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Mahendar Misir: The Great Creator of Bhojpuri Folk Literature and Purvi Melodies

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Abstract: *Mahendar Misir is a well-known folk poet of Bhojpuri literature. His poetry beautifully combines the simplicity of folk life with deep spiritual awareness. His songs are not just for entertainment; they also show the struggles of rural life, human emotions, and spiritual experiences in a very real way.*

He uses simple and natural language, which easily connects with common people. Because of this, his poems feel authentic and close to everyday life. In his works, we can see clear pictures of village life, family relationships, the pain of migration, the waiting of women for their loved ones, and small but meaningful moments of daily living. These elements not only show social reality but also reflect the inner emotional and spiritual struggles of human beings. Especially in his Purbi songs, the feeling of separation (viraha) is not only about human love; it also becomes a symbol of the distance between the soul and God.

Spirituality is another strong aspect of his poetry. Themes like devotion (bhakti), self-reflection, and the temporary nature of life appear again and again in his songs. Through simple life situations, he expresses deep spiritual truths. In this way, his poetry acts as a bridge between folk life and spirituality. The aim of this research paper is to study the relationship between folk life and spiritual consciousness in Mahendar Misir's poetry. It tries to understand how realism and spirituality come together to create a unique poetic beauty. It also highlights the relevance of his poetry in today's time.

Keywords*: Bhojpuri Literature, Folk Life, Spiritual Consciousness, Purbi Songs, Separation (Viraha), Devotion (Bhakti), Symbolism, Folk Culture, Contemporary Relevance*

The poet Mahendar Misir was born at the village Mishrawaliya near Jalalpur of the district of Saran in Bihar in a Brahman priest family on 16th March, 1865 and left this mortal earth on 26 October 1946, one year back of the Independence of India. He is often called the Purbiya Samrat (the master of Purbi), a lokdhun of Bhojpuri region. His father Shiv Shankar Mishra was the priest of the landlord Babu Halwant Sahay. At the house of the landlord, often different dramas and dances along with music were performed and the child Mahendar used to watch all these artistic creativities with much curiosity which later on culminated into a great passion for him. Renowned singers from Bihar used to come to Babu Halwant Sahay regularly. While accompanying his father to the court of Haliwant Sahay, his young mind was so deeply influenced by music that, as he grew older, his artistic abilities kept flourishing.
Mahendra Misir was a man of great talent. He was not interested in studies. Along with wrestling, horse riding, and singing, he was also quite skilled at playing instruments like the tabla, dholak, and harmonium. He had a cheerful nature and often made people laugh.

It is said that once there was a musical event in the court, but the tabla player did not show up. At that time, Mahendra Misir played the tabla so skillfully that all the music lovers present were captivated. After that, his presence became essential at every event.
Around the same time, the influence of the Purbi songs composed by him also grew. Good dance troupes began inviting him. Across the entire region, all the dancers and performers (tawaifs) had his songs on their lips. Ignoring social restrictions, he started traveling to various places to sing.

Mahendar Misir has composed a number of great Bhojpuri verses. Apart from his magnum opus *Apurva Ramayan,* the following other immortal books are to his credit, though most of them are not available today. They are as follows: *Mahendra Manjari, Mahendra Vinod, Mahendra Diwakar, Mahendra Prabhakar, Mahendra Ratnawali, Mahendra Chandrika, Mahendra Kushumawti, Mahendra Mantrak, Bhagwat Dasam Skand, Krishna Gitawali, Bhishma Vadh Natak* etc.
(Mahendra Mishir ki Pratinidhi Kavitayen,16).

