



NAMDEV DHASAL'S POETRY: THE VOICE OF PAIN AND PROTEST FOR DALIT LIBERATION

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ABSTRACT

Ambedkarite literature is a revolutionary literary movement in India. It expresses the suppressed voice of pain and protest of Dalit community and proclaims crusade against inhuman caste based social set up which was induced of Chaturvarna system i.e. Brhaminical socio cultural hegemony. Padmahri Namdev. Dhasal is radical litterateur and prominent Ambedkarite activist of Dalit liberation moment in post-independence India. He is a protestant panther against man made discrimination which is being made in the name of caste class and gender in Indian society. Dhala's description of the lives of people in this habitation shocked the human hearts and shaked the brains and bodies of so called upper class society.

Taking inspiration from the American Black Panther movement, he founded the Dalit Panther in 1972, a militant organization and supported its radical socio-political activism to the Liberation of Dalits in Maharashtra. His arrival on the scene of Marathi literature transformed the very face of Marathi poetry and caused a great upheaval and brought revolution in cultural discourse .Dhasal published three popular anthologies entitled 'Golpitha', 'Murk Mahataryne Dongar Halvila and 'Amchya Itihasatil Ek Aprihary Patra Priyadarshini' just in the period of four years and vibrated the cultural discourse in the country.

Key Words *Ambedkarite literature, Dalit Protest, Dalit liberation*

Delineation of Dalit life: As Dhasal lived and experienced the destitute life of underworld he presented it in very firing words in his poetry and attracted the attention of readers'. He was born in a Dalit caste and grew up in dire poverty. He spent his childhood in Goliatha, a red light district in Mumbai, where his father worked for butcher. While talking about his very birth as an orphan in a pathetic condition he says in the poem,' On the Way of Dargah'-

*“The leaking sun
Went out
In the embrace of the night
When I was born
On the pavement
In the rags
An instant orphan
The woman who delivered me
Went to the father in heaven..
I grew up nourished by roadside shit
Saying, “Give me five cents”... (Edt.Anand & Zelliott,1992 : 72)*

Thus, Dhasal presented the life of starving people living in Golpitha, their bare skeletons and their lives like worms writhing in garbage, on footpath and in gutter. Further, in his epic poem, ‘Amchya Itihasatil Ek Apariharya Patra : Priadarshani’ he has depicted the pain and anguish in his heart and he utters,

*“I am writhing and sweating profusely
I am experiencing labour pain
What do I write?
How do I write?
About hunger and poverty
About poorness and slavery
About culture, custom..
God religion stone
In these names they have killed us
Crushed and beaten
They have broken bites of our flesh and bones”.*
(Nimbalkar, 2005:86)

Here he depicts the fiery verbal picture of "Golpitha", boycotted habitation of prostitutes' in Mumbai. Further he talks about dire poverty and exploited life of Dalits in India in the poem, ‘So that my Mother may be convinced’ he states,

*“A body broken down for seven generations
Gentle mother...
Mother you never understood:
This land does not value the women,
the Shudras, the workers, the landless. (Ed. Anand & Zelliott1992:60)*

Thus, Dhasal seems conscious about his Dalitness and depravedness in the society. He doesn't bear this inhuman treatment and perennial exploitation by the caste and capitalist

class. Now he sets out to over throw this hideous life. Even he interrogates to the established elite class in society in his poem, 'In the Age of Wetting the Navel Root'-

*You scattered..
Made slave to man
You took over the head to the orthodox Manu, the enemy of man
Compelled man to clean faeces of the man..
On the very blood of whose your body nourished*

To whom you banished out of the village. (Translated by the researcher) (Dhasal, 2007: 10)
Thus, Dhasal expresses the suppressed voice of Dalits in India. He give the voice to the age old humiliation and exploitation of man by another man. In his poem 'Atta' (Now) Dhasal reminds the reader of the sacrifice and labour of the Dalits in this country he says'

