

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HISTORICITY OF GODAVARI RIVER****Dr. Ramabrahmam Vellore**Assistant Professor  
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Triambakeshwar, Pattisam

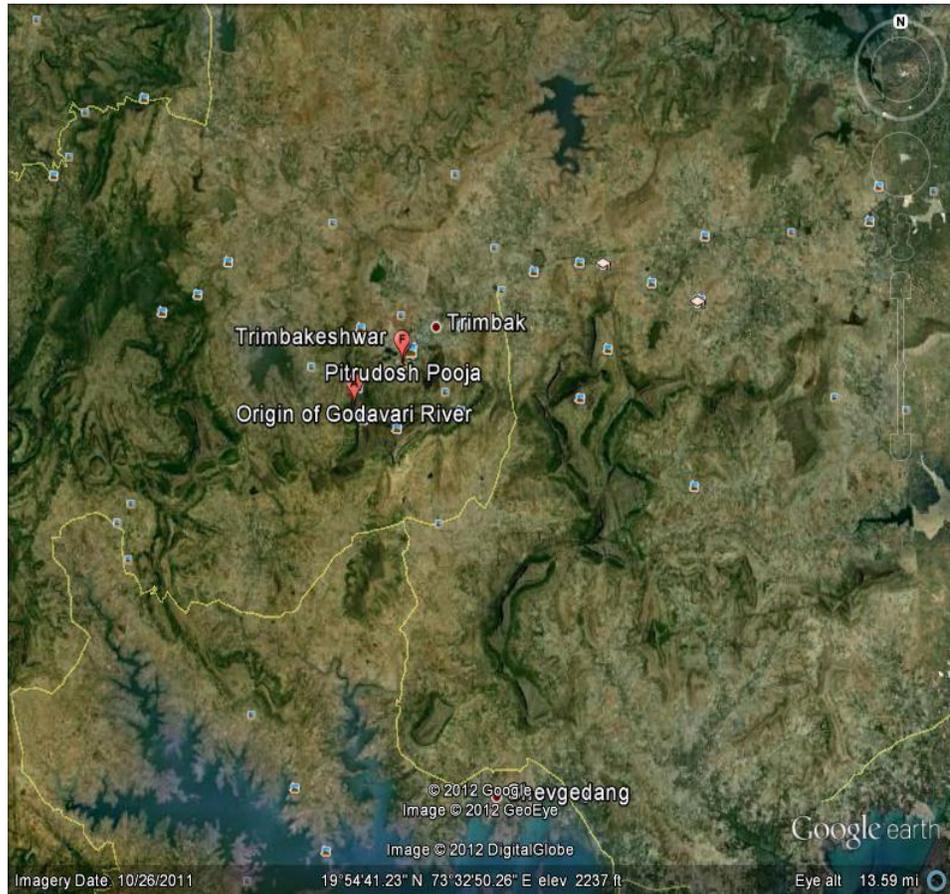
The Godavari is India's second longest river after the river Ganges. Its source of origin is in Triambakeshwar, Maharashtra. It flows east for 1,465 kilometres (910 mi), making the States of Maharashtra (48.6%), Telangana (18.8%), Andhra Pradesh (4.5%), Chhattisgarh (10.9%), Odisha (5.7%) evergreen and ultimately emptying into the Bay of Bengal ocean through its' extensive network of tributaries. Measuring upto 312,812 km<sup>2</sup> and having a larger drainage basin, it forms as one of the largest river basins in the Indian subcontinent along with only the Ganga and Indus rivers. In terms of length, catchment area and discharge, the Godavari is the largest in peninsular India and had been dubbed as the *Vridha* i.e., old Ganga (Dakshina Ganga 2014, <http://www.importantindia.com/10222/dakshina-ganga/>)

**GEOLOGY OF THE GODAVARI BASIN:**

The primary/initial catchment of the Godavari drainage basin is largely represented by the basalt of the Deccan Volcanic Province comprising up to 50% of the total basin area. This is followed by the Precambrian granites and gneisses of the eastern Dharwar craton, sandstones, shales and limestones of the Gondwana Supergroup, various sedimentary units of Cuddapah and Vindhya basins, charnockites and khondalites of the Proterozoic Eastern Ghats Mobile Belt and the sandstones of the Rajahmundry Formation. The Godavari River carries the largest sediment load among the peninsular rivers and the majority of the mass transfer in Godavari occurs during the monsoon. Mineral magnetic studies of the Godavari River sediments suggest that the floodplains in the entire stretch of the river are characterized by a Deccan basalt source. The bed loads on the other hand are sourced from local bedrock. In fact, influx of Deccan source in the Godavari River up to the delta regions and possibly in the Bay of Bengal off the Godavari, therefore, can be related to the intensive chemical weathering in the Deccan basalts. Abrupt increase in  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  (a measure of the ratio of stable isotopes  $^{13}\text{C}$ :  $^{12}\text{C}$ , reported in parts per thousand) values and decrease in TOC content accompanied with a significant increase in ferromagnetic mineral concentration in Bay of Bengal.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HISTORICITY OF GODAVARI RIVER

