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Cultural Landscape of Chaitanyaism: An Appraisal on the Status of a Spiritual Triangle for Pilgrimage Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Pilgrimage tourism is the post-modern form of pilgrimage. *Hare Krishna* movement has already attracted the attention of the spiritual world in generating the flow of such pilgrim tourists. Considering Sri Chaitanya as the Master, the devotees used to travel to the places bearing memories of his life events, namely Nabadwip, Puri and Vrindavan incorporating which a triangular tourism circuit is already developed. This paper is an attempt to analyse the status of pilgrimage tourism development in this circuit with the application of a number of techniques available in qualitative research domain in order to address the research gap on planning sustainable pilgrimage tourism in Indian context based on the spiritual heritage of *Gaudiya Vaishnavism*.

Introduction:

Cultural landscape in association with the memories and activities of prophets as their imprint upon land (Baker, 2003) holds a central place in inquiry of modern historical geography. The application of such geography lies in facilitating the development of pilgrimage tourism by its contribution to destination image because a landscape for pilgrims and tourists is nothing but a cultural image manifested through its memorials and monuments. From review of literature in this field of study, a research gap is found in the analysis of travel motivations and movements of *Hare Krishna* devotees that increase day by day with the functioning of ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) following the devotional path of Sri Chaitanya (1486-1533), one of the medieval saints of India, who was deified during his lifetime. Supposed to be the dual incarnation of Indian deities namely Radha (female) and Krishna (male), he has been worshipped in Bengal and Odisha (formerly Orissa) since the 16th century. Born at Nabadwip in Bengal, he went to Gaya at the age of twenty-two to offer oblations to the departed soul of his father following the popular Hindu customs and rituals. At the spiritual ambience of Vishnupada temple, he left his atheism and became a devotee of Lord Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu. At Gaya, he started worshipping Gopala (Krishna as a child) under the influence of Iswar Puri, a famous saint of the Madhavasect of Vaishnavism (Sen, 1913). After returning to Nabadwip, the Master appeared as an ardent devotee of Krishna. Since he was believed to be the incarnation of Lord Krishna by his followers, many of his boyhood activities in Nabadwip have been described as replications of early *lila* (divine play) of Lord Krishna witnessed by Vrindavana.

His spiritual attachment with the divinity of Vrindavana subsequently led him to revive the place as the nerve centre of *Gaudiya Vaishnava* theology. Puri was the place where he took his last breath is known as the land of Lord Jagannath (a form of Lord Krishna). It was on an auspicious occasion of the solar eclipse, according to a legend, Krishna with his brother Balaram and sister Subhadra went to Kurukshetra (North India) from Dwaraka (Western India) by a chariot. As their presence

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was traced by the Gopis, who gathered there for a holy bath, they started to pull the chariot to bring them back to Vrindavana (Mondal, 2014). The world famous chariot festival of Lord Jagannath has its origin in this folklore. Sri Chaitanya was obsessed with the sentiment of Radha for Krishna (his feeling has been described in Vaishnava literature as similar to Radha at Kurukshetra) while witnessing the chariot festival of Lord Jagannath at Puri for the first time in the year 1510. Though the Oriya devotees identified him as living (*sachala*) embodiment of Lord Jagannath (as described in Oriya "Chaitanya Bhagbata" by Isvara Das), the Master himself considered Jagannath as Krishna and spiritually suffered from the agony of Radha to be unified with the beloved. According to the Oriya tradition, he was assimilated into the image of Lord Jagannath in Puri, while a few others believe on his absorption within the image of Gopinath for which no trace of the dead body of the prophet was found anywhere. As the place of such miraculous unification with the supreme soul, Puri draws the Chaitanya devotees all over the year.

The foreigners who are drawn in the country by the Hare Krishna movement are neither pure pilgrims nor recreational tourists and thereby designated as pilgrim tourists. It is noteworthy to mention that the destination image is vital for pilgrimage tourism as it is one of the factors determining pilgrim revisit, being a composite of attractions and attributes (Stylos et al. 2016). Success in a strategy to influence overall attitude depends on levels of belief and knowledge about an object leading to its cognitive evaluation (Baloglu& Mc Cleary, 1999). Spirituality bears strategic influence on functioning of the proposed triangular tourism circuit (Figure 1) related to life and activities of a prophet.

