

Chapter V

Push and Pull Factors in the Economy: Resource Generation and Concentration.

While 'warfare' and 'leadership', two variables of early and secondary state formations¹ were significantly linked with the emergence of the Koch state; its economic solidarity was dependent to the surplus generating agricultural economy supplanted by the peasantization of the tribals. Technological acculturation had stimulated the process of peasantization of the tribals and *sanskritization* of their culture². Specialization in crafts and monetization of the economic transactions through the circulation of a common currency by the Koches (*Narayani Tanka*) had accelerated the rate of surplus production that had been appropriated by the state.

5.1. Economic Typologies: Tribal and Non-Tribal.

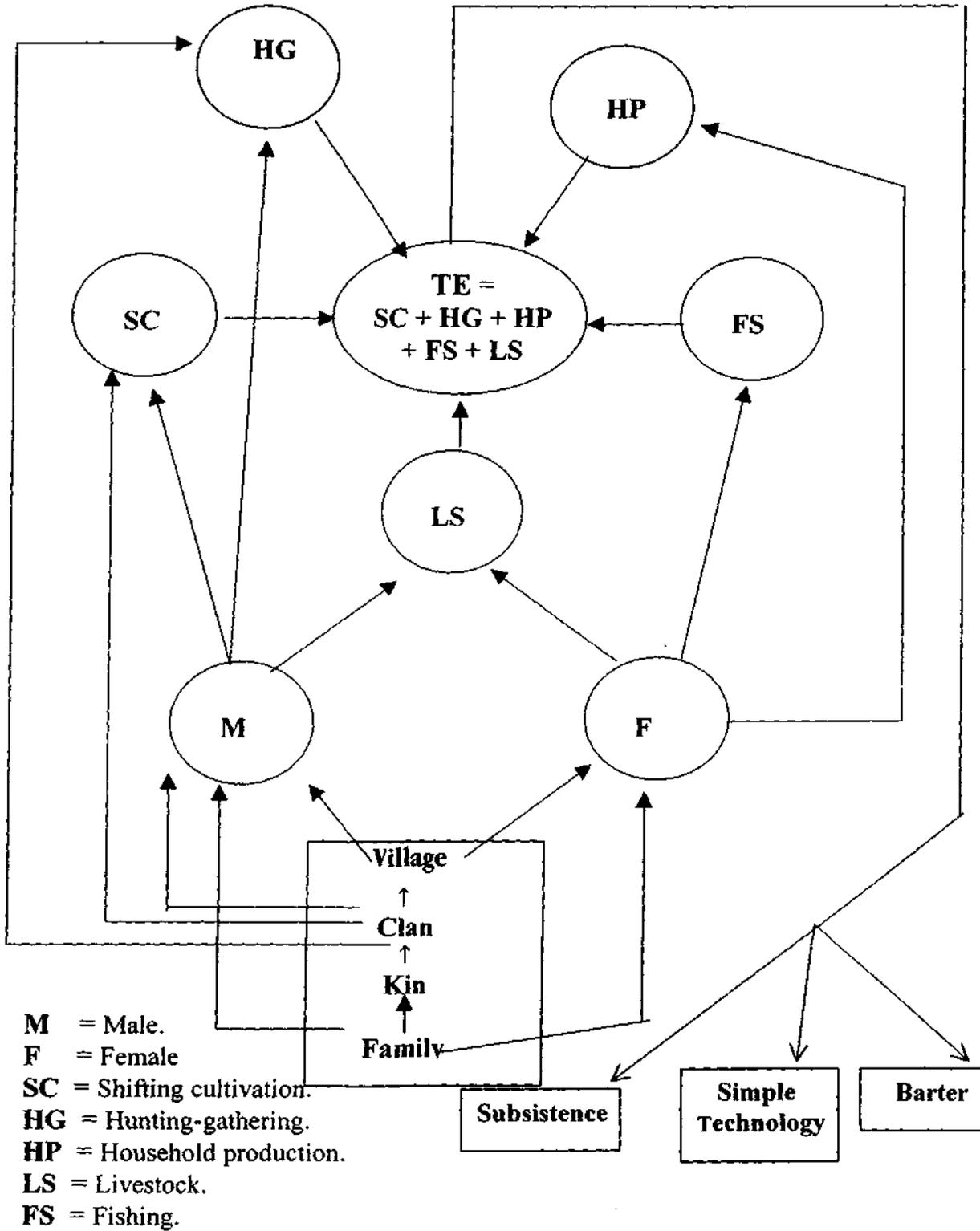
Main tribal groups of the present study are the Koches and Meches who settled down in large number in the geographical region of our study. The pertinent fact of their economy was the close relationship between the nature and natural environment they inhabited which is basically the hills and foothills of the Assam-Bengal Duars. Location and nature of the land had determined the mode of productions of their economy. So in the medieval period, the Meches kept them aside from the periodical inundated lands located in the north of the *Brahmaputra*.³ But in the *Duars* they were acquainted with the artificial irrigation.⁴ The late 19th century official reports on the Western Duars have spotted the Meches with their traditional habit of *jhum* (shifting) cultivation⁵. So in 1895 D. Sunder observed that

'the habits of the Meches were very nomadic, and they used to shift their cultivation and homesteads from place to place that they may obtain the full benefit of the virgin soil'.⁷

So it was the urge of utilization of virgin soil which made the Meches nomadic in their settlement.

Jhum cultivation of the Meches used to be carried out by the tribal villages and families⁷ which have been illustrated in the Koch genealogies and chronicles.⁸

Figure 5.1.: Tribal-economy and settlement pattern.



Economically it alone was not self-sufficient. Cattle rearing were also a common and significant feature of their economy. Even Visvasimha and Sisvasimha, in their early life had participated in the cattle rearing with other tribal boys. Collective hunting for both ceremonial and subsistence, is apparent from the genealogies and the chronicles.⁹ Fishing both community and household had been practiced by the women folk of the Koch and Mech tribes with a triangular fishing means called '*jakai*'. *Jakai* was being used by the Koch, Mech and Rabha tribes and is still prevalent in the *duars*. The subsidiary features of the tribal economy like--livestock, fishing and hunting made the whole economic structure as a mixed one.

The only craft that the Mongoloid tribes of the region had developed since the time immemorial is the *endi-culture*¹⁰. The Mech women were experts in rearing of *endi* silk worm and making thread and cloths from that silk. It was consumed within the family and rarely brought into the ceremonial markets.

Mostly forest products had been utilized for making the implements of the productions like--agricultural tools, hunting and fishing implements and weaving looms. Production was labour-oriented. The units of production had been varied in tune with the operation of productivity. *Jhuming*, hunting, fishing and livestock were mostly collective works or had community participation. But *endi-culture* was basically a family oriented - production.

The entire structure of the traditional tribal economy has been illustrated in the figure 5.1. It indicates that TE was a mixed economy with different subsidiaries such as--*jhum* cultivation (SC), hunting-gathering (HG), household production (HP), fishing (FS), and livestock (LS) or $TE=SC+HG+HR+FS+LS$. Technologically it was simple. The tribal crafts had no market network. The mode of exchange was confined to the barter level. So the tribal economy did not cross the level of subsistence. Whatever the surplus generated was consumed within the village or community in ceremonial feasts, folk dances and other community gatherings. In spite of it tribal economy had close proximity with the non-tribal economy of the same region.

Non-tribal economy of the region was far advanced than the subsistence economy of the tribals. Agriculture was the main source of surplus generation. Introduction of advanced agricultural techniques and technologies for rice cultivation by the *Kayastha*

Bhuiyans had contributed to the generation of surplus in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley.¹¹ Cultivation of other food grains and raw materials for crafts had multiplied the amount of surplus.

There are sufficient examples of specialization in crafts and division of labour in the non-tribal economy. Weaving, iron, earthen and ivory works with specialized technologies were the general feature of in that economic typology .It had enough market prospects. Means of exchange was not bartered. Rather cowry cells and metallic coins were used extensively. Thus there was ample scope of surplus exploitation.

5.2.Agriculture: Peasantization, Surplus Generation and Extractions.

Juxtaposition of two different economic typologies in a particular region ¹² had inevitably led to the diffusion of techniques and technologies of production system from the advanced to the less advanced. Simultaneously it quickened the process of the development of economic structure and helped the tribal economy to generate more surpluses to be exploited by the state. Moreover transfer of capital from the Chikina hill of Goalpara to Hingulabas and then to Kamatapur by the early Koch rulers ¹³ enabled the Koches to establish their control over the surplus generating agricultural economy of the plains of Northern Bengal. So the extraction of agricultural surplus from the 1560s to 1772 A.D. was the primary task of the Koch kingdom in its internal affairs.

5.2.1. Agricultural Products and Sub-Products.

Agriculture was the main feature of both the tribal and non-tribal economy. Rice of different varieties was the main agricultural crop. Rice of two broad categories like-- *aush* (*ahu-bitri/bhadai*) and *aman* (*hemantika/sali*) were cultivated hugely in the Koch kingdom. Table 5.1 based on the 19th century official reports ¹⁴shows that the Tista-Brahmaputra valley used to produce large varieties of *aush* and *aman*. *Aush* used to be sown regularly particularly in the highlands. The *aman* rice requires irrigation and transplantation of seed plants (*bichan*) to the main land. This rice requires law land and clay that can contain water and moisture for a long time. *Boa* rice used to sown broad caste in the low land (marshy land). The Koches, Meches and other tribals of the region were familiar with the cultivation of different varieties of *aush*, *aman* and *boa* paddy.

Table 5.1.: Varieties of rice cultivated in the Tista-Brahmaputra Valley.