About his life, village and parentage, the poet Mahendar Misir has composed an autobiographical poem at the end of the Apurva Ramayan. He writes:

मउजे मिश्रवलिया जहाँ विप्रन को ठट्ट बसे,
सुन्दर सोहावन जहाँ बहुते मालिकाना है।
गाँव के पश्चिम में विराजे गंगाधर नाथ,
सुख के स्वरूप ब्रह्मरूप के निधाना हैं।
गाँव के उत्तर से दखिन्न ले सघन बाँस,
पूरब बहे नारा जहाँ काहीं का सिवाना है।
दिज महेन्द्र रामदास पुर के ना छोड़ो आस,
दुख-सुख सभ सह करके समय को बिताना है।
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं, 16)

[At the village Mishrawaliya, where Brahmans live in comfort and dignity,
It's a very beautiful and charming place where there are a number of landlords.
To the west of the village resides Gangadhar Nath,
The embodiment of happiness, a treasure of divine (Brahma-like) form.
From north to south, the village is filled with dense bamboo groves,
To the east flows a stream marking the village Kanhi's boundary.

Says Mahendra, the devotee of Ram, do not give up hope for the village.
Bear both sorrow and joy, and pass the time with patience.]

Pandit Mahendra Misir has made a unique contribution among the poets who have shaped the flow of Bhojpuri poetry. He was a great poet of Purbi rhythm and style. The most important feature of Purbi style is deep emotion, especially the feeling of separation (viraha). In many songs, a woman expresses her pain while waiting for her husband or lover who has gone away, often for work. This sense of separation is not only about human love. Sometimes, it becomes spiritual, symbolizing the distance between the human soul and God.
Misir was the first to give recognition to the pains and stories of women. In this regard his contribution to portray the plights, persecution and inner feelings of women in rural India specially in the Bhojpuri belt is immense. Through the medium of the folk language, he brought before society certain untold episodes which, over time, became a treasure of literature. It is not an easy task to express the psychology of women in simple words. His inner presentation of the separated and deserted women in the village life reminds us of the champions of women empowerment including Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath and Anita Desai. The credit goes to Pandit Mahendar Misir who selected proper words at proper places to express the untold feelings of married women in the village surrounding. Poet Misir, taking risks, placed the raw words of the folk language into appropriate contexts and gave them meaningful expression. This not only adorns harsh and rough expressions but also becomes sufficient to create a lasting rhythm on every lip. About the greatness of his poetry, Dr. Suresh Kumar Mishra rightly observes:

> " उनकी कविता विशाल वृक्ष की शीतल छाँह है, जिसके नीचे उठंग कर कोई थका यात्री नई ताज़गी प्राप्त करता है। उनकी कविता आधी रात में बजने वाले हारमोनियम की अनुगूँज बनकर भीतर तक उतरती जाती है।
> (महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं, 16)

[His poetry is like the cool shade of a huge tree under which a weary traveler stretches out and finds fresh vitality. His poetry, like the echo of a harmonium played at midnight, seeps deep into the inner self.]

Mahendra Mishir was contemporary to Bhikhari Thakur and Rahul Sanskrityaan. Bhikhari Thakur has presented the ills and maladies of the contemporary society through the portrayal of several immortal characters in the form of Launda Naach , Nautanaki dramas and some Bhojpuri local songs. Similarly, Mahapandit Rahul Sanskrityaan has written eight Bhojpuri plays in which he has very beautifully presented the plights and predicament of the poor and the deserted people of the colonial India and also some other contemporary themes of social consciousness. But so far as the poetry of Pandit Mahendar Misir is concerned, he is very much concerned with the inner feelings of women and their unexpressed and untold wishes and aspirations. His contribution to revive and upgrade the Bhojpuri folk culture, folk dance and folk music is beyond measure. Dr. Usha Verma rightly says:

> "पंडित महेंद्र मिसिर एक नाम है—पूर्वी की धुन के जनक का, एक नाम है हारमोनियम, तबला, पखावज, मृदंग, सारंगी, एकतारा और बाँसुरी जैसे वाद्य यंत्रों को अद्वितीय निपुणता से बजाने वाले विलक्षण कलाकार का। एक नाम है—पूर्वी के साथ-साथ ग़ज़ल, दादरा, ठुमरी, टप्पा, निर्गुण, कजरी, सोहर, झूमर, होली, चैता आदि समस्त भारतीय संगीत-शैलियों को मोहक अंदाज़ में प्रस्तुत करने वाले प्रवीण गवैये का।"

