



## SHIVDHARMA: A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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**Abstract:** *The present communication deals with the philosophy of new religion "Shivdharma". 'Sindkhedraja' a small village in Buldhana district of Maharashtra is the birthplace of Jijabai, mother of great Maratha warrior Shivaji. It was Shiv Prakashan Sohala (manifestation of new religion). The new religious philosophy was named 'Shivdharma'. Maratha Seva Sangh is an organization that basically operates in Maharashtra. Mr. Puroshattam Khedekar and Mr. A. H. Solunke are the pioneers of this movement. The gathered mob took pledge for accepting the new religion Shivdharma. Inequality is the soul of Hinduism. The morality of Hinduism is only social. It is not normal and human to say the least. This is what Hinduism has become. Nobody had doubt about this inequality Social composition of the Hindu society does not favor poor and low ranked sections of Society. About the cast system Hindu philosophy states that all castes do not stand parallel. It is a system in which the castes are placed in an upright situation one above the other. In the scheme of Manu the Brahmin is placed in first rank then Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. It is not conversion from Hindu religion according to followers of Shivdharma. They alleged that Brahmanism is the philosophy of superiority.*

**Key words:** *"Shivdharma, Sindkhedraja, Jijabai, Maratha warrior Shivaji, Hinduism, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra etc.*

### INTRODUCTION

Religion is a more or less coherent system of beliefs and practices concerning a supernatural order of beings forces places or other entities a system that for its adherents has implication that the adherents for their behavior and welfare implication that the adherents in varying degree and ways take seriously in their private and collective life. (Harry Johnson) Society accepts defines and rediscovers the nature of religion. Comparative religion tells us that all religions have history and that none is final and perfect religion. Each religion had gone through process of change. While talking in Indian context, any student of Indology knows that Hinduism had been particularly, the Brahmanic version of it, passed through a career of long vicissitudes. In fact, for a major part of the period, Hinduism had been



deprived of royal patronage. It has survived in spite of the attacks of the Buddhists, the Jains, foreign invaders and seven hundred years of Muslim rule. The structure of Hinduism is so vast and diverse that it calls for systemic analysis of its heterogeneity and the factors, which account for it. The variation in Hinduism is both regional and sect-linked. (The sociology of G.S. Ghurye- Pramanick)

Hinduism the religious movements in India tried to make Hinduism more contemporary as they wanted to be. Raja Ram Mohan Roy introduced Brahmo Samaj. He defines it as more realistic and society oriented. In his philosophy he does not defer people on cast. At the end the revival continues, earlier in India there is lot of variations of Hinduism as it is. Later on Swami Dayanand Saraswati found modern philosophy of reformation known Arya Samaj. Above all when Dr. B. R. Ambedkar converted to Buddha Dharma it was major episode in Hinduism. Bryan Wilson quotes "religious movements will continue because new religious movements offer reassurance to men in more immediate ways. They cut through the encumbrances of tradition; they use contemporary language and symbols and more direct path of spiritual mobility". Recently in Maharashtra a religious movement proves it again that people will rediscover religion and will try to make it more contemporary in their ways.

### **‘SHIVDHARMA’ MANIFESTATION CEREMONY**

‘Sindkhedraja’ a small village in Buldhana district of Maharashtra is the birthplace of Jijabai, mother of great Maratha warrior Shivaji. This small village came in light when lakhs of people gathered with unusual intention. It was Shiv Prakanth Sohala (manifestation of new religion). The new religious philosophy was named ‘Shivdharma’. Maratha Seva Sangh is an organization that basically operates in Maharashtra. Mr. Puroshattam Khedekar and Mr. A. H. Solunke are the pioneers of this movement. But this did not happened all of a sudden. It was the result of continuous efforts. Shivdharma activities during ten years. Massive campaign was launched before Shivdharma manifestation ceremony. Lakhs of people came from Maharashtra and other parts of the country. Many of them came spontaneously on own. Shivjoti (flame) arrived at the ground, which was started from Diksha Bhumi (Nagpur) symbolically. The gathered mob took pledge for accepting the new religion Shivdharma.

### **WHY SHIVDHARMA?**

Inequality is the soul of Hinduism. The morality of Hinduism is only social. It is not normal and human to say the least. What is immoral easily becomes deprived, cruel for humankind.



