

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: The ultimate inspiration for Dalit literature

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Abstract

Dalit literature is after a long time emerged as one of the famous literary representation of Post-colonial writings in India for Dalits for their rights and equality and freedom. There is a force behind the creation of all these writings. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is the sole inspiration behind the creation of dalit writing. Dalit panthers also drew their inspiration from Ambedkar's writings speeches and his movement. Today number of dalit writers composing their works centering the ideas of Ambedkar where every human is being treated equal. In this paper I tried to portray Dr. Ambedkar as the ultimate inspiration for Dalit literature.

Keywords: Dalit literature, Ambedkar, equality, Inspiration

Introduction

Dr. Ambedkar the everlasting inspiration for Dalit literature. The western educated champion of human rights doctor B.R. Ambedkar having sound knowledge about marginalized sections of India, have fought for the liberation of dalits from the clutches of casteist philosophy. It is literature that helps them to make others listen to the screams of their pain which was not heard before; education among them at last, forces them to express their pain with the help of pen.

Doctor Ambedkar, will remain the ultimate source of inspiration for Dalit literature.

According to Nimbalker, one of the contemporary Dalit writers opines:

“The immense potential of Ambedkar and his philosophy, was not restricted to himself or anyone particular individual. He handed over to them the flares of his philosophy for development. His thoughts contained a graph of the progress of the people at the grass roots of the society. For this Doctor Ambedkar's life it-self has become a revolution. This revolution had changed the consciousness of the dalits. That is why Ambedkar and his philosophy is the source of Dalit literature”.

Babasaheb's ideas about social justice are evident in his defence of the untouchables. Before the Southborough commission, the Simon commission, and the round table conferences his publications such as *Mook Nayak*, *Bahishkrit Bharat*, *Janatha and Samatha*, his efforts with Bahishkrit Hitkarini sabha, his entry into the Kalaram Temple and the burning of Manusmriti, and the total life of Babasaheb and his work, ideas and message awakened the Dalit society, Dalit movement and the Dalit writers. The movement of his actions for rights and equality sowed the seed for Dalit literature.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is the doyen of Dalit literature, his message is the magnetic force for Dalit writers in India. He is the essence of social revolution and embodiment of dalit-ideology.

Dr. B.R. Amedkar gave ultimate importance to humanist ideology. His speeches and wrings are mainly based on equality among human beings. Inspired by him, Dalit literature holds the human being to be its focal point. Dalit

literature is a declaration of human freedom without caste and racist philosophies. It encourages human liberation believes in the greatness of human beings, and firmly opposes notion of race, religion and caste.

Dr. Ambedkar said I like the religion that teaches liberty, equality and fraternity, and his words inspired many writers and the humanity became the religion of Dalit literature.

But there led a political and literary conspiracy against Ambedkar in India, Ambedkar's corpus of writings were neglected until his birth centenary celebrations, whereas writings of Gandhi, Nehru and Rajendra Prasad have been fully organized. Ambedkar remains a totally forgotten figure, his wrings not available even in libraries for some years after independence, the first generation Dalit writers discussed such kind of things in their works, and even I have mentioned one of those kind of incident in my paper, the incident that was written by a Dalit writer in his work.

Dr. Ambedkar was very dear to Dalit-heart, as we know his own achievements in the field of learning are the source of pride, prestige and inspiration to the Dalit writers. Ambedkar was portrayed as a living character and hero in some of Dalit literary works.

Narendra Jadhav portrays him as a catalyst to their revolutionary life in his novel *Outcaste*; Ambedkar's struggles for the upliftment of dalits were often quoted throughout the text. The Mahadsatyagraha in 1927, and the Nasik Kalaram temple entry movement in 1930, and few incidents were portrayed.

Damu, the central character in the novel, sees Ambedkar during Mahadsatyagraha he recollects when Babasaheb spoke everyone listens he urged the untouchables, to do away with the humiliating and enslaving traditions of village duties like carry away dead cattle.

“It is utterly disgraceful to sell your human rights for a few crumbs of bread”, he said “we will attain self-education, only if we learn self-help regain our self-respect and gain self-knowledge” Babasaheb said.

“There will be no difference between parents and animals if they do not desire to see their children in a better position than their own”

What a man what a leader (*Outcaste*, 6).

