

Mahima Babaji

Our Jajpur reporter writes that nearly four or five hundred people of Dhenkanal, Sukinda and Keonjhar *gadjats* have organised a community named Kumbhipatias. Their other name is Mahima Babajis. Two or four persons of this community, entering into Madhupur, tried to destroy the caste system. The king have driven them away from his state considering them opposing Hinduism. Two of these Babajis, since nearly two months, are coming to Jajpur. They initiate disciples from Brahmin, Karan and Hadi castes and wander with them. They receive food from all houses except those of five: Kings, Brahmins, Barbers, Dhobas, Malis and Prostitutes. They do not even keep themselves away from Christians. Begging boiled rice from their houses, keeping in earthen pots, after eating on the street both the master and the disciples together, break the pot into pieces. Common people respect them as great and some people tell their sorrow before them and receiving their command cherish those in deep devotion. Even the desire of getting sons being fulfilled by them is known. However, seeing their ways of destroying caste system, the Brahmins of Jajpur have hold a meeting and have decided that who has lost his caste by Mahima Babaji, he will be condemned socially and no one will have social contact with them unless they expiate for their sins accordingly. Because of such regulations the number of disciples is decreasing and many of those who have already turned to be disciples are returning home and trying to expiate for their sins.

The Deputy Magistrate, hearing all those called for the Babajis to his residence to know about the situation. They introduced themselves that they do not honour the authority of Veda or any other scripture. Nor they worship any God. Their religion is Nirveda and Alekha. They only honour the Mahima. Mahima is the name of the formless Brahma which exists within all beings. Still, they do not have contact with five castes like

Brahmins and Kshatriyas etc. They gave its reason that they are all irreligious and that they never perform any religious activities. Therefore they are banned. Hearing all these the Deputy Magistrate, defeating them by arguments, told them to go away leaving the sub-division.

We have to tell one thing regarding this. We have nothing to say about the religion. But the people belonging to this community regard the king as irreligious. What is its implication and what is the meaning of the word king? If the king belongs to the *gadjat*, then there is nothing to say. Because under which king they are living, he is able to understand its meaning and is capable of taking necessary steps to prevent them from promulgating their opinions. If it implies to the British Government, then their talks appear very hard. And the authority should collect extensive reports about this community. It could be that they present the British to the people as irreligious, by which may decrease their devotion for the kings and may thereby rise rebellion. The people of the *gadjat* are illiterate. A rebellion has already taken place in Keonjhar that day and there is high faith upon the words of Babaji. If they will be told repeatedly that the king is irreligious and shown some imaginary examples, then is there any doubt in the fact that when the number of their followers will increase, there must be happening some misfortune?

(Utkal Sahitya, 6th September, 1873, pp. 66-67)