CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Religion is a part of society, it is common to the group, its beliefs and practices acquired by each individual as the group. It has been an important and vital factor in shaping the society. Great men with high level of intelligence developed all the great religions of the world in a particular geographical setting. The physical surrounding has greatly influenced each religion. In each religion an effect of environment can be noticed in the description of relation between God and man. Such descriptions are largely related to landscape elements such as topography slope, drainage, vegetation, and soil which are mostly influenced and operated through climate. These elements of landscape have influenced all major religions of the world.¹¹

The landscape is a stretch of scenery seen from a single vantage point as befitting an ideology wrapped up in the visual technological perspective. It is dynamic phenomena that change as a result of both natural and human induced causes of human activities and landscape characteristics are interrelated.

The cultural landscape reflects the culture of a place. It is the human made landscape created by a cultural group occupying an area and make the visual manifestation of the culture and its interaction with the environment. Cultural landscapes also denote the visual expression of human relationships to natural environment. It reflects the net effect of a groups, technology, values, beliefs, tools and goals on the natural environment. It is created and transformed by human symbolic action. It is as historical transformation and modification of aspects of nature.¹¹

The religious landscape shows influence of religion on cultural landscape as religion is vital part of culture. Such landscapes are called as sacred landscapes or holy places. The content of religious landscape is varied ranging from houses of worship to cemeteries, way side shrines and place name, more over, religion can haps landscape features such as settlement pattern. The landscape of India reflects the Hindu belief system. Indian sacred landscape is a visible aspect of universal tendency to shape nature in an image of cosmic ideal and there by make it
into a culture artifact, archaic concept of nature and finally religious responses to nature (Sinha, 1994).

The landscapes, flora and fauna of the Indian subcontinent have been incorporated into the myths and legends of the vast pantheon of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. In the location of temples and temple complexes, the landscape as a source of sacred power has played an important role. The different natural settings like mountain caves or forest grooves have provided ideal venues for heritage and sustain the great tradition of Hinduism.

Hinduism believes in all the elements of universe (Panchmahabhute) that is, water, light (sun) earth, atmosphere (wind), and sky. For them, these are spirit of God and therefore, revered as Gods. On the whole, these are the elements of environment and ecology which affect ideas, thinking behavior, imagination and teaching. The five fundamental ecological variables are energy, matter, space, time and diversity. These are also the elements of natural resources. Thus bearing of Hindu religion can be termed to be oriented towards ecology and natural resources.

Hinduism is polytheistic and becomes cause of increasing sacred places. The sacred places whose holiness made inevitable to raise temples and shrines. On the other hand, some places became sacred after creation of temples and shrines on them. Such places are almost found on any spot on mountain or plain, trees, springs, roads, rivers, lakes etc. and become significant to the people. Certain locations are regarded as sacred because they are associated with significant religious events or because of their unique geographical characteristics. Bodhgaya in India acquired spiritual significance because it was the site of Budha’s enlightenment. Similarly the mount kailas is considered important because of its slopes and give rise to sacred rivers like Ganga. Such type of locations become places of powerful contact between divines and human being.

The most important natural elements in Hindu religion and mythology are water and mountain. Most of the worship centers contain one or both. The water is associated with both evolution and dissolution, symbolizes fertility and it is formless and softest element in nature. Therefore, it has great religious significance. The holiness of a place increases because of proximity to water, especially more at river confluence and become cause of establishing worship centers.
The mountain plays very important role in all religions. The conception of the mountain is as a producer of life force. It was identified with rain, clouds and fertility and figured as an object of worship. It was also seen as a symbol of stability and permanence. The mountains are venerated as residence of gods. Therefore, these are favoured sites for the building of temples. In India, the kailashnath temple at Ellora in Maharashtra, holly Himalayas and other mountains have the favourable sites of many centers for worship.

There is an attraction of elevation to people. Even at village level, usually two local dieties are found, one on elevated portion or the hill top and another on the lowland, particularly along the course of river. In villages, where local relief is not prominent, the temples are located on relatively high grounds of the village.