(महेंद्र मिसिर: विविध आयाम, 70)

[Pandit Mahendra Misir is a name—of the originator of the Purvi melody; a name of an extraordinary artist who could play instruments like the harmonium, tabla, pakhawaj, mridang, sarangi, ektara, and flute with exceptional mastery. It is a name—of a skilled singer who, along with Purvi, could present ghazal, dadra, thumri, tappa, nirgun, kajri, sohar, jhumar, holi, chaita, and various other forms of Indian musical traditions in a captivating style.]

Mahendra Mishir was a poet par excellence. He has composed all types of songs and poems concerning the social, cultural, religious and feminine sensibility of the contemporary time. His religious poetry is mostly related to the Ramayan and the Mahabharat.
The songs and verses of Mahendar Misir often echo with the दर्द—the tender ache—of the Gopis, steeped in longing and separation. Their emotional landscape finds a profound resonance with the Bhramar Geet of Surdas, where devotion and विरह (separation) intertwine like fragrance in the wind. In the absence of Krishna, the Gopis are drowned in sorrow; their hearts tremble with yearning. Through their voices, the poet delicately weaves the inner turmoil of womanhood—the silent cries of separation, the unspoken desires, and the restless stirrings of the soul—into a lyrical tapestry of deep emotional beauty.

Many of his compositions also draw inspiration from the sacred कथा of the Ramayana. Episodes such as the dialogue of the boatman (Kevat Samvad), the intense exchange between Ravan and Angad, the divine wedding of Ram, and the vivid portrayal of Janakpuri's blossoming gardens—where even a humble gardener pauses to question and wonder—are rendered with grace and poetic charm.In all these verses, one finds a harmonious confluence of Shringar Ras (the essence of love and beauty) and Bhakti Ras (the essence of devotion). Like two rivers meeting, they flow together seamlessly, creating a poetry that is at once tenderly human and divinely transcendent.

Critical Exploration of His Select Poems:

Mahendar Misir, the great folk poet of Bhojpuri literature, expressed profound spiritual experiences through the simple language and symbols of rural life in his Nirgun devotional songs. In his Nirgun poetry, worldly relationships and domestic images often symbolize the eternal relationship between the soul and the Supreme Being. Let us see the following Nirgun Bhajan:

"कइसे जाई ससुरारी।
खेलत में रहनी हो सिपुली मउनिया से आई गइले गवना के नियारी हो।
बाबा घरे रहितें मोरा भइया घरे रहितें त फेरि देतें डोलिया कहाँरी हो।
काँचहीं बाँसवा के डोलिया बनवले से लागी गइले चारि गो कहाँरी हो।
नाहीं मोरा लूर ढंग एकहु रहनवां पिया हमसे करिहें पुछारी हो।
मिली जुली लेहु सभ सखिया सलेहरि से छूटी गइले बाबा के दुआरी हो।
कहत महेन्दर कुछ नीको ना लागे से खुलि गइले कपट कंवारी हो।
कइसे जाईं ससुरारी। आ
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं, 23)

[How shall I journey to my in-laws' home?
Just moments ago, I was lost in play—

A carefree child beneath the open sky,
And now the call has come,
A summons I scarcely understand.
Had I remained in my father's courtyard,
My brothers would have turned the palanquin back—
But now it stands ready, fragile,
Woven of tender bamboo,
Lifted by four silent bearers
Who carry me toward the unknown.
I know no ways, no manners, no art of living—
How shall I answer
When my Beloved questions me?
O my companions, gather close, embrace me once more—
For I must leave this threshold behind,
The doorway of all I have ever known.
Says Mahendra—
Nothing feels gentle or pleasing now;
The veil of innocence has slipped away,
And the heart stands bare,
On the edge of eternity.]
(Mahendra Mishir ki Pratinidhi Kavitayen,23)

This poem is about life and death, but it is explained in a simple way using the story of a young bride. The poet says that the girl was just playing happily like a child, and suddenly she is told that she has to go to her husband's house. She feels confused and scared because she is not ready yet. She also says that if her father and brother were there, they would have returned the palanquin bearers, that is, the messengers of the Almighty God. Here by the terms father and brother, the poet seems to denote our devotion to God and other good works for the needy people.
Here, the girl is actually the human soul, and the husband's house means God's home. The father's house means this world where we live. Just like a bride has to leave her home after marriage, in the same way, every person has to leave this world one day.

