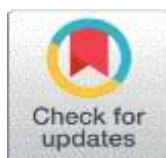




TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE IN NADIA DISTRICT CONTEMPORARY TO THE KRISHNANAGAR DYNASTY: A REVIEW

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DOI

<https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v3.i1.2022.5321>

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Nadia district, a region inhabited by rivers and canals, holds a unique place in the history of India and West Bengal. Nabadwip, in the Nadia district of West Bengal, was the capital of Bengal during the Pala and Sena periods from the 7th to the 9th century. In view of this historical importance, it is natural to have traces of temple architecture in the Nadia. But surprisingly no traces of temple architecture from 7th to 16th century can be found in Nadia. However, many temple architectures have been found in Nadia since the 17th century. In response to this discrepancy, many say that the temple architecture of Nadia was destroyed by the Muslim invasion. However, more research is needed on this. Because from the seventeenth century till King Krishnachandra, Nadia was under the rule of Muslim rulers. Many temples were built during this period. However, it is known from the writings of Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi that many temples of Nadia were destroyed by Nawab Sirajdaulah during this period. That is, during the period of the Nawabs of Murshidabad, there was a Muslim invasion in Nadia - it took a way to deny that. Despite the Muslim invasion, many contemporary temples of the Krishnanagar dynasty were established in Nadia. For example, 'Palpara temple, 'Krishnadev Roy' temple of Kanchanpalli, 'Shiva temple' of Srinagar, 'Dwadash (12th) temple' of Birnagar etc. In the construction of these temples, the traditions of the past were mostly followed. However, during the time of King Krishnachandra, Muslim and British architectural techniques were followed in the construction of the temple instead of traditional traditions. The main reason for this deviation was the financial crisis and the lack of terracotta artists. These issues are discussed in this article.

Keywords: Architecture, Historical, Kanchanapalli, Muslim, Nawab, Shiva, Terracotta, Wonderful

1. INTRODUCTION

Nadia is a historic district of West Bengal, India. Nabadwip in Nadia district, known as the Oxford of Bengal, was the capital city of the Pala and Sena kings respectively from the 7th to the 10th century. In this regard, it is natural for the past traditions to be illuminated in Nabadwip and Nadia. But it is a matter of disappointment that no architecture or temple of the Pala or Sena period is now intact in Nabadwip or Nadia. In fact, no trace of temple architecture from the 10th century to the 16th century i.e. about 700 years can be found in Nadia. Later, temple architecture was discovered in Nadia from the 17th century. Therefore, the question arises whether a temple was not built on the Nadia at this time or it was destroyed due to lack of conservation and natural causes. Or the temples of that time were destroyed by the Islamic invasion. The question is, if the temples of that time were destroyed by the Islamic invasion, then how did so many temples come up in Nadia during the Muslim rule in Bengal in the 17th century. Before answering all these questions, let us try to look at it through the medium of literary criticism. Our discussion on 'Temple Architecture in Nadia District Contemporary to the Krishnanagar Dynasty is an unique topic.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Our subject matter is certainly unique and fundamental. Because, in all the research books and articles published on Nadia district in the past, the temple architecture of Nadia district contemporary to the Krishnanagar dynasty has never been discussed in a larger context. Tapas Bandyopadhyay's book 'Unish Shataker Ranaghat' (in Bengali), Sahityashree, Calcutta, 1995 is an invaluable resource in the study of the regional history of Nadia. But that's not what this book is about. On the other hand, Malay Bhattacharjee's 'Nadiya Itihas Chhinnapatra', (in Bengali) the Canopy Books, Krishnanagar, 2003 and Pradyut Kumar Goswami's 'Nabadwip's Samaj o Sanskrit, (in Bengali), Pustak Bipani, Kolkata, 2006 are also interesting for history buffs. But in these two texts, the subject of "Temple Architecture of Nadia District Contemporary to the Krishnanagar Dynasty" is not discussed. On the other hand, Pabitra Chakraborty's book 'Chakdaha: Itihas o Sanskrit' (in Bengali), Nabapatra Publication, Kolkata, 2010 mentions some temple architecture in Chakdaha and its surrounding areas, but the picture of social and political history has been drawn more in this book. Mrityunjay Mondal's books 'Nadia Charcha' (in Bengali), Amar Bharati, Calcutta, 2014 and 'Nadia's Itihasa Charcha' (in Bengali), Amar Bharati, Calcutta, 2016 are mainly collections of essays. In these two books, one hundred and forty valuable articles have been discussed respectively. But both of these topics are missing from the book. This gap proves that the subject of our discussion, "Temple Architecture in Nadia District Contemporary with the Krishnanagar Dynasty," is a very fundamental one. First, evidence of this originality will be presented in the discussion of the architecture of the Nadia temple, and then the answers to the questions raised in the introduction will be sought.

3. THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE NADIA TEMPLE

Under the Nadia dynasty, numerous temples contemporary to the Krishnanagar dynasty are found in the physically prominent areas of Krishnanagar, Dignagar, Halishahar, Shantipur, Birnagar, Ranaghat, Chakdaha and Haringhata police stations. For example, the Krishnadeva Raya temple in Kanchanpalli, the Madangopal temple in Virahi, the Palpara temple, the Shiva temple in Srinagar, etc. The temples of these places have been bearing witness to the glorious past for ages. For the convenience of discussion, we will try to highlight the glorious past of Nadia according to the sub-division.

1) Kalyani subdivision

Kalyani subdivision consists of the physical areas of Chakdaha, Madanpur, Kalyani and Haringhata police stations. Kanchanpally of Kanchrapara was once an important Janapada in this subdivision. The temple of 'Krishnadeva Raya' at Kanchanapalli was built twice. The temple was first built on the banks of the Hooghly River in the early 17th century by Kachuray, a cousin of King Pratapaditya of Jessore. But when the temple of 'Krishnadeva Raya' was damaged by the erosion of the Hooghly river, in 1786 the sons of Nayan Chand Mallick, the zamindar of Pathurighata in Calcutta, Nimaicharan and Gauda Mallick respectively, rebuilt the temple of 'Krishnadeva Raya'. However, the temple still remains neglected. The height of the temple is 60 feet. Inside the temple on the white stone altar on the wooden throne the magnificent statue of Lord Krishnadeva Raya is standing (Mahit Ray & others ed. Nadia Jelar Purakirti, 1975, pp.25-26). Another such traditional temple is the 'Madangopal' Temple in Birahi. The temple was built in 1760 by the Nadia king Krishna Chandra Roy on the banks of the river Jamuna (Field Surve. 19.10.2019, Madanpur, Nadia, West Bengal). However, the original temple structure is no longer intact. The old temple has been renovated. Actually it is nothing but a building temple decorated with bricks. Even if there was any craft before, it cannot be noticed now. However, a lot of craftsmanship can be seen in the temple architecture of Pal Para. There is no information about when this temple was built. In the 'List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal' published in 1896, this temple was mentioned as 500 years old (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal. Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp. 116-117). In this argument, the temple can be dated to 1296 or its contemporary. But considering the similarity in the structure of this temple with the temple architecture of other places contemporary to the Krishnanagar dynasty, the above information seems to be wrong. A signboard of the Archaeological Survey of India at the site of the present Palpara temple mentions the establishment of this temple in the 18th century. The same information was also given by Mc Cutchin (David J. McCutcheon. Late Medieval Temples of Bengal, 1972, p. 31). So it is certain that this temple was established in the early period of the Krishnanagar dynasty. It is a terracotta temple. The terracotta sculptures of the Rama-Ravana war temple are a treasure trove. Even during the British period, the archaeological significance of this temple was acknowledged. In 1894 the collector of Nadia visited this temple and allocated Rs 500 for its conservation (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal. Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp. 116-117).

The temple of 'Jagannath' in Chakdaha is also very ancient. This temple is a contemporary of King Krishnachandra. It is not known when the temple was founded. Because there is no foundation plaque on the temple (Binay Ghosh. Paschimbanger Sangskriti, Tritio Khanda, 2008, pp.120-121). Terracotta work is also missing. Instead, the fine work of terracotta can be seen in the Atchala ancient dilapidated temple behind the present Kamalpur High School, near Chakdaha. Apart from the idols of Kali and Radhakrishna in terracotta art, the art of 12 Shivalingas in small holes on the walls of the temple attracts a lot of people. The locals call it the Shiva Temple. Beside this temple, there are two other ancient Shiva temples which are contemporaries of King Krishnachandra (Binay Ghosh. Paschimbanger Sangskriti, Tritio Khanda, 2008, pp. 122-123).

