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# Dalit Aesthetics an Important Phase from Modern Indian English Literature: A Historical Study

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**Abstract:** History of Dalit aesthetics is going to explore in this research paper. This research paper is focuses on Dalit aesthetic values origin in modern Indian English literature. As we know Dalit literature was origin from Marathi Dalit literature at first. Soon after it was spread in various Indian languages in different regions. The concept of Dalit aesthetics was brought into Marathi literature was Comd. Sharad Patil's 1988 work, Abrahmani Sahityache Saundaryashastra (Aesthetics of Non-brahmanical Literature), is a striking commentary on the philosophy of literature. It is a critical comment on mainstream Indian aesthetics. Later the second pioneer of Dalit aesthetics concept was Sharanakumara Limbale in his book Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies, and Considerations in 2004. It is a critical work on Dalit aesthetic very popular in Dalit literary studies. Then Om Prakash Volmiki also joined with Dalit aesthetics concept developer, but he was concentrated in literary genres. Next Anad Tale Tumde was awarded Ph.D. in Toward Dalit Aesthetics from JNU Delhi in 2009. In this research paper we are going to analyses historical motivation on this burning topic in Dalit studies. In this research article proposes to conceptualize on Dalit aesthetics historical existence in mainstream Indian English literature.

**Keywords:** Dalit, Aesthetics, History, Foundation, Literature

## INTRODUCTION

In this research paper introducing the main historical foundation of Dalit aesthetics by various researches and critics in Dalit literature. Non-Dalit writers created literature on the foundation of sympathy in mainstream Indian literature. Mahatma Jothi Rao Phule has his own aesthetics values towards Dalits. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's worldview can be inferred from his statements on society, its foundations and bounding principles can be seen. Dalit aesthetics was first started by

Comrade Sharad Patil's work, Abrahmani Sahityache Saundaryashastra in 1988 (Aesthetics of Non-brahmanical Literature), is a striking commentary on the philosophy of literature. The basic foundation of Dalitism brought the old concept only. But, now the Dalitism without changing its form tends to find new paths or searching in modern days. That is now called new Dalitism. The foundations of Dalit social movement are formed on the basis of literary movements. Metaphorically speaking, it is a key to many puzzles that haunt the field of literature in India. As a meticulous dissection of brahminical hegemony in the field of literature and art, the book theorises—for the first time using political axioms—that caste is at the root of production of art and literature in India. Its second edition was published in 2017 as Abrahmani Sahityacheaani Kalanche Saundaryashashtra (Aesthetics of Non-Brahmanical Literature and Art).

Patil argues that to understand the politics of literature and art in India, one must never lose sight of the caste of an artist. Abrahmani Sahityache's second edition published in 2017 enlarged the scope of the book to dissect the aesthetics of non-brahminical art, apart from the literature.

Patil was a brilliant and incisive philosopher, and a theorist and scholar of Panini Sanskrit. He founded the Marx-Phule-Ambedkar school of thought as a rebellion against brahmins and brahminism within the Marxist fold. He also started the Satyashodhak Communist Party based on a synthesis of Phule thought, Marxism and Ambedkarism.

Further, Patil argues that the study of society based on materialistic perceptions, and from the viewpoint of "impermanence", can only determine whether its religion, politics, philosophy and art are a reflection of its economic structures, a reaction to it or its symbols, or all of these.

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Using the historical dialectical approach, Patil's Abrahmani Sahityache offers a much-needed understanding of the historical premises on which brahminical individuals have appropriated the arts and literature of dalit-bahujan masses.

Being a scholar of Panini Sanskrit, Patil was equipped to decipher the meanings of texts that many Indian philosophers and writers could not. Not just in Abrahmani Sahityache, in other works as well, he methodologically develops the Marx-Phule-Ambedkar analytical framework. This, he uses to construct fresh perspectives that illustrate the journey of a literary process from life to the artifact.

Abrahmani Sahityache Saundaryashastra offers what most books over the last few decades have failed to offer on literature and art in India. The proposition that one must never lose sight of the caste of an artist when examining the politics of his works may sound too radical, but read it, read his earlier works, and Indian literature and art will never be the same again.

