

A Historical Study of World Religious Monuments and Celebrities Memorable Places in Religious Perspective

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Abstract

The most tangible expression of religious ecology is through the veneration of nature. Diversity of procedure & approaches were designated as holy in different religions, and they are held in deep respect in honor of their assumed holiness. Many examples can be seen through the glimpse into the human civilization & history. The sacred journey is a religious act suggested for the specific spiritual cause, and it stand for a corridor to scrupulous holy sites. This research study will explore the status of Pilgrimage and the holiness of sacred places in their particular religious doctrine and practice using qualitative method. The research study will elaborate that some sacred journeys are difficult and require great obligation to complete. The purpose of research is to examine the sacred places are a bond to their followers because they have heartily association with them. The devotees have to offer sacrifice and sometime keeps fasting and travel bare-footed. It is also persuaded by the world religions to visit these sacred monuments. People visit and purified spiritually.

Keywords: Pilgrimage; Religious Monument; Sacred

Abstrak

Ekspresi paling nyata dari ekologi religius adalah melalui pemujaan terhadap alam. Keragaman prosedur & pendekatan ditetapkan sebagai hal yang suci dalam berbagai agama, dan mereka sangat dihormati untuk menghormati kesuciannya. Banyak contoh yang dapat dilihat melalui sekilas pandang ke dalam peradaban dan sejarah manusia. Perjalanan suci adalah tindakan religius yang disarankan untuk tujuan spiritual tertentu, dan merupakan koridor menuju tempat-tempat suci. Studi penelitian ini akan mengeksplorasi status Ziarah dan kesucian tempat-tempat suci dalam doktrin dan praktik keagamaan tertentu dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif. Studi penelitian ini akan menguraikan bahwa beberapa perjalanan suci itu sulit dan membutuhkan kewajiban yang besar untuk menyelesaikannya. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memeriksa tempat-tempat suci yang merupakan ikatan bagi para pengikutnya karena mereka memiliki hubungan yang erat dengan tempat-tempat tersebut. Para pemuja harus mempersembahkan pengorbanan dan terkadang berpuasa dan melakukan perjalanan dengan bertelanjang kaki. Hal ini juga dibujuk oleh agama-agama dunia untuk mengunjungi monumen-monumen suci ini. Orang-orang mengunjungi dan dimurnikan secara spiritual.

Kata Kunci: Monumen Keagamaan; Sakral; Ziarah

Introduction

Religion consists of two fundamental categories, beliefs and rites, in order words, states of mind and specific ways of behavior. It is beliefs that determine the objective of the practices; beliefs have to be defined first. Beliefs as expressed in myths and the like are also important for other reasons. They determine not only what objects will be considered as sacred, but also the specific nature, characteristics, virtues etc., of these objects.¹Religious man is not given; he makes himself by approaching divine models.² The proposed research work has been intended to acquire the following objectives:

1. To discuss the significance of the religious monuments and religious celebrities memorable places
2. To identify the mean & methods of spirituality implemented over celebrities memorable places
3. To clarify the status and divine charisma of religious monuments in world religions

¹E Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Presses de France, 1960, p. 49-58

²M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane, The Nature of Religion, The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, Harper & Brothers, 1957, p100

4. To do the analysis of prevailing situations of tremendous places in religious perspective and the reasons behind the foremost interest of people regarding the religion.

Methodology

The qualitative methodology will be applied. The research will be carried out in descriptive & an analytical manner. The data will be compiled and arranged in a logical manner. A review of relevant sacred scriptures will be done following the Implemented practices in Societies. The divine information would be compiled and organized logically in accordance with the relevant topic.

Discussion

Sacred is “consecrated to; esteemed especially dear or acceptable to a deity ... set apart for or dedicated to some religious purpose; made holy by association with a god or other object of worship; Consecrated, hallowed.” Further definitions include: “Regarded with or entitled to respect or reverence similar to that which attaches to holy things. Sacred is to regard anything concerned with religious point of view, considered it holy. Sacredness is anything becomes honorable due to the association with the God or his representative saints etc. The sacredness is the sentiment, reverence, sense of justice against violation, infringement, or encroachment Sacrosanct, inviolable; protected by some sanction from injury or incursion. “Worship places had been considered sacred because of the linkage between men and the God at the particular sacred place. Every religion shows respect to all such places. As Bible mentioned that the Lord stopped Moses to come at the holy place with shoes and ordered to put off them as a preparation act³ and “temple” was regarded as a sacred place.⁴ The Bible has used the word “Holy” and “Holiness” many times and given the deep impression of sacredness regarded God and Moses and particular sites.⁵

