



ISSN NO. 2320-5407

International Journal of Advanced Research

**Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research
LLP**

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: **IJAR-58314****Title:** Courage in the Battlefield: Mulagabharu in the Ahom–Turk Conflict.**Recommendation:**

Accept after minor revision.....

Rating	Excel .	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Faheem Abdul Muneeb

Reviewer Report

Overall Assessment

The manuscript entitled "**Courage in the Battlefield: Mulagabharu in the Ahom–Turk Conflict**" examines the historical role of Mulagabharu during the Ahom resistance against the invasion led by Turbak Khan in the sixteenth century. The study seeks to reconstruct her contribution through a critical examination of the Ahom *Buranjis*, Persian references, and modern historical scholarship while situating her within the broader political, military, and social history of the Ahom kingdom. Rather than presenting Mulagabharu solely as a legendary heroine, the manuscript attempts to distinguish historically verifiable evidence from later commemorative traditions and argues that her participation represents an important example of women's agency during periods of political crisis in medieval Assam. The topic is both original and significant because women associated with military history in medieval northeastern India

International Journal of Advanced Research

**Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research
LLP**

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

remain comparatively underrepresented in mainstream historiography despite their importance within regional historical traditions.

The manuscript addresses an important historiographical gap by focusing specifically on Mulagabharu rather than treating her as a brief episode within broader political histories of the Ahom kingdom. The study demonstrates familiarity with the principal primary sources, particularly the *Ahom Buranjis*, while also engaging with the writings of Edward Gait, Surya Kumar Bhuyan, H.K. Barpujari, S.L. Baruah, Arupjyoti Saikia, Yasmin Saikia, and other historians of Assam. The discussion is logically organized, beginning with the historical background of the Ahom–Turk conflict before moving to the reconstruction of Mulagabharu's role, the Battle of Duimunisila, women's participation in warfare, historiographical debates, source criticism, and finally her legacy in modern Assam. This structure allows the narrative to develop coherently and makes the manuscript accessible to readers who may not be familiar with the political history of the Ahom kingdom.

One of the notable contributions of the paper lies in its effort to combine military history with gender history and historiography. Rather than merely recounting the events surrounding the Battle of Duimunisila, the author attempts to examine broader questions concerning women's political agency, historical memory, and the relationship between contemporary chronicles and later cultural representations. The sections discussing the distinction between documented evidence preserved in the *Buranjis* and subsequent literary embellishments demonstrate an awareness of historical methodology and source criticism, which strengthens the scholarly character of the manuscript. Likewise, the discussion of Mulagabharu's continuing place within Assamese historical consciousness highlights the interaction between historical events and collective memory.

Overall, the manuscript makes a worthwhile contribution to the historiography of medieval Assam and opens an important discussion on women's participation in warfare in northeastern India. While the study is generally well researched and clearly presented, certain aspects could be strengthened to enhance its analytical depth, historiographical engagement, and overall scholarly contribution. These observations primarily concern refinement rather than fundamental weaknesses, and therefore the manuscript is suitable for publication after minor revisions.

Strengths of the Paper

One of the principal strengths of the manuscript is the originality of its subject matter. Although the political history of the Ahom kingdom has received considerable scholarly attention, Mulagabharu herself has rarely been examined as the central subject of historical investigation. By focusing specifically on her

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research
LLP

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

contribution, the paper successfully brings attention to an overlooked historical figure whose significance extends beyond regional folklore into broader discussions concerning gender, warfare, and state formation. This focus adds originality to the manuscript and fills an identifiable gap within the existing historiography.

Another notable strength is the author's engagement with both primary and secondary historical sources. The manuscript appropriately identifies the *Ahom Buranjis* as the principal documentary foundation for reconstructing Mulagabharu's life while acknowledging their political context and limitations as court-sponsored chronicles. The discussion does not rely exclusively upon later commemorative literature but instead attempts to distinguish between historically verifiable information and subsequent nationalist or literary interpretations. This balanced approach demonstrates sound historical judgment and strengthens the credibility of the study.

The manuscript is also commendable for integrating different historical perspectives. Instead of limiting the discussion to battlefield events, the paper incorporates military organization, administrative reforms under Suhungmung, environmental factors influencing warfare, gender history, historiography, and collective memory. This interdisciplinary approach broadens the significance of the article and demonstrates that Mulagabharu's contribution can be understood within wider historical processes rather than merely as an isolated act of heroism.

The historiographical sections represent another strength of the manuscript. The discussion examining how Mulagabharu's image evolved from concise references in the *Buranjis* to an important symbol of Assamese patriotism and regional identity is particularly valuable. By distinguishing between historical evidence and cultural memory, the paper avoids both uncritical acceptance of legendary narratives and excessive skepticism toward regional traditions. This balanced interpretation enhances the scholarly quality of the manuscript.

