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A FOCUS ON FOURTH WORLD LITERATURE OF INDIA: THE NEED OF THE HOUR

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ABSTRACT

"The fourth world is the name given to indigenous peoples descended from a country's aboriginal population and who today are completely or partly deprived of the right to their own territory and its riches....The people of the fourth world have only limited influence or none at all in the national state to which they belong". (Cited in the GAIA Atlas, p.19)

KEYWORDS: Dasyus, Aryans, Samajika Nyaya, Dalits

INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of civilization, it has been known 'might is the right'. As the civilization progresses, man has started to comprehend nature and tried to dominate the other tribes. His lust for power provoked him to move to other places where the sources are abundant and the local inheritors are weak and innocent. This is how 'Aryans' invaded India and subjugated the local 'dasyus'. The native land owners, 'Dasyus', were created as demons in the literature of Aryans. In fact, the aboriginal Dasyus were men of peace. Hence, they have started accepting Aryans as their rulers; brothers and sisters. 'History repeats again'. The scenario was more or less equal when India was invaded by the mighty British Empire. Struggle went on for nearly three centuries. People from the four corners of India have tied together to achieve Independence. A long struggle and sacrifices have paved a way to the relief which cannot be valued in terms of vocabulary.

Surprisingly, even after half a decade of the India's Independence, the struggle is still persisted; this time the suffering is of our own 'Bharath Brand'. The upper caste, the rich and the male have been suppressing their counterparts. These power-mongers ignore the rights of the common .Power has become an inherent trait for them. Even political parties are throwing the bait of reservations to the downtrodden.

'Samajika Nyaya' (social justice) has become a buzz word of every political party. All these downtrodden are competing among themselves to acquire a clerical job while the higher class retains their political leadership. The literature produced by these classes is called Fourth world literature. Fourth world literature refers to the written work of a native people living in a land that has been taken over by non-natives. Examples are the Native Americans in North America, the Maori in New Zealand, and the Aboriginals in Australia.

In this presentation, we would like to focus on how the ill-treatment, the atrocities, the sufferings and the agony have been reflecting in the literature of Dalits, Tribes, Women and Minority.

DALITS

"When they (the oppressed) rise, get organized and fight back, only then history can be changed". (Mahasweta Devi)

Though Dalits are a considerable population in India, 'Untouchability' is still a common coinage in many parts of India. After fifty years of Independence and campaigning for these long years, Dalits are still forced to live a secluded out-caste life in many parts of the nation. Discrimination has been haunting them all through their life. In village front, the hotels are still practicing two tumblers-systems. One particular tumbler is offered to lower-caste

people and the other is for the upper-caste. In addition to not providing them with equal opportunities, the upper-caste people are grabbing greedily the special provisions reserved to Dalits. The political power reserved to Dalits in Panchayaths is also picked by these upper caste people who are politically, financially and socially stronger than the Dalits. They are forced to take lower-profile jobs which sustain them in miserable poverty for long years. Even in religion also, the converted lowercaste people are separately treated. Separate churches were built for them. Marriages are not performed between these lower-caste converted and the uppercaste converted. In some areas of the nation, the burial ground is partitioned for the lower-caste converted. The increased number of cases against the atrocities committed to the Dalits every year is an indication of the existence of suppression. These sufferings have been reflected in Telugu Literature since long time.

Ambedkar and Phoole advocated how Dalits have been deceived by the political gimmicks of the upper caste people. Since then, a sizable literature has been composed against this. In Telugu Literature, 'Gabbilam' by Gurram Joshua is the first ever poem written in Dalit Literature. Dalit is not permitted to enter temple. Hence, he sent a bat to the Lord Shiva with his message in which he listed out the sufferings he faced by the society. Likewise, Dr. Yendluri Sudhakar, Kathi Padma Rao, Sathish Chander, Bojja Tharakam have published many volumes of literature in this regard.