The visit towards such religious sites is called “Pilgrimage” in religious terminology. The word ‘pilgrim’ is derived from “*peregrines*”. This is the Latin word exactly means ‘foreign, travelling or migratory. The purpose of pilgrimage is entirely specified and spiritual healing and for the life hereafter.⁶ Pilgrimage has introduced a communal, financial and bodily difficulty or sacrifices as a part of pilgrimage.

These Places of the divine charisma have been recognized as sacred. People worship there and with the passage of time’ they had been marked off and protected against profane use. At initial they have been handiest spots, mountain or in groves by the sideways of streams, needing no marks or sign, for they have been open to each and every one and were blanketed by means of the admiration and adoration of the human beings.⁷ When the lands have become extra populated’ the religions had prepared such extra worship locations. Such sites got here an immediate & reliable care of the prevailed authorities or country.⁸

The pilgrimage to sacred sites is a part of the custom & ritual in the world religions. The hardships of the journey discipline the body and the company of fellow pilgrims strengthens the

³Exodus 3:5

⁴1 Cor 3:17,

⁵Psalms 99:5, 9

⁶Bhardwaj, S. M. (1987) Single Religion Shrines, multi religion pilgrimages. National Geographical Journal of India 33; 463.

⁷Religious Anthropology, 36

⁸Singh, Rana P. B., Pilgrimage in Hinduism, Historical Context and Modern Perspectives; in, Timothy, Dallen J. and Olsen, Daniel H. (eds.) Tourism, Religion, and Spiritual Journeys. (UK: Routledge, London & New York, 2006), 220-236.

religious faith. It is inspiring and uplifting to pray and worship at the place where the great religious leaders and saints once stood. The soul receives merit while the mind receives peace.

Religious Monuments of Judaism

This visit involves purification rituals so that demon, evil spirits and dark forces of lack of expertise excluded here. The situations for invoking the presence of divinity are maximum favorable right here.⁹In Judaism Holy location are Synagogues, the Western Wall, the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and Biblical Mount Sinai. Robert Cohn describes the holiness of sacred sites and says; “*Sites brushed by God (particularly mountains) showed that nature was associated with the Divine.*”¹⁰The word used in Hebrew for mountain is “*Canaan*”. This word ‘*Canaan*’ has been used more than five hundred and twenty times in Hebrew bible. It reflects the important and sacredness of mountains in Judaism.

1; Mountain Sinai; Mountain Sinai is located in Sinai Peninsula (Northwestern Saudi Arabia). The actual mountain from which the Torah was given named now-a-day “*Jabel-Musa*”. This mount is symbolized the starting period of Israel. Bible depicts Mount Sinai as a foundational institution and highly focused topic.¹¹The Lord called Moses at the Mount Sinai’ and given commandments, Elijah went back to cave.¹²In Pentateuch, Mount Sinai has been called “*Axis mundi*” (*a connection among paradise and ground*).

2; Mount Hor; The Israel in groups journeyed from *Kadesh*, and came to *mount Hor*.¹³ Mountain Hor is placed near Petra where isolated summit of *Jabel Haroon (Aaron)* is shown.

3; Mount Zion For the fundamental “amassing” of the people of God is the gathering to God, “to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the metropolis of the dwelling God.”¹⁴ You have come to hundreds upon lots of angels in completely satisfied meeting, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the choose of all guys, to the spirits of righteous guys made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, that speaks a higher phrase than the blood of Abel.”¹⁵

Celebrities Memorable Places of Christianity

The local church isn't always a lot a part of this church because the manifestation of it, the outcropping of it. Every church is sincerely the church. Thus, anything it is we do whilst we acquire together-In Christianity Bethlehem; (Birthplace of Jesus), Church of the Nativity, worship places of Jerusalem and sacredness of the Roman Pope are the most important in the perspective of spiritual purification.¹⁶The city of Jerusalem was also considered “sacred” by the Christianity and called “the land of Heaven”.¹⁷In the West some of the most popular modern pilgrimage has been to Lourdes in southern France, where Bernadette Soubirous had visions of the Virgin Mary in 1858. Thither in-numerable sick people have travelled and the grottoes are hung with the crutches

⁹Encyclopedia of Religion: 7507

¹⁰Cohn, Robert L. *The Shape of Sacred Space: Four Biblical Studies*. (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press 1981), 13.

