

Ambala A Substantial Traditional Heritage in Vidarbha Region

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Abstract—Heritage structures perform vital role in nation's history, culture and signify the richness of it. Heritage buildings and monuments in any country are mute testaments of its glorious past. India has a very rich historic background which is evident from various buildings, forts, temples, landscapes, objects of historic era. Visiting historic buildings is our nation's favorite leisure activity, attracting millions of tourist from home as well overseas. The architecture of these buildings is the precious and distinctive justifying the phrase 'Old is Gold', Old architecture is also irreplaceable. To preserve this gigantic "virasat" of our country is huge task in itself. In order to interpret and understand a building or heritage of ramtek, it necessary to consider its architectural importance in terms of aesthetics as well as functional aspects. The aim of this paper is to provide an understanding of substantial architectural heritage in Ambala of vidrabaha region. This architectural establishments have made remarkable mark, it contribute to the architectural enhancement of their surrounding though Ramtek is rich in itself but heritage temples of ambala make it more live and beautiful. The paper makes an effort to understand and to enhance the awareness of powerful temple heritage of ambala in ramtek from vidrabha region.

Keywords: Heritage building, temple architecture, architectural establishment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional settlements in India present a physical fabric, truly responsive to social, cultural and climatic requirements. In addition to these, there is a naturally evolving balance between the built and open spaces, between community and personal needs. Religion has played a major role in the way of life of the people in India compared to any other country. The religious buildings in most of the cases were the nucleus of settlement thereby shaping their socio cultural profile. The religious areas not only functioned as a religious place but also as a cultural and philosophical center and the same time supported the economy through their activities.

Ramtek is one of those strategically located areas wherein diverse civilization and cultures met in past. The various hills – Kaikai hills, Ramgiri hills, Nagarjun hills, Hidimba hills covers the area. The Sur river and Kapila River flow through the region. This area was very much famous for its natural

beauty and also its association with the lord Ram. It is believed that lord Ram had stayed in this area while in exile. Due to this mythical association this area started developing as a pilgrimage center. This area was known as the "Mahadwar of Kashi" (gate for Kashi) as the pilgrimage route started with this area for the people going to Kashi. Ramtek is also called as kashi of Vidarbha.

2. HISTORY OF AMBALA

Ambala is a famous holy place of hindus to perform their rituals after death. It has been come to existence by the king named 'Ambarish'.

It is believed that one can go to the heaven from ambala.

It is also being said that that god Ram has done his father's rituals over here.

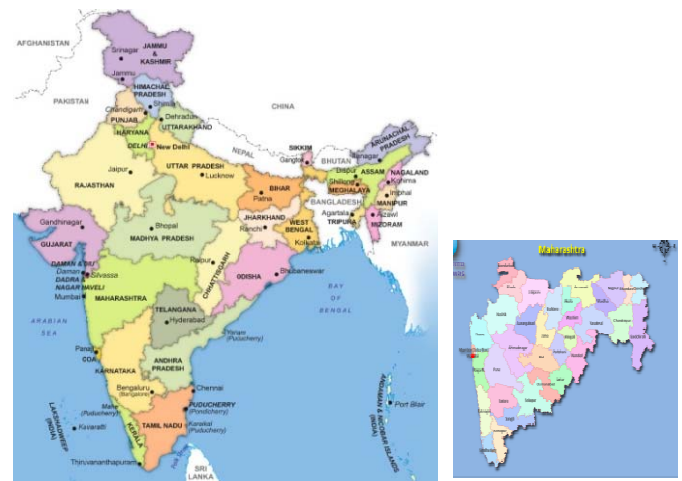


Fig. 1: Map showing location of Ramtek in Maharashtra

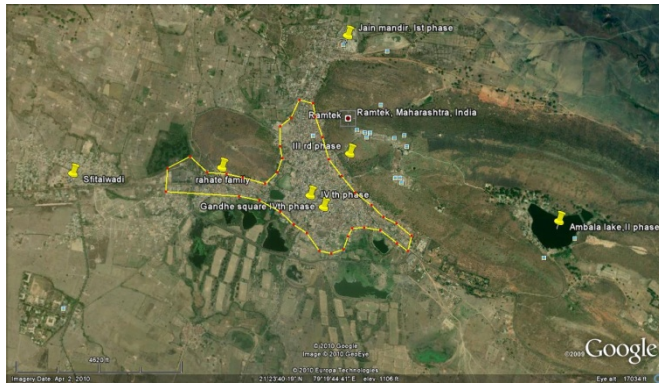


Fig. 2: Ramtek settlement showing location of ambala tank



Fig. 3: Ambala Tank Surrounded By Temples

3. STORY OF AMBALA

The king Ambarish was having dangerous skin disease.