Objectives of Study:

The study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

(i)   To evaluate the attraction status of the three pilgrimage nodes in the spiritual triangle i.e. of Vrindavana, Puri and Nabadwip for the followers of Gaudiya Vaishnavism.
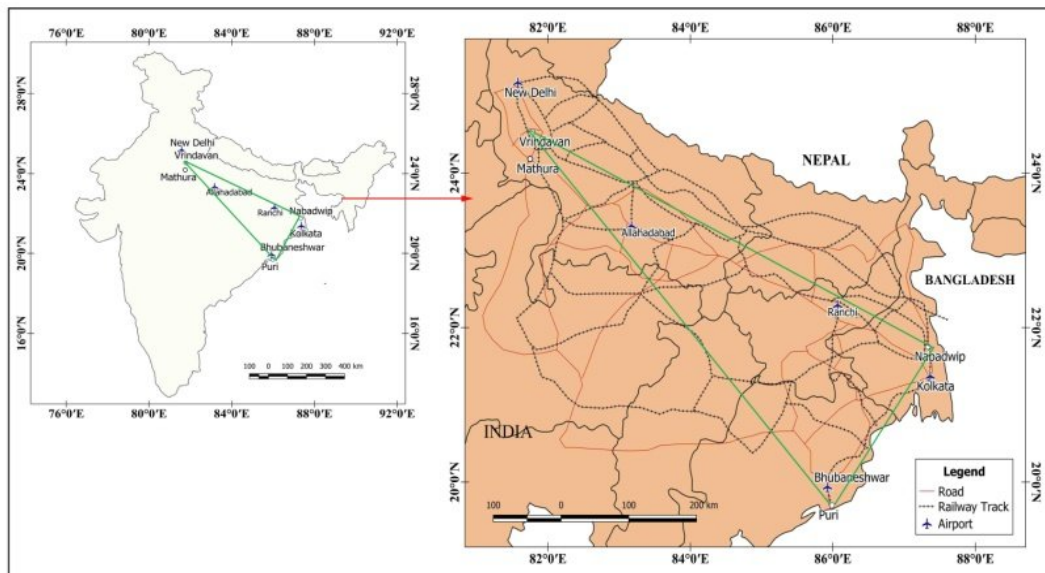

Fig. 1: Accessibility Status within Spiritual Triangle for Pilgrimage-Tourism
Source: Prepared by Authors, 2020

Sites related to the memorials of Sri Chaitanya invariably attract a large number of Krishna devotees who believe the Master as the incarnation of Lord Krishna and could avail the modern facilities of surface and air transport (Figure 1). As and when pilgrims adopt modern facilities that reduce their hardship, they have been transformed into pilgrim tourists from the identity of pure pilgrims.

(ii)   To assess the accessibility and hospitality status of these heritage places.

(iii)   To recommend measures for sustainable pilgrimage tourism development within the spiritual triangle.

Materials and Methods:

With application of its methods, systematic analysis of destination image has become an agenda of new cultural geography since 1990 (Aitken, 2005). Considering pilgrimage tourism as a function of 5A's (Attraction, Accessibility, Accommodation, Amenities and Administration), the survey schedules have been prepared. Regarding the assessment of heritage attraction with special emphasis on destination image and authenticity aspects, literature triangulation was conducted. DEXi software is used to compare the status of the heritage hubs under study analysing field data

analytical purposes. Thus with application of various methods and techniques, an attempt has been made to visualize the scope of pilgrimage tourism development with serious consideration on all the sustainability issues and concerns.

Discussions and Analysis:

Discussion may begin with reference to the immense contribution of Nabadwip born Hindu prophet Sri Chaitanya in the spiritual rejuvenation of Vrindavana and Puri as places of pilgrimage particularly for the Vaishnava devotees of eastern India. Variation of his holy image in spatial context is noteworthy (Table 1):

Table 1. Space- Centric Deification of Sri Chaitanya

Place	Nature of Deification
Nabadwip (West Bengal)	Krishna, benevolent but originally the warrior deity.
Vrindavana (Uttar Pradesh)	Dual incarnation of Radha and Krishna.
Puri (Odisha)	Living Jagannath, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu as described in Oriya scriptures.

Source: Field survey and literature review, 2020

obtained from visitors' responses. The application of iconographic approach for the study acknowledges symbolic geographies embedded in construction and designing of cultural landscape (Robertson & Richards, 2003). A journey was performed in the year 2018 by road following the footsteps of Chaitanya from Nabadwip to Puri in order to assess the feasibility of the route for introducing pilgrimage tourism. Since Chaitanya made his journey through an unconventional forest path from Puri to Vrindavana, this tract is however yet to be discovered and not incorporated in this research. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) have been conducted at Nabadwip - Mayapur belt involving the foreign devotees visiting ISKCON establishments. Based on the data obtained from interviews and analysis of questionnaires, SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) factors have been enlisted and an analysis of TOWS (Threat, Opportunity, Weakness and Strength) has been attempted for further evaluation. The specific aim is to fulfil the goal in deriving the sustainable strategies for managing pilgrimage tourism within the spiritual triangle, which is mapped by using software of Geographic Information System (GIS).

