



DALIT POETRY: A SOCIAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT

Poetry touches to the heart and its effect is everlasting in the mind. Dalit poetry is the product against the hunger, discrimination, humiliation and exploitation. Marathi poem is different than the stream of Marathi literature. Dalit literature aims to produce new literature which exposes inhuman bondage formed to humiliate human by human. Dalit literature originated from the thoughts and works of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Dalit Poetry receives extreme responses and winning awards in the field of literature. Dalit literature expresses social, educational, scientific awareness in illiterate and oppressed society.

KEY WORDS: *Dalit, hunger, discrimination, humiliation*

INTRODUCTION

Poetry becomes the popular and interesting form of Dalit literature. Poetry reveals many individual and social aspects. Poetry becomes the form of sensible and emotional nature. Early composed ballads are religious generally. It tells the Mythological stories. India is the country of the great kings and their history. There are wandering singing groups who reached villages early in the morning and singing ballads, brave stories of god and goddess, kings and queens, knights and soldiers.

Dalit poetry is flourished with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's social movement in innumerable ways. Poetry is the powerful medium to escape from the pain for the Dalit poets. They have used poetry as their strength to endure the curse they had. It was inhuman and humiliating but only one man of our community has given life to the oppressed, he is Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Dalit writers realized that there was no point in merely writing provocative poetry against injustice.

Dalit literature established to make a change in society. They had many issues, even the problem of managing one time food was difficult before the class. They hardly managed to eat for him and family. In such cases how they will come into the stream of struggle against the subjugation, humiliation and atrocities. It is the poetry which give them strength and consciousness to change their life with education and thought of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Dalit particularly "Mahar" take education to change social and economical condition. According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, purpose of education is to moralize and socialize people. Students should learn to distinguish between what may fairly be called matter of fact and what is certainly mere matter of opinion. He should be accustomed to distinguish issues, and to look at bearings on some cherished theory.

Dalit Poetry expresses suffering, worries, poverty and exploitation behind casteist mentality. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar gives more value to character in life. Dalit Poetry stands against the rooted value which is based on discrimination. Dalit literature tries to enhance the individual

and social status with the help of educational opportunity of people. People belonged to untouchable community, they started migration from village to urban area where they could manage their food and started taking education. Dalit Poetry is unique in the poetical pattern; it expresses different and unusual experience and expression than customized Marathi poetry.

Dalit Poetry transforms the theme of isolation, alienation, protest, revolt, struggle for survival, freedom from all sorts of bondage and exploitation, apathy, estrangement and uprootedness, a search for new identity, and a longing for human dignity. It is thus poetry of protest, voicing its opposition to all is orthodox, traditional and conventional. It is as much empathetic as evocative and addresses itself a new to its reader in terms of startling images and symbols, differently moulded myths and metaphors. (Page, 60, *literature of Marginality*)

Wamandada Kardak, prominent poet composed poems on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and his work, He is an emancipator of oppressed class and become source of inspiration for poets and musicians. Wamandad's work in the Dalit poetry is extremely sensational. He extended gratitude and honoured Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar for his contribution in the development of the oppressed class. Wamandada Kardak's poetry reached to the small village and small hut of the downtrodden and inspired them to follow the path of education and science. He composed poems on the birth, work, contribution and devotion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Wamandada's poem,
Send my boy to school
Lord and Master
I tell you
Send my boy to school
We may be terribly poor
Famine may knock at the door
I'll see that he gets to school
Send my boy to school, etc.

The need of education to my community is more important than my hunger. His poetry touches to the heart and motivates people



to struggle and be passionate for education and moral. His experience of caste discrimination mainly expresses in the form of poetry.

Keshav Meshram, poet, critic, novelist, story writer of Dalit literature. He has used literature for awareness in community. His literature has different subjects as poverty, inequality and frustration mainly in creating new life. His poems are extremely emotional for the first generation of social movements. Social and economical barrier in the development is presented in the poems.

