified conduct and soon he turned a danger to the State committing an unending series of bloody acts.

The Bar-Phukan arrested the *Kaṭakī* sent by Deberā. He came to the Burā-Gohāin and said that the Bar-Baruā 'has made a plot to kill me and you one after the other by this skill'.[274] All the Phukans,

272. *Ibid.*, In the Assamese Buranjis the name of the place is mentioned as Tungkhāng and Tungkhang is known to be the plains area in front of the Charāideo Hill and is to be distinguished from Tingkhang in the Dibrugarh Sub-Division.

273. The victors of the Śarāi Ghāṭ battle, who continued to stay at the sub-capital Gauhati for the defence of the area of Śarāi Ghāt-Pāndu-Gauhati, were popularly known as the Śarāighatiās.

274. *AB*, p.238.

Rājkhowās and Hāzarikās at Gauhati then assembled and requested Bānhgarhiā Burā-Gohāin to assume the leadership and proceed to the capital to destroy the Bar-Baruā. They all took oath of unity and loyalty to the Burā-Gohāin with all solemnity and in the name of Goddess *Phurā-Tārā* to liberate the country from the clutches of Deberā, the blood-thirsty evil genius. As there was none of the king's family now to succeed to the throne they also proposed the name of the Burā-Gohāin to assume that office. Having left Gauhati in charge of Guimelā Bar-Gohāin Phukan, Burā-Gohāin Phukan of Charaguā, Dihingiā Lāpet Phukan's son Kamalābariā Amunseng Neog and Gajpuriā Kalanchu Neog the Burā-Gohāin and the Bar-Phukan with their host of Phukans, Rājkhowās, Hāzarikās, Saikiās and also the Koch princes of the north and south advanced against Deberā at Gorhgaon. As this formidable force advanced up towards the capital, in Central Assam the Salāl Gohāin and the Marangikhowā Gohāin joined with the Burā-Gohāin.

Deberā Bar-Baruā heard the news of the expedition. In the month of *Dinruk* (April-May) of A.D. 1675 he collected together all foreign mercenaries (Bangāls) to reinforce his own band. He gave them horses and weapons, threw up forts at strategic places and placed his forces all over the area from Dergaon to Garhgaon. He placed Sengmun Bar-Gohāin at Barākhowā-duār, Ākasu Barpātra-Gohāin at Banhgarha-duar and he himself was at Mechāghar-duār. General Burā-Gohāin was mortified to see foreign foes (Bangāls) inside the 'casket of gold' (Assam), while they were going to fight those outside of it. On Deberā's side, almost all the top officers, such as Nakjāng Phukan who was in charge of Deberā's fort, the Pānī Phukan at Thurā, Āsuk Barpātra-Gohāin at Bānhbāri, Nagariāl Phukan at the fort Raiphrā and others, on whose support he counted, suddenly changed their mind and deserted him. They went over to the side of the Burā-Gohāin, who, with his host of Śaraighatias, had come up and encamped at Nāmdāng. Though left with a reduced strength Deberā gave a fight at Bānhgarāh but was vanquished and fled away. The Bar-Phukan engaged the Hāzarikās with their men to search him out and arrest him. They combed the area, captured Deberā and made him over to the Bar-Phukan.[275] Deberā's regime collapsed. Deberā was put into a pig's cage, his two wives were made to ride on his shoulder and trample him and then he

275. AB, pp.238-241 for details; *AB—'SMJC'*, pp.131-132; *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.36-38.

was taken to Rajāhāt where he was put to death by hoeing from foot to head.[276] With him many of the insurgents of his band were also captured and beheaded. The king made by Deberā was deposed and brought away from Hāithāguri for his hostility and was confined without food and water till death at Bhogbārī[277] to the great pleasure of all people who detested him for being a puppet of the Bar-Baruā. He reigned for twenty-four days only.

Thereafter the Phukans and other officers desired that the Burā-Gohāin should occupy the throne, but the latter declined it on the constitutional ground that 'a minister cannot become king'.[278] Then after consultation with the nobles and officers the Burā-Gohāin suggested the name of the Prince of Dihing, who was the son of the Nāmrūpiā Rajā, a descendant of Hsö-Hom-Möng or Dihingiā Rajā and all agreed. He was brought in and made king at Phulbārī in A.D. 1675 in the month of *Jaistha* (May-June) with great pomp.

On ascending the throne the Dihingiā Prince assumed the title of Hsö-Jin-Hpā. There was a wholesale change of the old officers of the State who were on the side of Deberā. Chao Sheng-Klang, the son of Chapā Barpātra-Gohāin of Kenduguriā family, was appointed Barpātra-Gohāin. Guimelā Bar-Gohāin's son Lāluk was appointed Bar-Gohāin. Lānching-Shāikan (Kirkiriā), the son of Rangāsilā, was made Bar-Barua in place of Deberā. The son of Pukhuripariā Burā-Gohāin was made Parvatiā Phukan. Lāluk Phukan, who was the grandson of Metekātaliā Bar-Gohāin, was made Tāirāi Phukan. Makdunā Phukan was made Nāoshaliyā Phukan. The Bar-Phukan Lāluk's brother was appointed Bhitaruāl Duarī Phukan. Lāi Baruā of Bar-Gohāin family was appointed as Rāidangiā Baruā. Tangasu Phukan was replaced by Bhātdharā as Phukan. Rangāsilā's brother was made Taruā-Dihingiā Rājkhowā.[279]

Within a year dissensions arose in the king's Court. The king's four sons and their friends found that the actual ruler of the kingdom was the Burā-Gohāin and the king was only a figure-head with no power

276. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.38; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.133.
277. *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.132.
278. *Ibid.*, p. 132; also *PAB*, p.152.
279. *AB*, p. 242; *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.133 1 *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), p.39.

to rule the country well. They therefore urged the king to make the Burā-Gohāin and his party of nobles to take an oath of loyalty to the king. The chief queen also, in consultation with Lao Barchetiā, advised the king to enforce the loyalty of the Burā-Gohāin and other Śarāighātiās, by making them take a solemn oath of loyalty, otherwise it would have been better to live by cultivation than to live in subordination to others'. The Burā-Gohāin was then summoned by the king to an oath-taking ceremony, but he did not come. He prepared for chastising the king for such a step and invited the Barpātra-Gohāin to his side, but the latter refused to side with him and said-'My forefathers never revolted against the king'. The Bar-Gohāin Lāluk also remained loyal. But Lāithapanā Bar-Gohāin and the Marangikhowā Gohāin joined with the Burā-Gohāin. Those who were on the side of the king took the oath, but those who were against assembled at Dergāon and became ready for action. The king requested the Bāpus (Gosāins) including the Vanamālī Bāpu to meet the Burā-Gohāin and bring about a reconciliation between them, but the Burā-Gohāin refused to discuss the matter with the Bāpus when the latter went to him. The king also sent the Bar-Gohāin, the Barpātra-Gohāin and a few other nobles to the Burā-Gohāin to make him change his mind, but the latter declined to have any talk on this issue.[280] The king was then determined to fight and advanced with his force to Tāmulihāt and charged the armies of the Burā-Gohāin, but was routed.[281] He escaped to Tāimung (Dihing) when under the Burā-Gohāin's instructions he was captured and his eyes extracted at Śākbārī Nāo-shāl (boat factory). It was followed by the king committing suicide in July, 1677, by striking his head against a stone. His body was buried at Charāideo.

The eldest son of the king fled away. The second son was banished to Nāmrūp by the victors and his eyes were extracted. The two youngest sons were put to death. The Burā-Gohāin was again requested by the nobles and officers to be king and take the powers into his hands. This time he asked the Bāilung Pandits for their opinion whether it would be in consonance with the principles of Ahom government to do so. The Pandits told him that it would not be proper for him to become

280. *AB*—'*SMJC*',*A* p.135.
281. According to *B*—'*SMJC*', (p.135) there was a fight between the king and the Burā-Gohāin at the Singha-duār or Lion-Gate of the capital.

king. Then the Bura-Gohāin summoned the assembly of the Ministers Phukans, Baruās and others and announced that, 'I do not belong to the royal family. Had I descended from the royal family, I would not have hesitated to take the title of king. Now therefore, I do not wish to be king. I wish to make one of the royal family king'.[282]

At the instance of the Burā-Gohāin Prince Chao Khām-Shen, the grandson of Chao Hsö-Teng, was brought from Charāideo and raised to the throne in 1677 under the title of Hsö-Doi-Hpā, called also Parvatiā Rajā. He married the daughter of the Burā-Gohāin and made her his chief queen. The Bar-Phukan's brother Bhātdharā Phukan and Mechā Bar-Baruā also gave their daughters in marriage to this king. Soon after his accession he offered presents to the Bar-Phukan and other Phukans and sent them back to Gauhati with other officers and men who earlier came up to the capital to subdue Deberā Bar-Baruā. Mechā Bar-Baruā and the Burā-Gohāin remained at Garhgāon. The king also richly rewarded the Burā-Gohāin and created for him a permanent landed estate near the Lohit. He then performed the *Rikkhan* ceremony and worshipped *Lāngkuri* (Siva) on the Barpāhār Hill and the Ahom gods at Charāideo with offerrings of cows and buffaloes.[283]

A number of officers were replaced by others. Among them Japang Gohāin was made Bar-Gohāin by the Burā-Gohāin and Kenduguriā Barpātra's grandson was given the office of Barpātra-Gohāin. Bhātdharā was appointed Phukan and was sent to Śarāi Ghāt and in his place Kalanchu was made Phukan at Garhgaon. The Burā-Gohāin's elder brother was appointed Nāoboichā Phukan by removing Madnukhowā from that post. The former Kirkiriā Bar-Baruā was replaced by Mechā Bar-Baruā and Mechā by Chakrapāṇi, the son of Dihingiā Hāzarikā. Mechā suspected evil for him and fled to Śarāi Ghāt. Betmela Phukan of Tāimung was charged with theft of a gold *Taokin* (water-pot) by the king. He felt insulted and attempted on the life of the king in one night, killing by mistake the king's mother. In fear of punishment he also fled to Śarāi Ghāt.[284] Those who thus fled to distant Gauhati with grudge and grievance reported to the Bar-Phukan

282. *AB*, pp.249-250.
283. *AB*, p.251; *AB—'SMJC'*, pp.136-137.
284. *Ibid.*, p.252.

the high-handedness of the Burā-Gohāin in the administration of the country. The attempt on the king's life was suspected by the Bura-Gohāin to be an act of the Śarāighaṭiās, particularly of the dismissed Bar-Baruā. This opinion of his reached the ears of the Gauhati officers and a feeling of estrangement developed between the authorities at Garhgāon and the officers at Gauhati.[285] What Burā-Gohāin did at Garhgāon in dismissing and changing important officers Lāluk wanted to do it from Gauhati. Thus the Bar-Phukan, who refused to remain subservient to the Burā-Gohāin, appointed his brother Marangi as Bar-Baruā and his son Jagarā as Panī-Phukan. He appointed Dihingiā Lāpet Phukan's son Ālun to the post of Phukan. He also raised to that post Maupiyā and Bandar of Lānmākhru family. Marangi was arrested by Mechā Bar-Baruā and made a prisoner. Ālun Phukan fled from Garhgaon and related everything to the Bar-Phukan at Kaliābar.[286] The matters came to such a pass that the Burā-Gohāin, after a discussion with his Phukans at the capital, announced the dismissal of the Bar-Phukan Lāluksolā (Nimāti) who had been in this office since the death of Lāchit Bar-Phukan. The Great Gohāins also constructed a stone fort on the Ājang Hill. The king, disregarding the advice of many, ordered the Burā-Gohāin in A.D. 1679 to construct a fort at Chintāmaṇi which was named *Hungnā-garh*.[287]

In the meantime, Lāluksolā[288] heard the news of his dismissal. The fortification at Chintāmaṇi became another reason of fear, for the officers at Śarāi Ghāṭ thought that it was meant against them. The Bar-Phukan held a council with his brother, Bhātdharā Phukan, and the three brothers of the Marangikhowā Gohāin and after a long discussion decided to seek the aid of Mansur Khān, the Nawab of Bengal in this extremely difficult situation. They despatched two envoys to the Nawab 'with presents of some elephants, *maihāngs* (raised dishes), gold embroidered cloths, and gold too'. They first contacted Bāduli Phukan and gave him some presents and with his help met the Nawab. The envoys said to the Nawab that the Bar-Phukan asked for about 200 horses and forty war-vessels from him to reach Śarāi Ghāṭ

285. *PAB*, pp.153-154; *AB—'SMJC'*, p.139; *Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p.99.
286. *Assam Buranji* (1648-1681 A.D.), pp.49-50.
287. *AB*, p.253; *PAB*, p.154.
288. called also 'Burāh Phukan'.

as early as possible to fight the Burā-Gohāin and that, in return, he would leave the fortifications of Gauhati to be possessed by the Mughuls, if only he was assured of being made king of Assam. The Nawab became sympathetic to the proposal, but could not himself come to a final settlement of such a major issue. He, therefore, directed them to meet 'the Pādshāh's son 'Āzam-tārā at Daccā'. It may be remembered that 'Āzamtārā or Muhammad Āzam married the daughter of Jayadhvaj Singha, Nāng-Seng *alias* Ramaṇī Gābharu or Rahmat Bānu of the Mughul Court as a sequel to Mīr Jumlā's invasion of Assam and that she was the daughter of Lāluk Bar-Phukan's sister, Pākharī, who was the Tāmulī Kunwarī of the king. As such Lāluk became the uncle of Āzam-tārā. When the Bar-Phukan's proposal was placed before him he agreed to it and promised not only to make his uncle Lāluksolā ruler of Assam but also to pay four lakhs rupees as a price for handing over Gauhati.[289] Thus the Bar-Phukan betrayed Gauhati, the main bastion of the kingdom, into the hands of the Mughuls, who took possession of it early in March, 1679, without any sacrifice[290] and for this so-called 'conquest'[291] Muhammad Ā'zam, the viceroy of Bengal, was rewarded by the Emperor.[292]

Meanwhile, in order to frustrate the plan of surrendering Gauhati the king despatched an army, headed by the Burā-Gohāin and other officers, to Gauhati when yet the Chintāmaṇi *garh* was not completed. At the same time the Bar-Phukan, undoubtedly strengthened by reinforcements from Bengal, proceeded up to the capital. While the three Great Gohains encamped at Viśvanāth and their advance-guards reached Duimuniśilā, the Bar-Phukan's army also reached that place. Getting the news of the Bar-Phukan's advance with a strong force the Burā-Gohāin's courage failed and so he fled northwards from Visvanāth to Lejubāj and from there towards Satshaiyā to escape to the hills. But on his way he was captured and brought down to the Bar-Phukan's camp at Duimuniśilā, where he was put into confinement under strong guards.[293] Lāluk Bar-Phukan arrested the Phukans and Hāzarikās

289. *Tungkhungia Buranji* Ed. by Bhuyan (*DHAS*, Gauhati), 1932, p.9.
290. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.164. See also *AB*—'*SMJC*', p.140 for date of surrender.
291. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* (Ed. Bibl. Indica, p.72).
292. Sir Jadunath Sarkar : *op.cit.*, p.190.
293. *T.B.*, p.11.

coming against him and marched to Garhgaon. The king became nervous and fled to the Charāideo Hill and would not come down even though his safety was assured by the Bar-Phukan. The king wanted to excuse himself by openly confessing that he was merely a nominal ruler, the real ruler being the Burā-Gohāin. He recalled his earlier days when he was happier with his peaceful calling of cultivation than with his burden of kingship. But at last he was persuaded to come down to the capital and allowed to rule as before. The Śarāi Ghāṭ officers returned to Kaliābar where they made their head-quarters as Gauhati had now come under the Mughuls.

But soon the king entered into a conspiracy against the Bar-Phukan being aggrieved at the loss of Gauhati and the disappearance of the Burā-Gohāin on whom he solely depended. He was also intolerant of the appointments to high offices made by the Bar-Phukan over the head of the king. When the plans matured the king declared, 'I make Bhātdharā Bar-Phukan and have removed the Burāh (Lāluk)' and he also arrested Marangi, whom the Bar-Phukan appointed as the Bar-Baruā. Soon Marangi escaped from prison at Garhgaon and reported everything to the Bar-Phukan. The latter marched to Garhgāon and arrested the king.[294]

Then the Burāh Phukan Lāluk brought in a Prince, called Saru-Gohāin, belonging to the Sāmaguria royal family and aged only fourteen years. He was installed as king in November, 1679. From his tender age the young king became known as Larā Rajā, or 'Boy King'. On his accession he assumed the name Hsö-Lik-Hpā and the Hindu name Ratnadhvaj Singha,[295] but he was more popular as Larā Rajā. He was a disciple of Chota Vanamālī Bāpu of Dakshiṇpāṭ Vaishṇava *Satra*.

His immediate task was to deal with the opponents. Hsö-Doi-Hpā was executed. The Burā-Gohāin's sons were arrested and sent to Tāimung and were soon afterwards impaled to death at the house of the Burā-Gohāin at Bānhbarī[296] and the Burā-Gohāin himself was put to death at Kaliābar on the second waxing day of *Āghon* (Nov.-Dec.),

294. *Ibid*, pp.11-12.
295. *T.B.*, p.12; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.164.
296. *AB*, p.258.

1679. His brother Nāoboichā Phukan, his nephew and son Lon-Khām were also executed at the same place.[297] Lāngi Gohāin of Pukhurī-parīā Burā-Gohāin family was then appointed Burā-Gohāin. Jabang Bar-Gohāin was dismissed and his properties attached and Laithapanā Bar-Gohāin of Mādurī, was appointed to the post vacated by Jabang.[298]

At about this time an envoy named Govindarām, sent by Muhammad Āzam, arrived at the capital with a letter asking the Burāh Phukan Lāluk to despatch to Bengal the king and the three Great Gohains and other enemies as prisoners, assuring him, at the same time, that he would be made king of Assam and the Burāh Phukan received him at his residence at Metekā in a right royal style putting on robes and ornaments worn by kings.