WOMEN

The Hindus believe that the whole creation has taken place because of the mother Goddess. Since ancient times woman is projected as Shakthi (the Goddess of power), creator, Goddess of Nature. Women have got a prominent place in ancient times but later with the advent of Brahmanism she has lost her charisma. Her character was made limited to household. Manu Smruthi emphasized that a woman is not eligible to be free or independent. Later, Budhism, Jainism and Veera Shiva religions gave a decent position to women. As women have not been permitted to receive good education, they remain to kitchen and bed room. But in the recent past, atrocities to women have been mounting in the society. Female foeticide, dowry, sexual harassment and discrimination at working places are still taking place. A survey said India has killed 10 million girls in 20 years.

Thallapaka Thimmakka is the first in Telugu Literature to oppose the attitude of male in her work 'Subadra Kalyanam'. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Veeresha Lingam Panthulu and Gurajada Appa Rao were the prominent reformers of the women cause. Chalam and Gopichand also supported the idea of independence to women in their literature. But finally, women have decided to raise their own voices against the atrocities committed to them. Since then, feminist literature has been poured. They have to carry on this struggle for existence till equality is completely well established in society.

"Men's callous treatment of women within the Dalit community should be recognized. You (male Dalit writers) set out to write the truth about your own life. So to write about only one aspect of your life is not very fair. Life should be written about every angle. You should write about your mistakes also". (Urmila Pawar to the Interviewer for the Sparrow Series)

Olga, Savithri, Vimala, Nayani Krishna Kumari, Jayaprabha, Revathi Devi, Mehajabeen, Seela Subhadra Devi have advocated the theory of feminism.

TRIBES

Man was born as primitive. It is not exaggeration to say that the primitive is the father of the modern. As the civilization progresses, he has shifted to cities. Thus the evolution of modern man has taken place. The association with the tribes has been traced since ancient literature. Sri Krishna Devaraya strategically used them as the guards of his kingdom. But all these years, the tribes have secluded themselves in the forests. Their rights have been thoughtlessly suppressed. Their lands have been occupied. Thus, their culture has been destroyed. Lambada, Chenchu, Koya, Konda, Gadhaba, Yerukula are some of the tribes. The original tribal literature has not been recorded in books. It is being passed from mouth to mouth for these many years. Researches and literature in this field have been made by people belong to other communities.

Aruna's Elli, novel which was written on the life style of 'yerukula' caste became very famous. Sadhana's 'Sarihadhu' and 'Rago' had written about the life style of 'Gondu,' Kesava Reddy's 'Athadu Adavini Jayinchadu'were some of the examples of tribal literature. Sahu, Allam Rajaiah, Sadhana Mallikarjuna Heeremath, Dr. VNVK Sastry, Dr. Vitta Venu Gopal have extensively pursued research in tribal literature.

MINORITIES

Though the word 'minority' refers to a group of people who are less in number, in India it limits to Muslim community. Minority literature can also be considered as fourth world literature because any literature which represents the voice of any oppressed or underprivileged victim or class of a state is called fourth world literature. The main point in Minority Literature that they have been treated ISI agents and their loyalty towards nation has been

questioned or doubted by all Hindus. All the political parties give them fake promised which cannot be materialized. Thus the community has been deceived by various sects of society.

The condition of women in Muslim community is pathetic. All their traditions and rituals are in favour of men. Man is always excused. The tradition of thalak, polygamy and negligence towards family planning make the women in the community lead a miserable life. The suppressed tones have their part in literature. Saleem, Khader Mohiddin, Khaja, Shajahana, Skybaba, Chader Miya, Tasleema Nasreen and Salmon Rusdee have produced wonderful literature which reflect their problems and sufferings genuinely. They ultimately aspire for a society where the tradition of their community is protected, where they get relief from religious fanaticism of both Hindu and Muslim.

"Though the Hindu spirituality depicted in the Vedas, the Upanishads, The Puranas and smritees has emphasized on 'Human Equality, Enlightment, Uplift, Love and kindness' to all not only o human beings but also for every living creature, generally this spirituality has remained Untouchable to the Hindu society. Mahatma Gandhi had painfully called this evil "a disgrace on Hinduism". Gandhiji's idea to uplift the Untouchable by changing Hindu's hearts was never materialized". (Vasanth Moon's growing up Untouchable in India: A Voice for the Voiceless)

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