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Abstract
In an interview the famous Japanese historian Noboru Karashima once said ‘if literature is to be used as a method of analysis, comparative literature of same period should be studied to understand various types of social formation’ [1]. But here, the two treatises, the Kalika Purana and the Yogini Tantra that we are selecting for this comparative study are not contemporary to each other. Even the nature of composition of these two treatises is also not same – one is known as an Upa-Purana and other being considered as tantra. But there are factors like same regional background i.e. both are regarded as composition of Assam and both have vivid geographical descriptions which inspired us to make the proposition of this comparative study. In this regard it is interesting to note that these descriptions are categorically mean to speak specially about rivers. More than fifty rivers of divergent identities have found their mention in each of these two compilations of Kamrupa origin. Though, majority numbers of such references are about the rivers of Assam but it is interesting that the treatises are also speaking about the rivers beyond the territories of the traditional boundaries of Assam and such references of rivers are the core concern of the study. Inspired by the ideal of nadi stuti of Rg Veda, the study here intends to go with comparative methodological approach to understand different phases of cultural connectivity that Kamrupa had enjoyed through the ages.

Keywords: Archaic, Nadi, Merchant, Geography

Introduction
The Kalika Purana and the Yogini Tantra have popularly been regarded as two of the primary resources of the history of Kamrupa. The Kalika Purana is considered as a composition of 9th/10th century A.D. and said to have been composed somewhere in or very near about Kamrupa [2]. On the other hand the Yogini Tantra is a compilation which supposed to have been composed not earlier than 16th century A.D [3]. Like many other treatises of their rank they also tried to endorse the concept of geography mainly in terms of topography. However, regarding geographical description, the Kalika Purana looks to be mature enough as it tried to conceptualise geography not only in the name of topography but also in terms of cosmology and climatology.

Statement of Problem
As both the treatises are of Kamrupa origin, they have naturally tried to be loyal mainly to the geography of ancient Assam. However, in doing this composer of the treatises did not forget to mention about some important geographical features of other Indian land. Among those features, they emphasised more on rivers which itself is a significant clause to note about. River is an apt metaphor for life and settlement [4]. Accordingly, their references in the treatises like the Kalika Purana and the Yogini Tantra certainly have some mean to state about the settlement pattern of our ancestor. Further, those references of rivers, beyond the traditional boundaries of Assam may have the prospect to think about the modalities of changing cultural domain of the people of Assam. Thus, the references of such rivers in turn may also have explained the value of intra-regional connectivity that our ancestor experienced at different stages of their development.

Accordingly, the study proposes to move around two perennial problems that come out of the river rime description of these two treatises a) What are the real identities of these rivers b) Are they suggest anything significant to the cultural history of Assam?
Methodology
The study is empirical in nature with a comparative historical approach. Further it isoup with primary literary evidences collected from the Kalika Purana and the Yogini Tantra and thus proceed with some secondary observation to define its critical stand with a philosophical thought.

Core resources from the Kalika Purana
The sequence of our rivers can be read in following way Ganga, Yamuna, Mahakosi, Jambunadi, Baitarani Akasanga, Sipra, Chandrabhaga, Sita, Mandakini, Cuvery, Gomti, Devika, Sarayu, Iravati, Karatoya and Drisadvati. Apart from Ganga, Yamuna and mysterious Jambunadi and Akasanga, the identity of other rivers may be made on the basis of their synonymous existence in some other Pauranic composition as tried by the scholars in following way.

Mahakosi
This river has found mention in the Kalika Purana in reference to a romantic incident in which lord Siva tried to explain before his newly wedded wife Sati that like many other places of the world, the beautiful bank of Mahakosi river also had the latency to be her abode if she choose for [3]. Scholars have tried to identify the river as Kosi [4], one of the most violent tributary of the northern bank of river Ganga. This river Kosi is formed by seven important Himalayan streams (Sapta Kosi) in eastern Nepal and now meets Ganga little below Kargola [7].