Mapping in advanced Cartography naturally aligns itself with computer aided design (Gay, 2001). Digital Cartography has been used to represent the lotus centric metaphor on cognition regarding the sacredscape of Nabadwip. Buffering technique available in the GIS environment is used in a case study for

Among the places concerned, instead of being the seat of the famous Jagannath temple, Puri scores comparatively poorly in DEXi application. Foreigners are considered as non-Hindu and forbidden to enter the shrine. Puri is locationally less accessible, not being situated on the main transport corridor. Nearest airport is Bhubaneswar, situated at a distance of more than 60 kms. Though Nabadwip is located at a distance of 135 kms from Kolkata airport, it is better accessible by road, rail and even by water route. Vrindavana is situated within 150km of the National Capital Region (NCR) of India and thereby enjoys the best accessibility status among the three pilgrimage tourism hubs concerned. Puri and Vrindavana are popular tourism sites in which the accommodation industry is already developed. Situation is almost reversed in case of Nabadwip, which receives more pilgrims than tourists even today. A comparative study on the status of attraction, accessibility and accommodation for the three non-collinear points of the triangular circuit is made with application of DEXi (Figure 2) following which the analysis of individual cultural images of them has been highlighted.

Cultural Image of Nabadwip: The city of Nabadwip was an eminent centre of learning philosophy under the Sanskrit scholarship of India. The reputation of its *tols*, the learning units drew scholars from all parts of medieval India, especially for their fame on teaching *Navya-Nyaya* (neo-logical doctrine), the new system of
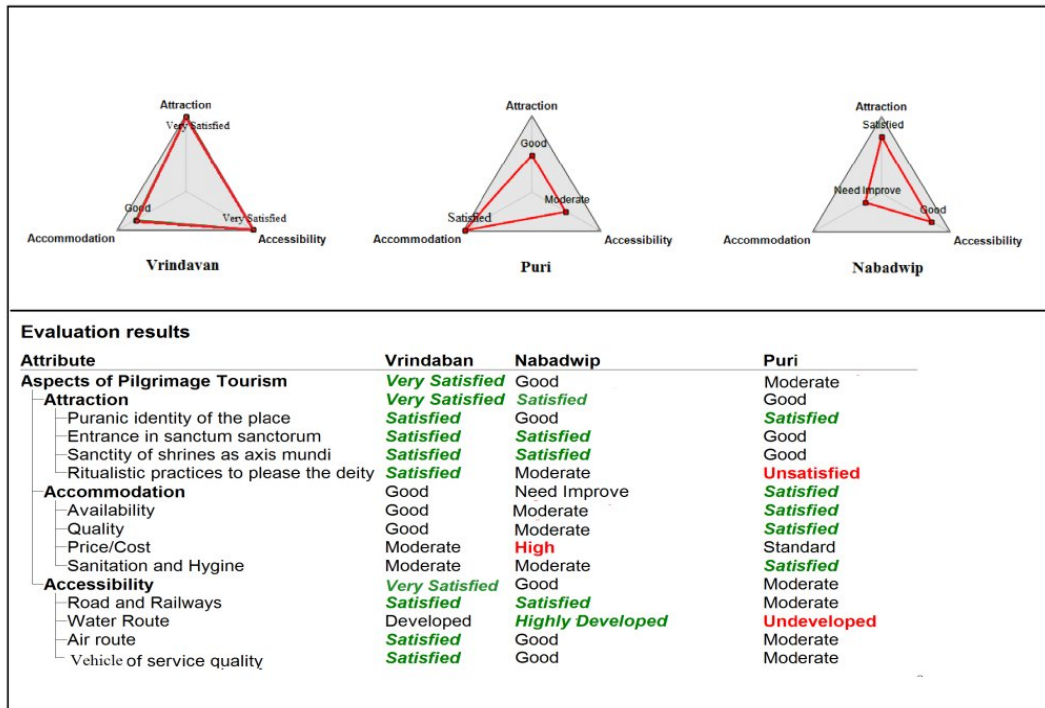
Evaluation results			
Attribute	**Vrindaban**	**Nabadwip**	**Puri**
Aspects of Pilgrimage Tourism	*Very Satisfied*	Good	Moderate
└ **Attraction**	*Very Satisfied*	*Satisfied*	Good
└ Puranic identity of the place	*Satisfied*	Good	*Satisfied*
└ Entrance in sanctum sanctorum	*Satisfied*	*Satisfied*	Good
└ Sanctity of shrines as axis mundi	*Satisfied*	*Satisfied*	Good
└ Ritualistic practices to please the deity	*Satisfied*	Moderate	**Unsatisfied**
└ **Accommodation**	Good	Need Improve	*Satisfied*
└ Availability	Good	Moderate	*Satisfied*
└ Quality	Good	Moderate	*Satisfied*
└ Price/Cost	Moderate	**High**	Standard
└ Sanitation and Hygine	Moderate	Moderate	*Satisfied*
└ **Accessibility**	*Very Satisfied*	Good	Moderate
└ Road and Railways	*Satisfied*	*Satisfied*	Moderate
└ Water Route	Developed	*Highly Developed*	**Undeveloped**
└ Air route	*Satisfied*	Good	Moderate
└ Vehicle of service quality	*Satisfied*	Good	Moderate

