

THE CONDITION OF DALIT BY NON-DALIT WRITERS

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ABSTRACT

When cast society became prominent in 500BC- AD500AD, a conflict between higher class and lower class became prominent in our society. Ancient Dharma shastra and Rig Veda both gave priority only on higher Hindu cast specially Bhramana and lower class like ayogava, chandala, nishda and paulkasa were completely deprived of even to vis-a-vis with higher castes. So many non-dalit writers like Tagore, Anand, Devi, Tendulkar, Roy, Rao, Karnad have depicted about the cruel and burning oppression of dalits and Spivak suggests the subaltern studies group to educate the subaltern people themselves so that they can speak about their own poor condition.

KEYWORDS: Higher Hindu Cast, Non-Dalit Writers, Economic, Social, Political

INTRODUCTION

In India the cast society became prominent between 500BC-AD500 period. This cast society was under control of chaturvarnic order and the condition of the lower class was too poor and shudras were totally restricted to touch even dwija society and they were prohibited from all types of knowledge and status of high class. According to Rig Veda, the former Dasyu/ Rakshaya/thief formed the conjecture of Shudra Varna. There are so many divisions in sudhra class i.e., ayogava, chandala, nishada and paulkasa and they are considered as not Varna but as asprushayas (the untouchables) who were physically and mentally assaulted and tortured by upper castes. According to Ancient Hindhu Dharma Shastra, there are a series of so many restrictions like economic, social, political and religious restrictions for the lower class. The untouchables were forced to live even outside the village and they used to feed their daily meals from the leftover surplus of the high caste people.

They are deprived of drinking water from wells and also from education by school or college. The ancient Vedas explain only four orders of Varna scheme and untouchables are not mentioned. But in ancient society there are too much distinction of casteism. Since the dawn of civilization, the institution of caste has been questioned by so many philosophers and reformers whose philosophy created the principle rope of both religions and new systems of thought. A band of rationalists named Lokayata first challenged to the casteism. The very word Lokayata literally means 'restricted to the world of common experience or Charavakas'. Charavaka was a materialist philosopher whose a protested against the slave system, caste exploitation and the existence of God. They preached the abolition of slavery, rational behaviour and beliefs rejecting all forms of sacrifices, rituals and ceremonies. After that Lokayata emerged as a progressive and optimistic philosophy depicting the cause of the oppressed tribal people.

Dayanand Saraswati(1834-1883), the founder of Arya Samaj gave a call: "Go back to the Veda." Dayananda Saraswati was against the oppressions of caste restrictions, early marriages, the purdah system, conversion and illiteracy. He tried to destroy the abolition of untouchability, emancipation and the development of education in Sanskrit and Hindi.

Swami Vivekananda was of the view that untouchability was the main cause of India's downfall and made Indians cowards and thoroughly contemptible.

Vivekananda prescribes a conception of a pure ideal Indian society accepting the goodness of all four castes- Brahman, kahatriya, vaishya and shudras and rejecting their evils. The view of Vivekanand was similar to other religious reformers mentioned earlier in defending the 'religious idealist philosophy' of Hinduism. Gandhi describes that Varna is nothing more than "the following on the part of us all the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers in a spirit of duty." Gandhi's idea of varnashrama expresses that children should follow their fathers' profession which seems to be good for the three upper castes but in case of lower castes, instead of being liberated from the caste oppression they are further being enslaved to the feudal principles of life through the system. This is contradictory to the democratic ideas that all people must get social justice irrespective of their castes, class or religion.

Rabindranath Tagore being a non-dalit writer expresses the condition of dalit in his writings like- *Gitanjali*(1913), where he expresses how the untouchables are humiliated and oppressed in our country and he also prophesizes the asymmetry and improportionate condition of the caste system that one day must will devour the privileged upper caste to the same degradation. His greatest play *Chandalika* (written between 1925 -1933) is dealt with an untouchable girl Prakriti, a chandal woman who is the protagonist of the drama. The story is that a Bhikku, who is a Buddhist monk wants for water to quench his thirst. Then the girl thinks that as she is an aspryshya and only a beggar can be her friend. In *Manu Smriti* chandals are given instruction to go away from high class Hindu society- "Chandals and untouchables should live outside the village, they should use earthen pots instead of utensils, should have dogs and donkeys as their property and should put on the cloths as taken of from dead bodies". (line-12) Mulk Raj Ananda in his *Coolie* describes the protagonist Coolie as a pathetic character who is comparable with Munoo, a rustic orphan presented in the urban setting with horrendous consequences.

His "Two leaves and a Bud" depicts the story of a tragic Punjabi peasant lured to a tea plantation in Assam where he is tortured and even murdered by a British Official. *The_Big Heart* is Ananda's last novel before Indian Independence which deals with a young copper-smith from lower class who becomes unsuccessful in case of representing modernity in a traditional society. But the main problem is that it is not possible for non-dalit writers to depict the exact condition of dalits.. Mahasweta Devi's writings show us the treatment of subaltern which is also depended on the ethics and politics of contemporary society. In *Kanyadan*, Tendulkar traces the psychological obsession of Arun Athavale who marries a high caste Hindu girl and he suffers from inferior complexity and his hostility takes the form of sadism. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Raja Rao's *Javni* and Girish Karnad's *Taldanda* show a formulation of comprehensive ideology of Dalit literature. Dr. Narendra Yadhav in his personalized saga of social metamorphosis of Dalits named *Outcaste: A Memoir* shows the experience of his illerate parents Damur and Somu who came from Mahur community in Maharashtra to the city of Mumbai and shows that Dalit consciousness is such a condition that comes from the social condition.

Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak rightly says in her "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1988) that subaltern people can never speak until they are educated. So it is the duty of Subaltern Studies group to educate them what is the purpose of their writing history by their own hands. Subaltern can never speak because subaltern studies are the voice of educated people of high class society. These are the showmanship of high class people but until subaltern are educated, they never speak.

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