District	<i>Aush/Bitri/Early</i>	<i>Aman/Sali/Late</i>
Cooch Behar	27 varieties	76 varieties
Rangpur	55 „	170 „
Darjeeling	11 „	24 „

Rice was the staple crop for both the tribals and non-tribals. Sub-products made from rice like--*chira* (parched rice), *muri* (fried rice) and *khai* (puffed rice) were very popular among the peoples of the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. Other food grains like--wheat, *china*, *kaon*, *makai* (maize) and pulses were also grown in the region. Pulses of different varieties like--*moog* (*phaseolus mug*), *musur*, *ksheshari* (*lathyrus sativus*), *thakuri* (*phaseolus radiatus*), *rahar* (*gajanus indicus*) and pea were popular food grains.¹⁴ Oil seeds such as --mustard (*sarisha/rai*) and *til* (*sesamum indicum*) were also grown in the Koch kingdom. Potato, ginger, garlic, turmeric, onion and arum were produced in abundance for local consumption. The cash crops mainly tobacco had large-scale production. The plains of Cooch Behar, particularly Dinhat, Mathabanga and Mekhliganj *Parganas* were the major sites of tobacco cultivation. Fiber like *shan* and *kunkura* (rhea) were also cultivated. The *shan* was used for making fishing net. *Kunkura* was famous for making trap. Cultivation of the last two varieties of fiber was confined to the fishing community.¹⁵

To offer the betel leaf (*pan*) to the guests was a common feature of the people of Tista-Brahmaputra valley including Koch, Mech, Ahom and non-tribal communities. The *Baruis* were and still are the traditional producer of betel leaf. In the Duars, betel leaf is still procured from the jungles.

Bamboo is a natural product which grows all over the country .Its varieties depend on the geological variations i.e. hills, plains etc. Hunting and fishing instruments, agricultural implements and building home and homesteads were basically made of bamboo of large varieties. Bamboo had extensive use in the making of furniture, musical instruments and utensils of daily uses. Bamboo was also used in making arms and weapons of the tribal militia¹⁶ . Late 16th century account of Ralf Fitch, an English traveler, contains the testimony of great use of bamboo in the defence of the country .It recorded that

'all the countries is set with bamboo or canes made sharpe at both the ends and driven into the earth, and they can let in the water and drown the ground above knee deepe, that men nor horses can passe.¹⁷

Like the bamboo, *motha* grass was and still is a natural product. *Motha* had the largest use in making of mats. Timbers like- *sal* (*shorea robusta*), *sisu*, *khair*, *sonari*, *agoru*, *maina*, *bahera*, *ghila*, *silikha* (*centrena*), *tentul*, *bat*, *odal* (*stereulia*), *shimul* (*bombax malabaricum*) and other valuable trees grown naturally in the jungles of the Tista-Brhmaputra valley had their immense use in the domestic and community life of the people.

Table 5.2: Agricultural crops.

Food grains	Oil eeds	Cash crops	Roots & fruits	Others
paddy, wheat, china, kaon.	mustard, lentil.	jute, <i>shan</i> (net fibre), <i>kunkura</i> (rhea), <i>mutha</i> , tobacco.	Potato, onion, ginger, <i>kanchu</i> , turmeric, orange, pineapple.	bamboo, betel nut, cottons.

Fruits, both cultivated and wild, were produced in the region having local characteristic. Jack fruits, banana, mangoes, olive and citrus fruits were produced in the kingdom. The *Yogini Tantra* supplies a vivid list of fruits and vegetables dedicated to the Devi Kamakshya during her worship which include most of the items mentioned above, and papaya, brinjal, plum, guava, sweet oranges (*santara*) of different varieties. The *Fathiya-i-Ibriya* and *Letters of Stephen Cacella* have mentioned the extensive production of oranges.¹⁸ Among the citrus fruits lemon and *lothkan* drew the attention of the Mughals for their taste¹⁹. Pineapples and sugar cane were also produced in the region.

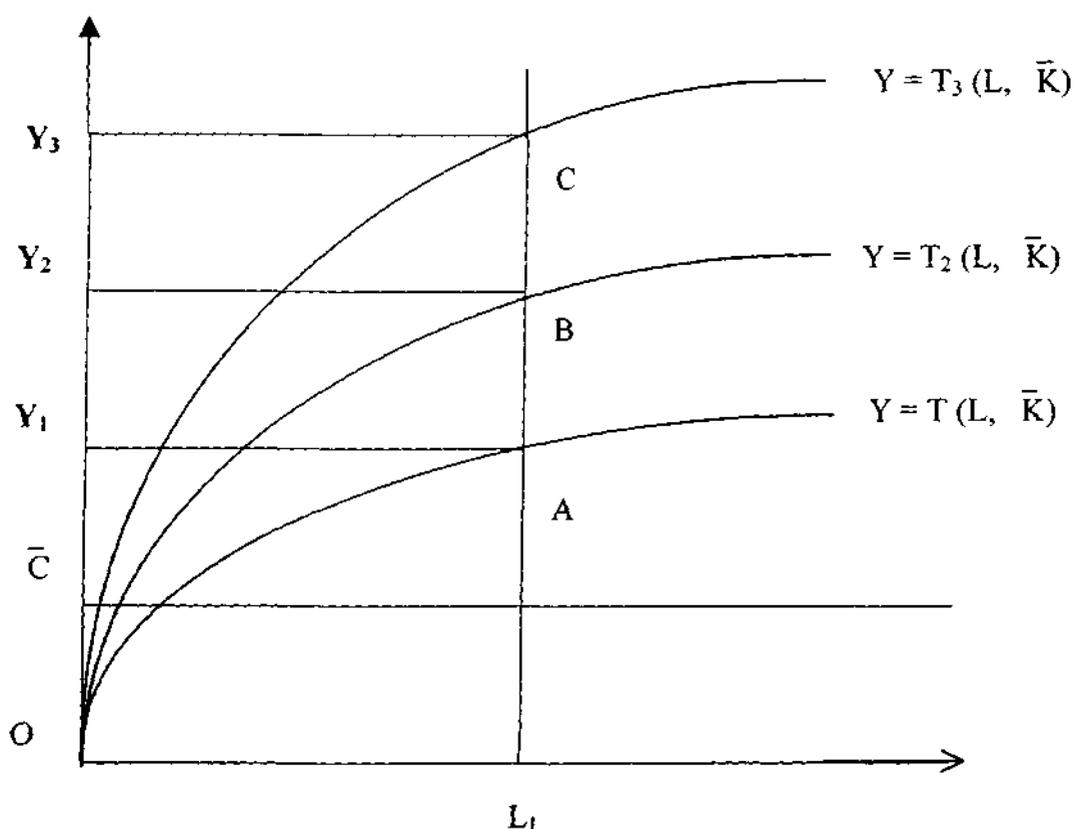
Cotton was another item of economic importance. The hilly area of Chikinagram and Khuntaghat of Lower Assam was a cotton growing area of the kingdom²⁰. Late 18th century and early colonial reports on Bhutan have recorded the cultivation of cotton in the *Duars* region and gathering of cotton fiber from the forests²¹.

5.2.2. Adoption of Advanced Technology and Surplus Generation.

Agricultural products both food grains and cash crops, cultivated in the Koch kingdom, did require specialize mechanism and technologies for generation of surplus. Wet-rice cultivation with sophisticated technologies introduced by the non-tribals had been diffused to the tribals of the entire region that stimulated the changes of tribal

mode of production. It increased the rate of surplus generation. The iron plough and spade/hoe (*kodal*) had replaced wooden plough and implements of *jhuming*. Although the tribals maintained their traditional mode of production in the hilly region but in the Karatoya-Brahmaputra valley they adopted the non-tribal production technology ²². So the 19th century colonial reports, particularly of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Gaolpara, Kamrup and Darrang districts have spotted the Koches as cultivators having the knowledge of plain land cultivation identical with the Hindu agriculturist castes. ²³ So the tribal mode of production had been gradually transformed into the settled plough cultivation at least in the plains of the state and the tribals were peasantized.

Figure. 5.2: Technological acculturation and surplus generation.



Y=Level of production or output.

T=Techniques of production.

L=Labour, **K**=Fixed capital.

Adoption of new techniques virtually affected their socioeconomic culture and generation of more surpluses. which has been explained in the **figure 5.4**. The **Figure 5.2**. explains the relationships between the changes in surplus production and the techniques of production $Y=T(L, K)$. Production function Y = level of output, L & K , are the factors of production where K is fixed. T = Technique of production and \bar{C} = fixed consumption level. The surplus production increases in tune with the application of T . When T is the technique of production surplus is $Y_1\bar{C}$. But when T_2 is the technique, surplus increased to Y_2 Y_1 when labour L remained constant. So 'the level of surplus production was dependent to the level of techniques adopted for the production'.

The rate of transformation of the technology of agriculture was, however, slow. But the adoption of 'non-tribal production system' had considerably modified the cultural life of the tribals. In spite of continuity of the animism and worship of nature certain Hindu deities as the symbols of economic prosperity have entered in their life which has been conceptualized as *sanskritization* by the earlier scholars. But the impact of the technological acculturation in the *sanskritization* process must not be overlooked

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5.2.3. Appropriation of Agricultural Surplus.

