

# Dalit Narrative: Anti-Untouchable in Indian English Novels

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**Abstract:** *This article tries to interact with Indian English fiction narratives and their representation within the academy as a nationwide, secularism, but mostly casteless land. That point raised is about the relationship between caste and the English language in respect to phenomena that are completely ignorant of scientific knowledge. Caste or Varna is certainly not the creation of God, the privileged class created this for their own selfish gains. Many great Scholars and writers like Dr. B R Ambedkar, Om Prakash Valmiki, Kancha Ilaiah, Sharan Kumar Limbale, and others have taught a relentless battle against the caste system by their thoughts, ideas, and writings. All these writers, written Dalit as a character in their works called Dalit literature, Dalit literature is important because they allow the Dalits as minority groups to provide a window into how they can be resettled into society, interpreting the history and culture of India. During the colonial rule, the upper-class people were studying in England used to have to suffer, humiliation every step of their stay in England, even in train, college, the hotel they want to sit in the third class seat, these upper-class Indians were unaware that perhaps Dalits in India were condemned to even the most severe kinds of humiliated. The humiliation of the Indian elite at the hands of the British, and the humiliation of Dalits now at the clutches of upper caste people are the same.*

**Keywords:** Denying Caste or Castial other, Anti- untouchable, De-brahminize

## 1. Introduction

The caste system is one of the most dehumanizing Institutions of our society, which we are following since ancient times. Despite this, the system has grown stronger than becoming weak no matter whether you are rich or poor. This brutal custom is excruciatingly painful, it violates human dignity and identity, majority of people in India are still following it blindly. We are all basically human beings though we are identified in terms of different castes and religions. The same blood runs in our veins though we follow different caste and creed. The caste system was created by the priestly class to retain its hegemony over society.

In many autobiographies written by the Dalits, we come across how Dalit children are ill-treated without allowing them to enter the classrooms, not allowing them to join with other children they were treated like animals. The Dalits were meant for leatherworking, street sweeping, agriculture work, and scavenging, if they did not clean latrines, dead animal skinning, and remove the carcasses, and the social life of the upper caste will be completely in a mess. Recent development in the Una district of Gujarat is a reminder of the terrible situation caused by caste conflicts. Many argue that Dalit autobiographical narratives are an unstructured, artless outpouring of unmediated experience and have become repetitive and stereotypical, in my point of view they are grim reminders of the horrible caste situation in India.

Moreover, really it is very difficult to accept when we put ourselves in the position of Dalits, then only we can realize their pain and suffering. In Indian society, people have strong caste consciousness, but they do not have the consciousness of humanity. The caste system is still responsible for cultural subjugation and political marginalization. Though we are supported by the constitution's provisions such as education and reservation,

we are still essentially divided and separated. But this should not stop us from desire or dream to treat everyone as human beings.

The word "Dalit" is now generally known to analyze India's former untouchables in accounts of struggles for dignity and against caste inequality, When Gandhi called "Harijan" everyone used this term. However, the word "Dalit" has indeed been commonly being used in writings since the 1970s, and followed the adoption by Dalit activists and authors, especially in the vernacular sphere of the literature. This paper attempts to engage with the narratives of Indian English fiction and its projection within the academic year as national security and hence casteless space. Such an inquiry is all the more pertinent given how narratives from the margins of gender and cast are challenging the disciplinary gatekeepers of literary studies and questioning the mainstream and the Canon paradigm, these concerns are not entirely literary and cons for wider attention to the socio-cultural and historical hegemonies. One factor for the lack of adequate interaction with Dalits both sociopolitical players is the prevalence of such a Harijan worldview. It uses a large image to portray Dalits, the image of scavengers and the humiliated victims with a quest for rehabilitation a view above it.

