

Swotting of Dalit autobiographies through Transformative Paradigm Research

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Abstract:

In this modern biosphere there is one form of writing which still thrives on being dissimilar, from the idea of what the history had portrayed about the past for centuries. As per layperson's empathetic, history is whatsoever occurred in former or past. To our astonishment, in a negative inference someone who wrote history has chosen only the certain aspects of past and not all that happened in a country. It means, it is interpreted only for a distinct group of audience. According to Herman Northrop Fry, a Canadian literary critic 'emplotment' acts a critical part in organizing a past narrative. Now, time has come to not only to know the past life of kings and queens, conquerors, battles, fall of territories, rise of empires, rich culture, religion, hegemony but also to know about the life of ordinary peasants, traders, fighters, marginalised group etc., Generally, mainstream literature has an aforementioned of major written and oral traditions from ancient times, these writers depend on this. However, the marginalised literature needs to generate a peculiar metaphysical base. This article does not talk about the scuffle between impoverished and well-to-do but the skirmish seen from the perspective of the lower caste, the marginals, the minorities, the subalterns through the autobiographies of marginalised writers.

Key Words: *Marginalised, subaltern, impecunious, ontological, epistemological, mainstream literature.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the contextual of India, the Indian Writing in English was dominated only by the mainstream writers. In their writing they have neglected to epitomize the actual anecdotes of a particular section of populace who are called as the 'Untouchables' in modern term as 'Dalits'. The historiographers abandoned Dalit history considering that as a strewn, unsystematic, untheoretical material replicated as unsuccessful attempt in literature. In this context, the Dalit's past is reconstructed in an ontological manner so that objectification of the suppressed can be vetoed. In connection, the outcaste or Dalits epistemological viewpoints are to be broadened to understand their confrontation in contradiction of the dominant culture to question the social stratum. To de-brahmanize the local rational, several marginalised discussions to be brought to limelight into mainstream academia in a larger context. In this way, literature ought to play a dynamic part in recording the 'micro histories' of the country.

The purpose of recording the 'micro histories' of Dalits life not only to correct the old image but brings out together the life of Dalit as a celebration, which finds its way through different local cultures. As an entire progression of Dalit literature, the marginalised writers opted the genre of poetry to gush about their community suffering. Few through prose, short stories and novels and Some chose autobiography as a tool to bring out the silent voice of their community through narrating the self. When the marginalised started writing, everyone was astonished to read the powerful writings because it was totally different from what the mainstream writers narrated about them. It will not be fair if it is stated that mainstream writers have not

discussed any of the issues, they have discussed, but in a flowery language and not the real sufferings.

An entire school of Dalit writers has risen during the four decades. They have broadened the scope of marginalised and regional literature, both in themes and style. They are expressed through their own words and it shows what man has made to another man. They framed their own vocabulary and idioms. It was the advent of Marathi Dalit literature in 1970's spread the struggle of lower caste in an authentic manner as the writers themselves have experienced the caste as a social evil.

The most important literary movement emerged in post-independence India was the Dalit literary movement. Rahul Pungaliya says, Dalit literature can be read and understood by anyone but the authentic literature can be written as such that only by the marginalised people who suffered itself. For example, the novel of David Dravidar's 'House of Blue Mangoes' the issue of caste was side-lined and later in the last he never dealt anything with caste and Mulk Raj Anand's work Coolie was considered to be his work of propaganda. It is been said that

"The Marxist-oriented All India Progressive Writers Association declared him to be a decadent in 1949 because he found evil and cunning both in the poor as well as in the rich" (2015: 67).

The sufferings were penned by the mainstream writers and thus they lack in shrewdness and originality. However, it still endures to face challenges from diverse sectors.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To enhance the arena of transformative paradigm
- To apprehend the moderate development of the Dalit literature
- To forefront the occurrence of bigotry, dearth, ferocity of Dalit
- To distinguish the hidden condition that exist even in the modern biosphere.