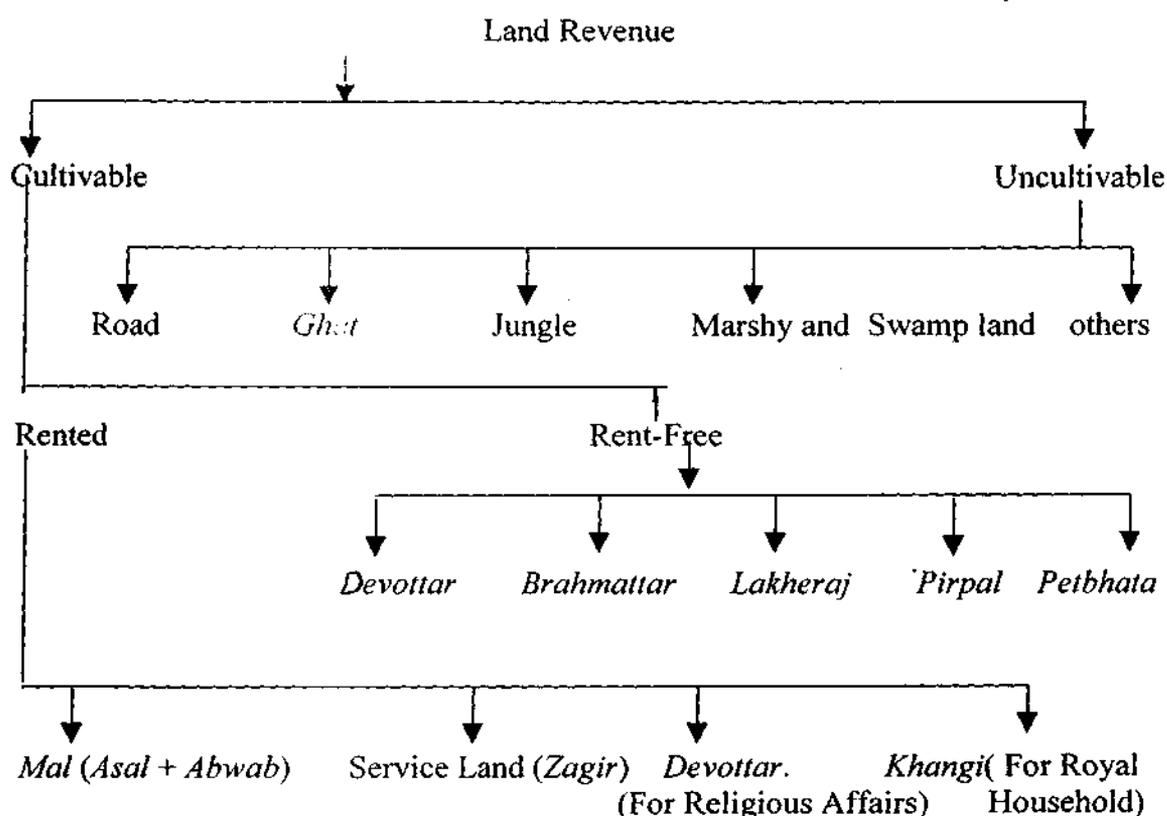
Extraction of surplus from the settled agriculture was an essential pre-requisite of tribal state formation in Northeast India ²⁵ but availability of natural products and their multiple uses in the economic life of the tribals to some extent enabled those tribal people to be free from the economic control of the state. But the Koch state had taken few innovative tools to concentrate the agricultural surplus in the form of land revenue and exploitation of services in lieu of revenues.

5.2.3.1. Exploitation of Land Revenue.

The subsistence economy of the tribals with the tribal mode of production do not produce essential surplus for the transformation of a tribal chiefdom to a state. So for a tribal chief, plunder was a popular means for exploiting surplus from the surplus generating political units. So founder king Visvasimha began the plunder by his tribal militia. Nara Narayan continued the plunder through warfare till the 1560s as mentioned in the chapter IV. But at the same time he initiated the extraction of the revenue from the cultivable land. The entire land structure under the Koch kingdom has

been explained in the Figure 5.3. It indicates the existence of two broad categories of land in the kingdom i.e., 'cultivated' and 'uncultivated'. The cultivable land again was of two categories 'rented' and 'rent-free'. The *brahmattar* (land donated to the Brahmins), *devottar* (land granted for maintenance of religious institution), *lakheraj* (reward for good service done for the state), *pirpal* (for maintenance of mosque and Islamic religious institutions) and *petbhata* (land granted for the maintenance of the relatives of the ruling family) comprised the late category ²⁶which was comparatively less than the first category.

Figure 5.3: Land revenue structure under the Koch kingdom.



The rented land had been classified into four categories like *mal*, *zagir*, *khangī* and *devottar*. *Mal* was a kind of land revenue directly paid by the *rayats* (cultivators) to the state. From the *zagir* (service land), the state could not collect cash revenue but exploited personal service according to the skill and efficiency of the *Zagirdars*. Each *Zagirdar* was allowed not less than 1 *bish* or 13 *bighas* of cultivable land. ²⁷ Revenue of

the *khangi* land had been reserved for the expenditure of the royal household. The rent extracted from the *devottar* land use to meet the expenditure of the religious affairs, including festivals and maintenance of the temples built by the state²⁸. The revenues extracted from this kind of land had maintained the costs of construction of large number of temples of popular deities and religious institutions. So it was not rent-free like the land granted to the temples' personal maintenance (*devottar*).

Mal being the principal categories of land revenue was the main source of state's income. It consisted with *asal* (or original rent) and *abwab* or additional cess, collected annually by the state officials called *Sajawals*.²⁹ However, land was not properly measured and assessed for revenue collection although Nara Narayan attempted to survey the cultivable land called *poa-bandha*³⁰ and granted service-land to the *paiks* and *zagirdars*. King Moda Narayan (1665-1680) and Upendra Narayan (1714-1763 A.D.) had also assessed the land called *piyal* and *dhala jabda*, respectively³¹. The term *dhala jabda* indicates the exact description of land possessed by the cultivators.³² But *poa-bandha*, *piyali* and *dhala -jabda* do not indicate the exact mode of revenue assessment prevailed in the state. In spite of it two popular units of land measurement had been in existence in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley like- *bish* equivalent to 12 standard *bighas* and 16 *kathas* or 13 *bighas*³³ and *pura* equivalent to four *bighas*.³⁴ *Bish* was also in use for revenue and service value assessment of the *zagirdars*.

From the foregoing discussion it appears that there was variation in land revenue assessment of the country during the period of our study for variation in productivity of land. First grade of land was assessed at Rs. 20 per *bish* and Rs 15 was the rate for second grade. For the third category the cultivators used to pay Rs. 10 per *bish*.³⁵

The rate of land revenue assessment of the Koches was lower than the Mughals³⁶. So the peasants of the Koch kingdom had opposed the Mughal rule introduced temporarily after the invasion of Mir Jumla in 1661 A.D.. Thus Shihabuddin Talish, an eyewitness of the mid-17th century political affairs of the Koch state, aptly identified that the over-assessment of land revenue was responsible for the opposition of the

Mughal rule in its overthrown.³⁷ Rate of land revenue in the Koch state was thus definitely less than 1/3 the rate of the Mughals.

The land directly controlled by the state had produced a large share in the surplus, extracted from the cultivable land. The *khang* land had been reserved for the maintenance of the ruling family and disappeared only in 1864 A.D.. The '*andaran land*' (land held by the ladies of the palace)³⁸ was although rent-free but had its use in the state affairs particularly during the political and economic emergency³⁹.

The process of revenue concentration had been fluctuated during the period of our study. In the initial stage of state formation, Visvasimha could not introduce any new method in revenue collection. Nara Narayan allowed the former revenue collectors like-- *Bhuiyans* to collect revenue from the peasants. However, state officials such as *Dewan*, *Karzi* and *Chaudhury* were held responsible for the collection of revenue accordance with the circumstances. *Bakshi*, a state official, had been entrusted the charge of taking care of the *zagir land*. The *Sajawals* were appointed in later period for revenue collections. Collection of revenue was very often exorbitant and the state officials oppressed the cultivators.⁴⁰

There was variation in the mode of revenue collection also. The 'core area' had been in the direct collection of state while the 'conquered territories' and 'lost territories'⁴¹ were left under the charge of the local *zamindars* to collect revenue from the peasants and its payment to the state after deducting their share. This system came to be known as *jamabandi*⁴². The *Zamindars* were mostly hailed from the Koch princelets.⁴³ Even the state itself took the charge of three *chaklas*, conquered by the Mughals during the period of Rup Narayan (1711 A.D.). *Izara* or deeds of Chakla Boda, Patgram and Purba Bhag had been taken in the name of *Nazir* in 1711 A.D.⁴⁴ and the state possessed the territories in terms of payment of revenue. The *Raikat* of Baikuntapur also made similar arrangements in 1687.⁴⁵ So after the 'Grant of 'Dewani of Bengal' to the East India Company in 1765 A.D.,⁴⁶ revenues of the above mentioned *chaklas* began to be deposited to the Company's treasury. So we must acknowledge that the mode of revenue extraction had been fluctuated for the changing political status of the state.

5.2.3.2..Amount of Land Revenue.

It is very difficult to enumerate the exact amount of land-revenue collected by the state both in the form of cash and kind. Early Koch rulers had stressed on the tribute collection through warfare. But the beginning of intra-Koch conflicts and Mughal-Ahom interventions in the state had increased the demand of revenue in cash when tribute collection through aggressive warfare was put off. So the process of internal exploitation had been regularized. From the occasional references contained in the contemporary literatures an idea can be made about the amount of collected revenue. Annual tribute (*peshkash*) paid by Lakshmi Narayan (1587-1627) to the Mughals was Rs. 100000 or 80000 *Narayani Tanka*.⁴⁷ The *Darrang Raj Vamsavali* claims that King Raghudeva Narayan had a hard cash of Rs. three crores in his treasury.⁴⁸ King Parikshit Narayan offered a *peshkash* of Rs 80000 to the Mughals.⁴⁹ Similarly, Prana Narayan (1632-65) paid Rs. 550000 to the Mughal governor of Bengal in 1665 A.D. as an indemnity.⁵⁰ The *Fathiya-i-Ibriya* also refers that the kingdom of Prana Narayan had the capacity of yielding Rs. 800000 as land revenue per year.⁵¹ Even if *Fathiya's* writer estimated the revenue according to the Mughal system of $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the total production it was not less than Rs. 600000 in the Koch system (of $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the gross production). Since the last quarter of the 17th century to the conclusion of the Anglo-Cooch Behar Treaty in 1773 A.D. the exploited revenue was tripartite due to trifurcation of power among the King, *Dewan* and *Nazir*. For the maintenance of state by king, militia by *Nazir* and civil administration by *Dewan*; the revenue yielding tracts were tripartite. The *Nazir* had the largest share of $\frac{9}{16}$ (56.25%) of the total land .The king enjoyed $\frac{6}{16}$ th (37.50%) and the *Dewan* was given the rest i.e., $\frac{1}{16}$ (6.25%).⁵² Hence, total amount was not calculated and the collection had its variations.

5.2.3.3.Exploitation of Service.

