

A letter regarding Mahima Religion

This might not have been unknown to almost all who are the followers of Mahima Religion? The followers of this religion are monotheist and they do not stick to caste discrimination. They do not take food except the duration between the sunrise and the sunset. (Taking food except in the day time is prohibited.)

As the Christians believe on the reappearance of Jesus, so the mahimites believe in their reunion with the prophet Mahima here in this world. No social development has been achieved by this religion; for the majority of the mahimites are the low uncivilized people, the glory and fame (Mahima_ of this religion could not persist long. Otherwise, like Brahma Dharma, some social development could have been possible by this religion.

The followers of this religion are divided into two groups, viz – the yogis (ascetics)and the bhogis (hedonists). The people of the first group are kumbhipatias, meaning , they wear kumbhipata (the bark of Kumbhi tree). Their ashram or monastery is in Joranda village of Dhenkanal. Here lies the samadhi (graveyard) of Lord Mahima. There stands near the samadhi a doorless (faceless) temple. This monastery is not as enjoyable as that of Mahulpada.

The followers of the last (second) group are Kanapatias, meaning they wear cloths besmeared with red ochre and mathā. Their monastery is in the solitary forest near the village Mahulpada , nearly three Krosas () distant from the forte. Here is Narasingh Das, Lord Mahima's first disciple. This monastery reminded me of the ashrams described in the past. Seeing this ashram all thoughts went away from my mind and there arose wonderful divine feelings. There, through the entrance of the monastery, flows a clear fountain that caters the need of the animals and beasts. There is a high altar at a distance. There are many small houses for the disciples. There is a sunya gruha built by bricks, a stone house and a fire house. There fire house has four doors on its four sides. Small trees of mango,

jack fruit and banana, bending down being fruit laden , express the glory of the place. The ashramates never eat fruit from their trees. Other people eat them. There is a trench round each trees at the bottom, from which birds drink water, seeing how fearfully the birds drink water from these trenches, one can realise well how much horrifying violence is. Though there were no deer found in the ashram yet deer sometimes coming from the forest beautify the ashram. Are creatures swinging down in the speed of wild as if to offer fruits ?

A number of smooth terraces , the mind-stealing twitter of the birds, the sweet buzz of bees, those holy sacrifice in the fire-house, the slow blowing fragrant breeze, the peace-giving, mind enchanting clay altar under the Kadamb trees are adding to the beauty of the ashram and filling the minds of the visitors with the ripples of bliss.

UTKAL DEEPIKA, 17TH MARCH 1883