1.1.3 The geography of religion is mainly related to ceremony aspects which are expressed geographically through temples and shrines (Paull Fickler 1962). For religion, travel is necessary part of getting from home to the holy destination and the motive of this leisure time Journey is clearly religious. People visit the places of worship and sacred shrines.

At first ‘Religious tourism’ sounds strange as the nature of pilgrimage, pilgrimage traffic and the pilgrimage itself are talked about more often. Certainly, geographers experience of the nature of pilgrimage, soon leads to the special type of tourism. It must also be taken in to account in the Geography of religion and the Geography of tourism.

1.1.4 The concept of pilgrimage exists in all religions. The nature of Hindu pilgrimage is encapsule in the Indian expression. ‘Tirth yatra; which literally means Journey to sacred place is considered a ‘Tirth yatra’ (Bhardwaj - 1973).

The term pilgrimage has its origin in the Latin word peregrinus which means a ‘stranger’ or ‘wanderer’. It certainly does mean, breaking off one’s ordinary occupation and leaving one’s home to go perhaps with family or friends to a place called ‘holy’ in order to make contact with what is sacred and to be in touch with the power of the universe by whatever name we may call that power. (Navale 1996)

“Pilgrimage is also defined as a spiritual odyssey. Its main purpose is to gather religious merits (punya) and absolve one sins
Pilgrimage is a particular form of domestic and international tourism. Here, pilgrimage should not be viewed in isolation, though the aim of pilgrimage is purely for religious gain, but at the same time it is also linked with visit to different places in addition to worship of sacred shrines. It appears, therefore, that the aim of establishing the four dhams by Adi Shankaracharya at the four cardinal corners might have been to visualize the vast stretch of land, experiencing different climate and culture in addition to the holy purpose. On the other hand, the domestic tourists, whose main aim of touring is pleasure or holiday, when visiting important historical and archaeological centers, hill stations, do not forget to visit important religious places. Thus, activity shows the interdependence of tourism and pilgrimage. The interwoven association of this twin phenomenon makes it somewhat difficult to draw a sharp line between tourism and pilgrimage.

The society of pilgrimage studies also explains that the pilgrimage to sacred place is an ancient and continuing tradition in all the cultures of the world. Pilgrimage is a process, fluid and changing phenomenon, spontaneous, initially unstructured and outside the bounds of religious orthodoxy. The ecological mysteries and invisible revelation related to men's cosmic integrity may be visioned and experienced through the pilgrimage system. There exists strong linkage among faith system, pilgrimage and tourism, all moving to unravel the mysteries and power of the earth places.

Pilgrimage has primarily religious motivation. The main purpose is to request god to relieve them from earthly disease and thanks giving for charity received, religious enlightenment and healing, as well as gaining experience of the religious communities at the shrines. It is also a movement of people to a sacred spot where they are able to make at least a temporary contact with the supernatural world. People expect to benefit by making a pilgrimage whether bodily by getting cured of sickness or spiritually for forgiveness of sins or for inspiration from seeing or touching some object which enthalls to them as wonderful work of god.

Pilgrimages are undertaken at certain time when people become free from their activities. They travel away from home to the holy destination and the motive of this leisure time Journey is
clearly religious. People visit the places to worship the sacred shrines. Therefore, pilgrimage tourism is defined as a visit to places of pilgrimage as a form of leisure behavior (Siever - 1987).

The pilgrimage tourism assumes visits to places of pilgrimage as a form of leisure behavior. It is traditional socio-cultural behavior. It is a form of domestic tourism on absolute form of traveling in India. In the historical past, pilgrimage was easiest way for leading a devotional life and the aim of pilgrimage was only for religious gain. But latter, it is linked with the visiting different places, in addition to worshiping at sacred shrines.

The pilgrimage and other forms of tourism have much in common. The common aspects are seasonality, economic importance, local surplus in tertiary sector, high occupancy rate, camping capacity and good inter-regional connections in the spatial activities of travelers (Gisbert and Sievers 1987)

Recently increasing communication is making rapid changes in the character of pilgrimage itself. Technological changes and modernization giving pilgrimage an increasingly secular character within a society. Therefore, lower and middle class rural population also have more opportunities to travel now. The volume of pilgrims seeking Darshan and performing traditional religious tasks is, therefore; likely to swell further.