Once the king 'Ambarish' and his soldiers hunting in the jungle of sinduragiri hills. While hunting, the king became too thirsty and he asked his soldiers for water. After searching a lot they found a rock with very small amount of water having footprints of cow on it.



Fig. 4: Ambala Pond where king got the water



Fig. 5: Ambala lake view

As the king touched the water, all of spots got vanished. The king became very surprised and happy that he built a pond with that stone.

Now the pond is known as 'Ambala Pond' and it is also known as 'Second Kashi' or 'Kashi in Vidarbha'.

4. INTRODUCTION ABOUT RAMTEK

The hill of Ramtek near of Nagpur attracts special attention because it has uninterrupted historical development. The hill is also known as 'Ramgiri', 'Sinduragiri' or 'Topogiri'. It is also served as a regional center of the religious activity.

It probably connects the central & eastern part of the basin of the gangs with the northern deccan.

Archaeological exploration in Nagpur plain during the last 2 decades have brought to light great no. of interesting sites belong into the culture of the vakataks (4-5 th centuries) notably Nandivardhan and adjacent Hamlapuri (7 km south of the Ramtek).

Generally considered to be the area of "vakatak" capital nandivardhan in hamlapuri splendid collection of Buddhist bronzes were recently found which seems to prove in the words of jamkheta that Buddhist was living faith under baramahical vakatak's.

Other vakataka of culture fall into the decay and where gradually obliterated, Ramtek survived and to date and still has four intact and one impaired vakataka temples (four of them still containing the original idol).

Besides a small cave temple and a cave reclusory probably also getting back to this period more or at least one store temple situated on the top of the hill (Ambala) appeared to be preserved very old callister construction which could like wise go back to the vakataka period.

The hill and immediate surrounding at least undamaged temple that may go to chalokia period(the kalika temple century 200m.n. near of the hill).

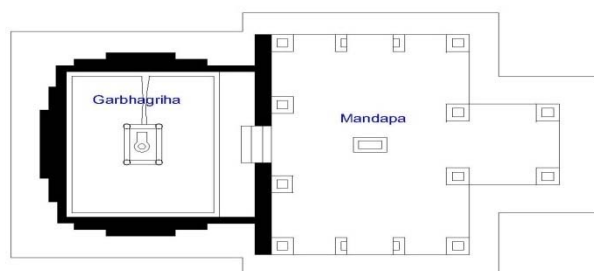
The temple and tanks constructed during the yadava period(12th & 13th century), the vijaynagar period(15th and 16th century) as well as the Maratha period(18th century and later).

In view of this astonishing richness in historical monoments, it is surprising to discover that the hill has been systematically ignored in all standards works dealing with the history of arts and architecture.

5. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES



Fig. 6: Ambala lake view



Plan of Panchamukhi Temple

Fig. 7: plan of Panchmukhi Temple

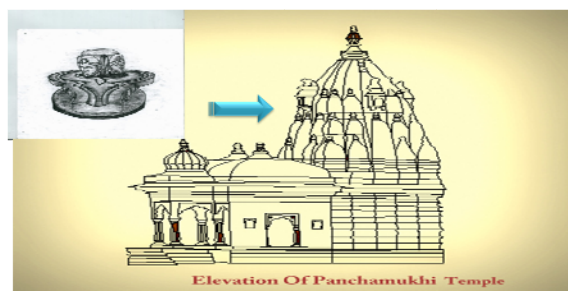


Fig. 8: View of Panchmukhi Temp

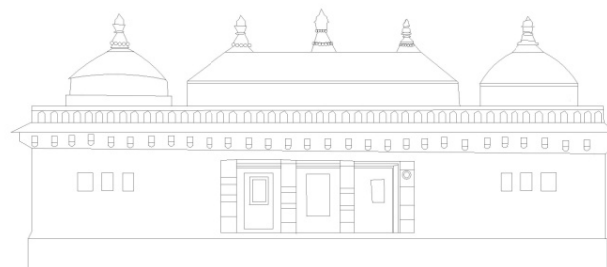


Fig. 9: View of a temple at Ambala



Fig. 10: details of richly ornamented pillars and carving done in Ambala

6. CONCLUSION

Ramtek is the most beautiful town in vidarbha region; its elegant is framed by architectural triumphs, surrounded by green lush environment and mountains. Best way to admire through the experience historical site by understanding of rich temple heritage . Heritage conservation provides concrete benefits to community as a whole and Ambala is a full of richness in terms of architectural value, which needs to recognize and make it own existence and become one of the iconic heritage from vidarbha region.

REFERENCES

- [1] <http://www.ambalahills.com/ramtek-temples>
- [2] Photo courtesy and documentation by authors