¹¹*The Shape of Sacred Space: Four Biblical Studies*. 17.

¹²Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:11

¹³Numbers 20:22

¹⁴Psalm. 128:5

¹⁵Hebrew 12:22–24; Joshua 15:1–4

¹⁶Jean Holm, John Bowker, *sacred place* (London: Pinter publisher 1994), 35.

¹⁷Galatians 13:14; Revelation 21:1–2

of those who have been healed. Other popular modern pilgrimage centers are at Fatima and Lisieux.¹⁸

Sacred Places of Islam

The holy Prophet ﷺ said that every person is born on “*fitrah*” (correct belief). It is because of the guidance of send Prophets. These people are found in the houses of Allah “Masajid”. Masjid is the place for salat and engaging themselves in the remembrance of Allah. These verses show the great deal of respect of Masjid. *“فِي بُيُوتِ أَذُنِ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ”*¹⁹ “The houses “mosques” that Allah has ordered to be raised and remember His name, invocation, recitation. Therein glorify Him in dawn and dusk.”

The Mosque is an honored place for the remembrance of the Allah Almighty in the form of “*adahan, Iqamah, salat*”, invocation, recitation of the holy book ‘Quran’ etc. Allah warned the people busy in their worldly business and matter that all your matter shouldn’t involve you in such a way that you forget your God and forget salat and zakat. Don’t forget the day of resurrection.²⁰ The prophet ﷺ has laid much emphasis upon the presence in the masjid and said whosoever wishes to love Allah, should love me, my companions, Quran and Masjid. Masjid is the house of Allah. Allah has ordered to respect these blessed places and those who are in them for legitimate use. Allah protected these masjids and their occupants as well. Allah fulfills their needs and desires and protects their belongings while they are in masjid.²¹ Likewise if a person starts off his home to masjid with ablution will have a great deal of reward as equivalent to the person in *Abarm* for Hajj or an Umrah and one who comes in the darkness will get total light on the day of judgment.²²

“Abu Darda” (a fellow of the Prophet ﷺ) advised his son to consider the mosque as home as Allah Almighty guarantees’ peace of mind for the inhabitants of mosque and will make easy the crossing of “*Sirat-bridge*”. While Saeed bin Musssab said whoever sits and stay in the house of Allah (mosque) is just like sitting in the company of Allah .So during this stay one should engage in good and beneficial things.

Respect for Mosques

There are some rules to be followed after entering the mosque; To say Salam to the occupants, if al busy in prayer or no one there than say; ‘salam be on us and God-fearing people’, Offer ‘*Tabayyat-ul-Masjid*’ (two *rakat salat*). Give space to people, Observe cleanliness and be clean and beautified apparently.²³ Engage in remembrance of the Allah almighty. Furthermore not to stop people from coming to masjid as it is a deed of severe punishment.²⁴ Don’t engage in business etc., No weapon allowed, No announcements of lost items, No loud voice, No worldly talk²⁵, No quarrel, Don’t spit, Don’t crack knuckles, Don’t play with body part, Don’t walk in front of a *Namaz*.

Muslims visit to “*Bytullah*” to perform pilgrimage (*Hajj*). Pilgrimage is the journey of devotees towards the most sacred place. This visit prepared him to cross boundaries and enter more deeply into the realm of sacredness. Purity is activated in pilgrimage. Pilgrims enter a dialect where

¹⁸Worship in the World Religion, 213.

¹⁹An-Noor 24: 36

²⁰An-Noor 24: 37-38

²¹see details in Qurtabi

²²Detail in Shahih-Muslim

²³Al-Araf 7:31

²⁴Al-Baqarah 2:114

²⁵Al-Jumah 10

pollution is dissolved by the journey to a sacred place. Thus in the great pilgrimage traditions of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, one attains merit, community status and indulgence for afterlife.²⁶

