

Bhima Bhoi: The Philosopher Poet

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ABSTRACT

Bhima Bhoi was a 19th century saint poet in Odisha. He was a social reformer & mysticism poet in the Renaissance period. He was influenced by Mahima Gossain's 'Mahima Dharma'. It was also challenged the authority of caste, other political and social issues at that period. Mahima Dharma was monotheism religious movement in Odisha at that time. Bhimabhoi wrote 'Stuti Chintamani', 'Nirveda Sadhan', 'Shruti Nisedha Gita', 'Astaka Bihari Gita', 'Bhajanamaala', 'Chautisa' etc. His form of writing is so popular in literature of Odia. In his childhood, he worked as a cattle caretaker but when he came contact with the holy texts like the Bhagabat, the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata and the Puranas, he gradually grasped the essence of true knowledge and the authenticity of life. He got the way to enlightenment. He established his Ashram in Khaliapali, Sonepur at the time of King Prataprudra Singhdeva Bahadur. He died in 1895 at the same place. Before his death he taught us about the precious Ekeshwara Brahmavada. It was the form of Sunya (Void). Today he is familiar as a Nirgunapanthy. He was a great philosopher. He gave us knowledge about the 'Pinda-brahmanda tatwa' (theory about body & universal similarized), that was consists only Indian medieval Bhakti literature. His words and dedication to the society is so elegant. In his life he always adhered to the path of truth and righteousness. His famous quote is "Mo jeevana pachhe narke padithaau jagata uddhara heu". His' followers were both men and women; came from various background at that time.

INTRODUCTION

Bhima Bhoi is an amazing poet in Odisha. He is well known as a Adivasi poet in Odia literature. For him Adivasi Kandhakabi is important, but blindpoet is not so evident. Especially for such a poet, there is enough research behind it, but the research is not over. Such as birth, time and place, biography, majesty are supernatural events heard by religious people and some things quoted by critics. Despite this, it cannot be denied that Bhima Bhoi was born in the of the 19th century Odisha. When a person hears a strange or rich event, he connects it to supernatural events. In the case of saint writers in Odia literature, this is a clear description. Thus this is linked behind their way of life and memorable them. In this context, the discussion of Alekh Mahima dharma and Bhima Bhoi is certainly reasonable. Bhima Bhoi was a devotee of the majesty of the house. Alekh Mahima dharma and its spiritual theory was born from the soil of Odisha and it's influence is still observed in some neighborhood states like West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Discussion about Bhima Bhoi and

Mahimadharma have also appeared outside of India. It is questionable when the poet Bhimbhoi came to the point of discussion in the history of Odia literature. Although the critic and editor Arttaballabh Mohanty edited his book of poetry and brought it to the public. Before him, Siddha poet Sridhar Swami in 'Siddhachandrika', wrote two character Guru Jagannath and his scholar Barang's conversation about the birth of Bhimbhoi. They discussed that Bhima's birth place was Redhakhola. Once, in the night Guru Mahima met Bhima Bhoi at Redhakhola and after that he became a devotee of his guru Mahima Swami. "He was blind from birth. He opened his eyes and looked at the Lord (Guru)."

Discussion:

From the life of Bhima Bhoi, it is said that after taking food from him, Guru Mahima Gossain satisfied with his service and gave him the blessing of poetry and vision. This was the prediction of Sridhar Swami of 'Siddhachandrika'. A poet from Panchaskha, Achyutananda Das's 'Adi Samhita',

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'Kalpa Samhita' also mentioned this fact. So it is clear that, Bhimbhoi revealed as blind in these Samhita and Chandrika, which were composed as prophecies. There is no proof and truth about his blindness in his (Bhima Bhoi) Bhajans, Chautishas and various Gitas. It is mentioned in 'Stuti Chintamani' 21 boli & 71 boli that he would be able to see the beauty of nature, youth, sky etc. These things indicated that he could see all things through his eyes.

Apart from this, when he was a four years old boy, he saw Guru Mahima Gossain in his village. This signified that he had clear vision. In the same way, being a worldly person in the world, the feeling of dislike towards the family and society for his senselessness is also reasonable. If you read a few lines in 'Bhajanmala', it becomes clear that the poet was very sharp. The poet himself also accepted what he can see in the context of verse description.

"Looking at the sky, I will describe how many verses"
(Bhima Bhoi Textbook, page. 253)

The poet admits the word 'blindness' in only one or two places. Indifference to the political and social system of the time seems to be more possible behind tell about his blindness -

"Bhimbhoi said, "I am born blind as a sinner
If lucky, I shall hold Sriguru's feet." (Bhima Bhoi
Textbook, page 255)

In 'Chautisha Madhuchakra', the poet has also mentioned about his own vision. It can be a point of discussion. Again after the death of the Guru, it is assumed that the poet was not blind, through the way in which the poet's regret and passion have been expressed in his heart.

"We saw 'Him' directly with our eyes. Now where did
'He' leave with the covered
The place is ugly, to see the Guru's temple."

