

Twitter Thread by Vibhu Vashisth

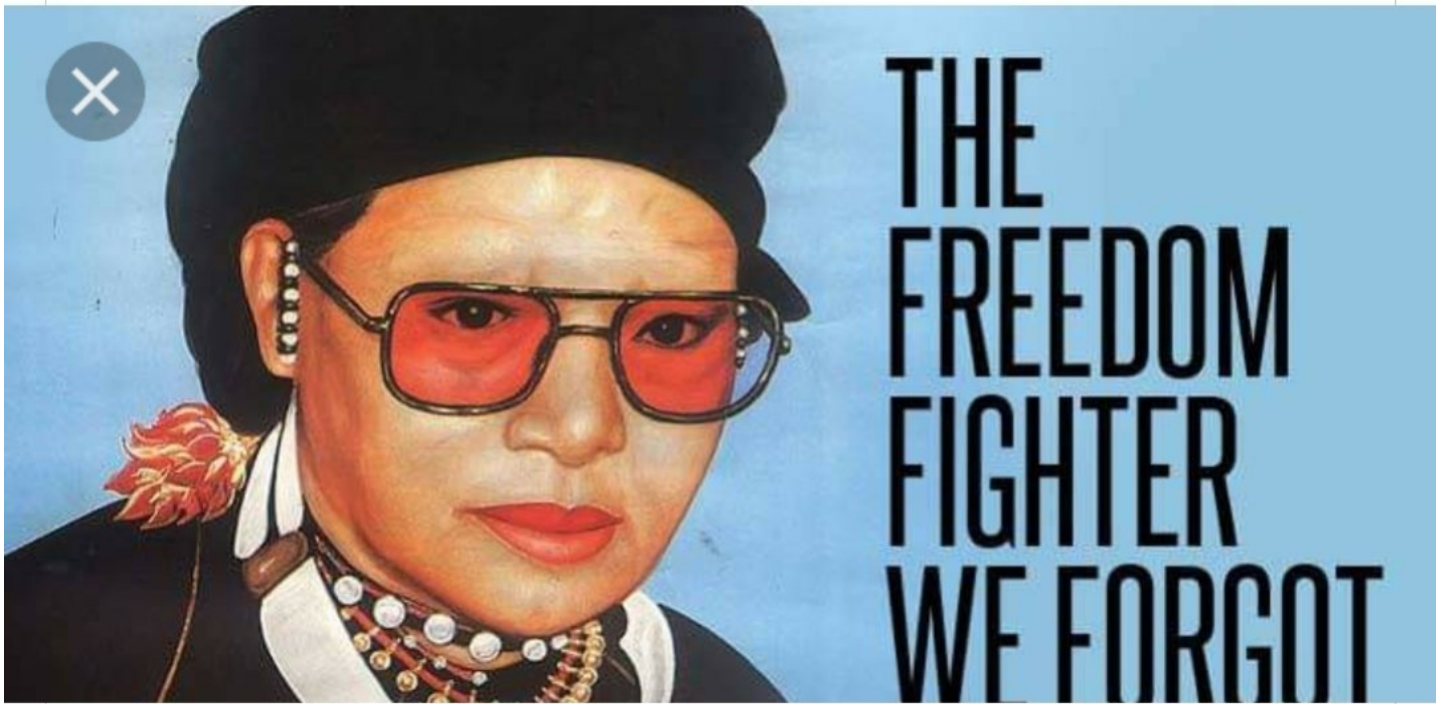


Vibhu Vashisth
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RANI GAIDINLIU:THE LESSER KNOWN FREEDOM FIGHTER

Rani Gaidinliu joined the freedom struggle at 13 & was sentenced to life imprisonment at 16."We r free people—the White should not rule over us."Thus calling out to her Zeliangrong tribesmen was the voice of 13yr-old Rani Gaidinliu.



She joined the freedom struggle in the present-day Northeast India. Today, her struggle is lost in history as most of her countrymen wouldn't even have heard her name. B'coz our history textbooks tell us that only Mahatma Gandhi & Pandit Nehru got India its Independence.

#IndianWomenInHistory

Rani Gaidinliu (1915-1993)

Rani Gaidinliu was a Naga spiritual leader and political activist. She joined the fight against the British at the early age of 13, after which she became the leader of the Heraka movement and led revolts against the British, leading to a 14-year-long imprisonment. She was released after Indian Independence, and was subsequently awarded the Padma Bhushan.