Finally, the paper is clearly organized and written in a logical sequence. The progression from historical background to military analysis, historiographical discussion, source criticism, and legacy enables readers to follow the development of the argument without difficulty. The conclusion effectively reiterates the broader significance of Mulagabharu within medieval Indian military history and gender history while identifying potential directions for future research.

Areas to be Improved

Although the manuscript successfully identifies an important historiographical gap, the central research contribution could be articulated more explicitly. The introduction states that the paper seeks to

International Journal of Advanced Research

**Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research
LLP**

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

reconstruct Mulagabharu's historical role and distinguish documented evidence from later commemorative traditions. However, it would strengthen the manuscript if the author more clearly explained how the present study advances existing scholarship beyond previous historical accounts. A more explicit statement of the article's original contribution would provide readers with a clearer understanding of its scholarly significance from the outset.

The literature review is comprehensive and demonstrates familiarity with the major scholarship on Ahom history. Nevertheless, the discussion remains largely descriptive in several places. Much of the review summarizes the contributions of individual historians sequentially before identifying the research gap. Greater critical engagement comparing different interpretations, identifying historiographical disagreements, or discussing evolving perspectives on Ahom military history and gender would provide a stronger intellectual foundation for the study. Such comparative analysis would also make the literature review more analytical rather than primarily descriptive.

The methodology appropriately outlines the use of qualitative historical analysis, source criticism, and comparative historiography. However, further explanation of how conflicting historical accounts were evaluated would improve methodological transparency. Since the paper seeks to distinguish between documented history and later commemorative traditions, readers would benefit from a clearer explanation of the criteria employed to determine historical reliability when different versions of events appear in the available sources. This additional methodological clarification would strengthen the overall rigor of the historical reconstruction.

The manuscript repeatedly emphasizes that Mulagabharu represents an important example of women's participation in warfare. While this argument is convincing, the discussion could benefit from greater comparative analysis. For instance, brief comparison with other women who participated in military resistance in medieval India—such as Rani Durgavati, Chand Bibi, or Abbakka Chowta—would help situate Mulagabharu within the broader historiography of women and warfare. Such contextualization would strengthen the paper's contribution to gender history while also demonstrating the distinctive features of the Ahom experience.

The sections describing the Battle of Duimunisila are informative and historically detailed. However, some passages remain primarily narrative. The analysis would become stronger if greater emphasis were placed on explaining why this battle represented a turning point in the evolution of Ahom military institutions and state formation beyond its immediate military outcome. Similarly, while the paper

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research
LLP

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

appropriately discusses the strategic use of geography and the Paik system, these factors could be connected more explicitly to the broader political resilience of the Ahom kingdom.

The historiographical discussion is one of the strongest sections of the manuscript, particularly in distinguishing historical evidence from later cultural memory. Nevertheless, the analysis could engage more extensively with contemporary scholarship on memory studies and public history. Incorporating recent theoretical literature on collective memory would strengthen the interpretation of how Mulagabharu's image has evolved within Assamese society and would situate the discussion within broader international historiographical debates.

Another area that could be strengthened concerns the conclusion. While the conclusion effectively summarizes the principal findings, it could more explicitly emphasize the wider implications of the study for Indian military history, women's history, and regional historiography. Highlighting how this case study contributes to broader debates concerning gender, historical memory, and state formation would reinforce the significance of the research beyond the regional context of Assam.

Finally, the manuscript would benefit from careful editorial revision before publication. Minor grammatical inconsistencies, punctuation errors, spacing irregularities, and occasional repetitive expressions are present throughout the text. Several paragraphs could also be condensed to improve readability without affecting the substance of the discussion. A careful language edit would enhance the overall presentation and ensure consistency in style and formatting throughout the manuscript.

Recommendation

The manuscript presents a valuable and well-researched contribution to the historiography of medieval Assam by foregrounding the role of Mulagabharu within the Ahom–Turk conflict and examining her significance through the combined perspectives of military history, gender history, and historiography. The use of primary sources, balanced treatment of historical memory, and integration of political and military context constitute important strengths of the study. While certain revisions relating to historiographical engagement, analytical depth, methodological clarification, and language refinement are recommended, these issues are relatively minor and do not diminish the overall quality or originality of the research. With these improvements, the manuscript will make a meaningful contribution to scholarship on medieval Indian history, women's participation in warfare, and the historical traditions of northeastern India. Accordingly, I recommend that the manuscript be **accepted with minor revisions**.