But in these two very dilapidated temples nothing remains except terracotta flowers. In fact, as a result of our indifference to ancient traditions, the temples have become desolate. The temple of 'Jagannath Dev' in Bishnupur near Chakdaha is also quite old. Although this temple was built by Shri Bishnudev Sharma in 750, the fame of this temple started during the time of King Krishnachandra Ray. He donated 72 bighas of 11 kathas of land in 1165 B.S for the regular worship of this temple. During this time, the structure of the temple was also changed. Inside the temple, apart from Jagannath, Radhaballabh, Radharani, 24 small Shivalingas on the right side of Jagannath give a lot of fun. However, the impression of the main temple has faded.

Two traditional 'Shiva temple's were established by King Raghav Ray in Srinagar on the banks of the Marali River adjacent to Baliagram in Chakdaha. He first established an Atchala Shiva temple facing north in 1671. The foundation plaque of this temple, which is currently preserved in the 'Barendra Research Archive' in Rajshahi, Bangladesh, reads:

"1593 saka Ramanko Banendou

Rajenduribo Raghava:" (in Sanskrit verse)

There is no doubt that Raja Raghav Rai established this Atchala Shiva temple in 1593 or 1671. There was a terracotta Ganesha idol at the entrance of the temple and two lotuses on either side. But due to the recent renovation, all the terracotta work of the main temple has been destroyed. On the other hand, in 1674, Raja Raghav Rai established another Shiva temple in Srinagar (Alok Kumar Chackraborty. Maharaj Krishnachandra O Tatkalin Bangasamaj, 1989, p.178). The temple is currently in ruins. There is no temple here. Two broken walls still carry the memory of terracotta. The foundation plaque of this temple is also preserved in the 'Barendra Research Archive' in Rajshahi, Bangladesh. The result of this is as follows:

"1596 saka Rasograhosharodwijoraja Sankhe

Sangkhyatobodmbuja Bijrimbhon Bhanubimbo: Shri Rajballabh Iti Nijo Nimmiter Immi

No Sthapoyot Parambeshmani Biswanathong." (in Sanskrit Verse)

The terracotta geometrical and various floral designs on the southern wall of this south-facing and four-storeyed temple are exquisite. On the other hand, King Krishna Chandra established a Charchala temple on the banks of the Hooghly River at Sukhsagar in Chakdaha and installed the idol of Goddess Ugrachandi there. But due to the erosion of the Hooghly river, this temple has been submerged in the river. Only the village is left. The two temples of Haradham and Anandadham Nagar of Ranaghat are also immersed in the womb of Mahakal. Radhamani Devi, the bride of the Krishnanagar royal family and wife of Prithvi Chandra Roy, built a four-tiered 'Kali temple' facing south in Haradham. (Kumudnath Mallick, Mahit Ray ed. Nadia Kahini, 1998, p. 470. But there is no temple here. Similarly, the temple at 'Anandadham Nagar' on the banks of the Churni river has also disappeared.

2) Ranaghat subdivision

Ranaghat subdivision consists of the towns of Hanskhali, Gangnapur, Birnagar, Shantipur and Ranaghat. Two Shiva temples of the Palchaudhuri Zamindar Bari (house) of Ranaghat were built by the Nadia king Shambhu Chandra Roy in 1803. The arches of the two south facing temples are like petals of flowers. Two terracotta works are still visible on the walls of the temple (Binay Ghosh. Paschimbanger Sangskriti, Tritio Khanda, 2008, pp. 129-134.) However, most of the terracotta work was destroyed during the renovation. A 'Navaratna temple' was established by Ujjwalamani Dasi, the widow of Ratanpal Chaudhuri, in the vicinity of this temple. However, it is not known when the temple was founded. In this temple beautiful idols of Gopinath, Radhika of eight metals, Jagannath of wood, Balram and Subhadra are worshipped.

Ula is an ancient prosperous Janapada of Ranaghat subdivision. The name Ula is derived from the name of Goddess Olaychandi. Later, the British named the Janapada Birnagar in 1800 as the residents of this area had demonstrated

bravery by capturing robbers several times. Birnagar was also famous as a temple town. People from far away visit this temple. Many people say that 21 traditional temples were established in the Birnagar. But not 21 but innumerable temples were established in Birnagar. For example, a temple of Goddess Chandi in the shape of a dochala or Bengali hall, decorated with wood carvings and with a standing canopy, was erected near the Singhadwar (door with lion symbol) of the Mustawfi house. About this temple Sri Srijannath Mitra Mostowfi says, "The Chandi Mandap in the shape of a Bengali house has very fine carvings on the barbed wood pillars and the upper kadi, bangles and arrows and the idols of different gods and goddesses and the effigies with different postures. On the three sides of the wall are carved images of various gods and goddesses." This wonderful temple of Goddess Chandi was built by Rameshwar Mitra Mustawfi in 1606 (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agrahayon, 1333, pp. 876-890). The temple was rebuilt in 1864 when it was damaged by Ashwin's (month of October) storm. But at present this temple is not there. In addition to this temple, in 1332 B.S. Sri Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi saw the 'Burasiva temple' established by the Nadia dynasty at Ula or Birnagar (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agrahayon, 1333, pp. 876-890). At present, there is no temple of Lord Shiva. He also mentioned 1 temple in the old house and 14 temples in the new house. However, these temples are no longer found. To the north of the house of the Mustafis was the Harisha prasad, a pair of 'Panchachura Shiva' temples established by the Mustafis. Both these temples were very beautiful and rich in terracotta work. A little to the north of this temple are the 10 monolithic Shiva temples, a 'Navaratna Kali' temple and a large 'Durga temple' belonging to Ishwar Chandra Mostowfi's Thakurbari (temple). The 'Durga temple' was the largest temple in the Nadia district at that time. These temples were built between 1225 and 1229. Other temples of this period include the 'Siddheshwari Kali' temple with an arched roof on the eastern side of the Mustafi house, the twin Shiva temples adjacent to the mutt house, and the Kali room and the swing in front of the lion gate of the Mustafi house. But by 1332 B.S., these temples were destroyed. Even after the epidemic of 1882, many temple structures were destroyed. For example, there was a temple named Ananda Roy in the inner courtyard of Ishwar Chandra Mitra Mistoufi's house - which was destroyed after the epidemic. Lord Krishna is worshipped in this temple (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agrahayon, 1333, pp. 876-890).

One of the architectures of Birnagar was the 'Dwadash (Twelfth) Temple'. One of these temples is the 'Vishnu Temple'. This temple was built by Kashishwar Mitra Mustawfi. The temple was established in 1679. Although Sri Srijannath Mustafi has suggested the establishment of this temple in 1606 or 1684. But the discovered foundation stone of this ruined temple is written -

"shubhamasto Shabdankebhumbindu Mahipotou

Shrikashiwar Mitren Bishsnubeshotsomorpitam" (in Sanskrit Verse)

Here Shakabdankevumbindu Mahipatau or Pati refers to 1601 Saka. That is, after taking Bhumi (land) = 1, Bindu = 0 and Mahipati = 16, following the Bamagati (left counting) formula of numbers, the establishment of the Vishnumandir is 1601 Saka or 1679 (Md. Jahangir Hossain. Abibhakta Nadia Jela Itihas, Samaj o Sangskriti, 2009, p. 175.) Therefore, Shri Srijannath Mustafi's information is not correct. The temple was very beautiful. The walls in front of the temple had exquisite carvings on bricks, effigies and idols of deities. This temple no longer exists. Like the 'Vishnu temple', the other temples within the 'Dwadash (Twelfth) Temple' were in a dilapidated state due to lack of maintenance for a long time, and in 1927, Lalitaprasad Datta renovated the temples and established a 'Gaudiya temple' there. Unfortunately, one of the twelve temples survives today.

