

Re-Aligning the Dalit Feminist Prospective in 21st Century India

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Abstract--- *Literature is the mirror of society without any boundary of language. It successfully portrays the on-going turmoil within the society- subtle or overt. The major stakeholder in the Indian society is the second gender as they constitute half of the Indian demography. Our scriptures have given the place of goddess to women but the reality check is totally opposite to the popular assumptions. The term "woman" portrays a picture of oppressed second gender, is not always given due recognition in society. Her portrayal has been more akin to a second citizen of this country. As Indian societal segregation has four major Varnas, the plight of a Dalit woman is beyond doubt even more painful. Strangely enough the Indian literature in English was very vocal about the Feminist issues but the plight of Dalit woman was not adequately acknowledged. However the Dalit women were made a part of romantic narratives, which were far from the reality of caste bifurcation. The era of 1980 saw a sudden upsurge of women Dalit writers who were perturbed with the fact that the feminist perception was covering upper and middle class women only. There was no representation of the underprivileged Dalit women; writers like Shantabai Kamble, Urmila Panwar, Babytai Kamble, Kumud Pawade, Gogu Shyamala, Vijila Chirrapad have highlighted the oppression of the second gender in their respective mother tongue.*

This research paper will analyse the fiction of two most prominent women novelists who have enriched their respective vernacular literature. Both the women novelists have tried to bring forth the plight of women who are marginalized both more importantly about Dalit women who are doubly marginalized. Volga is a non Dalit Telugu poet and writer well known for her feminist perspective whereas Palanimuthu Sivaakmi is an Indian Dalit Feminist writer who writes in Tamil. The interesting fact is that they have written about women - both are from South India- both bring about the double whammy faced by Dalit women. But there are dissimilarities in terms of their treatment of their feminist perspectives and they have discussed the socio- political, social-economical disparities which are prevalent in the Indian society at large.

Keywords--- *Second Gender, Oppressed, Feminist, Dalit, Double Marginalized, Dalit writer, Non-Dalit Writer.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Academicians observe the concept of feminism as a classroom conceptualism or intellectual property. They limit it to framing of ideology but Feminism is not an ideology which is shaped in intellectual classroom discussions. It started with movements which addressed women problems and seeking right to equality. Later, a feminist theory has come with the response of some scholars who introduced women studies, gender studies and so on. But these theories have emerged from feminist movements which aim to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining womens' social roles and actual experience.

Feminist movement in India did not take place by chance. It happened because of societal circumstances which

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were chocking the women on all levels and they were feeling suffocated due to the non-empathy of the patriarchal structures. The women were not just suppressed and oppressed as they were treated as the second gender of the society but ironically the women who belonged to Dalit community were worse hit.

It has developed theories in a variety of disciplines in order to respond to issues such as the social construction of sex and gender. But there is criticism from their part which considered only certain sections of women such as white, upper-class and middle-class, and educated women but left the lower class and lower caste women from feminism. This led to the creation of ethnically specific or multicultural forms of feminism.

In the Indian male-dominated society, men are regarded as superior to women but feminist movements have shattered this framework. Feminism assisted women to break the restraints - to raise their voices against the oppressive culture, tradition and society. Indian society has always been highly hierarchical. The several hierarchies within the family concretizing age, sex and ordinal position, congenial and fine relationship or within the community referring to the caste lineage, learning, occupation and relationship with ruling power have been maintained very strictly.

The sexual access to Dalit women from the dominated castes earlier regarded as the right of the dominant castes, has been drastically constituted by Dalit politics and named as rape. Not only this consideration forced a re-conceptualization of the beliefs about the subject of rape, but it has in very noteworthy way to redefine Dalit politics itself. Dominant groups, by definition, set the restrictions within which the dependents are operated. The dominant group holds the power and authority in society comparative to the dependents and governs. Whether it is replicated in defining who gets the best jobs, whose history will be taught in school, or whose relationships will be authenticated by society, the prevailing group has the utmost power in defining the structure of the society.

