
DOUBLY OPPRESSED VOICES

Yasmeen Begum¹-

Lecturer in English Language and Literature,
Govt. Degree College for Women, Begum pet,
Hyderabad.

P. Jhansi²-

M.A English final yr.,
Govt. Degree College for Women, Begum pet,
Hyderabad.



Abstract:

Dalit literature represents the harsh lived experiences of marginalized Dalit people. There is always one or the other real character behind a fictional name and the depiction of the solid reality behind the veils of fictionalized incidents in almost all the genres of Dalit literature, whether in poetry or prose. Dalit literature is basically literature of resistance it aims to unveil the revolt of Dalit (people below the poverty lines) on the question of their identity which is opposed and oppressed by the Indian caste system in every possible way. It portrays the lives of Dalits who were the victims of brutality and slave culture. After many protestations, Dalit writings have become a matter of interest; many Dalit writers came up with their own autobiographies, stories of pain and agony. Our paper explores the superiority of non-Dalits over Dalits, highlights the doubly oppressed voice of the Dalit women and traces the level of relegation of Dalits even in Education and Employment in the selected works of KumudPawde and Meena Kandaswamy.

Keywords: Dalit literature, depiction, fictionalized, Education and Employment, etc

Introduction;

The fact of having the elementary rights denied, elicits attempts to intervene the situations. Despite all the negative impositions of ideology. "Where there is power there is resistance" rightly said by Michael Foucault best exemplify with Dalits; who also characterized by resistance and resilience. Dalit literature is established as a separate genre of writing in many Indian languages, The Dalit writers portray the social reality of appalling caste oppression, untouchability, poverty and slavery through their writings. This passionate depiction of crude society has touched the hearts of many around the world. A Woman in Dalit community is a Dalit among Dalits. In spite of siding caste by men; the Dalit women have also contributed sufficiently to Dalit literature... This paper examines the oppression of Dalits especially women by so-called upper caste religious rules and their discernment in the education and employment through the works of two major Dalit female writers Meena Kandasamy and Kumud Pawde.

Voice of doubly oppressed through the works of Meena Kandasamy:

Meena Kandasamy, being both Dalit and women writer mostly focuses on the issue of caste and untouchability- something that stems from her being a Dalit, considered the lowest and most oppressed of India's castes and formerly known as 'untouchables'. For Dalit women, oppression often means sexual conquest too. Kandasamy's poetry constitutes a sense of gender relations and issues of Dalit. One of the prime targets of Meena Kandasamy is Hindu society and in her poems, she repeatedly goes back to Hindu and Tamil myths. Her works eloquent the voice of the Dalits, the people at the lowest rung of India's ancient caste system. Despite the fact that the Indian constitution abolished this system, Dalits still face widespread discrimination. She has written many essays on the tedious issue of casteism. Of all her works her poetry speaks the loudest filled with fire and anger in hearts.

Meena Kandasamy once said in an interview that she consciously chooses poetry to articulate her profound concern for what we call the Subaltern or the Marginalized: she states that she chose poetry as it intricately connected with language and since language is the site of all subjugation and oppression: poetry alone has the power of being extremely subversive. Because on several levels, it challenges language patterns of thought, its prejudices, and its enshrined, encapsulated inequalities." Through her poetry, she addresses multi-faceted problems and conquers women's rights. According to her poetry helps in switching her anger: one can feel anger and sarcasm while reading her revolutionary poems.

Kanda says' poetry crashes havoc on the idea of Brahmin supremacy. Not only does she dispel such notion but digs into the roots of religion to uproot such belief by questioning the Hindu persuasion and ideology. Her poems are the clear manifestations of the helplessness and marginalization of the Dalits and Dalit women in Indian society. Her poetry condemns rigid restrictions and inhuman hierarchies of caste that reduces a fellow human being into an untouchable creature. Her preferred mode of writing and in a language inextricably linked to the histories of colonialism is clearly to express caste subjugation and patriarchal oppression, visible in the large section of women in India. Her works can be seen through an autobiographical view as Kandasamy conceives of her writing as an attempt to come to terms with her womanhood and low casteless.

Kandasamy's first poetry collection entitled 'Touch' in 2006 is the most fundamental of all the sensations which a human being has bestowed with: We typically think that touch gives pleasure, but not a particularly important part of life. who we love and even how we heal. When in meditation man closes his eyes, ears, and nose, it is the sense of touch which keeps one connected with the world. This stimulation of touch is perhaps the first of senses and no one can escape it the same sense of touch is thought to be a taboo when it implies to transgress the compartmentalization of caste. Kandasamy has excellently described this 'Touch Deprivation' in this poem.

But you will never have known
That touch – the taboo
To your transcendence,
When crystallized in caste
Was paraphernalia of
Undeserving hate. (Touch)

She tries to prove the purity of touch which has been unfortunately transformed in the prohibition when a 'touchable' get touched by an 'untouchable' the traditional Indian myth of impurity revives itself; how the only touch of classes creates the despoliation in the caste Brahmin's world- order.

