

The Archaeology of ‘*Krimila Visya*’

(Synopsis)

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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF “KRIMILA VISAYA”

The forgotten city of *Kirmila* located the district of Lakhisarai, Bihar State. The District covers an area of about 1,29,397 Hectares, Geographically, lies between 25° to 25° 20' North Latitude and 85° 55' to 86° 25' East Longitude. Lakhisarai is surrounded modern districts of Bihar i.e. Munger, Jamui, Sheikhpura, Begusarai and Patna. The district can be divided into three parts viz. (i) Hilly area (ii) Flood Plain and (iii) Plain area. The hilly area comprises of hill series and rocks like Kachhua hills, Kajra Mountains upto Abhaipur and Jaynagar Mountains including forest area. Lakhisarai was an established administrative and religious centre during the golden times of Gupta period, Post Gupta & Pala period. This region of Lakhisarai was identified in old times as a place of rocks, mountains and statues of different Hindu and Bhuddhist gods and goddesses. In Buddhist literature this place had been mentioned as "*Anguttrap*" meaning the northern part of the *Anga Desh*. Lakhisarai came into existence, as a new district from Munger in the later part of twentieth century. Hence this place in the ancient period also can be identified with the name of Munger or Anga Pradesh. Lakhisarai region during Pala rule was the important centre. Several inscriptions of different Pala rulers have been found from this place.

Krimila the Forgotten City:

The area around 72 square kilometers of the city has large number of historical monuments, particularly Buddhist Stupas and Brahmanical temples. Beglar and Cunningham explored the area and reported the antiquity of the region in 19th century. They have identified existence of Buddhist Stupa and Brahmanical temples in the area. In 1950s and 1960s D.C. Sircar and subsequently R.K Choudhary visited the region and reported few inscriptions of early medieval period. An extensive exploration conducted by Dr. Anil Kumar. He has revealed many interesting facts undisclosed about the early medieval historiography. There are more than sixty big mounds of various sizes which are unexcavated lying between Valgudar and Daitabandh in Lakhisarai district of Bihar. In

the Gupta period, the present state of Bihar was divided into two administrative centers, known as *Shrinagara-bhukti* and *Tira-bhuktit*. The former *Shrinagara-bhukti* comprised of three *viṣayas*, Gaya, Rajagriha and *Kṛmila* respectively. The name *Kṛmila* among these *visaya* got its origin from the nearby river *Kṛmikala* which is not other than the river Kiul of present Bihar. The early reference to this river is mentioned in Buddhist texts, *Anguttara Nikaya* and *Moghyevagga* in which this river is called as *Kṛmikala*. Kiul is one of the most important rivers of southern Bihar.

Recent exploration has yielded six image inscriptions and more than 100 Buddhist as well as Brahmanical sculptures. Stylistic analysis of these sculptures suggests us the early medieval dates, and different phases of construction activities. The whole area falls around 72 square kilometers, which has more than sixty mounds, more than fifty ponds and three lakes. Few brick structures over the mounds are exposed due to natural calamities or encroachments by the local people. Overall survey of the area and decipherment of the found inscriptions, suggests us about an existence of a large religious and administrative centre of early medieval eastern India. However previous research revealed many archaeological sites in this region .The following are the important sites in this region : Nongarh, Rampur, Garhi, Bridavan, Ghosi-Kundi, Bichwe, Neri, Kiul, Hasanpur, Jainagar, Jalappa Sthan, Ramsir, Arma, Pokhrama, Uren, Balgudar, Chowki, Rajaouna etc.

The Study Area:

The district of Lakhisarai is considered for the study area it lies between 25° to 25° 20' north Latitude and 85° 55' to 86° 25' east longitude. Lakhisarai is bounded by Munger, Sheikhpura, Begusarai and Patna in the East, South, West and North respectively. The natural boundaries of *Krimila* region is in the north there River Ganga, in the south Jainagar, in the east River Kiul and in the west the River Harohar is protected this region.

Scope of the work:

The intensive field survey compounded with well planned exploration and field research provided good scope to understand the settlement pattern that existed

during Historical times and its cultural transformation. It also helped to test the existing hypothesis and provided better visible data to understand the nature of settlement.

Review of the Sources:

The sources are vast and varied in nature. The bulk of the source material in this work is mainly drawn from the archaeological and literary sources. Reports from the Archaeological Survey of India, excavation reports and research paper, Journals and other archaeological reports, Gazetteer were studied thoroughly. In addition to archaeological evidences, Indian and foreign literary sources, the use of geographical, geological and other information are also used for understanding the various facets of the subject under review. The study of literary sources sometimes raised doubts about the chronological sequence whereas the archaeological evidences by themselves were insufficient. Hence, more intensive and extensive research can be carried out, largely by corroborating the archaeological sources with the literary sources. The ancient literature throws interesting light on social and economic factors of the region. It traces out the commercial knowledge of the people of those days. Archaeological sources included seals, ceramics, and other remains, materials of art and culture, besides architectural findings. It has the durability which, under certain favorable conditions, can be preserved remarkably well. The works of early scholars are also taken into consideration. The material and data collected from the direct sources and the information gathered from the previous scholars were studied with care and their results summarized in this report.