It was suggested to the king by the Bar Deodhāi (chief priest)[299] that human sacrifices should be offered to the Goddesss at Sadiyā to remove the miseries of the kingdom. The king asked the Burāh Phukan to find out a man to be offered as sacrifice. The Bar-Phukan selected for the purpose one of his attendants named Bhotāi from Nowgong who possessed both a good physique and bravery. When Bhotāi became aware of it he, in association with two other friends named Mādhav Tāmulī and Āghonā Kachārī, murdered the Burāh Phukan at night in November, 1680.[300] According to another version (*Kāmrūpar Buranji*, p. 101) the Burāh Bar-Phukan became so overbearing and arrogant that most of the nobles and officers conspired to get rid of his dominance. They employed Bhotāi to assassinate him and the latter did it according to plan. The king then appointed Bandar of Lānmākhru family, a disciple of Chota Vanamālī Bāpu, as the next Bar-Phukan and Dihingiā Ālan as Bar-Baruā. Bhotāi is said to have remained

297. *T.B.*, p.12.

298. *AB*, pp.258, 260.

299. It seems he was the chief priest of the Tāmresvarī Temple of Sadiyā.

300. According to the Tai-Ahom text (*AB*, p.250) it was the Phukans and Baruās, all king's party, who killed both the Bar-Phukan Lāluk and his body-guard Bhatāi (Bhotāi). They also put to death Lāluk's three sons and two brothers. It must have been the result of a big plot arising from the past actions of Lāluk. Bhātdharā Phukan, the third brother of Lāluk, fled to *Faujdār* Mansur-Khān's place at Gauhati when the Garhgāon officers proceeded to seize him at Kaliābar.

careful after the assassination of the Burāh Phukan, but he was captured, kept under detention as a dangerous element and later his nose and ears were chopped off and his eyes put out.

It is said that Lāluk Burāh Phukan, hoping to become king with Muslim support, 'pursued the ruthless policy of massacring all able-bodied princes', principally for his own security when he would become king. His main target of attack was Gadāpāṇi of the Tungkhungiā royal faimily. Chronicles give no names of the other princes, murdered or mutilated. It is doubtful whether it was a general hunt for massacring princes or simply an attempt to capture the most powerful rival, Gadāpāṇi only, who was feared. The latter appears to be the truth. Gadāpāṇi was the son of Gobar and as such, had a good claim to the throne and he was also a prince of extra-ordinary physical vigour, ability and courage. Spies were employed after him for his capture, but he left his home at Tungkhāng down the Charāideo Hill and roamed about *incognito*.[301] In the meantime, while yet the Muslim promise to make him kīng was to be fulfilled, the Burāh Phukan was put to death by his enemies. Gadāpāṇi removed his two sons, Lāi and Leshāi, to a Nagā village in the hills for protection and he himself spent a period of time among the Nagās from whom he got good reception. Behind his back his wife, Jayāmatī, is said to have been captured and tortured to death under the orders of Larā Rajā.[302] As it was meaningless to waste his days in the hills he came down to contact his friends for enlisting support. On the advice of Garhganyā Handikoi-Phukan and Pelan Bar-Baruā's son, the Sāringiā Phukan, he went to the *Satra* of Dakshiṇpaṭiā Chota Vanamālī Bāpu at Kalābarī and requested the Gosāin to acquaint Bandar

301. The version in Harakānta's Buranji (p.56) that during his wanderings *incognito* he lived for some days at Chāndkuchi in Kāmrūp and then lived at Rāṇī on the south bank is unlikely. Kāmrūp with Gauhati was then in Muslim occupation and the Muslims were the friends of Lāluksolā Bar-Phukan and enemies of Gadādhar and his supporters. It was Gadādhar who liberated Kāmrūp from the Muslims. This part of the story is not there in Kāshināth's Buranji, which Harakānta rewrote with a few additions here and there, nor is it there in any other Buranji.

302. Jaymati is said to be the daughter of Lāithāpanā Bar-Gohāin. Her Ahom name is not to be found in any extant Buranji. Her story is variously told and only casually referred to in two or three Assamese Buranjis, such as Harakānta's Buranji (p.54) and *Tungkhungia Buranji* (p.14) and probably in one Ms. There is no reference to her in the published Tai-Ahom texts. More remarkable is that nothing is said about her in Kāshināth's Buranji.

Bar-Phukan, the Gosāin's disciple, with his plan and policy and get him to his side, but the Gosāin refused to comply with Gadāpāṇi's request in the interest of his disciple Larā Rajā and even did not allow him to stay inside the *Satra* and treated him as an ordinary man. He received a similar treatment from Keshavdev Bāpu of Āunīāṭi *Satra* where a resident disciple, chewing betel-nut, spat towards him (Gadādhar) which spoiled his garment. But the Prince was amazed to see the vast wealth and splendour of the great *Satras* and of the resident *bhakats* (disciples) and their gradation of functionaries and workers. The Gosāins had everything of a king including the royal ornaments except only the *Kekurā-dolā* (royal palanquin) and elephants. He witnessed this in the Dakshiṇpāṭ, Āunīāṭī and other *Satras*.

Getting no support and sympathy from the *Gosāins* he again contacted the Garhganyā Handikoi-Phukan and the Sāringiā Phukan at Kaliābar and related to them all about his experiences in the *Satras*. The two Phukans then took up the cause of the fugitive Prince and met the Bar-Phukan to plead for him. They succeeded in winning his support for Gadāpāṇi. At this time, apprehending the return of Bhātdharā with a force to attack Assam, most of the nobles and officers came down from Garhgāon to Kaliābar to fight the Bangāls at Gauhāti. When they all assembled at Kaliābar a feeling of dissatisfaction with the weak king, Larā Rajā, was visible among all. 'How can an incapable king', said they, 'protect the kingdom ? He can protect the kingdom only if he is capable'.[303] They held a council and seriously discussed this vital issue and all agreed to support Prince Gadāpāṇi in the greater interest of the country.

29. Hsö-Pāt-Hpā alias Gadādhar Singha (1681-1696) :

All the nobles and officers that assembled at Kaliābar formally performed the installation ceremony of making Gadapāṇi their king in August 1681 on a Thursday. Thus they revolted against Larā Rajā whom they wanted to remove from the throne for his incapacity to govern the country well and efficiently. They then sailed up the Brahmaputra to Garhgaon with their Tungkhungiā king under the leadership of Bandar Bar-Phukan. When this news reached Chota Vanamālī

303. *TB*, pp.14-15; *PAB*, p.156.

Gosāin he became worried. He came down and met the Bar-Phukan and requested him not to proceed for making Gadādhar king.[304] 'You are my chief disciple', said the Gosāin, 'and you know, Larā Rajā is also my disciple; as such I am myself virtually reigning as the king, hence you do not do such a thing; I beg of you the rule of the kingdom'.[305] The Bar-Phukan could not oblige the Gosain as it was not a single man's affair, nor was it in the true interest of the country. The Gosāin was extremely displeased and the talks ended by mutual cursing.[306] The Bar-Phukan's party then advanced and reached Garhgāon in one week's time. Larā Rajā was removed from the throne and banished to Nāmrūp where he was put to death. Gadāpāṇi ascended the throne by building a *Śingari-Ghar* at Barkolā[307] and assumed the name of Chao Hsö-Pāt-Hpā and the Hindu name Gadādhar Singha. He made his capital at Barkolā which is close to Garhgāon.

Final Recovery of Gauhati :

His immediate act was to equip an army and send it to recover Gauhati under the commands of Dilihiyāl Lāngi Burā-Gohāin, Salāl Gohāin, Dihingiā Ālun Bar-Baruā and a few others. By the first assault Bānhbārī was captured and with great expedition Kājalī on the south bank was occupied. The Muslims retreated, but their fleet with big boats became prepared to meet the Ahom navy at the mouth of the Bar Nadī. The Ahoms came down upon the Muslim fleet, attacked it furiously and won a great naval victory. The Muslims fled away in small boats leaving behind their fleet and war materials. Dihingiā Ālun Bar-Barua took Itkāhuli by defeating Mansur Khān at Śukreswar in A.D. 1683. The *Faujdār* then fled away leaving Gauhati at the mercy of the Ahoms, who pursued the Mughuls down to the Mānāhā. The whole of Kāmrup was thus recovered finally. Never in any previous war so large an amount of booty was captured as in this one and the booty consisted of brass cannon, iron guns, money, horses, camels, bullocks, buffaloes and other articles. All these were sent to the

304. *Ibid*, p.15.
305. K.T.P. : pp.44-45. In this context the event of Jaymatī's death, said to be under prolonged tortures, unprecedented in the history of the Ahoms, will be a subject, about which further research is likely to bring to light startling facts.
306. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.45.
307. *Ibid* p.46; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.166.

king who distributed them among his officers.[308] Bhātdharā Phukan, who had earlier gone over to the side of the Muslims and incited them to invade Assam, did not get much response. He later came back to his country in disappointment. He was captured with his son and both were put to death.

This was the last war with the Muslims, who never again ventured to invade Assam and the Mānāhā was accepted by both sides as the boundary.

Gait refers to three cannon in existence of which one is in the Indian Museum, one at Dikom and the third outside the house of the Deputy Commissioner of Lakhimpur, which bear the following inscription : 'King Gadādhar Singha, having vanquished the Musalmans at Gauhati, obtained this weapon in 1604 śak (1682 A.D.)'.[309]

Controlling Revolts and Conspiracies :

The kingdom was not free from intrigues and conspiracies because of the influences of rival parties. It was unfortunate that Bandar Bar-Phukan, the main pillar of strength and support to king Gadādhar, and the Pānī-Phukan became rebellious against the king. They were brought to Garhgāon on a charge of grave offence and made to stand trial by the three Great Gohāins of the Court in the fore-chamber of the *Holong* (Great Council Hall). They were found guilty, but the three Great Gohāins and other high officers prayed for their mercy for the first time which the king granted. But the king dismissed them from their posts and appointed Handikoi Neog as Bar-Phukan and Bhebā as Phukan in their places. There were fresh conspiracies against the king by four Phukans, namely, Chengrāi Phukan, Khāmrak Phukan, Khāmsin Phukan and Pānī-Phukan. After necessary enquiries the main ring-leaders, Chengrāi and Khāmrak, were executed and the other two were excused. He dismissed the Pānī-Phukan and appointed Tungkhangiā Dolā-kākhariā Baruā as Pānī-Phukan. Once again the dismissed Pānī-Phukan revolted and this time he was executed at Rajāhāt.[310] Another

308. *TB*, p.17 ; K.T.P. : p.46; *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.146-148 for details about the disposition of the Ahom forces at Gauhati.
309. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.167.
310. *TB*. pp.19, 22.

officer to revolt against the king was Sāringiā Phukan, but the Phukan had ultimately to seek the protection of Handikoi Bar-Phukan for safety. The Bar-Phukan said, 'The king only reforms (the offender) after trial. Don't fear, no danger'. In the trial evidences were such that the Sāringiā Phukan was granted the benefit of doubt, particularly when the Bar-Phukan spoke for him.[311] The king appointed Kunwoiganyā Mau Gohāin as Burā-Gohāin by removing Lāngi Burā-Gohāin, called also Dighalā Burā-Gohāin, who was executed for the offence of giving shelter to the prince of Diroi. After Mau Gohāin, Khāmpeng of Lankakiā family was made Burā-Gohāin. Āchuk became Barpātra-Gohāin and Lāithapanā of Māduri Bar-Gohāin with the office of Rājmantrī. Temā of Lāhan family was appointed Bar-Baruā.[312] He also made a number of other changes among his officers.

Controlling Troublesome Neighbours :

King Gadādhar subdued the Miris of Sadiyā who raided the house of Rūp Handikoi and set fire to it causing death to his children and also killed two hundred subjects of the king. He also brought to submission the Lathā Nagās of Nāmchāng who had raided the king's territory killing a number of men by sending an expedition against them. The ring-leader, Lathā Khunbao, was captured and punished with death on the bank of the Jamunā stream. This Nagā trouble was followed by another in the direction of the Dayāng river area. A force was sent against the Dayāng Nagās under the command of Tanseng Phukan. The Nagās were defeated and they submitted to the king by offering two Nagā princesses. The Phukan delivered the princesses to the king, who then forgave the Nagās and made presents to them.[313]

Religious Policy :

King Gadādhar himself was free from any religious bigotry, but he saw the danger to the State from the great concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the priesthood. The great Gosāins and Mahantas gathered round them all the luxuries and paraphernalia of the king and the ministers and were able to control to a great extent

311. *AB*—'*SMJC*', pp.148-151.
312. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.45.
313. TB, pp.23, 25-26.

the temporal affairs of the State. He lost faith in a religious system which could permit the heads of the *Satras* (Vaishnav monasteries) and the celibate disciples, resident in them, to indulge in such earthly luxuries. The king himself was the witness to all these during his days of adversity. He also remembered that while as a fugitive he was at Dakshiṇpāt, in an altercation the Dekā Gosāin of the *Satra* had insulted him with abusive language. The Gosāin also opposed his candidature to the throne and he sailed down from his *Satra* by the Lohit to ask the Phukans to remove him from kingship. At Viśvanāth the king, sighting the Dekā Gosāin's boat, sent his men to request him to come and bless, but the latter refused to come.[314] With all these bitter reminiscences Gadādhar was determined to do something with this class of religious preceptors.

The Bhāndārī Baruā Bezdaloi Rangācharaṇ, complained to the king, 'Why should gold and silver be necessary in the houses of *bhakats* (devotees) ? What they want is the *kathā*[315] of rice only and that, too, is offered by the *sebaits* and initiated. If the Svargadev orders, I can bring their wealth in gold and silver'.[316] The king felt it to be a just view and permitted the Bhāndārī Baruā to confiscate all such wealth with the help of *Chāudāngs*.[317] He seized the gold idol of Dakshiṇpāt, which Gadādhar had seen during his stay as a fugitive at that place, and also put out the eyes of Rām Gosāin of the *Satra* as a punishment for his previous offence.[318] The idol was melted down and made into a dome and fitted on the head of the temple on the hill (Charaideo). The Auniāṭī Gosāin was banished to Sadiyā after confiscating his properties and the idol of *Govinda Thākur* was also ordered to be thrown away into the waters of the Lohit. It is said that the real *Thākur* was concealed, only an imitation *Thākur* was so thrown into the Lohit at Chānginighāt.[319] Fearing that the Hindus would spoil the country by propagating their various cults, Gadādhar removed the Mahantas from the central parts of the country and settled them at out-of-the-way localities such as Nāmrūp, Tokolāi, Cheuni and Bachā.[320] The

314. *TB*, p.26.
315. the daily ration of ten *muthis* or about half a seer.
316. *TB*, p.28.
317. policemen of these days.
318. reference is to the insult to Prince Gadādhar by the Dekā Gosāin
319. *TB*, p.27.
320. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.46.

Medhis were fined and transferred to Cheuni. As ordered by the king the Bhāndārī then set fire to the deserted *Satras*.[321] Gadādhar's policy in this had political reasons behind and not guided by any sectarian motive.

Among his public works were the construction of a stone bridge at Dijoi Khanā, excavation of the Rahdoi tank, the raising of the Dol Āli with a stone bridge over it, the Akār Āli, Dhodar Āli, and the Ālis raised by Dihingiā Bar-Baruā and Halau Phukan. He also constructed the Kharā-dol and the Kharā-garh and the Gotā-dol with a tank at Charāideo. At Gauhati he made the temple of Umānanda-Devālay.[322] It is to be noted that he introduced the system of detailed survey and measurement of land. For surveying work of the country surveyers were imported from Koch Behār and Bengal. It was commenced in Śibsāgar and extended to other parts of the country, but could not be completed before his death. Gait says that the method of survey was probably the same as that which was in vogue when Assam was first occupied by the British, that is, 'the area of each field was calculated by measuring the four sides with a *nal* or bamboo pole, 12 feet long, and, multiplying the mean length by the mean breadth'. The unit of the area was the *purā*, which contained four standard Bengali *bighās*.[323] Gadādhar died on Tuesday of 14 *Fālgun* (last week of February) of *śak* 1617 (A.D. 1696)[324] after a reign of about fourteen years and a half.

An Estimate of Gadādhar :

Gadādhar Singha, called also Burāh Rajā as he ascended the throne at an advanced age, was the greatest king of the later Ahom period and was undoubtedly the greatest among the rulers of the Tungkhungiā Dynasty. The *Tungkhungia Buranji* (p.5) seems to indicate that he was the third king of his dynasty, one with a short-lived career preceding Gobar. King Gadadhar's immediate successors flourished only on the stability to which he restored the kingdom from a precarious

321. *TB*, p.27
322. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.46-47; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.60
323. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.46 ; Gait :*op.cit.*, pp.170-171
324. *TB*, p.27; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.47
323. K.T.P. : *op.citt.*, p.46; Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.170-171
324. *TB*, p.27; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.47

state of chaos and internal divisions by driving off the external foe for good from the territory of Kāmrūp and by suppressing the internal trouble-makers and evil influences with wonderful tact, vigour and foresight. He was a god-send at a moment when the country was fast going to rack and ruin under feeble monarchs set up by ambitious nobles.

He was hundred per cent Ahom inheriting the blood and vigour of his great ancestors. He possessed a towering personality before which all others looked like pigmies. His unique personality left a mark in history around which legends, good and bad, were woven by different sections of the later generations. As an administrator he was always just and fair, never punishing an offender at his whims in a fit of anger. He would either punish or pardon only after a regular trial of which the Chronicles have given a number of historic instances.

Being surrounded by hardy and autonomous races of people and threatened constantly by the mighty Mughuls at the western gate of the kingdom, Gadādhar was opposed to all such influences, religious and social, as were likely to undermine the health, strength and unity of the nation. He believed that the sectarian influence of Hinduism which fundamentally changed for the worse the food and social habits of the proselytes, would lead to physical and consquent mental deterioration of the nation and therefore disfavoured them. He followed the traditional Ahom religion and way of life and of the Hindu religion he preferred Śāktaism to Vaiṣṇavism as more liberal and closer in several respects to the religion of the Ahoms. He abolished the Neo-Vaiṣṇava *Satras* but built the temple of Umānanda,[325] a centre of Tāntric worship. Just before his death king Gadādhar called his two sons to his side, nominated the elder one to succeed him and asked the younger to obey the elder. In the interest of the kingdom he advised his elder son not to indulge in dance, music and *Bahari Sen* sport and be attached too much to religion at the cost of kingly duties. He also warned him against relying mainly on the priestly class in matters of administration.[326] He probably realized the fatal mistake of Udayāditya in this respect which drove the country to the throes of a revolution, Gadādhar's political wisdom proved itself in later history.

325. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.60; *Buranji-viveka-ratna* (*MS, DHAS*) compiled by Manirām Dewan (A.D. 1838), Part II, p.142-3-B; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.170
326. *BVR, MS.*, p.142-B

30. **Hsö-Khrung-Hpā *alias* Rudra Singha (1696-1714) :**

On the death of Gadādhar Singha his elder son Lāi Gohāin ascended the throne on the 14th *Fālgun*, A.D. 1696 and assumed the Ahom name Chao Hsö-Khrung-Hpā and the Hindu name Rudra Singha. One of his first acts was to bring back the Gosāins and Thākuriā Mahantas from Nāmrūp, Cheuni and other places and settle them respectively in the original localities. His first Burā-Gohāin was Lankakiā Khāmpeng already appointed by Gadādhar. He was later succeeded by Kunwoiganyā Lāisheng and Dilihiyāl Aphuā Khāmpat as Burā-Gohāins. Kenduguriā Sengkong was appointed Barpātra-Gohāin and Rājmantrī and on the death of Lāithapanā his son Kamalākānta became Bar-Gohāin. During his reign there were as many as four Bar-Baruās successively, namely, Burāh of Dihingiā family, Kotā of Pātar family, Dekā of Dihingiā family and Barāgī of Handikoi family. Handikoi Bar-Phukan continued to hold his office for a long time and was succeeded by Elder Duarā and Pātar one after the other.[327]

Shairing still continued to be a hot-bed of conspiracies. In 1697 in the month of *Bhādra* (August-September) the Shairing Rajā Long-Tyaoek in collusion with the Sungi Baruā made a plot against the king, but they were arrested and the Sungi Baruā was executed at Nāmrūp. One Mechāghariā Dāmodar Phukan made a false report to the king that his (king's) brother Leshāi Sarujanā Gohāin was conspiring to overthrow him and seize the throne and in this his associates were Handikoi Bhitaruāl Phukan, Lānmākharu Bandar Naoboichā Phukan, Bailung Dekā Phukan and a few others. Without proper investigation the king arrested Leshāi, put out one of his eyes and confined him in a jungle and ordered the execution of his associates except the three Phukans. Later when the king learnt that the allegation against his brother, Leshāi, was false he became aggrieved for his action. He, however, made amends for his wrong by making him Nāmrupiyā Rajā with full dignity and paraphernalia of royalty. In his death bed injunction to his sons the king confessed that by 'listening to the suggestions of enemies, I drove away the younger (brother). I now perceive my error'.[328]

327. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.47-48.
328. *TB.*, pp.282-9; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, pp.63-64; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.136.

Kāchār and Jayantā Expeditions :

The most important event of Rudra Singha's reign was the war with the Kachārīs. The Kachārī Rajā Viradarpanārāyaṇ was succeeded by his son Gaḍuradhvaj. He was a contemporary of Gadādhar Singha. The two kings could not establish friendship between them. Makaradhvajnārāyaṇ and Udayādityanārāyaṇ, who became Rajās successively after Gaduraḍhvaj, also failed to make friendship with the Ahoms. Tāmradhvajnārāyaṇ, who succeeded Udayādityanārāyaṇ and who was a contemporary of the Ahom king, Rudra Singha, initiated, through diplomatic channels, a new move for restoring good relations of old with Assam, but the manner of approach appeared objectionable to the Ahom authorities.[329] The road for Kachārī *Kaṭakīs* was through Rahā, where they were to contact the Ahom officer-in-charge of the Rahā *chaukī* and the latter was to inform the Bar-Phukan at Gauhāti about the matter, who, in his turn, forwarded it to the king for his orders.

As there was no more a Muslim invasion and Tāmradhvaj[330] demanded territories upto Mahang, Rudra Singha wanted to invade the Kachārī country ,from which raiding parties created troubles from time to time in the frontier territory. He assembled the Lower Assam and Upper Assam forces at Viśvanāth and in December, 1706 sent one division by the Dhanśiri route under the command of Paṇḍihingiā Dekābarua (Dekā Bar-Baruā) and another division by the Kapili route with Phulbaruā's grandson Pāṇi-Phukan to invade Kachārī territory.[331] The Ahom armies were reinforced, among others, by Miri soldiers who proved their mettle by overpowering the Nagās who took the side of the Kachārīs.[332] The Kachārīs were driven off from Lenguriā and the Bar-Baruā occupied Māibang. The king ordered the Ahom generals to advance to Khāspur and occupy it. There was some delay on their part in being prepared to march upon Khāspur for two reasons—one was the difficulty of the route and the other was that most of the army and a number of officers including the Bar-Baruā himself fell ill in the unhealthy hilly areas which were full of jungles. There was, in

329. *KB*, pp.59-60
330. His name is given as Jay Singha in *TB*, p.31
331. *KB*, pp.70-71; *TB*, p.32
332. *KB*, p.94

addition, a difficulty in the supply of provisions. But the king wanted them to proceed at once and occupy Khāspur. The Phukans made their march and encamped at Sāmpāni where a fort was made. From that post an envoy named Nilāmbar was sent by the Chāudāng Baruā to the Kachārī king demanding his submission. At this time the Bar-Baruā died at the Gelemu fort and the Chaudāng Baruā also received no reply for eight days. Hearing the plight of the Ahom armies and their Generals the king ordered them to return. In 1768 in the month of *Āshin* (September-October) king Rudra Singha learnt from the Kachārīs visiting Garhgāon to pay homage to him that the Jayantā Rajā, Rām Singha, instigated the Kachārī Rajā to unite with him to attack Garhgāon. But soon a difference arose and taking advantage of the helplessness of Tāmradhvaj the Jayantā Rajā invaded Khāspur and captured the king and his son and removed them to his capital. He boasted of his power before an Āhom king's Boirāgī who was staying at Jayantāpur on way back from Sylhet. Tāmradhvaj, a captive at Jayantāpur, made his submission to the Ahom king before the Boirāgī in a confidential talk between them and prayed for Ahom help. The king then sent an expedition against Jayantā in 1709, he himself advancing to a camp at Misā in Nowgong. One division of the army consisting of the Garhganyas proceeded by the Kapili river with Barāgī Bar-Baruā in command and a second division, manned by the Sarāighaṭiyās and commanded by the Bar-Phukan, marched up by the Gobhā road. Jayantā Rajā Rām Singha prepared to fight but his officers refused to face the powerful Ahom army. Rām Singha surrendered. The army returned triumphantly with the Kachārī and the Jayantā Rajās as captives. The two hill Rajās were brought to Rangpur where they paid their homage to the Śvarga Mahārājā Rudra Singha. Rajā Rām Singha died at Rangpur where he was duly cremated. Two years after that King Rudra Singha placed Rām Singha's eldest son on the Jayantā throne as his vassal. The Kachārī Rajā was given presents and allowed to return to his country.[333]

King Rudra Singha's last great enterprise was a preparation for the conquest of Bengal. His object was to bring within his kingdom all the territories ever conquered by his great predecessors, such as

333. See *KB*, pp. 59-113 and *TB*, pp. 63-121 for details. Also *TB*, pp.31-34 H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.63

Hsö-Hôm-Möng and Jayadhvaj Singha. According to the *Tripurā Buranjī* (pp. 1-19, 91-99) and also Wade's *Account* (p.131) King Rudra Singha, after subjugating Jayantā and Kāchār but before starting for invading Bengal, sent envoys with letters from him in the name of the Bar-Phukan to the Rajās and Zamindārs of Tripurā, Koch Behār, Pāngā, Rangpur, Nadiā, Burdwan, Maurang and Barnagar of Bengal intimating them his claim upon the territories as far west as the Karatoyā river as they were in the past a part of the Ahom dominions. He also appealed to their religious sense as Hindu rulers, whose religion had been spoiled by the Muslims, to unite in a common effort to conquer the Muslims for the protection of the religion. The letters addressed to them contained, among others, these words: Do not prove inimical to us. If we remain friendly everything will succeed. Be yours the Countries, the Government and the Revenue; mine the name. Act in a manner to preserve peace. Fear not our approach; send friendly answers respecting your welfare without delay.' The envoys returned with satisfactory answers. King Rudra Singha for the first time established friendship with Suvaṁsarāi of Dāccā through Tarkavāgish Bhattāchārya and Ratnakandali and with Rajā Ratnamāṇikya of Tripurā through Ānandirām Medhi. Since then embassies continued to be exchanged between Tripurā under the reigns of Ratnamāṇikya, Mahendramāṇikya and Dharmamāiṇkya and Āsām.

The Ahom king then finalized the plan of invasion in consultation with his ministers—Kamalākānta Bar-Gohāin, Kunwoiganyā Phukan Burā-Gohāin and Kenduguriā Dekā Barpātra-Gohāin. They said that due to the neglect and inaction of the Ahoms these territories had passed into the possession of the enemies. The Phukans and Baruās of the king offered their services for the conquest of Bengal right down to Dāccā. The forces were trained up and equipped for the purpose. The Kachārī and Jayantā Rajās joined his army with their contingents of 14,0000 and 10,000 men respectively and, in addition, 600 Daflās, who acknowledged his authority, came down from the hills north of the Darrang district.[334] In due course Rudra Singha proceeded in person to Gauhati where he made his camp and got ready a very large army and a powerful fleet. But, as he was preparing to march, he fell ill and died after eight days on a Sunday in the last week of August, 1714

334. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.180-181; Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.132-133

leaving behind five sons—Śiva Singha, Pramatta Singha, Mohanmālā Gohāin, Rajesvar Singha and Lakshmī Singha in order as known in history. *Chāngrung Buranji's* date (*śak* 1663) about it seems to be based on a wrong calculation.

His Works :

He excavated at Rangpur, just across the Dikhau river on the west of the present town of Śibsāgar, the greatest tank in Assam, called Jaysāgar,[335] in A.D. 1697 in the month of *Agrahāyaṇa* (November-December). It took forty-five days to complete the work of excavation. The tank was formally consecrated in the month of *Fālgun* in the same year. In the next *Fālgun* (A.D. 1698) the construction of three *dols*[336] was commenced. Near the north bank of the tank the king's residence was built. In the month of January, 1701, the three *dols*, with the images of Vishṇu, Keshavrāi, Śiva, Durgā, Ganesha, Sūryya and others placed in them, were dedicated. Thereafter the king made the city his capital and named it Rangpur.[337] The city buildings were made of bricks under the supervision of an artizan, named Ghaṇashyām, imported from Koch Behār. The same artizan also constructed some of the brick temples and houses at Charāideo. When the works were completed the artizan was richly rewarded and permitted to go. But on the point of departing a document, containing a full account of the country and its inhabitants, was accidentally found in his possession. It was apparently meant to betray the Ahoms to the Mughuls. It being a treasonable offence, Ghaṇashyām was arrested and executed.[338]

335. 'The tank comprises an area of 318 acres of land including its four banks out of which an area of 155 acres was under water. The length of the tank from east to west (both sides) is 588 'Beau', equivalent to 1 mile 2 furlongs 152 yards, and from north to south (both sides) 536 'beau' equivalent to 1 mile 1 furlong 164 yards. Thus the perimetre of the tank is 2 miles 4 furlongs and 96 yards. An earthen pipe line runs from this tank to the Rangpur Palace which is about one mile from it, for supplying water to the Royal Palace'.— Extract supplied by Shri B.C. Handique who translated it from an old Buranji.

336. *dol* is a brick or stone temple, dome-shaped, round and tapering upwards and resembling more or less those of the *śikhara* type in outline.

337. *TB*, p.29; Wade : *op.cit.*, p.122

338. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.171-172

Capital at Rangpur (A.D. 1707) :

On the 18th day of *Ashvin* (October), A.D. 1707, King Rudra Singha formally entered his new capital at Rangpur, which was just a fortress of bricks and masonry, and occupied his palace.[339]

Parvatiyā Gosāin from Bengal :

Svargadev Rudra Singha became a disciple of Haridev Adhikārī of the Āuniāṭī *Satra* and gave him all manner of material help to rebuild the *Satra*. Contrary to his father's injunction he became more and more attached to religion and, not satisfied with Haridev, brought in a famous Gosāin of the *Śākta* line named Krishṇarām or Krishṇānanda Nyāya-vāgish Tengrāmārā Bhattāchāryya from Simlāgrām in Śāntipur of Nadiā district in Bengal. The Gosāin, at his wish, was provided with a residence at Kāmākhyā on the Nilāchal Hill, from which he was called Parvatiyā Gosāin. The king asked for *mantra* or mystic formula of religion from the Gosāin, but the latter sent it in writing in the hand of a Brahmin. He did not present it directly as, from orthodox view-point of the Hindus, the king was thought to be of low origin by reason of his race. The king understood it and refused to accept the *mantra* from the hand of the Brahmin, but the Gosāin was allowed to live on the hill.[340] He, however, permitted his son, Śiva Singha, to accept the Gosāin as his *Guru*. Rudra Singha's excessive leaning towards Hinduism and foreign ways to the neglect of his ancestral religion and culture evoked curses on him from the Ahom Deodhāi and Bāilung Pandits. This monarch for the first time allowed the fashions of Bengal in food, dress, religion and culture to be imported into his Court and Kingdom in a marked degree.

His Works :

The religious question whether a Śudra could initiate a Brahmin was settled at a Mahājan[341] conference at Garhgāon. The decision after consultation of *śāstras* was that nowhere it was found in the *śāstras* that a Śudra was authorized to initiate a Brahmin and the king accordingly enforced it.

339. Wade : *op.cit.*, p.122.

340. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.67. According to Śrī Śrī Pradyut Kumār Goswami, a direct descendant of Krishṇarām in the seventh generation King Rudra Singha became a disciple of Krishṇarām by accepting *dikṣā* from him and Śiva Singha was initiated to Śākta religion by Krishṇarām's son Rāmānanda.

341. religious preceptor, a *Satrādhikār*.

There was, in A.D. 1677, a severe earthquake which continued to produce shocks for six months from *Fālgun* to *Śrāvaṇ* causing mountains to fall to pieces and throwing up sand and fish to the surface.

In addition to the Jaysāgar tank and its *dols* he also constructed the Rangnāth-doi and Fākuā-doi and also the Rangpur city in Meṭekā. Further he constructed a stone bridge at Nāmdāng and two such bridges at Dimau and raised the Kharikaṭiyā-Āli, Dubariaṇī-Āli and Meṭekā-Āli.[342] He imported many artificers from Bengal, established numerous schools for Brahmins and sent Brahmin boys for studying in the centres of Sanskrit learning in Bengal. Gadādhar's unfinished land survey works were resumed and the districts of Śibsāgar and Nowgong (Na-gāon) were surveyed. The territory of the kingdom from the eastern extremity to Khāgarījān in the present Nowgong district was under the administration of the Bar-Baruā and from Khāgarījān westwards including the original areas called Nogāon, Kharangi and also obviously Rahā the whole territory up to the Mānāhā formed the jurisdiction of the Bar-Phukan (*Deodhai Buranji*, p.130). All hill tribes submitted to the Ahom authority. Trade with Tibet was promoted.[343]

31. **Hsö-Tān-Hpā *alias* Śiva Singha (1714-1744) :**

On the death of Rudra Singha his eldest son, Barjanā Gohāin, who was at Gauhati with his father, sailed up with the dead body of the deceased king and ascended the throne at Rangpur. The dead body was embalmed at Chunpurā for a fortnight and, according to *Chāngrung Phukanar Buranji*, entombed in the month of *Kārtik* and not cremated as some accounts say. In the month of *Fālgun* (February-March) the Barjanā Gohāin ascended the *Śingari-Ghar* and assumed the Ahom name Hsö-Tān-Hpā and the Hindu name Śiva Singha.[344]

His Burā-Gohāins were successively Bāilungiā Bāyan, Domāi Gohāin and Sengmun of Pukhuriparīā family. Kamalākānta continued to be the Bar-Gohāin who was also made the Rājmantrī after Paramānanda Bar-Gohāin, who had succeeded his father Kenduguriā Sengkan as Rājmantrī with the office of Barpātra-Gohāin. On his death

342. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.48.

343. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.181-182.

344. *TB*, p.37; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.49.

Harināth of Kālugaon, younger brother of queen Phuleswarī, was appointed Bar-Gohāin and Rājmantrī when she became 'Bar-Rajā'. He was later made Barpātra Gohāin with the office of Rājmantrī which was until then held by Kamalākānta, as Thānunāth of Dihingīā *phoid* (clan or family) was appointed Bar-Gohāin. The office of Bar-Baruā was held first by Burā Dadāi, probably Barāgī of Handikoi family, and then by Rupchandra of Bakathā. Bijoy Tarun Duarā, Deberā of Dihingīā family and Bijoy's son Dekā Duarā became successively Bar-Phukan.[345]

His Queens : Growing Influence of Śākta Priests :

The private life of the king was not quite chaste. He admitted into his chamber his nurse who was the daughter of one Lākhṭakiā Koch. Next he married a dancing girl named Phulmatī, a member of a Koch family of *nat* or professional dancers of Sinātali and made her his chief queen. Thereafter she was named Phuleśwarī who also assumed the name Pramatheśwarī, a name of Durgā. This Śiva-Durgā concept of the king and his consort arose from the growing *Śākta* influence under the spiritual leadership of the Parvatīyā Gosāin, of whom both the king and the queen Phuleśwari, had become devoted disciples. This Bengali Gosāin was the first to introduce in Assam the Neo-Smārta doctrine which created a friction with the Assamese Pundits. By his too much attachment to religion the king soon fell under the influence of the priests and astrologers who surrounded him and developed superstitious beliefs and became a fatalist. These spiritual guides and soothsayers predicted an end of his rule in the near future owing to the evil influence of what was called a *Chatra-bhanga-yoga*.[346] He believed it and on the advice of the Parvatīyā Gosāin transferred the royal umbrella and the throne to his wife Phuleśwarī who was given the title of 'Bar-Rajā' and was called also Rajā.[347] She, as Bar-Rajā, meddled too much in matters of religion and customs which had eventually disastrous consequences

345. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.50.

346. *TB*, p.37; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.49, 51. *Chatra*, royal umbrella, *bhanga*, fall, *yoga*, junction (of planets).