At 16 yrs of age, this valiant girl was sentenced to life imprisonment for leading a movement to drive out the colonial rulers from Manipur and Nagaland. Nevertheless, she was released in 1947 after India's independence and was given the title , "Rani of Nagas".



EARLY LIFE AND HERAKA MOVEMENT

Gaidinliu belonged to the Rongmei clan of the Zeliangrong tribe in the Tamenglong district of western Manipur. Born on January 26, 1915, she was fifth among eight children.



Her native village was Nungkao, which is present day Tamenglong distt. Brought up in a specially backward region,she couldn't receive any formal education. However,this didn't stop her from joining the freedom struggle. At the age of 10 she came under the influence of her cousin.



Her cousin Haipou Jadonang, was then leading a socio-political movement called 'Heraka' meaning 'Pure', seeking to drive out British from the region. Movement took inspiration from ancestral Naga <https://t.co/ild0YVgJ7v> span of 6 yrs he gathered strong support from various tribes...



..and emerged as a strong voice of opposition against the foreign <https://t.co/IEDa8DXquY> feb 1931, he was arrested and in a fake trial by British was found guilty and was hanged on 29 Aug 1931 at Imphal jail. Meanwhile, Gaidinliu become a strong force in the Heraka movement.

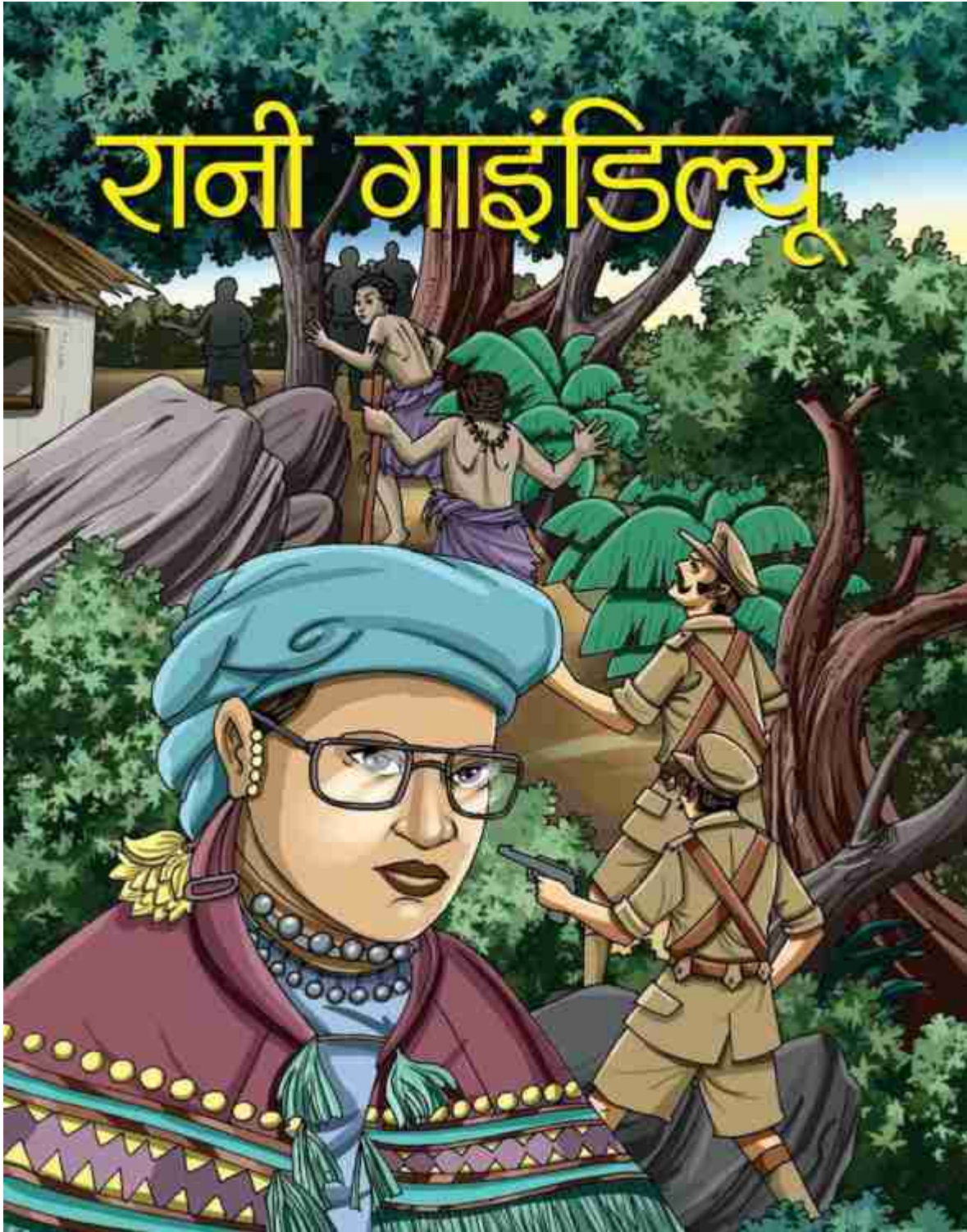


Gaidinliu become a strong force in the Heraka movement, leading guerrilla attacks on the British authority. Image source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

She started leading guerrilla attacks on the British forces. With the death of Jadonang, the leadership of the Heraka movement fell upon Gaidinliu, who was barely 16 at that time.

RANI-THE LEADER OF MASSES

After her brother's death, she began to rebel against the British rule.



She asked fellow tribemen to refuse to pay tax & called out for <https://t.co/6LzGyKjmdc> her work against foreigners, she was assisted by donations from local Naga community. When she got majority on her side, refusing to cooperate with British, she posed a huge threat to Colonial rule

Mapping the Heraka Identity Are We Engaged Truly?

BABUL ROY

This response to "Cultural Positioning of Tribes in North-east India: Mapping the Evolving Heraka Identity" by Soihiamlung Dangmei (EPW, 5 January 2013) attempts to set the record straight on the Heraka reform movement, the religious practices and how it emerged from traditional Naga animism.

The commentary "Cultural Positioning of Tribes in North-east India: Mapping the Evolving Heraka Identity" by Soihiamlung Dangmei (EPW, 5 January 2013) contains a number of misleading interpretations and incorrect movement that began in Manipur. The information. Dangmei has borrowed the Heraka, as it is known today, is a religious idea from Arkotong Longkumer's thesis reform movement which was started in the titled 'Where Do I Belong? Evolving Reform' late 1920 by Jadonang, a Rongmei Naga and Identity amongst the Zeme