II. DEPICTION OF DALIT FEMINISM BY NON DALIT VOLGA AND DALIT SIVAKAMI

Volga, being non-Dalit writer shares her idea on feminism and Dalit feminism in Telugu Literature. On the other hand, Dalit woman writer Sivakami explicate in detail the plight of Dalit women in Tamil literature. Both the women authors have written about Feminism and Dalit Feminism but both have different stand points. Both had different exposures and divergent voices in terms of expressions yet they have same concerns from two different geographical areas within India.

In observing Volga's novel from Telugu literature, the essence of existence and opportunities, women have to obtain freedom first. The freedom does not come from anybody but women have to recognize necessities for their existence. Woman is forcefully hurled to rigid traditions and pointless opinions. In most of the middle class families, women lead dependent life either on their male family members or on other women.

Volga in her foreword to the novel '*Swecha*', analyses the differentiation between words like 'Swecha' (freedom) and 'samanathwam'(equality). She senses that without equality, freedom exists but equality has no significance in the absence of freedom.

She also argues that:

"In order to cultivate equality, in order to live mutual accepting equal rights take decisions from societal norms

which curb woman's freedom".

The writer brings Aruna's mental development step by step. The writer also suggests woman to recognize relationship with society and her family and her existence, significance and her oppression in all these relationships.

"Though, words like freedom and equality is called as separate words, so many people feel that there is no variance between those two words. Freedom exists in the absence equality but equality has no meaning deprived of freedom." (1987: 2)

Volga's writings analyze the oppression of her woman characters physically and psychologically. Her depiction of Dalit characters is heart rendering but as a non- Dalit she did not know the factual triple marginalization they undergo in reality. She brought out the oppression that is faced in day to day life by women convincingly. Different interpretations of the disadvantages to which women are subject, allied to different conceptions of what would constitute an improvement, gave rise to distinctive and sometimes irreconcilable feminism. In most of the middle class families, women lead dependent life either on their male family members or on other women. This happens mostly with widows as they lack right to property.

The character, Aruna from the novel *Swecha* symbolizes an educated woman from middle class family, who questions her day today situations in family restrictions towards women and she thinks of her own freedom and she inspires to take decisions from societal norms which curb women's freedom.

Her works reflects narrative themes comprise of analyses of women's oppression and applications for overcoming it. However, there are also momentous variances among feminist writers from to present times. Different interpretations of the disadvantages to which women are subject, allied to different conceptions of what would constitute an improvement, gave rise to distinctive and sometimes irreconcilable feminism.

In observing Volga's novel from Telugu literature, the essence of existence of a person or movement is vital and prominent. A novel titled *Aakasamlo Sagam* was published in 1992. The main protagonist of the novel is moderate educated Dalit Maala woman Jacintha. She comes back to village in difficult situation where she cannot continue her studies with financial problems.

After returning from education, she goes for daily wage work. She acquires communist ideology when she was studying. She also has read some progressive literature. The novel talks about Dalit women's facing exploitation, violence by upper caste people and also deals with middle and upper caste women's problems regarding sexual violence and patriarchy's atrocities. Though women work at fields all the time and struggle to grow the crop, they do not have right to sale the crop and it is taken by male and they enjoy the benefit (money) gained out of women's toil. The rivalry in the village starts when two upper caste groups fight on where to build the panchayat office. Maalapalli, a residence of dalit Maala community, faces problems of this situation and many prominent men go away from village. Jacintha with the help of her friends and communist women's group gathers all women of the village irrespective of castes and proposes to build toilets for women at the place adjacent to panchayat office. Communist party calls back women group and orders not to involve in reforming acts. But the cadre helps Jacintha to fight back.

All women regardless of castes amalgamates on a thought to build the toilets as they face so much inconvenience and discomfort every day, as a result they build toilets along with help of head work woman. This incident consolidates all women and gives self-progression to every woman. But, some upper caste men do not digest the development carried by Jacintha. So at last, Jacintha with her caste and gender disparities is raped and killed brutally by upper caste men. In later part of the novel, women's group leader Veena from middle class and non-dalit consolidates all the women from various castes and explains them how Jacintha is killed. She also reminds the past deaths of dalit men, dalit women and upper-caste women by upper caste men. She jolts them saying that Jacintha is killed not because of constructing toilets but because of going against male's supremacy. So, she suggests them to fight against these atrocities which will not happen recurrently in the village and to get justice from the court. Volga describes Jacintha's pain very empathetically while encountering rape by upper caste men.

