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A Historical Study of Place Names of Eastern Uttar Pradesh

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In view of geographically, the Eastern Uttar Pradesh is situated in the middle of the northern Himalaya mountain tract and southern Vindhyan tract. The Faizabad, Bahraich, Gonda, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Allahabad districts are making the western boundary of this area. In addition to the above mentioned districts Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria, Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Banaras, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Sidharthanagar, Sant-Kabeer Nagar, Maharajganj, Kushinagar, Mau, SantRavidas Nagar and Sonbhandra districts are also included in this study area. The Bihar state is situated in the east. The above cited area of study covered the cultural border of ancient Aryavarta.The remembrance of monarchical states like Koshal, Kashi, Vatsa and the republic states like Shakya, Malla, Koliya of ancient India are protected here. Much more of the learned Historians worked much important work for the history and culture of this region. The work of W. Krook "Tribes and Castes of the North Western Provinces and Avadha" (2 Volumes, Calcutta, 1896) is very important for the study of Tribes and society of the region. AnantSadashivaAltekar published his work "History of Banaras in 1937. Motichandra also wrote his work to centralize on Banaras, "KasiKaItihas (1962). For the focus on the regional studies, the work of A. N. Ghosh 'Early History of Koshambi (Allahabad, 1935) is also very important. The editions of "History and Culture of Indian People"edited by R. C. Majumdar and Pusalkar (BharteeyaVidyaBhavan, Bombay) are also important for the revealing of the history of the area. R. S. Tripathi lights the importance of the area in his most famous book "History of Kannauj (Banaras, 1937). The book of RajbaliPandy "Gorakhpur JanapadaAurUsaki Kshatriya JatiyonKaItihas" (Gorakhpur, 1946); the work of Roma Niyogi "The History of GahadwalDinesty" (Calcutta, 1959) are very important for the history of the region. In the above mentioned works, the history of the area is presented as traditional dimension. The place-names related with the reality of the places, they are very significant for the revealing of the history and culture. In some subjects it is openly seen that the historicity of the nomination of the place includes the short form of the characteristics, arts, culture, geographical status, trade, climate, human settlement, geographical incidents and important historical events etc. The earlier historians have put up the important work about the geographical identification of the places described in Indian classics especially Vedas, Brahmanas, Upnishads, Mahakavyas and Buddha literature.

N. C. Dutta presented "A Note on Ancient Geography of the Asia, compiled the Valmiki Ramayana (1896). The Vedic Index (2 Volumes, London, 1912) is also important for the verification of the person and place names. The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India of N.L. Day is also important for the purpose. The ancient Indian writers like Panini, Patanjali, Kalidas and Varahmihir mentioned many time the place names in their academic literature. On the basis of these books, currently so many writers presented their works. B.S. Upadhyaya presented his work 'India in Kalidas' (Allahabad, 1947). BasudeoSharanAgrawal created his pioneer work "India as known to Panini (Lucknow, 1953). B. C. Law presented his work "Geographical Aspects of Kalidas's work" (Calcutta, 1954). B. N. Puri wrote a book entitle "India in the times of MahabhashyakarPatanjali" (1958, Bombay). AjayamitraShastri presented a work on the basis of Varahamihir'sVrihatasamhita "India as seen in the Vrihatasamhita of Varahamihir" (1969, Delhi).In the Indian context, the reference and historical implementations of place names, the descriptions of foreign travelers were also very important. On the basis of information of Macrindle, Megasthanees and Arian, the books of Ancient India as described by Ptolemy (1885, Calcutta) and Ancient India as described by Megasthanees and Arian (Calcutta, 1885) were composed. Periplous of the Erithrean Sea (W. H. Scoff) is also some important sources of information in connection with the Indian place names. Having availed description of foreign travelers,Eliot and Dowson has written the book "History of India as told by its own Historians, London, 1887. The books of T. Waters on "Yuwanchwang's (Travel in India, London, 1905); S. Beal, "Buddhist records of the Eastern World, Translation of Whenchang; Farishta edited by Brigs; E. C. SachauAlbarunies India (1910, London); the book of SarMarcopolo (London, 1920) etc. are describable. The information produced by foreign writers on the basis of geographical survey of Indiaespecially Chinese travelers, Sir AlexenderCunninghum wrote his pioneer work 'Ancient Geography of India (London, 1871). In the context of Indian history, on the basis of description submitted by Greek Historians, B. N. Puri has written the book "India as described by Early Greek writers" (India Press, Allahabad, 1939).

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The above mentioned works were really very important for the geographical studies, but, we have seen a lacksof study for place names of this area. In fact, the study about place names began more or less after 1977 when Prof. J. Gaura established 'The Place Names Society of India'. In this direction, the learned writers K. V. Ramesh, K. S. HaridasBatta, S. P. Tiwari, M. N. Kuttywere played very important role. This type of historical study is much progressed in South India, but unfortunately, in North India the research and study of the history could not take place.