Maqam-i-Ibrahim ; “*Maqam-i-Ibrahim*” is a monument of the Prophet Ibrahim (A.S). He was bestowed with this status because of his piousness and purity. Allah almighty has given order to offer salat at the foot-print place of Prophet Ibrahim (A.S) as said’ وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَاً وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ*²⁷ “*And We made the House a focus for the human beings, and a sanctuary. Use the shrine of Abraham as a place of prayer. And We commissioned Abraham and Ishmael, “Sanctify My House for folks who circle round it, and those who seclude themselves in it, and those who kneel and prostrate.”*²⁸” فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا*²⁸ “*In it are evident symptoms; the Station of Abraham. Whoever enters it attains safety.*”

In Islam, *Holy Kabah, Masjid ul Haram, Masjid Nabvi* and *Baitul Maqdis* (Masjid al Aqsa) are recognized and declared as the holy places for spiritual purification. Confinement in mosque for worship is also admirable in Islam. During the Confinement in mosque for worship, Muslims are commanded not to be associate physical (sexually) with wives and keep self-restraint.²⁹

Muslims Dargahs; It is often said that merely sitting in dargah courtyard with faith and certitude purifies ones heart. The Inner side of tomb always forms as burial place. Muslim believes that physical misfortunes are often a manifestation of a spiritual malaise. A visitation to a dargah is usually referred to as ziyarah or haazri. The acts and rituals pilgrims perform depend largely on the extent of their devotion to the Sufi. Most devotees believe that darghas abundant with barakah, Gods grace and evoke the blessings of the Sufis.³⁰ There are always celebrations on darghas. Unlike mosques, which are meant strictly for prayers, darghas are more inclusive and welcoming, irrespective of gender, age, class or creed. Despite different backgrounds, pilgrims often pray together and eat same *langar* (food distributed in the premises). The visitors of darghas offer the gift of the “*Fatihah*” (prayers) to the saints. However, duah, supplications, can be made standing or sitting towards the feet. Devotes then proceed to place flowers, usually roses, on the cloth draping the tomb. Some offer a chadar, a simple or an ornate cloth covering, placing it over the tomb as a token of love and respect. After offering flowers and chadar at the tomb, Pilgrims sit around the premises in prayer and meditation, seeking the intercession of the Lords exalted friends. Some devotees tie strings around the jaalis, (boundary of the tomb) as a reminder of their wishes to the Sufi. Many leave written letters for the Sufi, attached to the trellis with threads.³¹ The dargah of Sufi lit s up for the days of his or her *Urs* festivities often accompanied by “*Sama mehfil, langar*”, and collective prayer gatherings. Sometimes the festival last for a week or ten days, but the central function id the *qul*, special prayer function held on the morning of the actual *Urs* date.³²

Sufis believe that death liberates the body, enabling the union of the soul with God. *Urs* is death anniversaries of Sufis. It is considered an important spiritual and festival occasion in Muslims. Birth celebrations, Basant, Eid Milad UN Nabi, Muharram and the Death day of Sufis and saints are the important occasions and festivals that celebrate at Darghas.

Celebrities Memorable Places of Hinduism

²⁶Encyclopedia of Religion: 7505

²⁷Al-Baqara, 2:125

²⁸Al-Imran, 3:97

²⁹Al-Baqara 2: 187

³⁰Sadia Dehlvi. *The Sufi Courtyard, Darghas of Delhi* (New Delhi: Harper Collins publisher, 2012), 15.

³¹The Sufi Courtyard, Darghas of Delhi, 17.

³²Ibid, 21

Hindus have been motivated by their religious leaders to visit sacred places to attain highest level of spirituality. *Shankar-Acharaya* said; whoever visited the four sacred places “*chardhaam*” once in his life, his previous sins will wiped away and he will definitely get salvation. There are many classifications of sacred sites,³³ but mainly three type of sacred sites geographically; 1st is *Jala Tirtha* (water-sites) 2nd is *Sthan Tirtha* (temple/shrines related to a particular person and 3rd is *Kshetra* (sacred grounds/region like ‘*mandala*’.³⁴In Hinduism, sacred places can be classified into four categories:

- (i) Divine sites related to gaining blessings from specific deities
- (ii) Demonic sites associated with the mythological demons who performed malevolent works and sacrifices there
- (iii) Sage-related sites associated with the lives of important spiritual leaders
- (iv) Human-perceived sites, which are not believed to be “chosen” but merely discovered and revered by humans.³⁵