The bamboo palanquin and the four people carrying it show what happens after death, when a body is taken away. The girl says she does not know how to behave or what to say when her husband asks her questions. This means that a person feels worried about what answer they will give to God after death. She asks her friends to meet her one last time before she leaves. These friends represent our senses and the people we are attached to in life. In the end, the poet says that nothing feels good anymore because the truth has come out. The person realizes that life is temporary and one day everyone has to leave everything behind and go alone.

The above Bhojpuri Nirgun Bhajan has a very close conformity with another great Bhojpuri saint poet of Saran Sri Lakshmi Sakhi Ji Maharaj who in his famous classic granth *Amar Kahani* rightly observes:

"फेरूना मिली कबो नरतन साजावा ॥
सुनि लेहु गंगन से आवेला आवाजवा ॥
समुझी बिचारी संवारी लेहु काजावाँ ॥
मरी गईले बाप तोरे मरी गईले आजावाँ ॥
तूका रहब जग में छाई के छाजावाँ ॥

आके निआराइल अब काल के भाजावाँ ॥
जे देखते मातर गिरि मुँहें-मुँहें गाजावाँ ॥
लछमी सखी पिया सिर पर ताजावाँ ॥
देखते लागेला जैसे राजा महाराजावाँ ॥
(अमर कहानी,87)

["You will never again receive this precious human form.
Listen—the call echoes from the heavens.
Understand, reflect, and fulfill your sacred duty.
Your father has passed, your mother too is gone.
Will you remain in this world like scattered dust?
Time has arrived in its fiercest form—run from its grip.
Even mountains tremble at its mere sight.
Lakshmi Sakhi sees his beloved crowned with glory,
Appearing like a majestic king among kings."]
(Amar Kahani,87)

This poem by Saint poet Lakshmi Sakhi gives a very simple but deep message about life. The poet says that this human life is very precious and we will not get it again. That is why we should not waste it. There is a call coming from above, which means God is calling us and reminding us to understand the truth of life. The poet tells us to think carefully and do good work while we are alive. Life is short, and time keeps moving forward. Our parents and loved ones also leave this world one day, so nothing here stays forever. Still, many people keep living without thinking about the real purpose of life, just like dust spreading everywhere without direction.

Time is very powerful, and no one can escape it. Even big and strong things cannot stand against it. So the poet is warning us to wake up and not ignore this truth. In the end, the poet says that the one who understands this and lives properly becomes close to God and shines like a king. This means a good and aware person becomes great in a spiritual way.

In one of his songs, Pandit Mahendar Misir lays emphasis on the devotion of God. He is of the opinion that the only thing real and permanent is chanting the name of God which accompanies you to the gate of heaven or in the lap of God. Other worldly relations, possession and your material earnings will no longer be helpful at the court of Bhagwan Yamraj, the God of death and justice. He says:

"भजि ल रामजी के नइया बेड़ा पार होई।
एक दिन सोना के ई देहिया बेकार होई।
अइहें जम के सिपाही बनिहें मुसुकी चढ़ाई,
छूटिहें सब अइंठलाका तन लाचार होई।
पिता माता अउर नारी साला सरहज ओ सारी,
केहू संगें नाहीं जाए के तैयार होई।
जब ले चलता ई तन करिलऽ हरि के भजन,
एक दिन खटिया पर साँझ भिनुसार होई।
कहत द्विज महेन्द्र गाई चेत लऽ अबहूँ से भाई,
हरि के भजले से जिनगी निस्तार होई।"
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं,पद 26, पृष्ठ 33)

[Worship Lord Ram, and only then will the boat of your life cross over. One day, this body, though as precious as gold, will become useless. The messengers of Yama will come and surround you, and everything will be left behind as the body becomes helpless. Father, mother, wife, and all relatives—none of them will be ready to go along with you. As long as this body is alive and moving, worship the Lord, because one day you will lie helpless on a cot from evening till morning. Dwij Mahendra says: awaken even now, O brother—by worshipping the Lord, life attains liberation.]

