CHAPTER - I

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1.1 INTRODUCTION :

The boundaries of the subject Geography are still illdefined and therefore the discipline shares the common concern with other subjects like geology, history, politics, demography, sociology, biology, economics, anthropology, planning and so on. The geography cannot be easily located in the camp of either the earth sciences or the social sciences. The same is true when we examine the specialization within the geography. The internal logic of geographical study has tended to split into two parts. A geography of the natural world is termed as 'Physical Geography' and a geography of man made world is termed as 'Human Geography,' (Jones and Eyles, 1977, p.6).

Human Geography as a branch of geography is a recent growth. According to Vidal-de-la-Blache, Human Geography is a recent sprout from venerable trunk of geographical science (Negi,1979). It covers a very wide field and embraces the study of human race, the growth of human numbers, the movement of population, physical and cultural differences between human groups and economic activities. It also covers the relationship between man and his natural environment and the way in which men and their activities are distributed. Therefore, " The human geography concerns with people, their activities and their spatial distribution," (Negi,1979). It gives rise to four broadest divisions as economic, historical, political and social geography.

Social geography is a recent sub-division developed mainly since 1945, and it has become an accepted one to devote a limited field of interest within the very broad area of human geography. It is a fairly young specialization and like it's parent discipline primarily concerns with space.

The 'Geography of Leisure and Recreation' is a branch of social geography. The growing interest in the geography of leisure and recreation is clearly shown by perusal of geographical writings over the past forty years.

Recreation Geography is, ' the systematic study of recreation pattern and processes on the landscape,' (Smith, 1984, p.13). Recreation is the basic concept in recreation geography. It means any activity undertaken during leisure time (Small and Withericks, 1986, p.217). It will often mean a set of activities both indoor as well as outdoor, and all these activities are systematically studied in recreation geography.

Recreation is a broad term often used synonymously with tourism. Therefore, these two terms are not very distinct identities. The fundamental difference between recreation and tourism seems to be a travel factor. Tourism involves the relatively longer journey to be undertaken, while in the case of recreation, journey is not always necessary. In the Sanskrit literature there are three terms for tourism. 'Paryatana', 'Desatana', and 'Tirthatana' (Gupta and Krishna Lal, 1974, p.10) derived from the root atana, i.e. going out or leaving home for some other place. But each of these words has a different cannotation. Thus, paryatana means going out for pleasure or knowledge, desatana means going out of the country primarily for economic gain and tirthatana means going out to places of religious merits. The domestic tourism in India was primarily of the third category and is still a great motivating force in the context of tourism in India.

Tourism represents the particular form of recreation and is defined as, " A leisure time activity involving an overnight stay or more away from home," (Small and Withericks, 1986, p.177). It is an outdoor recreation activity and can broadly be grouped into two categories, International and Domestic tourism. The international tourism has priority as it brings foreign currency and creates employment opportunities. Domestic tourism plays secondary role although it is officially referred to as an infrastructural task and plan, but not in a very concrete sense. Like international tourism the role of domestic tourism must be emphasized and it should not be forgotten, because this type of tourism acts as a foundation stone on which edifice of international tourism rests.

Tourism has rapidly won recognition as an activity generating a number of social and economical benefits like promotion of national integration and international understanding, creation of employment opportunities, removal of regional imbalances, opening up of new growth centres, agumenting of foreign exchange earning, thus redressing the balance of payment situation. It is significant that many of these beneficial aspects of tourism have special reference to socio-economic scene of India.

Domestic and International tourism may broadly be divided on the basis of motivation. Pilgrimage is a particular form of domestic and international tourism. Here, pilgrimage should not be viewed in isolation, though the aim of pilgrimage is purely for religious gain, but at the same time it is also linked with visiting of different places in addition to worship of sacred shrines. It appears therefore, that the aim of establishing the four dhamas by Adi-Shankaracharya at the four cordinal corners might have been to visualize the vast stretch of land experiencing different climate and culture in addition to holy purpose. On the other hand, those domestic tourists, whose main aim of touring is pleasure or holiday, when visiting the important historical and archaecological centres or hill station, do not forget to visit important religious places. Thus, this activity shows the interdependence of tourism and pilgrimage. This interwoven association of this twin phenomena makes it some what difficult to draw a sharp line between tourism and pilgrimage.