Temple of Jagannatha; The temple of *Jagannatha* is situated (Juggernaut, a title of Krishna) at Puri. Puri has long been famous for its festival. In the past devotees dragged, the chariot by hooks fastened through their backs and excited pilgrims threw themselves to the ground in front of the cart wheels. There are many opinions and researches about the total number of sacred places in Hinduism. There were estimate of 2000 Hindu sacred places,³⁶ while ‘Tirthanka’ has described 1820 holy sites. He listed 35 per cent of all them are related to the god “Shiva”, Vishnu 16 per cent, and goddess 12 per cent.³⁷ There are 51 goddess-linked sites ‘later on got increased into number 108.’³⁸Paryag is in Allahabad almost eighty miles away from Banaras. It is place where two rivers Ganga and Jamna are combined. There is a shrine of Shiva in the southern part of India named *Ramesvaram*. Devotees visit there barefooted to attain higher spiritual purity.

Gaya; Gaya is a famous as sacred place. There is foot print Of Vishnu in stone. Pushkar Lake; Most sacred lake of Hindus is at *Pushkar*. This is near Rajhistan and Ajmeer. This is also associated with the stories of gods.³⁹A sect of Hindus is known as *sketas*’ who took wine and performed filthy rituals. This worship is known as *yonis*. This worship of *saktas* is very conspicuously depicted in the famous kamakhya temple of Assam.⁴⁰Temple is also ceremonial center as well.

³³See details in Kane, Pandurang Vaman, History of Dharmashastra: Ancient and Mediaeval Religions and Civil Law in India, (India: Bhandarker Oriental Series, Pune, 1974). ; Dave, Jayakrishna H. Immortal India. 4 vols. (India: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1957-1961) ; Tirthanka. Kalyana,, Annual no. 31.(India: Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1957) Popular essays on about 1000 holy places of India. in Hindi.

³⁴Singh, Rana P. B., Kashi as Cosmogram: The Panchakroshi Route and Complex Structures of Varanasi; in, Malville, John McKim and Saraswati, Baidya Nath (eds.) Pilgrimage– Sacred Landscapes and Self Organized Complexity.(India: DK Print world, Delhi, 2009) for IGNCA: pp. 91-102.

³⁵*Brahma Purana* 70.16-19

³⁶Kane, Pandurang Vaman, History of Dharmashastra: Ancient and Mediaeval Religions and Civil Law in India, (India: Bhandarker Oriental Series, Pune, 1974)

³⁷Khanna, Amar Nath, Pilgrim Shrines of India: Mythology, Archaeology, History and Art: Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Christian and Sufi. (India: Aryan Books, New Delhi 2003)

³⁸Singh, Rana P. B. Sacredscape, cosmic territory & faiths cape: Goddess territory of Vindhyaachal,(India: National Geographical Journal of India, 1997) vol. 43 (3), September: 237-263.; Sacred Geography of Goddesses in South Asia. A Festschrift to David Kinsley, Planet Earth & Cultural Understanding Series, Pub.5. (UK :Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle u. Tyne, 2010) and The 51 Shakti Pithas in South Asia: Spatiality and Perspective for Pilgrimage-Tourism. The Oriental Anthropologist (India: Allahabad and New Delhi, 2012), 12 (1), July: 01-37. Rana P. B. Singh, Hindu tradition of pilgrimage’ sacred spaces &system, (India: Dev Publishers & Distributors, 2013)

³⁹World in the World Religion, 55.

⁴⁰Comparative Religion, 39.

Upper three casts performs their religious rituals regularly there. Temple used for mostly congregational worship and different occasions or festivals of their gods and goddess.⁴¹

There are some natural sacred locations in Hinduism. Places related to the lives of gods, incarnations, seers and sages, or outstanding ancient occasions such as Mahabharata war are traditionally revered as purifiers and sanctifiers. There are famous ancient groups of temple buildings at *Ellora*, *Khajuraho*, *Bhuvaneshvar* and *Puri*, but the south Indian temples are the most numerous. In the great temple at *Madura*, there is a Hall of a Thousand Pillars, with wonderful and elaborate stone sculpture. The central part is the sanctuary (*vimana*) in which an image or symbol of the god is enshrined in its 'womb' covered by a tower. There is a pavilion in front of the shrine and a passage around it for ritual circumambulation. It is an essential part of worship to make the circuit the shrine, one or many times. There is always a large tank for ritual washings. The south Indian temples are characterized by the "*gopurams*". These tower above thousands of villages and towns and mark the landscape, like pagodas in other lands.⁴² There is the much publicized Birla temple in New Delhi, a pretentious River Ganges; the water of river is considered sacred. Every year Hindus make pilgrimage to Benares and other places of Ganges. They bathe there to attain high level of spirituality. They believed in that after death, their body cremated on river banks and his ashes cast upon water.⁴³

