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DALIT LITERATURE ON SOCIAL ASPECTS

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Introduction:

The word "Dalit" is derived from Sanskrit word "Dalita" - means "oppressed." In Indian socio-cultural context, they were untouchables and the below Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya. The untouchables were referred as "Chandala" or "Avarna" in ancient period. The words "Untouchable" or "Harijan" used by Narasimha Mehta and Mahatma Gandhi during 20th century. The word "Exterior Castes" used by the famous historian J.H. Hutton at international level for these untouchables. "Harijan" means "people of God." The official term used for this community is Scheduled Caste. Since few decades Shudras are known as Dalit. "Dalit," a word that refers "ground" collects under its umbrella numerous groups that move at the margins. This is a self-chosen word derived from the Sanskrit and Marathi word for ground down, broken, that is oppressed. It is used to indicate that untouchability is imposed by others, not a result of natural pollution. It is also used to include all the underprivileged and oppressed of India

Dalit literature movement Suppressed class movement started in India in 1958 after the death of great thinker Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and earlier inspired by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. This got the spark from the Black Movement of contemporary America. As obvious from the meaning Dalit literature is the writing about and of Dalits or oppressed. This literature echoes the pain of the experiences of untouchables. It portrays the caste dishonor, injustice, violence, and discriminations perpetrated by the upper caste people. It expresses the political realization that focused on the struggle for self-respect and dignity for the community. The word "Dalit" has a large edge and it speaks about every type of domination that any group faces. This literature has a healing power to cure the traumas of the past. Literature written by the members of the Dalit communities or the literature that is specifically written to represent the typical social, historical and cultural aspects of the Dalit communities is described as Dalit literature. It is the literature of explicit social commitment aimed at promoting ideas of social equality, justice and resistance to suffering, discrimination and economic exploitation.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To study Dalit literature on Social Aspects.

Methodology:

The information required for the study has been collected from secondary sources.

Dalit Literature on Social Aspects:

On huge landscape of India, there lived the people of various castes, communities and religions. Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islam and Christian had seen dominant sects made their essence clear with the religion. Among them most of communities were tried their best to bring the social change in the society, but they become failure. Due to this, various ways of thinking took place on Indian canvas. One group demanded to have changes in religion and still remained firm to keep the religion as it is. Other group demanded to have changes in the way of life. It gave importance to cultural change in Nineteenth and a cultural study of dalit autobiographies in india Twentieth century. As a result of this, society makes two groups such as the exploiter and exploited. Sociologically, the neglected class doesn't belong to any caste or community those who are ignored, they are Dalit.

In the beginning phase of the Dalit movement when a few Dalits started documenting their unfortunate lives, their writings were harshly criticized and rejected on the ground of being abusive and vulgar. The upper caste intellectuals of the society found them monstrous and refused to consider these writings as a part of literature at all. They alleged Dalit writers of using a language and style which was crude and rude, totally unsuitable to literary purposes. They denied the literary worth of Dalit literature and found it different from the norms of an established canon of literature. Moreover they prejudiced that the revolting nature of Dalit literature would create a confusion and disorder in the society while they were only depicting the pain and agonies of their lives to make rest of the world aware of their miseries because there was a need for it. Non-Dalit writers never focused on the problems of the Dalits in their writings. They always presented the Dalit characters as the underdogs of the society who did not possess any identity of their own. Dalit literature was not a gutter literature, it had human values and human rights in its centre, the pain and pangs of a deprived section of the society. Since the upper caste hegemonic literature was unable to portray the accurate picture of the Dalits and didn't have their questions, their anguish, and their experiences, they formed their own separate literature which was later recognized as Dalit literature. It was a historical beginning.

"Who Were the Shudras?" is a book written by B.R. Ambedkar. Ambedkar dedicated the book to Mahatma Jyotiba Phule (1827-1890). As Ambedkar opines about Mahatma Jyotiba Phule that he is "the Greatest Shudra of Modern India who made the lower classes of Hindus conscious of their slavery to the higher classes and who preached the gospel that for India social democracy was more vital than independence from foreign rule". In this book Ambedkar contends that the Shudras were initially Aryans associated to the Kshatriya class. Ambedkar further argues that the Brahmins brought about the degradation of the Shudras. Relations have also been drawn between the wide acceptance of Mahars in Hinduism as outcasts and untouchables due to their affirmation to Buddhist practices. Shudra were of two kinds, "pure" or "not-excluded" (aniravasita) and "excluded" (niravasita). The latter were quite outside the pale of Hindu society, and were virtually indistinguishable from the great body of people later known as "Untouchables". According to the brahmanical textbooks the chief duty of the pure shudra was to wait on the other three classes. He has to eat the remains of his master's food, wear his cast-off clothing, and use his old furniture. Even when he had the opportunity of becoming wealthy he might not do so, "for shudra who makes money is distressing to the brahmans". He had few rights and little value on his life as set in law. A brahman killing a shudra performed the same penance as for killing a cat or dog. The shudra was not allowed to hear or repeat the vedas. A land where shudras were numerous would suffer great misery.

Dr. Ambedkar is the best example in front of many Dalits in India. Dr. Ambedkar's thought philosophy of life, and sacrifice and commitment for bringing a revolutionary change in life of the weaker section of the society. He made important endeavours at giving political rights and social liberty to Dalits.

Conclusion:

Dalit literature is characterized by its fundamental criticism of the caste system and all kinds of discrimination and by its call for destroying social hierarchies. It is the literature of social and political commitment that challenges the status quo. It is the literature of questioning the exclusion from the mainstream of society and culture. It is the literature that promotes equality and human dignity. Most

Dalit writers also believe that the principal purpose of writing literature is to bring about social change rather than recreation or mere intellectual creativity.

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