Heraka of Manipur. However, it crystallised and North Cachar Hills, Assam, India. Uni-reorganised in the political background versity of Edingburgh (2008) (see <http://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/2669>). Naga inhabited North Cachar Hills district, and relied heavily on Chapter 5 (pp 146-148) now named Dima Hasao district (Assam) 92) "Negotiating Boundaries". The thesis under Rani Gaidinliu. At present, about has been published as a book reform, 8,000 persons – the majority of the total Identity and Narratives of Belonging: The Heraka followers – are found in this district Heraka Movement in Northeast India and are mainly the Zeme Nagas. This Bloomsbury. The various issues around the figure constitutes about 40% of the total Heraka identity negotiating between the Naga population residing in the district. In Naga nationalism and pan Hindu cultural Manipur and Nagaland where there is a nationalism remained the principal focus much bigger concentration of the Zelian-of Longkumer's work. There may be cergrong tribes of about 1,25,000 and 70,000, tain truths in Dangmei's arguments, but respectively, the overwhelming majority the material taken from incomplete his (99% in Nagaland and 95% in Manipur) torical records and shallow ethnography have converted to different denominations makes for unconvincing arguments which of Christianity (the rounded estimations are contradictory to the facts. I intend to place the facts about Heraka and Heraka Although due to the political unification identity in the correct perspective while of the Zeliangrong Nagas and also the repairing some of the wrong mappings Heraka movement, the three separate in the history of Indian ethnography. Naga tribes are shown together in the

What is the Heraka reform movement? literature, in actuality there are variations What are the Heraka religious practices? Due to their distinctive ethnic identity How did the present-day Heraka religion (Zeme, Liangmei, Rongmei, etc), religion and Heraka religious reform movement (different denominations of Christianity, emerge from traditional Naga animism Heraka, traditional religious following, These are a few fundamental question etc), and social hierarchy. In Nagaland the that have not yet been properly answered Zeme and Liangmei tribes live in a social but are increasingly being obscured by setting of predominantly Christians and various misguided writings in recent other Christian Nagas. Only in Assam times. To address the various issues (North Cachar Hills) the Zeme Naga is the raised in Dangmei's commentary and in only Naga tribe per se to have almost an Longkumer's book, let me first briefly equal share of Christian and Heraka folk talk about the Heraka and the Herakdowers, and are surrounded by the more religious reform movement from my own numerous Hinduised Dimasa Kachari

Babul Roy (babul_roy@hotmail.co.uk) is senior research officer, Social Studies Division, Office of the Registrar General, New Delhi.