More such ruined temples can be found in Ula or Birnagar. To the north of the house of the Mustafis was a beautiful 'Panchachura Shiva' temple outside the house of the brahmacharis (one who worships God without getting married for the rest of his life). In this temple there was a huge Shivalinga, the idol of Krishna-Radhika, the ten arms of brass and the idol of Nrisinhadeva. But this 'Shiva temple' is no more. This temple was built between 1225 and 1245 BS. At a distance of 50 to 60 cubits from this 'Panchachura Shiva temple' in the north-west corner there was a house of worship with the work of brahmacharis. Here Nandalal Brahmachari used to worship with Normund (human skull). The temple was built between 1706 and 1715. At a distance of north from this temple was the house of Bamandas Mukhopadhyay. On entering through the southern arch of this house there was a huge building of worship of Shambhu Nath Mukhopadhyay in the south. At that time it was the largest building in the Birnagar city (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agrahayon, 1333, pp. 876-890).

However, Bamandas Mukherjee's 'Barwari' (where everyone rejoices together during the ceremony) 'Durga Mandap' and his own 'Durga Mandap' were also well known. The walls of the temple were decorated with murals. These pavilions were built in 1245 B.S. There was a single 'Shiva temple' on the western side of Bamandas Mukherjee's own puja mandap. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple there was a beautiful idol of Shiva. There was a small temple in front of the temple. This temple was built by Mahadev Mukherjee, the predecessor of Bamandas Mukherjee, in 1196 B.S. In addition, a large 'Dalan (bricks building) temple' was erected after the epidemic on the south side of Mahadev Mukherjee's house. On the other hand, two 'Ekchur' and one 'Panchchur' temples were built along the circular road in the middle neighbourhood of Ula. Among these 'Panchachur temple' is situated right in the middle of the market. In this temple a Shivalinga of Krishna stone was installed. An idol of Lord Ganesha is placed at the entrance of the temple. Shiva is in the womb. This temple was built by Tarakanta Gangopadhyay in 1758 saka or 1242 B.S. Even today this temple is in the middle of the Birnagar market. Apart from this temple, there was a huge Shiva temple of medium size at the northern end of Ula or Birnagar. There was a temple in front of the temple. Kamalnath and Umanath Mukherjee built this 'Shiva temple' between 1230 and 1250 B.S. There was a 'Dolmanch' on the northwest side of Khan's house near this Shiva temple. Such a 'Dolmanch' was also in Huda Para of Birnagar. But in Ula or Birnagar now there is no trace of the existence of these temples and 'Dholmanch' (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agradhayon, 1333, pp. 876-890). This is due to the negligence and lack of maintenance of the past traditions apart from the blood eyes of Mahakal (God).

But despite the lack of respect and maintenance of the past traditions, the 'Jorabangla temple' still survives, ignoring the frown of the Mahakal. In 1694 Rameshwar Mitra, the zamindar of Birnagar or Ula, built this 'Jorabangla temple' of Radhakrishna (Md. Jahangir Hossain. Abibhakta Nadia Jela Itihas, Samaj o Sangskriti, 2009, p. 174). The foundation stone of the temple reads:

"Angaikalendumite Shakabde 1616 Kayastha

Kaistaharesa dharma: , yo nirmamme Srihariyugama

Dham Shrijukta Rameshwar Mitra Das. "(in Sanskrit Verse)

That is, the 'Jorebangla temple' of Radhakrishna was built in Birnagar in 1616 Shaka or 1694. There is terracotta work on the front walls and sanctum sanctorum of the temple. And in the terracotta sculptures on the walls of the temple, Krishna Leela, mythological deities, merchant ships, Mrigayatra (hunting) etc. have been depicted in an amazing way. Inside the temple, black stone idols of Krishnamurti and Radhika of Ashtadhatu (eight metals) are worshipped. An 'Atchala Shiva temple' can still be seen in the northern neighbourhood of Ula. This temple was built in 1758. It is not known who built the temple. However, it is clear from the composition of the other temples of the zamindars of Ula, the Mustawfis, that this temple was founded by someone from that clan. Apart from this traditional Shiva temple, the zamindar of Ular Mukhopadhyay dynasty established another 'Atchala Shiva temple' in 1788. But this 'Atchala Shiva temple' no longer exists in Birnagar. However, the ancient 'Pancharatna temple' adjacent to the market in Ula or Birnagar still exists. The temple was established by Tarakanta Gangopadhyay in 1836. An idol of Lord Ganesha is placed at the entrance of the temple. Shiva is in the womb (Srijannath Mitra Mustawfi. Ula Ba Birnagar, 12 sha Barsha, Pratham Khanda, Shastha Sangskaran, Agradhayon, 1333, pp. 876-890).

The ancient 'Jugal Kishore temple' is located on the banks of the Churni river in the neighbouring Arangghata of Ula or Birnagar. This beautiful temple was established by King Krishnachandra Ray in 1728 (J.H.E. Garrett. Bengal District Gazetteers Nadia, 2001, p. 213). This temple has eight arches on the east side. At the centre of the temple are the idols of Radha and Gopinath. In the other four chambers are the idols of Kalachand-Shyamchand, Radhaballabh-Gopiballabh, Balgopal and Balram Pramukh. Such a large building is rarely seen in West Bengal.

According to tradition, the first one was brought from Brindavan and was first installed at Samudragarh (near Nabadwip), from where it was transferred to Arangghata by Ganga Ram Das, the first Mahant of the temple. The Radha idol is said to have been brought from the palace of the famous Maharaja Krishnachandra of Nadia, who donated 125 bighas of rent-free land for the upkeep of the temple. A large fair is held here every year during the month of Jaisthya (April-May) and is attended by pilgrims from various parts of Bengal: women predominate among the visitors, as it is believed that any woman who visits the temple will be saved from widowhood, or, if she is already a widow, will be freed from that fate in her next birth. There is another ancient temple to the south of this temple, where Gopinath was worshipped (J.H.E. Garrett. Bengal District Gazetteers Nadia, 2001, p.213). This temple no longer exists. However, Gopinath is worshipped separately in the 'Jugal kishore temple', which we have seen earlier.

Traditional temples of Nadia are also found in Shantipur and its surrounding areas. Bagh Anchara is an ancient settlement near the town of Shantipur. It was in this village that the saint Raghunandan established the temple of 'Bagdevi' in the middle of the 16th century. However, many believe that Chand Rai, the dewan of King Rudra Rai, established the temple of 'Bagdevi'. It is not Goddess 'Saraswati', but Goddess Durga. There is a temple there. However, the temple that we see is built afresh on the ruins of the ancient 'Bagdevi temple'. There is no idol of Goddess 'Durga in the temple'. There are rocks and rocks. On the other hand, there was a Shiva temple at 'Atchala' in Baghanchra village. Established in 1665, it is the second oldest temple in the undivided Nadia district (Nirmalchandra Chowdhury & others ed. Sthapatya o Bhaskarye Nadia, 2000, pp. 28 & 32-33). Sadly, the temple has been in ruins for many years. However, the various terracotta figurines and tapestry work in the crumbling wall cavities of the temple bear the mark of advanced craftsmanship. Another speciality is that the foundation stone of this temple was carved on bricks. It's written here:

"Shaake Baramtang Baan Harinankenankite Shankrang
Sangsthapayashu Sudhakarrakhkhirod Nirapamam.
Tasme Saudhamidung Muda Sujalda Nilinloldhabjung
Tadpaderitto Dhir Dhir Biratang Shrichandrayo Dadou". (in Sanskrit Verse)
[At present this plaque is preserved in Shantipur Sahitya Parishad.]

The 'Jaleswar Temple' in Shantipur is very ancient. This temple is located in the town of Shantipur. The temple was built in a rectangular design of lime, surki and burnt brick. The Jaleswar Shivalinga inside the temple is built of black basalt stone. It is difficult to say when the temple was built. Again, there is disagreement as to who was the founder of the temple. Many people believe that the wife of King Rudra Ray had established this temple in the eighteenth century (Md. Jahangir Hossain. Abibhakta Nadia Jela Itihas, Samaj O Sangskriti, 2009, pp. 178-179). But the locals believe that at one time the Shivalinga of this temple had another name 'Raghaveshwara'. The third king of Nadia was Raghava or Raghaveshvara. Therefore, many say that the temple may have been established by King Raghava. It also bears some resemblance to the temple architecture of Dignagar founded by Raja Raghav. Some terracotta sculptures can be seen in the southern and eastern walls of this temple. Among the subjects of the idols are various scenes of Krishnaleela, scenes from the Ramayana, Bhishma's Sharashayya, Garuduravahana, Maricha, Vishnu, Ganesha, Kali, Bandukdhari Saheb, the merchant and the archer, etc. Such characteristics are also seen in the temple of King Raghav in Dignagar. So it would be fair to say that the Jaleswar temple was established during the time of King Raghava.