347. It is said that on the advice of his Priests he performed *laksha homas* and offered *laksha valis* at Kāmākhyā to ward off the evils of *chatra-bhanga-yoga*. He also fed numerous Brahmins and gave them precious presents. All these cost so much that the royal treasury was nearly exhausted.- vide *BVR*, II.

to the State. She compelled the Thākurīā Mahantas[348] to bow down before the Gosāins of the Brahminical *Satras* of Āunīātī and Garamūr and adopt *Śālagrāms* with the Bhāgavat, Bhāgavatīs and Deories for their worship.[349] She caused the original images of gods and goddesses in the temples, including that of Phulbārī, to be thrown away into the the waters of the Lohit and substituted for them newly made stone and brass images. She became so bigoted in her particular religious creed that, according to one Burañjī,[350] she took great interest in converting the people to her line and even summoned the Śudra Mahantas and Medhis of the Vaiṣṇava sect including the leading and respected Mahanta of Moāmarā, who did not follow the Śākta cult of Durgā worship with animal sacrifices, to the festival of the Goddess and made them under compulsion to bow down to the image, take on the forehead sacred paint-marks of vermilion, red sandal-wood and blood of sacrificed animals and also accept *nirmāli* and *prasād*. More than others, the Moāmarā Mahanta felt it to be an insult comparable to death and decided, in consultation with his disciples who were many, to seize the political power from the hands of such a ruler as, otherwise, religious freedom was at an end. The subsequent history of the Ahom rule was essentially a history of Moāmariā revolts and their genesis is to be traced to the split caused in the society by the prevailing 'rival cults of Hinduism'.[351] Gadādhar's successors, by their blind adherence to sectarian religion contrary to his advice, soon fell victims to the influence of the priesthood. This paved the way to the rise of Phuleśwarī, who, by being a votāry of a particular sectarian form of religion, lost all sense of good administration and started unduly and unnecessarily interfering with the religious and social practices of others. As rightly said by Gait she was 'more under the influence of the Brāhmans than her husband'. She even suppressed the age-old Ahom custom of burying their dead and compelled them to take to cremation as among the Hindus. There was no freedom of conscience under her regime. The

348. Followers of Śankar Dev's grandson, Puruṣottam Ṭhākur. They are a sect of Vaiṣṇavas in Assam differing slightly from the ordinary Mahāpuruṣīyā in their tenets.

349. *TB*, p.38; for Āunīāṭī and Garamūr *Satras* see *DHAS, Transcript* vol. V, Part IV, Tr. 94, pp.309, 315.

350. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.71.

351. P. Gogoi : *Future Status of Assam* (Jorhat, 1945), p.6. Maṭak and Marāṇ (a Maṭak clan) both called *Tai-klong* in Tai were the pre-Ahom Tai settlers in the North-eastern extremity of Assam.

inevitable reaction to her maladministration was a series of revolts and civil war in the country that did not take long to bring about the collapse of the ruling dynasty.

Bar-Rajā Phuleśwarī died after prolonged suffering from illness. She excavated a rectangular tank called Gaurīsāgar[352] near Nāmdāng in Śibasāgar with three temples (*dols*) built on its bank and dedicated to Śiva, Vishṇu and Devī, of which the Śiva temple is the biggest in size. Its excavation commenced on the 5th *Fālgun*, *śak* 1645 (A.D. 1723) and was completed after nearly five months. Her younger brother Harināth, who became a minister—first Bar-Gohāin and then Barpātra, made his residence and gārden at Kālugāon. This family is called Kāluganyā Barpātra family. Harināth Barpātra with the king's permission excavated a tank at Kālugāon and built a temple (*dol*) on its side.[353] The temple is known as *Barpātra-dol.*

Phuleśwarī's younger sister, Draupadī, was given in marriage to Salāl Bar-Gohāin of the Miri Handikoi family, by whom she had two male children. After Phuleswari's death Siva Singha forcibly brought her away and made her his Parvatiā Kuanrī giving her the name Ambikā, which is again another name of Durgā. She had a son by the king who was made Tipām Rajā. Of the two sons by her former husband one was made Sadiyākhowā Gohāin. Following her sister's example Ambikā Devī excavated the second biggest and most famous tank in Assam, called Śiva-sāgar,[354] near a village inhabited by the Kalanchuparīā Gohāins, in *śak* 1655 (A.D. 1733). The excavation was begun on the 18th *Jaistha* (May-June) in that year and completed for dedication on the 6th *Baishākh* next year. Three big temples (*dols*), were constructed side by side on its bank in the same year and dedicated to Muktināth Śiva, Viṣṇu and the Devī. The Śiva temple, with its large gold-covered dome, is the biggest and tallest of the temples in Assam.

352. The tank is close to the Assam Trunk Road on its south. For details see *Chāng-rung Phukanar Buranji* reproduced from original manuscript by Lilā Gogoi in *Asom Sāhitya Sabhā Patrikā*, 18. 1., 1959, pp.37. Collected originally by B.C. Handique who also published it in 1961.

353. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.51.

354. The tank, a spring-fed one, has an area of 129 acres under water and 257 acres with the four banks. The total length of the banks is 2 miles 196 yds. It is rectangular in shape. The height of the Śiva Temple including the dome is 120 ft. and that of the dome alone is 7 ft. 6 inches. The temples on this tank were declared protected by the Government of India on 25th March, 1913.—From an extract supplied by Shri B.C. Handique. See also *Chāngrung Phukanar Buranji*. See *TB*, p.38; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.71.

When Ambikā died the king made another lady, named Anādarī or Ākarī Gābharu, his chief queen giving her the name of Sarveśwarī, which is also the name of the wife of Sarveśwar (Śiva). Anādarī was the daughter of Lāithapanā Bar-Gohāin's son Salāl Bar-Gohāin, who had been already removed from that post. At the time the king took her to wife she was already the wife of Kālugonyā Barpātra (Barpātra).[355]

Śiva Singha died in 1744 in the month of November. With all his proclivity towards Hinduism he proceeded to Charāideo year before his death and worshipped *Sengdeo*. That Śiva Singha had three wives successively with the above names, who wielded regal authority, is confirmed by numismatic evidence. The inscriptions on the coins issued prior to 1724 bear the name of the king alone ; those between 1724 and 1731, with one exception, are in his name and Phuleśwarī's ; those of 1732 to 1736 in his name and Ambikā Devī's; and those of 1739 to 1744 in his name and Sarveśwarī's. Some coins were issued in the name of the king during the intervals between the death of one queen and taking in of another. Both Ambikā and Sarveśwarī were 'Bar-Rajās'.[356]

Estimate of Śiva Singha :

Śiva Singha tried to follow the example of his father, but in doing so he fell hopelessly under the influence of sectarian priesthood and surrendered his great responsiblities of the State. With the adoption and spread of Hinduism under the patronage of the ruling family the society went through a rapid social change, the traditional Ahom system yielding place to a new pattern of relations based on the Hindu concept of social hierarchy. It was essentially a social revolution leading to the emergence of a new aristocracy of a composite nature with vested interests which has been existing more or less to this day. King Śiva Singha and his queens devoted most of their time, energy and resources to erecting numerous temples and making very generous grants of land and labour—*Brahmottar* and *Devottar* with *pāiks* and attendants—for the support of Brahmins and temples. Gait points out that nineteen out of the forty-eight inscribed copper-plates recording grants of land by

355. *TB*, p.38; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.71.
366. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.183-184.

Ahom kings refer to grants made by Śivā Singha alone. The Ahoms, who still stuck to their own religion and customs, became during his reign a degraded class and the friendly tribes of the hills and the plains became socially cut off from the Hinduised Ahoms who abandoned the free use of meat and drinks and old social habits. The Deodhāis and Bāilongs resisted the change but to no effect. This king is noted for his elaborate system of espionage. During his reign the country was in peace, there being no more any invasion from outside. Only an expedition had to be sent against the Daflās in January, 1717. The king developed taste in literary pursuits and in music and dance and invited foreign musicians to his Court. He wrote Sanskrit songs and learnt music. It is said that during his reign 'oppression was unknown' and punishments light.

32. Hsö-Nen-Hpā *alias* Pramatta Singha (1744-1751) :

On the death of Śiva Singha his younger brother, Shairing Rajā, who was the second son of Rudra Singha, was raised to the throne on the 25th *Agrahāyaṇa* (December) of *śak* 1666 (A.D. 1744) by Pukhurī-parīā Sengmun Burā-Gohāin and Rupchandra Bar-Baruā of Bakathā or Bakatā with the support of most of the nobles and officers of the Court. Thus 'king's brother has become king'.[357] The new king, who was formally installed on the throne by the Deodhāis, assumed the Ahom name Hsö-Nen-Hpā and was given the Hindu name Pramatta Singha. Kāluganyā Barpātra-Gohāin, Khāmchāng Dihingiā Bar-Gohāin and Dihingiā Nāoboichā Phukan had made an attempt to enthrone Śiva Singha's son, Tipām Rajā, with the help of a band of attendants and servitors of the royal household, but before the prompt and energetic handling of the situation by the Burā-Gohāin and the Bar-Baruā the attempt fizzled out.

The Kāluganyā Barpātra-Gohāin and Khāmchāng Dihingiā Bar-Gohāin were dismissed from their posts for their opposition to Pramatta Singha's accession. The Tipām Phukan, the Dhekiāl Baruā and a few others were severely punished on being found guilty of grave offences at a trial. The king then appointed Mṛtyuñjay, son of Kendugurīā Barpātra, as Barpātra-Gohāin and Lāithapanā Bar-Gohāin's son

357. *TB*, p.41; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.52.

Khāmseng Gohāin as Bar-Gohāin and Rājmantrī. Further Sengmun Burā-Gohāin was succeeded by Bāilungiā Sonai Burā-Gohāin and Bakatiāl Rupchandra was succeeded by Gendhelā *alias* Kīrtichandra of Bakatiāl family as Bar-Baruā.[358]

Pramatta Singha's reign has no notable events. He erected the brick-built *Rang-Ghar* of the city of Rangpur with two gabledroofs on the model of ordinary houses made of wood and bamboo. The Rang-Ghar stands just on the north side of the grand Trunk Road. He also rebuilt with bricks the structures in the city of Garhgāon. Among his other constructions were the temple (*dol*) of Śukreśwar in the town of Gauhati and the temple (*dol*) of Rudreśwar Devālay at North Gauhati. In the latter temples built in A.D. 1751, an image of Siva named Rudreswar was installed, and *devottar* lands and *pāiks* were endowed for the maintenance of the temple. These *pāiks* were settled in a village which was named Rudreśwar-Grām.[359] On a Hindu auspicious day, a census of the people of the country was taken.[360]

He respected the Mahantas and Gosains and gave them presents and made three copper-plate grants of land to religious institutions. But he was a follower of traditional Ahom customs. His coronation ceremony was held in strict conformity with the Ahom formalities, the Deodhāi and Bāilungs officiating at it. He duly planted *Āubars* and *Bātbars*[361] at the *Deoghars*[362] (temples) at Malai and Hukum respectively and also rebuilt the temples at Charāideo, Hukum *Deośāl*,[363] Malai *Deośāl*, Bāntung *Deośāl*, Kanāi *Deośāl* and the *Deoghar* of *Sengdeo* at the request of the Deodhāi, Mohan and Bāilung Pandits. He even constructed anew his granaries, his residential buildings and his throne at the suggestion of these Pandits.[364] These were significant changes and indicated a new trend of thought after what had been done by Śiva Singha and his queens.

358. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, .52.

359. AB, p.278.

360. A Banyan tree used to be planted to ensure the longevity of an Ahom king.

361. appears to be what is in Sanskrit *baṭa-vṛkṣa* which is also a tree for ensuring long life.

362. a place of worship and sacrifice.

363. *AB*, pp. 279-280.

364. AB, p. 280. Mohan, Deodhāi and Bāilung Pandits are respectively called *Mo-hung, Mo-shām, Mo-plang* in Tai-Ahom. *Mo* = Pandit.

An ambassador from Tripurā visited his Court in A.D. 1744 with a variety of presents. The Rajā of Tripurā hearing of the abilities of the Ahom rulers from his ambassador 'solicited the king's friendship, requested that his ambassador might be permitted to reside at Court and entreated favour of a similar compliment from Svargadev.'[365] The king also dismissed the Sadiyākhowā Gohāin of Kechukaliā family for oppressing the Chutiyās and appointed Nāoboichā Phukan of Nagā Barpātra family to that post. The king died in October, 1751.

33. Hsö-Rem-Hpā *alias* Rājeśvar Singha (1751-1769) :

Pramatta Singha was succeeded by his next brother in the same year assuming the name of Hsö-Rem-Hpā and the Hindu name of Rājeśvar Singha. Mohanmālā Barjanā Gohāindeo, whose claims of seniority entitled him to the succession after Pramatta Singha, was deprived of the right 'by the intrigue and violence of Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā' on the ground that the Prince was 'pitted with small-pox'.[366]

Langmāi Kaliā and Konwoigayā Bhagī successively became Burā-Gohāins under Rājesvar. After Khāmseng his younger brother Numalī and then Barjanā of the Māduriāl Bar-Gohāin family became Bar-Gohāins. Mṛtyunjay, his son Kambukaṇṭha and Lechengiāl became Barpātras one after another. Numalī Bar-Gohāin held the office of Rājmantrī, but after his death Lechengiāl Barpātra-Gohāin was appointed Rājmantrī. Bakatiāl Kīrtichandra continued to be the Bar-Baruā with his tremendous influence. Bijoy Tarun Duara's grandson, Bahikhowā, became Bar-Phukan who was succeeded in that post by his uncle, Tāmulī.[367]

Maṇipur Expedition :

The greatest event of his reign was his Maṇipur expedition. In 1758, Ālomprā (Ālaungpāyā, 1752-1760), the founder of the last Burmese dynasty, the Konbaungset line, undertook in person the first conquest of Maṇipur and other neighbouring countries. He defeated the Maṇipurīs

365. Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.143-144. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.186.

366. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.53. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.73.

367. Pemberton's *Eastern Frontier of British India*, pp.43-44. See for details pp.36-45 of his books.

under Burut Shā near Palel after a sanguinary conflict and captured the capital. But the Paguan revolt made him return to Āvā after thirteen days. Maṇipurīs then sought the help of the British and Mr. Verelst actually moved from Chittagong with a force but returned on political grounds. Maṇipur was in a most unstable condition being in the throes of political intrigues and plots. Jay Singh then took the reins of government, but soon another invasion of the Burmese under Shem-, begwen in 1765 overwhelmed his unhappy country. The Maṇipurīs were defeated and Jay Singh fled to Kāchār. The suffering inflicted upon the people of Maṇipur by the relentless enemies beggars description. Hsinbyushin (1763-67), the third king of the Ālaungpāyā dynasty, was then the ruler of Burma. The Burmese returned from Maṇipur 'after raising a man remotely connected with the royal family, called Eeringbā, to the throne'. Jay Singh returned, and dispossessed the usurper, whose life was spared. As the condition of the country showed some improvement the Burmese again appeared in the valley of Maṇipur. A bloody battle was fought by Jay Singh near Langthabal lasting for three days. Jay Singh being completely defeated fled across the hills towards Assam. The Burmese placed the Moirāng Rajā on the vacant throne as their puppet and returned to their country.[368]

Jay Singh[369] made an urgent appeal to Rājeśvar Singha for help by sending an ambassador from the Kachārī Court where he took shelter. After consulting with his nobles the Ahom king permitted Jay Singh to come to Rangpur.[370] When the latter came he, with his 'retinue of 4,000 men' was accommodated in a large camp on the banks of the Dikhau river. The king agreed to despatch in aid of the Manipur Rajā an expeditionary force to oust the Burmese (Mān-tarā) invaders from his country. The force was got ready, but initially several officers, who were summoned to lead the expedition to Maṇipur, 'pretended illness' and being detected were dismissed from their jobs. The king at last found Haranāth Majumdār Bhitaruāl Phukan, grandson of Rangāchilā Duarā Bar-Phukan, respond to his call. He made Haranāth Neog or Senāpati Phukan (Supreme Commander) and in 1765

368. Wade's *Account* calls him Krishṇa Chandra, but in other Chronicles of Assam as well in Pemberton's account the name is Jay Singh.