She Describes,

"Jacintha wants to shout loudly but except sobbing no voice comes out. Meanwhile two people closed the doors; another two pushed her to the ground and put in clothes in her mouth. They caught her hands and legs with dead level. Jacintha looking as if her eyes are thumps out completely. In state of her defilement, she is fighting on her debility as she is not able to do anything. One among them occupied her. What wars, which enmity, which kingdoms of desires, which heredity monarchy lunatics induce male to do this act- that fraction of moments how is it possible they turn in to animal behavioral-Jacintha flaring with anger and shame? All her dreams of her future life are breaking, cracking in to pieces. Jacintha's wished to become teacher and teaches lessons to children-Jacintha as everybody's life in village..."(92)

This particular section of the novel depicts the poor condition of women to face against rapes and to pass on to deaths consciously. Jacintha as educated Dalit woman and as communist ideologist hopes for betterment of village and women irrespective of castes. She tries to change the society within her purview of ideas and in a way to create awareness in village women on gender and cast discriminations. Though, she succeeds in constructing toilets, she fails to save her life from rape and death which are enforced ridiculously by ancient Indian law books. Volga brings very efficiently the existence of individual and women group to fight against atrocities caused by caste system and patriarchy. Though Jacintha is killed brutally but her wish and fight does not go in vain. Her next inspires take up the issues and try to establish justice to women. The problems may vary among Indian women according to their castes but the discrimination is common. However the lower castes in Indian social structure are worst hit. Though some of non-Dalit writers represent Dalit problems in their works and it is appreciable from their gesture yet, the main problem remains that it is quite difficult for non-Dalit writers to bring the real pain and depiction of worst situations of Dalit community. Mahasweta Devi's writings show us the treatment of subaltern, caste and gender but her works are depended on ethics and politics of contemporary society. When it comes to Dalit women writers' works, they have carried forward rightly the exact Dalit women's life, village setting of Dalit women, and their part in developing their culture in their writings. Thus Dalit women writers have pictured coherent and sociological aspects of Dalit women problems, since they draw their churn of writing from reality and it is completely diverse from mainstream feminist literature.

Dalit women writer, Sivakami's novel *The Grip of the Change* illustrates Dalit women's encounter in rural areas with sexual assault from outside their castes when they go for work, and within family boundaries at home. The novel depicts the main protagonist, Thangam's discrimination and sexual assault by both her own family members and upper caste men. It is seen as quite obvious and natural in village atmosphere. She is not given her husband's property after his death, but demanded to offer her body to her brothers-in-law. Often Dalit women are married to excessively older husbands, or sexually harassed or raped by fathers-in-law or brothers-in-law. Later, she is seduced and raped by an upper caste landlord, Udayarsand she is even beaten up in the street when it is known to landlord's wife.

After that, she is provided with some justice by Kathamuthu, a Dalit leader but she is made to depend on him for everything and she is brought to his house as third mistress. She was cursed and ill-treated for a mistake she hadn't committed. What could such helpless women do, when their own sisters betrayed them? Her sister-in-law, Valliammai indeed took pleasure in abusing her, she says in the novel that:

"They beat her up. Good! Why did they leave her alive? That whore thinks too much of herself. She thinks that she's very beautiful. That's why she went after that Udayar. When she loses her shape, he'll throw her out, and she'll be in a state worse than dogs." (2006: 28)

In *The Grip of Change*, Sivakami applies a self-critical and deconstructive technique and exposes the deplorable realities of Dalit patriarchy. In her English translation of the Tamil Text Pazhiyana Kazhithalum, she smartly knots an attachment of 10 years later revisit of the protagonist Gowri to her villages which stimulates the creative faculty of readers to reassess their earlier elucidation of the incidents and characters and it represents her own established vision too. *The Grip of Change* is enlisted by Hanif Mohammed, the Pakistani novelist, among his five favorite Indian Novels for its superb realistic depiction of caste, gender and class merged with socio-political machination. Through her political activism and literary medium Sivakami has been articulating the voice of the voiceless Dalit women. By projecting a woman instead of a 'man' protagonist in her very first novel, she has opposed the mainstream sexist ideology. The protagonist of the play is Thangam, a poor Parachi widow who suffers not only for being a Dalit but for being a woman, an *OTHER* too.

