

**PROCEEDINGS OF  
NORTH EAST INDIA  
HISTORY ASSOCIATION**

**NINTH SESSION**

**GUWAHATI ; 1988**

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HISTORY ASSOCIATION



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9

*Edited & Published by*  
**Jayanta Bhushan Bhattacharjee**  
General Secretary  
on behalf of

**North East India History Association**  
Department of History  
**North-Eastern Hill University**  
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## PREFACE

*The ninth session of the North East India History Association at the Gauhati University was indeed the fulfilment of a long cherished objective of the Association to hold a session in the premier University of the region. In fact, there had been efforts on the part of the Association ever since it came into existence in 1979 to hold a session at the Gauhati University. We are thankful to the authorities of the Gauhati University for inviting the ninth session and organising it in an excellent manner.*

*Shri Bhisma Narain Singh, the Governor of Assam, inaugurated the session. Professor D. P. Barooah, Vice-Chancellor, and Professor J. N. Phukan, Head, Department of History, Gauhati University did the Association a great honour as Chairman of the organising committee and Local Secretary respectively for the session. It was presided over by Professor Bhupen Qanungo of the North-Eastern Hill University. More than one hundred and fifty delegates attended the session in which eighty-five research papers were presented and discussed.*

*The present volume is the proceedings of the ninth session of the North East India History Association held at the Gauhati University on November 3-5, 1988. I am thankful to my colleagues Dr. J. P. Singh, Dr. O. P. Kejariwal, Dr. M. S. Sangma and Dr. D. R. Syiemlieh for the help in selecting and editing the papers and publishing the volume. We are also thankful to the Indian Council of Historical Research for the generous financial assistance extended to the Association.*

**J. B. Bhattacharjee**

*General Secretary,*

North East India History Association.

Shillong

The 25 August 1989

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Early History of the Mizos

Suhas Chatterjee

We donot have definite historical information about the early history of the Mizo people. The south of Cachar had been the abode of aboriginal forest people which the *Puranas* and *Mahabharata* testify. According to Dr. Suniti Kr. Chatterjee, the Kukies of Cachar border are the ancient *Kiratas* of Hindu *Puranas*. The Kacharies claim to be the descendents of *Hidimba* the wife of Bhisma, the second Pandava. These legends may contain some truth. But it is a historical fact that the Tibeto - Burman Mongoloids live in Assam, the North East of India, from the beginning of Indian history. These forest people of defferent denominations had their mutual intercourse both social and political. The 'Old kukies' of Cachar frontier consisting of hmars, Poes, Lakhers, Raite, Rungs, Hrangkhels Tipras, Bodos, Kabuis, Meithis, etc. are very old residents having direct political and social contact with the Rajas of Manipur, Cachar, Sylhet, and Tripura. There has been large scale inter mixture of blood between these people. The common facial features of the people of this area is clear indication of this . Like the Assamese of the Brahmaputra valley, the Bengalees of the Barak valley have some dose of Mongolian blood in their veins. Similarly, the Mizos (especially the Lushai clan) with the exception to the Khasis of Meghalaya do contain Bengali and Hindu blood more than any frontier tribes. Hindu slaves (of Bengali man and women) were brought by the Lushai Chiefs in their raids to Lushai Hills as captives and they got mixed with the Lushai Society. Indeed, the Kukie chiefs of Lalchukla's clan had been the important frontier officers of the *Rajas* of Tripura and Lalchukla's *mantrees* could converse in Bengali with the Raja's Officials. The Lushais of the Sylhet frontier had the similar connections with the Hindu rules of Sylhet. Although

we do not have any concrete proof that the *Rajas* of Cachar had Mizo wives or they married their daughters to the Lushai Chiefs but it is very likely marriage relationship existed between the *Dimacha* and Kuki nobility. Now the Kukis are Christians but like the kabui Nagas of Manipur frontier, the Kukies used to follow their developed form of Pagan religion some what influenced by the Hindu faith. The name kalasiva (Black Mahadev) not very far from Bhuban hillock in Cachar, Assam, is a clear indication of Hindu influence on the Mizos. Every year at Silcoorie Tea Estate in South Cachar a *Mela* is held in honour of a Kuki saint Baram-Baba. Baram Baba, the local Kuki Godman definitely had his followers among the non-tribals in Cachar. That the *Kukies* had been very powerful residents in Cachar frontiers in the thirteenth to nineteenth century is being evidenced by the history of Sylhet. The Tripuras were the rulers of *Ita pargana* of Sylhet in the twelveth century. The rulers Dharmadhar (Swadharmapa or Chengpha) was the raja of Kailagadh. He invited a Kanauj Brahmin Nidhipati to his principality and granted him real estate as *Brahmottar* land. The inscription in the copper plate bears the name of *Kukisthanam* i.e. the land of the Kukies. The second verse of the Sanskrit couplet describing the area of the granted land to Nidhipati states as follows:-

