

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 59200

Title: SATRA, LAND AND SOCIETY: THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF NEO-VAISHNAVISM IN MEDIEVAL ASSAM,

Recommendation:

Accept after minor revision

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

Reviewer's ID: Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The paper, titled "*Satra, Land and Society: The Economic Foundations of Neo-Vaishnavism in Medieval Assam*", examines the Satra institution beyond its conventional image as a purely religious or devotional entity. It presents a qualitative secondary analysis arguing that the long-term institutionalization and expansion of Assamese Neo-Vaishnavism were enabled by economic and material foundations. Grounded in agrarian history, the paper explores how revenue-free land grants from Ahom rulers, access to labor via the *Paik* system, tenant cultivation, and institutional resource management allowed the Satra to act as a complex socio-economic hub.

Key Strengths

- Clear Interdisciplinary Focus:** The paper bridges religious history, health/social economics, and political sociology by systematically mapping how spiritual ideals rely on agrarian resources (land, surplus, and labor) for long-term survival.
- Structural Clarity:** The narrative flows logically through clear thematic developments—transitioning from devotional movement, to land grant acquisitions, state relationships, labor management, cultural production, and internal institutional hierarchies.
- Use of Specific Historical Evidence:** The inclusion of concrete historical instances—such as the recorded land grant of 30,000 *puras* given to Garamur Satra by King Siva Singha and legal cases regarding land ownership (e.g., Gauhati High Court cases)—strengthens the paper's thesis.

Critical Weaknesses & Areas for Improvement

- Absence of an Explicit Methodology Section:**

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

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- While the abstract and introduction position the study as an analytical/historical examination, the paper lacks a formal methodology section outlining source selection criteria, historiographical methods, or analytical frameworks used to evaluate primary and secondary texts.

2. In-Text Citation Gaps:

- Several historical claims and conceptual assertions in the main body (e.g., descriptions of the *Paik* system or the internal offices of the *Satradhikar*) lack specific, direct parenthetical citations to the bibliographic sources listed at the end.

3. Subtle Redundancies:

- The core argument—that religious institutions require material foundations to survive—is repeated in very similar wording across multiple sections (e.g., Section 1, Section 5, Section 11, and Section 12).

4. Formatting Consistency:

- In the bibliography, entries 9 and 10 refer to different editions or listings of Maheswar Neog's work on *Sankardeva and His Times* and could be consolidated or clarified.

Suggested Improvements

- Add a Methodology Sub-section:** Insert a brief section under Chapter 1 or Chapter 2 detailing the historiographical approach, primary source reliance (such as *Buranjis* and court judgements), and secondary source evaluation.
- Integrate In-Text Citations Throughout:** Ensure that assertions regarding royal patronage, land measurements (*puras*), and administrative systems (*Paiks*) explicitly cite the relevant authors listed in the bibliography (e.g., Guha, Sarma, or Neog).
- Trim Repetitive Conceptual Statements:** Streamline the theoretical points regarding "faith vs. material reality" in Sections 5, 11, and 12 to make room for deeper critical analysis of tenant-labor dynamics or specific regional variations among *Samhatis*.

Recommendation & Decision

Decision: Accept Pending Minor Revisions