Despite all this, the 'History of Mahima Dharma and Pratipadak' mentioned Bhima Bhoi was blind that related to Mahima Dharma. According to the critic Bijaya Chandra Mazumdar - "he was good at first and became blind in his youth." According to the critic Arttaballabh Mohanty (founder of Prachi Samiti) "Bhima Bhoi was blind from his birth." After reading the manuscript of 'Stutichintamani' published by Prachi Samiti, the Maharaja of Sonapur (subarnpur), Sir Sri Biramitrodaya Singhdev, sent a letter to Arttaballabh. In that letter he expressed several opinions about Bhima Bhoi. "As an orphan, Bhima Bhoi was initially living in the village of Sangrampur, near the border of Redhakhola and Sonapur". He admitted in the letter that some of his later disciples had made such declarations regarding his blindness.

But he did not accept Saint Bhima Bhoi's blindness. Again, the Maharaja mentioned in the letter that, he was affected with an eye disease during his teenage. Critic and archaeologist Krushnachandra Panigarahi has denied that Bhimbhoi was not blind. According to the critic Mayadhar Mansingh, he lost his sight in childhood due to spring sickness. Brahmabdhut Vishwanath Baba's view that Bhima Bhoi was blind and with the Guru's blessings he became a poet.

Date and Place of Birth:

There is no information about the birth of the poet Bhima Bhoi. Therefore, various disputes have arisen based on the date and time of his birth. According to critic Arttaballabh Mohanty, he was born in 1855 and died in 1895. Pandit Binayak Mishra has determined the period of the poet between 1849 to 1895. At the age of 16, Bhima Bhoi took the initiation of Mahimadharma and composed poems. So it is clear that he was born in 1849. Similarly, the critic Chittaranjan Das in his book 'Odishara Mahimadharma' has mentioned that Bhimbhoi's time is the Bhanj's period of Odia literature. Critic Chittaranjan Das strongly accepts that Bhima Bhoi spent his precious life in Khaliapali village in Sonapur and died there. Earlier, the critic Nagendranath Basu had given the opinion that the birth place of Bhima Bhoi was Joranda. But this is not logical. Despite this, some accept that he was born in a Kandha family of village Gramdiha in Redhakhola, while others accept that Jatasingha of Balangir. He was adopted by a Kandha couple, Danra and Gurubari. According to Bhagirathi Nepak, he was born in Jatasingha village. Despite these doubts, there are many figures (Anka ganana) mentioned in the poet's composition. Like 21 anka, 37 anka, 54 anka etc. So his time can be estimated from this anka or periodical time.

Education and Poetic Initiation:

If we read the poems of the poet Bhima Bhoi, it gives us abundant knowledge and a profound acquaintance with devotion. In the corrupt and superstitious society of that time he was a tribal youth, and study the wisdom of Hindu Shastra Purana, scientific philosophy, concern for society and humanity towards all innocent creatures give him the identity of a rational personality. Apart from this, the names of other Odia poets like Sarala Das, Balaram Das and Upendra Bhanj appear to have been analyzed in his literature with the presentation of the issues of Nimal and Udayabatta in the context of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Gohira Tikiri war, Pharasi war, Malika etc. So it is known that the poet himself may have recited all this or heard it from someone. Like other Saints, the poet is silent about his education. He also

admits himself to be ignorant and stupid from his birth. In the same way, as a result of penance in the past, he has accepted to be a scholar in this birth (Stuti Chintamani/ 22boli)

"I read the text in my mother's womb because I have a little bit."

(Stuti Chintamani, 22 boli/page 44)

The poet called himself 'Kavikula Virbar', 'Kavikula Chand', 'Kavikrut'. He also said that his poetic power was God-gifted and the result of previous birth. With the blessings of Guru Mahima Gossain he got the power of composing poems at the age of 16. Going to acknowledge this, he mentioned –

"I was a fool from birth
I became a poet from sixteen age
I do not know anything called Vedashastra
Guru sat down and said give it to me." (Adianta Gita, Chapter 8)

He has admitted in 'Nirvedasadhan' that he composed the poem under the Guru's instructions and got the power to spread the principles of majesty Dharma. Elsewhere in 'Bhajanmala' the poet also gives a confession about his text -

"Fourveda is becoming readable
They know the character of the mind." (Bhajanmala / 302,)

In addition, the poet himself admits that the manuscript contains -

"There is still talk about the unexplained world
I can't tell you how much I will continue to write".

(Stutichintamani/21 boli)

Poet Bhima Bhoi is criticized as a blind in his religious society. So four persons have been accepted as the author of his poetry. Among them; two were Brahmins Hari Panda and Basudeva Panda. The other two were Vaishnavas Dharmananda Das and Markand Das. But there is no trace of it in any of Bhima Bhoi's compositions.

Conclusion:

In the 19th century, Renaissance period started a new era. In this period we found saint poet Bhima Bhoi and the birth of Mahima dharma. Mahima Gossain was the founder of the Mahima Dharma, but it was spread and preach by Bhima Bhoi. He settled this dharma as Nirakaradharm (shapeless). He was a subaltern voice in his time. His poetical language is mysticism and musical. He uses vernacular language instead of Sanskrit, that is called Boli (dialect). Today people of Mahima dharma used to recite his 'Stuti Chintamani' and his written bhajanas at Joranda (spiritual place) and in other Mahima Ashram and tungs. He is known as 'Santhakabi' of Odisha.

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