The same type of Bhajan has been composed by the great Bhojpuri Sant Mahaprabhu Jagannath Das. Sant Jagannath Das was born at the village Rampur just beside Bhagwanpur Hat,Siwan whose sacred samadhi Sthal is situated at Anandbag Bakhari, near Chainpur, Siwan. Let us see his two immortal verses which have very close similarity to Mahendar Misir:

1.हरि भज हरि ना तो मुएबे पछता के।
सेती में ले जहीहें खाट पर उठा के।
लकड़ी बटोर चिता रखिहें सजा के।
कपड़ा ओढ़ाई दिहे ऊपर सुता के ।
मुहावा में आग दिहैं चारों ओर घुमा के।
जारल जइबे खोड़ खोड़ बसावा से मारके।
मुसुक् चढ़ाई जम्मू ले गईल बान्ह के।
नरक में ढाह के मारेले मूता के।
कहे जगन्नाथ जग में का कइले आके।
भजन बिना नर तन गइले गंवा के।

2. एको कौड़ी संग नाही जाई रे गंवारा । अबहु से खोजु आपन सिरजन हारा।
का तेहुं लदले बरे माया कर भारा।
छन ही में घर तोर होइहें उजारा।
जब जम्हूराज सिर पर जूता बाजारा।
दुनिया भर हित कोई लागे ना पुछारा।
जेकरा खातिर रात दिन धुनेलऽ कपारा।
सेहू नाहीं कामे आईल देखु रे गँवारा।
जगरनाथ चलु सत गुरू दरबारा।
दोसरो नाहीं त केहू मिलि ना संसारा।
(Sant Jagannath Das, Satguru Sagar)

[Chant the name of Hari; otherwise, you will regret it after death. They will carry you on a cot and take you away. Wood will be gathered and the funeral pyre prepared; they will cover you with cloth and lay you on it. Fire will be lit at your mouth and taken around you on all sides. You will be completely burned, your body reduced to ashes.
With a faint smile, you will be taken away bound by Yama's messengers, and in hell you will suffer punishments and pain. Jagannath says: what did you really achieve by coming into this world? Without devotion, you have wasted this human life.
Not even a single coin will go with you, O ignorant one. Even now, seek your Creator. Why have you loaded yourself with such a heavy burden of illusion and attachment? In a moment, your home will be left empty. When the king of death strikes upon your head, no one in this world will stand by you. For whom you worried day and night, none of them will be of any use

then. O ignorant one, see this truth. Jagannath says: go to the court of the true Guru—there is no other support to be found in this world.]

The book *Apurva Ramayan* by Mahendar Misir is a classic work of Bhojpuri language. It delineates and describes poetically with various rhymes and rhythms the whole story of the Ramayan. What matters most in this book is its mingling of the story of Ram with the various cultural and social rituals and practices of Bhojpuri region. Just take for example the most famous "Kohabar Song" (the bridal chamber song) generally sung by the friends and companions of the bride on the wedding day. In *Apurva Ramayan*, the companions of the bride ask Ramji, the bridegroom:

"कोहबर में अइले राम इहो चारों भइया
से हमनी के मोहले परनवाँ हो लाल।
एकटक लागे सखी पलकौं ना लागे
से भूले नाहीं तोतरी बचनवाँ हो लाल।
हँसी-हँसी पूछेली सासु से सरहज
से फेर कब अइब ससुररिया हो लाल।
तोहरो सुरतिया देखी जियरा लोभइले
से नीको नाहीं लागेला अटरिया हो लाल।
जाहीं के जो रहे राम अवध नगरिया त
काहे के धनुहिया उठवलऽ हो लाल।
कहत महेन्द्र राम रहि जा भवनवाँ
से हमनी के छोड़ी कहाँ जइबऽ हो लाल।"
(Apurva Ramayan,420)