The study of the place names of eastern Uttar Pradesh (India) not only revealed the history and culture of the region, but it creates a new scope for the study and research of Indian history. Some place names have attached ancient historical and traditional remembrance. Some place names bears the geographical and environmental information. The place names give important information about agricultural economy. Some place names give important information about the tribes who lived here from very early times. The micro and etymological studies play very important role for the construction of history and culture of this area.

The prima-facie, the exploration of the place names, especially the village names- Imlideeha, Khairdeeha, Amwan, Bargadwan, Bargadahi, Bardarh, Mahuadarh, Mahuakhor, like names indicates the Mango, Banyan, and other trees and forest which was presents in this area. The much more nomination of the places is kept suffix on Mango, Banyan and other type of trees. The relation of the forest with Lord Buddha also prevailed in the history. He was born in Shaal-Vana and his Mahaparinirvana also became in Kushinara's Shall-Vana. He has also given the thought of speech on Dhammachakkaprvartana in Rishi-Vana, Sarnath. The forming of agricultural land by cleaning of forests also found in place names. Vankati and Vankatia like village names clearly indicate that type of works.The villages names like Gopalpur, Govindpur, Gpipur, Godhana, Goplapur are often get in this area. These types of names clearly indicate the serving of cow and their importance. It is stated in MahabharatathatBheema (brother of Pandwas) travelled toGopalaka country[1] in eastern region.The nomination of the places to the impact of casts and tribes indicates the settlement of those types of people here. We often fined the names like Bharpur, Bharohia, Bharvalia, Bharsar, Bharwal, Bharauli, Bharthari in each district of eastern U.P. (India). These types of names are indicating the relation with Bhara Tribes. Domahar, Dumari, Domingarh, Dumaraila, Domandash like names related with the settlement of ancient Domb Tribes. The information about the settlements of Bhar and Dombs tribes in this region, the Baden Powel concluded that the Domb tribes currently live in a very weak position, but in fact, in ancient time they were engaged as ruler groups at the foot of mountain tracts.[2] The historians believe that as a tribes the Bharas were dominated position in this region in ancient time. From the Banaras gazetteer it has been revealed that once upon a time the Bharas were very dominated position from SanyuktaPranta of Sagar to terai belt of Nepal and Ghazipur of U.P.[3] Wilton Oldem believes that the presence of tribes was in middle ganges valley from very early time and he told that they spread to Banarasa and Bihar. He told about his contemporary dominating personality ofLand-Lord Rambadan Singh for example.[4]The Residue of Bharas, especially a large number of tanks are prevailed in this region.[5]Duthout also believes about the prosperity and domination of the Bharas and he correlated themwith ancient city of Pumpapura.[6] In addition to above tribes, the Chero, Seori (Sevari, Shabar), Kol, Kharwar tribes also settled in the forest and mountain tract of Mirzapurdistrict.Now the population of Chero tribes became very poor. They are affiliated with Naga group of tribes. Cherri and Chari villages of Sonabhadra and Cherui village of Mirzapur districts are related probably with Chero tribes. The place names related with Kol tribes are Koldihawa, Kolia, Kolaha, Koulpur also present in this region.In addition to the tribesKevata (Nishadas), Aheer, Dhobi, Nai, Brahmana and sub castes of Brahmana'srelated place names are also found here. Kevatali, Kevatgachha (Gorakhpur- Sadar), Kevati (Chandauli district), Kevatalia (Sidharthanagar district), Nishadpur (Jamania of Ghazipur district) like villages names are totally indicating the relation with the cast of Kevata or Nishadas. Dhobahi (Gorakhpur), Ahirauli (Gorakhpur), Dubauli (related with DubeyBrahmana), Ahiraghasi (Srawasti, Ekouna), Kehari (Bhinaga), Pandita (Ghazipur), Kumhargarhi (Gonda), Nowchak (Ghazipur) like places revealed the real picture of the casts and social tribal relation with the region.