The term pilgrimage has its origin in the Latin word 'Peregrinus' which means a 'stranger' or 'wanderer'. It certainly does mean breaking off one's ordinary occupation and leaving one's home to go perhaps as a family or with friends to a place called 'holy' in order to make contact in it with what is sacred and to fall in touch with the power of the universe by whatever name we may call that power. So, a pilgrim is a person who travels to visit holy shrines, tombs or places of religious interest (Benton, 1973, p.74).

Pilgrimages are primarily religiously motivated. Their aims are a request to relieve from earthly disease and the thanks giving for charity received, religious enlightment and healing, as well as experiences of the religious communities at the shrines. Accordingly, the activities of the pilgrims are limited to the visits of the shrines, attending of services and procession, buying of devotional goods and articles etc.

The pilgrimage then is a movement of people to a sacred spot, where they are able to make at least a temporary contact with the supernatural world, for example, Muslims travel to Mecca, Christains to various shrines, Sikhs to Gurdwaras, Hindus to Varanasi, Puri, Dwaraka or Rameshvaram etc. People expect to benefit by making a pilgrimage whether bodily for cure of sickness or spititually for forgiveness of sins or for inspiration from seeing or touching some object which recalls to them a wonderful work of God. Therefore, 'The pilgrimage is a journey to sacred spot undertaken for religious motives' (Benton, 1973 p.74).

Pilgrimages played a very important part in human life. People from all parts travelled great distance together, many spoke common and different languages, but their common purpose gave them a sense of fellowship, which was stronger than any feeling of separate nationality. People, though they are drawn from almost every walk of life, they live together and travel as equals. Each one is telling his or her story to enliven the journey and the variety and jollity of the stories show clearly that besides the religious purpose of the pilgrimage, it was considered a delightful holiday. Pilgrimage was incidentally means of spreading new ideas and of fostering trade. Travellers would bring home with them books and works of art such as paintings, ivory carvings and silk hangings and from these native authors and artists would get new inspiration.

Pilgrimages are undertaken at certain times when people become free from their activities. For pilgrimage travel is necessary to get away from home to the holy destination, and the motive of this leisure time journey is clearly religious, social and cultural. People are visiting the places to worship their sacred shrines. Therefore, pilgrimage tourism is defined as a visit to places of pilgrimage as a form of leisure behaviour (Shivers, 1987).

'Peregrinology' has recently drawn attention from many fields of study including geography and anthropology. The German School has taken peregrinology and tourism together through behaviourstic approach (Dr.Angeliko Sievers). The pilgrimage and tourism both have a direct relationship with the glories of nature and it would be quite rational to use multidisciplinary approaches and methodology for the study.

The pilgrimage and other forms of tourism have much in common, but also have different characteristics. The common aspects are seasonality, economic importance, local surplus in tertiary sector, high occupancy rate, camping capacity and good inter-regional connection in the spatial activities of travellers (Gisber and Sievers, 1987).

Today, increasing communication is making rapid changes in the character of pilgrimage itself. Technological changes and modernization are giving pilgrimage an increasingly secular character within a society, therefore, the lower and middle level rural population which also have more opportunities to travel now. The volume of pilgrims seeking darshan and performing traditional religious tasks, is therefore, likely to swell further. Therefore, popularity of the standard All India Tours is increasing.

1.2 TOURISM IN INDIA :

The origin, growth and development of tourism in India is closely associated with the history of human settlement and

civilization. The institutions of pilgrimage, in the form of Tirth Yatra have their roots in the country's civilization and tradition (Kayastha and Singh, 1983). The history of tourism in India in the ancient and medievial period was closely associated with the trade and religion, although political embassies and good will missions also played some significant role. Visitors and travellers have been coming to India from Europe, Persia, Tibet, China and other countries for diverse reasons. Magesthenese, Fahien, Hien-Tsang, Itsing, Taranath, Alberuni were only some of the famous travellers who visited India in the ancient and medieval periods (Gupta and Krishnalal, 1974).

