

Fall and sacrifices of voiceless women in Mother by Baburao Bagul

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Abstract : The Dalit literature, though written in different languages, in different geographical backgrounds, portrays same themes like the suffering, discrimination, exploitation, injustice, the question of Dalit or human identity. 'Dalit is dignified' thereby rejecting the sub-human status imposed on them by the Hindu social order. The motive of Dalit literature is the liberty of voiceless, and portrayal of their struggles against casteist, male domination and traditions. Baburao Bagul was one of those Indian writers who are known as Dalit writers, as he tries to point out in his novels and short stories the conflict-ridden status of the Hindu society. A pioneer of Marathi Dalit literature, he was influenced by the works of Karl Marx, Jyotiba Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Bagul, who portrays the harsh reality of all subaltern's life and brings out the woes and miseries and economic inequality, which are the basis of his experience. His writings deal with the individuals who are the victims of the social system in which casteism is a dominant factor. The interpretation of Urban Slum Mother by Baburao Bagul is the depiction of life in an urban slum. The story revolves around a young, lower-caste Dalit widow and her son Pandu, who face many harsh realities of life. The story tells the suffering of a mother Dalit Identity against the Emotions of a Dalit Woman.

Dalits are still marginalized and in the face of many struggles. The present paper tries to portray the real status of women by Baburao Bagul, a pioneer of Marathi Dalit Literature, in his short story Mother. Particularly, the writer of this article wishes to focus on the character of the Dalit women who are ill-treated not by the society at large but also by their own family. Horrifying Treatment meted out to the Dalits.

IndexTerms - Suffering, discrimination, exploitation, injustice, subaltern or human identity

I. INTRODUCTION

The short story, Mother is a voiceless, suffering, painful, worthless effort and voices of all women in the society. Mother by Baburao Bagul is the depiction of the brutal battle for life in an urban slum. The story revolves around a young, lower-caste Dalit widow and her son Pandu, who faced painful live style in their days. Their life is turned into suffer and unhappy because of their relationship is spoiled when the upper caste people exploit the innocence of the child by poisoning his mind against his own mother.

Pandu's mother moved her life with struggles and her survival also questioned. Because of his son's misunderstanding who has suffered. No understanding between the mother and the child. Mother, who has lived her whole life to her son but Pandu, has failed to rapport his mother in his life. The story shows the painful life of the mother, sacrifices of her everything and her experiences the whole time of her life.

Women Unfulfilled wishes, dreams, expectation and her salty water shows that women are unhappy and hopeless in her personal life. The Constitution and laws in India prohibit untouchability. But the Dalits still have no healthier alternative. Migration and the anonymity of urban environment have in some cases resulted in upward occupational mobility among Dalits. The majority of them still continue to perform their traditional practices. Still the practice of untouchability is customary in most of the rural areas where the Subaltern faces discrimination at the hands of dominant castes.

“Mother” open with the children in a school where the teacher is schooling a poem which is about a mother and her life. The children are accepted away by the soothing and melodious voice of the tutor, which reminds them of the warmth of their mother’s lap, her love and care. The poem transports them to a land where only love and joy exist. Pandu starts thinking of his mother as ‘Vatsalya Sindhu’, which was a river of motherly love and benediction. He realizes her greatness, the love and the care how she gave him and the sacrifices she made for him. But he is soon transported back from his dreamland when one of his class mates begins to call Pandu bad names, abusing his mother. The Dalit children are always the target of the mischief for the upper caste children. Dalit children sometimes have to face discrimination and even untouchability in school.

His young mind starts thinking that he has to face humiliation because of the acts of his mother and he is furious: Pandu’s face burned with shame and anger. He felt a demonic, murderous rage rising within him. He could have killed them, murder them all in cold blood. It was good to think them lying together in a pool of blood. It was short-lived joy, however. He remembered that he was an orphan, now that his father was dead, and his mother an unprotected widow. He was afraid that Dagdu, their neighbour, would pick fight with his mother, try to strip her sari....Rage gave way to infinite helplessness and he felt spent. (Ramakrishna 2005: 217)

The Widow Being a poor helpless and above all an untouchable widow, is a curse. People start abusing and pointing fingers at her for every single act. A woman has her own share of universal suffering as all other women, and the fact of being a Dalit woman adds more social, religious and cultural exploitation to the list. In Mother, windowed women separated and wounded more by her son. Her sacrifices felt down like broken -mirror and also became useless and lifeless to her. All have some fall and rise in life. So, women have to be enough strong in their remaining days. Misunderstanding and immaturity won’t stay longer ,though everything will be cleared and then truth will be stay as a remark but windowed women’s painful- hurt and wounded by her son and her societies words will be stay as ever pained mark. Her flexibilities and real love of her life to her son have become failed and her broken heart and mind also voiceless and helpless at the end.

Pandu, unable to handle with the love she bestowed upon him after so many months, refuses to answer. Abuses and the awkwardness make him feel more disgusted towards his mother, and he runs out of the house, calling her a whore. His mother is deeply hurt to hear it from his mouth. Since the death of her

husband, all those years she had lived the life of a widow though she was proposed to by many men who were wealthy and could have provided her everything for a happy life.

She sacrificed her happiness for Pandu, hoping that when he grows up he would support her and her sufferings would come to an end. She had spent ten long years as a widow and had tried so hard to love Pandu. She had lived only for him till the overseer came along last year. Ever since she lost her husband, she has given her all for him, and now this son has turned against her. She starts crying helplessly. The overseer hugs her and her unfulfilled desires of ten years make her respond to him. She is so overwhelmed by it that she does not even hear her son's timid knock and cry for her. Pandu, heartbroken, runs out of the house. When she realizes this she tries to go out to stop her son from going, but the overseer does not let her go. She tries desperately to get free but like a person stuck in a quagmire, she finds release impossible.

The story ends thus on a note of despair and helplessness in the life of a liberated, illiterate Dalit woman. Truthful Reflection Social exclusion, lack of effective legal protection and socio, economic and cultural exploitation has kept the Dalits at sub-human living conditions for centuries. Nowadays, many among the younger generation are able to make better lives for themselves, through education and job reservation provided by the Constitution of India. Baburao Bagul portrays the harsh realities of life in an uneducated Dalit widow's life. He shows the struggles of women in his works. His stories show the external as well as internal conflict faced by the Dalit women. Bagul portrays the fall as well as the rise of women characters and depicts them as their own selves honestly.

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