[When Ram came into the bridal chamber with his four brothers,
he enchanted all of us, dear.
O friend, we kept staring his face without even blinking,
We cannot forget your prattle, dear.
Smiling, the sister-in-law asks the bride groom
"When will you come again to the in-laws' house, dear?"
Seeing your face, our heart is captivated,
even our home does not feel pleasant anymore, dear.
O Ram, you belong to Ayodhya city,
Why have you stirred such emotions in us, dear?
Mahendra says, "O Ram, stay back in this home,
Where will you go leaving us behind, dear?"]
(*Apurva Ramayan*,420)

In one of his *kavit*, King Dashrath entreats the great sage Vishwamitra not to demand his delicate son Ram to slay the demons at his yagyashala. He is hesitant in sending his son with Vishwamitra Ji. King Dashrath says:

"चौथेपन आए तब पुत्र हम पायो नाथ
ताको करि ओट कइसे दिवस को बितावेंगें।
मांगिए जो राज विभव तुरत ही मंगाई नाथ
सेना चतुरंगिनी को साथ हो पठावेंगें।

प्राण के आधार सुकुमार है हमारे नाथ
चार दिन के बालक कइसे असुर से लड़ावेंगें।
द्विज महेन्द्र दोऊ कर जोर के निहोरा करें
अबहीं बुढारी समय धनुषा को उठावेंगें॥

राम तन राम मन राम ही हमारो धन
आठो याम राम नाम राम ही सो काम है।
प्राण के आधार सुकुमार है हमारो चार
इनका के देखि-देखि जीवन विसराम है।
लाड़िका नादान रघुनाथ मेरे प्यारे हाथ
समर में ले जाना इनको बिल्कुल बेकाम है।
द्विज महेंद्र रामचंद्र सबसे मोहि प्राणनाथ,
इनहीं के प्रभा से माने अवध सुरधाम है।
(अपूर्व रामायण,194)

[O Lord, we were blessed with this son only in our later years;
How can I now pass my days without him, keeping him away?
If you desire wealth or royal resources, O Lord, I shall provide them immediately,
I can even send a mighty fourfold army along with you.
He is delicate, the very support of my life, O Lord;
How can a mere child of a few days be made to fight demons?
The Brahmin (sage) Mahendra pleads earnestly with great insistence,
And now, in my old age, you ask me to let him lift the bow.

Rama is in my body, Rama is in my mind—Rama alone is my true wealth.
At all eight times of the day, chanting the name of Rama is my only task.
He is the gentle support of my life-breath, my fourfold foundation;
By beholding Him again and again, life finds its rest and peace.
The beloved child Raghunath who is dear to my life,
Taking him into battle would be utterly useless (He is too tender for war).
Says the Brahmin Mahendra: Lord Ramachandra is my dearest life;
By His glory alone, Ayodhya is regarded as a divine abode.]

Mahendra Mishir was a great Bhojpuri poet who created both religious and romantic songs. In his Apurv Ramayan, he retold the seven sections of the Ramayan in Bhojpuri style, making it close to the culture of the villages. Along with devotion, he also wrote many songs of love and desire, which are called Purvi and are still sung in rural areas today. In these songs he used beautiful comparisons and poetic images to express the hidden feelings of women. He showed how a woman's mind is restless when her husband is not with her, and how her desires rise inside her. Through symbolic language, he gave voice to emotions that were often kept silent. In this way, his poetry can be seen as an early form of women's empowerment, because he allowed women's inner world to be expressed in art. His work combines devotion and love, spirituality and human longing, making him one of the most important voices in Bhojpuri literature. Let us see a very common song of Mahendar Misir which is often song among rural folks in n Bhojpuri region :