Ironically she is victimized even by her own Dalit community also. She faces triple marginalization economic oppression, gender subordination and caste discrimination. Clutched in the jaws of patriarchy, she is abused, raped and beaten frequently. As Vaishali Shivkumar suggests: A very famous statement 'Woman is a Dalit from Beginning to End', seems really a naked truth at this stage just because of this struggle of the Dalit women against the society, against their own outset and against the traditions their men follow. The patriarchy crushes down the originality, warmth, delicacy, tenderness and even beauty in them. (3)

Undoubtedly the rhetorical question of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak 'Can the subaltern speak?' has its background in post-colonial subalternity but it is quite relevant to Dalit woman's subalternity too. They can't articulate against the oppression inflicted upon them.

Thangam is treated as a 'body' in this novel. Time and again she is assaulted physically, verbally and sexually not only by upper caste patriarchs but by the womanizers of her own community too. After the death of her husband

she becomes a 'surplus woman' for her brothers-in-law and they force her to become a prostitute. Even her right on share of land is rejected on the basis of her infertile 'body' which could not produce child. She can get share of property only if her 'body' can satisfy their lust. As she tells to Kathamuthu, "My husband's brother tried to force me, but I never gave in. they wouldn't give me my husband's land, but wanted me to be a whore for them! I wouldn't give in. . . ." (7) But she is unable to save her body from the jaws of hierarchy. Devoid of money, the destitute and dispossessed Thangam moves outside her home to earn her livelihood by working as a laborer in the fields of a upper class landlord Paranjothi Udayar and there she is raped by him. She narrates, "I didn't want it. But Udayar took no notice of me. He raped me when I was working in his sugarcane field. I remained silent; after all, he is my paymaster. He measures my rice. . . ." (7) What can be the justification for this heinous crime which not only shattered a woman physically but psychologically as well? This brutality of class hierarchy made her 'subaltern' who can't even speak! Thus poverty makes a poor widow to bear the sexual exploitation silently. Caste is the most demoralizing aspect in a woman's identity who is already located at the periphery of a male dominated society. Caste disparities lead to violence against lower caste woman, who is expected to yield to upper caste male chauvinism. The cruelty of caste discrimination is exposed when she moves from passivity to active assertion of her angst against the exploiting masculine brutality and has to suffer social indignation. When the liaison between Udayar and Thangam is disclosed, Udayar's brothers-in-law attack her and beat her doggedly and even she is threatened to be killed (6).

The duality of the upper class is exposed when Udayar abuses her, "Ungrateful whore! Even if she was hurt by the hand adorned with gold! A parachi could have never dreamt of being touched by a man like me! My touch was a boon granted for penance performed in her earlier births. . . ." (31) These words reveal the hypocrisy of Hindu caste system who at one hand hate the lower caste considering them untouchables, and at the other hand gratify their corporeal hunger through Dalit bodies. But Thangam's saga of exploitation is not complete yet. Still she has to face oppression for being poor and particularly a 'woman' and now she is exploited at the hands of the rich of her own Dalit community. Unguarded in her own village, she seeks help in Arthur village but this help proves transitory. Not only her money is grabbed by her so called guardian Kathamuthu but her 'body' is also violated. The rich and influential Dalit Panchayat leader Kathamuthu who earlier gave shelter to Thangam turns into animal and once more her 'body' is abused. In an afternoon while she was sleeping in the kitchen he rapes her and she is so tormented that she can't even see his face. And then she becomes a mistress to him forever. Ironically, Thangam epitomizes the dilemma of all the subjugated women as the novel projects her in a wretched condition of an outcaste from the beginning to the end.