Meenakandasamy's poetry reveals a sharp awareness of the inextricable linking of caste and gender and its manifestation in the lives of women. In the collection of poems Ms. Militancy, the opening poem entitled 'A Cunning Stunt' represents the upper caste men who have traditionally wielded power not only in sexual realm but also over the symbolic means of production. The poem then describes the sexual act as one of violence in which the poetic 'I' is torn into various meanings of family, race, and caste. Readers then are confronted with a picture of female sexuality as it is used as an instrument of control and domination in patriarchal and caste-based society.

The title poem of her second collection of poems "Ms. Militancy" in 2010. Is based on the 'Kannaki' the heroine of Tamil classic 'Silapathikaran' this poem is a revolutionary call for all

the women. The first part of poem portrays Kannaki's sacrificial devotion and loyalty when judged by the standards of Tamil culture, which advocates patriarchal dominance. It depicts in spite of deeply affected by her husband's betrayal, how Kannaki forgives her husband's mistress and supports him to start a fresh life by giving him one of her anklets to the mortgage.

Ditched and duped by his dancer mistress.

She forgave that bitch, buried the bad blood

Between, gave him her anklet of rubies to sell and begin some business with..., (Ms. Militancy)

In Ms. Militancy, she speaks about the contemporary issues of her native India. She reveals the societal assumptions that assign specific roles to be played based on caste and gender. She turns her attention to the past, and deconstructs the heroes; she uses her poetry as a scalpel to dismantle stereotypes.

On the edge, Ms. Militancy bayed for more blood

Vending Vengeance, she made a bomb

Long after that land had turned to ashes,

Kandasamy dreams of such militant women; by coming forward and voicing her protest she has set herself a model for oppressed, subjugated women.

Her poetry condemns rigid restrictions and inhuman hierarchies of caste that diminishes a fellow human into an untouchable creature as is apparent in one of her eloquent poem 'One - Eyed' evokes the brutality of a caste-based society which inflicts disciplining violence upon a large section it deems as untouchable. A young school girl who reaches for a pot of water to parch her thirst is meted out severe punishment by her teacher, resulting in loss of vision in her left eye- this is the price for the tasting of that touchable water. It extols the various atrocities committed against the Dalit women, and explores how the educated upper-class people (the teacher, doctor, the school and the press see the violation of rules and are indifferent to the needs of people Ironically, the inanimate pot, glass, and water are revealed to be more 'humane' than the human agents who fail to see beyond the 'untouchability' of a helpless girl. It uncovers the flaws of human in understanding their fellow beings. Dhanam's world was 'torn in half' when she tasted the impermissible water at the cost of her left eye.

The oppression faced by Dalit women is far more intense than what Dalit men go through. Dalit women acquire a distinct identity derived from the sexual inequality they experience in their own community as well as the disparities of caste, religion, sexuality and economic status between them and upper caste Hindu women. Their position is of a doubly marginalized; whose lack of social and economic power endangers their education, freedom.

Discrimination in Education:

Kumud Pawde belonging to the 'Mahar' community, the lowest of the castes, exemplifies rare courage in the pursuit of her dream of academic excellence. The discrimination that was

meted out to the people of this section of society is well-documented fact. These were people who were not even allowed to drink water from the wells which were used by upper castes. They need to carry their own pots for their spittle and brooms to wipe out their footsteps on the road so that to prevent the defilement of the other castes. Living on the fringes of society they were forced to do menial jobs like disposal of human wastes and the dead bodies. Burdened further were the women who had to bear untold severe sexual exploitation.

KumudPawdes' "The Story of My Sanskrit" part of her autobiography Antasphot, for the first time, details the struggles of the life of the untouchable woman who had the courage to enter the public sphere. Her story took place back when the study of Sanskrit was still confined to Brahmin men; Pawde to reach her goal had to fight discrimination both on the grounds of caste and gender.

A girl from the Dalit community studying Sanskrit not only for the dreadful anomaly to a traditional mind but this is the subject a pride for the people. People get attention from the community those who know the language. Words that come out from lip's edge as filthy as betel-stained spit. Each word is gleaming smooth as cream. All these restricted to the people of higher castes. So the question arises if the subject can't destroy the discrimination in the society then what importance of this subject is. Brahman didn't want to see the rivals as an opponent in the field of job, society, everywhere. They opposed the girl KumudPawde to study Sanskrit because they took as a threatening to them. This girl represents her society if she rejects everything, she will become the landmark of the society. If she breaks the rules regulated by upper caste in education and employment, rest starts avoiding the rules. She was as a disaster waiting for them, they need to control and overcome her.

Apart from her education coming to her employment, after getting her M.A degree, she remains unemployed for two years. That was a really hard time for her; she couldn't get a job to her identity. Then she got married to an upper caste man, this is again another picture for the society. Inter-caste marriage is the very much offensive crime to the society but the couple ensures their life to them. Finally, after getting married she could achieve an assistant lectureship in a government college. Her dream was fulfilled but lost her identity. It is very clear that religion is an opium eater. There are still cases of untouchability even in this developed and modern era, Dalit children are ostracized, or made to sit separately in school and served from a distance. In Sanskrit, the word Dalit means suppressed, smashed, or broken into pieces.

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