Baitarani
The Kalika Purana describes the sacred river Baitarani as the creation of the tear of lord Siva, drip out of a deep sense of sorrow at an unexpected death of his wife Sati; this river flew toward the eastern sea [9]. The Kalika Purana described the river as being in the middle of the Puskardwipa. This creates a great confusion in identifying the river as the land of Puskardwipa said to have covered the whole region of Japan, Manchuria and south eastern Siberia [9]. Leaving aside the confusion, if we concentrate only on the name of the river it appears that still there is a river of the same name in the state of Orissa of Indian federation. This river rises in the hills of the southern part of the district of Singhbhum and flows through the Bolasor district of Orissa from north west to south east and ultimately merged with the bay of Bengal near Dhamra [10].

Sipra
According to the Kalika Purana, the Sipra river originates from Sipra lake situated on the western side of Himalaya to fall into the southern sea. The water of this lake become sacred as it received water once poured by Hindu trinity on sage Vasistha and Arundhati while solemnizing their marriage and that water later emerged on earth as Sipra river at the initiatives of lord Vishnu [11]. Ujjain, the capital city of an ancient janapada Avanti said to have been situated on the bank of river Sipra [12], Ujjain, a region of eastern Malawa [13] is now in Madhya Pradesh. Though the Kalika Purana described it as an independent river, it now survived only as a tributary of river Chambal [14].

Chandrabhaga
According to the scripture, Chandrabhaga river originates from Chandrabhag mountain. In the treatise the river was describe as a girl born out of the sight of Lord Brahma from Manas-Sarobar; later she was married to the lord of the sea at the consent of pitamaha Brahma; lord Chandra helps her to flow through the earth by breaking a portion of Chandrabhaga mountain with the tip of his gada (mass) and water of this river describe as holy as that of Ganga [15]. This river has popularly been identified as Chenab [16]. At present Chenab drains through two major Indian states – Jammu-Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and ultimately merged with the Arabian sea [17].

Sita
This river of the Kalika Purana said to have been originated in the Chandrabhaga mountain at the graceful word of lord (?); the secretion of ambrosial from the body of lord Chandra made the water of this river sacred. The story of sacredness of the water of the river Sita is related to a curse imposed by lord Dakshya on his son in law, lord Chandra due to latter’s too much affection to one of his wife Rohini and ignorance to the others (all these wives of lord Chandra were the daughter of Dakshya) [18]. This has been identified as river Yarkhand [19], Yarkhand is a tributary of famous Tarim river. In China Tarim and Hwangho are considered as one river and thus Yarkhand, Tarim and Hwangho in alternate sense can be considered as ancient Sita river [20].

Mandakini
River Mandakini [21] of the Kalika Purana may be identified as one of the tributaries of Alakananda an upper course of river Ganga [22].

Cuvery
Describing the origin of the river, the Kalika Purana states that a few strips of bathing water poured by Hindu trinity on sage Vasistha and Arundhati on the occasion of their marriage also fall on Umakshetra which creates Cuvery lake there and it was from that the river Cuvery emerged on earth [23]. Popularly known as Ganga of south India, the Cuvery river rises in Brahmagiri hill of western ghat parvat and drain the south western part of Karnataka and middle part of modern Tamilnadu [24].

Gomti
According to the Kalika Purana, this river emerged from Gomati mountain on the southern side of Himalaya; the beginning point of this river is near the place known as Siva [25]. This is a left bank tributary of river Ganga and one of the chief river to drain through Uttar Pradesh. The famous Indian city Lucknow stands on the bank of this river.

Devika
The mythology propounded by the Kalika Purana states that the river initiates from a place where wife of the king of mountain (Himalaya) Menaka, gave birth of a child known as Mainak; soon after its emergence, lord Mahadeva send her to the sea [26]. This river has been identified as Deeg, one of the right bank tributary of Ravi [27]. Some scholar however, tried to identify it with Deva or Devika, a tributary of the southern bank of river Sarayu [28].

Sarayu
Sarayu [29] has been identified with Ghogra [30], a tributary of Ganga who merged with her near the Chapra district of Bihar.

Iravati
This great river said to have been originated from Ira lake; like Jahnavi this river also full fill day to day necessities of the people around her; it flows towards western sea; she along with six other rivers considered to be the Mahanadi to bestow
upon human being three fold Moksa (Dharma, Artha and Kama) [31]. This river is identified with Ravi [32]. It drain through three Indian states Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir and Punjab. The river has a strategic importance as being a part of Indo Pakistan boundary. It runs all along the Gurdaspur and Amritsar district of Punjab.