Koch state since the beginning of its formation had maintained a method to exploit services in lieu of land revenue. The *Raja Vamsavali* indicates that certain professional castes such as *Teli* (oil men), *Mali* (gardener), *Dhoba* (washer men), *Kahar* (palanquin bearer), *Kamar* (ironsmith), *Sonari* (goldsmith), *Navik* (boatmen) and *Chamar* (tanners) were granted rent-free land by the state. which had to render

their respective services to the state⁵³ as *paik*⁵⁴. More over certain communities were granted lands in terms of rendering services to the state. The *Morungias* (the inhabitants of Morung of Eastern Nepal brought to the Koch kingdom by Nara Narayan) were obliged to render services as *zagirdars* (service landholders).⁵⁵ *Hazra* (head of the buffalo keeper), *Tarai* (headman of the plough), *Tekar Saliya* (waterman), *Tirkar* (wicker work maker), *Behura* (palanquin bearer), *Haluya* (ordinary servant), and many other professional posts (as mentioned in the **table 5.3**) had been held by the *zagirdars*. Economically it was more profitable for the state because land was plenty in the state. This system had been continued for a long time even after the conclusion of the Anglo-Cooch Behar Treaty in 1773.⁵⁶ As a whole 'feudal art of exploiting artistic, menial and professional services of the subjects in lieu of land revenue had enabled the tribal state to augment of surplus through the exploitation of labour-value'.

Table 5.3:Service Landholders.

Name of the office held by the <i>Zagirdars</i>	Service rendered /meaning.
<i>Bakshi</i>	An officer who looks after the <i>zagirdars</i> and ceremonies maintained by the state
<i>Barait</i>	<i>Farash</i> maker.
<i>Bariaya</i>	A domestic worker.
<i>Bakura Dhara</i>	A servant attached to the <i>Toshakhana</i> or treasury.
<i>Chhatra dhara</i>	To hold umbrella
<i>Deori</i>	Servant attached to the temple.
<i>Farasia</i>	Light man.
<i>Halua</i>	Plough man.
<i>Hazra</i>	Keeper of livestock of the state.
<i>Jharudar</i>	Sweeper.
<i>Manta</i>	Peon.
<i>Napit</i>	Barber.
<i>Pankhadhara.</i>	Holder of fan.
<i>Pujari</i>	Priest.
<i>Soya Saliya</i>	Kitchen Servant.
<i>Tarai</i>	Headman of the <i>Haluas</i> .
<i>Tekar saliya</i>	Waterman.
<i>Thayat</i>	Betel maker.
<i>Tirkar</i>	Wickerwork maker.

5.2.3.4. Other Revenues from the Land.

The state had its income from the uncultivated land consisting roads, *ghats*, market place, fishery and jungle. Jungle land was often cleared for fresh cultivation. The tribes like Mech and Garo were allowed to enjoy the cleared land as rent-free for certain years and become taxable after the maturity of contract⁵⁷. A tradition of leasing out the fisheries, markets and the *ghats* (ferry) to the highest bidders was developed in the state. It was an additional income for the state.

5.3. Crafts and Industries.

5.3.1. Textile Industries.

The Mech, Koch and Rabhas of the Duars had developed the *endi-culture* with subsidiary crafts like weaving and dyeing. The art of dyeing of the threads made from the *endi*, *mugha* and cotton fiber had been developed among the tribes. The dye was generally procured from the bark and leaf⁵⁸ of the wild timbers and the creepers i.e. nature. *Endi culture* was a common and household production of the Meches. Even it became a compulsory tradition of the Mech brides to be acquainted with the weaving with their traditional loom called *sanchali* before their marriage.⁵⁹ Weaving of *mekhli* cloth from the fiber⁶⁰ of jute produced in the plains of the kingdom had been survived till the early 20th century. The *endi* and *mekhli* produced by the Koch, Mech and Rabha tribes with their traditional technology⁶¹ were the important part of the Cooch Behar-Bhutan and Bengal-Cooch Behar trades⁶² beside the domestic uses.

Traditional non-tribal weavers called *Tantis* had developed the art of weaving cloths who had their large concentration in Bengal and Assam. Two other castes--*Jolah* and *Yogi* had their expertise in weaving. Visvasimha had appointed a state-supervisor on the weaving industries and to collect taxes from the weavers and washermen⁶³. Nara Narayan had continued this office. His patronage to Sankardeva had indirectly contributed to the development of the weaving industry as Sankardeva was given the charge of *Mahal* of Barpeta particularly to look after the *Tantis*⁶⁴. Tantikuchi village was famous for weaving of a special cloth called of *Vrindavaniya kapar*.⁶⁵ Sualkuchi, Kamarkuchi and Narayanpur were other notable centers of textile industries during the Koch rule⁶⁶.

5.3.2. Pottery

The art of making earthenware had also been developed in the Brahmaputra valley both among the tribals and non-tribals (caste). The *Hira* tribe was the maker of earthenware with very simple technology even without wheel. A section of the *Kalita* also adopted the art of pottery.⁶⁷ However, pottery as a profession of a caste (*Kumar*) had very little concentration in the Koch state. The use of wheel enabled the professional *Kumar* to produce big *handis* and *saras* or big earthen pots.⁶⁸ Quality of pottery was inferior from that of Bengal. Thus, *kalasi* (pitchers), water jugs and utensils were imported from Eastern Bengal.⁶⁹ Similarly, image making did not flourish in the region as it was in Bengal. But it became a profession of a small section of the people like *Khanikars*.⁷⁰

5.3.3. Cattle-Powered Crafts.

Pressing of oil seeds and making of oil had been developed as a special craft. The professional oilman caste called *Telis* had their large concentration in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. Visvasimha appointed his son Ananta Narayan as an officer to look after the *Telis*.⁷¹ Nara Narayan continued the system and the *Telis* had served the state even as *paik*.⁷² Mustard oil was an important item of export from the kingdom.⁷³ The *Telis* and *Kalus* (oil maker) had developed the cattle powered mill (*ghani*) for the production of mustard oil. Like the *ghani*, sugar cane crushing machine was also a cattle-powered mill. Juice extracted from the sugar cane was used to prepare *gud* or molasses. The southern portion of the kingdom used to produce sugar cane and *gud* in large quantity.⁷⁴ However, Sugar used to import from Bengal.⁷⁵

Table 5.4: Crafts and industries.

Textiles	Traditional Professional Castes	Metal and Ivory	Wood and bamboo works.	Others
<i>endi</i> and <i>muga, silk</i>	<i>Tanti, Teli, Kumar, Kamar, Chammar, Dhoba,</i>	Ivory works, brass works	boat making, image making, bamboo works.	Husking, <i>ghee</i> .

5.3.4. Iron and Jewelry.

Smithery was an inseparable part of the crafts and industries of the Koch kingdom. *Kamars* or blacksmiths of the traditional caste Hindu society were numerous in the kingdom who were the chief producer of the iron implements and implements of ordinary uses such as *dao* (knife), *kodal* (hoe), and cooking utensils were manufactured

by them. The *Kamars* had also developed their expertise in manufacturing the lock, padlocks, sacrificial knives, spears, clamps for building boat, swords, arms and other items of required by the people. The Koch the state had keen interest about the ironworks. So Visvasimha appointed his son, Brishaketu, as the supervisor of the iron works.⁷⁶

The goldsmiths (*Sonar/Bania*) were not numerous in the Koch kingdom. The *Darrang Raj Vamsavali* shows that prince Surasimha was appointed as the state-officer to look after the gold smithery.⁷⁷ Gold and silver ornaments worn by the women folk of the kingdom like-*har* (necklace), *footi* (ear ring), *bankharu* (an ornament for leg), *noth* (nose rig), *kadena* (a kind of ear ornament) etc., were manufactured by the *Sonaries*.⁷⁸ Beside the professional gold smiths, the *Kalitas* of Lower Brahmaputra valley had also developed their expertise in this craft.⁷⁹

5.3.5. Carpentry and other Artisans

The carpenters were mainly *Kalitas* and other tribes of the lower Brahmaputra valley. They managed the works from the making of boat to the making of agricultural tools. The war boats, merchant boats and small boats had great use in the river system of the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. The navy introduced by Nara Narayan and retained by subsequent Koch kings significantly contributed to the growth of the boat making industries. The 17th century Persian works like - *Fathiya-i-Ibriya* and *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi* have left some references about war boats and general boats of the region. The *charita* literatures repeatedly illustrated the importance of the boats for transportation in the river system of the Tista-Brahmaputra valley.

Perhaps the best expertise had developed among the tribals and lower castes of the region were the bamboo works. Implements and tools of agriculture, fishing, hunting and weaving were used to manufacture from the bamboos of large varieties. The *sanchali* (weaving loom) of the Meches, traps, fishing instruments like-*jakai* used by Koch, Mech and Rabha tribes were the bamboo-made implements. Agricultural tools like ladder, plough, jaw, *bida* and *mugur* were made from bamboo⁸⁰. Bamboo had immense use in manufacturing furniture like-chair, *Mura*, *jhapi* and *mathal* (used as umbrella to protect the head from heavy rain), baskets and pots. Bamboo made special weapon called *bish payiji* (poisonous bamboo stick)⁸¹ had special use in the defence of the country.

There were few more small-scale crafts developed in the region. Mat or *pati* made by the *patias* from the *mutha* grass⁸² had domestic use and was marketable small-craft. Production of lime or calcium carbonate by the *Chunari* or *Mukhi*⁸³ and fishing by *Nadials* and *Keots* were other small industries of the region. Art of making rice by using the traditional husking machine (*dheki* or *udu khol* and *chham-ghain*) was basically confined to the domestic circles.

The *Kalitas* developed their expertise in copper, brass and bell metal works. The *Hiras* and *Marias* also were expert in the in brass works.⁸⁴ Due to the availability of wild elephants and other animals ivory work and leatherwork had also been developed in the kingdom

There was scarcity of salt in the region of the present study. Salt produced from hill rocks was not sufficient. Thus an alternative of salt had been developed in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. Salted water made from the ashes of banana barks and dry jackfruits had been in use in lieu of salt. This alternative became so popular that the Koch-Rajbanshi people of North Bengal and Assam had and still have a special dish made with this ash called *chheka*.