On the other hand, the 'Gokul Chand Temple' in Shantipur is built in the Atchala style of Bengal. Looking at the construction of the temple it seems that this temple was of the same period as that of King Krishnachandra Roy. Because the temples of King Krishnachandra and his contemporaries are built in the Atchala style. Terracotta work such as hunting scenes, Dasavatara, Dasabhooja paintings are found on the walls of the temple. Inside the temple are the idols of Advaita Prabhu and his wife Sita Devi. There are two more ancient 'Atchala Shiva' temples in the Kansari neighbourhood of Shantipur. Both the temples have stone carvings. They are known as 'Yadaveshwar' and 'Madhaveshwar' respectively. These two Shivalingas were established in 1863 (Md. Jahangir Hossain. Abibhakta Nadia Jela Itihas, Samaj O Sangskriti, 2009, p. 182). Based on the establishment period of the Shiva Linga, it can be said that the two temples were established at the same time. The inscription on the foundation of this temple reads:

"Atisthopachchibosyo Dwe Linge Radhe Yugendume
MathabhyangBanoboswochchichondroshake Raberdine
Shakabda: 1785 / 14 Baishakh." (in Sanskrit Verse)

That is, on the 14th Baisakh of 1785 or 1863, Shivlinga was established in these two temples. At present, the Bamagati (left-hand) rule of numerals with age = 4, Indu = 1, Baan = 5, Basu = 8, Abdi = 7 and Chandra = 1 has been established on 14 Baisakh 1785 Saka. Therefore, there is no doubt that the two temples have archaeological significance. On the walls of both the temples attractive carvings of terracotta can be seen. The two sides of the entrance to the sculptures are divided into 22 and the upper part into 12 culanges. The terracotta images of kings, feudal lords, Dasavatars and mythological deities in the sculptures captivate our minds. There is a temple nearby adjacent to it. This temple is very ancient. The temple is divided into three naves. In the middle chamber there are idols of Krishna with flute of Koshti stone and Radhika of Ashta (eight metal) metal. There are murals on the walls of this temple. The foundation of this temple:

“Haremurtting Ramyadunathdasstothakarot.
Avarikshime, Munibhajibhumisha Bidhordine
Shakabda: 1787 / 20 Ashara.” (in Sanskrit Verse)

The date of establishment is 20 Ashara (Bengali month), 1787 Saka or 1865, by following the Bamagati (left-hand) rule of numerals with abhra = 0, akshi = 2, muni = 7, eva = 8, avadhi = 7 and bhumi = 1 (Md. Jahangir Hossain. Abibhakta Nadia Jela Itihas, Samaj O Sangskriti, 2009, p. 182). However, the ‘Shyamachand temple’ of Shyama Chandpara in Shantipur is much older than the temples of Kansaripara. In 1648 Saka businessman Ramgopal Khan and his brothers established this temple at a cost of two lakh rupees. The foundation stone of this temple is as follows:

"Shrimoto: Shyamcondrosyo Mandirong Purnotam.

Vasudevartu Subhrangshushankha Ganite shake1648". (in Sanskrit Verse)

The date of establishment is 1648 Saka or 1726 following the Bamagati (left-hand) rule of numerology as mentioned in this verse Basu = 8, Veda = 4, Ritu = 6 and Subhrangshu = 1. Atchala Temple is one of the largest temples in West Bengal (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp. 118-119). At one time there was terracotta work in the temple with five arches. At present, that is not the case. Now some beautiful lotus works of terracotta are seen. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple there is an idol of Krishna. One such ancient temple is the ‘Agameshwari Kali Temple’ in Shantipur. This temple was established by the Sarbabhouma Agombagish. However, it is not known when the temple was founded. However, locals say that this temple was established about 450 years ago from today. At present, the temple has been renovated and given a new look. The Sri Sri ‘Radharaman Temple’ in Shantipur is also quite traditional. King Pratapaditya brought an idol named Dolgovinda from Puri to Jessore. Later, during Mansingh's invasion of Jessore, Mathuresh Goswami brought the idol to Shantipur and installed it in the name of Radhagovinda. From this point of view the temple can be called 1609 or its contemporary. Much after the establishment of this temple, a Radhika idol was installed here at the expense of Nadia Raj. The statue of Radharamana is built in the Utkala style.

3) Krishnanagar Sub-division

The unparalleled art works of the Nadia dynasty are also seen in Krishnanagar sub- division and its surrounding areas. The temple of ‘Samaj Bari’ at Nabadwip is very ancient. Sri Radharaman Charandas Dev Maharaj built this temple in 1312 B.S. It is a brick structure temple. There are no sculptures in the temple. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple the idols of Shri Radharaman Jiu, Shri Gaurang Mahaprabhu, Shri Nityanand Prabhu and Krishna-Balram are kept. Another traditional brick temple in Nabadwip is the ‘Bara Akhara’ Temple. Sri Tota Ramdas Babaji established this Akhara in 1202 B.S. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple are the idols of Sri Sri Radheshyam Sundar Jiu and Sri Sri Gopal Jiu. The main attraction of ‘Bada Akhara’ is the ‘Nat Temple’. The founder of this temple was Shri Madhav Chandra Datta, a businessman from Kolkata. However, it is not known when the temple was founded. But it is certain that in Nabadwip, he started the ‘Dhoolot festival’ in 1250 B.S (Kantichandra Rarhi, Jaineswar Chaudhuri ed. Nabadwip Mahima, 2004, pp. 249-251). So it can be said that at that time the ‘Nata temple’ was established. The ‘Srivasa Angana’ temple in Nabadwip is also quite traditional. Lakshmandas Babaji was a disciple of Tota Ramdas. He established this temple at Puranaganj in Nabadwip. Although the date of its establishment is not known, the temple was immersed in the Ganges in 1278 B.S. The temple that we see today, the ‘Srivasa Angana’, is completely new. There is no art. The ‘Porama temple’ is located under an ancient banyan tree on the banks of the Bhagirathi river. Her real name was ‘Mayadevi’. But when the mother is burnt in the fire, it is called ‘Porama’. ‘Bhavataranjiu Shiva’ Temple is adjacent to this temple which was established around 1300. The ‘Bhavataranjiu Shiva’ temple was established by Nadia king Girishchandra Roy in 1825. Lord Shiva's original name was Raghaveshwara. King Rudra Rai of Nadia built a temple of ‘Raghaveshwara’ Shiva at a place adjacent to the present Baral Ghat near by Bhagirathi river. But later when the temple was destroyed by the erosion of the Bhagirathi river, King Girishchandra Roy built a Pancharatna temple next to the ‘Porama temple’ and in that temple ‘Raghaveshwara’ re-installed Shiva as ‘Bhavataranjiu’. At present, the temple is almost in ruins. Another unique example of the antiquity of Nabadwip is the ‘Vishnu’ and the ‘Dwadash (Twelfth) Shiva Temple’. The ‘Dwadash Shiva’ temple and ‘Vishnu’ temple were built in 1757 Saka or 1835 by a businessman named Gurudas Kansvanik. The foundation of this temple is as follows:

"Śrī Śrī Krishna Sahaya. Shakabda 1757.

Bhaktanugrahokrit Sthiten - Trijagatang Bijong Bhabambhavonidhau

Majjamajjantang Kadambakodharbidhau y: Karandwar Swayong.

Prasade Giribhoot - Bhudhar - Nishanath Ankiteshmin Shake

Das Shri Gurudas Ish Sharansthan Vishnuma Sthapayyat.