Monuments of Buddhist

As Buddha has travelled throughout Asia, sacred places of indigenous spirits and gods were incorporated with Buddhist cosmology and became important visiting (pilgrimage) destination. Buddha has been laid great emphasis to visit the sacred places and said; "*oh Nanda; a man who is enlightened with my teachings and spending his life according to it, if he pass away during these sacred visits' I give him the good news of the everlasting happiness in the life hereafter.*"⁴⁴

Sixteen sites have been declared as sacred in Buddhism including "*Sripada*" (Adams peak) and the home of god "*Mahasumana*" (a giant foot print of Buddha). *Sripada* (Adams peak) also became a visiting place for Hindus and Muslims as well. A tradition about the same place also describes in Christianity that this foot print was of St Thomas, preserved in the mountain.⁴⁵

In Cambodia and Laos shrines are known as "That" of bulbous-shaped tower tapering up into a spire. The most famous is the "That-luong temple". It was built in 1567. Laotian temples are called "*Viharas*" lavishly decorated and furnished with images of Buddha.⁴⁶ The great temples at Angkor Wat are renowned as relics of Hindu and Buddhist medieval art. Java also has its Buddhist memorials. In Vietnam, the Mahayana Buddhist school Prevails. In Cambodia and Laos there were over eighty shrines but destroyed when Siamese sacked city in 1827.

The "*kataragama*" (sect of Buddhism) in Sri Lanka worship and seek the gods favors. They practice physical practices like rolling in scorching sand, piercing their cheeks, tongue and other parts of body with screw or hooks and walking across the burning coal. More than half a million visitor visit there in a year. The greatest number of visitors came and performs rituals in congregation during the god's festival in the month of *Esala* (July or August).⁴⁷

⁴¹How Men worship: 51-52.

⁴²Worship in the World Religion, 51.

⁴³How Men Worship: 53.

⁴⁴Mahapurana Bhanasuttra

⁴⁵Buddhism , p:112

⁴⁶How Men worship: 97

⁴⁷Buddhism 123

In Thailand (Siam) the temples are called wats, groups of several edifices guarded by leogryphs. The stupas (phras) are made of piles of stone discs of decreasing size, tapering away into metal spires. There are many Buddha images, and also Hindu motifs appear in decoration.⁴⁸

Mount Wutai in china, *Mount Fuji* in Japan and *Mount Kailash* in Tibet are also known as sacred places in Buddhism to visit and purified them.⁴⁹ Every temple has at least one altar present somewhere in the room. These alters are well designed containing some representation of Buddha or *Buddhistiva*, some statues paintings and scrolls.⁵⁰

The Earliest Monuments & Texts Of Buddhism

Sarnath; The great emperor Asoka (300 B.C) became a monk and did much to spread the Buddhist faith. He sent out missionaries to Ceylon, Syria and Egypt. A number of his pillar and rock-carved edicts remain, as the earliest monuments and texts of Buddhism. The best of all is at Sarnath where the magnificent capital of stone topped with four Persian style lions. Asoka made a pious tour of tradition cites and erected commemorative pillars and stupas ('mo\und' from chaitya, a funeral pile). A great stupa is still remained in Sarnath, although some part has been demolished. Sarnath is decorated with slick and sensuous paintings by a Japanese artist⁵¹ A famous and beautiful stupa at *Sanchi* replaces a smaller one built by Asoka. The famous caves at *Ajanta*, near Bombay contain many statues and frescoes Buddhist.