5.3.6. Technological Acculturation.

The crafts and industries developed in the region were the results of both tribal innovation and technological acculturation from outside. The weaving technology developed by the Bodo tribes was the outcome of their long experience in the *endiculture* and largely confined to the domestic use. It was labour intensive production and cost of production was very high for which commercially it was less profitable for the manufacturer. On the contrary, productions of professional weaving castes (*Tanti*, *Yogi* and *Jolah*) were more profitable. However, technologies of iron works, oil pressing and few other crafts had been gradually diffused to the tribals of the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. So the *gazetteers*, *census* and other *official survey* conducted in the 19th century have recorded that the *Khenas* are the expert in oil pressing⁸⁵, the *Keots* have their expertise in mustard oil making⁸⁶ and the *Koches* and the *Kalitas* are expert in iron and jewelry works⁸⁷. So 'technological acculturation' was 'a process by which the tribals adopted the occupations of non-tribals (caste) which was equally linked with their social mobility i.e. *sanskritization*.

5.3.7. Taxes and Revenues from the Industrial Sectors.

Beside the land revenue, the state also exploited the revenue from the craftsmen and artisans. The *Darrang Raj Vansavali* has given a list of manufactures from which the state could derive taxes. The weavers had to pay Rs. 2 per annum as tax to the government.⁸⁸ The oilman, washermen, goldsmith, blacksmiths, traders and musicians also had to pay taxes to the state⁸⁹. But the rate of revenues collected from these craftsmen yet to be measured. The artisans were also allowed to render their 'service value' to the state instead of cash taxes as mentioned earlier. So the extraction of taxes and revenues from the industrial sector had fattened the treasury (*bhandar*) of the state.

5.4. Currency System and the Growth of Trade and Commerce.

The process of state formation in Northeast India is significantly linked with the striking and circulating coins by the emerging states. Like Kachari, Jayantia and Tripura states, the Koches also introduced their own coins called *Narayani Tanka*. The pre-Koch Tista-Brahmaputra valley was although acquainted with several medium of exchanges like- cowry cells,⁹⁰ metal coins,⁹¹ cattle, paddy,⁹² the slaves and handloom products; ⁹³ coins of the Koches (*Narayani Tanka*) became the largest circulated medium of exchange in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. The earliest Koch coin, so far been discovered, is bearing the date *Saka* 1477 (1555 A.D.) which was issued by Nara Narayan. The subsequent rulers from Lakshmi Narayan (1587-1627 A.D.) to Rajendra Narayan (1770-72) have issued a large number of coins of half-rupee and quarter-rupee denominations. However, no coin of Visvasimha has come into light.

5.4.1. The Narayani Tankas.

Gold and silver plundered from Northeast Indian states by King Nara Narayan and Chilarai had been transformed into the *Narayani Tanka*. The coins of rupee, half-rupee and quarter-rupee denominations of Nara Narayan, discovered from Chandir Jhar (Alipurduar, 1986), Harisinga (Mangoldai, 1990), Haflong and Modgharia (Guwahati, 1986), Barundanga (Dhubri, 1996), Phulbari (West Garo Hills, 1992)⁹⁴ and other places; prove the circulation of *Narayani tanka* in a larger area of Northeast India. Nara Narayan also allowed the king of Khyram of Khasi hills⁹⁵ and Jayantia kings of Jayantia hills⁹⁶ to strike coins bearing the name of Nara Narayan. Gohain Kamal, *Dheyam* of Khaspur, after detaching him from the control of the core area, also minted

coins bearing the name of King Nara Narayan.⁹⁷ So the coins of Nara Narayan had been minted from several places of Northeast India and North Bengal.

The *Darrang Raj Vamsavali* narrates that Raghudeva Narayan had a reserve of 30000000 *Narayani Tanka* in his treasury. His coins of rupee and half-rupee denominations bearing the date *Saka* 1510 (1588 A.D.) have been brought into light. The basic difference of Raghudeva Narayan's coins is that it bears the invocation to *Hara-Gauri* while the coins of other kings had the invocation to Shiva. Although, Parikshit Narayan's reign was a turbulent period, his coins of one rupee denomination have been discovered.

Table 5.5. An eye view on the *Narayani Tanka*

King	Date	Denomination (s).	Obverse	Reverse	Comment (s).
Nara Narayan	1477 <i>Saka</i>	¼Rupee, ½Rupee, Rupee.	<i>Sri Sri Shiva Charana Kamala Madhu Karashya</i>	<i>Sri Sriman Nara Narayanasya Saka 1477.</i>	The script is of early Bengali character and <i>Nagari</i> .
Lakshmi Narayan.	1509 <i>Saka</i> and 98 <i>Raja Saka</i> .	¼Rupee, ½Rupee, Rupee.	<i>Sri Sri Shiva Charana Kamala Madhu Karashya .</i>	<i>Sri Sriman Lakshmi Narayanshya Saka 1509 / Raja Saka 98.</i>	His coins are bearing two dates, 1509 <i>Saka</i> and 98 <i>Rajasaka</i> .
Raghudev a Narayan	1510 <i>Saka</i>	½ Rupee, Rupee,	<i>Sri Sri Hara Gauri Charana Kamala Madhu Karashya .</i>	<i>Sri Sri Raghudeva Narayan Bhupalashya Saka 1510.</i>	-----
Parikshit Narayan	1525 <i>Saka</i>	Rupee	<i>Sri Sri Shiva Charana Kamala Madhu Karashya .</i>	<i>Sri Sri Parikshit Narayan Bhupalashya Saka 1525.</i>	-----
Bir Narayan	1547 <i>Saka</i> / 118 <i>Raja Saka</i>	½ Rupee, Rupee.	<i>Sri Sri Krishna Charana Kamala Madhu Karashya</i>	<i>Sri Srimad Bira Narayanashy a ,Saka 1547/Rajasa ka 118.</i>	Instead of Shiva, Krishna became the invocation.
Prana Narayan	<i>Saka</i> 1554, 1555.	½ Rupee, Rupee.	<i>Sri Sri Shiva Charana Kamala</i>	<i>Sri Srimat Prana</i>	He had issued

	<i>Rajasaka</i> 127,129,130 ,131,140,14 1,146,150, 151,152, 155,etc.		<i>Madhu Karashya .</i>	<i>Narayanashya</i> <i>a</i> <i>Bhupalashya</i> <i>Sake 1554</i> and other dates.	coins in different dates.(date of the minting)
Moda Narayan	<i>Raja Saka</i> 170	½ Rupee.	..	<i>Sri Srimat</i> <i>Moda</i> <i>Narayanshya</i> <i>Sake 170.</i>	-----
Vasudeva Narayan	Date is not visible	½ Rupee	..	<i>Sri Srimat</i> <i>Vasudeva</i> <i>Narayanshya</i> <i>Sake ?</i>	-----
Mahindra Narayan	..	..	Controversial	---	-----
Rup Narayan	..	..	<i>Sri Sri Shiva</i> <i>Charana Kamala</i> <i>Madhu Karashya .</i>	<i>Sri Srimat</i> <i>Rupa</i> <i>Narayanshya</i> <i>. Sake (not</i> <i>visible)</i>	-----
Upendra Narayan	..	..	..	<i>Sri Sri</i> <i>Upendra</i> <i>Narayan</i> (date is not visible)	-----
Devendra Narayan	..	..	..	<i>Sri Srimat</i> <i>Devendra</i> <i>Narayanshya</i> <i>Sake (?)</i>	-----
Dhairendr a Narayan	..	..	..	<i>Sri Srimat</i> <i>Dhairendra</i> <i>Narayan.</i> Date is not visible	-----
Rajendra Narayan	..	..	..	<i>Rajendra</i> <i>Narayan</i> Date is not visible.	-----

Laksmi Narayan continued the minting of coins of rupee, half-rupee and quarter-rupee denominations. His coins have been spotted in different places of North Bengal and Northeast India bearing the date 1509 *Saka* (1587 A.D.) and *Rajasaka* 98 (1608). The coins of Bir Narayan bear the dates 1548 *Saka* and 117 *Rajasaka* (1527 A.D). Prana Narayan issued a large number of rupees bearing the actual date of their minting

(see Table 5.5). The *Fathiya-i-Ibriya* mentioned that Prana Narayan had also issued gold coins.⁹⁸ However, the subsequent Koch kings merely issued quarter-rupees in large scale. Minting of *Narayani Tanka* under the supervision of the *Bhandar-Thakur* had been continued even after the conclusion of the 'Anglo- Cooch Behar Treaty in 1773 A.D'⁹⁹.

Inspite of independent status and considerable influence over the Koch kingdom. Bhutan used to get her coins from the Koch kingdom by sending silver.¹⁰⁰ However, Bhutan started minting her own coins after adopting minting technology from the Koches¹⁰¹ and their coins came to be known as *Deva Tanka*.¹⁰²

The *Narayani Tanka* became an acceptable medium of exchange both in inter-regional and intra-regional trade of North Bengal, Northeast India, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet¹⁰³. It led to the growth of trade and commerce in favour of the Koch state. Contemporary literatures particularly the biographies of Sankardeva and his disciples contain the references of circulation of the coins among the masses of the region. The *Guru Charita* of Ramcharan Thakur frequently mentions the *taka* (rupee), *adhtaka* ($\frac{1}{2}$ rupee), *shiki* ($\frac{1}{4}$ rupee) and cowries as the prevailing coins for ordinary and big transactions. Inspite of existence of barter system in the Duars¹⁰⁴ *Narayani Tanka* and the coins of other rulers of the region had monetized the whole economic structure.

5.4.2. Trade and Commerce

Monetization of economy had its positive impact on the trade and commerce of the region. Trade links with the neighbours and internal trade was a subject of great care for the Koch Kingdom. Contemporary and near-contemporary sources categorically highlighted the trade link of the Koch state with Bhutan, Tibet, Bengal and the Upper Brahmaputra valley.