This is what Hinduism has become. Nobody had doubt about this inequality. Social composition of the Hindu society does not favor poor and low ranked sections of Society.

Priest is God blessed and plays major role in Hindu religion. Hinduism requires a priest to perform a religious ceremony. The priest appointed by the scripture is the Brahmin. Brahmin can accept and deny the invitation of any Hindu irrespective of his caste for performing religious ceremony. The invitation of which caste he will accept and of which he will refuse is a matter left to the wishes of the Brahmin.

This system advocates the domination of Brahmanism and the hierarchy in the society. The caste at which a Brahmin will officiate is held as superior to a caste at whose religious functions. Obviously the other caste in the Hindu religion has ranked after Brahmin. The question does not end here. The authority to perform religious rituals holds the lower cast to exploit.

About the cast system Hindu philosophy states that all castes do not stand parallel. It is a system in which the castes are placed in an upright situation one above the other. In the scheme of Manu the Brahmin is placed in first rank then Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. This system of rank and gradation is simply another way of justify the principal of inequality. Manu is responsible for the creation of cast. Manu preached the sanctity of the Varna. Varna system is parent of the cast. In that sense Manu can be charged with being the progenitor of it. There can be no question that Manu is responsible for upholding the principal of gradation and rank. Hierarchy creates discrimination among the society. Manu philosophy divides the society into parts and Bahujans are placed at the bottom. From many centuries the lower section of the society has been dumped into darkness. This stratification needs to reconstruct for the welfare of the Bahujans.

Philosophy of Hinduism does not satisfy the test of justice. Hinduism is not interested in the common man. Hinduism is not interested in society as a whole. The center of its interested lies in a class and its philosophy is concerned in sustaining and supporting the rights of that class that is why in the philosophy of Hinduism is such that it cannot be called the religion of humanity. In Hinduism there is no sorrow, no help for ordinary people.

### **CONCEPT OF SHIVDHARMA**

It is not conversion from Hindu religion according to followers of Shivdharma. They argued that as per ruling of Supreme Court Hinduism is a way of life not a religion. We all had no



religion so there is no question of conversion at all. In Hinduism large section of people are exploited by a small group of people. They alleged that Brahmanism is the philosophy of superiority. Manusmriti is the charter of inequality. Hinduism carried the superior and subordinate feeling among the society. Brahmins harass Bahujans for a long period. They are bound to follow rites and observances. Superstition, animism, fetishism, totemism and magic such kinds of concepts are created by Hinduism. These concepts lead to create orthodox view among Bahujans. There is time to rethink about our way of life. We should move on with rationality and practical view of life. This situation compelled us to form and construct new philosophy and it is shivdharma, they argued.

Shiv means truth, Shiv means good and it is not related with Maratha king Shivaji or Hindu God Shivshankar. Jijabai mother of Maratha king Shivaji is the inspiration of Shivdharma but she is not Goddess or supernatural power. It is asked to all the followers not to warship her she is a human being with capacity of guidance. Concept of rebirth has been denied. Caste system is the soul of Hinduism. It is very complex feature of Indian society. It should be destroyed but Shivdharma has no tools to destroy it. But the founders are optimistic that one or the other day, the cast system will be removed from society as civilization grows.

Shivdharma is based on rationalism. Everything is balanced and intended on rationalism. Theology of Hinduism might be pure and holistic but until it is not open to criticize it will not represent the common interest. Holy books should be discreet. In future if Shivdharma creates or accept any holy book it will be open to criticize. Any criticism based on rationalism will be appreciated. God is belief; if this belief strengthens the attitude and inner power Shivdharma will have no objection to follow such kind of belief. God may be inspiration but should not be superstitious faith.

Shivdharma will follow the principle of equality. Everyone has his occupation determined for him. What about liberty so far we had choice of occupation goes there is none. Shivdharma will not interfere in the occupation choice of the follower.

## **CONCLUSION**

Shivdharma is a new concept of religion. The followers as Shivdharma argue that the rites and observances of Hinduism which can dominance of superiority of Brahmanism compelled to create the new philosophy of religion. The followers of Shivdharma are aware of criticism and ready to modify its philosophy. It is difficult to radiate all the rituals and tradition of the



past but in course of time changes will take place. The philosophy states that women should have equal status as men. However the philosophy seems to have future.

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