In the river Godavari, sediments from ~3.2 to 3.1 cal. ka BP reflected a shift of organic carbon and sediment source and a severe decline in vegetation coverage. This kind of phenomena indicates intensified deforestation and soil/rock erosion in the Deccan Plateau producing higher ferromagnetic mineral inputs, which is as such in agreement with the significant expansion of the activities related to agriculture in the Deccan Chalcolithic cultural period (Meng et al. 2017, n.k.)



Satellite view of the originating place of the Godavari River at Triambakeshwar



Bramhagiri range of Western Ghats where Godavari originates at Sri Triambakeshwar

Nashik is located in the Brahmagiri range of the Western Ghats i.e., on the western edge of the Deccan Peninsula on the banks of the river Godavari. The name of the city is famous due to the famed Nassak Diamond and the city is known for its charming surroundings and pleasant climate. The Godavari River flows through Nashik from its source Triambakeshwar, which lies to the southwest of the city, in the Nashik district. The climate of Nashik is very favorable for growth of grapes and sugar along with many other types of fruits. The production of grapes is comparatively more in Nashik district and so maximum number of wine industries can be found in the surroundings of this district Nashik as the '*Wine Capital of India*' or the '*Grape City of India*'.

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HISTORICITY OF THE RIVER GODAVARI**

The tribal population of this geographical area generally gets a link to the main land after being cut off by Machkund and Balimela Dams through boats. This is the originating place of Godavari and hence many a times, throughout the year, immense number of people flock to this area to witness and enjoy the beauty and serenity of the destination with great fervor as there are innumerable tourist places to witness around.



**Tribals trying to get link to the main land after being cut off by the Machkund and Balimela Dams**

**DUDHASAGAR WATERFALLS:**

Dudhsagar between 19° 97'17" between 73° 35' 85" western part of the Dudhsagar Waterfalls famous waterfalls popular picnic spots, Someshwar temple, the destination that of the people to travel Someshwar Temple is from Nashik. This Dughdsagar because the looks like that of Milk, 10metres stretch of the creamy white water n.d., [tourism.\(home/nashiktourism.in/wp\\_formatting.phpon](http://tourism.(home/nashiktourism.in/wp_formatting.phpon).



**Wonderful Dudhsagar Waterfalls**

Waterfalls is located North latitude and East longitude in Nashik city. is one of the most among the other located nearest to the prime religious captures the attention to this place. at a distance of 8 kms. waterfalls is known as falls of water here when it falls from lovely cascade with its flow (Amar Singala [sagar/public\\_html/live/wpincludes/](http://sagar/public_html/live/wpincludes/)

**DUGARWADI WATERFALLS:**

Dugarwadi waterfall is located between 19°99'74" North latitude and between 73° 78' 98" East longitudes in west part of the Nashik. Dugarwadi waterfall is 30 kms from Nashik on the road of Triambakeshwar and 2 kms from the Jawhaar road. Dugarwadi Waterfall is also known as one of the best natural waterfall who improves the beauty of Nashik District. In the monsoon season, Dugarwadi waterfall attracts the people to see its beauty. Due to this beauty, adventure and nature lovers simply attracts at this waterfall to take one day outing at Dugarwadi waterfall to feel the energetic spirit of the monsoon season. Dugarwadi is known as one of the great



place which helps to explore the beauty of Nature especially in the monsoon season (Dugarwadi Waterfalls 2015, [home/sagar/public\\_html/nashiktourism.in/wp\\_live/wpincludes/formatting.Php](http://home/sagar/public_html/nashiktourism.in/wp_live/wpincludes/formatting.Php)on).