San1242 Barosho Biyallis Sal, Maha Baisakh." (in Sanskrit Verse)

The 'Dwadash Shiva' temple, established in 1757, is currently preserved by the state archaeological department. Although this temple attracts art lovers, terracotta work is absent here. These are mainly Charchala temples (Sri Nirmalchandra Chowdhury & others ed. Sthapatya o Bhaskarye Nadia, 2000, pp. 82-86).

Instead, some ornamentation can be seen in the temple of 'Anu Mahaprabhu'. This temple is located in Manipur region in Nabadwip. Bhagyachandra Singh, the King of Manipur, one of the north-eastern states of India, was a Parama (great) Vaishnava. He came to Nabadwip in his old age to live with his daughter Lairibi. Then Bhagyachandra, with the help of Nadia king Girishchandra, built a temple in the area now called Nabadwip, Manipur region, in 1798 and installed Mahaprabhu's Srimurti (shri shri God of Chaitanya) in that temple. Lairabi Devi used to call Mahaprabhu as Anupa. So here another name of Mahaprabhu is 'Anu-Mahaprabhu' and the name of the temple is 'Anu-Mahaprabhu' Temple. There is another traditional temple called the 'Golden Temple' inside the Manipur Rajbari at Nabadwip. It is not only the river but also the only golden temple of Bengal. That is, the temple was covered with gold leaf, hence the name of this temple is 'Golden Temple'. After the death of Maharaja Bhagyachandra of Manipur, his descendants built this 'golden temple' in 1815. At present, there is no trace of gold on the outer walls of the temple. It is heard that the gold bars have been opened. This is an 'Akratna' temple.

'Srichaitanya Math' is one of the traditional temple architectures of Nabadwip. The name of this temple is 'Sri Chandrashekhar' Temple. Actually, this is the house of the Lord Sri Sri Chaitanya's aunt. The monastery was founded by Saraswati Goswami Tagore in 1918. The main temple inside the monastery consists of 29 peaks. In the temple Radha Krishna and Gauranga Mahaprabhu are worshipped daily. The 'Shriyogi Peeth' here is also a traditional temple. This temple is the birthplace of Lord Sri Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The temple was established in 1934. This temple is very ancient. But in the middle of the peak, there are a total of sixteen Anga peaks, four on each side. There is no such temple in West Bengal. In the main temple the worship of Shri Gaura and Radhamadhav is done.

On the other hand, another temple called "Matrimandir" (Mother Temple) has been found in Nabadwip. That historical "Matrimandir" was established at a place adjacent to the cremation ground of Nabadwip. Currently, no such ancient temple is seen on the road adjacent to the cremation ground of Nabadwip. However, it is not known whether the temple of "Ma Kali" on that road is the ancient "Matrimandir" (Shri Chitranjan Dash ed. Narayan, Masik Patrika, Pratham Barsha, Dwitiya Khanda, Shastha Sankhya, Kartik, 1322 B.S, pp. 1281-1287).

Krishnanagar was the capital of the Nadia dynasty. Therefore, many temples were built in the centre of Krishnanagar. The first thing that comes up is the 'Puja Mandap' or temple of the Rajbari. The 'Puja Mandap' of Rajbari was built during the time of King Krishnachandra. The 'Puja Mandap' is quite large and adorned with attractive ornamentation of feathers. Also, there are aisles in front of and behind the mandapa. No permanent god or goddess is worshipped in this mandap. Basically Durga Puja and Jagadhatri Puja are performed in this temple. Right next to the Rajbari is another traditional 'Maa Anandmayi' temple. King Girishchandra Roy had established this temple in 1804. He was a wizard. So King Girishchandra established the south facing 'Maa Anandamay' Kali Temple near the Rajbari. The name of King Girishchandra appears in the foundation stone of this temple:

"Vedangekshanagotra Kairavakuladhipe Shake Shreeyuta

Kailashpatirupkrishnanagare Shrimadgirishotsobe.

Namanandamay Shubhrehni Mahamaya Mahakalabhruta

Raja Sheel Girishchandra Dharanipalane songstjapita." (in Sanskrit Verse)

This is a Brick temple. There are three metal plates on the top of the temple. In the Charchala temple there is an excellent work of the panchas (feathers). Apart from this temple, one of the traditional temples of Krishnanagar is the temple of 'Maa Siddheshwari'. The temple is very ancient. Initially this temple was located on the other side of the Jalangi river. It is not known who first founded this temple. The temple was shifted to its present location by King Krishnachandra Ray. However, due to the renovation of the old Charchala temple, all the ancient traditions have been buried.

Dogachhi is an ancient settlement on the banks of the Anjana River near Krishnanagar. There are many ancient temples in this village. Several years ago, a 'Charchala Shiva' temple was destroyed due to lack of preservation. The temple had exquisite terracotta work. Among the terracotta works were scenes of Krishna stripping the clothes of the gopis (so many girls), Matsya (fish) avatars God) and Mithuna. This temple is believed to be a contemporary of King Raghava. While the terracotta temples of Raja Raghav on the banks of the river Anjana have been destroyed, the terracotta temple at Dignagar still remains. He established two charchala south facing 'Raghaveshwara Shiva' temples with rich terracotta work in Dignagar in 1669 (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp. 120-121). One still exists. The foundation of the temple is said to be:

"1591. Shake Somnabesuchandragani Punonoik

Ratnakaro Dheer Sriyutaraghavo Dwijamani

Bhumibhujamogroni:. Nirmaye Safurdurmmi Nirmmal

Jal Prodyotinindirghikantottire

Kritarambeshmani Shivadevendebong Samsthapayata. (in Sanskrit Verse)

That is, in 1591 Saka = 1669 King Raghav had established the temple of Shiva on the bank of Dighi (big pond) by digging the lake of pure water. It is known as 'Raghaveshwara Temple'. At one time there was a wonderful terracotta decoration on the walls of this temple. The sculpture is still very much visible. The wall sculpture of the 'Raghaveshwara Shiva' Temple can be said to be a manifestation of the artist's fine artistry. Exquisite sculptures include royal processions with horsemen and armies, a Mithuna scene, a flute playing Krishna, a Radha Krishna image, a gopis robbing scene, a Harinam Sankirtana (calling upon God with the melody of song) with musical instruments, guards and musicians, a symbolic temple with a Shivalinga on the top of the arch, a nude female figure with a deer child, a swan, a Baiji (a prostitute in a sense) dance, and a smoking noblewoman. The black stone Shiva Linga is worshipped daily in the 'Raghaveshwara Shiva' Temple.

A traditional 'Radharamanjiu Temple' was also established in the neighbouring Durgapur township of Krishnanagar. This temple was built in 1596 saka or 1674 by Krishnaraya, the king of Jayadiya in Jessore. Then 'Radharamanjiu' established the idol there. The inscription on the temple's wall reads:

"Kalank-banendu-mite shakabde jaisthe shubhagya maasi sunirmalashaya.

Shree Krishna Roy Shuvo-Saudha-Mandirang Srijukta Radharamaniyo sandodou . " (in Sanskrit Verse)

This charming temple was turned into a ruin in 1893 (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp. 116-117).

Another traditional temple of Nadia is the temple of 'Nrisinghadeva' at Dey Para. It is not known who built this temple. However, it is known that King Kshitish Chandra Roy renovated and re-established this temple in 1896 on the banks of the Chamtar Beel. That is, before the establishment of the temple of 'Nrisinghadev' by King Kshitish Chandra, 'Nrisinghadev' was worshipped in Deypara. He only renovated the temple when it was damaged during his time. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple four idols of 'Nrisimhadeva' are carved in black stone. At his feet were worshippers 'Prahlada and Hiranyakashipu'. Although the temple has been built in the past, it is not visible at present. It is a bricks temple.

A unique example of the temple love of the Nadia royal family can also be seen on the banks of the Alaknanda river in Amghata. Fascinated by the natural beauty of this place, King Krishnachandra Ray built some palaces and 'Harihar' temples in 1776 to live here in old age. This place was named Gangavasa. King Krishnachandra died here in 1782. Although the modest Samadhi (tomb) of King Krishnachandra took place, 'Harihar' left the temple for future generations. From the stone tablets found here, it is known that King Krishnachandra built the 'Harihar Temple' to make 'Hari' (God of Bishnu) and 'Hara' (God of Shiva) one and the same. However, the temple built by the king is now in ruins. The temple that can be seen now is a new temple built on the ruins of the 'Harihara temple'. The significance of the establishment of the Krishnachandra's 'Harihar Temple' can be understood from the foundation plaque found in the pit of the new temple:

'Gangabase Bidhishrutyonugoto Sukrito Khounipale Shakehsmin

Shriyukto Vajpayi Bhuvi Vidit MaharajRajendra Dev:.