The *Krimila* and in around mound is one of the well spoken but less explored regions of Bihar State. Nevertheless, one can visualize the importance of this region based on the available material brought to light in the pre-independence era by the explorers. The antiquarian remains of Lakhisarai region had drawn attention of British scholars like Beglar, Buchanan and Cunningham in late nineteenth century. They have conducted preliminary survey of the area and identified *stupa* and temples at Valgudar, Rajaona, Chowki and Jaynagar. These are the names of modern villages and are within the municipal area of the town, and falls within the radius of 15 square kilometres. A. Cunningham surveyed the area first in 1871 and again visited it in 1879–80. Beglar surveyed the whole area in 1871–72. According to Cunningham's report, a large town or

city existed here at the confluence of river Kiul, old Ganges and Haruhar. It extended from Rajaona southwards up to Jaynagar along the western bank of river Kiul, a distance of nearly 6 kilometres and had a width of 1.5 kilometres. Cunningham identified '*Lo-in-ni-lo*' as Rajaona mentioned by 'Huan-t-sang'. 'Huan-t-sang' in his travel account mentions that he visited this place, where he saw a Buddhist monastery and *stupa* erected by Ashoka in third century BC and a large lake, 5 miles in circuit, to the north of the *stupa*. Cunningham identified this *stupa* and monastery. In the recent course of exploration by various scholars efforts are going on to identify the limits of this significant lost or forgotten city of early medieval eastern India.

Objectives:

The present work was undertaken to study the archaeology of *Krimila visaya*. The analysis and interpretation of source material revealed some unknown facts. In the present work, an attempt is made to study the culture of the Historical Period of early times and documentary and archaeological records with following objectives:

1. To document and analyse the context ancient Historical evidences. This work was undertaken mainly to fill in the lacuna of the detailed information of the study and to deal it in broader perspective.
2. To identify mounds nearby the area. The archaeological remains of this period give valuable account of this region. A comparative study of the administrative limits of other countries is carried out, so as to know the common factors and to understand the past of *Krimila visaya* in a better perspective. This will help us to know about the emergence of new facts.
3. To study the settlement patterns of the archaeological sites and to study the site material and remains.
4. To study the political, social, economic and cultural diversion of the historical period.
5. To understand the ethnographic components of this region.

The Research Problem:

The *Krimila* is Historical site, and the remains we get in this region according that *Krimila* is participating an important role during Gupta to Pala period. The structural and other remains noticed from this site; on the bases of that *Krimila* is administrative and religious centre. *Krimila* is located in the alluvial plain of three important rivers is: Ganga, Kiul and Harohar. After the independence construction of new dams, more cultivation and accumulation population was started due to the reason more archaeological sites were disturbed. The structural and other remains noticed from this *visaya*; on the bases of that the study aimed to understand the settlement patterns of the various cultures of this region.

Sources for the Research & Research methodology:

To do any research work we need research data, so for research work necessary data collected from primary and secondary sources. In this we using literary and archaeological, geological and geographical source. After going through the previous work, it was felt that the area under review requires much more careful, well planned research method for better understanding of various facets related to past of *Krimila*. Therefore all the available archaeological and literary sources are put together and utilized in order to give coherent picture of the subject concerned.

Archaeological:

The archaeological sources in the form of material remains of the past are found to be more reliable than the literary sources. In most of the cases the author have tried to use the primary sources in their original content for the interpretation of the archaeological data recovered from excavations as well as explorations carried out in this area. The period study primarily falls between early historic times to medieval period.

Epigraphic:

Inscriptions of 2nd CE to 18th CE are taken as the secondary sources of the research. The major publications are:

- Annual Report on Epigraphy

Literature:

Literature reviews are secondary sources; in this the academic journals, surveys books, scholarly articles and other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research we used for better understanding the research topic.

Research Methods:**Library Research:**

The published data from the State Archaeology Department, Archaeological Survey of India, and Geological Survey of India and from individual scholars were collected.

Field Survey:

Village-to-village survey is undertaken to obtain information on the sites like location, geo-coordination, geological wealth, flora, fauna, and cultural features. Two types of data sheets are used in the explorations. The archaeological data sheet covers all the tangible evidences and the historical data sheet covers the inscriptional data. A data base is created for further analysis, the data on the latitude, longitude and there. For finding such spots, topographical sheets of the quarter inch map were used to locate them.

Documentation:

The artefacts collected from the sites were documented and analysed.

Interpretation and Analysis:

The field data is transformed on to a digital map by using GIS platform to see their location aspects in a given landscape. The geographical features were compared with the location of the archaeological sites and the patterns of the settlements were analysed.

Scheme of Chapters:

- I. **Introduction:** In this chapter firstly we tell about basic intro of history of *Krimila visaya* and site culture. An attempt has been made to project geographical settings, which led the very foundations of settlement activities during the period under review.
- II. **Physiography:** A brief outline of geology, climate, drainage system, vegetation and soil has been examined in this chapter.
- III. **The Forgotten City of Krimila:** The background of political history is based on both archaeological and literary sources. Both these sources have been updated in the light of recent discoveries.
- IV. **Development of the Architecture:** The structural remain reported from various sites in this region and recent excavation going on 'Lali pahari' in Lakhisarai on the bases of that I try to give an idea of architecture of this *Krimila visaya*.
- V. **Excavated Remains:** In this chapter I try to give a brief account of various excavated sites which relevant to this synopsis.
- VI. **Social and Economic condition of Krimila region:** Under this chapter a brief survey of the social and economic conditions prevailed during *Krimila* region.
- VII. **Conclusion:** The concluding chapter of this work deals with the general discussion of different phases in *Krimila* and activities carried out in this area and indicates the significance of the study and brief summary on the outcome of the research will be presented.

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