Sharankumar Limbale wrote a book in Marathi entitled Dalit Sahityache Saundaryashastra (1996). It was translated from the Marathi "Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature History, Controversies, and Cons Miliniderations", by Alok Mukherjee into English. In that book, there are eight chapters in contents. Those are as follows. That is Reading Sharankumar Limbale's "Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: from Erasure to Assertion; About Dalit Literature"; and Dalit Literature Form and Purpose; and Dalit Literature and Ambedkarism; and Dalit Literature and Marxism; and Dalit Literature and African American Literature; and Dalit Literature and Aesthetics; and Dalit Literature Today: A Conversation with Sharan kumar Limbale. The conversation was between Sharankumar Limbale and Alope Mukarjee about Dalit literature today. In this book, he made the basic principle of Dalit aesthetics theory. He critically analyzed Dalit literature and other subversive theories.

The first chapter is "Reading SharankumarLimbale's "Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: from Erasure to Assertion". In this chapter, he explained towards Dalit literature position in various contexts in India. Arjun Dangle identifies this in his book Poisoned Bread translated from Marathi Dalit literature.

There are many arguments and discussions in that book on Dalit literature criticism in mainstream literature. He described in this chapter an Untouchable novel by Mulk Raj Anand. Besides, Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak can the subaltern speaks text also explained in this chapter. This theory was misinterpreted on Dalit literature. Literary critics' postcolonial theory also interpreted on Dalit literature. But he explained it is entirely different from that theory. Dalit lifestyle also commented because there are no theories, which can explain that pain. Why they behave in such a way in their life? To explain all this issue some tools needed in Dalit literature.

The second chapter is "About Dalit literature" which explains that Dalit literature is on the creation of Dalit consciousness. Dalit literature is about slavery, pain, and suffering of Dalits in their life. Non-Dalit writers created literature on the foundation of sympathy in mainstream literature. There is a need for a separate aesthetic for Dalit literature. He criticized the concept Satyam, Sivam, and Sundaram; "Untruth, Unholy, and Unbeauty". For Dalit literature human beings are the first, their good fare has to give preference, liberation, and humanity equally important in Dalit's life. He remarks Dalits not for this any system in society. They are living outside of the villages. Dalit literature has to explain why it is happening in their life this bias. Dalit literature has motto one should take up this agenda and write their literature. Dalit writers have to write about a real pain in their lives through the literature.

The third chapter is "Dalit literature: Form and Purpose" deals that independence of India people became free of all the national movements. They have settled in various sectors working for the country's growth. There are many economic changes in the country with a five-year plan and so on. This chapter is also identified unemployment, poverty, and the growth of the population in India. The idea of democracy Dalits, Advises, and the criminal tribe got an education in their places. The education got to farmers, workers, and women in society. People came to know that liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice in their life. He discussed many issues in Dalit literature in this chapter. Those are for example: Is Dalit literature is for propaganda? He discussed all Dalit literature related questions by mainstream literature in general. He explained Dalit literature's past, present, and future in this chapter. He told that due to Ambedkar's inspiration the Dalit struggle started in the society.

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The fourth chapter is “Dalit literature and Ambedkarism” Ambedkar converted to Buddhism; many Dalit people joined in that conversion. They identified as neo-Buddhists in society. The Hindu practices no more belong to them with this rejection. Many literary movements happen with that cultural change. That led to the evaluation of Buddhist thoughts and Ambedkar perspectives in literature. They tried to intermingle with the Buddhist philosophy and Dalit literature at the beginning of Dalit literature. The Buddhist and Ambedkarist thoughts on their literature described in detail in this chapter. In the Buddhist literature and their criticism of society is explained for wellbeing of people in those times. The author evaluated critically that in the book. Ambedkar’s philosophy analyzed in the Dalit literature the way caste spread in society. Those are Heredity, Marriage restrictions, Profession, Dietary rules, and Hierarchy in society. Manusruhi law practiced many centuries on Dalit people in India. They are still living in poverty because of the ill-treatment of Dalits in society. Ambedkar mentioned that Manu not a Sociologist at that time. The Dalit literature motto is humanity concern human beings are most for everything. He discussed the Dalit critics and their role in society. There are many speeches made by Ambedkar in that time. He wrote many books on various Dalit issues. He gave inspirational ideology through his writings to Dalit writers.