As a result, British launched a manhunt or rather I should say womanhunt to capture her, with monetary reward going to anyone who gave reliable info. Despite these efforts by authorities, she evaded arrest by moving across regions of Assam, Nagaland & Manipur with her loyal followers.

Rani Gaidinliu: The Iconic Woman of Northeast India

Indian Journal of Gender Studies
25(3) 351–367
© 2018 CWDS
SAGE Publications
sagepub.in/home.nav
DOI: 10.1177/0971521518785666
<http://journals.sagepub.com/home/ijg>



Ajailiu Niumai¹

Abstract

This article attempts to analyse why Rani Gaidinliu, who was a freedom fighter and social and religious reformer, was keen to preserve the identity and culture of her cognate tribe¹—the Zeme, Liangmai, Rongmai/Kabui and Npui. Does Heraka—a socio-religious movement started by Haipou Jadonang and later developed by the Rani—become a tool of ‘cultural revivalism’ and act as a means to unite cognate tribes? Why do we juxtapose Heraka with the Hindutva ideologues such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) that position Rani Gaidinliu in a new spirit of nationalism and identity as the lone woman spiritual and political protagonist of Northeast India? She used Heraka with politics to fulfil her goals in fighting the British. Using the interview method, I spoke to selected respondents, particularly elders and community leaders, about Rani Gaidinliu. Her story illustrates a rationality that could encourage marginalised and invisible women to become sociopolitical and spiritual leaders, questioning patriarchy and bringing about empowerment and social inclusion.

Keywords

Identity, culture, community, cognate tribes, religion, Heraka

¹ Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy (CSSEIP), University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana, India.

Corresponding author:

Ajailiu Niumai, Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy (CSSEIP), University of Hyderabad, Gachibowli, Hyderabad—50 0046, Telangana, India.
E-mail: ajainiumai@gmail.com

In early 1932, her forces engaged in Armed combat with Assam Rifles in North Cachar hills & Hangrum village. With her dissent growing, the British assigned a special troop of Assam Rifles led by Cap. McDonald to arrest Gaidinliu.



As soon as Cap. got the info of Gaidinliu located in a village called Pulomi, he launched a surprise attack and she with her followers were captured on Oct 17, 1932. She was handcuffed and taken on foot to Kohima & later tried in Imphal. Her trial went on for 10 mnths.



“मेरा जीवन ही मेरा संदेश है, और मेरी जनता, मेरी उम्मीद”
 “My life is my message, and my people are my hope”

रानी गैदिनल्लु (१९१५ - १९९३)
 Rani Gaidinliu (1915 - 1993)

34

After the trial, she was falsely convicted of murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment. From 1933-1947, she served time at Guwahati, Shillong, Aizawl & Tura jails.

In Northeast, Rani Gaidinliu was leader of her own people. Even after her release, she worked to empower & uplift weak.



In 1966, she organised a resistance movement against Naga National Council, which led insurgents. However, today many Nagas choose not to acknowledge her. Despite this, she was recognized as a freedom fighter & was awarded Tamrapatra in 1972 & was felicitated with Padma Bhushan in 1982.



Rani Gaidinliu Birth Centenary at Thanagong village, Khouppum in Tamenglong on Decembe. 15-17 2015 :: Pix - Nongpok

In 1993, Gaidiniu died in disappointment as the govt couldn't fulfil the promises of making a separate 'Zaliangrong Administrative Unit' under the Union of India. Only a stamp was released in her memory in 1994.



*A stamp was released in the Rani Gaidinliu
memory of in 1994*

She was a strong willed Woman of Substance, who dared to challenge the Might of British Empire & India doesn't even know this brave child of hers. Even today her sacrifice remains unknown to most of us.
We must know the actual freedom fighters of Bharat Mata & know our true history.

