

Origin and Emergence of Dalit literature: A Critical Exploration

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Abstract

The present article focuses on characteristics of Dalit literature like pain, destruction, untouchability, etc. From beginning to day today's Dalit literature is described with the help of various angles. Dalit literature is revolt against injustice, slavery, caste discrimination in equality in the field like politics, economic as well as social level. Dalit used to be a very voiceless underprivileged class. In India Dalit literature began to get some voice because of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar with the Indian independence movement. The dark reality of poverty, disease, sexual exploitation are the subjects of Dalit writings. These Dalit writers are Dr. B.R Ambedkar, Jyotiba Phule, Daya Pawar, Dr. Nagraj, Om Prakash Valmiki, Namdev Dhasal, etc. All these writers had written history in a totally new way. The revolt of injustice, independence and untouchability started with the writings of the writers like Sharan Kumar Limbale, and Narhar Kurundkar.

Keywords: Dalit, Discrimination, Exploitation

Introduction:

Dalit literature is a literature of Dalit's by the Dalit's and for the Dalit's. Dalit (oppressed or broken) is not a new word. It was used in 1930 as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'depressed classes'. A term British used for Dalit is now called 'the schedule castes'. In 1970's the Dalit Panther revised the term and enlarged its references to include scheduled tribes, poor, peasants, women and all those being exploited politically, economically and in the name of religion. Dalit is not a caste, it is a symbol of change and revolution. Dalit literature is an attempt to bring to the fore the prejudices, brutality, and exclusion faced by the Dalit community in India. The members of Dalit community have been pushed to the margins and their life experiences have been ignored by the majority.

Dalit is the fifth category called 'Harijan or Asprishya'. Traditionally Dalit considered to be beyond the pale of the Varna or caste system. They were originally considered as panchama or the fifth group beyond the fourfold division of Indian people. The term Dalit literature came into use in 1958 when the first conference of Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangh (Maharashtra Dalit literary society) was held at Mumbai. Dalit literature is a good stream of Indian writing in English and other languages of India.

Struggle for identity:

- Dalit's were forbidden to let their shadow fall on non-Dalit caste members.
- Dalit's had to sweep the ground where they walked, to remove the contamination of their feet.

- Dalit's were rejected to worship God in temples.
- Dalit's were not allowed to draw water from the wells.
- They usually live in separate grounds away from the main village.
- In the context of traditional Hindu society Dalit status has often been historically associated with occupations regarded as radically impure such as any involving wood carving, butchering or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses, and waste.
- Dalit worked as manual laborer cleaning streets, latrine and sewers.
- Dalit could not enter the temple, not a school, they must have to stay outside the village.

The main themes of Dalit writings are social disabilities, caste system, economic inequality, contemporary cruelties and cultural assertion that can be uniquely entitled as the struggle for identity. The writing replicates the resistance, issue of identity, experience of pain and moreover a communal destructiveness.

Definition:

The writers like Sharan Kumar Limbale, Narhar Kurundkar define Dalit literature as "it is a form of agitation, it focuses on the man who is suppressed from hundreds of years, it is a revolt against inequality, slavery, untouchability and pain and also it is a tendency it's being expressed."

"Literature is the mirror of society. If there is untouchability, slavery, pain in society then it should be definitely reflected in literature". Dalit literature reflects

untouchability, slavery and pain faced by Dalit themselves, represented in this universal literature.

Beginning:

In 1958 the term 'Dalit literature' was used in the first conference of "Maharashtra Dalit literature". It was held in Mumbai.

Dalit literature started being written in Marathi in 1960's at it soon appeared in Bangla, Hindi, Kannada, Punjabi, Sindhi and Tamil languages. Such as poems, autobiographies which Store out due to their stark portrayal of reality and Dalit political scene.