B. Mangalam, rightly observes, "Sivakami's fiction documents violence against women within the domestic space. Her fiction exposes caste and gender hierarchies outside and inside the home that renders the woman an outcaste in her community" (111).

Dalits are OTHER in Hindu caste structure and in the novel their otherness is ostensible by the setting of the Dalit communities in Cheri, (separate outcast area for all minorities) whereas the upper castes live in gramam. The discrimination doesn't stop in separate places; its roots are extended to the untouchability and relationships too. A Hindu upper caste Udayar feels ashamed after the exposure of his liaison with a parachi but a lower caste

Kathamuthu brings a 'foreign brandy' Nagamani to home as his wife (39). Udayar's wife, an upper caste Hindu woman can send her brothers to assault Thangam for having an illicit affair with her husband but Kangawali, a lower caste woman has to bear her husband's second wife Nagamani. Later they both bear Thangam in their home. Ironically there develops a friendship bond too between these three victimized Dalit women. Kangawali and Nagamani became accustomed to having Thangam in house. "After lunch, they sat together in the coconut grove chewing betel leaves and chatting. They no longer served the leftover food. She ate what they ate" (88).

The yawning gap exists not only between Dalit and non- Dalits but among Dalits too. Sivakami has criticized the self - destructive tendencies of Dalit community by exposing caste hierarchical order existing in Tamil Nadu, by giving an elaborated narrative in the text .She says:

Even amongst the lower castes, hierarchy existed- pallars were agricultural labourers, Parayars were drummers and menials, and the Chakkiliyars were cobblers. The first grade -the Pallars-were absent in Puliur. The Pallars considered themselves superior to the rest. The Parayars considered themselves higher than the Chakkiliyars, who in turn considered themselves superior to the Para- vannars, the washer community. The para-vannar men washed clothes for the lower castes and the women worked as midwives for them. Similar to all other human communities, the women were considered to be lower than the men. Everyone established their worth by pointing to those beneath them. (63)

And this series of hierarchy in every culture and every social group concludes with the one and only perpetual prey i.e. woman of that culture or social group. Paradoxically such totalitarian tendencies survive even in the midst of the lowest of the lower castes. Each caste wants to dominate another. And such a hierarchy proves to be a curse especially for the Dalit woman for which she has been weighed down over the manifold layers of exploitation due to this caste hierarchy.

Meena Kandasamy , a contemporary Dalit writer appreciates Sivakami for this honest self -criticism, "The first Tamil novel by a Dalit woman, it evoked a great deal of discussion because it went beyond condemning caste fanatics by using fiction to describe how we were shackled, and tangled among ourselves. Instead of being the journey of her individual voice and consciousness, it was a unanimous expression of the youth of this oppressed community- eager and waiting for change "(193).

Truly confirming its title, the novel *The Grip of Change* doesn't only voices the plight of an exploited Dalit woman, it records the waves of 'change' also in the Dalit consciousness; thus providing a kind of cure for the ailments of the society. Through the character of Gowri, the ideal of education in recovery of Dalit's condition is also established. This novel postulates a crude stereotype of the patriarchy along with a hopeful vision presented by Gowri. The glimpses of the growing consciousness can be seen in the novel. Kathamuthu, a Dalit patriarch allows her daughter Gowri to study and this is only by the awareness provided by education that she is able to realize the exploitation of women in a patriarchal set up. Being educated she protests against her early marriage, "The sufferings that my mother underwent in her marriage! I don't want to be tortured like her by some man"(124).

She defies the decision of her father about her marriage by working hard for her examination, and after getting

success she chooses to study further in the city college. When she crosses the threshold of chauvinistic home, resisting her father's intimidation, she thinks she has conked out the tyrannical chains. The text beautifully conveys, "During floods, waters from overflowing wells mingle with the waters of huge water bodies, transgressing their boundaries. Gowri felt that she had crossed over human -made boundaries -her father, her caste and her village – and merged with the ocean of people" (95).

