The Myths of 51 Shakti Peeth and the Temple of Kali Ma Pavagadh Shakti Peeth

Chavda Vanrajsinh Karansinh

Ph.D. Scholar, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India)

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to discuss the legend of Shakti Peeth and its allusions as depicted in the various Hindu religious treatises. According to Hindu myths there are 51 Shakti Peeth and they are made on the pieces of the body parts of the Goddess Sati. Out of 51 Shakti Peeth one of the Shakti Peeths is in Pavagadh, Gujarat. The history and its construction are discussed briefly in the paper.

INTRODUCTION

India is a country of cultures, customs, traditions, myths and religions. According to Hindu religious belief there is a supernatural power which generates, operates and destroys the entire universe which is known as God. God is the Almighty and has all powers of generation, operation and distortion. The human being believes in the superpower whether they are Hindu, Muslim, and Christian or of any race. Hindu believes that there basically two genders of superpower i.e. God as a male and Goddess as a female. Shiv and Shakti are the main powers according to Hindu religious books. In all over the world and especially in India there are many ancient and modern temples of Gods and Goddesses. There are many forms of Gods and Goddesses according to the religious books and there are many temples of various Gods and Goddesses. According to Hindu myths many temples of Goddesses are of Shakti, which are known as Shakti Peeth. There are 51 Shakti Peeth according to one of the Hindu mythology.

THE MYTHS OF SHAKTI PEETH

According one of the Hindu myths there was a king named Daksha whose daughter daughter was Sati. When she grew young she performed intense penance to attain Shivji as her husband. She married Lord Shiva against her father’s wish. After this incident once Daksha was performing Yagna and in that Yagna he invited all the deities except of his Son-in-law i.e. Lord Shiva. From Narad Sati came to know about the Yagna and Narad also advised her that there is no need of invitation to visit her father’s home so be she became obstinate and she expressed her wish to visit her father’s home without invitation. Lord Shiva denied her to go but she did not listen even a single word of her husband and she went to her father’s home where she was not welcomed but on the contrarily she was insulted by her father. Her father also used bad words for her husband and Sati could not bear the disrespect of her husband and in a rage she sacrificed herself and sat in the Yagnakund. On the other hand Lord Shiva came to know about the fact and he created a creature from his locks of hair named Veerbhadra who tore off Daksha’s head and tossed it into the same sacred fire of Yagna. Sad Shiva begun to wander on the earth by carrying the dead body of Sati in his arms and performed Tandav Nuryta. To protect the universe from Lord Shiva’s anger, released the Sudarshan Chakra to cut the dead body of Sati to sooth the anger of Lord Shiva and the cut pieces of body parts fell on the various places across India and these pieces are called Shakti Peeths.

According to Shiva Charitra (depicting Lord Shiva's Character), the numbers of Shakti Peethas are 51. According to Kalika Puran, the number of Shakti Peethas are 26. According to Devi Bhagwat Puran, the number of Shakti Peethas are 108. According to Tantra Chudamani and Durga Saptasati, the number of Shakti Peethas are 52.

Thus, different allusions and legends are prevailing in India regarding the Shakti Peeths.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE OF KALI MA PAVAGADH SHAKTIPEETH

The Pavagadh Shakti Peeth is located at at a distance of about 50 km from Vadodara in Gujarat; it is located near Champaner the ancient capital of Gujarat. The three main Shakti Peethas of Gujarat are Ambaji at Arasur, Bala at Chunval and Kali at Pavagadh near Champaner. Other Shakti shrines in Gujarat are those at Asapura in Kutch, Arbudadevi on Mount Abu, Sundari at Halvad, Harsiddhi at Kolgiri or Koyla and Anasuya on the Narmada.

Maa Mahakali Temple is a popular Hindu and Muslim pilgrim centre, which is one among the 51 Shakti Peeths scattered throughout India. The temple is situated on a cliff of the Pavagadh Hills which is in existence from 10th century. According to legends, it is said that the right toe of Goddess Sati fell here. It is believed that the idol of Kalika Mata was set up by a sage named Vishwanmitra. A river called the Vishwamitr originated from the hills of Pavagadh. The goddess of this temple is also worshipped as Dakshina Kali. There are around 250 steps to climb, to reach the temple of Maha Kali.

The temple was constructed with a strong fortification and an open junction in front of the temple, with two altars which were used for sacrifices. The temple holds the head of...
Kalika Mata in the inner sanctum of the temple, which is painted in red color. Besides that, there are idols of Mahakali and the yantras of Bahuchara.

The complex is divided into two parts, the ground floor containing Hindu shrines, while the temple spire is domed with a Muslim shrine. The chief shrine on the ground floor contains three divine images: in the centre Kalika Mata in the centre (depicted in the form of a head, known as mukhwato and red in colour), while Mahakali is situated to her right and Bahuchara Mata to her left.

The restored marble floor dates to about 1859 and was presented by the minister of Limbdi in Kathiawar. The domed temple spire contains a Muslim shrine and mausoleum to Sadan Shah Pir, a Sufi saint.

**CONCLUSION**

Out of 51 Shakti Peeth one of them is in Pavagadh, Gujarat. Its construction is very unique and antique. It is not only the holy place of Hindus but also of Muslims. The temple is being visited by thousands of the people and now a day it has become the famous tourist place.

**REFERENCES**