

Delineation of Women in the Selected Memoirs of Dalit Writers

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ABSTRACT

Many Dalit authors discuss their personal experiences of exploitation and marginalisation as well as those of the women they write about. Women's issues dominate neglected literary works. The social reformation movements led by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Phuley, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj encouraged other social philosophers and Dalit writers in India to write on the social challenges affecting Dalit women in particular and Indian women in general. The memoirs *The Weave of My Life* by Urmila Pawar, *The Prison We Broke* by Baby Kamble, *Outcaste: A Memoir* by Narendra Jadhav depicts the life of the woman character in the Dalit community. The Dalit woman stand as marginalized among their own communities as being outcaste and weaker gender at an equivalent time.

Keywords: Dalit Literature, Caste, Memoirs, Women, Marginalized

I INTRODUCTION

Caste discrimination, a long-standing practise that dehumanises and maintains a severe type of prejudice, is still in use in the twenty-first century. In India, where the practise is pervasive despite laws to the contrary, discrimination against 160 million Dalits, 49.96% of whom are women, is still rife. Similar to racial discrimination, which treats people as untouchable because of descent or because they were born into a specific race or group.

Dalit women are declared to be "impure" by the caste system, making them untouchable and hence socially outcasts. Women's human rights have been completely negated and violated by this. The Indian parliament is making an effort to abolish the discriminatory caste system. Dalit women experience discrimination on three different levels: they are treated as outcasts and untouchables because of their caste; they are subjected to gender discrimination because they are women; and, finally, they suffer economic hardship because of unequal wage gaps and low or underpaid labour. Women are positioned at the bottom of the social ladder by the hierarchical structure.

Dalit women make up the most disadvantaged group in society since they are the poorest, illiterate, and easiest targets for sexual harassment. In addition to violence perpetrated against them by the dominant castes, women also experience violence.

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In this realistic fiction book *The Weave of My Life*, a Dalit woman's experiences are presented in an open, direct, and straightforward manner that is easily comparable to the story of Afro-American women. The

cultural atmosphere of the Marathi original is superbly captured in Maya Pandit's English translation. Pawar's book has incredibly detailed information about the abuse and exploitation of girls and women. Sometimes the humiliation is so intense that the words really bite the reader's sensitivities.

Dalit women's stories are eyewitness accounts of violence against women. In spite of their devoted and unselfish behaviour, their husbands abuse them. Thrashing and torturing in Dalit households. According to the authors, "At The spouse often punched and kicked her on the slightest excuse. At times, he even beat people." [H]e would beat me up for flimsy reasons..., this was the life I hated the most," she said (*The Weave*, 112-113). women-led" (*The Prisons*, 155). Pawar talks about how her cousin is being persecuted.

*Her husband was a drunkard and her mother-in-law a tyrant. Both beat her up mercilessly at the slightest pretext. They would drive her out of the house with her young children even on stormy nights. The poor woman would take her children and cross the hills and valleys at night, her face broken, body swollen, bleeding and aching all over, and reach her mother's house (*The Weave*, 33).*

According to Narendra Jadhav, the woman's situation was comparable to that of a Dalit in the community. In his book "*Outcaste: A Memoir*," it was difficult for a woman to labour side by side with a male since Hinduism forbade it. Hinduism was attacked by various people because of the male-dominated nature of the culture, and the same was true here "The Hindu religion and caste system are inseparable. Caste systems form the basis of Hinduism. This religion justifies the karma theory and so accords the slave status of women. It aggravates the conditions of women by reinforcing; rationalizing and practices and

makes women feel that they are inferior creature and sinners.” (Paswan 17)

The Prisons We Broke by Kamble is not thought of as her autobiography but rather as the autobiography of a Dalit woman who has been oppressed and subjugated and who wishes that her silent sorrows may be given an audible voice. Kamble paints an unvarnished portrait of Dalit women who are oppressed on three different levels by patriarchy, caste, and gender. Younger women, especially those who are newlyweds, have the worst fate.

According to Kamble, the Mahar women's life were restricted to and constrained by all household duties, and they were never given access to self-hygiene and self-care. In addition, they were merely seen as machines for producing children. A Mahar lady would carry on giving birth until menopause (82). They were the worst victims of domestic violence, sexism, casteism, and gender bias. Kamble describes the miserable predicament of the Mahar women, who are expected to act like slaves in front of their upper caste Brahmans and who are even given instructions by their own men on how to serve the upper caste Hindus as their masters. They were made to feel threatened by these upper caste segments of the community. However, they received curses and slander as payment for their struggles and hard work for their masters. The Mahars provided exceptionally obedient service to their lords for many centuries. However, the Mahars received abuse from the upper caste group if they did not submit to their masters or if they did not make room for them when the masters blocked their path.

II CONCLUSION

Every segment of society has unique concerns, and every writing style concentrates on one or more of these issues. Even memoirs that make the claim to be an accurate account of the author's life also have a goal and follow a specific format. The memoirs highlight the limitations and the reach of a single form of narration in addition to revealing the disparities between the psyches of men and women. More significantly, in this kind of narration, memory and representation produce a new dialectic. Women raise worries about the dual exploitation while men prefer to remember their humiliation and clamour for self-respect in society. The act of representation itself poses issues with regard to reality or actuality, imagination or perception, and authenticity or purported authenticity.

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