Fig. 2: Aspects of Pilgrimage Tourism
Source: Prepared by the authors using DEXi,5.04 software

logic. Sri Chaitanya was not only the product of the education system of Nabadwip but also became an atheist teacher who initially possessed little interest in religion. The spirit of learning in Nabadwip was largely academic rather thanencouraging the development of a deep concernon soul and the infinite (Kennedy, 1925). Lord Shiva was the dominant deity of Nabadwip when Sri Chaitanya was born. The name that he acquired from birth, i.e. Viswambhara is nothing but one of the names of Lord Shiva. After ordained as a monk by Kesava Bharati in the year 1510, he was given the name Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Instead of being a monk of the *Vaishnavite* sect, he undertook his first pilgrimage to worship Rameswara Shiva, a non-Vaishnava deity. On his way to Puri also, he paid homage to several Shiva shrines in places like Chhtrabhog, Jaleswar and Jajpur and danced before the Lingaraj Shiva of Bhubaneswar. This is why Nityananda, originally a Shiva saint, was readily accepted by the Master in his doctrine. Instead of the *Sakta-Vaishnava* conflict in his contemporary society, he visited Goddess Viraja on his way to Puri and prayed to the Mother Goddess for imparting devotion to his mind (Mukherjee, 1979). Such broad mindset was probably originated from the cultural environment of Nabadwip that made him readily acceptable to the followers of Buddha and Jagannath theology in Oriya Vaishnavite tradition. Achyutananda, one of the five Oriyan comrades (*Panchasakha)* of Chaitanya and the author of "Sunya Samhita" propagated a void theory that had been significantly admired by Chaitanya in the sense that the Supreme Being is full of power and thereby could be formless (*Nirakara*). The academic background that he acquired from Nabadwip (known as "Benaras of the east") could be given the actual credit for the success of Sri Chaitanya to preach a new religion incorporating people of diversified faiths under a new fold. Devotion to Lord Krishna is the key of his religious doctrine and devotional music *(kirtan)* replacing the *mantra* (esoteric knowledge) for worshipping the divine is still the instrument for attracting people irrespective of race and ethnicity since its initiation.

Though Sri Chaitanya left Nabadwip at the age of 24 and never returned, Nabadwip became the most revered place of pilgrimage for the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Regular flow of Jagannath devotees since time immemorial bounded these two settlements in a tie. With approval of the Master, a wooden statue of Dhameswar Mahaprabhu was carved for Nabadwip,

which was worshipped by Vishnupriya, wife of Sri Chaitanya. This deity is one of the major pilgrimage attractions of modern Nabadwip, which is theologically referred to as *Gupta* Vrindavana in the sense that its secrecy as *Vishnuloka* (the abode of Lord Vishnu) could be explored only by the spiritual experience through pilgrimage. In the mundane Vrindavana of Uttar Pradesh, the union between Radha and Krishna was said to have occurred in the Dwapara era (ended about 3102 BCE) as described in sacred Hindu scriptures known as Puranas.

It is believed that Lord Krishna was reborn at Nabadwip more than about 4500 years after his cremation in the Dwapara to demonstrate the mirror *lila* (divine play) with Radha that manifested in a spiritual union of both

the deities metaphorically within the divine human body of Sri Chaitanya. Sensing the sacred landscape of Nabadwip as an axis mundi (where the heaven is believed to meet the earth), the pilgrims trek through a prescribed path to approach to the birth place of Sri Chaitanya following the ritual of circumambulation (*parikrama*). The places visited during *parikrama* are of two tiers: a group of sites associated with the life events of Sri Chaitanya while the other group of sites possess either the cognitive association with incidences described in Purana or the folklore on divine play between Radha and Krishna in the celestial Vrindavana (Table 2). Such places are often manifestations of serial reproduction, replication of the

Table 2. Circumambulation Route followed by ISKCON devotees

Name of *Dwipas* with spiritual metaphors	Historical Place Identity	Remarks
Antardwipa(**Space for self-surrender**)	(i)Dhameswar Mahaprabhu temple, (ii) Yogipith, the birth place of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, (iii) Sribas Angan, (iv) Sri Murari Gupta's House, (v) Siddha Jagannath Das BabajirAsram, (vi) Sri Chaityanya Math, (vii) Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir (ISKCON Temple), (viii)Shyamkunda, (ix)Radhakunda(x)Gobardhan Hills.	(i), (ii), (iii) & (iv) are places directly associated with the Master; (v), (vi) & (vii) are modern religious establishments and (viii), (ix) & (x) are places having Puranic association
Simantadwipa(**Hearing**)	(i) Chand Kazi's sepulchre, (ii)Rajapur Jagannath temple (iii)Kholabecha Sridhar's house.	All the places are associated with historical events/characters.
Godrumdwipa(**Chanting**)	(i)Sri Nrisinghapalli, (ii)Hariharkshetra, (iii)Subarnabihar Gaudiya Matha, (iv)Sananda Sukhada Kunja(v)Surabhikunja.	All the places are associated with historical memories and identities
Madhyadwipa (**Meditating**)	(i) Brahmana Puskar- a Brahmana willing to visit Puskar tirtha of Rajasthan was told by Lord Brahma that this pond is the original Puskar Lake, (ii)Panchaveni (confluence of five rivers-Alakananda, Mandakini, Yamuna, Manasi Ganga and Saraswati)	All places are subjected to cognition on Puranic incidents
Koldwipa (**Serving the Lord's feet**)	(i) Samudragarh: ruins of a fortified structure	Historical place with Puranic association
Ritudwipa(**Worshipping**)	(i)Champahati, (ii) Trees said to be grown from Lord Chitanya'spen (iii)Sarbabhauma Bhattacharya's house	(i), (ii) & (iii) are places associated with historical characters.
Janhudwipa (**Greeting**)	(i)BhismaTila (a mound relating to Bhisma, a character of Mahabharata)	Cognized Puranic association.
Modadrumdwipa(**Serving as a faithful servant**)	(i)Sripata of Saranga Dev, (ii)Sripata of Basudev Dutta, (iii) Siddha BakulTree (iv)Mamgachhi- the birth place of Vrindavan Das	All these places have associations with historical events.
Rudradwipa (**Friendship**)	(i)Belpukur, (ii)NidayarGhat (iii)Sankarpur	All are mundane places associated with narratives of varying authenticities

