



A SWING FROM DALIT TO AMBEDKARITE LITERATURE: MULK RAJ ANAND AS PAINTER OF SOCIAL PANIC

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Abstract

Indian social structure is the key source to Dalit literature. The flow of social reform has started from the emergence of Buddhism which teaches the notion of Altruism and Acculturation. The stream of conscious percolated through different ages under the humanitarian efforts of various social thinkers, ideologists and intellectuals. Literature as an art form highly utilized to pen down the social pain. Marathi is the background to Dalit notion. The challenging efforts of Dr Ambedkar pour the ray of self respect and a sense of social security among the Dalits. Traditionally dalits are those lied on the footstep of four fold Verna system. It is transformed with its new dimension as those deprived by socio-political, economic, religious, cultural and educational human rights. The various generations of social reformer and worshipper of words are depicting the miserable plight of the depressed on realistic observation. The magic of Dr. Ambedkar's thinking took a drastic change in the mindset of oppressed. They discarded the very notion of Dalit as connotation of 'hatred' and called themselves as Ambedkarite, as follower of Dr. Ambedkar, pioneer of progressive principles. All this turmoil happened in the both pre and post independent Indian era. Mulk Raj Anand as social painter pinpointed all the panic of Indian unequal ethos in his suited seminal creative English writing- Untouchable, Coolie and many more short stories. It is a saga of transition from toxin to tonic in the wake of self quest interwoven with the flight of fancy and factuality.

Keyword - Stream of consciousness, dalit literature, social panic, regional writer etc.

Dalit literature is a concept initiated from Maharashtra in India in 1958. The term Dalit of which literally meaning is 'broken' in Marathi. The term was first used by Jyotiba Phule and later popularized by its leader Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. It reflects the situation of Dalits million in South Asia, which are systematically and institutionally clutches and deprived of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in all spheres of life. However, the Dalits are redefining the word and with it their identity - Dalits are the practical equality, believe in equality and the fight for equality!

It is a literary response to bring forth the value of humanism on natural justice rather than providing an aesthetic pleasure or the so called terms of literary world 'art for art's sake.' It is a revolt to the age old Indian puritan Varna system. Number of sources of the origin of Dalit literature can be cited from the Buddhist era down to the visionary Mahatma Phule and Shahu Maharaj. The pioneer work of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is a milestone for social amelioration on the path of unequal Indian social stratification. Various visionaries, activists and ideological groups have contributed to this 'conscious movement' in different span. The spirit of Dalit movement is in struggle against anti-caste movement to build a modern democratic and secular Indian identity. They fought against all unjust divisions of society. A huge mass of literature is created in the light of Dr. Ambedkar's teachings and visions.

Dr. Ambedkar as dauntless and dashing intellectual is a vital figure behind the force of Dalit literature. The architect of Indian constitution, a diplomat, a politician, an economist, an educationist, has got his education in an open and libre atmosphere in the Western soil. As an acute observer of global vicissitudes he studied the global voice against color unjust in Western world through Harlem Renaissance Movement. As an ardent critic of caste system he was of the strong view that caste is manmade mechanism for the preservation of power of a few prevailing upon the majority. He denied openly the Indian caste structure supported by the fanatics of Hinduism. His speeches and writings is a compendium of his ideology and philosophy based on rationalism and logicism sharpened with an acute edge of progressive thoughts supporting to healthy nationalism. 'Caste is the bane of Hindus' is his central line of thinking and writing. His was a renaissance spirit. And mind too. Imitating the footsteps of their messiah the miserable Indian masses have got prestigious positions in all spheres of life. Dalitism is the ideological habitat where various socio-cultural sensitivities and political-economic groups coexist. Opposition to Hindu traditions in general intellectual and oppressive caste hierarchy, in particular, is the central concern of the movement of Dalit literature.