Indian Dalit literature:

The concept of 4th world literature seems to have been appropriated by Dalit in India. Whole world's attention caught by Dalit literature through their realistic writings. Discrimination on the basis of caste gender is banned by constitution, some of the main stream societies as well as critics look down to Dalit's and Dalit writers also considered it as not even a literature.

Dalit literature should not be read or just along the same parameter of mainstream literature'. According to Dalit writers for the Dalit writing the author must be a Dalit himself so that he can explain easily the pain and sufferings of Dalit. Dalit literature opposes the Varna system casteism; it supports brotherhood and separation; it commit to freedom and social justice social transformation. Eat a post to Brahmanism hegemony and domination. Also it rejects traditional orthodox standards through the literature Dalit writers wanted to inform about the condition of Dalit and wanted to get status and recognition in society.

Dalit literary History and Dalit canon:

Dalit literature written by Dalit's about their lives. It was written in 1960 in Marathi language in the form of short stories, poetry and autobiography. Dalit consciousness in India is mainly an Outlook of the great works done by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for rights of the Dalit's and untouchability.

Contribution of Dr. B.R Ambedkar in awakening Dalit consciousness:

Ambedkar launched a full-fledged movement for Dalit rights during 1930. Ambedkar launched a movement against Dalit discrimination by creating public opinion, through his writings in several periodicals such as "*Mook Nayak, Bahishkrit Bharat*" and "*Equality Janta*", which he started for the protection of Dalit rights. In 1956 with Ambedkar his many followers rejected Hindu religion and converted into Nav Buddha. In the Golmej conference at London Ambedkar applied for a separate electorate for scheduled caste people. He also signed the 1932s Pune pact for ensuring reservation of seats for the untouchable class in the provincial legislature within the general electorate.

Dalit writers:

The ancient example of Dalit Saint includes '*Chokhamela*' in the 14th century. He was India's first rewarded Dalit poet. F.M. Shinde, Marathi poet wrote a poem named '*Habit*' about Dalit. Om Prakash Valmiki popularly known for his autobiography '*Joothan*' is regarded milestone in Dalit literature. He described his life as an untouchable or Dalit in newly independent India of the time of 1950s.

Daya Pawar an activist, poet and reformer:

Daya Pawar through his songs put the feeling of awareness in Dalit about their conditions and status in society. As he knew maximum Dalit's were uneducated so for them reading Dalit literature was not possible so he made his song medium to aware Dalit community.

Namdev Dhasal:

Namdev Dhasal is the founder of Dalit Panther movement in 1972 with Arjun Dangle, Raja Dhale and J.V. Pawar. His works include '*Golpitha*' his first collection of poetry. "*Tujhi Iyatta Konati*" (How Educated Are you?). He wrote about Indira Gandhi as "*Priya Darshani*". His two novels are '*Andhale Shatak*' (Century of Blindness) and '*Ambedkari Chalwal*' (Ambedkarite movement).

Arjun Dangle:

He had edited "*Poisoned Bread*", the first anthology of Dalit writing in English. He did psychological study of Dalit men. He has translated "*The Corpse in the Well*", "*Homeless in my land*" and "*No Entry for the New Sun*."

Baburao Bagul:

His first collection of stories "*Jevha Mi Jaat Chorli Hoti*" 1963 (when I Hide my caste). Translated by Jerry Pinto. When I Hide My Caste is the most notable work. His second short story collection is "*Maran Swasta Hot Ahe*" (Death is getting Cheaper), also he wrote "*Ambedkar Bharat*" (Ambedkar India) and "*Akar*" (shape), a poetry collection.

Conclusion:

In this way Dalit writer who himself had faced rejection, untouchability, humiliation had written Dalit literature. This

literature opposes the Varna system and Casteism. Dalit literature had to go through three phases of consideration from the part of mainstream literature: erasure, containment and assertion. Dalit literature

doesn't entertain fine sentiments and refined gestures. It is simply expressions of power struggle within a larger establishment due to some stringent sacred texts.

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