Source: Field Survey, 2019

same myth associated with different landscapes to glorify the destination images (Chakrabarty, 2016). It is believed that Nabadwip in the past was a territory constituted by nine islands (called "Dwipas" while "Naba" is another Bengali word that means nine) which is not a geographical reality but an expression of spirituality through emblematic representation (Cosgrove & Jackson, 1987). It is with the rise of new cultural geographies in the 1980s, conceptualization of landscape was reformulated centering its metaphors (Cosgrove, 1984). Circumambulation as organized by ISKCON evokes cultural geographic inquiry because it coalesced around metaphorical cognitions (Figure 3) manifested as a lotus, a symbol of sacredness over space.

veiled landscape uncovers itself spiritually towards a divinity for the participants of circumambulation (Sarbadhikary, 2013). Puranic and historical identities of the same place are often not contested but provide multiple layers in building the destination image. Hare Krishna movement of ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) has further rejuvenated and reawakened such sacredscape by serial reproduction of sites like Radhakunda, Shyamkunda, Goshala etc. which are nothing but the replicas of Vrindavana in the cultural landscape of Mayapur. Mayapur is developed by ISKCON as a pilgrim town on the right bank of Ganga, whereas Nabadwip lies on its left bank forming the core part of lotus. The mytho-geographic space of the region bears its own image in the market of national
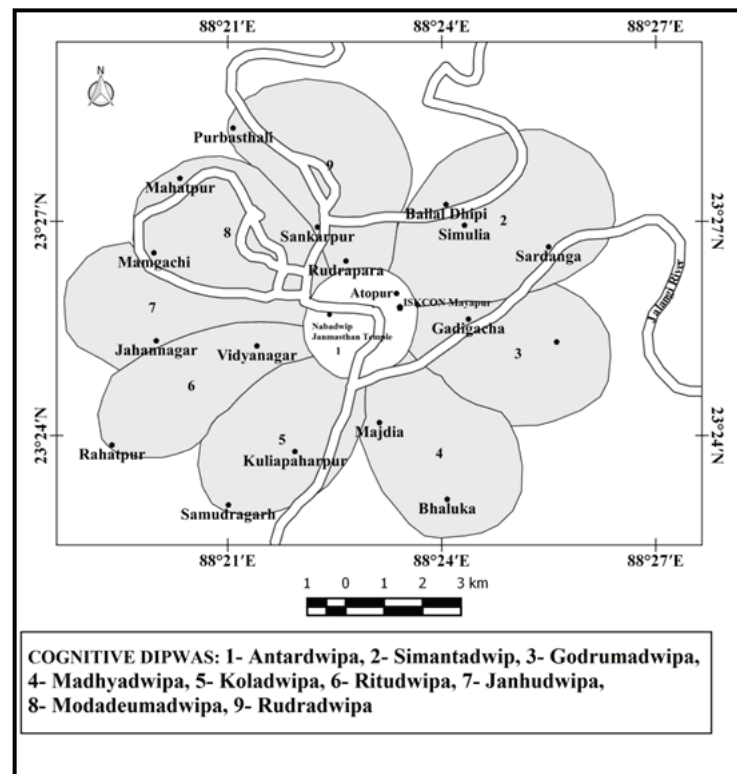

Fig. 3: Cognition of Lotus in the Arrangement of Dwipas
Source: Prepared by the Authors , 2020

Circumambulation exerts a deeper meaning in religious space as it connects pilgrimage to a larger cosmos (Bharadwaj, 2009). A cosmogonic mapping is made which resembles a lotus (Figure 3) with eight petals with a core representing the aforesaid nine Puranic islands. With organizational guidance, the

and international pilgrimage tourism boosted by the Hare Krishna movement.

