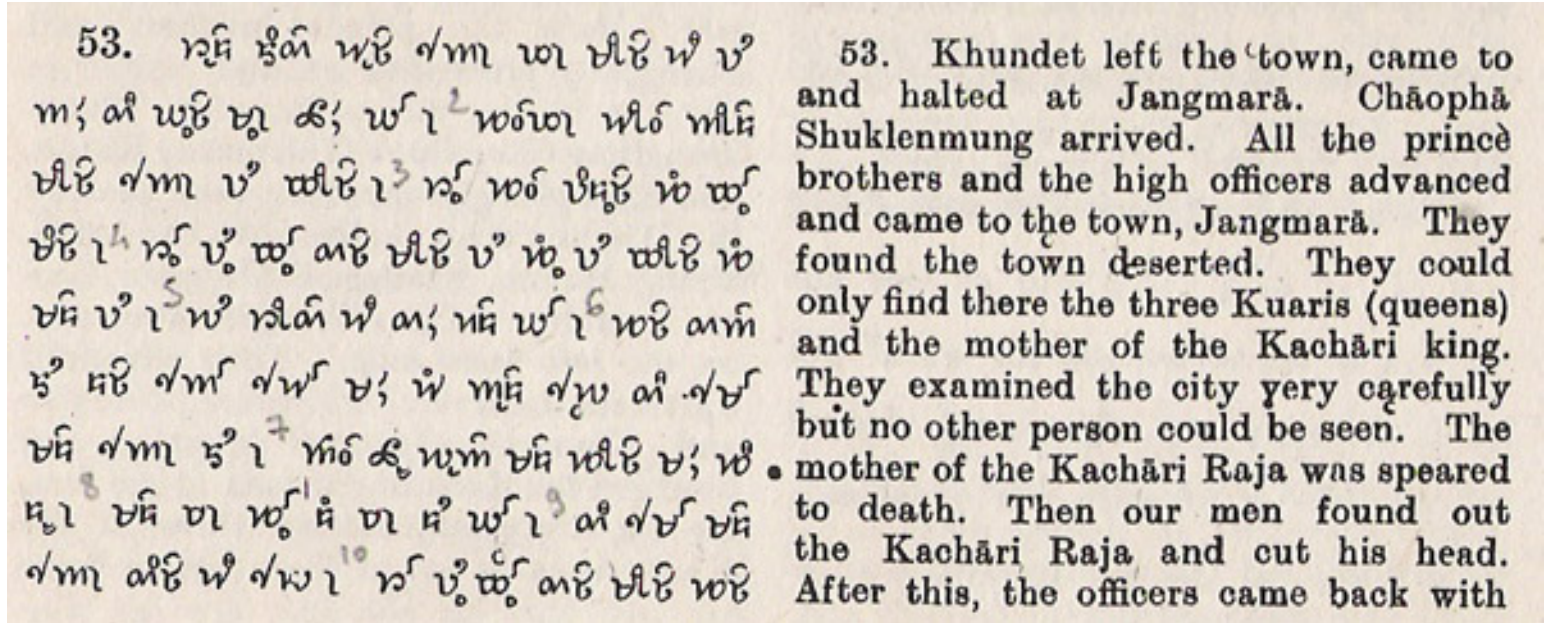


Dimapur

Dimapur, now an important border city between Assam and Nagaland, has a peculiar status : although it is in Nagaland, yet it is within the "Inner Line", which means that any person can reach the place, either an Indian citizen or a foreigner with a normal visa. *Dimapur* is a mixed name (*Dima* is a Dimasa name meaning "river", and here designates the Dhansiri ; *-pur* is the common Indian name for "town"), was something like a capital city for the Dimasa kingdom until the 16th century. The Ahom chronicles describe how the Ahom expanding power waged war against the local "kings", and especially the conflict between the Ahom king Suhum and the people named *Timisa* in the Tai-Ahom chronicles, *Kachari* in te Assamese ones. In 1536, the city of Dimapur was stormed and (so it seems) destroyed. The extract here, from the 1930 edition by G.C. Barua, is related to this event : on the left, the Ahom text.



The British officials visiting the place during the early 19th century re-discovered, close to the city center but half-hidden in a jungle patch, an important group of stone pillars. Some had a "Y" shape which was also found in use among some Naga people; but most had a peculiar "mushroom" figure with a bigger round head. Nothing of the kind is known anywhere else in India or (as far as we know) in South-East Asia. Nor do we know what was the use of these big pillars. It is unlikely they were supporting a roof, because they differ in heighth.

Here are samples from our collection of photos of the site.



A view on one of the stone groups. The more recent gate is visible behind on the right.
Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



A group of stones. Some stones or stone fragments have probably been transported : the older plan of the site is difficult to assess.
Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



Among this group, some Y shaped stones.
Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



A fallen pillar. Traditional motives (the affronted peacocks) confront more alien decoration.
Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



Another slab.

Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



One of the highest pillars, about 7m high.

Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.



More recently (17th or 18th century), a gate has been built.

Source : photo by F. Jacquesson.