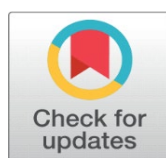
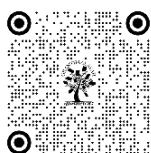


A CRITICAL REVIEW OF 'GOUTAM BUDDHA IN HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY BY A. K. TRIPATHY ET AL'

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ABSTRACT

This review provides an in-depth examination of authors's (Dr. A.K. Tripathy, Sri P.C. Tripathy and Dr. C.B. Patel) book entitled as "Goutam Buddha In History And Archaeology" published on 2012. This book explores the main theme regarding the birth place of Gautam Buddha. This review evaluates the author's arguments, methodology used in the book, strengths and weaknesses and comparative statements of different historians.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1) Theme of the book

The author(s) has took up the issue to bring out the original birth place of Lord Buddha and some important points in support of Chakradhara Mahapatra's opinion. The mission of this book is to reiterate the forgotten issue on the importance of Buddhism and the birthplace of Buddha in Odishan scenario.

Since, the matter is as old as 2000 and 600 years, so it is quite natural that on the basis of archaeological remains are defaced and disappeared. So, the thrust of this book is to sort out the problem of the birth place of Buddha and the Buddhist sites of Odisha. Mostly the evidence of archaeology is enumerated in a scientific study to get the place of Buddha. The book consists of nine important points excluding bibliography. Some important points are discussed below:

1.1. INTRODUCTION

One dark area in history is to identify the birth place of Buddha. One is Ruminidei in Nepalese Tarai and the other is Kapileswar of Bhubaneswar. Kapilavastu, the capital city of Sakyas and Lumbini are taken for granted as actual birthplace of Buddha for hundred years on the basis of the inscribed pillar of Ruminidei. Tradition prefers to picturize Buddha as the son of a king than the son of a gaṇamukhya (chief of a democratic rule). Because, India was ruled in many places by democratic ruler, Suddhodana. The place Kapilavastu is identified on the basis of the small states ruled by Suddhodana and his father-in-law who ruled in Lumbini and Devadaha respectively. This is known as the birth place of the kingdom of Buddha which is identified on the basis of two references of Mahapadana Sutta in Mahavagga and reference of Bhagban Buddha of D. D. Kosambi (There is no objective references). The kingdom of Suddhodana and his father-in-law are mentioned as Lumbei and Devadaha respectively which is separated by the river Rohini. So, it is necessary to identify the place of Devadaha.

The name Lumbini or Ruminidei in Tarai appears to be fictitious. The reason being the opinion of Fuhrer is contested by V.A. Smith. Smith holds that, as there were no such places in government records earlier to Fuhrer's opinion. Cunningham endorses this view. So, all that is seen in the name of Lumbini, Kapilavastu and the temple of Mayadevi are artificially made in a glorification mission of Nepalese administration.

1.2. FINDINGS OF DR. E.J. THOMAS

The opinion of Edward J. Thomas is quoted to support the view of non-accepting recognized literature as historical documents. The authenticity is not acceptable for Puranic or religious character. But this opinion does not appear to be rational. The historical essentials are always collected from legends, folktales, mythology and the available texts. It is not appropriate to dispel Puranas, chronicles, mythological stories and other sources of history. So, they should be viewed as the "kernel of history".

1.3. OBSERVATION OF TERENCE A PHELP

The findings of eminent historians are relevant to build up the opinion. But references of those authors and their opinions chronologically need to be highlighted. There is a long discussion of Fuhrer's life and work where his opinion regarding the birth place of Buddha appears to be inconsistent. The view is not accepted by V.A. Smith. So also the Chinese travelers Hieun Tsang and Yuan-Chuang were quite unaware of the places mentioned above. The activities of Fuhrer's preparation of evidence with the help of Burmese priest is highlighted in detailed. There is a long discussion in this regard. It appears that the authors have left no stone unturned to refute his views in all respect.

1.4. COMMENTS OF CHARLES ALLEN

This part is devoted to the opinion of Charles Allen regarding the mischievous deeds of Fuhrer. C. Allen depicts details of his fraudulent activities in establishing Tarai as the birth place of Buddha for which V.A. Smith has forced him to resign from the job.

1.5. THE KAPILESWAR STONE EPIGRAPH

The Kapileswar inscription was sold to one M.N. Roy, a contractor of Puri which was enquired by the then collector of Puri. The callousness of the officers prompted Odishan historians to pay heavy price for this disinterested activities and alas! it was stolen and transferred to Calcutta and now it is lost forever.