Ambedkar's idea that education as panacea was well examined in Narendra Jadhav's *Outcaste*, Jaanu, the son of Damu in the novel *Outcaste*, is a fine example of what we can get through education. Damu remembering of words of Ambedkar:

"Many years ago, babasaheb had told Dada, looking at Jaanu, "Educate your son well " ! Dada had obeyed babashaeb's command and in the process babashaeb advises his Dalit followers "Win the seeds of respect and power had borne fruit" (233)

Jaanu become, Indian Administrative Officer, and the family declares that the philosophy of Ambedkar was the cause of their success.

Dr. B.R Ambedkar believed that education is the panacea for social evils. And his ideas inspired even African, and Afro-American black leaders such as Nelson Mandela, in South Africa, and Martin Luther King in America.

Nelson Mandela said:

"Education is the weapon with which you can change the world". Mandela believed in education in eradicating social evils. Martin Luther King, the ex-president of America being an African, humiliated by white people in America with their racist beliefs of black is inferior to white; in his speech (*I have a dream*)

"One day my four children will be recognized in this world not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their intellectuality".

Luther too believes education as panacea, that what was suggested by Ambedkar, but unfortunately, there led a conspiracy against Ambedkar's writings to reach people, for some years, but after people come to know about his writings and speeches, inspired the people a lot, not even in India, and throughout the world and he was chosen as the best Indian after Independence in a survey conducted by a private channel in India, some people tried to demolish his ideology, but they failed in it, because Ambedkar's ideas of social justice can be attributed to all ages, he is never before social scientist of world.

Even we can project him as father of fourth world literature, why because George Manual, who is talking on behalf of marginalized sections of the world, way back in 1974, but it was Ambedkar who talked of Marginalized sections of world and especially of Indian dalits.

Dalit literature portrays the hopes and aspirations of the exploited masses. Their fight for survival, their problems the insults they have undergone, their experiences all these events are portrayed in Dalit literature. Dalit literature represents the collective consciousness of social, political, economic, and discrimination suffered by the dalits for hundreds of years. Their ability in resisting, and their revolt against inequality inspired by Dr Ambedkar, which was also the inspiration for Dalit writers, because every story of Dalit is autobiography, and every story is often remembering Ambedkar as their liberator in all terms.

Anna Bahu Sathe, the Marati Dalit writer, his poem "*Take a hammer to change the world*" here the hammer is none other than Dr. Ambedkar.

Take a hammer o change the world
So saying went Bhimrao

Why the elephant is stuck sitting
In the mud of slavery?
Shake your body and come out,
Take a leap to the forefront!

The rich have exploited us without end
The priests have tortured us
As if had eaten jewels
And thieves had become great

Sitting on the chariot of unity
Let us go forward
To break the chains of class and caste
Hold to the name of Bhim.

Anna Bahu Sathe, portraying Ambedkar as Hammer to change this world with ups and downs, and to liberate ourselves, let revolt from our under privileged stage, saying the name of Bhim, means Dr. Ambedkar, Anna Bahu Sathe's famous novel *Fakira*, won Maharashtra state award, and he dedicated this award to Dr. Ambedkar's warring pen, because he got inspired by Ambedkar's ideology as like any other Dalit writer.

Baluta. Is another important and semi-autobiographical work by writer and poet Daya Pawar in 1978, its dealing with forced labour on dalits, there was no time table for dalits, they will have to work around the clock without rest.

Dagdu, the protagonist who is a staunch follower of Dr. Ambedkar, who thinks that the teaching and preaching of Ambedkar can inject the germ of rebellion in to the Dalit mind and cause socio-cultural change. Dagdu believes that this forced labour can be eradicated through the ideas of Ambedkar and it was projected as it is by writer Daya Pawar, because all the Dalit writer's inspiration is the one and only Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, most of the writers have been influence by the thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar, their writings contain the narratives of the sub-verted, exploited and enslaved people who have been marginalized deliberately, by the upper class people, in this regard Limbale argues:

"Dalit consciousness is an important seed for Dalit literature; it is separate and distinct from the consciousness of other writers. Dalit literature is unique because of this consciousness" (Limbale 32).