### **TRIAMBAKESHWAR TEMPLE:**

Shiva Temple of Shree Triambakeshwar is located in 19°55'56" North latitude and between and 73°31'51" East longitudes in south part of the Nashik. Triambakeshwar temple is the most famous, holiest and sacred places for Hindu pilgrims and is admired as the 12 Jyotirlingas shrines of Lord Shiva. This temple lies in the foothill of Brahmagiri Mountain which is the origin of the river Godavari (called as Ganga in Nashik). The time to visit this temple is between 5.30a.m. and 9.00p.m. The existence of 3 lingas is one of the most significant and attractive feature of this temple as these 3 lingas are being represented as the Brahma, the Vishnu and the Maheshwara (Shiva). The Shiva lingam of this temple is placed in the internal square sanctorum (*garbagriha*). Here water constantly slinks out from the top of the Shivlingas. The sanctum is crowned with a graceful tower apart from being embellished with a massive *Amalaka* (a segmented or notched stone disk, usually with ridges on the rim, that sits on the top of a Hindu temple's shikhara or main tower) and a golden *Kalasha* (the amalaka itself is crowned with a kalasam or finial, from which a temple banner is often hung). The main feature of the Shiva linga is that it is always covered with a silver mask. Occasionally, it is ornamented with a golden mask of diamonds, emeralds and many precious stones.



**Front view of the Triambakeshwar Temple**

In 1755-1786 A.D., Shri Nana Saheb Peshawa constructed the temple of the 12th *Jyotirlinga* of God Shiva. Black stones were used to build this temple and it is said that the Shiva lingam is said to have emerged naturally. The temple is safeguarded by a 20-25 stone feet high surrounding wall around. This Jyotirlinga temple is just 10 minutes walk away from the main bus stand and thus those who intend can reach the temple by walk without getting into an auto. The general queue starts from the Entrance gate of the temple which will lead one to the queue that has logical separation of around 6 to 7 lines. The queue to the main temple passes through Nandi temple situated in front of the Shiva temple facing the main Shivlingam. The idol of Nandi is sitting on a platform that is carved out of white marble. The sanctum is quite small and in the abode where the main Shivlingam exists, there are three lings residing within the hollow structure. The whole structure of the roof of the temple is decorated with sculptural work featuring the running scrolls, the floral designs, the figures of Gods, the Yakshas, the Humans and the Animals. Outside the temple of Lord Shiva and just in front of the entrance gate, visitors can always see a few cows having self-feeding of the grass. The nearby Brahmagiri Mountain was used for construction by Peshwa Balaji Bajirao in the Nagara style of architecture is another

attraction. Another significant feature is that this Triambakeshwar Temple serves as the venue of the Kumbhamela that is organized and conducted once in 12 years. On every Monday which is considered as the day of God Shiva and also on the scared day of Shivratri celebrations are conducted here spectacularly with great pomp and splendor (Padam Kumar n.d., n.k.)

### Sahayadri Hills – The Entry Point of River Godavari

The river Godavari originates at Triambakeshwar (near Nashik in Maharashtra) in the Sahayadri hills, flows in a north-eastern direction and enters the city of Basara situated in the Adilabad district of the State of Telangana. From here, it flows further east, cutting through the Eastern Ghats. At Papikondalu, it forms a narrow gorge of 180 metres to 270 metres wide and 30 metres to 60 metres deep and enters the plains at Polavaram. The river valley of Godavari gradually becomes wider after Polavaram and extends upto 3.5 km. at Rajahmundry, which further expands to 7 km. near the city of Dhavaleswaram. Afterwards, further down from Dhavaleswaram, the Godavari flows through the deltaic region, popularly known as Konaseema, and branches into seven streams acquiring its' local name *Sapta-Godavari*. These seven streams are – *Vasisti*, *Vaisyamitri*, *Vamadevi*, *Gautami*, *Bharadwaja*, *Atreya* and *Jamadagni*. Apart from these 7 streams, the other important tributaries of the Godavari are the *Manjira*, *Manneru*, *Pranahita*, *Indravati* and *Sabari* (Murthy 2003, 11-12).

### Basara, Gnana Saraswathi Temple:

Sri Gnana Saraswathi Temple at Basara on the banks of the river Godavari is the only temple in South India dedicated to the Goddess of learning. According to legend, Maharishi Vyasa and his disciple and sage Suka decided to settle down in a cool and serene atmosphere after the Kurukshetra war. In the quest for a peaceful abode, he came to Dandaka forest and, pleased with serenity of the region, selected this place. After his ablutions in the river Godavari, Maharishi Vyasa used to bring three fistful of sand place it in three small heaps and made images of Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Kali with his mystic power and later conducted prayers. This idol made of sand has its face smeared with turmeric. By eating even a little bit of this turmeric paste



Saraswathi deity near Godavari River

it is believed, that any body's wisdom and knowledge will be enhanced. Since Maharishi Vyasa spent time praying here, this place came to be called as *Vasara* and it assumed present name due to the influence of the Marathi Language (Murthy 2012, 11-12).