In the comparative study of two different inscriptions of Ruminidei and Kapileswar, the authors want to prove both the inscriptions which are different from each other. So, the possibility of Kapileswar inscription being copied from Tarai inscription is ruled out. Another specialty of Kapileswar inscription as noted by C. Mohapatra is that the date on which Buddha breathed his last which was not mentioned in Tarai inscription. Cunningham does not accept the existence of Lumbini and Kapilavastu. The temple of Mayadevi is built much later. The govt. records has been incorporated these names only before sixty years. There are as good as sixteen photographs attached in the book to corroborate the facts and to prove the Buddhist remains in Odisha and all about those inscriptions.

1.6. KAPILESWAR AS THE BIRTHPLACE

Kapileswar being the birthplace of Buddha is discussed in detail. Besides the history of Buddha's notable places and deities related with Buddhism are highlighted. Kapileswar, Kothadesa, Kollas and other places are discussed. The authors have undertaken hair-splitting discussion to bring Kapilavastu as the birthplace of Buddha.

1.7. SUMMING UP

In the last part, first of all, the authors have raised the issue of Lumbini and Kapileswar again. They wanted to impress that Puri gazetteer and revenue records have identified Lumbini pragana under which a village existed called Kapilavastu. Secondly, about the existence of stupa of Konark is indicated but the exact place is not mentioned. In this context, it may be marked that the place where sun temple is built on the confluence of river Chandrabhaga. So, it is quite impossible that there was a stupa on the flow of water. Thirdly, there is no trace of sand-dunes or extant of any stupa is excavated so far. The reference of yamadharma of Kuruma village, eight kilometers far from Konark towards east. And the huge Buddhist image could testify certain relations with Buddha. Fourthly, some places such as Rahulapatna, Dhamapada, pindala and Nahantara are familiar with persons related with Buddha. Besides, a survey of place names would subscribe to this view. There is no mention of Buddha's birthplace in the travelogue of Hieun-tsang and F-Hein. Thus the subject matter is prepared in this book.

2. COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS

The main inspiration of this book is received from Chakradhar Mahapatra's "THE REAL BIRTHPLACE OF BUDDHA", 1977, reprint in 2008. Further it is curious to mark that the mention of the above places and the comparison of inscription and the life of Buddha are taken from the findings utilized in detail by C. Mohapatra. Further the convincing style and Fuhrer's mischievous research is adding feather to the research findings of Mohapatra. It is a much developed work on the previous research but the style is scanty. Alois Anton Fuhrer's book is contradictory of this book.

3. QUALITIES

The language of the book is simple and good. There is lucidity and clarity in delivering the matter. This book is written in an analytical method where micro level socio-cultural analyses are given. Here, intimately discussion about the birthplace of Buddha is seen, as a result of which the new researchers would get a chance to again think of it. The get up and price of the book is all right. And also fonts are in a better way. The authors have presented every sentence in such an intelligible way that one can learn the writing style from the beautiful sentences.

4. INSIGNIFICANT ERRORS

The authors have tried their best to bring the real fact to lime light properly. In this book, there is no grammatical, thematically and comprehensive mistakes. But it may be marked that two negligible mistakes and five glaring mistakes are noted down.

- * There are some printing mistakes such as Jdtaka(p.63), Kapilvatthu, trhe, tooth0 etc.

- * In a research work, it should not be written Dr., Prof. etc. which error is repeated in this book that Dr. fuhrer, Dr. E.J. Thomas.

- * The numbering of pages is not in a proper manner. Page-numbering should be started after contents but it is mentioned from the second page followed by contents. From beginning to the contents it should be Roman numerical only. There is an option to start numbering the second page of the text counting the total remaining pages of cover back to text.

- * Words other than English should be in Italics with diacritical marks or in devanagari. Hence, one can read it easily. In almost everywhere even in every pages this problem is faced by the readers. For example-VASABA KHATTIYA (what is this? pp.71)

* The chronological orders of arrangement may be preferred in the bibliography points to any historical research. The models are as follows:

- a) Author, Book, Publisher, Place, Year
- b) Author, Book, Place, Publisher, Year
- c) Author, Year, Book, Place, Publication

Bibliography may be prepared according to the name of authors, books, or publication time alphabetically. But hear no methods are followed and it is prepared haphazardly.

* The discussion on "Buddha's mother Mayadevi, her temple, and R. R. Diwakar's view" is repeated in p.11 (last para.lines26-30) and in p.30 (first para.lines5-8).

* One researcher may need the reference that where is it written in Mahapadana sutta by Mahabhaga that lumbini was a small estate of the father of Buddha. But this is not mentioned in this book. In a research book care should be taken to mention objective references and the above mentioned errors. This book opens a new challenge of dialogues between scholars of different types of expertise to appreciate and re-appreciate.

5. CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that this book is axiomatic in nature to resolve the issue of Buddha's birthplace where the view of Chakradhar Mahapatra is taken as major premise. But in broader sense, the study leaves an opportunity to reopen a dialogue amongst the scholastic world that is not aware of it. Further it has leaving a scope for freedom of research.