"Sri Nidhipati Vipraya Vastsya Gotraya  
Dharmine  
Prehayang Longai Kukisthanan Pratichyan  
Gopola nadi"

(To Sri Nidhipati, the Vatsya Gotra Brahman, the land bound in the east the Longai and Kukiland and in the west the Gopola river, page 64 *Shrihatter Itibritta* Chapter I Volume II). Pandit Chandradaya Vidyavinod and Sir Edward Gait (*History of Assam*) have mentioned this. The *Sylhet District Gazetteer*, mentions the date of the land grant to Nidhipati in 1195. *Sylhet District Gazetteer*,

Chapter II. p 22). In *Rajamala*, the family chronicle of the Tripura rulers, there are number of references of the Kukies. The Kuki Chiefs had been the feudatories of the Tripura King. Probably there had been marriage ties between the two tribal people. At least in the eighteenth century the Kukies of Sylhet frontier were loyal to the Tippera King. One *Shlheti* advanterous noble Raja Ram Datta by the grace of the Tripura ruler became the Landlord of Chargola Valley, near *Shon Bill*, in Cachar district (now Karimganj district) and had in his command a large number of Kuki rayots. He used those Kukies to suppress his adversaries; even in 1784 he stormed upon the military out post of the British Government with the help of the Kuki subjects. Like Cachar, Sylhet, Tripura and Manipur, the Hisotry and culture of Chittagong had been closely associated with the hill tribes of the great Mizo clan. Not only the Chakmas, Mongs, but Howlangs, Shindus (Bungsheys) and Lushais had regular social intercourse with the people of Chittagang. The people of Chittagang like the people of Sylhet and Cachar had to face the bloody Lushai raids in their villages. It is also believed that in the hoary past the tribals paid their homage to Lord Siva in the ancient shrine of Ghandra-nath, the famous international pilgrim centre at Chittagang now in Bangladesh. That the Tripurians were the relatives of the Kukies had been admitted by the royal records of Tripura. A bronce statue of a horsemen has been discovered in the Longai valley (Karimganj district) from the halm clan of the Kuki tribe. The names of Vijya Manikya and Chatra Manikya are inscribed on the back of it. Similarly, large seal inferiormetalic tigers and elephants have been discovered from the same area among the same tribals which bear on their backs the following inscriptions in Sanskrit in Bengali Scripts:-

"Purva parya Kramadhabanta A tmia  
Indaning Yadi Vaiparityam A charanti

*Tadopari Dharama Shasya Naso Bhabissyati  
Paschadgaja Shardulou"*

The English rendering of this verse is that from the remote past we are your relatives. If you do not keep the bond of relationship intact, you will lose your paddy and religions and at the end you will be destroyed by the tigers and elephants (*Nabya Bharat*, 1304 Bengali Era, Issue No. 7, Calcutta). All these go to show that like the Bodos of Assam the Kukies of Mizoram are original Indians living in the frontier regions from the ancient past. However, the Lushais of Lalu's clan who ruled considerable part of Mizoram in the nineteenth century by ousting the other clans, entered into Mizoram from Haka (Burma). The Howlongs and Shindus, the ruling tribes of south Lishai Hills perhaps came from Arakan (lower Burma). According to John W. Edgar Luluha, the founder of the Sylo dynasty, established his hold in the North Lushai Hills around 1840 A.D. . But Luluha is the grandson of Chunglena who entered India in the second half of the eighteenth century. The assimilation of the Lushais with the mainstream or Indian life was deliberately prevented by the English, particularly the foreign missionaries.

**Notes & Reference**

1. Upendra Chandra Guha, **Kacharer Itibritta**.
2. Government of Tripura, **Raja Mala**.
3. Assam Govt., Dist. Gazatters, Vol. II Chapter II p. 22.
4. **Srihatter Itibritta**, Vol II, Chapter II, p. 209 - II.
5. Ibid. Vol. II Miscelianeous, Canto V, Chapter 3, p. 52.
6. E. Gait, **History of Assam**, Ch. XI p. 261.
7. Ibid. Chapter XVII p. 326 - 338.
8. K.C. Singha, **History of Tripura**, Vol. III Chapter 1.
9. **Journal of the Asiatic Society**, Calcutta Vol. XLII, part 1. p. 214 - 34.

10. **Report on the Progress of Historical Researches in Assam**, 1897, p. 12.
11. Hrankhols, Betes, Hmar with their off-shoots are old Kukies. The Thado, Jangshens, Paites are the new Kukies of Cachar frontier who were pushed by the Lushai. **The Imperial Gazetteer of India**, Vol. VIII London, 1886 p.529.
12. The word 'Chin' in Burmese means basket.
13. **Gazetteer of Upper Burma and shan State**, Rangoon, 1900.
14. B. Lalthangliana, **History of Mizo in Burma**, p. 9 - 11.