Gnana Saraswathi, Basara, Adilabad District

Since India is *the land of temples*, almost every Temple in India has its unique legend telling a fascinating story about its' existence. Amongst such numerous legendary temples in India, this temple of Gnana Saraswati at Basara in the Adilabad District of Telangana holds a prominent place. Basara Temple is surrounded with beautiful gardens amidst the dry and barren patches of the Northern Telangana region. Built near the confluence of the rivers Manjira and Godavari, this Temple is adorned by the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. The presiding deity, 'Gnana Saraswati Devi', is in a seated position with a 'Veena' in hand and bedecked with turmeric. Nearby to this temple and in a little distance away is the shrine of Goddess Maha Lakshmi. On the Eastern side to that temple is the Maha Kali Temple. This Temple has no exquisite carvings like other Temples. Walking ahead a few steps, one can enter the sanctum sanctorum. A feeling of peace, brightness and unlimited joy engulfs one here, which can be better experienced than described. According to the Brahmanda Purana, the renowned poet and sage Valmiki, installed the idol of Gnana Saraswati and wrote Ramayana here. There is a marble image of sage Valmiki and his Samadhi near the Temple. It is also believed that this Temple is one of the three Temples constructed near the confluence of the Manjira and Godavari rivers by the Rashtrakutas. The Gnana Saraswathi Temple at Basara is situated at a distance approximately of 205 kms. from Hyderabad. This Saraswati temple is one of the two famous temples dedicated to Goddess Saraswati in India and the other is in Jammu & Kashmir (Nageswar Rao 2010, 184).

#### **SRI SEETHA RAMACHANDRASWAMY VARI DEVASTHANAM, BHADRACHALAM**

The cult of Sri Rama worship as a popular deity of the Hindus, dates back to about two thousand years. As early as in the 10th century, the immortal epic 'Ramayana' was rendered into Tamil by poet Kamban. The temple of Sri Rama at Bhadrachalam on the banks of the river Godavari first in the antiquity of Telangana is a living example and testimony of this great cult. Unlike many other famous temples, this temple is created by man i.e., *Manusha Pratishta*. According to the local tradition, the origin of this famous temple is referred to a mendicant, who came to this place from Ayodhya, many centuries ago. He took his abode in the small hillock which overlooks the wide basin of Godavari river. The original idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, which are being worshipped today, were chiseled out by him, who later on built a small temple in the place. However, according to popular legend, centuries ago, Sri Rama appeared to a woman devotee called Pakala Dammakka, who found the idols of these deities on the Bhadrakiri hillock on the banks of river Godavari and afterwards a small temple was erected by her at this place i.e., where the idols were found.



**The Bhadrachalam Temple near Godavari River and the Deity of Rama, Sita & Lakshmana, Khammam District, Telangana State**

Historically speaking, the renowned status the Bhadrachalam temple enjoys at present was actually acquired during the 17th century, when the great devotee of Sri Rama, saint Ramadas whose original name was Gopanna, who held a high office as a *tahsildar* during the reign of Abdul Hasan Thane Shah (1654-1687), the last Nawab of the Quatub Shahi kings of Golconda constructed this temple. The story says that Gopanna, who was in charge of Government revenue collections at this people, utilized the collected funds to reconstruct the old temple and brought it to its present form. He also regularized the mode of worship of the deity. Thus, Gopanna, later known as Ramadas, played a nucleus part in the history of this temple. It was during this period, Ramdas composed several melodious Telugu songs in praise of Sri Rama, which became very popular throughout the Telugu speaking areas.

It may be noted that the idol of Sri Rama in this temple is unique and does not conform to the usual iconographical representation of the deity. Instead of the normal two hands, the idol of Sri Rama here has four hands. While he holds the customary bow and arrow in these front two hands, the two rear hands hold a conch and a discus, similar to the characteristics of Vishnu. Generally, such four armed (*chaturbhuj*) Rama idols are rare and are considered very significant for worship.

From the point of architecture, the temple does not have such noticeable importance, as it is constructed sturdily rather than elegantly. However, the idols of the deities in the ‘sanctum’ are excellent pieces of divine beauty and the best. Such fine idols are not known to exist anywhere else in the country. The Nizam of Hyderabad had sanctioned substantial grants for the maintenance and regular worship at the temple. At present, the administration of the temple properties has been taken over by the Government. Two big festivals take place at Bhadrachalam every year – One on the Vaikunta Ekadashi day, and the other on Sri Rama Navami. During that time, there will be a regular stream of thousands of devotees and visitors (Vasudevan 2000, 274).

