

PRINT: ISSN 0972-639X ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6799

STUDIES OF TRIBES AND TRIBALS



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PRINT: ISSN 0972-639X ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6799

Stud Tribes Tribals, 17(1-2): 19-26 (2019)

DOI: 10.31901/24566799.201917.1-2.422

Trade in the Pre-colonial Ahom Agrarian Economy

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KEYWORDS Bhutia. Chawkey. Haat. Paik. Salt

ABSTRACT Trade in the pre-colonial economy of the Brahmaputra valley has often been looked as something primitive and of little value. When the English East India Company entered into the Brahmaputra valley as the ruler, this notion of commercial primitivism of the Brahmaputra valley in general and the Ahom trade, in particular, was re-emphasised by the colonial journal writers and record keepers. The Ahom Buranjis provides scant information on trade. To understand the nature of trade in the valley in late medieval time, the author has used the meagre Ahom sources along with the European reports and the Company's records. These sources unanimously speak about the Ahom rulers' involvement in the trade. With the neighbouring communities, the valley had trading relations. This paper attempts to study nature and scope of trade in the valley with special reference to the Ahom monarchy.