369. According to *Tungkhungiā Buranji* (p.50) the Kachārī Rajā also came with Jay Singh to the Ahom court.

370. *AB*, p.288; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.54.

ordered him to proceed to Maṇipur 'through jungles over the Charāideo Hills'[371]. The force had 40,000 men both from *mul* and *duāl* of *got-pāiks*.[372] The Ahom king gave a send-off to Jay Singh with good wishes from his camp-house on the Soṇai river and the latter undertook to guide the expedition across the hills. The troops then marched and entered into a dense forest in the middle of the Charāideo Hill, but they lost the way and the Maṇipur Rajā also could not show the direction. The whole body of men were put to extreme hardship due to the difficult terrain. They had to grope through the jungles by opening up a route and their advance was unusually slowed down taking about one month in covering a small distance and so their rations of food were exhausted. Many of them perished from the effects of exposure and from diseases, such as fevers and dysentery and many were killed by the Nagās, through whose country they tried to push through. Some even died of snake-bite and bites of spiders. When this plight of his men was reported to the king they were ordered to return. As these men had to fight against nature in having to cut through the vast tangled masses of jungle-creepers the Assamese called it *Latā-kaṭā raṇ*[373] The king charged his general, Haranāth Bhitaruāl Phukan, for his inability to overcome the Nagā opposition in leading the force, but the Phukan gave a convincing reply that it was the Maṇipur Rajā who had undertaken to guide the expedition along a short-cut but who had failed to show the way and it was not the fear of the Nagās that had caused the delay and suffering. The Phukan was exonerated and in 1767 a fresh force of 30,000 men under the command of Khowāng (khu-āng) Phukan, the son of the Bakatiāl Bar-Baruā, proceeded under the orders of the king to Maṇipur with Jay Singh by way of Rahā and the Kachārī country. Leaving the main army at Rahā Jay Singh proceeded with a force of 10,000 men from it under the command of the Nagā Barā, Manmath Bar-Baruā, and reached the Merāp river where forts were constructed and a Nagā force was levied. At the approach of the Ahom army the Burmese puppet ruler fled away.[374] The Rajā was welcomed by the Nagās and probably did not require any more help from the Assam

371. *TB*. p.54.
372. In Wade's *Account*, (p.146), 54,000.
373. literally 'creeper-cutting war'. See *AB*, p.288; *TB*, pp.51-55; Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.146-147. Wade says some six months were spent in covering only a part of the way. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.54.
374. *AB*, pp.288-289

force which was sent back to Rahā. With his Nagā force the Rajā proceeded to Maṇipur where almost 'all the people of the country welcomed Jay Singh as their king' and a few who opposed were arrested and put to death. He devastated Moirāng, defeated and probably killed the Burmese puppet ruler and recaptured the throne of Manipur.[375]

At the king's order the Khowang Phukan, who was at Rahā, sent Manmath Nagā Barā to Maṇipur with two hundred men to see Rajā Jay Singh and report about what he was doing. Manmath was received with great honour by Jay Singh who expressed his gratitude thus—'I have regained my dominion through your king's favour. I cannot forget him as long as I live. I shall remain faithful to him and send annual tributes without failure. . . . I wish to offer my daughter to your king and intend to send her with you'.[376] Jay Singh sent with Manmath his daughter, Princess Kuranganayanī (fawn-eyed), with two respectable *Kaṭakīs*, Hiromaṇi and Nānang, to the Ahom king with great pomp. When the party arrived at Tengābarī the chief dignitaries of the Ahom Court went forward and escorted the Princess to Sonārīnagar where there was a residence of the king. The king also proceeded to Sonārīnagar where in *Fālgun*, A.D. 1768, one Śiromaṇi offered the princess after performing *Chaklang* (marriage) to the king who made her his chief queen.[377] The party of Maṇipurīs (Magals), who were sent with the Princess by Jay Singha, were settled in the farm at Manāimāji village, called thence Magalukhāt, in the area of Sarucharāi in the lower valley of the Disoi.[378] The Bakatiāl Bar-Baruā, Gendhelā, was renamed Kīrtichandra (*Kīrti-* fame) by the king as the success of the Maṇipur expedition terminating with a matrimonial connection between the two royal houses of Assam and Maṇipur was due to his political ingenuity.[379]

Destruction of Buranjis :

A commotion was created by a reference to Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā's family as a *jalam-baṭā* (draper) family in a Buranji, called *Chakari*

375. *Ibid.*, pp.289-290.
376. *Ibid.*, p.290; K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.54-55. For *chaklang* see *TB*, p.51.
377. *TB*, p.51. In *AB*, the supreme commander of the second expeditionary force to Maṇipur is mentioned to be Khangiā Phukan, son of Bakatiāl Bar-Baruā, but in K.T.P.'s *Buranji* he was simply Bakatiāl Bar-Baruā. In others the point is not clear.
378. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.55; *TB*, p.50.
379. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.55-56.

pheṭī Buranji, brought out by Numalī Bar-Gohāin. The term *jalam-batā* signified that the Bakatiāl family was not pure Ahom. This aspersion made Kīrtichandra call in his relations in the Narā country in Upper Burma to prove his pedigree as genuine. Having proved it he had the king issue orders for a grand collection of all the Buranjis in the houses of the nobles and officers for an examination and those of them, which contained this incorrect statement, were burnt away.[380]

Other Events and Works :

The Daflās raided the neighbourhood of Ghilādhārī in 1758. This tribe was never reduced to complete submission. The whole foot-hill frontier was therefore defended by a series of forts to the south of which their access was prohibited. This measure proved effective and a deputation of the Daflās surrendered the captives earlier taken and also brought presents to the Ahom king. But the king, in rage, arrested the members of the deputation, which provoked their relatives. They retaliated by seizing a number of Assamese subjects and two cannon. Soon the king came to terms with the Daflās, by which, in order to secure frontier peace, the latter were permitted to collect a form of blackmail at the rate of 'a *purā* of paddy and 320 *cowries*' from each family in the Daflā *Duars*.[381]

A punitive force had also to be sent against the Mikirs in July, 1765, which subdued the offending villages. In November, 1766, the Kachārī Rajā, who was summoned to the presence of the Svargadev, refused to come. But the Bar-Baruā marched with a force against him and reached Rahā. The Rajā being terrified came and made his submission. He was accompanied by Rajā Jay Singh of Maṇipur (Mekheli), who had taken shelter at the Kachār capital Khāspurī after being driven from his country by the Burmese as already said.[382] In 1769 the Jayantā Rajā's movements on Assam boundary appeared to be hostile. The Bar-Baruā marched against him with a body of troops and reached Rahā. From that base he advanced to the Assam-Jayantā boundary and placed cannon for action. His action alarmed the Rajā who made all haste to retreat to his capital.[383]

380. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.186-187.
381. *AB*, pp.286-287 for details.
382. *AB*, p.291.
383. *Ibid.*, p.284. Garhgāon, in Tāmulī Phukan's Buranji.

The question of selection of a site for the Rajā's residence came up before the Pandit astrologers soon after the accession of Rājeśvar Singha. The Deodhāi Phukan and Bāilung Phukan recommended Tāimung and, the Brahmin and Gaṇak Pandits, Rangpur. The king followed the Hindu view and constructed a brick-built palace at Rangpur, called *Talātal-Ghar*, but later he also erected a brick-built residence (*Talātal-Ghar*) at Tāimung (Dihing). He was also a great temple-builder. Among the temples (*dols*) he built were those at Vaśiṣṭhāśram Maṇikarṇeśvar, Chitrāchal and Negheriting. During his reign the Moāmarā Mahanta raised a big earth foundation called *Barbheṭi* in the low Mālau paddy field. The big size of the *Barbheṭi* became a symbol of the numerous character of his disciples. Being apprised of it Rājeśvar, who knew the Mahanta to be opposed to the Ahom king, won over to his side, as a balancing factor, the Śilikhātaliā Mahanta of Dihing by showing special honour to him.[384]

Kīrtichandra Bar-Barua was an intelligent officer with a domineering attitude. King Rājeśvar could not oppose any firm opinion of the Bar-Baruā who was virtually the policy-maker. For his overbearing and ruthless temperament he was hated by many and once in 1763 in the month of *Kārtik* an attempt was made on his life by a group of nobles including the younger son of the king, Nāoshaliyā Phukan, Dhekial Baruā, the Brahmin Bezbaruā and Taptapi Dekā. At the principal gate of the royal residence they fell upon him and gave him some blows with their daggers, but Kīrtichandra, though wounded, escaped death. The assailants were later arrested and some were mutilated and others put to death.[385] Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā also established one hundred and eighty Bebejiās and a *hāt* (market) at Rahā.[386]

Rājeśvar Singha was a disciple of Nāti Gosāin, a relative of Krisṇarām.[387]

Four Phukans visited Rājeśvar Singha's Court as ambassadors of the Bar-Narās, who were received by the old Chiring Phukan and the Gohāins and who referred to the Ahom king as 'Bhāi-rajā' or brother-king.[388] They saw in the Ahom kingdom a large population, but comparatively less work. This king also imported foreign magicians who

384. *AB*, P. 284; *K.T.P* : *op. cit*, pp.56-57.
385. *AB*, pp. 284-285.
386. *DAB.* (1962), p. 142.
387. Gait; *op. cit.* p. 187; *H.S.B. op. cit.* p. 76.
388. *H.S.B* : *op. cit.* p.76.

showed their performances at the Rang-Ghar. He took the *śaraṇ* from Nāti Gosāin, who was given a temple at Pāndunāth.[389] He made seven copper-plate grants of land and *pāiks* to Brahmins and temples. Since then Brahminical rites come into force.

Rājeśvar had three sons already born to him while yet a prince and a fourth was born after he became king. The eldest was called Kāndurā Gohain, and was given Tipamiā *mel*, the second was given the Sāringiā *mel* and the *mel* given to the third son was called *Saru-mel*. The Fourth prince, who was born after his accession to the throne, was called *pāt-konwar* or throne-prince. Rājeśvar took a tour of his kingdom visiting Gauhāti, Hājo, Bar-Nadī, Kālśilā Bekī, Bardowā, Sariahtali, Kalīābar, Jatiārāng, Dergāon and Gajpur, in all of which royal residences were constructed for his stay.[390] These residences may be compared to the modern circuit-houses, but meant for the king alone.

Rājeśvar Singha died at Devaragāon in A.D. 1769 in the month of *Jaiṣṭha*. His body was cremated at Sonārīnagar, and the bones were taken to Charāideo and buried. His cremation ceremony was performed according to Brahminical rites. From Rennell's Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (p. 57) Gait collects the information that 'the Monās was the Ahom boundary on the north of the Brahmaputra. South of that river it was 21 miles further east'.

34. Hsö-Nyeu-Hpā *alias* Lakṣmī Singha (1769-1780)

On the death of Rājeśvar Singha his next and youngest brother, Nāmrūpiā Rajā, called also Kālśiliā[392] Gohāindeo, aged fifty-three years, was installed as king in 1769 at the temporary royal residence at Devargāon by the Gohāins, the Bar-Baruā and the Phukans after a Council meeting amongst them.[393] The new king assumed the Ahom name Hsö-Nyeu-Hpā and the Hindu name Lakṣmī Singha. Gait refers to a difference of opinion among the nobles regarding the choice of Lakṣmī Singha whose legitimacy was doubted from his colour and features being entirely different from those of his father, Rudra Singha. Even the father himself had this doubt. Hence the Mādurial Bar-Gohāin

389. H.S.B. *op. cit.*, p. 76; Gait : *op. cit.*, p. 189.
390. TB, p.46.
391. Gait, *op. cit.*, p. 189.
392. Probably from his birth at Kālsilā camp.
393. TB, pp.56-57.

and a few others supported the claim of Rājeśvar's eldest son while Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā was in favour of Lakṣmī Singha. Finally the Bar-Baruā prevailed and the others conceded.[394]

It is said that the Parvatīyā Gosāin refused to recognize Lakṣmī Singha on the score of his alleged illegitimacy. The king became a disciple of a Sākta Gosāin, named Rāmānanda Āchāryya, of this country and settled him with land and other grants. The Acharyya is known as Pahumariyā Gosāin who was also the first of the Na Gosāins.[395]

Soon after Lakṣmī Singha's accession his best friend, Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā, insisted on the propriety of accomplishing the destruction of the sons and descendants of all his brothers to make the throne safe from usurpation. The king reluctantly authorized the Bar-Baruā to deprive the royal descendants of their noses, eyes and ears and to banish them into the hills of Nāmrūp. It was speedily carried out by the Bar-Baruā except in the case of twelve princes who enjoyed the king's favour, but the king himself deeply repented of his cruelty.[396]

Revolt of the Moāmariās :
Their Seizure of Power :

Since the advent of the Parvatīyā Gosāin the religious trend in Assam took a serious turn and Phuleśwarī's action inflamed the situation. Among the local sects of Hinduism and even between the Hindu and Ahom priesthoods there was no friction worth the name. The Ahoms sacrificed animals, such as cows and buffaloes, and worshipped their own gods at Charāideo, yet the Vaiṣṇava Satras flourished side by side and received patronage from the Ahom kings except when these Satrādhikārs went out of their way to dabble in politics. As the Ahom religion was not at all a proselytising religion neo-vaiṣṇavism spread peacefully; but the introduction of Śāktaism from Bengal created a different situation. Prior to that there was religious peace, because there was no imposition. But the imported cult was aggressive. No king could have thought of forceful conversion without the sanction of the spiritual preceptor, but it was attempted by the royal disciples of the

394. Gait : *op.cit.*, p. 189.
395. H.S.B. *op. cit.*, p. 77.
396. Wade : *op. cit.*, p. 151.

Parvatīyā Gosāin and hence the Moāmarīā flare-up. Early insurrections were merely incidents of steady preparations among the faithful disciples of the Moāmarīā Gosāin, whose resolve it was to deal a fatal blow to the Ahom government after the insult he had been put to by Phuleśwarī. Continuance of Kīrtichandra in the office of Bar-Baruā during Lakṣmī Singha's reign drove them irresistibly to a trial of strength. The climax was reached when, once, the Moāmarīā Gosāin was abused with insulting epithets by the Bar-Baruā for being indifferent to him while showing respect to the king. The Marāṇ Chief, Nāhar, was also beaten up by the Bar-Baruā and his ears cut off for a similar reason.

The Marāns, particularly those of Hātichungi, who, according to some accounts,[397] had been suppressed on the advice of Kirtichandra since the time of Rājeśvar Singha, were now prepared to fight and reports came that they set up a parallel government with their own Rajā, Bar-Baruā and Phukans and trained up troops. A force was sent by Lakṣmī Singha to subdue them under the command of one Bez-Baruā. But the Ahom force was defeated by the Marāṇs and Bez-Baruā narrowly escaped. Another force, despatched with Haranath Bhitaruāl Phukan in command, encamped on the southern bank of the Dibaru river, constructed a bridge over it and crossed to the other side. The Marāṇs suddenly fell upon them killing many while the rest went inside a stockade.[398] Meanwhile the Moāmarīā Gosāin received full co-operation of the Marāṇs and Kachārīs of Nāmrūp who became his disciples. The Marāṇs contacted in Nāmrūp the three exiled Princes—Bātgharīā Barjana Mohanmalā Gohāin, brother of Rajeśvar Singha, who was exiled by that king, Māju-Gohāin and Saru-Gohāin, sons of Rājeśvar Singha, who were exiled during Lakṣmī Singha's reign—and persuaded them to join their revolutionary army to oust the unjust and oppressive government of Lakṣmī Singha and Kīrtichandra Bar-Baruā. The latter, they said, was particularly instrumental in mutilating and banishing the Princes and oppressing the Moāmarias. They promised to make Barjanā Gohāin king. The three Princess then accompanied the Marāṇs in their march against the royalist forces. Mohanmālā Barjanā Gohāin arrived at the place, where the Bhitaruāl Phukan was invested, and

397. *TB*, p.58.

398. *Ibid*, pp.58-59; Wade : *op.cit.*, pp.153-154.

appealed to him to join with them and accept him as his lawful king. The Phukan refused to accept Mohanmalā as king with the result that he was imprisoned and kept under guard. Sadiyā was also devastated by the Marāṇs, who killed the Sadiyākhowā Gohāin in a battle, but who were later defeated by the Ahom general Doimukhīā Rājkhowa.[399]

The victorious Marāṇs then, in consultations with the Ahom Princes (Gohāins), proclaimed Rāghav as Bar-Baruā and one Khorā named Nāhar, Deo-Gosāin, who had two wives of historic fame named Rādhā and Rukminī. Having thus set up their own machinery for conducting operations these Marāṇs, contrary to their earlier assurances, murdered the two sons of Rājeśvar, Saru-Gohāin and Māju-Gohāin by secretly administering poison. Their next step was to set up Nāhar's son, Ramānanda of Ramākānta as their king by-passing Barjanā Gohāin, who was confined in a house under the surveillance of their guards.[400] But they were giving out that Barjanā Gohāin was their king, the strategy being to draw the support of the people in general in capturing the government. Thus Rāghav Marāṇ succeeded in receiving submission of the villages to the east of the Dihing river including Tipām. The Marāṇs also played upon the minds of the people by singing an awe-inspiring song that Aṣṭabhuj, Saptabhuj and Chaturbhuj[401] were their protectors.

In October, 1789, the royalist troops were defeated in several engagements by Rāghav on the north bank of the Brahmaputra causing a great alarm in the capital. The Bar-Baruā advised the king to leave the capital and go for safety to Gauhati. Rāghav marched with his troops on Rangpur and reached it at midnight after the king's departure. The king was pursued by his men and captured at Sonārīnagar. He was brought back to the capital and confined in the temple of Jaysāgar. Rāghav's men also rounded up as many nobles and officers as could be traced and put some of them to death, keeping the rest in confinement.[402] Rāghav then took to wife the king's Maṇipurī Queen, and a number of

399. *TB*, pp.57-60.

400. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.191.

401. So-called eight-armed, seven-armed and four-armed gods.

402. *AB*, p.302; Gait : *op.cit.*, p.191; *TB*, p.65; Wade : *op.cit.*, Chap. V for further details.

daughters of the nobles. Meanwhile the Bar-Baruā, being sent from Soṇārinagar by the king, met the Moāmarā Gosāin and prayed for the king's life. But the Gosāin chained him and kept him under guard. At this time Rāghav occupied Rangpur and informed Ramānanda (or Ramākānta) that 'Rangpur has been taken, the king too has been seized and kept under guard'. Immediately Ramānanda, his father Nāhar Khorā, Rādhā and Rukminī proceeded with their Marāṇ troops to Rangpur and occupied it in the month of *Agrahāyaṇa, Śak* 1691 (A.D. 1769). At first the Moāmariā Gosāin's son Bāyan Dekā was going to be placed on the throne of Rangpur, but the Gosain forbade it and on his advice Ramānanda was installed as Rajā. Two other sons of Nāhar were made Rajās of Tipām and Sāring in imitation of the Ahom system. Bangan, however, assumed the title of Nāmrupiā Rajā.[403] Nāhar had the title of Pitri Rajā.

The Marāṇs preserved the entire structure of government as set up by the Ahoms, but filled the posts with Moāmariā Marāṇ officials. Thus they appointed three Marāṇs as Bar-Gohāin, Burā-Gohāin and Barpātra-Gohāin, a *kāṇḍī* (archer) as Bar-Phukan and two Moāmariās as Sadiyākhowā and Marāngikhowā. Only the old Salāl Gohāin was allowed to continue. Phukans and Rājkhowās were also appointed from amongst them. In face of this revolutionary change of government Haranāth Senāpati Phukan escaped to Silmāri in Bengal.[404]

Soon after completing these arrangments, Rajā Ramānanda went to Khutiāpotā, the abode of the Moāmariā Gosain. He there put to death the Ahom Burā-Gohāin, Bar-Gohāin, Bar-Baruā Kirtichandra, Bar-Phukan, Deka Phukan and Kāthkatiā Baruā of Lughuri. He also arrested the Brahmin Gosāins of Aunīatī, Dakshiṇpāṭ, Garamur, Kuruābāhī, and others and also the Thākuriā Gosāins and exacted large sums of money from them. He even cut off the nose and ears of the Vāgish Bāpu of Aunīatī. Common people in great numbers were summoned and made disciples of the Moāmariā Gosāin.[405] Coins, dated *śak* 1691 (A.D. 1769), were struck in the name of Ramākānta (Ramānanda). Actually Rāghav was the man behind, who managed all affairs at Rangpur in the capacity of Bar-Baruā and directed the policy of the Marāṇ government.