In the work *Diwali*, written by Gujarati writer Dalapat Chauhan, who was inspired by Dr. Ambedkar, has condemned *Manusmriti*. Ambedkar burned *Manusmriti*, on 25th December, 1927 because it's promoting in equality in Indian society. Even here Chauhan has talked various atrocities, like not to allow Dalits to enter into temples, and other public places, not to allow use pond and well how upper caste people do not allow an avarna to marry a savarna woman. Abhijit the Dalit character in the work *Diwali*, wants to marry an upper caste girl but Brahmanism does not allow him to do so. In this play Dalapat Chauhan instigates the public to overthrow the casteist ideology and to create a world, where everyone is living equally and happily. The equality that through intercaste marriages that can brought into society suggested by Ambedkar was projected here in his work.

Om Prakash Valmiki's *Joothan*, is also an important work in Dalit literature. Valmiki faced many problems, even the girl whom he loved left him only for the cause he belongs to downtrodden sections and his work *Joothan*, has full of incidents like this one. Valmiki struggled with downtrodden identity from his primary education days. Ambedkar was

unknown entity to him up to that time when he joined in college. And the college library also did not have the most of the book of Ambedkar, as we discussed it was a conspiracy that led against Ambedkar, but he managed to get some books of Ambedkar from somewhere, and he inspired by the writings of Ambedkar.

Valmiki quotes the inspiration of Ambedkar on him, and his writings.

“Dr. Ambedkar’s life –long struggle had shaken me up. I spent many days and nights in great turmoil. The restlessness inside me had increased. My stone-like silence had suddenly begun to melt. I proceeded to read all of Ambedkar’s books that I found in library. (*Joothan*, 72).

Bama, the Dalit- woman writer, remarks “Being a Dalit creates a problem! On top of that, being a Dalit woman makes difficult. Ambedkar’s call for equal rights for woman on par with man has given a new dimension to feminism and the rights for Dalit-woman. He stated

“Education is as necessary for females as it for males”.

Being inspired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Bama suggests a solution treating boys and girls equally and educating both and providing girl child, enough freedom would then eradicate the evils of injustices, violence’s and inequalities. (123).

Another Dalit woman writer, Baby Kamble is influential woman writer in Dalit literary scenario, her work “*The prisons we broke* (2008), is considered the manifesto of Dalit woman. Baby Kamble is strongly inspired by Ambedkar’s thought and philosophy on education and rights for woman, from her childhood days Baby’s father and brother were part of Ambedkar’s socio-political activities, of Ambedkar, and they used to closely discuss and follow everyday activities of Ambedkar.

I measure the progress of community by the degree of progress which woman have achieved, said Dr. Ambedkar, the author Baby Kamble remembering Ambedkar, because they are just educated only through the efforts of the human rights champion, and the liberator of marginalized sections Ambedkar, and recollecting the cunning nature of upper castes: to confine the woman to the superstitious and rituals.

“Today many of our daughters and daughters-in law, are graduates. They are a hundred times more superior to ignorant woman like us. Even if their husband’s forgot the father, in the glory of so-called greatness, it is their duty to reprimand their husbands: They should tell them; remember what you are today is solely because of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar” (123).

There are many examples how Ambedkar became the source of inspiration for Dalit literature in even in Telugu. Writers like Gurram Joshua, Katthi Padma Rao, Yendluri Sudhakar, Madduri Nagesh Babu, Paidi Theresh Babu, and many other poets remember Ambedkar in their writings and most of them admitted that Ambedkar is the sole inspiration for Dalit-literature.

Conclusion

Dr. Ambedkar was the light of of Dalit-life, and the Dalit literature. All these writers showed to the world, through their writings, what the great soul Dr. Ambedkar single handedly achieved which no one else had achieved in ages. His wish to create India as a great nation through social and economic revolution without bloodshed, as the real democratic, state is

the everlasting gift to the people of India. All the movements of Dalits, as well as Dalit writers proudly hold him in high esteem as the father of Dalit-literature. The motto and slogan of Ambedkar what known as “Educate, agitate, organize” has made the people to aware of the things that happening around them in Indian social context, perhaps it was a great remedy, to this social problem. As he said political power is solution to all our problems, writers now must concentrate in their works with the slogan “Educate awake access to power” that might be the better tribute to Dr. Ambedkar by Dalit-writers.

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