She openly condemns the inhuman treatment of her father inflicted upon Thangam. When Kathamuthu rapes Thangam she vehemently shouts, "Dogs! Dogs in this house! Shameless as dogs! " (93). She is also critical of her father's polygamist marital state and always stimulates her mother Kangawali and her step-mother Nagamani for liberation. In fact Gowri is the mouthpiece of Sivakami through whom she has voiced the voiceless Dalit women who are bearing the inhuman treatment silently. The vocalization and resistance chiefly rests upon firebrand spirited Gowri.

Meena Kandasamy, in her article "And One Shall Live in Two . . .," gives an insightful review of *The Grip of Change*. She calls Sivakami's daring attempt of self-examination as an exemplar of realist criticism. Though the novel is fictitious but still the characters and incidents are realistic enough to verbalize the reality of modern society. K. Sachidanandan observes, "Dalit literature empowers the marginalized by retrieving the voices, spaces and identities silenced or suppressed by castiest powers" (14). And truly P. Sivakami is able to formulate the poignant tale of a woman's struggle to fight and survive in a biased society and culture through Thangam's story and Gowri's protests which suggest that silence and suppression is optimistically replaced by a stimulated and resisting expression. Thus from the beginning to the end this novel serves as an icebreaker and draws attention to violent realities, sexual assaults, psychological torments, and economical exploitation along with a message that a democratic approach is essential to eradicate such discriminatory ideologies from social fabric.

Dalit women hesitate so many times to fight back or to report in police stations for the sexual harassment and caste discrimination as they lack education and confidence to contest atrocities. Though, Dalit women come as group and protest against the discriminations, it would not reach to a level of justice determination. As a result, these constant observations ignited dalit women to engage in writing poetry, and other writing forms in every language and it is evident in the form, content and the emotions that they express. Their writings deliver a kind confidence in Dalit women to contest these kinds of atrocities. Dalit women used language as their armament and defense, a fistful weapon to outbreak the oppression executed by Hinduism for centuries. Dalit women acquainted their ways of learning to perform in literature and constructed self-respect from their humiliation. They have become thriving literary boulevards from nothingness caused by Hindu religious scriptures which denied a basic humanity and have been outcasts for centuries.

Today 'untouchable' voices rule Telugu literature. Their writings show the aggressive gale of pain in Dalit poetry. Literature of the Dalit represents an alternative culture, refusing to be a subaltern any longer. A Dalit text is subversive, but not necessarily intimidating. It relates itself to cultural context and speaks for the revival of sociological approach to literary arts. It opposes the obsessive concern with the formal accomplishment, the linguistic expertise and the modernist tendency to look for the meaning of the text within the text itself. It

inaugurates a new era of cultural transformation in the Indian context, and inevitably reaches out to the global phenomenon called postmodernism.

III. CONCLUSION

Though, some of non-Dalit writers represent Dalits' problems in their works and it is appreciable from their gesture, yet, the main problem remains that it is quite difficult for non-Dalit writers to bring the real pain and depiction of worst situations of Dalit women. Mahasweta Devi's writings show us the treatment of subaltern, caste and gender but her works are depended on ethics and politics of contemporary society. When it comes to Dalit women writers' works, they have carried forward rightly the exact Dalit women's life, village setting of Dalit women, and their part in developing their culture in their writings. Thus Dalit women writers have pictured coherent and sociological aspects of Dalit women problems, since they draw their churn of writing from reality and it is completely diverse from mainstream feminist literature.