5.4.2.1. External Trades.

Historically Bhutan was subordinate to the Koches till the reign of Lakshmi Narayan. Contrarily Bhutan established her domination over the Koch kings since the late 17th century. But the trade link continued as usual. As the trade routes passing across the Koch territory to Bhutan and Tibet, the Koch kingdom had enjoyed a sizable profit. The British political missions sent to Bhutan and Tibet (after 1773 A.D.) categorically recorded the trade links between Bengal and Bhutan and Bengal and

Tibet carried through the *Duars* of the Koch state. Bhutan trade is also evident from the account of Ralf Fitch who visited the Koch kingdom in the 1580's.¹⁰⁵

Table 5.6:Export-import trades between Cooch Behar and Bhutan.

Exports to Bhutan.	Woolen cloths, indigo, Maldah cloths, spice, dyes, betel leave and betel nut, tobacco, dry fish, coarse cotton cloths, rice, iron, country gunpowder and <i>endi</i> silk.
Imports from Bhutan.	Musk, cow tails, blankets, woolen cloths, oranges, <i>manjit</i> , walnuts, <i>Tangon</i> horses, Chinese silk, gold dust rock salt and silver.

The trade between the Koch kingdom and Bhutan was reciprocal. Bhutanese traders including the government officials used to bring their articles to the trading centers¹⁰⁶ of Koch kingdom such as Cooch Behar, Rangpur, Dinajpur,¹⁰⁷ Odalguri, Hajo and certain other markets of Assam.¹⁰⁸ Nazirganj and Bhurchungmari (Tufanganj) were the two markets famous for Bhutanese products¹⁰⁹. Apart from the markets and towns, seasonal fairs held in the Tista-Bharnapurta valley were other major places of commercial transactions. Hajo, Charigaon, Odalguri, (Eastern Koch Kingdom), Pangaw, Badarganj, Haldibari,¹¹⁰ Jalpesh¹¹¹ etc., were the places of fairs where the Bhutanese products were sold seasonally in large scale.

Table 5.6 shows that Bhutan use to import woolen, cotton and silk cloth; cattle, dry fish, tobacco, rice, iron gun powder, dye, etc from thw Koch state. Koch state, on the other hand, had regular imports of musk, cow tails, woolen blanket¹¹² and cloths, silk, orange, *Tangon* horses, gold dust, rock salt and silver from Bhutan. The King of Bhutan had monopolized the export of *Tangan* horse to the Koch Kingdom.¹¹³

The traders from Rangpur, Cooch Behar and other parts of Bengal had their regular coomercial transactions with Tibet through Bhutan. The letter of Nirpur Piaga, dated 19th April 1779 A.D. to the East India Company¹¹⁴, confirms the prosperity of the Bengal-Tibet trades. This trade relation considerably increased the circulation of *Narayani Tanka* in Bhutan and Tibet and contributed to the easy exports of certain products of the Koch kingdom, like-tobacco, betel leaves, betel nuts, *endi* silk and other cloths.

The *Guru Charita* and *Katha Guru Charita* have mentioned the slave trade between the Koch Kingdom and Bhutan.¹¹⁵ The prisoners of war and criminals were used sell as mainly as slaves. The *Guru Charita* also claims that two disciples of

Sankardeva were sold to two Bhutanese traders named Hema and Pema at Rs. 120.¹¹⁶ But they were ultimately released. It was not a sheer exaggerated narrative¹¹⁷ as Mr. Krishna Kanta Bose, a British ambassador, sent to Bhutan in 1815 found that slaves or *phanchemi* were recruited to kill hogs and other animals which were restricted to the Bhutanese.¹¹⁸ However, slave trade was not a common feature of the Bhutanese trade.

The trade relations of the Koch Kingdom with other Northeast Indian states and Bengal had been flourished for the demands of certain articles not produced locally and export of surplus products. Jesuit traveler, Stephen Cacella who visited the Kingdom in 1627, had recorded that articles from Patna, Rajmahal and Gauda were supplied frequently to fulfill the internal demands of the state¹¹⁹. The cloths produced in Bengal had a great demand in the state.¹²⁰ In spite of productions of rock salt and salted water; pure salt was a scare in the Tista-Brahmaputa valley. Salt was an imported item from Bengal¹²¹. Lower Brahmaputra valley had regular imports of gold, *patkapar* (cloth), *dao-katari* (knife), elephant task and *barkapar* (cloth) from the Upper Brahmaputra valley (Ahom state)¹²².

We have already observed that Koch kingdom had exportable surplus of mustard seeds and oil, tobacco, jute and their sub-products. Tobacco was exported to Burma through Bengal.¹²³ In spite of availability of wild elephants, its trade never became prosperous as the *Tangan* horse monopolized by the King of Bhutan.

5.4.2.2. Internal Trades

Towns, *hats* and *bandar* were the centers of internal and external exchanges. Stephen Cacella had found many *bazars* (markets) in the state where every thing was available including the imported items.¹²⁴ *Bandars*, seat of trade and commerce where the merchants reside permanently having their own farms; were situated on the big river or by the side of the public roads.¹²⁵ *Hats* were the public market place lying in the rural areas where people of the neighborhood assembled in the fixed days of week for both selling their products and buying items of daily uses. *Hat* being the small unit of transaction had the chance of direct exchange. From food grains to cattle,

agricultural and fishing instruments were sold in the *hats*. The middlemen had little intervention in the *hats*.

The kingdom had numerous centers of big trades like--Cooch Behar, Rangpur, Khuntaghat, Pandu, Hazo, Chekakhata (Alipur Duar), Rangamati, Balarampur, Gitaldah, Gosain Ganj, etc. Narayan Ganj and Bhurchungmari were the centers of the Bhutanese trades while Rashidanga and Shilkhuri were famous for tobacco trades.¹²⁶

5.4.2.3. Transport

Both land and water routes were in use for transportation of goods. Limited scope of navigation in the hill streams of North Bengal and Assam did not allow the easy transport of merchandise through water routes. Yet the *Brahmaputra* and other big rivers of the plains were not beyond the scope of navigation. George Bogle's report on Bhutan in 1774 records that

'the great rivers *Tista, Manshi, Torsa* and *Raidak*... are navigable for six months of the year as high as within 10 *ks* of the foot of the mountain.'¹²⁷

The *Brahmaputra* is navigable throughout the year and the Persian sources, *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi* written in the early 17th century and *Fathiya-i-Ibriya* written in 1663 A.D. have vividly described the navigability of the *Brahmaputra* system. Testimony on the river born trade in the home market particularly during the rainy season is also available from the *Account of Cooch Behar* of Captain Lewin.¹²⁸ Alternatives of the limited water-routes were the land routes constructed during the medieval period both by the Khenas and the Koches. Cart, drawn by the buffaloes and bullocks was common transport system prevailed in the region.

5.4.2.4. Trading Communities.

The *Byaparis* were the small traders who used to deal with the articles of daily uses and food grains. Big traders called *saudagar* were engaged in large-scale business. Gold, silver, silk, salt, jewelry, mustard seeds, tobacco and other items of much economic value were handled by the *saudagars*. Unlike Bengal, no particular caste had developed its expertise as trader in the Tista-Brahmaputra valley. Traders could be of any caste. Bhabananda Saodagar, a big native merchant¹²⁹; was a Kalita by caste. The foreign trades particularly from Western India¹³⁰ mainly carried out large-scale trades. The tribal and the lower caste Hindus had no interest about the trade and commerce.

Trade of any kind was prohibited in the traditional Koch, Mech and Rabha society¹³¹. Thus the Koch, Mech, Rabha and the Rajbanshis were neither interested nor engaged in the trade.

5.5.Koch State Formation and the Economy.

The state formation process of the Koches, like other tribal states of Northeast India had identical phenomena in the transition of mode of production and production relations. While control over wet-rice cultivation enabled the Ahom to form their state,¹³² the Koch kingdom is witnessed of the growth of agricultural economy and peasantization of the tribals. Peasantization of the tribes and the 'technological acculturation' in agricultural production had increased the rate of surplus production particularly in the plains of Sub-Himalayan Bengal and Lower Assam. So the colonial reports of the 18th and 19th centuries have recorded the Koch tribe as expert agriculturist in the plains of Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, Goalpara, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Kamrup and Maymansingha districts although in the foothills and Duars, together with the Mech tribe they remained confined with the tribal mode of production. Extraction of agricultural surplus by the state and monetization of economy had enabled the state to be free from its dependence to the plunder through aggressive warfare.

The Koch state besides maintaining the traditional methods had adopted certain innovative steps to appropriate the agricultural surplus and exploit the 'labour-value' from the subjects, which eventually feudalized the 'ruled-ruler relationships'. The *poa-bandha* agreement with the professional castes and tribes had further feudalized the process. But introduction of *Narayani Tanka* as common medium of exchange and requirement of ready cash kept the feudal process under state control. Contrarily, monetization of the trade and commerce (inspite of continuity of barter in the remote and peripheral zones) had mobilized the economic growth instead of stagnation.

Acculturation in the industrial technology has been noticed in the adoption of technology and techniques of production of certain crafts by the tribes from the non-tribals. Diffusion of technology from the non-tribals to the tribals had caused occupational mobility of the tribals that increased the rate of production.

Inspite of slow rate in transition of tribalism and tribal mode of production into settled peasantized economy, the state enjoyed every benefits by appropriating the 'surplus and 'services ' and controlling the key of dynamics of monetization of

economy i.e., *Narayani Tanka*. Exploitation of revenues from the possible source of any descriptions had strengthened the economic viability of the state.

Notes and References.