"अँगुरी में डँसले बिया नगिनिया रे
ए ननदी, दियरा जरा दे।

दियरा जरा दे, अपना भइया के जगा दे
नसे-नसे उठेला लहरिया रे
ए ननदी, दियरा जरा दे।
एक त मुएनीं हम अपना दरद से
दोसरे ई रतिया अन्हरिया रे
ए ननदी, दियरा जरा दे।
पटना सहरिया से बैदा बोला दे
पोरे-पोरे उठेला दरदिया रे
ए ननदी, दियरा जरा दे।
कहत महेन्दर, ननदी, बैदा बोला दे
उनहीं से उतरी ई लहरिया रे
ए ननदी, दियरा जरा दे।
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं, 75)

[The serpent has bitten my finger,
O sister-in-law, light the lamp.
Light the lamp, awaken my brother,
Every vein is trembling with waves of pain,
O sister-in-law, light the lamp.
First, I am dying from my own suffering,
Second, this night is full of darkness,
O sister-in-law, light the lamp.
Call the healer from Patna city,
Pain rises in every pore of my body,
O sister-in-law, light the lamp.
Mahendra says, "O sister-in-law, call the healer,
Only he can calm these waves of poison,"
O sister-in-law, light the lamp.]

This Bhojpuri Purvi by Mahendra Mishir is not just about a snake bite. The words are symbolic. The poet uses the image of a serpent biting the finger to express the hidden desires of a woman. The repeated call to the sister-in-law to light the lamp and awaken the brother is a way of saying that only her husband can fulfill her inner needs. The darkness of the night and the rising waves of pain are not simply physical suffering but a metaphor for the intensity of longing. The healer from Patna is mentioned as someone who can cure the pain, but in truth the poet is suggesting that no outside remedy can satisfy these feelings. Only the husband has the power to calm the storm within her. The waves of poison are actually the waves of passion that have reached their peak. Mahendra Mishir, through this song, gives voice to the inner emotions of a woman in a simple rural setting. He uses everyday images—lamp, night, serpent, healer—to speak about something very deep and personal. This is why the poem belongs to the tradition of Shringar poetry, where love and desire are expressed through symbolic language. The darkness of the room also shows her miserable life full of plights and persecutions. The term Nanadia may also connotes here her own outer being. In other words , figuratively it may suggest here the dialogue between the inner and the outer being of the woman.

The other well known song which is often on the tongues of the people of the Bhojpuri region is the following song in which Pandit Mahendar Misir has described the miseries and dilemmas in the mind of a recently married woman:

"सासु मोरा मारे रामा बांस के छिउँकिया
ए ननदिया मोरी रे सुसुकत पनिया के जाय।
हाथवा में लिहली ननदो सोने के घरिलवा।
ए ननदिया मोरी रे चलि भइली जमुना किनार।
गंगा रे जमुनवाँ के चिकनी डगरिया
ए ननदिया मोरी रे पऊआं धरत बिछलाय।
छोटे-मोटे पातर पियवा हँस के ना बोले।
ए ननदिया मोरी रे से हो पियवा कहाँ चली जाय।
छोटे–मोटे जामुन गछिया फरे ना फुलाय।
ए ननदिया मोरी रे से हो गछिया सुखियो ना जाय।
गावत महेन्द्र मिसिर इहो रे पुरुबिया।
ए ननदिया मोरी रे पियवा बिनु रहलो ना जाय।"
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं, पृष्ठ संख्या 84-85)

[My mother-in-law strikes me with a bamboo stick,
O my dear sister, I go weeping towards the water.
In my hand, O sister, I hold a golden bracelet,
And I walk away towards the banks of the Yamuna.
The slippery path between the Ganga and Yamuna,
O sister, makes me stumble as I walk.
My beloved, though near, does not smile or speak,
O sister, where has my beloved gone?
The small jamun trees no longer blossom,
O sister, the branches have dried without joy.
Mahendra Misir sings this eastern song,
O sister, without my beloved I cannot live.]