Bhettung Bh ranting MuraritripurHarvidamjyanatong Pamarong

Advaita Brahma-rupanam Hariharamumaya Sthapoyollonoya ch" (in Sanskrit Verse) .

Now King Rajendra means King Krishnachandra. The temple he founded was originally a 'Dalan temple' (Bricks temple). At the top of the building, there are two domes. These two top domes symbolise the twin idols of 'Harihara'. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple is a four-tiered stone idol of 'Harihara'. Apart from this, the stone footprints of Lord Ramchandra brought by King Krishnachandra from 'Chitrakoot' mountain after spending a lot of money are still there in this temple. There are still many archaeological finds around the temple. The ruins of the old temple walls can still be seen next to the new temple - attracting the attention of art connoisseurs.

The first capital of the Nadia dynasty was Matiari on the banks of the Churni river. A palace, a fort and a temple were built here. However, apart from some parts of the Rajbari and the 'Rudreshwar Shiva' temple in front of the Rajbari, no other architecture survives. 'Rudreshwar Shiva' Temple was built by Raja Raghav Rai in 1670. He named the temple after his son Rudra. This south-facing temple is similar to the 'Raghaveshwara Shiva' temple in Dignagar. There are three gopurams on the top of this temple. These three peaks are the sum of the Kalash-Amalak and Trishul Chakras. The middle part is the pinnacle. The temple is built of black stone. Numerous terracotta works can still be observed in the temple cavity. While battle scenes, flowers and tapestry decorations were noticed, other works of terracotta were stolen. If not preserved, this ancient traditional Shiva temple will soon be lost from the map of Nadia.

The seat of the greatest glory of the Nadia dynasty is the town of Shivanivas on the banks of the Churni river. On the eve of Bargi (Marathas) attack king Krushnachandra built Shivanivas village. It was his second capital. To live here, he built palaces, forts and 108 Shiva temples. But by 1824, most of these temples had been destroyed. Bishop Heber came down to Shivanivas in 1824 on his way to Dacca via Churni river. But there was no mention of 108 Shiva temples in his account. Interestingly, the builder of these temples, king Krishnachandra, died in 1782, 42 years before Heber's visit to Shivanivas. But it is never credible that a king like Krishnachandra would allow the destruction of his own temples during his lifetime. Especially the temples of Shiva-Nivas were not very ancient. Because the oldest 'Rajarajeshwar temple' here was built in 1754. Therefore, the question arises in my mind that within 42 years of the death of king Krushnachandra, how the lion's share of 108 Shiva temples was destroyed? This question cannot be answered logically. Therefore, the information about the establishment of 108 temples seems to be wrong. Again the destruction of the architecture and building of Shivanivas by Nawab Sirajuddaula and the comparison of Shivanivas with second Kashi, when the information of the establishment of 108 temples by king Krishnachandra was found to be true. But it's hard to draw any firm conclusions because we have so little information. However, it is not certain that king Krishnachandra built several temples in Shivanivas. Of these, 6 temples were left in 1333 B.S. But the unfortunate thing is that now not six but three Shiva temples are intact.

The temple of 'Devi Annapurna' is one of the temples established by king Krishnachandra at Shivanivas. By 1333 B.S., this temple was in ruins. The top of this temple was shaped like the top of the temple of Lord Ramchandra. As the temple was in a dilapidated condition, the idol of Goddess Annapurna was installed in the 'Devi Anandamayi Kali Temple' near Krishnanagar Rajbari. At present, there is no temple of Goddess Annapurna in Shivanivas.

Maharaja Krishnachandra established the 'Rajarajeshwara Temple' in 1754. The southern wall of this temple is a stone slab:

"1676 Yo Jato: khalu Bharate Surotoru Jaisthyadigishangshoke

Senanimukhorajirajobilosoto Songkhyabotidmopur

Kritba Mandiromindu Chumbishikhorong Bhupal Churamoni:

Proutro: Shriyutokrishnachandra Nripati: Shambhung Smasthapayoto." (in Sanskrit Verse).

That is, in 1676 Shaka or 1754, Nripasreshtha (grat king) Shriyuta Krishnachandra built a temple with a rainbow spire and installed 'Shambhu' (God Shiva) i.e. Shiva in that temple. The height of the temple is 120 feet. There are eight pillars at each corner of the temple. They look like the minarets of the Muslims. The top of these minarets used to be adorned with brass hooks like material. A total of four brass pitchers, one on top of the other, and a beautiful and large brass trident were mounted on the pitchers at the peak of the temple. These traditions are no longer observed. The black coloured Shivalinga installed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple is 9 feet 9 inches in height. There is no other place like this in eastern India. This is what is mentioned in the Sanskrit verse written on the pedestal of the Shivalinga of this temple:

"Trilokya Pragan Prathisthita Jo Ramepa Rameshwar Sthavata

SridijakrishnaChandrakritina Bhuraja Rajavidham.

Tdbat Tang Dadhta Swayong Trijagati Nathohpi Sangsthapito Namma.
Bhaktaparan, Samabhavya Sri Rajarajeswara: (in Sanskrit Verse) .

That is, just as in the Tri-Jagat (Satya, Dwapar, Treta), Lord Ram was established by Lord Ram, Lord Krishna, a great Brahmin, having assumed the title of the king of the world, established in this temple a Shivalinga or Trijagatinath by the name of Shri Rajarajeshwar (Hemendraprasad Ghosh. Shivnibas, Pratham Khanda, Pratham Sanghya, 18 sha Barsha, Baishakh, 1346, p. 86).

The example of immortal feat on Shivnivas is the 'Raniswar temple' or 'Shiva Temple'. This temple was built by King Krishnachandra Ray in 1684 saka or 1762 for the love of his second wife. The inscription on the foundation stone of the temple reads:

" y sakhatkritashoibamurti Basuboishangsake sambhbat
Sangkhyat: Khitidevarajapadavak Krishnachandraprabhu.
Tasyo Khounipate Ditiyomohishi murter lakkhi: swaying
Prasadprabare prasad sumukham sambhu samsthayat." (in Sanskrit Verse)

That is, it is clear that king Krushnachandra had built the four - pronged 'Ranisvara Temple' as a symbol of his love for second Queen or wife (Rani II). This temple was built by Lord Shiva. The temple is built of stone. The height of the temple is 7 feet. Although the temple was built in the past, there are no sculptures in the present temple (List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Revised and Corrected up to 31st August 1896, 1896, pp.120-121).

To the east of this temple is the traditional 'Rama-Sita temple'. This temple was built in 1762. This temple is 50 feet high. At the top of this temple there are 4 decorative minarets. In the sanctum sanctorum of the temple are seated Ramchandra of black stone, Sita of eight metals and Lakshman. The inscription on the foundation stone of the temple reads:

"Deva: Krushnachandra: Kshitipatitilko Brahmarajarishvanshay
Johsau Bhukalpashakhi Shrutibasubasudheshangshake Tulyasongkhye.
Preyasastanmahishya: Parama-kritikrit Janaki Lakshanawang
Prasade Pradurasit Trijagadhipati Sriyukta Ramachandra." (in Sanskrit Verse)

Therefore, on the basis of this verse, it can be said that Sri Krishnachandra, the descendant of Brahmin Rajarshi, established the 'Tri-kingdom' (Satya, Treata and Dwapar age) of Shriram Chandra, Sitadevi and Shriman Lakshman in that temple (Hemendraprasad Ghosh. Shivnibas, Pratham Khanda, Pratham Sanghya, 18 sha Barsha, Baishakh, 1346, pp. 84-86).