*"Our blood was spilled for this glorious city
What we got to eat was the right to eat stones.
Now, now we must like sunflowers,
Turn our faces to the sun. (Dhasal, 2007: 12)*

No more he tolerates the unceasing atrocities and the exploitation of Dalits he takes cudgel against the age old slavery and so called social suprimo. He wants to over throw this discriminatory and exploited life. His consciousness of Dalithood and its pathetic condition and powerful proclamation of freedom is voiced in his poem 'Gandu Bageecha' (Impotent garden)

*For this bread
'For this statement
For this song
For this water
How many generations of mine
Have been perished... (Dhasal, 1986:17)*

Thus Dhasal pathetically presents the exploitation and marginalization of his forefathers from ages. Even after gaining political independence Dalit people in slums are still living in grave poverty that are kept illiterate and uncivilized.

Dalit Protest: After accepting democracy several decades have passed yet, the poverty, atrocities on untouchables and their humiliation is not over. Pertaining to the rejection of the age old darkness in the life of Dalits, Dhasal irately utters in his poem, 'Comrade'

*"This is not democracy. It is desecration of seventeen generations
Say, say comrade fearlessly...
Strike friend yours turn
Let democracy go in hell.... (Translated by the researcher)
(Dhasal , 2007: 68)*

We experience, his words are like fire expressing the burning life experiences of underdogs whose lives were full of injustice, atrocities and poverty. In his revolutionary writings he delineated the life of underworld and explored the necked realism of dehumanized Indian society..In the poem 'By the Roadside' he cites'

*Like the garbage heaps raised by roadside
Sorrow in our life...
We have been shortened like the kins of germs..
Yet should we glorify the soul?
Let them live such mean life
I shall not..... (Translated by the researcher) (Dhasal, 2007: 14)*

Thus Dhasal's expresses the suppressed and oppressed voice of the age old slaves such as Dalits. Adivasis, labourers and women and whose blood is being sucked by cast and capitalist class even today...: in the poem *Andharane Surya Pahila Tenhva* he alerts his counter fellows i.e the so called upper caste and social suprimo'

*"When darkness saw the sun
Words assented
For how long do we live in the cattle field of hell?
Breathe suffocating...
To break the flippant earthen pots of your sins
Words said
When darkness saw the sun". (Dhasal, 2007: 80)*

Thus, the unbearable pain of masses is expressed through his revolutionary writings. Therefore he urges to his fellows to proclaim crusade against this inhuman social setup.

Towards Dalit Liberation:

The magnitude of his burning thoughts are reflected in his epoch making anthology,'Golpitha'.In one of his poems,'*Mansane*' he expresses,

*"Hang the heirs of Christ, Paigumbar, Buddha, and Vishnu
Destroye, temples, churches, mosques,
Then all those remaining should not make anybody a slave, plunder him,
Do not call him black, white and nag them by saying you are Brahmins, a.
Kshatriya, a Shudra...
Consider the sky as grandfather and earth as grandmother and leave in
their lap
Contentedly in harmony and happiness...
All should eat one sesame, compose hymns on human beings
Man should sing songs of man". (Nimbalkar,2006: 83, 84)*

Thus, Dhasal intends to destroy all manmade barriers such as caste, creed, and religion and race entirely and expects the cosmic equilibrium where all can live happily. We experience the Dhasal's voice is mighty and seems stringent. Therefore, initially the mainstream litterateurs and critics overlooked his writing by pointing the abusive language in his poetry. However, Dhasal's poetry, basically aims at presenting the humiliated and exploited life of Dalit people in Indian society. Therefore his poetry strikes like thunder that burst in the sky.

In nut shell, it can be stated that Dhasal had devoted his life to propagate cosmic humanitarianism and attempted to manifest Ambedkarite ideology i.e. to establish democratic society in world. He spent his entire life to deconstruct the established hegemony and aspired to reconstruct the human society in the light of egalitarian ideology of Buddha, Phule, and Ambedkar. i.e. happy and healthy human society where minds are free from all manmade discriminations.

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