The subject of Dalit becomes very important because once Gandhi glorified the scavenger persona and strove to elevate the scavenging work, he played a key role in shaping this narrative. The outcasts' unclean employment of scavenging was prominently emphasized in Gandhian ideas of Hindu societal outcastes is outcastes works praised by earlier society but outcasts' reform becomes inextricably tied also to reformation and modernization of the scavenging profession in Gandhi's vision. Under Gandhi, ancient Indian works including such Mulk Raj Anand's 1935 work Outcast and Sivasankara Pillai's 1947 novel Tottiyute Makan (Scavenger's son) idealized the manual scavenging,

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reinforcing the archetype of the scavenging character and humiliated victims also as Dalit's typical picture.

Untouchable religion and societal ideals also shaped the birth of advanced India as well as leading to newly restrictive customs. Restriction of Dalits from temples was one of the first expressions of Dalit protest in the early twentieth century. The commitment of caste Hindu society to exclusionary regimes based on Hinduism's social norms and religion has been strengthened by modernization. Dalits no longer played as victims, an object of reform but Dalits portrayal as scholars, thinkers, and active players, playing in society changes, emphasizing significant contributions to modern Indian talks, and also they went against the caste discrimination. Dalit literary works in Indian languages often hailed colonialism as positive progress for creating new concepts and structures that allowed Dalits and other marginalized communities to participate in public discourse.

Dalit communities are tribal people, women, as well as other marginalized Indians. This age additionally corresponded to new research in religious and literary studies, as well as contemporary and historical fields, which only further underscored the significance of marginalized societies in the maintenance of various kinds of dedication and resistance. Dalit issues and problems seem to be gripping the Indian popular imagination more and more. This may be seen in the literature of Dalits and non-Dalits alike, who have addressed a wide range of Dalit topics from philosophy to literature.

The Dalit movements were extremely important because they created Dalit space in Kerala's modern society. Many upper-class moves, like the Nairs but also after that, the communist movement in general, were seen as forerunners of modernity in the Kerala social system. As an example, the intellectual and political landscape has been dominated by elitist histories and historiographies. Several myths about contemporary Kerala are circulating in the literary circle. Only through challenges and obstacles against caste dominance and oppression has modern civil society been able to emerge in Kerala. It's indeed essential to recognize one of the most pivotal moments in the struggles that led to the development of contemporary civilized society in Kerala. Christianity especially missionaries helped the low caste people came out from the slave system, caste discrimination, and oppression by upper-class people.

"Aaydaan" is an autobiography by Urmila Pawar, translated by Maya Pandit as *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memories* is a true masterpiece in Dalit women's writings. Pawar's experience taught the narrative of her coming of age as such a Dalit child in a small rural town Ratnagiri as well as her travels there from Mumbai. Her life's journey revolves around the eventual awakening of Dalit feminism within her. It is worded in such a way in which the reader may understand and sympathize with her experience of caste discrimination at school; She, along with others in her community, was discriminated against because of her category.

#### **Denying Caste or Castial other**

Many Indian authors no longer carry forward or using their caste in their works, they started coming out of the caste in

their writing called denying caste. Example in Indian English Novels, first in *The Serpent and the Rope* by Raja Rao, used the theme of denying caste. Few other Indian books have been subjected to such in-depth and continuous criticism as *The Serpent and the Rope*. A metaphysics fiction, and an Indian novel, narrative poetry, and a metaphysical disquisition have all been used to describe this text. Diverse scholars have looked into its projected metaphysical perspective, its roots in Indian religion, and its depiction of interpersonal relationships in an East-West encounter, its blood and imaginative use of the English language, and its rich symbolism and mythic content.

Raja Rao's biography "The Serpent and the Rope" novel's hero, Ramaswamy is indeed a mirror image of the novelist, of course, this isn't to say but also that, there was a linear relationship between both the writer's background and the events depicted in the novel. What is the distance between a South Indian Brahmin household and the prominent Advaita Vedanta interpreter after Shankara? So Rao's interest in philosophy led him to research with his parent's support. Rao's childhood time his parents decided to move from Mysore to Hyderabad, where he attended high school before moving north to seek higher education at Aligarh University, where he earned a BA in English and history and was awarded a scholarship to France, where he planned to do Ph.D. studies on the impact of Indian ideas on western mystical, with a focus on Irish literature. By that stage in life, he was allowed to marry a French girl who's very concerned about India's history and culture. Meanwhile, Rao became involved in the cultural politics of his time and identified himself closely with Ramaswamy is the main character, he is indeed a pretty young Southern India Brahmin whose ancestry could be traced back to such a Upanishadic Guru. He departs then for France to carry historical research, in there he meets Madeleine Roussel, a history professor, as well as they married. Ramaswamy intended to finish his doctor of philosophy and afterward return safely with Madeleine Roussel to become a Lecturer at an Indian university. It shows how Ramaswamy denying caste.