1. R.L. Carneiro argues that different states arose independently at different historical times in different parts of the world where 'warfare' as a causative plays a significant role in the formation of state (A Theory of the Origin of the State, *Science* 169(1970), pp.733-38; ---The Chiefdom: Precursor of the State, in G. Jones and B.Kautz (eds): *The Transition to Statehood* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp.834-871;----- The Role of Warfare in Political Evolution: Past Results and Future Projections, in G. Ausenela(ed): *Effects of War on Society* (San Marina ,Center for Inter-Disciplinary Research ,1992),pp.81-102).On the other hand Elman R. Service stresses on the 'institutionalization of leadership' as a causative of state formation state. Elman R. Service: *Origin of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution*, (New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1975).
2. Most of the writings on the process of cultural change of the Indian tribes have emphasized on the adoption of non-tribal cultural elements by the tribes. The changes have been noticed in the food habits, social customs and religion of the tribe which led the social scientists to build the models like-- *sanskritization* (Suniti Kumar Chatterji: *Kirata Jana Kriti*, Calcutta, Asiatic Society, 1951; M.N. Srinivas: *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*, 1952), *Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* (N.K. Bose: *Structure of Hindu Society* ,revised ed.,Delhi ,Orient Longman ,1994) and *Tribe- Caste-Continuum* for conceptualizing the process of cultural change. But a correlation between the changed/changing mode of production of the tribe and the *sanskritization* in cultural domain is still less discussed. Few theoretical studies on this process, done so far, however are less documented. In case of the Koches, Bhaskar Nandi and Vasanti Raman's study (*The Long Transition: The Koch-Rajbangshis of North-Eastern India*, in Dev Nathan (ed): *From Tribe to Caste*, Shimla, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1997,pp.446-460) is an interesting one .

3. Amalendu Guha : *Medieval and Early Colonial Assam: Society ,Polity Economy*, (Calcutta ,K.P. Bagchi &Co.,1991), pp. 12-14.
4. *Ibid.*,p.12.
5. D.Sunder: *Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars in the District of Jalpaiguri 1889-95*, (Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Press, 1895), p. 71.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Kamrupar Buranji*, p. 10; *Deodhai Assam Buranji* , p. 127.
8. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, vs. 52-54, pp.9-10; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.10.
9. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, vs. 75-77; *Rajopakhyan*, p. 11.
10. R.M.Nath: *The Background of Assamese Culture*, (Shillong, 1948), p.15.
11. *Guru Charita*, vs.96-100, vs.2574-2576,pp. 18, 510.
12. This economic typology of the Tista-Brahmaputra valley can be compared with the pre-colonial African economy which was characterized by the juxtaposition of two apparently contradictory levels--the local subsistence village economy and the commercial economy. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch: *Research on the African Mode of Production*, in Peter C.W.Gutkind and Peter Waterman (eds): *African Social Studies: A Radical Reader*. (London, Heinemann, 1977), p.81.
13. *Raja Vamsavali*, Ms., (NBSL, Ms. no.04), f.7; Pitambar Siddyantavagis: *Markandeya Purana*, Ms. (NBSL, Ms. no.08)
14. W.W. Hunter: *Statistical Account of Bengal*, reprint ed.,(New Delhi ,Concept Publishing House ,1984), *vol.x* , pp. 92,271,379.
15. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement*, (Cooch Behar, The Cooch Behar State Press, 1903), pp.165-168.
16. J.P.Wade: *An Account of Assam*, edited by Benudhar Sharma, (Lakhim Pur, Madhupur Tea Estate, 1927), p. 186.
17. William Foster: *Early Travels in India*, reprint ed., (Delhi, S. Chand & Co., 1968), p.25.
18. H.Blochmann: Koch Bihar, Koch Hajo and Assam in the 16th and 17th centuries, *JASB*, 71.1(1872). p. 66; C. Wessels (ed): *Early Jesuit Travelers in Central Asia (1603-1721)*, reprint ed., (Madras, Asian Educational Service, 1992), p.128.
19. *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. III, p.136.
20. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, v. 53, p. 9.

21. George Bogle: *Narrative of the Mission of Mr. George Bogle to Tibet (1774 A.D)*, edited by M.R.Clements, (New Delhi, Manjusri Publishing House, 1971), p.55; K.K.Bose: *Account of Bootan (1815)*, in H.K.Kuloy (ed.): *Political Missions to Bootan*, reprint ed., (New Delhi, Manjusri Publishing House, 1972), p.356.
22. See *Plate 5.1*
23. W.W. Hunter: *Statistical Account of Bengal*, vol. x, pp.350- 358; *idem: Statistical Account of Assam*, vol., I, pp.32-33, 117; and vol. II, pp.41-42, 116-117.
24. For details about the relationship between the *sanskritization* and technological acculturation see *infra* Chapter VII.
25. Surajit Sinha (ed): *Tribal Polities and State Systems in Pre-colonial Eastern and Northeastern India*, (Calcutta, K.P.Bagchi & Co., 1987), pp.xiv-xv.
26. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *Op. cit.*, p.441.
27. *Ibid*, p.547.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 441-42.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 442.
30. *Raja Vamsavali*, (NBSL, Ms.no,04), f.9.
31. Khan Chowdhury Amanatulla Ahmed: *Cooch Biharers Itihas*, pp. 174, 187.
32. The term *jabda* derives from an Arabic term *Jabat* is means to keep vivid description of certain matter in exact condition. So *Dhala jabda* means details description about the cultivable land.
33. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, pp. 442 - 547.
34. *Raja Vamsavali*, f.9; Khan Chowdhury Amanatulla Ahmed: *op. cit.*, p.125. One *bigha* is equivalent to $1/3$ acre. Or 1 acre = 3 *bighas*. So 1 *pura* = 1.33 acre.
35. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p.442.
36. Although there was variation in the assessment and collection of land revenue in the Mughal Empire, $1/3$ of the gross production was the general rate. Akbar fixed $1/3^{rd}$ of the gross produce as state demand that had been applied in the major part of the empire. (I.H.Qureshi: *The Administration of the Mughal Empire*, reprint ed., New Delhi, 1990, p.170) .In the 18th century the rate of the land revenue under the Mughals had been varied from $1/4$ to $1/2$ of the gross

- production. But $\frac{1}{2}$ rate constitute the maximum collection. (Noman Ahmed Sidiqi: *Land Revenue Administration Under the Mughals, 1700-1750*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1970, p.47). For more details about the 'land revenue collection' of the Mughals, see- Shirin Moosvi: *Economy of the Mughal Empire c 1595: A Statistical Study*,(Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1987), pp.95-118; Irfan Habib : *The Agrarian System in Mughal India (1526-1707)*, 2nd revised ed., (New Delhi ,Oxford University Press ,1999),pp.230-297.
37. H. Blochman: *loc. cit.*, p. 87.
 38. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p. 355.
 39. *Rajopakhyan*, p. 49.
 40. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op.cit.*, pp. 442-43.
 41. Territories conquered by the Koches (in the 16th century) paid tribute to the Koches. Charges of revenue collection had been left to the respective states. But the territories lost to the Mughals by Parikshit Narayan, Lakshmi Narayan and Rup Narayan and other Koch rulers were left under the Koch representatives to collect revenue.
 42. The term *jamabandi* signifies that the Koches adopted the mode of revenue assessment from the Mughals.
 43. *Assam Buranji (1648-1681)*, p.14.
 44. *Rajopakhyan*, pp. 37-38; Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op.cit.*, p . 241.
 45. Jagadindra Dev Raikat: *Raikat Bangsa O Tahader Rajyer Sanschipta Bibaran*, edited by Nirmal Chandra Chaudhuri,(Jalpaiguri ,1982), p. 23.
 46. The Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II had issued a forman dated 12th August 1765 by which the East India Company got the *Dewani of Bengal*, Bihar and Orrissa. Hence the revenues for the *parganas* (of the Koch state) possessed by the Mughals no came under the Company's jurisdiction.
 47. *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi*, vol. II, p.522.
 48. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*. v. 688, pp. 138-39.
 49. *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi*, vol. II, p.522.
 50. Jadunath Sarkar: *History of Aurangazeb, (5vols.)*, reprint ed.,(Calcutta ,Orient Longman Ltd., 1972), vol. III, p. 218.
 51. H. Blochmann: *loc., cit.* p. 66.

52. Rev.J.Long: *Selection from Unpublished Records of Governement for the Years 1748-1776*, edited by Mahadev Prasad Saha, (Calcutta, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhaya,1973),p.715.

Mahi Narayan (son of Lakshmi Narayan) was appointed as *Nazir* by Lakshmi Narayan. He held the *chhatra* (royal umbrella) during the coronation ceremonies of Bir Narayan, Prana Narayan and Moda Narayan because the *Raikat* denied to perform this duty attached to this ceremony, and the *Nazir* subsequently came to be designated as *Chhatra Nazir*. Although the *Raikat* revived the old tradition of holding the *chhatra* by selecting Vasudeva Narayan (1680-1682) as king after the death of Moda Narayan (1665-1680) but practically *Nazir Deo* or *Chhatra Nazir* enjoyed unchallenged power and authority in the administration. With the selection of Rup Narayan as king (1693-1714) from the family of *Chatra Nazir*, the tradition of selection of the king from the royal blood was delinked. The *Chhatra Nazir* (Santa Narayan) and *Dewan Deo* (head of the civil affair) got the direct access to enjoy the land-revenue for their duties as the states administrations. *Nazir Deo* established his office at Balarampur and *Dewan* at Baramkhana, respectively, and they had temporary camps in the capital. During the minority of King Devendra Narayan (1763-65) and next king Dhairendra Narayan (1765-70), the *Nazir* extended his control over the enjoyment of the land. After the conclusion of the *Anglo-Cooch Behar Treaty* (1773) it has been found that the *Nazir* and *Dewan* had large tracts of land under their control. Mr. Purling in his statistics of revenue (*hastabood*) found the tripartite land structure of Cooch Behar. The *parganas* such as Baladanga, Bakalimari, Sitai, Pinjirarjhar, Lalabazar, Abuar Pathar, Lakshmipur, Bhitari Bihar and Mahonpur, were under the possession of the king. The *Nazir* had the possession of Dakuar hat, Gitaldah, Rampur, Chakla Purba Bhag and Rahim Ganj *parganas*. The *Dewan* had the possession of one *pargana* only (Patchara). The locations of the *parganas* have been illustrated in the *Map 3 and 4*.