1.1.5 India has long been known as a very spiritual, religious and heavenly area of the world. In India, religion is way of life. It is an integral part of the entire Indian tradition. For the majority of Indians, religion permeates every aspect of lifechores to education and politics. The most important type of Journey was pilgrimage has served to unite Hindu throughout India in common culture and religious consciousness as well as to help the growth of commerce and industry.

Secular India is the home to Hinduism, Islam, christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and other innumerable religious traditions. Hinduism is the dominant faith practiced over eighty percent of the population; Besides Hindus, Muslims are most prominent religious group and are integral part of Indian society. Each has its own pilgrimage sites, heroes, legends and even culinary specialties mingling in unique diversity, that is, the very pulse of society.13

1.1.6 All over Maharashtra, hundreds of shrines of all faiths are found everywhere. The evidences of artistic-skills of people
whose culture goes back to thousands of years as in Ajanta, dances, in paintings and sculptures, in architecture and handicrafts. Maharashtra displays a fascinating variety of brilliant achievements, that is, however, more evident than in its cave temples and Hindu shrines.

Maharashtra is the homeground of Gods, the mahatma shri Datt, at whose lotus feet's in all holy places are located in the sahyadries (Anne feldhaus 1986). Maharashtra has a long tradition of tolerance and symbiotic interaction with different religious faiths. The territory from Nasik to Nanded which is regarded as sacred. A majority of saints and poets were born here. There are twelve Jotirlingas in India, out of these, five are in Maharashtra. Three and half shaktipithas are in Maharashtra. The banks of Godavari, Bhima, and Krishna are strewn with holy places. This is why Maharashtra is at the crown of all lands. Maharashtra is a microcosm of India with positive religious values. Majority of the people of Maharashtra worship God shiva, god Vishnu and mother goddess.

Mahashivratri and Mahaekadashi are two most sacred days in Maharashtra. The imprint of different religions and sects on the landscapes of Maharashtra is visible in the form of shrines, temples and Buddhist caves.

1.1.7 Jejuri; a holly town in Maharashtra, located in purandar tahshil of pune district has emerged as a famous pilgrimage destination. It derives its importance from the religious fairs held in honour of the God Khandoba, who is also called Bhairoba, Malhari and Martand. This deity is worshipped by lakhs of people in Maharashtra and outside the state as well.

During last two decades. Jejuri has witnessed remarkable changes in morphology. The present study aims at analyzing various aspects of Jejuri as a religious as well as pilgrimage centre.

1.2 SELECTION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE TOPIC

The selection of the topic is influenced by different considerations. The review of literature on Jejuri as a study in religious tourism reveals that there is very little study based on either primary or secondary data, Geographically, the study region has a unique features to study from this aspect. The
researcher is motivated by the following factors to select the topic.

1. Jejuri is one of the important religious as well as a pilgrimage centre in Maharashtra which is associated with Lord Khandoba.

2. Jejuri is experiencing many changes in town morphology, that is, transportation, accommodation, number and the attitude of the people, social and economic attributes, perhaps as a result of pilgrimage at Jejuri.

3. Due to increased tourist facilities for comfortable stay and marketing indicators, accruing to pilgrims and also to residents of Jejuri.

4. Tourism can generate employment opportunities, especially, to the local people.

5. The study will be helpful in the development process of Jejuri as a tourist centre.

6. Hardly anybody, so far has attempted this sort of study on Jejuri, an important religious and pilgrimage centre with geographical perspective.