Literature is to be said as the mirror of society. To spreads the voice of awareness and self quest in Indian Dalit literature has become the main weapon. To quote P. B. Shelley, the next generation English Romantic poet has very meticulously propounded the meaning of the poetry, as one of the important genres of literature... 'Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.' The same line of thinking has been utilized in the context of Indian Dalit literature. The turning of



suppressed voices to the catching clarion call for upliftment is penned down in different regional languages. Marathi as the native language of Maharashtra is on the forefront of it. Because of the seed of 'awareness agitation' is sowed in the native land of Dr. Ambedkar, in Maharashtra. There are host of academicians and writers writing their own experiences in so called part of literature 'atmcharitra' to which later 'swakathan' is replaced with. A stream of consciousness started with number of literary men in Marathi language. The great poets like Narayan Survey, Namdeo Dhasal, Daya Pawar, Arun Kamble, Macqwan Josef, Limbale Saran Kumar, Arun Dangle, and many other poets wrote poetry weaving the Indian ethos and boiling passion against communalism and casteism in their writing. The hosts of artists, painters, sculptures, folk singer, and musician have contributed to diminish the bias in Indian social structure. The southern literature in both regional language and translation is a concrete voice strengthening to Dalit literature. The recent Tamil vigor, poet, writer, activist and translator, Meena Kandaswamy has kindled the flame of caste annihilation through her prolific writing. The perennial poet as well as comprehensive Marathi critic Dr. A. R. Ingle is picking the pain as well as full swing yearning for changes in social mindset. As a noted Marathi literary celebrity, Dr A. R. Ingle, in 'Yuddhapakshi' an anthology of poetry, has finely fanned the fire of emotional expression mixed with realistic neo- Buddhist notions filled with scientific and restless mind for the zeal of knowledge, befitting the deprived as civilized citizen of Globalised horizon. Dalit Literature is transformed into 'Ambedkari Literature' in 1993 after the name of its harbinger and main inspiration Dr. Ambedkar. The dalit were demographically segregated and sidelined in a society. Their writing did not depict the fancy of romanticizing the issues, but resisted it strongly observed in vicinity. The canvas of Dalit writing may not be filled with rainbow colors of imaginative eyesight but the native hue of reality is able to compel the world to sit and speculate on it.

Indian social structure is the key source to Dalit literature. The flow of social reform has started from the emergence of Buddhism which teaches the notion of Altruism and Acculturation. The stream of conscious percolated through different ages under the visionary and humanitarian efforts of various social thinkers, ideologists and intellectuals. Literature as an art form highly utilized to pen down the social pain. Marathi is the background to Dalit notion. The challenging efforts of Dr Ambedkar pour the ray of self respect and a sense of social security among the Dalits. Traditionally dalits are those lied on the footstep of four fold Verna system. It is transformed with its new dimension as those deprived by socio-political, economic, religious, cultural and educational human rights. The various generations of social reformer and worshipper of words are depicting the miserable plight of the depressed on realistic observation. The regional languages as Marathi, Tamil, Kannnad, Punjabi, Telgu and many more have contributed majorly in crossing the national borders of infamous attribution of Dalits. The magic of Dr. Ambedkar's thinking took a drastic change in the mindset of oppressed. They discarded the very notion of Dalit as connotation of 'hatred' and called themselves as Ambedkarite, as follower of Dr. Ambedkar, their great leader and pioneer of progressive principles. All this turmoil happened in the both pre and post independent Indian era. Mulk Raj Anand as social painter pinpointed all the panic of Indian unequal ethos in his suited seminal creative English writing- Untouchable, Coolie and many more short stories. It is a saga of transition from toxin to tonic in the wake of self quest interwoven with the flight of fancy and factuality.

Mulk Raj Anand is an Indian English writer famous for his depiction of the lives of the poorer castes in traditional Indian society. Along with R.K. Narayanan and Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand is actively involved in narrating the realistic social situation existed in the pre and post independent India in the world of segregated one. Anand the pioneer of Indo-Anglican fiction has no excel in delineating the Indian based writer in English to gain an international readership. The fertility of his fine imagination is so powerful that his acute eyesight has left no literary area untouched. His literary career sparks from his family, originated by the rigidity of the caste system. His first prose essay was a response to the suicide of an aunt, who had been expelled by his family for sharing a meal with a Muslim. His first novel Untouchable was a frightening exposition of the day- to-day life of Indian untouchable caste. It is the story in the life of Bakha, a toilet-cleaner, who unintentionally felt the victim of a higher caste. Bakha searches for his better fortune in which he was born, indulging with a Christian missionary, listening to Mahatma Gandhi and a succeeding conversation by two educated Indians. Anand has left a moral message for the alternation of mind of the 'Manu' oriented Indian rigid lifestyle controlled by Varna system. So also a scientific solution also suggested by Anand that newly introduced technology of flush toilet may be utilized for eliminating the need for a caste of toilet cleaners. The popularity of the fiction crossed the geographical and cultural boundaries and widely acclaimed Anand's reputation as India's Charles Dickens.