There is another river of the same name in Myanmar which naturally creates confusion in ascertaining the identity of this river. But considering the point of emergence of this river as suggested by the Kalika Purana, this river should better be identified as Indian Ravi instead of Irravti of Myanmar.

Karatoya
For number of occasion, the river Karatoya has found its mention in the Kalika Purana. This sacred river said to have been on the eastern side of river Ganga [33]. Scholars have tried to identify the river with modern Teesta or Trisrota, means three stream, the first one is modern Teesta, second one seem to be a less celebrated river somewhere near modern Goalpara district of Assam and third one may be identified with Drirai river near Tezpur; of them the first one i.e. Karatoya was the most celebrated one and popularly known as Ganga of Dvapara [34].

Drisadvati
The Kalika Purana described it as being a river in the middle of Brahmavarta; a famous city known as Karavir Nagar said to have been situated on the bank of this river; its water is a holy as the water of Ganga and had the capacity to remove sin. [35] According to Alexander Cunningham this river constitutes the southern boundary of Kurukshetra region now in modern Harayana [36]. Later it being identified as Chitang, a tributary of Ghaggar, flows between Yamuna and Sutlej [37].

Core resources from the Yogini Tantra
Like the Kalika Purana, the Yogini Tantra is also a region centric compilation. However, the ideal of regionalism have acquired a more acute exposition in the Yogini Tantra than that of the Kalika Purana. This effort of regionalism that we have in the Yogini Tantra has their explanation mainly in terms of topographical description of Assam. Thus, the treatise though emphasise more in describing the topographical features of Assam, it however did not forget to mention about the rivers beyond the traditional boundaries of Assam.

As it is a product of much later age, it seems to be very natural to have the accommodation of more numbers of rivers in the tantra. The list of the rivers in the Yogini Tantra had attained an extensive look with some interesting addition that we have not found in the Kalika Purana. As for example the Yogini Tantra recognised the existence of two great Indian rivers, Narmada and Godavari when the Kalika Purana interestingly remained silent about them. Similarly, the Yogini Tantra was aware of the mythical existence of rivers like Jahnavi and Saraswati while the Kalika Purana did not feel it necessary even to mention about them. Again, the great Ramayani river Sarayu of the Kalika Purana had found it’s appearance in the Yogini Tantra with its modern real identity as Ghogra.

In this way, the list of the rivers in the tantra though have an extensive look with the inclusion of more numbers of rivers it however, does not mean that by mentioning their name the tantra actually intended to recognise them with their real identity. Rather, the tantra tried to impose their name upon some local rivers and stream. This is probably an effort to inculcate a sense of sacredness in some regional rivers for local availability. As for example the tantra tried to identify the stream touching Chandrasaila as Jahnavi [38], stream touching Indrasaila as Saraswati [39] stream flowing from Pandavukta as Narmada [40], stream from Kamakhya as Ganga [41], stream from Vyaskunda as Chandrabhaga [42], stream from Somkunda as Vaitarani [43], stream from Tamsaila as Godavari [44] etc. The names and the mode of description itself indicate that all these mountain and Kunda from where the great Indian rivers said to be originated are situated mainly around modern Guwahati. The location of some of those mountains has already been identified like Chandrasaila as a mountain in Sinduri Ghopa Mouza in modern north Guwahati region, Indrasaila as Kshetraparvat around Guwahati, Pandavukta the popular mountain on the southern bank of river Brahmaputra [45], etc. However, this effort of the tantra is exuberant not only in case of the rivers; in describing every topographical features of Assam the tantra had adopted this unique allegorical approach. So to say, the tantra is habituated enough in using the name of those important topographical identities of Indian repute to describe geographical features of this great tantric land.

Thus, the discussion has further left two sets of question 1) Why the Kalika Purana remain silent about the existence of river like Narmada and Godavari when the another treatise of same regional background mention about them? Can those mentions in the Yogini Tantra be regarded as an indication of ever expanding horizon of the people of Assam? 2) If it is so, then why the Yogini Tantra was metaphorical enough in using the name of those great Indian rivers merely in locating some local rivers?