Manohar Malgonkar used in his novel heroic code is very important than the caste, he has firsthand knowledge of the partition, which he brilliantly depicts throughout his fiction "A Bend in the Ganges". There is indeed a superb depiction of the whole blood-soaked communal "apportionment" that swept the entire country during the tragedy of partition in India. The unfortunate result of the Partition is the severing of old friendships into foes. The book's first chapter covered a symbolic fire of all the British cloths under the influence of the Swadeshi Movement, anticipating the flames of Cities of India during Partition in the novel's later sections. To oppose them, the people of the village burn all of their British clothes. It shows Nation is very important than the Caste, which means denying caste.

Amitav Ghosh's novel "Sea of Poppies", a diverse group of characters who might never have crossed upon lands in the Empire was drawn together and at sea, where they rediscover their voices and reinvent their identities. First, as ship in Amitav Ghosh's novel locates across the deep waters of the Indian Ocean, it becomes a vessel to rewrite the

discourse of subalternity from the perspective of this Diaspora people. All of Amitav Ghosh's characters, who are victims of various power structures such as gender, class, and race differences, struggle to find their own space, and the sea serves also as space. All characters in fantasy space got a new identity and forget their caste and class so it is also one kind of denying caste.

Even though Christianity arrived in Kerala about two millennia ago and communism emerged as a significant egalitarian force in the last century, caste remains a persistent and insidious influence in Kerala. Whereas the novel "The God of Small Things" uses subversion connections and analogies to deconstruct patriarchal norms that perpetuate caste and gender dominance, older systems that support the caste system and gendered issue remains forceful, unsolved even for literature's cleansing and redemptive abilities. All characters influence by politics, Marxist class consciousness on the Christian and Hind Dalit characters in this novel, small things are Ammu, Isha, Rahel deprived, victims, and big things Baby Kochamma and others. Ammu, who is very rich in caste and class fell in love with Velutha, an untouchable boy who shows the denying of caste for love.

Bhattacharya is a visionary writer. He envisions a unique India He does have something to say. Throughout his works, he is a master storyteller. In his "Who Rides a Tiger" novel, in the little town of Jharna, Kalo is indeed a pitch blacksmith. He is a hard worker who inspires everyone's admiration. His wife dies in delivery, and the kid, a daughter, is named Chandra Lekha, who demonstrates remarkable brilliance and fine features as she grows older. Kalo is chastised for his presumption by both the upper caste and the caste. Kalo is overjoyed and proud of Chandra Lekha's achievement in school and she got the gold medal in the state-level essay competition. Kalo takes great pleasure in his medal and looked at it every day, both are aware of their lower-caste status; however, the girl's achievements are more impressive. Food crops are in short supply and jobless are at an all-time high. Kalo decided to move to Calcutta for a job where he meets Bikash, who wants to survive, then Kalo changes his category to Brahmin and started to wear a sacred thread so it shows the denying of caste.

#### Anti- untouchable

Mulk raj Anand's novel "Untouchable" shows the theme of anti-untouchability, here the central character Bakha, is an 18-year-old Indian boy who works here as sweeping and he is also the central character of Untouchable. He is strong and capable, and he is enthralled by the lives and customs of India's British colonialists. His status as an outcast is led to a great deal of self-pity and despair. Bakha could be harsh and, at sometimes, aids in the maintenance of the oppressive system that he's a part of, Surprisingly, he continues to criticize the established order and a purportedly "fixed in stone" social structure.

