



IMPORTANCE OF TRIBENI AND VASUDEVA TEMPLES AT BANSHBARIA IN REGIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY OF HOOGHLY DISTRICT

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Abstract

The NEP 2020 policy on education states that there is no harm in being educated in one's own language, culture and traditions. That is, we must know the tradition and culture of a place and the tradition and culture of a place must depend on the regional history practices of that region. Old temples and monuments play an important role in learning the history of ancient culture, education and trade. Therefore, the discussion of regional history has occupied a prominent place in the present time, beyond the political history, we get an idea of the education and culture of the contemporary people especially from the various images painted in the temples. Tribeni is a town in ancient India and one of the pilgrimage sites for Hindus. Tribeni was one of the centers of Sanskrit learning in the early Middle Ages and beyond. At the same time, ships arriving at Saptagram port used to anchor in this Tribeni. Various stories of *Manasamangal* surround this Tribeni, Tribeni is the identity of a developed culture and education. *Hanseshwari* Temple is located 4 km from Tribeni. This temple is temple style and right next to it is a Vishnu temple which is complete with terracotta art. Numerous images on the surface of this terracotta temple represent contemporary society and culture. These socio-economic and cultural aspects are very relevant for us to know.

Keywords - *Education Center, Trade Center, Sanskrit, Terracotta, Ancient Culture*

Introduction

India is a diverse country. All over India there is a variety of history and traditions. Different dynasties ruled at different times and left their monuments and the culture and traditions of a country are known from these things. India has a glorious history from the distant past. NEP 2020 talks about preserving these past traditions and knowing the culture of a place is not a problem. I have done my study on this subject in Tribeni under Magra police station in Hooghly district and Vasudeva temple in Banshbaria. It is a regional historiography of Hooghly district.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify Tribeni's importance as an educational center in the past
- To identify Commercial and religious importance of Tribeni
- To identify Features of Banshbaria Vasudeva Temple
- To identify Importance of Terracotta Art in Vasudeva Temple

Methodology of the Study

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The present study is historical. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, qualitative research has been used by the investigator. For this study, these places have been visited and data has been collected from there. Most of these studies have been completed through field survey. It is based on secondary data and is largely collected from sources like journals, papers and articles.

Analysis of the Study

Tribeni was one of the centers of ancient learning. Tribeni is the place where the river Ganges flows over the Hooghly district, the confluence of the Ganga-Yamuna Saraswati rivers hence the name Tribeni. This place has been known as a holy pilgrimage site for Hindus since ancient times. According to Pliny's text, Saptagram was one of the oldest port cities in India and sea-going ships used to anchor at Tribeni when they came to Saptagram. Today the old tradition of Saptagram is gone and the seven villages of Saptagram are now scattered. The present day Saptagram is only a small village and the river through which the ships came was the river Saraswati. This river Saraswati is not like before it has become shallow and narrow.

In the field of education, this Tribeni was prosperous in ancient times. The town boasts of a rich heritage.¹ Tribeni was one of the few places of learning in West Bengal that were originally centers of Sanskrit practice. Today only Nabadwip survives as a center of Sanskrit practice, but in ancient times Nabadwip, Bhatpara, Guptipara and Tribeni were famous for Sanskrit practice in West Bengal. Tribeni, the center of Sanskrit practice, had more than 30 tolas. By Tribeni in modern times we mean the famous *Ghat* in Tribeni. This famous *Ghat* is known as *Mukundadev Ghat*.² During the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar, Akbar had a conflict with the Pathans. Mukundadev was the independent king of Odisha at this time. Mukundadev made an agreement with Akbar and invaded Bangladesh in 1565 AD and expelled the Pathans from Saptagram. During this time Saptagram Tribeni these areas were freed from Islamic rule for some time. Mukundadev built this Ghat as a memorial of his victory.