India is a large country having a great tradition. It has large cities, monuments, temples, mosques and churches. It is full of great places, beautiful sculptures and paintings and a host of other artistic creation. It is a living civilization, whose traditions arose directly from the past. It has the great cultural heritage, traditional art and architecture, monuments, colourful cultural life, gay festivals and varied traditional customs. The picturesque valleys of the Himalayas, the Vindhyas, the Eastern and Western Ghats, Nilgiris, broad sunny beaches of Goa, Kerala and Tamilnadu and the wild life sanctuaries like Kasiranga, Kanhan National Park, Jim Corbett National Park, Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, Melghat, Tadoba, Palmaue and Bandipur increase the curiosity of the tourists. With these the lofty

buildings of ultramodern constructions, hydro-electric dam sites like Bhakara Nangal, Tungabhadra Valley Project, Sharavati Valley Project, Hirakud, Thumba Rocket Launching Centre, Atomic energy projects, big industrial establishments also play a significant role. All these realized that India has a vast potential for the development of tourism.

Tourism in India may broadly be grouped into three categories on the basis of motivation. Pirst, the journey undertaken to see historical and archaeological monuments, cities, exhibitions and educational tours. Secondly, the holiday makers visiting the hill stations and thirdly the pilgrimages.

✓ The modern tourism differs from ancient tourism in matters of basic motivation because it is basically pleasure oriented. The phenomena of holiday, leisure and relaxation in connection with the concept of travel has developed slowly after western contact during the colonial age. Ancient tourism was religion oriented (Gupta and Mrs.Krishan Lal, 1974, 0.151). For the majority of the population of all social classes, the most important type of journey is a pilgrimage to the large national pilgrimage sites. These pilgrimages have served to unite Hindu throughout the India in common culture and religious consciousness as well as to help the growth of commerce and industry. It is this difference which is responsible for a new set up of values attached to the basic needs of tourism.

Since independence special measures have been taken to

encourage, increase and develop tourism. Indian Tourism Development Corporation (I.T.D.C.) is the main agency of the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation which is exclusively devoted to the promotion of tourism in India. For the efficient coordination of the movement and stay of tourists travel agencies have now become the pivot of modern tourism in India. The same is true with tourist guides, accommodation and transport which serve as the four main limbs of tourist industry in India.

Regional offices are established in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and New Delhi, and the branches are at or near places of tourist interest. Tourist spots in the country are improved. More facilities are provided to attract foreign tourists. Government is giving priority to develop international tourism. For that purpose 'National Tourism Board' was set up in 1972 to deal with the policy regarding tourism.

While considering the International Tourism the role of domestic tourism should not be forgotton. In a vast country like India, this domestic tourism brings together people belonging to different state, practising different life styles and speaking different languages. There is a great miningling of cultures and this naturally has its effects. It helps to break down prejudices, barriers, suspiciousness that exist between states. The very best way of getting to know people from another part of country is to go there. When the vast numbers travel the

narrow rigid boundaries that keep people in compartments, naturally tend to weaken and we move towards the better national understanding.

1.3 TOURISM IN MAHARASHTRA :

Modern Maharashtra is not the bustle of industrial and agriculture activity or the frenzied pursuit of wealth and progress alone. It is very much a part of the everyday scene, anywhere in the state, there are the signs of its great religious, cultural, historical and martial heritage.

In Maharashtra hundreds of shrines of all faiths, like Pandharpur, Tuljapur, Kolhapur, Shirdi etc. are found every where in the state, the evidence of the artistic skills of a people whose culture goes back to thousands of years as in Ajanta and Elora, Karla and Gharapuri. In songs and dances, in paintings and sculptures, in architecture and handicrafts Maharashtra displays a fascinating variety of brilliant achievement that is nowhere more evident than in its cave temples and Hindu shrines.

All over Maharashtra are the relics of the glorious history of the great Chh.Shivaji, mussive forts on hill tops and historic battlesites tell the story of a great nation's rise from division to unity.

Apart from culture and history, Maharashtra offers quiet and beautiful hill stations like Mahabaleshwar, Panchgani Lonawala, Matheran, Amboli, Panhala, Chikaldara and golden beaches lapped by the blue waters of the Arabian sea.