In our colony...

Reforms get confused

Paths are bruised, schemes stumble

Now--only now have boys started learning.

They write poems-stories-Indian literature

The axes of words fall upon the trees of tradition,

The warm, experience hailstone

Strange realities rain

On the dreams of literature....

Jyoti Lanjewar's poem titled 'Caves' expresses issue of human discrimination on the basis of caste. The inhuman experience of caste faced in every step of life. Everyone who was born in lower caste had bitter experience of treating him as lower than animal.

Their inhuman atrocities have carved caves

In the rock of my heart

I must tread this forest with wary steps

Eyes fixed on the changing times

The tables have turned now

Protests spark

Now here

Now there.....

She expresses struggle, protest, and writing against humiliation in poems.

The Dalit writers had also become familiar with the Black literature and movement. The result was that the youth Namdeo Dhasal, Arjun Dangale and J V Pawar took the initiative and established the political movement called the Dalit Panthers in Bombay in 1972. Thus a way of writing describing experience in provocative language swept Marathi literature. This probably the first time in India that creative writers became politically active and formed an organization. (Page-XII, *Poisoned Bread*).

In the modern period Dalit literature has changed way of writing; poetry becomes new in terms of experience, emotion and expression. Dalit poet has selected new phrases, structure and style. Poem expresses realistic, faithful than the traditional form of writing. K. Satchidanandan rightly pointed out Dalit writers as "created an alternative poetics that throws overboard classical values like propriety, balance, restraint and understatement. They also often use a deliberately subversive diction that challenges middle-class notions of decency". (Page-10, K. Satchidanandan)

Namdeo Dhasal's *Golpitha* is world famous collection of poems. It has given new identity to the Dalit poetry. Vijay Tendulkar, Marathi renowned writer wrote introduction in

Golpitha. He remarks: "The Marathi language so softly and delicately nurtured by the white -collared class, so rich in its splendor, Namdeo turns and twist "like mistress". He shatters it to pieces: he fills it, adding indecent expressions, with deliberate distortions. He justifies it as being warranted by the semantic content of his poem". (P-25, *Vidrohi Kaviata*)

Namdeo Dhasal's poem "Hunger" is the painful expression who have experienced self-consuming, other- inflicted hunger know what it means, how painful and incapacitating the state is, something beyond the reach of the middle class sensibility. Hunger is seen here as a multiple poetic reality and the poet toys with it on physical, mental and emotional levels.

Hunger, tell us your game, your strategy

If we can muster guts enough

We'll fight you to the finish

Can't crawl and grovel on your stomachs

Too long with you

How much can we wash the grime off hunger?

How much wash the dust off years?

Namdeo Dhasal's poems expresses painful condition of extremely hungry man whose hunger on physical level is an awesome, hateful calamity bringing in its wake emotional devastation, but the poet keeps his attitude towards it deliberately frivolous despite all seriousness, e.g. (P-63, *Literature of Marginality*)

Here's our manhood before you now

Let's see who wins this round

You are we?

Namdeo Dhasal's writing style is unique. He has used diction which is attached to his life. He could write in a decorative and ornamental language but used local language to express his nuisance in effective and simple way. Language never be a barrier in expressing pain, it must come from the self experience.

Dalit Poetry gained popularity after autobiography, novel and drama criticism. Dalit poetry emerged as a new platform to express pain and suffering due to casteist social system. Well-known Dalit poets are Namdeo Dhasal, Keshav Meshram, Arjun Dangale, Yashwant Manohar, Trymbak Sapkal, Arun Kamble, Mina Gajbhiya, Hira Bansod, Jyoti Lanjewar, Mallika Amar Sheikh, Pardnya Lokhande.

Conclusion:

Dalit poetry effectively used to change society. It is useful to awake people who are neglected, physically and mentally exploited. Dalit Poetry covers aspects from birth to death, darkness to light, bondage to liberty, discrimination to equality and inhuman to human.

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