Another example of King Krishnachandra's passion for temple architecture is found in the Bahirgachchi area adjacent to Muragachcha in Nadia. In this village Pandit Ram Bhadra Nyalankar, the Gurudev of Maharaja Krishnachandra lived. To pay homage to the Guru, he built the Guru's residence and the 'Dwadash Shiva' (12th Shiva temple) temple at Bahirgachi. Since there is no plaque in the temple, it is difficult to tell the date of establishment. Another thing is that all but one of these Shiva temples have been destroyed. Earlier there was no architecture in the temple, but now there is none.

Belpukur's Bachaspatipara 'Shiva Temple' on the banks of the Bhagirathi river is quite traditional (Sri Nirmalchandra Chowdhury & others ed. Sthapatya O Bhaskarye Nadia, 2004, p. 30). Belpukur is an old growing village. During the period of Nadia Raj dynasty the fame of this district for Tol (ancient Hindu school) or Chatuspathi was Bengal wide. Pandit Ramchandra Bhattacharjee lived in this village. He was a scholar in the court of King Rudra Rai of Nadia. Pandit Ramchandra Bhattacharjee established '108 Shiva' temples at the behest of Raja Rudra Roy in this Janapada (Mahit Ray & others ed. Nadia Jelar Purakirti, 1975, pp. 64-65). But except for one Shiva temple in Bachaspatipara, the remaining 107 Shiva temples have been submerged in the womb of Mahakal (God).

However, the present temple is in a dilapidated condition. The west-facing temple is a rectangular structure made of burnt brick and limestone. The temple is 25 feet high. Various terracotta works such as Dasavatara, Krishnaleela, Brahma, Shiva, Kali, Kartikeya, Ganesha, Vishwakarma, etc., have been depicted on the entrance walls of the temple. In the southern wall cavity of this temple the Mithuna scene of Naranari (men) has been painted. All in all, the terracotta work that still remains in the wall pits of this temple amazes the history buffs.

4) Tehatta Sub- division

Tehatta subdivision consists of Tehatta, Karimpur, Hogalberia and Palashipara. Traces of traditional temple architecture are also found in Nadia's Tehatta and Karimpur on the banks of the Jalangi river under this subdivision. The 'Jorabangla temple' of Krishna Roy is located in the Thakur Para of Tehatta. This temple was built by Shriram in 1678. The foundation of this temple is as follows:

"1600 Shake Shunonbbho:sharinduganite Meshagate Bhaskare

Shrigobindapadarabindonirotto: Shriramdeb Mahan

Lakshmi Jasya Padarabindosebonbidhou Byaparsampadini

Tasyo Shripurushottomosyo ch gri Hong yotnoirokashirto Swoyong." (in Sanskrit Verse)

That is, in the month of April or Baisakh (Bengali month) in 1600 saka or 1678, Shriramadeva, the foot servant of Govinda (God), established the 'Krishnaraya temple' (Sri Nirmalchandra Chowdhury & others ed. Sthapatya o Bhaskarye Nadia, (in Bengali), 2000, pp. 33 & 86). A large number of sculptures are found in this temple. Among the terracotta decorations, four Krishna idols, Hamsapala, Pratik Mandir, lampstand, two royal idols, fruit and tapestry work are of special note. The 'Dalan' (bricks) Temple at Sundarpur in Karimpur of Tehatta subdivision is also quite traditional. This temple was established in 1197 B.S by Shyamsundar Das Sarkar, the Dewan of Nasipur. There is no visible craftsmanship in this temple. In the first of the three chambers of the temple, there are the Daru (wood) images of Mahaprabhu (Sri Sri Chaitanya) and Nityananda, the 12th Gopal and Narayan Shila of brass, the second Vrindavan Bihari and Shri Radhikar Daru (wood) images, and the third image of Shri Vinod Bihari and Smt Radhikar Daru images, which are worshipped daily.

So far, the traditional temples of different subdivisions of Nadia have been discussed. Now it is to be seen what was the nature of these traditional temples. It will also try to find out how the temples in the district were built and what ancient knowledge was used in terms of technology.

4. THE NATURE OF NADIA'S TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

The temple architecture of Nadia district is a unique example of temple architecture in West Bengal. However, a review of the temple architecture of Nadia, a contemporary of the Nadia dynasty, shows that no particular architectural style was followed at that time. From 1606 to 1727, the traditional Bengali style or tradition of Bengal was followed in the temple architecture of Nadia. Fine works of terracotta are seen in the temples of this period. But many say that new horizon's was initiated in the eighteenth century in the construction of the Nadia temple. With the ascension of King Krishnachandra Nadia to the throne in 1728, the traditional style of temple architecture was replaced by innovation. Which is called 'Krishnachandriya temple establishment tradition'. This style of architecture is influenced by European and Muslim architecture. In his time, European influences were followed in the decoration and sculpture of the walls of the temple architecture. On the other hand, the impression of Muslim architecture is visible in the construction of arcades and minarets. For example, the minarets at each of the eight corners of the 'Raniswara temple' are like the minarets of a Muslim mosque. And instead of terracotta work, the work of charming wings was started. This is what we call the king Krishnachandra style of architecture. Because no one other than king Krishnachandra later built the temple in this manner. After the king Krishnachandra, his descendants built the temple architecture in Nadia, which was basically a distorted version of the Ekaratna temple. They did not follow the architectural style of king Krishnachandra. On the other hand, king Krishnachandra's ancestors or nobles built numerous temples with unique and artistic terracotta work. The unique terracotta work of the 'Raghaveshwar Temple' of Dignagar or the Mustafi Temple of Birnagar is still unique to us.

But why this fracas? The main reason for this was the financial crisis. According to the past traditions of Bengal, a lot of money is needed to build a temple rich in terracotta. But neither King Krishnachandra nor his descendants had the ability to do so. king Krishnachandra owed the Nawab of Murshidabad Rs. 5,94,846 in revenue. He remained in jail for several days. As his descendants were not financially well off, he sold many of their estates. For example, Shivrivas sold it to the Pal Chowdhury of Ranaghat. On the other hand, in addition to this financial instability, the lack of skilled terracotta artists also hindered the establishment of advanced and traditional temples. It was for these reasons that king Krishnachandra and his descendants chose a relatively simple style of architecture.

That is, the architecture of the Nadia temple underwent changes at different times. But it was a simple and necessary change. Another thing is that most of the temples of Nadia were built with the financial help of kings and nobles. Very

few Barwari temples were established. In that case also the cooperation of the zamindars and the nobles was quite commendable. Mustawfi zamindars contributed to the construction of several Barwari temples in Birnagar. This temple no longer exists. That is why in the architecture of the temple of Nadia the number of private worshippers or worshippers is seen more among the worshipped deities. Lord Krishna, Lord Shiva and Maa Kali were the most worshipped deities of the Krishnanagar dynasty. Moreover, as the life of Mahaprabhu Sri Sri Caitanya in the river was Krishna-like, the river dwellers became Krishna-like. In this case, the religion of the king and the religion of the people were united. The manifestation of which can be seen only by seeing the worship of the gods and goddesses worshipped in those temples.

Assimilation is also one of the most prominent features of temple architecture and sculpture in Nadia district. The tradition of making the idol of God in the Utkala kingdom was adopted in the construction of the idol of Lord 'Radharamana' in the 'Radharamana' temple of Shantipur. On the other hand, the construction of the Nadia temple follows European and Islamic architecture in many cases. For example, the imprints of European and Islamic architecture are clearly visible in the temples of Shivrivas.

Another thing is that the traditional temples in Nadia have been rebuilt in many cases. As a result, the main structure of the temples, the carvings, the terracotta sculptures, etc. have been covered. This was due to lack of maintenance for a long time. In the old temples which are still alive the abundance of Chun-Surki is seen. Again, the same scale of bricks and indigenous technology can be seen in the temples established by the Krishnanagar dynasty and their contemporary nobles. In this regard, the influence of the Krishnanagar dynasty on the ancient temples of Nadia is well known.

It has been said earlier that there was no single tradition in the construction of the temple of Nadia. Several architectural styles were followed in the construction of the temple. The best examples are Ek Ratna in Nabadwip and Palpara, Pancharatna in Biranagar, Navaratna in Ranaghat, Charchala in Krishnanagar and Dignagar, and Atchala temple in Kanchanpalli. Here is a look at some of the traditional temples in the temple town.