Many small temples can be seen on both sides of this Ghat of Tribeni. All gods and goddesses can be seen in this temple. To the north of this Mukandadev Ghat is Manasamangal Neta Dhopani Ghat, this is spread through folklore. This *Neta Dhopani Ghat* is the Ghat where Behula brought her dead husband Lakhinder and how this *Dhopani* brought her dead son back to life. Although the flow of the river Ganga has changed, this Ghat is currently right next to the river Ganga. But earlier its location may have been different. There is a temple of Mansa Devi at this place, but this place is famous for tourists now. Tribeni *Mahashasan* is located right next to it. A lot of shops have been built around Tribeni Ghat, Rudraksh garlands and conch shells are widely used in that place. There are many small and big temples around Tribeni Ghat especially Shiva temples. Another ancient monument of Tribeni is the temple of Venimadhava. This temple was built a long time ago, however, in the year 1148 of Bengali months, Chakuram Singh, the zamindar of Vastara, renovated the temple and built six more temples, three on both sides of this temple. The temples are worshiped daily and many visitors throng there. There is a mosque in Tribeni known as Zafar Khan Ghazi Masjid. This Zafar Khan Ghazi was the general of Delhi Sultan, he built this mosque here in 1298 AD. Today it is a tourist attraction of Tribeni. Whether it is a place of pilgrimage, a commercial center or an educational center, Tribeni has a unique place.

Banshbaria was known as Banskabati in the distant past. Shri Hanseshwari Devi temple adjacent to the Rajbari of Banskabati is a well-known temple in Hooghly district.³ Just next to this temple is the Vasudeva temple but the original name of this temple is Ananta Dev's temple. However, the condition of this temple is not very good at present. As this place is included in the archaeological department, the maintenance has increased more than before. The temple is made of terracotta bricks. The temple was built by the king of Banskabati, Raja Rameshwar. A sloka is written on a plaque on the eastern side of the high altar on which the huge temple stands while visiting the temple. The verse is written in Sanskrit in Bengali characters. This verse is there and a year is given next to it. The year of construction of this temple is found by analyzing the verse. Later I came across this verse in the book '*Hooghly zelar itihaso Bongosomaj*'. The first line of the verse indicates numbers, and they are, 1,0, 6,1. Analyzing these, the year found is 1601Shaka, i.e. English year 1679 and Bengali year 1086.⁴ This temple of Ananta Dev is

painted following the ancient traditional art style of Bengal. From this it can be inferred that Bengal also once had traditional arts. This Vasudeva temple is a one gem temple located on the outskirts of Bankura district. Hump-shaped roof with open arches on all four sides. The eastern and southern exteriors of the temple have three arches. The temple has numerous images, various images are seen on the front and on the sides. These are Durga, Kali, Shiva, also cavalry soldiers fighting with swords in hand, beating drums, dancing, standing on pike, carrying palanquins, chariots, boats, ocean going ships etc. Various motifs are also seen on the arches, including dance figures and images of Radhakrishna. These images give an idea about the contemporary society. That is, the characteristics of contemporary rural Bengal are present in the image of this temple. The depiction of ships at sea proves that Bengal was once a force in naval power. Also, the Cavalry is indicative of riding on the horse of the time. The picture is emerging that even before the Lethel forces of our zamindars in British India, the people here were fighting with swords in their hands. Again, it can be assumed that the picture of this battle is alluding to the Malla warriors of Mallabhum area of Bengal. This art is describing different stories. The facade of the present temple has lost the artwork on one side. Most images are blurry. The adoring deity of the temple Narayana is worshipped. A lot is being planned to preserve the site as the Archaeological Survey of India takes over the maintenance of the site. But all these things are our heritage and we must maintain them.

Findings of the Study

A lot of people are living around Tribeni city. At present, many shops and markets have been established in that place. The temples adjacent to Tribeni Ghat are clean and have regular worshipped. However, the Netadhopani Ghat of Mansamangal next to the crematorium is not preserved as much. The ghat I mentioned in Tribeni is being repaired. The condition of Vasudeva temple in Banshbaria is not very good, the wall paintings of the temple are not so clear. Although considerable maintenance is done from the Archaeological Department.

Conclusion

We can know the history of a place by studying regional historiography. The prevailing customs of a society, their social life etc. are all subjects of the study of regional historiography, various aspects of the society emerge through it. Through the practice of regional history, the common people of the society become the subject of history, although it is a different stream of history. By studying the history of Tribeni, just as we found different aspects of Tribeni in the past, we found the contemporary society that the images in the Vasudeva temple are talking about. So, it can be said that the study of regional historiography is a subject through which we can get a general idea of a subject.

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