Gopal Guru argued in his article 'Dalit Women Talk Differently':

Dalit women suffer two distinct patriarchal structures: the Brahmanical form of patriarchy that stigmatizes Dalit women due to their caste identity of being untouchable, and political and literary marginalization of Dalit women by Dalit male dominant movement. Guru argues that the political marginalization of Dalit women in post-Ambedkarite Dalit movement. Dalit men are reproducing the same mechanisms against their women which their high caste adversaries had used to dominate them.(83)

In observing mainstream woman writers, they proudly admit that they are feminists and they write feminism. It is very outstanding gesture from their part to express boldly. But their writings are limited Volga says that:

She proudly calls herself a feminist writer and says that she writes to propagate the ideas of feminism. I am a feminist. I proudly call myself as a soviet feminist.... I am not a writer who writes for the sake of writing. I took up writing as an aid for propagating the ideas 146 of feminism in the form of literature. (Streevadhama Kosame Katha Rachana Chepattanu 254-255)

Sharankumar Limbale in his interview states that:

"Dalit literature is a new literary stream of the post-independent period. Not only it is new, its form and purpose too are different from those of savarna Marathi literature. Therefore, it cannot be appraised using traditional aesthetics." (Towards: 115).

Upper-caste men and women have superior complex even if they write for Dalit. As a result, they undervalue or underrate Dalit literature written by Dalit women and they do not even acknowledge their effort. In their sense, they judge that Dalit literature does not accomplish the aesthetics criteria of mainstream literature. The basic difference to be noticed between literature of the non-Dalit writers and the Dalit writers is that non-Dalit consider romanticism of life and Dalit writers' present realism in struggle. In this regard, Harish Mangalam, a Dalit writer remarks:

"Non-Dalit writers describe the beloved's cheeks by comparing them with roses and liken the beloved's lips to

rose petals. Dalit writes use words such as the beloved's cheeks were like hardened lumps of jaggery and her lips were like wrinkled black clay." (*Trivedi Tongues*, 161: 62)

Hence, mainstream women writers cannot put themselves to the level of Dalit experience and they disgrace Dalit women writers. They have to lose the ego and dignity in order to express Dalit problems. Hence, they observe and judge Dalit writings with upper caste's mentality. As a result, they cannot justify Dalit literature and Dalit aesthetics. Although Dalit men are victims of casteism but Dalit women are doubly oppressed than Dalit men and mainstream women. They are reprimanded and dehumanized not only by upper caste men but also by men from their own community. The relegation of women and their complete ostracism is clearly reflected in the writings of Dalit men. In exceptional circumstances, when Dalit women are essentially specified a voice or representation in Dalit men's autobiographies as in *Tiraskrit*, the narrative is based on conservative stereotypes.

The observations are perpetually on their ethical character and the representation is always that of mothers or wives engaged in archetypal roles that society labels for them. Dalit women's contributions in serving the family and their struggles in making a livelihood are completely inattentive. This discriminatory obliviousness shown by Dalit males represents their unpreparedness to recognize Dalit women's impact to the family, to the community and to the Dalit movement at large. The absenteeism of these women in the men's narratives is not only deliberate but also intended. These men decline to accord their women equality even in literary representation. The stereotyping of Dalit women has led to an alternative voice from the women themselves.

Dalit woman's personal narratives not only contest their nonappearance in Dalit man's narratives but also opine the apprehensions contributed by women each corner of all sections. These unconventional interpretations amenably condemn the patriarchal edifice in the society, thus, reproducing women's complications with detailed issues in Dalit society.

The sufferings confronted by these women under the patriarchal order are thus verbalized. Dalit women's autobiographies are very honest and outspoken about all kinds of exploitation and subjugation that these women had to tolerate both within and outside their society. They also give coherent interpretations of their contribution to the larger cause of the Dalit community. Dalit women procured certain painful time to overthrow the oppression as women and as well as Dalit by inspired usage of life experiences through social and literary movements. Though, Dalit men and women fight for common cause, yet Dalit women has extra burdens to think of patriarchy and its oppression as well.

Indian society with an amalgamation of various castes, classes and religious people, the set of rules for each category are structured by religions mostly. In our Hindu society, it is done by Manu's Laws and religious scriptures. Every caste is given certain rules and duties to be performed and at the same time their status is decided in caste ladder accordingly. Apart from this caste structure, women status is also defined by religious scriptures and their duties are clearly distinguished from childhood to marriage and widowhood. There is undoubtedly vast difference between Volga's depiction of Dalit woman and Sivakami's portrayal of Dalit woman which sensitizes the Telugu and Tamil Literature.

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