

ONE DAY INTERDISCIPLINARY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

UNDERSTANDING MAHIMA DHARMA IN ODISHA

25TH JAN 2018



Organized By:



Subarnapur, odisha

Concept Note of the seminar:

Mahima Dharma, is an Indian Religion practiced primarily in Odisha. It was started by the people from underprivileged castes as a social reform movement against the dominance of Brahmanism. Mahima Dharma in Odisha can be seen as a movement against the brahminical hegemony and spiritual authority. It emerged as a powerful religious movement symbolizing simmering dissent among the tribals and lower caste communities in the 19th century colonial Orissa. This movement articulated the aspirations of the marginalized, and challenged the Brahminical Hinduism signified by practices of untouchability, exploitation and various forms of caste based discriminations. It symbolized popular social dissent against the monotheistic order, by contesting the dominant caste hegemony and delegitimized the bourgeoisie class (the Chieftains, landlords) and the priests (the Brahmins). The prominent leaders of this movement suggested something like “Mahima” and “Alekh” which literally meant glory and unwritten / oral respectively. In principle, they proposed formless, shapeless, classless, and omnipresent character of the divine, and the whole idea was to demolish the exploitative order of Brahminical Hinduism.

Bhima Bhoi, Orissa’s 19th century poet of Mahima Dharma articulated a radical social equality and a theory of secular rationalism in colonial India. The indigenous ways in which he does this through the aesthetic form of his poetry laid a serious challenge to western modernity and paved a way to post colonial thinking in literature writing and liberated indigenous thinkers and writers. He also advocated how local narratives are also crucial vis-à-vis grand narratives in understanding social history.

This seminar tries to critically engage with theoretical understanding of Mahima Dharma. Further it interrogates about Mahima Dharma and its various social resistance. The need of the hour is to contextualize Mahima Dharma in subaltern discourse in a proper socio-economic-political dimension by situating in a historical background. This seminar is an attempt to have a holistic understanding through various disciplinarian perspectives on the issue o Mahima Movement.

Objectives of the seminar:

- I-To analyze theoretical understanding of Mahima Dharma in Odisha
- II- To examine the genealogical history of Mahima Dharma
- III- To reflect upon how Mahima Dharma grew as a social movement and became a symbol of resistance.
- IV-To introspect how Mahima Movement contribute to subaltern discourse in odisha.
- V-To understand textual analysis of Mahima Literature and how it contributes to Odia literature in particular and English in general.

Sub-themes of the seminar:

- I-Genealogy, History and Mahima Dharma
- II- Subaltern Politics and Mahima Dharma
- III- Religious Rationality and Mahima Dharma
- IV- Mahima Dharma as a Social Movement
- V- Mahima Dharma and Social Change
- VI- Mahima Dharma and Gender Discourse

Abstracts submission:

Abstracts of the seminar papers related to the theme and sub-themes are invited within 500 words on or before 20th Jan 2015. Soft copy of the abstract of the paper should be sent to- gunajnu@gmail.com.

Rules for Participation:

- I-Registration is mandatory for participation in the seminar. Only the registered participants will be provided participation/ presentation certificates.
- II- Paper presenters will normally be given 8 minutes and hence, they should organize their paper accordingly. PPTs are also welcomed.

III-The registered participants will be provided breakfast, lunch, and tea.

Patron

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Shree Ram College, Rampur

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