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims (visit) from all over Sri Lanka travel to ancient capital of *Anuradhapura* and nearby *Mihintale* to mark the day upon which the monk *Mahinda* (son of Asoka) became king. This day is called *Poson* (full moon day in May or June).⁵²

Celebrities Memorable Places of Jainism

As Jainism flourished in India, north of Bombay, Gujarat and Rajputana and some southern areas are famous for Jain temples. A Jain temple is a place of worship where a person experiences immense peace and serenity. It is a beautiful, quiet and peaceful place to reflect upon our true nature and soul. It promotes introspection, and brings home the feeling that God/Soul resides within one's self. Therefore, each person can follow a path of purification of the inner self, devoid of anger, ego, deceit, and greed. Before entering the temple one must take off their shoes. One should not eat, drink or chew anything in the temple, nor should one run-around, shout, talk to others, or socialize in the temple. When one enters the temple one should say 'Nissihī', meaning 'to leave behind'. This means that by mind, speech and action we are leaving all our worldly relations outside the temple, which in turn implies leaving our vices (Kashāyas) namely anger, ego, deceit and greed. A donation box in a temple promotes anonymous giving.⁵³

The most sacred city of "*Satrunjaya*" (*Politana*) is Gujarat which has 863 temples. They are magnificence and majestic structure. Some other temples are in Gwalior, in the united providences, and at the Mount *Paisnath* in Bihar, which are center of Jain worship in eastern India.⁵⁴ In these monasteries, there is confession of sin, and acceptance of a penance given by the director (priest-monk) to get rid of Karma. *Svetambara* Jains daily visit the temple, after bathed, put on neat clothes, and a sacred thread round his waist only during worship. They proceed to walks three times around

⁴⁸worship in the world Religion, 106.

⁴⁹Buddhism, 112.

⁵⁰Leslie.D.Alldritt, Religions of the World, Buddhism (USA: Chelsea House Publisher Philadelphia, 2005) 86.

⁵¹Worship in the world Religion, 103-104

⁵²Buddhism, 124

⁵³Compendium of Jainism, Jaina Education International, 252.

⁵⁴How Men worship:58

it. During this walk they meditate on three jewels of right knowledge, faith and conduct.⁵⁵ Mount Girnar with its magnificent stairway, Gwalior with great statues cut out of the hillside, Sravana Belgola with its 60-ft. nude figure of Gomatesvara are well known as the sacred places of Jainism. The most famous of all are at Mount Abu, 'the Olympus of India', in southern Rajasthan; by the intricacy of detail and delicacy of carving of figures and flowers in marble, these temples with their fretted ceilings and pillars contain perhaps the finest marble sculpture. In the Sevotambara temples the images have big glass eyes and stone loin-cloths, and are adorned with jewels and flowers. The Digambara images have eyes cast down and no loin-cloths.⁵⁶ Every temple contain the central image of Mahavira accompanied by smaller images of twenty four *Tirthanaras* and a saint wheel (*siddha chakra*). The saint wheel is saluted daily and eight days worship in spring and autumn.⁵⁷

Celebrities Memorable Places of Sikhism

In Sikhism, Gurdwaras considered as a sacred place to worship. A copy of Guru Granth is kept there, wrapped in beautifully decorated silk. The Sikhs always used to bow in front of Guru Granth in respectful manners. In the temples the Granth is the focal point; it is opened every morning and closed after the evening prayers. It is given great honor, and some have concluded that the book is worshipped when they have seen Sikhs bowing before it. No other book is read in temple except Granth. The Granth is read continuously from start till end. In Amritsar temple Granth is kept as treasury and conducted a ritual for this purpose and taken out in a nark on shoulder by some people. The common services of a temple is opening of Granth, music, exposition, sermon, the Anand (Guru Amardas's 'Song of Joy to the Name'), a prayer, reading of a passage from the Granth, distribution of communion food *Karah Prasad* (a sweetmeat of butter, sugar and flour) and final dispersal.⁵⁸

Conclusion

The sacred places have the divine charisma and recognized as blessed sites. People visit and worship there to be spiritually highly purified. With the passage of time' such places had been marked off and protected from blasphemous use. These sites were declared holy by the religious scripture or by the holy personalities of them. Devotes have great affiliation towards them and travelled for hundreds of thousands miles to reach their and express their adoration. They perform their religious rituals and rites according to their sacred traditions. Different places are known for different purpose; some are known for physical healing, while others are famous for spiritual healing. However sacred places are the religious icons & signs of particular religion. These monuments are the symbol of love, peace, spirituality and harmony for all.

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⁵⁵Worship in the Worlds Religion, 67

⁵⁶Ibid, 69.

⁵⁷Shah, U. P. *Studies in Jaina Art*, (India : Jaina Cultural Research Society, Benares, 1955) 97.

⁵⁸Worship in the World Religion, 79.

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