403. *TB*, pp.66-67
404. *Ibid*, pp.66-67.
405. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.193.

Restoration :

After a few months of Marāṇ rule a dissension arose among their chiefs. Rāghav wanted the insignias of royalty including the *Kekurā-dolā* (royal palanquin) as the real Conqueror of Rangpur, but Ramānanda refused to give him that status. Bāyan Dekā, who organized the Moāmariā armed forces, also aspired to the throne. At the same time the Ahoms regained consciousness and became prepared for a return blow. One Rāmkrishnāi, in collaboration with Kuranganayanī, killed Raghav in April 1770, on the night before the *Bohāg Bihu* festival. It is said that the Manīpurī queen herself gave the first stroke with a sword. Ramānanda escaped but was caught and put to death. Lakshmī Singha was released and placed on the throne. Then there began a vigorous persecution of the Moāmariās. The Moāmariā Gosāin was seized and put to death. Other insurgents were hunted down and killed. There were fresh risings of the Moāmariās, but, after some headway, were crushed. The whole fabric of Moāmariā government broke down. Lakshmī Singha's installation ceremony was then performed with great pomp for which there had been no moment of peace.[406] Kunwoiganyā Ghanashyam became his Burā-Gohāin and Bāilung his Bar-Gohāin and Rājmantrī. Marāṇ became Barpātra. Bhadrasen of Bakatiāl family was made Bar-Baruā after Kīrtichandra. Kāshī and Lāhan of Dihing became Bar-Phukan successively. Marāṇ was succeeded by Kenduguriā Rudreśvar as Barpātra-Gohāin and Edābariā of Handikoi family became Bar-Baruā after Bhadrasen.[407]

Kalitā Phukan :

People of Nārāyaṇpur complained against the oppressions of the Kalitā Phukan of Kesāmaṭi. The Phukan was dismissed in December 1774. He took shelter at Tāmul-bārī on the north bank and thought of making himself an independent ruler. Soon he proclaimed himself king under the name Mirhang. He made a throne and ascended it. He was after some labours captured at Ḍhekerījuli, but escaped by bribing. But he was again captured and executed.[408]

406. K.T.P. *op.cit.*, p.58; *TB*. pp.83-84.
407. *AB*, pp.318, 320-324.
408. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.59.

In 1779, a Narā chief of Khāmjāng, who was given settlement near Sadiyā, started a rebellion with a band of Chutiyās and Mishmis killing the Sadiyākhowā Gohāin, but retreated into the forests when a punitive expedition was sent against him from Rangpur.

Lakshmī Singha was decidedly a man of weak character, who yielded, against his will, to some of the diabolical plans of his Bar-Baruā. His mind vacillated between the Ahom and Hindu views and eventually he submitted to the latter. He was put out of his wits by Rāghav Marāṇ's victorious march on Rangpur and took to flight at Kīrtichandra's bidding betraying his own indecision and timidity. His foollwers left him for his complete lack of stamina. He was back to power without Kīrtichandra. At Na Gosāin's suggestion he performed the worship of the Hindu Tāntric Goddess Tārā with an elaborate ceremony and at an enormous cost to the great displeasure of his hereditary priests, the Deodhāis and Bāilungs. He built a copper temple within the compound of the Na-dol of Devargrām. His mother built the Bagī-dol. Even the Pahumarīā Gosāin's son erected the Gauriballav-Devālay. The king also built the Janārdan-dol at Aśvakrānta and excavated the great Rudrasāgar tank.[409] He died of dysentery in *śak* 1702 (A.D. 1780) in the Hindu month of *Paus* (Dec.-Jan.).

Decline and Fall of the Kingdom (1780-1826) :

35. Hsö-Hit-Pöng-Hpā *alias* Gaurīnāth Singha (1780-1795) :

Lakshmī Singha was succeeded by his eldest son, Loknāth, who assumed the Ahom name Hsö-Hit-Pöng-Hpā and the Hindu name Gaurīnāth Singha. He made his residence at Garhgāon. According to Capt. Welsh's account he was 'only fifteen years of age at the time of his succession'. He cremated the body of his father and entombed the ashes at Charāideo. He became a disciple of a son of Pahumariā Ramānanda Āchāryya Gosāin.[410] Rudreśvar Barpātra was appointed Rājmantrī. Ghanashyām continued to be the Burā-Gohāin. His-Bar-Gohāins were successively Bisṇuṇārayaṇ and his son, Nirbhoynārāyaṇ, of Maduriāl family and Gangāram of Saṭāialiā family. Later Nirbhoy again became Bar-Gohāin on removal of Gangārām. Edābarīa was

409. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.59.
410. *Ibid*, pp.59-60, 119; *TB*, p.85.

afterwards dismissed and Bhāgatī of Nāmtiāl Handikoi family was appointed as Bar-Baruā, who was again succeeded by Jaynāth of Bakatiāl family and Bāskatiā Lāhan. Haranāth Senapati Phukan, who in the meantime returned from Silmārī, was given the office of Bar-Phukan. He was succeeded by Gogoi, Medhi, Śivanāth, Burāh Chetiā and Ghināi Badanchandra (son of Haranāth).[411]

Fresh Revolt of the Moāmariās :
Their Temporary Ascendancy :

In A.D. 1782 the Moāmariās again rose in rebellion and set fire to the Śingari-Ghar at Gargāon. They also attempted to burn away the capital, but were repelled by the Burā-Gohāin and the Senāpati Bar-Phukan after a sharp engagement and the morale of the panic-striken people was restored. Rudreśvar Rājmantrī fled to Gauhati. The king, who narrowly escaped from the Moāmariās, appointed Ghanashyām Burā-Gohāin as Rājmantrī and large numbers of Moāmariās were put to death for their rebellious activities by the Bar-Baruā under the king's orders. Further steps against the Moāmariās came up for consideration and the Bar-Baruā, rejecting any conciliatory approach to win them over as suggested by the Burā-Gohāin, advocated their wholesale massacre to get rid of their repeated attempts to overthrow the government. This policy was endorsed by the vindictive king. A general massacre was then ordered and several thousands of Moāmariās were put to death.[412] This step simply aggravated the situation. A Mahanta of Jakhalābandhā Satra took lead in organizing a subversive movement at Jaysāgar, but he was captured and his eyes were plucked out and three of his followers were fried to death in oil. Soon another rebellion, that of the Marāṇs, broke out under one Bādal Gāonburā, but it, too, was quelled. In the meantime a very powerful revolutionary force was built up by the Moāmariās or Maṭaks on the north bank of the Lohit. It broke out in rebellion in 1786 and swept down across the Lohit and the Brahmaputra defeating the royalist forces, sent against it, at the Garoimārī-*bil* and other places. It sacked the Garamur *Satra*

411. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.196.
412. *TB*, pp.94-97; Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.196-197. In *TB*, Rānī Luki and Topaguchiā (instead of Beltalā) are mentioned.

and set fire to the houses, routed the Lower Assam troops sent by the Chiefs of Rāṇī, Luki and Beltalā and advanced towards Rangpur.[413] The remnants of the Ahom forces on the north bank crossed to the south bank and joined the Burā-Gohāin[414] who was at the Soṇāri post with another force. The Burā-Gohāin was attacked and defeated by the Moāmariās and forced to retreat to Gaurīsāgar. The Moāmariās occupied Garhgāon and destroyed it. Gaurīnāth was at his Rangpur palace and the Burā-Gohāin joined him followed by the Moāmariās, who devastated the country through which they marched. Gaurīnāth sent *Kaṭakīs* frantically seeking help of the Bar-Phukan and Maṇipurī Kachārī and Jayantā Rajās. But before any help could come the Moāmariās, along the Jānji river smashing all opposition, arrived at the gate of the capital, Rangpur, and put the king to flight. Purṇānanda Burā-Gohāin, who was left in charge of Rangpur, retreated after gallantly defending the city for some days. Meanwhile Gaurīnāth reached Gauhati, met the Bar-Phukan and arranged reinforcements under the Pānī Phukan for the Burā-Gohāin. The Burā-Gohāin was forced to retreat as far as the Kāzirangā river when he met the Pānī Phukan with 13,000 men advancing from Gauhati.[415] He marched back and fought the Moāmariās with victories and reverses for over two years. Nāmdāng, Gaurīsāgar, Meleng, Lādoigarh and the Disoi river were the main theatres of war in this protracted campaign. Purṇānanda Burā-Gohāin, on whom the main responsibility of dealing with the Moāmariās rested at the time, constructed what is called the Bibudhi-*garh* to fight the insurgents. The Kachārī and Jayantā Rajās did not respond, but the Rajā of Maṇipur, gratefully remembering the sacrifices of Rajeśvar Singha, 'marched with 500 horse and 4,000 foot to Nowgong, where he was met by Gaurīnāth Singha'.[416] But the Maṇipurī troops could not give a good account of themselves in their fight against the Moāmariās and had to retire with heavy losses. There also cropped up a number of local petty chiefs who asserted their independence.

At Rangpur the Moāmariās set up Bharath Singha as king and appointed Honkorā as his Bar-Baruā. The Hātīsungi Marāṇs acknowledged

413. appears to be Purṇānanda, son of Ghanashyam Burā-Gohāin who. in the meantime, had died. See Kāshināth *Buranji* p.60, and *TB*, p.91.
414. Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.197-198.
415. *Ibid.*, p.200.
416. *TB*, p.115.

Sarbānanda as their Rajā, of whom Godhā was the Bar-Baruā. They ruled over the territory to the seat of the Dihing.[417] Coins issued by Bharath Singha and Sarbānanda have inscriptions testifying to their rule. Bharath's coins are dated 1791, 1792, 1793, 1797 and those of Sarbānanda 1794 and 1795. Bharath Singha described himself on his coins as a descendant of Bhagadatta, while sarbānanda assumed the title of Svargadev.

During a brief stay at Nowgong his followers offended the local people by their constant demands for supplies and harsh treatment. One Hinduri Hāzarikā, leader of the local Moāmariās, organized a band of rebels and attacked Gaurīnāth's camp. Gaurīnāth fled to Mājulī and took refuge in the Āuniāṭī and Dakshiṇpāṭ *Satras* for some time and then went to Gauhati. Here again the Rajā of Darrang, Krishṇanārāyaṇ, at the head of a force of Hindusthānīs and Bengalis, occupied a large part of North Kāmrūp including North Gauhati. He was an enemy of Gaurīnāth who had earlier slain his father, Haṁsanārāyāṇ, the Rajā of Darrang, and appointed Viṣhṇunārāyaṇ in his place. Krishṇanārāyaṇ ousted Viṣhṇunārayaṇ and proclaimed himself Rajā.

The Moāmariās enacted a reign of terror killing people, burning villages and destroying crops. As a result famines broke out. Many people left their homes and emigrated to the country east of the Na-Dihing river and even to the Hukawng Valley in Burma and some 'became voluntary slaves to the Singhphos in return for sustenance given them'.[418]

Arrival of Captain Welsh :
Liquidation of the Moāmariā Regime :

Being helpless Gaurīnāth appealed for a battalion of Sepoys to Mr. Lumsden, the Collector of Rangpur. In this, a merchant named Raush, who was a farmer of the salt revenue at Goalpārā, and Mr. Douglas, Commissioner of Koch Behār, aided Gaurīnāth by writing to the British authorities in his favour. Mr. Raush had been robbed of goods worth Rs. 45,000 when proceeding by boat from Gauhati

417. Johnstone : *Capt. Welsh's Expedition*, p.6.
418. *Ibid*, pp.13-14.

to Goalpārā. King Gaurīnāth begged through Raush for the earliest despatch of the battalion. In spite of the difficulties arising from the British policy in the affairs of other countries the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, evolved a line of policy to help Gaurīnāth in this great disorder in his kingdom by driving out the Bengal mercenaries from Assam. Accordingly in September, 1792, Captain Thomas Welsh, with Lieutenant Robert Macgregor as adjutant, was sent with a force of 12 companies of Sepoys, each company having sixty Sepoys and officered by Europeans. Capt. Welsh arrived at Goalpārā on 8th November, 1792. Gaurīnāth while escaping from Gauhati, met him on the 19th of that month below the Nagarberā Hill.[419] The main object, with which Capt. Welsh was sent, was to suppress the freebooters whom Krishṇanārāyaṇ had brought here from Bengal, to invade the Ahom territory. But at Gauhati he came up face to face with the Moāmariā rebellion. Capt. Welsh crossed to the north bank and defeated Krishṇanārāyaṇ's *Barkandāzes* and brought him to submission. Then he turned against the Moāmariās who suffered defeats at Jorhāt and other places and fled away before the British Officers, who liberated Rangpur on the 18th March, 1794. Gaurīnāth reached Rangpur on the 21st March and Capt. Welsh held a grand *durbar* with the king and the nobles. Last efforts of the Moāmariās to attack Rangpur and its neighbourhood were liquidated by Capt. Welsh by destroying their camps and scattering them away to the east. Gaurīnāth also made a commercial treaty in 1793 with the British. It was the first treaty ever made by the British with any Assam Chief. But the Company's government never ratified and published it on the ground that the Rajā's government was not sufficiently strong to ensure its observance. With the coming of Sir John Shore as Governor-General non-interference became the basic British policy and in May, 1794, Capt. Welsh returned to Bengal carrying from Assam huge quantities of ornaments, gold and silver coins and other metals and cloths.[420] The Burā-Gohāin managed to retain two Sepoys, Dina and Fakirchand,

419. 400,000 pieces of gold ornaments, 400,000 pieces of silver ornaments, gold to the value of 20,000,000 rupees and an immense quantity of copper, bell-metal, brass, cloths, etc. They also took away 2,000 boats, one tusked elephant, one female elephant and 4,000 guns. See *TB*, p.129. *AB*, (p.356) says. 'The captain and his wife and the Firingis were given sufficient quantity of gold and silver as presents and were directed to go back'.

420. *AB*, pp.356-357.

belonging to the Captain's force, with whose help he trained up a considerable body of soldiers after the fashion of the Sepoys from Bengal to meet the threats of the Moāmariās and others. A number of flint-guns were purchased for the purpose. Instructions were issued to form also a body of wrestlers. There was no money to pay the Sepoys. The king ordered the Sepoys to collect money by force which they proceeded to do by extorting gold and silver from the villages in Gauhati and from the Gosāins and Mahantas. On one occasion the Gosāins and Mahantas had to decide at a meeting to collect money and they actually collected one thousand rupees and paid the amount to the Bengal Sepoys.[421]

Influence of Foreign Mercenaries :

Soon after the departure of Captain Welsh foreign mercenaries (*Barkandāzes*) began to dominate Assam politics. It was possible owing to the weakness of the central authority. Chetiā Burā-Phukan rebelled against the king with the help of one Jamādār Hāzār Singh Bangāl who was the chief of a mercenary band. Hāzār Singh was paid by extorting money from Pahumarīā Na-Gosāin's brother. Senāpati Phukan's son was made Bar-Phukan by Hāzār Singh for a price of 60,000 rupees, which the former paid by robbing the temples, including Kāmākhyā and Mādhava, of their gold articles. Chetiā Burā Phukan, who rebelled and fled away, was seized with the help of Bengal Sepoys and beheaded at Jorhāt under the king's order. Gauhati could be recovered from Hāzār Singh Bangāl only by importing Subedār, Niamat-Ullah with a force from Calcutta.[422]

Gaurīnāth died of dysentery at Jorhāt in *śak* 1717 (A.D. 1795) on the 22nd *Śrāvan*. His body was cremated.

Character and Works of Gaurinath :

Captain Welsh describes Gaurīnāth Singha as 'a poor debilitated man, incapable of transacting business, always either washing or praying, and when seen, intoxicated with opium.' He ascribes all the evils

421. *Ibid.*

422. Captain Welsh's Report to the Government (29th November) describing the Rajā of Assam and the state of affairs generally. See also John Stone : *Capt. Welsh's Expedition*, p.17.

to the Bar-Baruā, who also was against asking for the aid of British troops. He further reveals that 'the Rajā....stated his wish to throw himself unequivocally into the arms of the British Government, and asked for assistance against all his enemies and for more troops'.[423] He also mentions that Gaurīnāth had fondness for low favourites and was imbecile, ignorant, capricious, cruel and oppressive.[424] Gaurīnāth's blind and excessive devotion to the way of life prescribed for him by his religious preceptor to the utter neglect of the responsibilities of the State was the chief cause of his downfall and the loss of prestige of his kingdom. His father, Lakshmī Singha, was, of course, primarily responsible for this debased outlook, but Gaurīnāth further worsened it, thereby falling at the mercy of the British for the first time in the history of the Ahom rule. It also ushered in the *Barkandāzi* influence in the kingdom.

With all this Gaurinath did certain pieces of good work of abiding repute. He was the first monarch to abolish the institution of annual sacrifice of human beings to *Pishāsī* ('the Daughter' of *Girāsī-girā* or Assamese Burā-burī), called also *Tāmresharī Māi* ('the Mother of the Copper Temple') and *Kechāikhātī* ('the Eater of raw flesh') in the neighbourhood of Chūṇpurā in Sadiyā. She is worshipped by the Barganyā *Khel*. The Deories of the temple had every year to obtain the sanction of the Ahom king to offer human sacrifice, but Gaurīnāth abolished the practice. The Deories say that from this abolition the Ahom kingdom began to go from bad to worse.[425]

Until the reign of Gaurīnāth, the Assamese annals had been very imperfectly kept. But he 'caused a commission of Norā astronomers and other learned persons to be deputed to Mogaung to examine the histories of their race in possession of the Shan Buddhist priests of that place, and to verify the books (or traditions) brought into the country by Chau-ka-pha. The examination completed, this commission re-wrote the Ahom history, in Assamese, and extended it backwards from Samlung-pha's conquest of Asam to the founding of the first Shan capital

423. Capt. *Welsh's Expedition*, p.6. His letter to Governor-General, 6th Feb., 1794...

424. W.B. Brown : *An Outline Grammar of the Deori Chutiya Language*. (Shillong, Assam Secretariat Printing), 1805, pp.IV-VII.