1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is concerned with the synonymous work done in relation to the present topic under study. Jejuri - A study in religious tourism falls in the branch of geography of religion. The review of literature has been done to see the gaps if any in the present study.

in historical context with reference to India. Kayasth and Singh (1977), in their article “A study of preferences and behavior pattern of tourists in Varanasi - A Geographical analysis”, have studied the Varanasi as a pilgrimage centre. They have assessed the behavioral pattern of domestic and foreign tourists and made use of it to suggest the future development through tourism point of view. Singh Rana (1987), in the article “The pilgrimage mandal of Varanasi” has stressed the need for the study of pilgrimage mandal in pilgrimage studies and sacred geography. Bhardwaj M (1987), in his article “Single religion shrines, multirelation pilgrimage” has tried to present evidences from shrines in India which attract pilgrims of variety of faith and how they ignored the religious boundaries under certain conditions of economic, physical and psychological stress. Dube (1987), in his article entitled “Kumbh Mela and historicity of India’s greatest pilgrimage fair” has studied fairs and festivals and showed its importance in the human life from the early times. Jakowski (1987), A polish Geographer in his articles “Geography of pilgrimage in Poland” has studied the pilgrims migration in Poland and showed the impact on historical, spatial and socio-economic aspects of the nation. Nolan Mary Lee (1987), An American Geographer, in his article “Christian pilgrimage shrines in western Europe and India, a primary comparison” has compared the Christian holy places in India with Christian shrines in Western Europe and examined micro regional similarities and differences. Rinchede Gisbert (1987), A German Geographer in his article “The pilgrimage town of Lourdes” has evaluated the impact of pilgrims on demographic and economic structure of the town. He has showed the changes in occupational structure of the town from primary sector to tertiary sector. Sievers (1987), A German Geographer, in her article “The significance of pilgrimage tourism in Shrilanka “(Celone) has discussed the need of pilgrimage tourism and its role in socio-geographical problems. Robert (1987), in his article “Pilgrimage along sacred path” has given account of routes of travel associated with religious motives. He has discussed the social, economic and political importance created due to travel of millions of pilgrims. Singh Rana (1987) in his article “Peregrinology and Geographical guest”, has stressed the need of study of peregrinology (pilgrimage study) in geography through its spatial approach. He has stressed the need of study of pilgrimage and tourism together with multidisciplinary approaches and methodology.
Malshe and Ghode (1989), in their article “Pandharpur - A study in Geography of religion” has examined the influence of religion on structure, function and land use of Pandharpur. Navale and Deshmukh (1989), in their article “A view of pilgrimage tourism - A study in human Geography” have discussed the importance of pilgrimage as a form of tourism and showed that the pilgrimage tourism has emerged from the human geography and fulfills the characteristics of tourism geography. Sing Rana P.B. (1992), in his article. “The Geography of pilgrimage in Indian-perspectives and prospects”, explained the importance of geography of pilgrimage as a multidisciplinary field of enquiry and discussed in detail the concept of pilgrimage in Hinduism. Paidel and Singh Rana (1994), in their article entitled “Pilgrimage and tourism at muktinath Nepal - A study of sacrality and spatial structure” studied the religious festivals, spatial and socio-economic structure of pilgrims and tourists at muktinath Nepal. Sinha (1994) in her article “Pilgrimage Journey to sacred landscape of Braj” has explained the meaning of pilgrimage by examining the relationship between sacredness and landscape. Leving (1986) writing on the “Geography of Religion” rightly remarked that the field is not to be taken more as catalogues artifacts and manifests rather religion is to be considered as the profoundly a social force.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

General objective of the study is to assess the Jejuri as a religious tourist destination. The specific objectives of the study are as under:

1. To examine the geographical setting of the Jejuri town as a basis of pilgrimage.

2. To highlight the historical perspective of the khandoba temple at Jejuri.

3. To examine the infrastructural facilities at Jejuri.

4. To highlight the growth trend of pilgrims in Jejuri.

5. To assess spatial distribution of pilgrims visiting to Jejuri.

6. To study the age group and purpose of visit of pilgrims to the Jejuri

7. To evaluate socio-economic background of pilgrims and vaghya-Muralis.
8. To study the views of pilgrims about facilities provided to them and their level of satisfaction.

9. To evaluate significance of fairs at Jejuri.

10. To make a spatial planning for Jejuri and tourist destinations around as a tourist region and tour plans.

1.5 DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The research work is based on both primary and secondary sources of data and information obtained by visiting Jejuri through the schedule and interview techniques, methodology is adopted as under:

1. Data and information of vaghya-murali were collected on the basis of socio-economic indicators.

2. Information regarding 'Jagaran' was collected by interviewing Vaghyas, Muralis and others.

3. Primary data and information of pilgrims at Jejuri were collected on the basis of socio-cultural and economic factors.