III. REQUISITE OF THE STUDY

Dalit autobiographies became one of the significant genres in promoting Dalit literature. The selected autobiographies of Daya Pawar's *Baluta*, Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life*, Bama's *Karukku*, Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke*, and Omprakash Valmiki's *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* articulates Dalit's voice in a bigger sense than ever before. Their writings shook the literature world and went beyond the self-expression and historical record. There may be a query in every one's mind whether to study or discuss about caste even in this contemporary technical world? Yes, it is necessary to study on caste even today because the society has not fully come out from the caste cover.

People do say, that in these days all are educated and cultured and therefore they don't see caste and everyone are treated equally. Let us take for an example, though to some percentage the inter-caste marriage has been accepted, people still hesitate to marry a lower caste man or women considering the social stratum. The so-called educated man also looks for caste and he cannot abridge the inter-caste marriage predominantly with the lower caste. It is a fact that a human being's behaviour is judged not by his/her characters but by the caste they belong to in an invisible sense. There have been many attempts to break the inequality in the lines of caste. The post-independence Indian Government has passed laws to eliminate the untouchability and recover the lives of the feebler section. Many amendments were designed at dropping inequality one among is reservation. The right to equality should not be only in papers but it should be properly exercised. This kind of Transformative Paradigm research will help to fetch equal rights and equality in future.

3.1. Envisaged Consequence

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar the young and vibrant activist from Dalit community influenced many to people from his caste through his speech. He belonged to Mahar community. A man from the lower caste with 'stuffed head' was summoned to concoct "Government of India" Act' 1919. The Dalit literature was emerged from Maharashtra. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar tormented very badly to get education in his early childhood days. But his father, constantly reminded him that only education can uplift him and his family in the society. He took these words as mantra from his father, he never thought of quitting his education at any circumstances. He received his graduation from Columbia University. During his

stay in the foreign country, he was able to witness the Blacks struggle to claim their identity from White supremacist. This assisted him to progress a context for the issue of caste separation.

Unlike any other writer Ambedkar did not write any poetry or revolutionary writings but he interconnected to people only through his robust speech. He was a persuasive speaker, who began his social work in endeavouring to change Hinduism. As a result, in the year 1927, 25th December he burnt the Manusmriti as a protest against Hindu varana system. He reminded people to uproot the four-caste system (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) and set as one caste and of equality. He did not like the practise followed by Hindu religion so he urged his followers to follow some other religion. A religion which treats every in the same way. As he preached, he got converted to Buddhism with lakhs of his followers on 14th October 1956.

3.2. Dalit and their Evolution

The caste in India considered to be the columns of the nation. In which Hinduism is an archetypal religion grounded upon the Varna system. Among this varna the last-mentioned Shudra class always remained subjugated. They were never given any status or equality in the society. They were mentioned to work for the other three caste. Even today the Shudras remain economically poor and their life is still pathetic in many villages.

Earlier people were classified based on their occupation and no one was treated as slaves. Before the colonial period the caste affiliation was quite wobbly and free. It was only after, the British Raj the caste affiliation was made strictly to follow the hierarchy. Some castes were criminalised in order to down them and make them as slaves to work for them and some were given preference in all aspects. The caste system that exists today is due to the British colonisation, which made caste a dominant tool for government. The colonial ethnographers in 1881 used caste to classify people. They wanted to divide people to take census by which they wanted to select a group of qualified people for colonial government jobs. According to David Cannadine, "Indian castes merged with the traditional British class system during the British Raj". It lawfully became unbending during the British Raj period.

For no surprise the communal stratum and dissimilarity exists in India but it is not the same what we saw a century back. The government after independence have taken adequate step to promote the lower caste people by offering reservations in education and jobs. These are the two important factors for a man to grow up in his status and economics. Female literacy is one another factor that has evidently changed the status of Dalits. The education played a vital role for the growth of Dalits in many fields. It was not a piece of cake for them. They struggled amidst the upper caste to get

education. Now many Dalits have gained education and they attained a kind of status in the society and they are proud to portray their hard life to other people. In that way, some Dalit writers have raised their voice for the voiceless people of their community.