Anand is a progressive writer who used novel as literary weapon of social amelioration and of crusade against the evils of the society. His sense of social sensibility and sympathy with the depressed and the underdog is commendable. The fictional story of Untouchable set in the outcaste's colony outside of an unnamed town during the British reign. The dirty nature of work of the hero in the novel treated as impure. The higher castes view them as impure and make them do all the menial labor. It indicates the idea of impurity is only suits to the higher castes desires. Bakha represents a part of the social history of



India. He is a victim of social suppression and superstition. He feels strongly against with human injustice set out to search himself. But the protest of the individual is ineffective against the strength of the false morality of the established society. Hence, Bakha is presented as a meager person who is unable to turn his anger into action. Here Bakha represents as a Dalit character. The dominating society pretends to civilize those people. But there is inner unwilling about the Dalit groups. The lack of education enhanced miserable and pathetic condition of them.

Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous castes from all over the nation. Like the character of Bakha, only through the education Dalits can improve their life style or change their lives and capacity. Untouchable is regarded as a classic since it brings into sharp focus which has proved unbearable to Indian society in general, and Hindu society in particular, encircling several issues upsetting the condition of man not only in India but also in the world. The novel explores the possibilities of interpersonal relations between untouchables and high caste Hindus considered in existential terms. Bakha's dilemma would have been all the more meaningful if the growth in his awareness which is required to be plotted by the novel had been rendered more plainly through a probing of this psyche.

Coolie is a shocking saga of an unending pain, suffering and prolonged struggle with an airy aspiration of brief moments of relief and hope. Coolie is called as the odyssey of Munoo, an epic of modern caste clashes a hilly boy who by fate is made to leave his idyllic village. In search of livelihood and with dream of seeing a better world. But wherever he went remained hand to mouth. His hope for better India shatters away. The first contact with reality shatters the innocent aspiration of this orphan boy. He first employed to the bank clerk, left him spellbound with a bitter experience. Munoo falls the victim of an ignorant house wife and finally flees far in search of bread and butter. He next finds himself in a primitive pickle and jam factory hidden away among the reeking lanes and dark alleys of the feudal town. Here he is acquainted with a bankrupt and bogus practices resulted to come into the rank of the laborers from where he had sought to rise, but failed. At the ultimate he died of tuberculosis as 'rickshaw' puller coughing blood for various diseases rested in feeble body.

He is exposed to a new world of friends and foes, of cut-throat competition and treachery, of the vulgar manifestation of vice and depravity of the red light district and of the communal fires enkindled and fed up by the factory boss to break an awaiting strike. Finally Munoo is knocked down by the car of an Anglo- Indian woman who takes him to Shimla as her servant which was goaded his grief by pulling the rickshaw for the mistress. The cancer of class system often results in the segregation and subjugation of thousands of people into everlasting misery and ultimate extermination.

The novel coolie projects the perspectives of a class- ridden society based on disparity which proves to be a more intricate and deceitful world. In this world the underdog, the coolie in this case, though apparently free, is subject to more rigidity and deprivation unlike the sweeper who is assured of this 'place' in the society because of the indispensability of his work. Munoo in coolie wandering from place to place for seeking out a secure place for livelihood in society, in vain. The harassed underdogs, a helpless victim of oppressive forces and an exercise of a dreamy destiny are masterfully handled by Anand. He symbolizes the disinherited earthy experience whose tragic life indicates man's brutality to man. Anand is an accomplished literary artist reads the mind and soul of an individual and the environment in an exceptional way, leaving behind his indelible impression in the mind of readers. As a novelist and short story writer Anand is par excellent. His Barber's Trade Union and other story compilation catching the pulse of society, makes the readers enthralled with shocking realistic panorama of Indian cultural cult and its limitation in the way of being human. The picturesque painting of personal and public panic purely empowered him in Indo-Anglian literature.

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