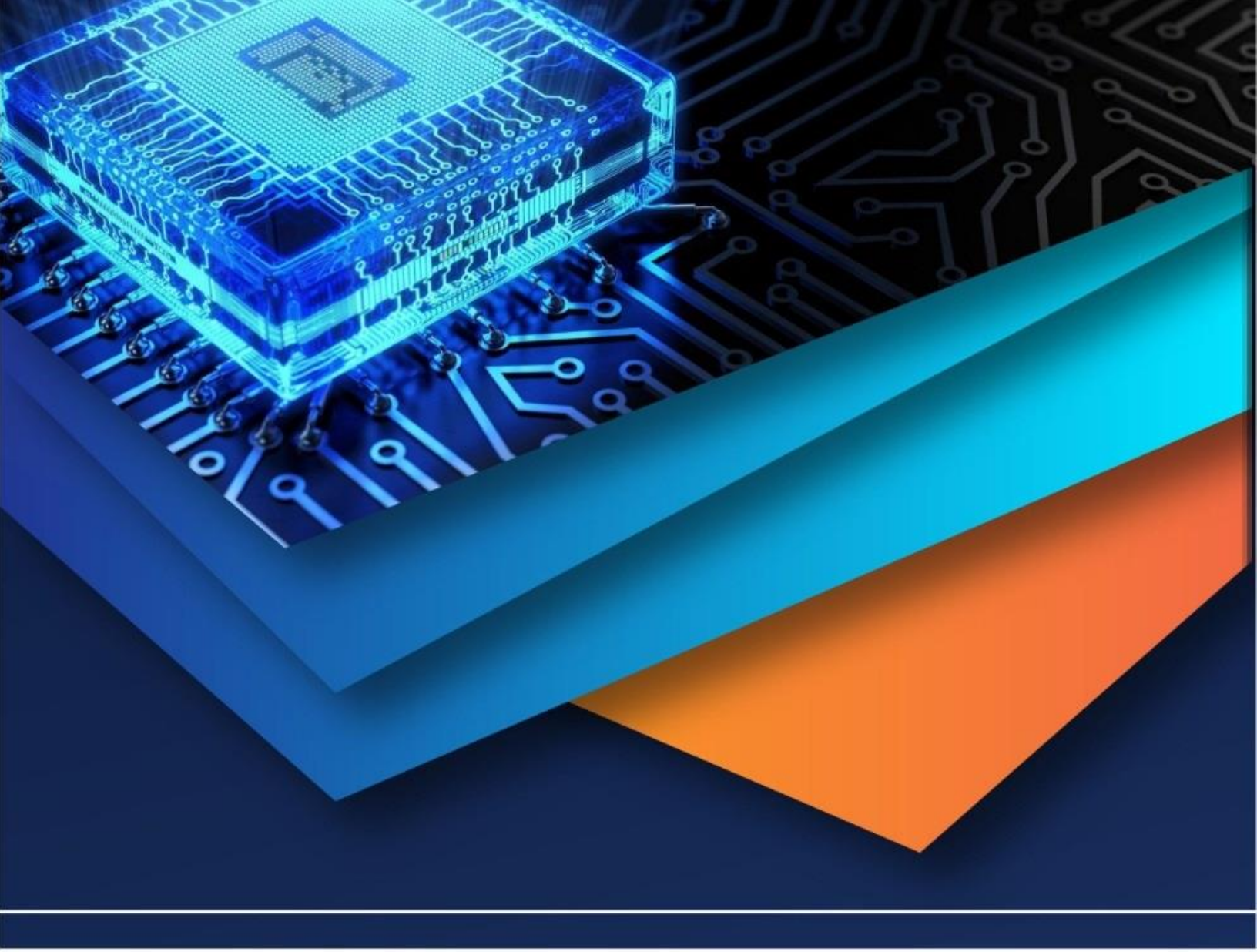
Many of the place names are found here on the name of God and goddess,which are indicated the impact of religious belief and traditions.Hariharpur, Shivapur, Rudrapur, Bhavanigarh, Trilokapur, Lakshmipur, Keshavapur, Mahadeva, Jagdeesh, Raghunathpur like place names are obviously indicating the impacts of the Hindu God and Goddesses. Sarnath, Kushinagar, Lumbini, Piparahwa, Sravasti like place names related with Buddhism isstated with many of the historical events. The etymological study of place names reveals the important events of the history. Nausar[7] the name derives with the two words Nava + Sara, Nava means new and Sara[8] means stream, therefore Nausar means the New Stream. It seems to be that any time river Rapti changed her position. The position of RamgarhLake situated in the eastern part of Gorakhpur indicates this type of incidents. The place name Kanaicha derived from Kan[9] + icha[10], Kan means Bright and icha means (Aditya, Itya, Ich = Surya (Sun) [11] Sun. Therefore the meaning of Kanaicha is brightness of Sun. Thus the place name Sonaicha[12] means golden Sun. The name Saket bears also this type of meaning. Saketderived from Su+Ket[13] = beautiful residence. On the basis of the above mentioned description and references, I may conclude that the study of the place names reveals many of the facts about history and culture of the area.

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[1] Mahabharata ,Digvijaiparva, Chapter-30, Shlok-3.
[2] Pavel Baden B.H., 'The Indian Village Community', p. 106. The Dom are now in a very humble position, but once they ruled over or possessed wide tract in the foot of the mountains.
[3] North-West Province Gazetteer, XIV, 102.
[4] Memoir of the Ghazipur district, p. 47 (Allahabad Government Press, 1870).
[5] North-West Province Gazetteer, XIV, 115.ff.
[6] Pavel Baden B.H., Ibid, p. 108.
[7] Nausar is situated at the bank of river Rapti (with a distance of 5 km.) in the western part of the Gorakhpur city.
[8] Sar is created from **sri** of whom it means stream.
[9] A village of Bansgaon Tehsil of Gorakhpur district.\
[10] Kan = 'to shine' The Etymology of Yask, p. 55.
[11] The Etymology of Yask, p. 32.
[12] A village of Bansgaon Tehsil of Gorakhpur district.
[13] Ketan = Ketanam means residence, V. M. Apte, Sanskrit-Hindi Shabd-Kosh, p. 344, Kamal Prakashan, New Delhi.

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