This Purvi song by Mahendra Misir is a very deep and sensitive portrayal of a married woman's inner world. In simple words, the poet shows how a woman suffers in her in-laws' house, especially under the harsh treatment of her mother-in-law. At the same time, she feels neglected by her husband, who though handsome and wealthy, does not give her the sweetness of love and kind words. She compares her body to a small tree which neither grows nor blooms. The song makes it clear that for a wife, her husband's affection is more precious than gold or riches. Without his love, all comforts feel empty.

The poet uses many symbolic images. The slippery path near the Ganga and Jamuna shows the uncertainty and fear in a woman's married life, where she can easily "slip" into sorrow if her husband does not support her. It also suggests the physical passion and undercurrent desires of a newly wedded woman . The golden pitcher is another symbol which shows that even if there is wealth, it cannot replace the warmth of love. These images are not just decorative; they carry psychological meaning, showing the struggles and desires of a woman who longs for respect and affection.

Through this song, Mahendra Misir presents family life as a place of both pain and hope. He highlights the importance of women's feelings, showing that marriage is not only about social duty or household beauty, but also about emotional fulfillment. In this way, the song becomes a voice of family sensibility and early women empowerment, expressed in the simple yet powerful Bhojpuri tradition.

Mahendra Misir composed many timeless poems in the form of ghazals as well. In his work *Apurv Ramayan*, he adopted the popular ghazal style of his time at several places. He also wrote a number of compositions in Khari Boli Hindi using the language and rhythm of the ghazal tradition. In that era, ghazals enjoyed immense popularity across North India. They were widely performed in folk theatre, Brahmanical musical gatherings, and traditional nautanki stages. During weddings and festive occasions, musical performances and dance programs were commonly organized, and ghazals formed an important part of such entertainment.
Mahendra Misir understood the cultural taste and emotional preferences of contemporary society. Therefore, he skillfully wrote ghazals that reflected the spirit, sentiments, and artistic demands of his age. His ghazals combined literary elegance with folk simplicity, making them deeply appealing to common audiences while also preserving poetic richness. In the Krishkindha Kand of *Apurva Ramayan*, Mahendar Misir says :

"दिल लगाने के लिए दिल आजमाना चाहिए।
बंदगी करने से पहले सर झुकाना चाहिए॥
चाह मुश्किल कुछ नहीं निर्वाह मुश्किल है सदा,
मिल गया जब दिल से दिल तो फिर निभाना चाहिए॥
ओछ से क्या प्रीत करना बालू का जो भीत है,
साँचे दिल से हो मोहब्बत दिल ठिकाना चाहिए॥
है कठिन ये मित्रता ये काँटे से कटता नहीं,
दुःख में सुख में साथ ही मर के मिटाना चाहिए॥"
(महेंद्र मिश्र की प्रतिनिधि कविताएं,133)

[To fall in love, one must first test the heart.
Before offering devotion, one should bow the head.
Love itself is not difficult, but sustaining it always is;
Once two hearts truly meet, they should remain faithful forever.
What benefit is there to love the mean minded people? It is like a wall of sand.
True affection must arise from a sincere heart and find a lasting place within.
Friendship is difficult; it cannot be cut away like thorns.
In sorrow and in happiness, one should remain together till death.]

Thus, Mahendar Misir occupies a unique and glorious place in Bhojpuri literature as a great creator of folk songs, Purvi melodies and spiritual poetry. His compositions reflect the true spirit of Bhojpuri culture, rural life, human emotions and devotional consciousness. Through his simple yet deeply touching language, he gave voice to the joys, sorrows, hopes, and spiritual aspirations of common people. His Purvi songs became immensely popular among the masses and enriched the musical and literary heritage of Bhojpuri society. Mahendar Misir was not merely a poet or lyricist; he was a cultural icon whose works continue to preserve the soul of Bhojpuri folk tradition and inspire generations with their artistic beauty and emotional depth.

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