53. *Raja Vamsavali*, Ms.(NBSL MS.no 04),f.9.

54. The whole male population except the noble, priest and the person of high castes between the ages 15 and 50 were liable to serve the state. They were known as *paik* in the Ahom state. 3 or 4 *paiks* constitute one unit called *got* to continue the

- service to the state without interruption. For details, see N.K.Bose: *Assam in the Ahom Age*, (Calcutta, Sanaskrit Pustak Bhandar, 1970),pp. 113-115.
55. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri :*op.cit.*,pp.546-47.
 56. *Ibid.*
 57. *Ibid.*,508. Interest of the Koch state to bring fresher land under cultivation was identical with the Mughal policy of encouraging the peasants to bring fallow land under cultivation .The Mughals laid down a graduated system of assessment for breaking the waste land The normal rate of assessment reached to these land in the fifth years. Advances ere also given to the cultivators in order to enable them to defray the initial cost of the change. R.C.Majumder (Gen. ed): *The History and Culture of the Indian People, Mughal Empire*, 2nd ed., (Bombay, Bharatiya Vidhya Bavan, 1984), p.533.
 58. Hari Narayan Dutta Barua: *Chitra Bhagavat*,(Nalbari ,1949), p. 1.
 59. Sunil Pal: Mech Jatir Endi Silpa, *Amrita- 12.30(1972)*, p.306.
 60. Bhagavati Charan Bandyopadhaya: *Cooch Biharer Itihas* (Cooch Behar State Press, 1884), edited by Nripendra Nath Pal (Calcutta, Anima Prakashani, 1987), p.19.
 61. See **Plate 5.2 and 5.3.**
 62. Chakrabarty Jadav Chandra: *Koch Biharer Itihas*, reprinted in Pal Nripendra Nath (ed.): *Bishay Cooch Behar*, (Calcutta, Anima Prakashani, 1994), p.36.
 63. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, v. 263. p 52.
 64. Haliram Mohanta: *Sankar Charita* (Sualkuchi, 1925), vs. 3506 - 07, p.275.
 65. *Ibid.*, vs. 3509-10, p.275.
 66. D. Nath: *op. cit.*, p. 151.
 67. Montgomery Martin: *Eastern India (5 vols.)*, reprint ed., (Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1976), vol. 5. *Rangpur and Assam*, p. 553; Haliram Dekial Phukan: *Assam Buranji*, edited by Jatindra Mahun Bhattacharyya, (Gauhati, Mokshda Pustakalaya, 1369 B.S.), p. 88.
 68. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri:*op. cit.*, p.154.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. Birinchi Kumar Barua: *History of Assamese Literature*, (New Delhi, Sahitya Academy, 1964), p.39.

71. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, v. 261, p. 52.
72. *Raja Vamsavali*, f.9.
73. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p.191.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
75. Haliram Dhekial Phukan :*op.cit.*, p. 104.
76. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, v. 260, p. 51.
77. *Ibid.*, v. 259, p.51.
78. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p.155.
79. Montgomery Martin: *Eastern India*, vol.5, p. 678;Buchanan Hamilton: *An Account of Kamrupa*, p. 62.
80. See Plate 5.4.and 5.4.
81. *Rajopakhyan.*,p.112.
82. Haliram Dhekial Phukan :*op. cit.*, p. 91.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
84. Montgomery Martin: *Eastern India*, vol.5, p. 678; Buchanan Hamilton: *An Account of Kamrupa*, p. 62.
85. W.W. Hunter: *Statistical Account of Bengal*, vol. x, p. 344.
86. Haliram Dherial Phukan: *op. cit.*, p. 88.
87. Francis Buchanan: An Account of Kamrup, in S.K. Bhuiyan (ed.); *Kamrupar Buranji*, 3rd ed., (Guwahati, DHAS, 1987), p. 62.
88. Daityari Thakur: *Mahapurush Sri Sankardeva and Madhav Devar Chiban Charita*, edited by H.N Datta Barua (Nalbari, 1978), v. 1251.
89. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*, vs. 259, pp.51-52.
90. Cowry cell was a common medium of exchange in Bengal and Assam. The pre-Koch Brahmaputra valley largely utilized the cowries in local exchanges, which continued to be circulated even after the introduction of the *Narayani Tanka*. N.G. Rhodes and Sankar K. Bose: *The Coinage of Assam, vol. 1. Pre-Ahom Period*. (Dhubri, Library of Numismatic Studies, 2003), pp.57-64.
91. The gold coins of the Varman dynasty had been discovered at Paglalik near Goalpara (N.G.Rhodes and Sankar K.Bose: *The Coinage of Assam, Vol.I*, pp.12-18). The copper coins issued by the rulers of the *Mleccha* dynasty of the 9th century have been noticed from several find spots (pp27-45). The sliver coins

were circulated in the Tista- Brahmaputra valley, particularly of the *Kachari coins*.

92. J.P. Singh: *Monetary Development in Early Assam*. (Jorhat, 1989), p. 20.
93. N.G Rhodes and Sankar K. Bose: *The Coinage of Assam*, p, 27.
94. N.G.Rhodes and Sankar K. Bose: *Coinage of Cooch Behar*, (Dhubri, Library of Numismatic Studies, 1999), pp. 74-85.
95. *Darrang Raj Vamsavali*. v. 839, p. 89; *Kamrupar Buranji*, p.12.
96. *Ibid.*, v. 819. p.85.
97. N.G.Rhodes and Sankar K.Bose : *Coinage of Cooch Behar*, pp.9-10.
98. H. Blochmann: *loc cit* .p. 66.
99. Harendra Narayan Choudhuri :*Op. cit* .,pp.266-68.
100. N.G.Rhodes and Sankar K.Bose: *Coinage of Cooch Behar*, pp.27-28.
101. R.B. Pemberton: Report on Bootan,(1837-38),reprinted in H.K.Kuloy (ed): *Political Missions to Bootan* ,reprint ed.,(New Delhi ,Manjusri Publishing House ,1972), p.355.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
103. K.K.Bose: *op. cit.*, p.310; Haliram Dhekial Phukan: *op.cit.* p.77;Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri:*op.cit* ,p.268; Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed: *op. cit.*, p. 291;N.G. Rhodes : Cooch Behar Coins Used in Bhutan, in Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya (ed.): *Kamata- Cooch Behar in Historical Perspective*. (Calcutta, Ratna Prakashan, 2000), pp.148-154; D.Nath: *op.cit.*, p.158;
104. George Bogle: *op. cit.*, pp. 55 and 59.
105. William Foster (ed): *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, reprint ed.,(Delhi ,S.Chand & Co.,1968) p. 27.
106. K.K. Bose: *op. cit.*, p.350. George Bogle: *op. cit.*, p.51.
107. Mr. George Bogle recorded on October 11, 1774, that the Bhutanese caravans previously use to go as far as Dinajpur. George Bogle: *op. cit.*, p. 52.
108. George Bogle: *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 53-55; K.K. Bose: *op. cit.*, p. 350; B.R. Pemberton: *op.cit*, pp.224-225, 162-163.
109. Ananda Chandra Ghosh: *Cooch Behar Itihas*, edited by Ananda Gopal Ghosh and Narayan Saha (Darjeeling, Uttarbanga Itihas Prakashana Parishad, 1990), p. 8.

110. *The Cooch Behar Gazette, Monday, November 8(1857)*, p.89.
111. D.Sunder: *Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars*, p.29.
112. Wollen blanket of Bhutan (*Bhot Kambal*) was very popular not only in Cooch Behar but also in mediaeval Bengal. Krishnadas Kaviraj: *Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, 9th ed., (Calcutta, Basumati Sahitya Mandir, 1386 B.S.), p.211.
113. K.K. Bose :*op. cit.*, p.350.
114. *Letter dated 9th Pouse 1185 B.S.* produced in S.N. Sen (ed.): *Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan* (Calcutta, Calcutta University, 1942), *Letter no. 1*.p.1.
115. *Guru Charita*, vs. 3488-35-8, p.141.
116. *Ibid.* vs. 3488, p. 693.
117. B.P.Misra: Early History of Bhutan, *Himalayan Miscellany, I(March 1987)* ,p.8.
118. K.K. Bose: *op. cit.* p.161.
119. C. Wessels (ed): *Early Jesuit traveler in Central Asia*, pp. 127-128.
120. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri :*op. cit.*, p.192.
121. Dhekial Phukan: *op. cit.*, p.105; Jagadidra Dev Narayan Raikat: *op. cit.*p.6; H. Blochmann: *loc. cit.*, p. 77.
122. *Katha Gurucharita*, p.108.
123. Jadav Chandra Chakrabarty :*op. cit.*, p.33.
124. George Bogle: *op. cit.*, p. 55.
125. W.W. Hunter: *Statistical Account of Bengal Vol.X*, p.360.
126. C.W. Wessels :*op. cit.*, p.28.
127. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p.123.
128. Ananda Chandra Ghosh: *op. cit.*, p. 8.
129. *Guru Charita*, vs. 2751-2836, pp.546-63; Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya: Eitihāsik Prekashapte Kamata-Koch Rajvamsa O Tar Kichu Samashya, in Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya(ed): *Kamata- Cooch Behar in Historical Perspective*. (Calcutta, Ratna Prakashan, 2000), p.45.
130. Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri: *op. cit.*, p, 192; W.W.Hunter: *Staistical Account of Bengal, vol. x* ,pp. 398-99.
131. Bhabesh Narzi: *Bado Kacharir Swamaj Aru Sanskriti*, reprint ed.,(Guwahati , 2001),p. 43; Kameswar Brahma : *A Study of Socio-Religious Beliefs of the*

Bodos with Special References to the Bodos of Kokrajhar District ,(Calcutta ,Puthi Pustak ,1992),p.14.

132. Romesh Buragohain: *Presidential Address*, 21st Session, North East India History Association, Imphal, 2000, published in the Proceeding of North East India History Association, Twenty-first Session,(Shillong ,NEHU,2000) pp.3-8.