### **Sri Bhadrakalisametha Sri Veerabhadraswami, Pattisam Temple**

Pattisam is situated at a distance of 25kms. from Kovvuru Railway Station. It is considered as one of the ancient and sacred places in South India. This religious importance is due to the existence of the shrines of Veerabhadra and Bhavanarayana situated at the *Devakuta Parvatam* overlooking the *Papikondalu* or Hills in the heart of the river Gouthami, a branch of the famous river Godavari. Located on a small hillock that is surrounded by the river Godavari, this temple attracts the tourists and accords a divine feel of the devotees when they visit this place. Even in the days of fast track roads and bridges, one has to take a boat to reach this island and walk in the sandy stretch for at least a km. to reach the temple. Constructed during the Chola period, the temple is an abode for both Lord Siva and *Maha Sivaratri* is the festival



**Overview of the Pattisam Temple**

during which the pilgrim turnout would be about 2 lakh in a day. The turnout of pilgrims is however quite normal during the ordinary days. Raja Kochcharlakota Jaggayya, the zamindar of Polavaram accorded the villages of *Ragolapalli an Ammepalli* for the customary celebration of temple duties daily in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and an inscribed stone of the same is visible till date here.



***Inscription showing donating villages to the temple in 1825-26***

Pattisam is one of the oldest Saiva kshetras in Andhra Pradesh. Here the main deities *Sri Bhadrakalisametha Sri Veerabhadraswami* and *Sri Neelasametha Sri Bhavanarayanawamy* acts as the *Kshetrapalas*, while *Sri Kanakadurga* and *Sri Mahishasuramardini* are the village goddesses. It is strongly believed that the other two important deities who are enshrined here are *Anisri* and *Punisri*, who are believed as the deities to bestow children as a boon to their devotees. The temple prakara construction, besides bestowing innumerable grants and *agraharas* for the maintenance of the temple by Polavaram Zamindars especially by Raja Kotcherlakota Jaggiah in the year 1825-26, which is being inscribed here is crystal clearly visible till date in the form of an inscription within the campus of this renowned temple.

During the auspicious Kartika Masam i.e., the month of *Karthika*, a minimum number of thousand people visit this temple daily. During the recent Godavari Maha Pushkaralu (a massive festival dedicated to worshipping of rivers once in 144 years), over 3 lakh pilgrims visited these two temples. “Boat is the only mode of transport to reach this temple, as there is no constructed bridge. According to Nalam Surya Chandra Rao, the Executive officer of the temple, when the Godavari is in spate, (if the river is over flooded with water) the water touches the temple steps. The age old temple was given a complete facelift when the government sanctioned 4 crores on the account of Godavari Pushkaralu in the year 2003. Until then, the eight families of the temple priests who had their houses abutting the temple were forced to vacate their houses and shift to the rented accommodations in Pattiseema village as their houses were removed, as a part of the renovation work in the temple (Suryanarayana Murthy, 2016).

Water is the lively source of energy, starts its journey from thousands of years it travel and give life to the humanity. The flowing of Godavari River that starts from Nasik, Maharashtra, travels through different States of India that are diverse in culture but sustains its’ colour as well as taste in unison. The energy of the water flow reaches each and every State that has constructed dams whether major or minor to sustain and maintain humanity.

Under certain circumstances, to settle the disputes pertaining to the sharing of water resources and maintaining the *Bachawat Tribunal Award*, the Government of India constituted a common tribunal on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1969 to adjudicate the river water utilization disputes among the river basins of Godavari and Krishna rivers under the provisions of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act of 1956.

The common tribunal was headed by R.S. Bachawat as its Chairman and D.M. Bhandari along with D.M. Sen as its members. Godavari river basin is spread in the States of Telangana (TS), Maharashtra (MR), Orissa, old Madhya Pradesh (later bifurcated into present Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Chhattisgarh), Karnataka (K) and Andhra Pradesh (AP) (Hasan 1997, 1-111).

The current decline in the world's biodiversity is largely the result of human activities, resulting in habitat destruction, over-harvesting, pollution and the inappropriate introduction of foreign plants and animals (Bijukumar and Sushma 2006, 47-66). The reservoirs maintain an ecological balance of flora and fauna inter-relationship, regulate the surrounding climate and recharge the ground water. Finally the paper focuses on the Cultural aspects of Godavari River, refereeing waterfalls, temples near the river banks, maintaining the languages, dress pattern, food structure, agriculture, power generation, covering all aspects in our daily endeavors.

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