ii. Cultural Image of Vrindavana: The city of Vrindavana is another reputed pilgrimage tourism destination, famous as the hub of theological aspects of the Krishna

cult. The environmental and social status of it has been changed with increasing international and national arrival of pilgrims, especially due to contribution of ISKCON in the cultural landscape (Nash, 2012). For both foreign and Indian devotees, the terrestrial Vrindavana is identical with the celestial one, the site of transcendental *lilas* of Lord Krishna in the spiritual realm (Brooks, 1992). The very word "vana" means forest and Vrindavana was believed to be one of the twelve forest entities of mythical Brajamandala. Rediscovering the sites of divine play between Radha and Krishna was the aim of Sri Chaitanya while visiting Vrindavana in the year 1515. He identified Radhakunda and Shyamkunda, the legendary ponds at the outskirt of the settlement, where Lord Krishna was believed to swim and play with the *Gopis*. To execute the plan of establishing a missionary centre of his sect at Vrindavana, he deputed Rupa and Sanatana, two renowned scholars who served as the ministers of Sultan Hussain Shah of Bengal before becoming Vaishnava saints.

When Rupa and Sanatana arrived in Vrindavana in 1516, it was merely a hamlet accommodating some Vaishnava ascetics situated in the urban shadow of Mathura city. The scholarly merits of Rupa and Santana attracted the attention of the great Mughal emperor Akbar. He personally came to the place from Delhi to meet the Vrindavana leaders and it was under his royal patronage, Vrindavana was converted into a temple town (Figure

4). Radha Damodar, one of the most sacred temples of Vrindavana was the contribution of Rupa while Sanatana installed the image of Madan Mohan which was later taken to Rajasthan to safeguard the deity from the intolerance of Aurangzeb, the grandson of Akbar. Sri Chaitanya was initially imparted with Gopala *mantra* (esoteric knowledge) while becoming a worshipper of Krishna and significantly, Vrindavana is known to its devotees especially as the abode of Gopala due to presence of a deity named Banke- Bihari. There is a custom of drawing curtains to protect the deity who is none but the child Krishna. It is believed that once the deity moved out following a devotee being impressed by his devotion. After the establishment of Krishna - Balaram temple by ISKCON about a few decades back, there was an explosion of international pilgrimage. It is noteworthy to mention that the town has attracted Indian pilgrims since the Mughal period after Sri Chaitanya gave special attention to its spiritual revival.

iii. Cultural Image of Puri: The heritage city of Puri is famous as the abode of Lord Jagannath. The image of the deity is believed to be carved from "Daru Brahma", the unburnt portion of the body of Lord Krishna that floated from Dwaraka (Gujarat) to Puri (Odisha). Since the hands and legs of Lord Krishna were believed to be consumed by fire during cremation, Lord Jagannath, carved from Daru Brahma was manifested without hands and feet. The deity was occupied by the Buddhists till Sankaracharya (788-820 A.D.) won the scholarly battle
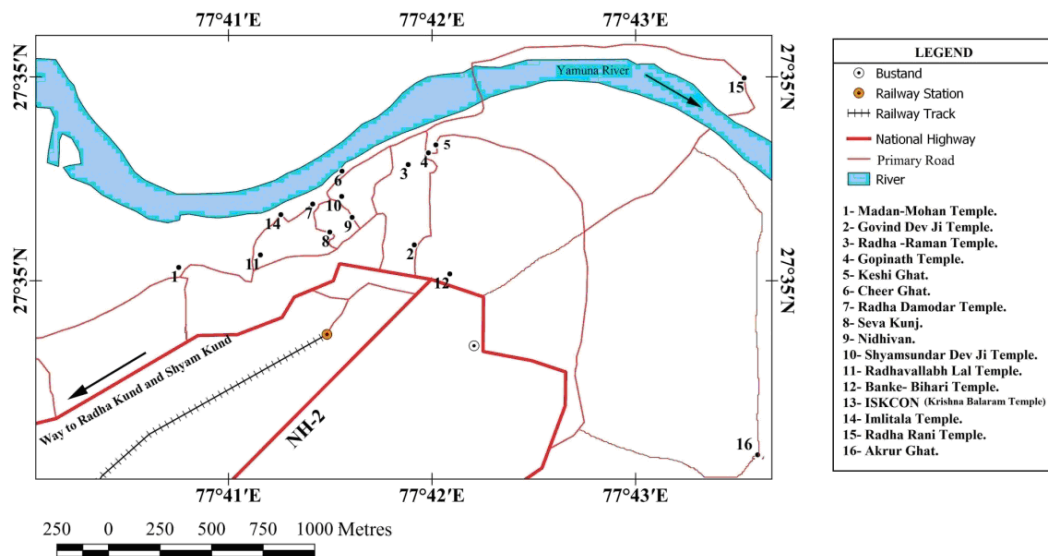

Fig. 4: Major Attractions of Vrindavana for Gaudiya Vaishnavas
Source: Prepared by the Authors , 2020

with them while visiting Puri and recognized Jagannath as Lord Shiva. Vimala, the Mother Goddess worshipped in the same shrine according to his view was none but His consort. The shrine came gradually under the Vaishnava fold by the continuous efforts of the Vaishnava saints in subsequent years. Vaishnava dominance in the shrine was initiated by Ramanuja (1017-1137 A.D.) and it reached its climax during Sri Chaitanya who dedicated the last two decades of his life in search of Krishna within Lord Jagannath.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving ISKCON devotees reveal the followings:

(a) Foreign devotees wish to visit not only Vrindavana, Puri and Nabadwip- Mayapur belt, they are interested in the other places related to the memory of the Master.