Our observation
From time immemorial the experience of crossing over rivers fascinate the human mind. It was probably because of that fascination we have found in the scripture like Rg Veda a complete chapter dedicated to rivers known as Nadi Stuti. The presence of this chapter in the Rg Veda is nothing but a salutation to the gracious presence of the rivers. It can further be said that the Nadi Stuti is an attempt made by our ancestor to solemnise their pleasant experiences of rivers that they cross over when they tried to open up new settlement in different corner of Indian subcontinent.

Accordingly, rivers in the Kalika Purana might have defined the domain of geographical reach of the people of this region in terms of their intra-regional contact. From time immemorial, the frequencies of such intra-regional human movement were largely dependent on mercantile activities. Whatever might be the avenues of such contact, the references of those distant rivers in the Kalika Purana looks to be an effort of our ancestor to memorize their pleasant experience while coming from or going over those rivers on different purposes. If we look those references of rivers in terms of their real geographical existence an interesting domain appear before us where Ravi is situated in the north, Cuvery in the south, Sipra in the west and Sita in the east. Thus, a vast tract of land stretching from Jammu-Kashmir to Tamilndu and from Ujjain to Chinese main land come up which once probably fall within the domain of commercial as well as cultural activities of Kamrupa.

Similarly, the rivers in the Yogini Tantra also look to have suggested a domain of bigger dimension as the tantra has recorded more numbers of rivers than that of the Kalika Purana. But the unique allegorical approach that the tantra had adapted created a problem in considering the fact. There is no doubt that the tantra was not only aware of more numbers of rivers from Indian heartland but it’s composer also had a good sum of idea about the importance of those rivers to the religious life of the
people of India. The efforts of the \textit{tantra} to explain only the religious sanctity of those rivers rather than highlighting their real geographical existence itself prove the fact. Now the question is that why the \textit{tantra} tried to be allegorical when using the name of those great Indian rivers? When we are trying to understand the problem the first point that comes to our mind is that there is a gap of more than five hundred years between the date of composition of these two rivers. In the courses of these years lots more has been changed. During 13\textsuperscript{th} century the great \textit{Ahom} had opened up their rule in the eastern frontier of Assam and by the time of the composition of the \textit{Yogini Tantra} they emerged as the paramount political power of Assam. A significant character of \textit{Ahom} rule was their ‘close door’ \cite{46} policy which in turn hampered the frequencies of intra-regional connectivity that the people of this region had enjoyed during the days of the \textit{Kalika Purana} and even after. Under such circumstances, the \textit{tantra} when intended to mention the name of those great Indian river it had to be dependent only on those memories that survive in society form the days of their forefather. On the other hand the \textit{Yogini Tantra} is a tantric composition. The \textit{tantra} by virtue of their nature emphasised on short cut route to moksa. Not only to the moksa, in every aspect of life had the \textit{tantra} advocated the cause of an abbreviated effort. Accordingly the \textit{Yogini Tantra} here possibly tries to inculcate a sense of religious sanctity of those distantly located rivers in some local rivers and stream so to make them easily available to the people of Assam. Thus, the discussion may be sum up in following words that there was frequent people’s movement between Kamrupa and other parts of India from time immemorial and traces of such intra-regional connectivity survive in the form of the record of rivers in the \textit{Kalika Purana}. With the passes of time it had assumed more vibrant look and more new region came in contact with Kmarupa. This is why the memory of some new rivers from those distant regions has found their mention in the treatise like the \textit{Yogini Tantra}. But, the changing political scenarios suddenly created a restriction and disrupt free movement of people between regions. Under such circumstances it might not have been possible for a treatise like the \textit{Yogini Tantra} of regional background to record anything about those distant river without the help of those pleasant memory that survive here from the days of society’s great forefather. Further, the allegorical approach that the \textit{tantra} had adopted while mentioning about those rivers can be appropriated in terms of its tantric affiliation; that to say that the \textit{tantra} possibly tried to revive the sense of sanctity of those great rivers readily available to the people of this land.

References

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