Bakha is puzzled and cannot agree with Gandhi when he urges the untouchables to purify their life, adopt hygiene habits, and abstain from harmful habits such as consuming whiskey and eating rodents. Bakha immediately feeling uplifted when Gandhi tells everyone to not receive caste Hindus' leftovers off their plates and to only take fresh

grains if this is provided respectfully. The lower castes need not damage personal identity, and the caste people should be more helpful and sympathetic towards the lower castes, according to Mahatma. After his lecture, he criticizes high-class Hindus for their lack of understanding of their faith, urging them to open all public wells, temples, roads, schools, and sanatoriums to the untouchables, and to continue spreading anti-untouchability messaging. Bakha thinks on the way to his home all about Mahatma's anti-untouchability.

It is honored posthumously in the archives of time. A young Indian barrister was traveling from Durban to Pretoria for work on June 7, 1893. He purchased the first ticket and sat in the first compartment. When a European or white man visited the cabin and saw a young person who appeared to be a "coolie," he contacted the train officials and requested that he be taken first from compartments. The Indian gentleman turned down the offer. He got pulled from the trains along his baggage and belongings in Pietermaritzburg train station as a result of his protesting. This incident happens in Mahatma Gandhi life, had written in his autobiography "My Experiments with the truth" this incident helped Gandhi o work for Indian people who lived in South Africa as an outcaste state and also he thought about the Indian's situation in India because that time India was a colonized country. Then Gandhi decided to remove the untouchability in India.

#### De-brahminize

In the Kannada novel "Samskara" written by U R Ananthamurthy and translated into English by A K Ramanujan. We can see the theme of De-brahminize, Non-vegetarian diet, and inter-caste marriage or illegal relationship with low caste woman are shows the theme of de-brahmainized best example in this novel the character of Naranappa. One of the most important things is in this novel cleaning and purifying procedures in Hindu worshipping Samskara. Each day, Praneshacharya, the most respected Brahmin in his traditional and strict agrahara, begins by bathing his indigent wife's diseased and desiccated body and he lead a sexless life. Naranappa had abandoned Brahmin agrahara practices and performed the most heinous and insulting activities to demonstrate his contempt for his fellow devotees and neighbors. He's turned to alcohol, eventually started to have a friendship with Muslims even eat chicken with Muslims, and fished fishes from the temple's sacred pool. But it was his choice to living with such a low-caste, pariah lady named Chandri rather than his lawful wife that would be the most heinous of his crimes.

"Kanthapura," a novel tells the story of the birth of a Gandhian nationalist movement in the same-named little South Indian village. The story has been told by Achakka, an elderly brahmin person who feels everything there is concerning known everybody in her community; she narrates it there in the wandering, interpretation of a sthalapurana, a typical "legendary status history" of a community, its inhabitants, as well as its gods and goddesses. Achakka portrays the educated and trained and well brahmins, such as the wealthy orphan Dorè, who declares himself a Gandhian after attending a semester of university in the city, and the much-loved Moorthy, who rejects marriage as one wealthy

background after yet another. Moorthy is indeed a "polite, gentle, peaceful, different" young brahmin who often opposes the rigid caste structure in favor of social equality. He is the leader of the Kanthapura villagers' Gandhian resistance campaign. Moorthy starts to live in low caste people's house and eat in their home shows the de-brahminized theme.

## 2. Conclusion

Caste is not specific for India and no country, despite the issue whether fundamental to its reality, should be confined to a single social group. Nonetheless, understanding India necessitates an understanding of caste, whose complexities are undeniably complex. This might not be one of India's foremost visible social aspects; this is also at the root of several of the country's historic and contemporary heresies. What else is caste, and how does it affect one's life? User may well have got to hear (perhaps in a high school or college classroom) that India has four ancient and unchanging castes, ranging from Brahmins at the top, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas in the center, as well as Lower caste only at base, with such a group followed like so Lower castes correct term is now Dalits—even farther and farther down. All Indian English writers used to write about Dalit or untouchables, how they are deprived of upper caste and succeeded in their life.

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