425. Ney Elias : *History of the Shans*, p.10.

on the Shueli river,....'[426]. These Pandits also worked out that eleven *Tausingās*[427] (i.e. 660 years) elapsed between the descent of Khun-Löng and Khun-Lāi (A.D. 568 or 569) and the founding of the Ahom dynasty in Assam by Hsö-Kā-Hpā, which gives A.D. 1228 or 1229 as the date of that foundation.

He personally followed Hindu religion and married the daughter of Kalīā Dekā of Dihingīā family according to Brahminical rites[428] and not by *chaklang*. But he could not give up his Ahom faith. For he once ordered the Ahom Pandits 'to perform Umphā Saragpuzā' and the ceremony was performed in which 'one white buffalo, one white cow, and many white fowls, ducks, and pigeons were sacrificed to the gods. All heavenly gods were duly worshipped'.[429]

36. Hsö-Ning-Hpā *alias* Kamaleśvar Singha (1795-1810) :

On the death of Gaurīnāth Singha his son Kinārām Gohāin ascended the throne assuming the name Hsö-Ning-Hpā and the Hindu name Kamaleśvar Singha. Rudreśvar's son Durgeśvar was made Barpātra and Gangārām Bar-Gohāin, succeeded later by Narahari Bar-Gohāin. His Bar-Baruās were successively Bhadari of Handikoi family and Śrīnāth of Duarā family. Gendhelā Rājkhowā of Handikoi family was appointed Bar-Phukan. He is also known as Kalīābhomorā Bar-Phukan and the king conferred on him the title of Pratāp-ballabh for effectively putting down the Dundiā (or Dumdumiyā) rebellion in Kāmrūp under Haradutta and Vīradutta. Mahāmantrī Purṇānanda continued to be the Burā-Gohāin. His son Chandrakānta was made Shairingīā Rajā on the death of the former one.[430]

Soon after his accession Kamaleśvar had to take steps to put down a serious rising in Kāmrūp. It was headed by two brothers, named Haradatta Bujarbaruā and Bīradatta Bujarbaruā who collected a motley band of Kachārīs, Punjābīs and Hindusthanīs and who were secretly

426. A cycle of sixty years, each year of *lākni* having a name of its own.

427. *TB*, p.92.

428. *AB*, p.356.

429. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.62.

430. *TB*, p.136; Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.218-219; H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.83.

aided, it is said by the Rājās of Koch Behār and Bijnī hoping thus to seize Kāmrūp from the Ahoms. In the first phase of the rising nearly the whole of North Kāmrūp fell into their hands. These rebels were nicknamed Dumdumiyās. One account says Mr. Raush was looted and killed by them in Darrang.[431] The pressure on Kāmrūp was possible because Niamat-Ulah Subedar with his force was transferred from Gauhati to Jorhat for helping the Bar-Baruā. Kaliābhomorā Bar-Phukan, unable to get help from the capital where the Sepoys were engaged, raised a force of his own by recruiting Hindusthanis and from local levies obtained from the Rajās of Beltalā and Dimaruās. With this force he crossed to the north bank and attacked and defeated the rebels in several engagements. Haradatta and Viradatta fled, but were traced out and put to death and the rebellion collapsed. This brave act earned for the Bar-Phukan the title Pratāpballabh.[432]

During Kamaleśvar's reign a regular standing army was formed by the efforts of the Burā-Gohāin and both Jorhat and Gauhati had garrisons. One Chandra Gohāin of the Burā-Gohāin family was appointed Captain of the army.

In A.D. 1797 about one thousand Bārasiringiās revolted in Sadiyā. The Khāmti Burā Rajā, Pāni-Narās, Fākeals, Miris, Mishmis, Muluks, Tekeliā Nagās and Ābars joined with them. They attacked the Ahom head-quarters at Sadiyā and speared to death the Sadiyākhowā Gohāin and took away the wives and children. Purṇānanda Burā-Gohāin sent a powerful expedition with a company of Sepoys. The rebels were defeated and leaders taken captive.

There were fresh insurrections of the Moāmariās with whom the Daflās joined, but the Burā-Gohāin crushed them with a strong hand. The Daflās submitted and the Moāmariā Mahanta, Pitāmbar, was captured and put to death. There was another outbreak of the Moāmariās at Bengmarā in 1799 but the rebels were put to flight by an expedition sent against them. After the success of the punitive actions taken against the rebels there was

431. Gait : *op.cit.*, p.219.
432. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, p.84.

peace in the country for the remaining period of the reign of Kamaleśvar. Under him more or less peaceful deplomatic relations were established with Jayantā, Kāchār and Bhutān and even with the Shan State of Möng-Kawng. This king restored Rangpur to its former condition and also built up the new capital at Jorhat. He excavated the river Bhogdoi in order, says Gait, 'to provide this town (Jorhat) with a better water-supply. He also improved the communications in and about Jorhat by constructing the Na-Āli, the Rajābāhar-Āli, the Mohbandhā-Āli, the Kamārbandhā-āli and the Suchandébandhā-Āli. With the king's order Kaliābhomorā constructed a copper-house at Kāmākhyā in Gauhati and also a *Devālay* at Chatrākār.[433] Kamaleśvar died of small-pox in *śak* 1732 (A.D. 1810) on 5th *Māgh*.

37. Hsö-Den-Hpā *alias* Chandra Kānta Singha (1810-1818) :

The deceased king's brother, the Shairingiā Rajā, was raised to the throne by Burā-Gohāin Purṇānanda. He assumed the Ahom name Hsö-Den-Hpā and the Hindu name Chandra Kānta Singha. The deceased king's body was cremated.

Purṇānanda Burā-Gohāin continued to be Rājmantrī. On the death of Kāliabhomorā, Badan Chandra of Duarā family was made Bar-Phukan. After the flight of Badan, Ghanashyām of Dihingiā family was appointed Bar-Phukan. Narahari of Kapaumariā family became Bar-Gohāin and Durgeśvar, son of Kenduguriā Rudreśvar became Barpātra.[434]

He made a dancing girl, named Padmāvatī of common origin, his Parvatiā queen. He also had a bosom friend named Satrām who became his constant companion and conspired against the Burā-Gohāin. Such taste and indulgence on the part of Chandra Kānta became a cause of friction between him and the Burā-Gohāin. Further Badan Chandra was suspected to have, rightly or wrongly, collusion with Satrām. The Burā-Gohāin sent men to arrest Badan Chandra, but the latter fled away to Calcutta from where he left for the capital of the Burmese king with the help of the Calcutta Agent of the Burmese Government.

433. H.S.B. : *op.cit.*, pp.84-85.
434. 'Mānar Asam Ākraman (Prathambār)' by P. Gogoi in *Tai Sanskriti* 1.1. (Gauhati, 1956) pp.25-35. It was translated from Khāmti Buranji by C.K. Gohain.

King Chandra Kānta himself wanted to get rid of the Burā-Gohāin's domination in his government. He wrote secret letters to Badan somehow to secure some help in order to remove the Burā-Gohāin from power. (see S.N. Sen's *Prāchin Bāngālā Patra Sankalan.* Calcutta University, 1942, pp. 170-172)

Burmese Invasions, 1816-1824 :
Treaty of Yandaboo, 1826 :

It may be noted that the Burmese king Bodawpāyā (1781-1819), whose capital was at Amarāpur, had married Rangilī Āideu (Rangilī Mépāyā) of Ahom Duarā family in 1797. Badan was at Amarāpur for sixteen months and through the Ahom queen persuaded Bodawpāyā to assist him with a force. Towards the close of the year 1816 an army of about 8,000 men was sent from Burma. Of this army 5,850 were Shan levies from Möng-Yang, Mānmo (Bhāmo) and Möng-Kawng.[435] The army was led by Badan Chandra by the Pātkāi-Nong-Yang route and arrived at Nāmrūp. By that time its number swelled to about sixteen thousand. At the battle of Ghilādhārī the Burā-Gohāin's army, which was sent to resist, was defeated. Just at this time the Burā-Gohāin died in a mysterious way. A suspicion was that Rājmantrī Purṇānanda committed suicide by licking diamond. With his death the resistance collapsed. His eldest son Ruchināth was then made Burā-Gohāin and Rājmantrī by the nobles. The Burmese advanced and occupied Jorhāt after defeating the Assamese again near Kathālbārī. Ruchināth fled away to Gauhati. Chandra Kānta was allowed to rule, but Badan had the dominating voice. He became Bar-Phukan again and hunted out and killed many relations and supporters of the late Burā-Gohāin. Having established order the Burma army returned home in April 1817 with a large indemnity and a girl for their king. Soon a friction arose between the Bar-Baruā and the Bar-Phukan and the tension became so great that the Bar-Phukan Badan was assassinated by one Rup Singh Bangāl engaged by the other side. Chandra Kānta was then ousted by the Burā-Gohāin Ruchināth, and Brajanāth, a great grandson of Rajeśvar Singha, who was then at silmari in Bengal, was invited to occupy the throne. Chandra Kānta fled to Rangpur. But as Brajanāth had suffered mutilation, his son Purandar Singh was raised to the throne in 1818. Chandra Kānta was

435. *Tai Sanskriti,* 1.1, (Gauhati. 1956), p. 26

seized and a part of his right ear was cut off in order to disqualify him from again becoming king. Many men of Badan's party fled to Burma and complained to the Burmese king against the actions of their enemies.

A fresh force from Burma under the command of Ālā Mingi again appeared in Assam in February 1819. It defeated Purandar's army led by Ruchināth at Māchkhowāgarh and occupied Jorhāt. Purandar and Ruchināth fled to Gauhati in March 1819. Chandra Kānta, who joined the Burmese, was again placed on the throne formally, after which the Burmese General returned home. Before their return the Burmese Commanders made a number of changes among the officers of the Court. Several were put to death as enemies of Chandra Kānta Singha. One Kheremiā Kachārī, named Patāl, was made Bar-Baruā and Badan's son Janmi, Bar-Phukan. Janmi was replaced successively by Bhadrachandra and Lambodar. But Patāl Bar-Barua made a fort at Dighalighāt of Jaypur with the object of fighting the Burmese. At that time the Burmese king sent Mingi Mahā Tiloā with royal ornaments and dresses to the Court of Chandra Kānta Singha. When Tiloā saw the preparations against them he killed Patāl. At this Chandra Kānta thought the Burmese to be hostile and left for Gauhati in April, 1821, leaving Kalibar Bar-Gohāin to fight the Burmese. Kalibar was defeated and made captive and Chandra Kānta was sent for, assuring security in order to be made king. Purandar Singha, meanwhile, went to Silmārī in the British district of Rangpur (Bengal) and applied for the Comapny's help to enable him to regain the throne. He even offered to be a tributary Rajā under the Company.

Chandra Kānta could not be persuaded to come back. The Burmese then filled the vacant throne with Prince Jogeśvar Singha, son of Bagā Konwar. Chandra Kānta went to Bengal. Both Purandar and Chandra Kānta tried to drive out the Burmese from Assam. In this situation, in the spring of 1822, Mingi Mahā Bandulā, a veteran Burmese general, came to take the command. Chandra Kānta gave a gallant fight to the Burmese at Mohgarh but was defeated with heavy casualties and fled across Goālpārā to the British territory again. The Burmese General warned the British Officer at Goālpārā against giving any protection to the fugitive. The Burmese then devastated the country and created a reign of terror by their widespread acts of plunder, torture and killing of the inhabitants of the country. The country relapsed into anarchy.

With the outbreak of the first Anglo-Burmese War the British troops entered Assam and drove out the Burmese. The British forces also landed in Burma, defeated the Burmese and forced them to sue for peace. Now by the Treaty of Yandaboo, 24th February, 1826, by the Article 2 His Majesty the king of Āvā 'renounces all claims upon, and will abstain from all future interference with, the principality of Assam and its dependencies'.

After keeping the province under their direct management for a few year, in 1833, Upper Assam except the Matak country was granted to Rajā Purandar Singha with whom a treaty was made by which 'The Raja Purunder Singh agrees to pay an annual tribute of 50,000 Rupees of Rajah Mohree coinage to the Honourable Company'. The territory assigned to Purandar Singha was 'the portion of Assam lying on the southern bank of the Burrumpooter to the eastward of the Dhansiri River, and on the northern bank to the eastward of a nullah immediately east of Bishenath'. But as Purandar fell deeply into arrears in the payment of his tribute and declared his inability to meet the engagements by which he had been bound the British Government assumed from him the power in A.D. 1838. Since then Assam became a part of British territory. The royal families were pensioned off.

CHAPTER VIII

The Ahom System of Administration

The Ahoms, a section of the northern Tai, who secured a permanent footing in Assam in the first half of the thirteenth century, introduced an administrative system which had a number of features quite new to the people of this land. It was a form of hereditary monarchy with a Council of Ministers and a Great Council of chief nobles and officers of the State, a king of *magnum concilium*, to give general guidance to the king in all matters of major importance to the State.

The King :

The Ahom King is called *Chao-Hpā*, *Svargadev* or *Svargadeo* being its Assamese equivalent. Here *Chao* is given the meaning of 'King' and *Hpā* that of 'Heaven' together meaning 'heavenly king'. Thus Svargadev has a sense of divinity attached to the dignity of his office. This way of interpreting terms of a different language appears to have been the result of proselytizing activities of Hinduism, and even an earlier king of the dynasty was given the appellation of *Svarganārāyaṇdev*. Yet at a later stage the story was built up by the orthodox priesthood of the Hindus that the line of kings from Svarganārāyaṇdev had a low origin which was to be traced to a scandal of Indra, the Lord of Heaven. There is nothing of the kind in the writings of the race itself. The word *Chao* in Tai is simply a term of honour or dignity attached to the name, not only of a king, but also to that of any great person or noble. All great Gohāins[1] and officers had *Chao* before their names. *Hpā* means here simply a king or a ruler. The kings or Rajās of other races, having no divine or heavenly origin, were also called *Hpās* by the Ahoms. The Kachārī kings were called *Hpās* by the Ahoms and *Rajās* by the Hindus.

1. 'Gohāin' from *kūm*, man, *hāi*, shining, great, prominent, hence Assamese *Dāngariā* or great (dāngar) man.
There were three Gohāins or Dāngariās.

The Ahom rulers did not originally claim to be heavenly and attached any divinity to themselves, though in their legends they are said to have originally descended from heaven. Even heaven had a different meaning to them. It was as earthly as the earth itself and their ancestors physically marched down from that high region to the low countries. In the Brahmaputra valley alone they were looked upon as 'born of the gods' (*deo hans*)[2] by the local peoples, either from their superior physique and brightness and fairness of colour of the body or from their superior might. The Ahom dynasty is called *Indravaṁśi* by the Brahmins and hence heavenly. But the ruling dynasties of the same race elsewhere in the Far East are never so called. The Tai dynasty of Tali was connected with Aśoka by the Buddhists. The *Sawbwas* of Burma have nothing to do with Indra and heaven.

The theory was locally developed in Assam by the time of Larā Rajā in the latter part of the seventeenth century A.D. that, being of divine origin the king's person was to be sacred and perfect, free from any blemish or mark of injury, whether from disease or accident. A prince having such a mark or defect was to be debarred from ascending the throne. It logically led to a novel device of mutilating rival princes in order to disqualify them for being kings. This was supposed to prevent ambitious princes from making a bid for the throne through conspiracy against the ruling king. The mutilation consisted in most cases in splitting the ear, 'a comparatively merciful way of rendering the sufferer ineligible'.[3] It was probably thought to be less harmful than a fratricidal war for power which might otherwise take place as among the Mughul princes. But the practice of mutilation for such a purpose was unknown to the Ahoms and not mentioned previous to the reign of Larā Rajā. The Ahom princes were themselves generals and fought with enemies in the battlefield and fighting princes cannot keep their persons uninjured. A historic example is Hsö-Klen-Möng or Garganyā Rajā, who, being seriously wounded in his fight against Turbak, had to temporarily retire to the capital for treatment. His son, Hsö-Khām-Hpā or Khorā Rajā, lame king was so much hurt when not yet king that he had a limping gait. But no body raised the question of debarring them from accession to the throne. But, contrary to the theory of

2. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, p.11.
3. *Captain Welsh's Expedition to Assam* by J. Johnstone, (Shillong), 1912, p.2.

divine origin and inviolability of the king's person, many monarchs of the dynasty were deposed and put to death by rival chiefs who were not all of royal origin. Among others, it is important to note in his connection the killing of Udayāditya and Rāmadhvaj by Deberā, Gobar Rajā and Hsö-Jin-Hpā by Bānhgarhiā Ātan Burā-Gohāin and Hsö-Doi-Hpā at the bidding of Lāluksolā Bar-Phukan

The Ahoms were essentially a fighting and ruling race bothering less about religion than material prosperity and national freedom. They were more concerned with the maintenance and promotion of the physical and mental vigour of the race and efficiency and defence power of the administration than anything else. But at a later stage, particularly from the time of Udayāditya, the Ahom rulers fell under the influence of Hindu priesthood to such an extent that religion began to assert its primacy over the concerns of the State and during Śiva Singha's reign its domination reached the climax with all its seroius repercussions on the administration of the country. The Ahoms were also a literary race from very early times. Among others, they produced a mass of historical literature of political importance, which are properly called Chronicles ('Buranjis'). These Ahom Chronicles, written in a racy prose style in the Tai script and language, give a systematic record of contemporary events and also of the services of the members of the community to the State in a chronological order maintaining a link between succeessive generations.