(b) Withdrawal of the proposed temple project of ISKCON at Puri, the foundation stone of which was laid on 29th November, 2015 is one of the reasons for comparatively less visit of foreign devotees in Puri, while strong base of ISKCON in Mayapur and Vrindavana encourage the foreigners to visit these places as pilgrim tourists. The location of Vrindavana near Delhi and Mayapur near Kolkata further facilitates the arrival of foreign devotees. However the devotees are eager to visit the Jagannath temple at Puri because of demise of their Master in the temple premise but they are not allowed on account of taboo considering foreigner being non-Hindu by birth.

(c) Devotees at Nabadwip- Mayapur are very much impressed upon the concept of *Gupta* (veiled) Vrindavana and travel to sense the mystic flavour of the landscape. The metaphors in relation to space have been glorified, for which *parikrama* (circumambulation) is very popular among devotees.

(d) Exploring the unexplored Chaitanya path would be a successful pilgrimage tourism project if safety and security of the participants could be assured. The foreigners pointed out a number of bottlenecks related to sanitation, hygiene and health since a long journey is to be undertaken by road. A three kilometre buffer (Figure 5) drawn using GIS software indicates the cultural tourism prospect of a number of heritage settlements including Tamluk, Danton, Jaleswar, Jajpur and Bhubaneswar on route if such project could be materialized.
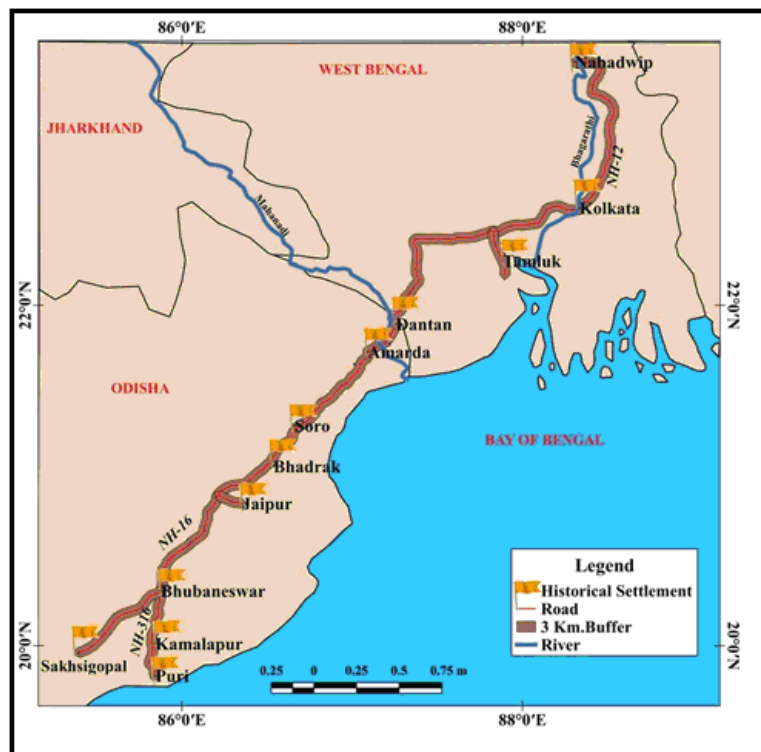

Fig. 5: Chaitanya *Path* for Pilgrimage Tourism
Source: Prepared by the Authors , 2020

For the critical evaluation of strategies from sustainability perspective, SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) and TOWS (Threat Opportunity, Weakness and Strength) have been undertaken since they are found more beneficial to combine internal and external factors to generate structure for creating strategies (Aslan, et. al., 2012). In strategic management, TOWS matrix is conceived as complementary to SWOT among the approaches and techniques available. The SWOT factors taken into consideration (Table 3) have been applied for TOWS analysis with defined objectives to counter the threats and weaknesses, which is possible by maximizing the available strength and simultaneously utilising the opportunities.

future. With the arrival of guests, there is increasing social exposure, to be utilized as an opportunity for the host population. All the hubs under discussion are hotspots of spiritual heritage, both tangible and intangible, which are their inherent strengths.

