



Bhojpuri Plays of Rahul Sankrityayan: Vedic Influences on His Literature

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Abstract:

Rahul Sankrityayan holds a unique position in modern Indian literature as a thinker who combined ancient Indian knowledge systems with progressive social thought. While he is often discussed in the context of travel writing, history and Marxist ideology, his Bhojpuri plays deserve special attention for the way they carry Vedic ethical and philosophical influences into a regional, people-centred literary form. Rahul Sankrityayan's engagement with Bhojpuri was a deliberate cultural choice. He believed that literature should speak in the language of the masses. His Bhojpuri plays are rooted in folk life, rural settings and everyday conflicts, yet they are enriched by classical Indian thought, particularly Vedic ideas. Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan is a luminous star in the firmament of Hindi, Sanskrit, Bhojpuri, Tibetan, Russian and Buddhist literature. He spent more than 40 years of life as a vagabond traveller thirsty for knowledge. He was like an untiring bee flying from one beautiful flower of nature to another tasting and sipping the essence of flower to its last core and then turning them into the honey of great and profound

knowledge in the form of immortal books. In the long run, he became a Buddhist monk sacrificing his whole life for the sake of the society. His writings comprise a treasure house of information about cultural, anthropological, sociological, geographical, linguistic and economic conditions of human beings. Apart from being an international writer, educationist, social reformer and polyglot, his love for Bhojpuri language and his contribution as a great Bhojpuri playwright is beyond measure. He penned eight classic Bhojpuri plays concerning contemporary issues with masterfully crafted language full of images, symbols and other dramatic and poetic devices which need to be explored and elucidated in modern context. All his eight Bhojpuri plays were composed in the prisons of Hajaribag and Hajipur during the Quit India Movement. His Bhojpuri plays are as follows: Jonk, Nayeeki Duniya, Mehrarun ke Durdasa, Dunmun Neta, Japania Rachhas, Germanwa ke Har Nihchay, Desh Rachchhak, Ee Hamar Ladai.

Rahul Sanskrityaan has composed several great works of Hindi and Buddhist literature. But very few people know that he has to his credit a number of Bhojpuri plays which need to be explored and examined in modern context both on the basis of its theme and technique. For Rahul Sankrityayan, Bhojpuri drama functioned as a medium of social awakening, a continuation of India's oral and dialogic traditions, a platform to reinterpret ancient values in modern contexts.

***Keywords:** Bhojpuri literature, Bhojpuri Plays, Women Empowerment, Social injustice, Economic sparsity, New generation, Saran ke*

Sankrityayan's literature does not mean blind adherence to abstract ideas, facts and figures, rather they are highly concrete, integrated and literary. His Bhojpuri literature refers to ethical questioning, human-centric philosophy, and above all, emphasis on action (karma) rather than dogma. These ideas, central to the Vedas and Upanishads, subtly shape the themes, characters and conflicts in his Bhojpuri plays.

Dharohar, Chapra, Ekma, Parsagadh, Sant Prasadi Das, Sant Lachhuman Das.