According to Gangadhar Pantawane, founder of a Marathi journal echoes:

“Dalit is not a caste. He is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of his country. He does not believe in God, Rebirth, Soul, Holy Books teaching separatism, Fate and Heaven because they have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution.” (Emphasis added; cited in Zelliott 2001: 268)

3.3. Dalit Concept

Gayatri C Spivak's says, those days have disappeared where Dalits could not express for themselves. Now everyone knows that Dalit can voice for himself and for his community. There is a famous African proverb “it is the one who lives in the house who knows where the roof leaks” it denotes only a born Dalit can express the real psychological pain that they have undergone. There is no record says that the uppercase or mainstream writers have portrayed or contributed so effectively in Dalit writing other than the Dalit themselves. It is the translators who have nearly elevated the writing of regional writers. Dalit writers like Omprakash Valmiki, Urmila Pawar, Daya Pawar, Bama, Baby Kamble, wouldn't have been recognised or received world revelation.

3.4. Flustered Autobiographies

a. Daya Pawar—*Baluta* was the first testimony that represented the remonstrance and annoyance from inside and external wherein both the individual and the community. The title discloses an extremely coextensive practice related with the untouchable communities in India.

He highlights the undignified and mortification practice. Pawar writes:

“We made the proclamations announcing funerals from village to village. We dragged away the carcasses of dead animals. We chopped firewood. We played music day and night at festivals and welcomed new bridegrooms at the village borders on their wedding days. For all this, what did we get? Baluta, our share of the village harvest” (2015:66)

b. Omprakash Valmiki - *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* brings apprehension, embarrassment and discernment. As Baluta the title Joothan means 'leftover'. At end of day, they receive the leftover as a token of wage from the upper caste. “Joothan” boisterously queries the

constitution for its promissory note by raising Dalits voice which stresses a dwelling for their people in the current society.

c. Bama-Karukkui considered to be a dissimilar book for the speaker. It ponders over numerous occasions from different standpoint. It was not written for publication. To get rid of alienation after she returned from the convent, she wrote her life story as a healing remedy. She used a typical Parayars terminology in her writing not the formalised text. She broke the rules of written grammar and spellings by demanding new pattern of reading. This quivered the Tamil literary circles after her book published. It is indeed her translator Lakshmi Holmstrom did justice to her work and brought the issues to wider audience.

d. Baby Kamble - *The Prisons We Broke* is presented in a stimulating and striking dimension. Her primary part of her autobiography represents the suppression and mistreatment of her Mahar community in the hands of upper caste and the second half portrays the renovation of the Mahar community under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. It is seen as a story of revolution and victory not out of pity but out of reverence. In the end after reading her life story everyone can feel the reformative idea through her voice.

e. Urmila Pawar - *The Weave of My Life* gives the opportunities for the readers to study the women characters. Three generations of women are discussed in her autobiography. Her writings weave together the issues of oppressed community based on their caste and gender. Her manuscript is written in first person and the text is considered as testimonio. She recorded the social and political inequality she faced in the name of marginalisation in her work place. Hence, Urmila's work is viewed in political perspective. Urmila used a vocabulary which provokes revolt and revolution. Thus, these autobiographies are read not for desire but to be read in social and historical in habits.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology followed in writing this article is Transformative Paradigm by using mixed-methods approach by Quantitative and qualitative Method. Transformative paradigm is outlining that centers the practices of relegated communities. Therefore, the autobiographies of Daya Pawar, Bama, Urmila Pawar, Baby Kamble and Om Prakash Valmiki's have been selected for this article. All these writers have recounted their life experience as Dalit by writing their autobiography in their regional language. This has promoted as a boon of knowledge, where one learns the culture and tradition in the vernacular language. This study aims to sustain how the past of Dalits been brought to attention through transformative paradigm research.

V. FURTHER READINGS

In this article the researcher has touched in general the evolution of caste, the writings of Dalit and some Dalit autobiographies and their themes. The further research can be expanded in dealing various genres like essays, poems, short stories, novels and drama.

VI. CONCLUSION

As a researcher, I have used transformative paradigm research to analyse the issues of marginalized group and social justice from the selected autobiographies. The dominant leitmotif of Dalit autobiography narration is their living standards, their assiduous, their values, their faith system, their amusements, their metaphysical, their endearment, their brawl, their grapple, their torture and torment, their delights and griefs, their crying and dreams. Definitely, the transformative paradigm research will one day bring a kind of transformation to the existing social stratum.

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