4. Data regarding facilities to pilgrims at Jejuri were collected personally by visiting the various locations at Jejuri.

5. Data regarding the Jejuri fair and related business activities were collected through questionnaire and interviews.

6. A few residents, pujaries and intellectuals were interviewed through tourism point of view.

7. Information regarding the historical perspective of the Jejuri and khandoba temple was taken from secondary sources like district census handbook. Gazetteer of the pune district, books, Journals, reports and other published and unpublished materials.

1.6 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The present study was undertaken from geographical point of view. The data analysis, mostly, was done as under:

1. Data and information of Vaghya-Murali were analysed on the basis of socio-economic indicators. Fifteen indicators
are taken to assess socio-economic conditions. The separate methodology is given in the concerned topic.

2. Analysis of the 'Jagaran' was made by noting the views of the concerned personalities.

3. Data and information of pilgrims were analysed on the basis of spatial distribution, education, classification, religion, mode of travel, income, noting their views about the facilities at Jejuri by using Statistical and Cartographic Techniques.

4. Data and information regarding pilgrim facilities were analysed by considering Transportation, food, accommodation, shopping facilities etc.

5. Analysis of data and information of residents were made on the basis of land use, occupational structure, business structure and other related aspects.

The appropriate statistical and cartographic methods like growth trend, Pie diagram, Columner graph etc. were used wherever necessary in the present work.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Research work is largely based on primary data. Certain limitations occurred which are mentioned as under:

1. For collecting the data, the measurement of pilgrims was rather difficult task due to lack of counting agencies.

2. Pilgrims hesitate to fill up the schedule.

3. Many pilgrims refused to fill up the schedule.

4. A few of the pilgrims did not answer questions related to the economic background.

5. Centres of tourist attractions are considered mostly in Pune district within coverage of 16 hours from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

The present research work is organized into six chapters.

The first chapter "Introduction" explains religion and its relationship with the elements of landscape, cultural landscape, religious landscape, Hinduism, and elements of Universe, relation with ecology and natural resources. The geography of religion,
religious tourism, the concept of pilgrimage, the importance of religious tourism in India etc are considered. It contains review of literature, objectives, sources of data, methodology adopted, methods of analysis, limitations of the study and chapter outline.

The second chapter deals with the study area entitled “Jejuri - The tourist Destination”. This area is viewed from tourism point of view. It includes introduction, historical perspective, physiography, climate, the town, population, occupational structure, business structure, attractions in Jejuri and future plan for the development of Jejuri as tourist destination.

The third chapter deals with the “Fairs- festivals and Appraisal of pilgrims”. It includes fairs and festivals in Maharashtra, yearly religious celebrations in Jejuri, the worships and rituals in the lord Khnadoba temple, fairs and festivals in Jejuri and appraisals of the visiting pilgrims.

The fourth chapter entitled “Vaghya-Muralis and their socio-economic problems” deals with socio-economic problems of Vaghya-Muralis and their status in society. It includes Jagaran ceremony, Vaghya-Murali community and their routine life, initiation ceremony of girls, boys and Bal Muralis, types of Vaghya-Muralis, analysis and discussion of survey work. The discussion of Jagaran ceremony, behavioral pattern of Vaghya-Muralis, people, expectation of Vaghya-Muralis for their survival, the socio-economic problems and demands of Vaghya-Muralis. The detailed study was done of Vaghya-Muralis from their viewpoint. The researcher’s own opinion is also included in the study.

The fifth chapter deals with “The spatial planning for Jejuri and Around as a Tourist Region”. It includes introduction, the concept of the region, geographical basis of the tourist region and tourist centers around Jejuri, including Jejuri as a gateway to the tourist region. Tour plans for the tourist region and discussion of the tour plans.

The sixth chapter deals with the “Conclusions and Recommendations”.
REFERENCES