With a few remarkable exceptions, the kingship was hereditary in the male line, normally the eldest son succeeding to the throne after the death of the ruling king. The eldest son may be superseded by the younger ones if the former be found imbecile or incompetent. A great departure from the rule of succession is noticed in the case of the sons of Hsö-Khāng-Hpā and later of Rudra Singha, who became kings one after another, and in the latter case to the exclusion of the line of Śiva Singha according to the death bed injunction of the deceased king. In the event of failure of sons and brothers the throne goes to the sons of the brother next in seniority to the former monarch. Failing any heirs in these two lines the chief nobles of the Court elect one amongst the nearest relations of the late monarch, paying some attention to the claims of princes of nearest consanguinity, but 'more to those of personal merit'[4]. In this connection it should be remembered that from

4. J. Johnstone : *Captain Welsh's Expedition to Assam*, p.2.

Hsö-Hum-Möng's settlements of princes with estates or *mels* early in the sixteenth century there arose five Royal Houses called Sāringiā (Shāiringiā), Tipamiyā, Dihingiā, Nāmrūpiā, Tungkhungiā and later also Sāmaguriā according to the names of their respective provinces. Hsö-Hum-Möng also created a principality or Rajāship for each of the three provinces of Tipām, Shāiring and Nāmrūp.[5] The successors to the throne were therefore first chosen from amongst these Rajās in order of seniority and personal merit. If these fail, then a selection of a prince is made from the other royal houses by the Gohains (Ministers) with the approval of the Great Council of the Gohāins, Phukans, Baruās and Rājkhowās of the State which is usually held in the Great Chamber (Haw-long : *Bar-charā*) of the royal Court. Only a prince of the blood-royal can become king and none from outside. 'If an ordinary being be sent down to the earth', said Lengdon in selecting Khun-Löng and Khun-Lai, 'he will not be able to be a worthy ruler. He, whose forefathers were never rulers, can hardly be expected to be a king'[6]. Bānhgarhiā Ātan Burā-Gohāin refused to become king as he was not a prince and did not inherit royal blood. Only Lāluksolā Bar-Phukan acted in contravention of this time-honoured principle and aspired to become a king.

The King's coronation is held with elaborate ceremony and pomp. The Kings mount on a male elephant and accompanied by his principal wife riding on a female one, proceeds to plant a *pipal* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) on the hill, Charāideo, 'the seat and centre of the ancient worship' of the Ahom conquerors with the temples of their gods and graves of their Kings on the site below. In this journey he suspends the *Chumdeo* round his neck, takes the sword, *Hengdāng*, girt round his waist and wears a cap made of feathers of the sacred bird *Kāi-sheng* (*Deo Kukurā*)[7] and he is accompanied by all the principal officers of the kingdom and also by a large part of the army and civil population.[8] Francis Hamilton says that having planted the tree he enters the *Pāṭ-Ghar*, *Holong-Ghar*

5. See *ante*.
6. *AB*, p.10.
7. *PAB*, p.11.
8. *Account of Assam* by Francis Hamilton (*DHAS*, Gauhati) 1940, p.17.

and *Śingari-Ghar* one after another.[9] Gait also mentions three houses. But it is doubtful whether three houses were erected for the purpose. Both Gait and Hamilton agree that it was the *Śingari-Ghar* where throne of gold was placed for the King to ascend. But the *Pāṭ-Ghar* should actually be the house for the throne (*Pāṭ*-throne). The *Pāṭ-Ghar* was, in all probability, later added for the performance of the Hindu form of *abhiṣek* of the Hinduized Ahom kings getting priority over the other two structures. For the Rajā and his queen 'first enter the *Pāt-Ghar*, where some water is poured on them from a shell called *Dakshināvarta Śangkha*, the mouth of which is turned the way contrary to that of the shell, which is usually sounded by the Hindus, in order to attract a little notice from the gods'[10]. The two royal persons then enter the *Holong-Ghar* and sit on a raised bamboo platform (*hānglāng*) under which is placed one of each species of animal that can be procured, such as an elephant, a horse, a cow, a deer, a hog, a fowl, a duck, a snake, an insect, a fish and even a man and others. Then the consecrated water is poured over the royal couple the sprinkles felling on the animals below. In this there is mention of the 'water from nine Tirthas', separately kept in golden vessels medicated with plants called *Sarvausodhi* and *mahausodhi*, which is also poured. This is a clear instance of a mixed form of ceremony in which both the Ahom and Hindu priests took part. After the bathing was over the King and the Queen finally proceeded to the *Śingari-Ghar*, the King holding in his grip the sword *Hengdāng*, and just before ascending the *Singari-Ghar* he killed a baffalo'[11]. Entering the chamber they take their seats on a throne of gold and the leading nobles come up and offer their presents.

The descendants of Chao Hsö-Ka-Hpā, the founder of the dynasty in Assam, were alone eligible for the king's office which was normally hereditary, but, on the failure of the direct royal line or on grounds of lack of calibre of the heir, the king was elected by the Ministers with the consent of the Great Council. The King was the highest executive officer of the State and presided over every department. He distributed honours, titles and properties including spoils of war without the concurrence of

9. F. Hamilton : *op.cit.*, p.17.
10. *Ibid.*, p.17.
11. Earlier custom was to kill a man, a criminal being selected for the purpose, but 'since the time of Rudra Singha a buffalo had been substituted'.

the Council of Ministers but in consultation with them where he deemed fit. He appointed and dismissed the Burā-Gohāin, the Bar-Gohāin, the Bar-pātra-Gohāin, the Bar-Baruā and the Bar-Phukan, the five highest officers or Counsellors of the State next to the king, who also constituted the Council of Ministers. He appointed, with the consent of the Great Gohāins, the three Governors of the frontier provinces, namely, the Sadiyākhowā Gohāin, Salāl Gohāin and the Marangikhowā Gohāin and the Phukans, Baruās, Rājkhowās, and Bar-Barās. The appointments of the Princes as Rajās to the various *mels* (princely estates), such as Tipamiā, Sāringiā and Nāmrupiā, were also made by the King in his discretion. All the above Ministers, Governors, Rajās and officials had their distinctive official uniforms, conveyances and insignia according to rank and precedence. The King also appointed and accredited ambassadors to foreign countries and received ambassadors and envoys from them.

The King was the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the State. He appointed and dismissed the field Commanders of the army and the navy and ordered the disposition of the forces and decided questions of strategy in actual warfare with the help of his experts, who moved with the king, and issued commands from time to time. He declared war and concluded peace. But in these matters of high policy he used to consult not only with his Ministers but also, where necessary summon the Great Council for its advice and consent.

Regarding law to be applied he was mostly guided by customs. The ancient Code, which was brought down by Khun-Löng and Khun-Lāi, was greatly modified towards the latter part of the Ahom rule. The Hindu Law, as it existed in Burma and India and also tribal customs must have changed the character of the original Ahom Law and customs, which evidently became more rigorous in the later period.

He was also the supreme judge to whom the Bar-Baruā, who was the head of the judiciary and keeper of king's conscience comparable to the Lord Chancellor in England, referred for approval all his decisions in cases, appellate or original, before announcing them. He decided only such cases as were to be decided by the King.

The King could have, if he wanted, two more queens over and above the Bar-Kunwarī or Chief Queen. The second was called Parvatīā

Kunwarī and the third Rāidangia Kunwarī. The daughters of the Ahom nobles alone had the priviledge of enjoying the status of any of these queens. For a breach of this convention Chandra Kānta Singha incurred the displeasure of his Court nobles[12]. He may have wives of inferior status who are called Chamuā Kunwarīs. The royal household had a gradation of officers and attendants for its different departments.

Council Of Ministers :

The Council of Ministers, or *Pātra-Mantrī* as it is called by the Hindus, consisted of five great Counsellors or Ministers—the Bar-Gohāin, the Burā-Gohāin, the Barpātra-Gohāin, the Bar-Baruā and the Bar-Phukan—appointed by the King. They were individually responsible to the King. They had no collective responsibility in the modern parliamentary sense but they discussed matters of policy and of day-to-day administration collectively in the King's Council Chamber. Of these Counsellors the Bar-Phukan lived in his distant head-quarters in Lower Assam. Before the acquisition of Gauhati and during certain intervals afterwards his head-quarters were at Kājali and later at Kaliābar, but, with Kāmrūp annexed, they were firmly established at Gauhati, which, because of its strategic importance, developed into a sub-capital of the kingdom with a regular Court of the Bar-Phukan. He could order execution of criminals by drowning or clubbing. He was not empowered to behead or use the sword. Due to the distance he could not always attend the Council meetings, but attended them when important questions were discussed. The same reason gave greater autonomy to his local administration. The Bar-Phukan had an immense responsibility, that of defending the kingdom by guarding the main gateway of Gauhati on the invasion route from Mughul India. He was, of necessity, the Viceroy and Supreme Commander of the Lower Assam armed froces, both land and naval. He was also to be a proved diplomat capable of conducting diplomatic relations with Indian and border States. He had in his Court six Phukans to aid and advise him in the efficient discharge of his functions and they were the Paṇī-Phukan, the

12. He married a dancing girl named Padmāvatī, who was the daughter of a Hindu *bhakat* (devotee) of Bengenāāṭī *Satra* and whom he made Parvatīā Kunwarī-See Harakānta's *Buranji*, p.85.

Dekā-Phukan, the Dihingīā-Phukan, the Neog-Phukan and two Chetīā Phukans. The Paṇī-Phukan was a naval officer second in rank to the Nāoboichā Phukan. He superintended 6,000 *pāiks* employed in cultivation, fishing and manufactures during peace times. The Dihingīā and the Neog-Phukan were the immediate assistants of the Bar-Phukan. The territory over which the Bar-Phukan exercised his jurisdiction extended in the east to Kaliābar and comprised Kāmrūp, Darrang, Nowgong, and the Deś-duārs of the south bank.

The Bar-Baruā, who had equal status with the Bar-Phukan, had to be always present at the royal Court. For he was the Chief Secretary, Chief Revenue Officer, and the head of the judiciary. All appeals from lower Courts lay to him. For all cases, other than those which could be decided by the King alone, there was a judge called the Nyāysodhā Phukan (Phu-kan-Phu-shan-ngin) who was supposed to be a legal expert. The Bar-Baruā's jurisdiction extended to all the territories to the east of Kaliābar except the provinces under the Great Gohāins. He was also endowed with an estate. He commanded 14,000 *pāiks*. Gait points out that his perquisites consisted of an allowance of seven per cent of the number for his private use, together with the fines levied from them for certain offences, and the fees paid by persons appointed to minor offices under government. He had no power to order execution of criminals, but he could slightly mutilate his own servants of his estate. The Bar-Phukan and the Bar-Baruā could appoint *kāṇḍī* Saikiās.

The three Great Gohains had equal status. One of them was appointed Rājmantrī. On all occasions their concurrence regarding important affairs was indispensable. They proclaimed the Monarch and could depose him in the event of incapacity or great delinquency. In the provinces allotted to each, they exercised most of the independent rights of sovereignty. They could sanction death sentence on criminals, but had no right to order execution by beheading or shedding blood. Hence the practice was to kill by drowning. In the event of war or for execution of public works they furnished their quota of militia or labourers. In case of the Gohāins the succession was usually hereditary except when the son of a Gohain was incapacitated by lack of ability or any other cause.

The Bar-Baruā had a Council of six Phukans, called *Charuā* Phukans, namely, the Nāoboichā Phukan, the Bhitaruāl Phukan, the Na

Phukan, the Dihingīā Phukan, the Dekā Phukan and the Neog Phukan. In addition, two other Phukans attend the Council as occasions demand and they were the Nyāyasodhā Phukan and the Chāngrung Phukan[13]. The Nāoboichā Phukan was the head of the navy. The Pāṇī-Phukan at Gauhati was the second in command. Another Phukan, called Siring-Phukan[14], was in charge of the State ceremonies performed according to the Ahom customs.

A number of new Phukans were created in the later period, particularly since the time of Śiva Singha, some of whom were Brahmins. For instance, the Khangiā Phukan, Tāmuli Phukan, Deoliyā Phukan, Parvatīyā Phukan and Jālbhārī Phukan were all Brahmins. As the departments increased in number these new officers had to be created and put in charge of them[15]. Military stores were under the superintendence of the Khārghariā Phukan. The Nyāysodhā Phukan represented the Sovereign and received appeals from the Bar-Baruā and Bar-Phukan. Next in rank to the Phukans were the Baruās, (*phu-kè*) of whom there were many. Among them the Gandhiā Baruā was in charge of the records department and the Majumdār Baruā was the publicity officer, who had also to read letters from foreign countries and prepare replies to them as directed by the King. He was the keeper of the Lion Seal of the King which was affixed to the correspondences issued from the King's Court. The King's private treasurer was called the Bhāndārī Baruā who had a Kāyastha Bhāndārī as his assistant.

There were twelve Rājkhowās who were always in attendance at the Court of Justice (*Bar-Charuā*) ready to be employed as umpires to settle disputes. There were other Rājkhowās also[16]. They were heads of certain districts where they supervised the works of *pāiks* and administered justice. In times of war they were to join the army with their respective contingents. The *Kaṭakīs* were envoys or ambassadors, the *Kākatis* were writers and the *Dalois* were astrologers.

13. Chief Engineer. He was in carge of constructions of buildings, *maidāms* (graves), ramparts, temples, etc.

14. Chief Priest who presides over the Ahom ceremonies, the most important of which are the *rik-khan* (calling back life), *Umphā* and *Sāiphā* are worth mantioning. *Rik-khan* was performed generally after a victory in a war.

15. For details see Francis Hamilton's *Account of Assam*. pp.20-21.

16. They are enumerated in Harakānta's *Buranji*, p.96.

Great Council :

The Great Council was summoned when its advice and consent were deemed necessary on a big issue, such as war and peace or selection of a new king on the failure of the regular line or any disorder and insurrection in the country.

The offices of Tipām, Sāring and Nāmrūpiā Rajās were not hereditary, but were conferred upon the reigning king's heirs and near relations. These Rajās exercised the same powers as the Great Gohāins. They relieved the King of less important duties, and assisted him in the more weighty affairs of State.

In Upper Assam there were no vassal chiefs, but with the annexation of Darrang and Kāmrūp, the Rajās and Zamindārs particularly the Rajā of Darrang, Rāṇī Rajā, Luki Duār Rajā, Beltalā Rajā, Dimaruā Rajā and Gobhā Rajā paid revenue and furnished their quotas of men for service. They administered justice within their respective territories, but could not pass sentence of death, and there was right of appeal against their decision to the Bar-Phukan.

So far as the neighbouring hilltribes and hill States of those days were concerned, the Ahom rulers thought it expedient to abstain from interfering with their internal social and political systems. On the contrary, it was their policy to promote good neighbourly relations with the hill people by creating all possible kinds of facilities for intercourse with them. For instance, roads were constructed for communication with the hills, open marts were organised for the growth of border trade and friendship between the hills and the plains people; and even fertile tracts of agricultural land in the border areas within the Ahom territory were granted to the hill neighbours, such as the Nagās, to raise food crops to meet their food deficiencies.

Pāik System :

The whole male population was divided into squads of four men, each called a *Got* or unit, both for service as soldiers during war and as labourers during peace. Since the reign of Rājeśvar Singha, the number of men forming a *Got* in Upper Assam had been reduced to three. All persons below the age of 15 years and above 50 years were

exempted from service. The levy of the first man in a *Got* was called a *mul*, of the second,a *dowāl*, and of the third a *tewāl*. When the *mul* levy was in active service the other two were to remain ready in their respective areas and, when called, must join duties immediately. Registers of *pāiks* were maintained and their vacancies promptly filled. The order of the *pāiks* worked like a standing army which could be called forth and mobilized speedily whenever necessity arose by the Kheldār. The *Pāik* system alone enabled the Government to carry out schemes of extensive constructional works throughout the kingdom. The *pāiks* were organized into *khels* which are comparable to work-guilds, each doing a particular kind of productive work for the State. Of these *pāiks* 20 men were commanded by a Barā, 100 men by a Saikiā, 1,000 men by a Hāzarikā or Hāzāree, 3,000 men by a Rājkhowā, 6,000men by a Phukan. The Bar-Baruā and Bar-Phukan as Commandens-in-Chief of Upper and Lower Assam respectively had each the particular command of a body of 12,000 men and, it is said the number was raised to 14,000 in case of the Bar-Baruā. The Phukans, Rājkhowās and Hāzarikās were nominated by the King, but appointed with the advice and concurrence of the Gohāins. The Saikiās and Barās were appointed by their respective Phukans and Rājkhowās. The privates might demand through the regular channel the dismissal of their Barās and Saikiās and the appointment of an officer of their own choice. Each officer administered justice to the men under their command with a right of appeal to his superior officer, and ultimately to the Nyāysodhā Phukan. From these services were exempted the descendants of the hereditary nobility and all who possessed offices under the Government. 'The administration of justice', says Mr. David Scott in his Notes on Welsh's Report on Assam (1794), 'is said to have been speedy, efficient, and impartial in former times, but a good deal corrupted since the commencement of the disorders occasioned by the Moamaria insurrection'. The next higher group above the *pāiks* and below the officers and nobles were the *Chamuās* and promotion, according to merit, was from the *pāiks* to *Chamuās* and from the latter to officers including the Bar-Baruā and the Bar-Phukan, only the Great Gohāins being restricted to the descendants of the original Gohāin families who came with Hsö-Kā-Hpā.

No record was kept in criminal trials, but in civil cases a summary of the proceedings was drawn out and delivered to the successful party. Trials were conducted before the Bar-Baruā or his delegate as President. No *Wukeels* were employed, the parties or one of their relations

appearing personally. Even the three Gohāins were subject to the jurisdiction of the Bar-Baruā's Court. Later a practice developed of deriving a revenue from the commutation of the services of the *pāiks* for a money payment varying from 6 to 18 rupees per *Got* and of exempting from personal service on the score of caste or rank.

Every family was given a rent-free economic holding, of land sufficient for food supply, by per capita allotment of nearly three acres (two *purās*) of the best paddy lands in addition to the homestead plot for house and garden. The rice lands were redistributed from time to time and for the purpose census was regularly taken. There was thus no opportunity in this sector for the growth of a landed class on the one hand, a landless proletariat on the other. David Scott rightly remarks that during the Ahom rule 'there is no division of the land in Assam amongst a comparatively small number of individuals such as seen in feudal countries of Europe and in Bengal, and the cultivated soil may be considered as the property of the paykes or peasants owing service to the State to whom it is allotted[17].'

17. K.T.P. : *op.cit.*, pp.77-105; Johnstone : *Captain Welsh's Expediton to Assam*, Chap.I, pp 1-4; A. Mackenzie : Appendix A. 'Welsh's Report on Assam 1794', in *The North-East Frontier of Bengal* (Calcutta), 1884, pp.377-394; Francis Hamilton : *An Account of Assam* (Gauhati), 1940, pp.14-41; Gait : *op.cit.*, pp.233-246.

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458	1	apposed	opposed
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525	14	of	or
536	1	Said by	said, by