List of Temple in Nadia district of West Bengal

Temple Name	Location	Year/ Period	Style	Funding Authority	Description
Palpara Temple	Palpara	Eighteenth Century	Charchala	Not yet known	Terracotta rich
Krishnadevray Temple	Kanchanpalli	Seventeenth Century	Atchala	Kachuray	Terracotta rich
Madangopal Temple	Madanpur	1760	Bricks Building	King Krishnachandra Ray	With brickwork and roof
Jagannath Temple	Jasora	Eighteenth Century	Charchala	Not yet known	Terracotta rich
Jagannath Temple	Bishnupur	750	Charchala	Shri Bishnu Sharma	Terracotta rich
Shiv Temple	Baliyagram	1671	Atchala	King Raghab Ray	Terracotta rich
Shiv Temple	Ranaghat	1803	Atchala	King Shambhu Chandra Ray	Terracotta ric
Nabaratra Temple	Ranaghat	Nineteenth Century	Nabaratra	Smt. Ujjalamani	With brickwork and roof
Panchur Shiv Temple	Birnagar	1836	Panchur	Tarakanta Gongopadhyay	Terracotta ric and a God Ganesha statue at the entrance
Jorbangla Temple	Birnagar	1694	Dochala	Rameshwar Mitra	Terracotta ric
Jugalkishor Temple	Arangghata	1728	Bricks Building	King Krishnachandra Ray	Arched
Jaleshwar Temple	Shantipur	Late Seventeenth Century	Charchala	King Raghab Ray	Terracotta ric
Gokulchand Temple	Shantipur	Eighteenth Century	Atchala	----	Terracotta ric
Jadabeshwar Temple	Shantipur	1863	Atchala	-----	Terracotta ric
Madhabeshwar Temple	Shantipur	1863	Atchala	-----	Terracotta ric
Radhekrishna Temple	Shantipur	1865	Bricks Building	Jadunath Das	Rich in brickwork and roof
Shyamchand Temple	Shantipur	1826	Atchala	Ramgopal Khan	Arched and Terracotta rich
Agameshwari Kali Temple	Shantipur	1574	Bricks Building	Sarbabhouma Agambagish	Rich in brickwork and roof
Radharaman Temple	Shantipur	1609	Utkal	Mathuresh Goswami	Rich in brickwork

Burashiv Temple	Nabadwaip	1316 BS	Nabaratna	----	A hipped roof with curved cornices
Samajbari Temple	Nabadwip	1312 BS	Bricks Building	Shri Radharaman Charan Das	Rich in brickwork
Baraakhra Temple	Nabadwip	1202 BS	Bricks Building	Shri Tota Ramdas Babaji	Rich in brickwork
Nat Temple	Nabadwip	1250 BS	Bricks Building	Shri Madhabchandra Das	Rich in brickwork
Shribas Angan	Nabadwip	1278 BS	Bricks Building	Shri Lachmandas Babaji	Rich in brickwork
Bhabataranjiu Temple	Nabadwip	1825	Pancharatna	King Girishchandra Ray	Octagon and Terracotta rich
Dwadash Shiv Temple	Nabadwip	1835	Atchala	Gurudas Kangsabanik	Beautiful lime and sandvines and flowers in front of the temple
Anu Mahaprabhu Temple	Nabadwip	1798	Bricks Building	Bhagyachandra Singha	Rich in brickwork
Subarna Temple	Nabadwip	1815	Charchala	Family of Bhagyachandra Singha	Rich in brickwork
Chaitanya Math	Mayapur	1918	Peaked	Swaraswati Goswami Thakur	Rich in brickwork
Sri Jagipith	Mayapur	1934	Nabachur	---	Rich in brickwork and Peakd
Rajbarir Puja Mandap	Krishnanagar	Eighteenth Century	Arched	King Krishnachandra Ray	Wing work involved
Ma Anandamayi Temple	Krishnanagar	1804	Charchala	King Girishchandra Ray	Rich in brickwork and Peakd
Ma Siddheswari Temple	Krishnanagar	Eighteenth Century	Peaked and Bricks Building	King Krishnachandra Ray	Rich in brickwork
Raghabeshwar Shiv Temple	Dignagar	1669	Charchala	King Raghab Ray	Rich in terracotta
Nrisingha Dev Temple	Dey Para	1896	Bricks Building	King Khitishchandra Ray	Rich in brickwork
Harihar Temple	Amghata	1776	Bricks Building	King Krishnachandra Ray	Rich in brickwork and Peakd
Rudreshwar Temple	Matiyari	1670	Charchala	King Raghab Ray	Rich in terracotta
RajRajeshwar Temple	Shivnibas	1754	Charchala	King Krishnachandra Ray	Arched and similar to the Saint Nicholas Church in France
Raggishwar Temple	Shivnibas	1762	Charchala	King Krishnachandra Ray	Peakd
Ramsita Temple	Shivnibas	1762	Charchala	King Krishnachandra Ray	Peakd
Jorabangla Temple	Tehatta	1678	Dochala	Shri Ramdev	Rich in terracotta

5. CONCLUSION

So if we look at the history of temple architecture in Nadia, we find that numerous temples were built in Nadia district. Suppose, from what we have discussed, a much larger number of temples were built in the Nadia district. In this context, Nadia can be called a temple city. But since the time of King Krishnachandra the construction of this temple started to fall apart. Unfortunately, very little of the temple architecture remains intact today. Moreover, according to the present discussion, we have not been able to find or locate any temple or monastery of the Pala and Sena period. Whether a temple was not built on the river during this period or it was destroyed due to lack of conservation and natural causes. Or can I say with emphasis that everything is covered with a fine layer of silt? So the question arises as to why these temples, the basis of our culture, were destroyed. Actually the unique temple architecture of Nadia has been destroyed due to several reasons.

One, there is no doubt that much of the architecture of the Nadia temple has been destroyed by the invasion of Islam. After the Pala and Sena periods, Nadia came under the control of Muslim rulers. Details of the destruction of many temples and shrines in Nadia during the Muslim rule, especially during the Husain Shahi rule, are found in Chaitanya biographies. In this context, many may question why the temples that were established by the kings, zamindars and nobles in Nadia survived even after the Hussain Shahi rule. After the Husain Shahi rule, the centre of attraction of Bengal politics was first Dacca and then Murshidabad. In the meantime, the Islamic aggression in Nadia and its surrounding

areas was somewhat reduced, but not reduced at all. Atrocities, conversions, destruction of temples were a daily affair throughout Bengal, including Nadia, during Sirajuddaula's time. In 1332, Srijanath Mitra Musthafi learnt from local elders that Sirajuddaula had destroyed a number of temples in Shivrivas and its surrounding areas - evidence for an Islamic invasion. If Sirajuddaula had not destroyed the temples of Nadia, we would have discovered more unique temple architecture. However, more research is needed on this. It is hoped that the 'Islamic invasion of Nadia and its impact on temple architecture' will give a new direction to the study of cultural history.

Two, not only Islamic aggression, but also our indifference to tradition and lack of maintenance can be said to be another reason for the destruction of the temple architecture of Nadia. Today, like the 'Dholmancha' of Jashora, the 'Shiva temple' of Raja Raghav Rai of Srinagar have been destroyed due to lack of maintenance, in the past also our glorious past has been destroyed. This is the result of an indifference to the past.

But indifference to tradition is in a sense a denial of the past. Just as the glorious past is a symbol of our self-respect, it also bears witness to the legacy of a long past. Ignoring the sun, rain and storm, the traces of those legacies are also a glorious chapter of Nadia's civilisation and culture. It is not that all the contemporary temples of the Krishnanagar dynasty in Nadia have survived the battle with nature. Most of the temples were destroyed. Some of the temple architecture that still survives, ignoring the frown of time, will also be lost from the Nadia's bosom at some point due to lack of government maintenance. Our future generations will never know that Nadia had a glorious past. Therefore, for the sake of our future generations, it is very important to preserve the contemporary Nadia temple architecture of our Krishnanagar dynasty for the sake of glory and connection with the past. Moreover, these temples of the past are visual evidence of the writing of regional and cultural history. If these temples are destroyed for lack of preservation, it will be more difficult to write that history.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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