1.3.1 Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (M.T.D.C.) is one of the most active government organisations in the country promoting tourism. It was established in 1975 to handle the commercial and promotional aspects of tourism in Maharashtra. It has a wide range of activities, that is a boon to the domestic as well as to foreign visitors. Regional offices are established at Bombay, Poona, Aurangabad, Nagpur, Amravati, Panjim (Goa) and New Delhi. Also M.T.D.C. runs holiday homes at 31 places having total capacity of 3000. M.T.D.C. also runs hotels at Poona, Shirdi, Panchgani, Goa and Aurangabad. In the 7th plan period Mahurgad, Titwal, Tuljapur and at Akklkot M.T.D.C. proposed to construct holiday homes. There is a plan for holiday homes on the coastal areas at Vengurla, Nagaon, Kashid and Motels on Poona-Bangalore, Poona-Nashik, Poona-Aurangabad roads. For the development of tourism in coastal areas there is a plan for 33 floating hotels and holiday homes. So there is a great scope for tourism development in Maharashtra.

1.4 CHOICE OF TOPIC :

The choice of topic under investigation has been influenced by many considerations. The researcher is motivated by many factors to select the problem.

i) Pandharpur, the holy town in the Solapur district of Maharashtra State is associated with 'Lord Vitthal' and is one of the

most frequented places of pilgrimage, not only in the State of Maharashtra but also other parts of India.

- ii) In the era of tourism the study of pilgrimage from the tourism point of view, may help the government for the development of infra-structural facilities in Pandharpur town.
- iii) It has also been pointed out that the tourism has damaged the fragile environment and age old tradition of pilgrimage, leading to a danger of acculturation. This study would certainly attract the planners and residents of the area to check such consequences.

1.5 OBJECTIVES :

The objectives of the study are as follows :-

- To assess the socio-geographical aspects of the pilgrimage phenomena.
- 2) To assess the transport and accommodation facilities.
- 3) To assess the conomic importance of pilgrimage.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS :

To realsise the above objectives the following hypothesis are formulated.

- 1) Pilgrimage tourism strengthens the relationship between the people and creates the regional harmony.
- 2) Transport and accommodation are integral parts of tourism.
- 3) Pilgrimage makes significant contribution to local economy.

1.7 METHODOLOGY AND DATA :

A geographical study is based on field work. This is also true with pilgrimage phenomena. For this a good knowledge of religious background, religious behavioural pattern and the language (for interview) is necessary. It helps the posing of problem and working hypothesis concerning the spatial activities of the pilgrims.

The required data for this study is collected from primary as well as from secondary sources.

- 1) The primary data is collected by visiting Pandharpur town.
- Questionnaire is prepared and filled up by pilgrims and the residents of Pandharpur.
- 3) Interviews of a few pilgrims and residents are taken.
- Secondary data is collected from district census handbook, and available published and unpublished materials.
- 5) Statistical methods and cartographic techniques are used as per available data.

The collected information finally tabulated, analysed and conclusions have drawn.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE :

The present study of pilgrimage tourism is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction, significance of study, methodology and sources of data and limitations of study. Chapter second concerns with personality of the region in which location, geographical and historical personality and cultural background of the town are given. Chapter third deals with fairs and festivals in Pandharpur. Here major fairs and festivals are taken into consideration. The fourth chapter concerns with the pilgrim facilities, transportation, accommodation, shops selling devotional goods and articles and literature. Chapter fifth deals with the functional analysis of pilgrims data. Here, all the primary work is analysed which denotes the present face of Pandharpur. Chapter sixth deals with conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations of the study :

- Measurement of pilgrims is rather a difficult task due to the lack of counting agencies.
- (2) The study of all the Palkhis is desirable but it is rather a time consuming process. Therefore, the study of the Dayaneshwar Palkhi procession was undertaken as a sample. It is equally difficult and out of scope to make a detailed study of 108 palkhis that represent different parts of socio-linguistic community of Maharashtra every year.
- (3) The study suffers another drawback, since the Maharashtra State Road Transport ^Corporation (MSRTC) has maintained a record of the pilgrim traffic only from 1966 itself. The record of the previous years is not available.

- (4) The non-availability of the old maps of the Pandharpur
 town is one of the results that have imposed restriction on this study.
- (5) The destructive floods of the river Chandrabhaga of 1956 devastated the old record of the town.
- (6) During the course of this research an important problem faced is that I could not get the proper information regarding the actual financial turnover in the industries, the employment and the income from these industries.
- (7) Finally, the utmost important limitation is the time. During the span of two years it is rather difficult to give full justice to the problem.

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