One of the greatest threats however arises from the poor status of health and hygiene which should be minimized. It could be addressed by funding in this sector as revealed from the analysis of the factor in "strength and threat" (ST) group. Community involvement in heritage management might be the appropriate strategy to combat the threat arising from non- stakeholders of pilgrimage tourism business. The heritage (both tangible and intangible) resources would

Table 3. Space- Centric Deification of Sri Chaitanya

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
? Heritages: Tangible and Intangible	? Authenticity aspect of attractions
? Accessibility	? Mode of transport
? Accommodation infrastructure	? Quality constraint in amenities
? Adequate funds for development	? Time constraint of the visitors
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
? Motivation from spirituality	? Security bottlenecks
? Income and employment generation	? Poor health and hygiene management
? Infrastructural extension	? Culture affecting from guest behaviour
? Social exposure	? Hostility from non- stakeholders

Source: Prepared by the Authors , 2020

In TOWS, strategies are developed for taking full advantages of opportunities from the maximization of strength as outlined under the group called "Strength and Opportunities' (SO). The increasing "Krishna Consciousness" from the Hare Krishna movement is the spiritual factor opening up the immense opportunities for pilgrimage tourism being supported by the accommodation infrastructure developed already. In view of further increase of arrival, the strategy should be focused on the extension of community oriented accommodation infrastructure like homestays to maximize the opportunities on income and employment. Extension of other infrastructure is supported by fund availability in case of Puri as it enjoyed the benefit of HRIDAY (Heritage City Development & Augmentation Yojana) and PRASAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) schemes. As Mathura is also enlisted in such schemes, Vrindavana is indirectly benefited. Nabadwip has been recently declared by the Government of West Bengal as a heritage city. The strategy should be to advocate for Nabadwip so that the place could receive any of such better funded Central Government schemes in

be the real strength, especially when it has been subjected to community pride. To minimize the threat arising from security bottlenecks, funding (outlined as strength) could be diverted by adopting strategic recommendations.

How weakness could be minimized by utilizing available opportunity is the aim of analysing 'weaknesses and opportunities' (WO) together under TOWS matrix. In this case, authenticity issues concerning the heritage are often questionable because of their association with non-historical metaphors. Sri Chaitanya was a historical personality but Lord Krishna is a Puranic character with whom the Master is equated with. The opportunity in this context however yields from space-centric cognition on spirituality by the visitors. Under such circumstances innovative guiding might be a sustainable strategy to combat the weakness that arises from disputed authenticities. Social exposure is a positive aspect that is enlisted among opportunities since perception on the authenticity of individual objects involves active social exchange (Cohen, 1988). This is why the WO group is referred to as Mini-Maxi (in the sense of minimizing weakness

and maximizing opportunity simultaneously) in TOWS terminology.

To reduce threat, overcoming the negatives of weakness is the key and an analysis of the group of factors concerning 'weaknesses and threats' (WT) together leads to the formulation of sustainable strategies to achieve this goal. It is due to time constraint, visitors are not usually adequately aware of the cultural values of the destination environment and thereby earn annoyance out of their negligence. The result may be a rise of antagonism if not controlled by implementing effective strategies in time. Quality assurance in this connection is another sustainable strategy, which has direct impacts on hygiene and health, thereby minimizing the threats. Travellers' quest for authenticity has direct relation with aspects of culture (Gale et al., 2013). To address the threat concerning ill-exposure and mishandling of such culture, no stone is to be left unturned to address every weakness in safeguarding the authenticities. Since these WT group aim to minimize both weakness and threat to attain inclusive growth, it is referred to as the Mini-Mini relationship in sustainable strategy building.

Conclusion

Boosting the existing heritage attractions is the key for advancement in cultural tourism. The Vaishnava shrines are tangible heritages, while *kirtan*, the devotional music used as a regular way of worship is the key intangible heritage in this context (Chakrabarty and Biswas, 2015). Today landscape remains at the heart of a great deal of geographic research and it continues to be conceptualized in new and innovative ways (Whelan, 2014). In an attempt to analyse the cultural landscape of Chaitanya-ism, a touristic triangle formed by Nabadwip, Vrindavana and Puri draws the scholarly attention from the perspectives of pilgrimage tourism management. With the success of ISKCON in the Hare Krishna movement, there is an increasing interest among the foreigners to visit the memorial places of Sri Chaitanya. There arises opportunity to utilize the cultural landscape on spiritual ground following the model of Buddhist circuit development in India, which earns huge revenue for the country. Such Buddhist landscapes for tourism have flourished following the footsteps of Lord Buddha (Jacob, 2013). This research advocates for utilizing the scope of similar type of circuit tourism based on the travel path of Lord Chaitanya. In order to revitalize the cultural landscape, measures like waterfront development could be adopted as a catalyst for promoting the individual spiritual hubs (Reiser & Crispin, 2009). The Ganga and Yamuna rivers for example are providing such opportunities respectively for Nabadwip and Vrindavana. The waterfront corridor of Puri town is already developed and accommodating visitors in seaside hotels and resorts. A policy of developing heritage sensitive infrastructure with local capacity enhancement is essential for the sustainable functioning of the proposed spiritual triangle. Innovative planning is of utmost importance in this context and the contribution of planners, historians and geographers are essential to ensure a landmark development in the pilgrimage tourism arena.

Acknowledgement

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