The fifth chapter is “Dalit literature and Marxism”. In Marxism and Dalit literature has many similarities among one another. The reason behind this is the Marxist movement at first Dalit people joined as an activist in India. There were Marxist literature movements related to Dalit struggle in society. Ambedkar has his view regarding this movement. Ambedkar thought that it was not talking about caste discrimination and the destruction of untouchability. He thought that Indian Marxism incomplete concerning Dalit issues. Marxists were together with Dalits in the beginning but this conflict leads them into the Dalit Panther movement in Maharashtra. This was in between Marxist and Ambedkarist split into two groups and foamed different parties in Maharashtra. There is opposition to Marxism and Marxist ideology because it is incomplete. In this chapter with these arguments, there are two schools of criticism formed in it. Those are Marxist criticism and Dalit criticism. Both the critics defined and concluded in their view’s human emancipation. There are many opinions on Dalit life in the

ideas of Marxism. Dalit intellectuals are projecting the real-life in literature India. In this regard, the common man is the hero for the Dalit context and Marxist view. They made arguments on Dalit consciousness and class-consciousness necessity in society. In this chapter, finally, the author concludes that the centrality of Marxist and Ambedkarist are human being well faire. There are many similarities in these activists on Dalit literature and Marxist literature.

The sixth chapter is “Dalit literature and African American Literature” Limbale argues that African and American literary movements on their literature focused on various aspects. Those are black literature and Dalit literature the same or different. For this question, he answered those are different but some similarities are found in this literature. How are the writers of black and Dalit literature? For this many answers drawn in this chapter. Dalits have to write Dalit literature on their own experience of life. Black writers wrote their literature for the liberation of blacks in America. Many critics criticized Dalit literature with obscenity. But social evil practices need to eradicate in society. The sociological perspective also needs to investigate or do research on black literature. Blacks are not untouchables they lived with a master’s house but with no freedom. They have a lower rank with white people. However, in the case of Dalits not like that these people suffered from caste discrimination and untouchability. There are many similarities between these two kinds of literature. They have the same emotional feeling towards their life. The literary movements are the path for their liberation. Both kinds of literature are fighting against the ill-treatment of others. They are all working for the emancipation of their human.

The seventh chapter is “Dalit Literature and Aesthetics”. Sharankumar Limbale has discusses in Marathi language about Dalit literature and of various conflicts on aesthetics. He did that with their respective literary works. Marathi savarna writers opposed this literature as a separate stream in mainstream literature. Saradh Patile raised a question on Dalit aesthetics concept in one of his seminar presentations. Then Dalit aesthetics started its origin with the critical observation on Dalit literature. They are wishing freedom as the aesthetic value in their life. Further, he created a new theory to explain incidents in Dalit literature. He took up all Dalit issues and started creating a new literary theory. That led him into creating a theory of Dalit aesthetics.

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Limbale mentions in his book four artistic values in Dalit writing. Those are as follows: There are four principal measures of Dalit writing

1. Artists must be motivated by their experience
2. Artists must socialize their experiences.
3. Artists experience must have the strength to cross provincial boundaries
4. Artists' experience must seem relevant to all-time (Limbale 121).

Dalits have voluminous literature in the Marathi language. However, there are more savarna critics on Dalit literature than Dalits. Dalit critics do not find that genuine criticism. Dalit writers rejected savarana artistic values and aesthetics. Dalit critics started creating separate aesthetics. Dalit critics started their path and direction in Dalit literature.

The conclusion eighth chapter is "Dalit literature today: A Conversation with SharankumarLimbale". This happened in the residence of Limbale's in Pune in 2001. This conversation is between Alok Mukherjee and SharankumarLimbale. This was begun with his new novel Upanya details. This is ended with Dalit writer neutrality.

Milind Eknath Awad (2009) submitted a thesis entitled, Towards an Aesthetics of Dalits unpublished doctoral thesis from JNU, Delhi. In this thesis, there are five chapters in contents that are:

1. Situating Dalit Expression in the Field of Aesthetics.
2. Egalitarian Roots of Dalit Aesthetics.
3. Historical Antecedents of the Aesthetics of Dalits.
4. Modern Expressions of Aesthetics of Dalits.
5. Aesthetics of Dalits.

Chapter one dealt with the introduction of the Aesthetics term. History of Dalit word described the concept and meaning as a category. There are many new trends began in the Dalit expressions. There is much diversity available in the Dalit literature. He studied the classical situation and the significance of aesthetics writing. He did an analysis of the western Philosophical tradition of aesthetics. He described Western philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Hans-Georg, and Gadamer. Further, he did classical Indian

aesthetics concept analysis in his thesis. He described the Nirvana tradition of Indian classical aesthetician Abhinavagupta, Bhamaha, and Rajashekhara. He wrote about the Rasa theory and Bharata. The historical denial also described in the thesis. He wrote parallels and divergences have drawn with the Marxist, Feminist, and Black aesthetics and their conceptualization of style in literature. Finally, he wrote the nature and extent of Dalit literature's uniqueness of Dalit aesthetics.

Chapter two dealt with Egalitarian thought over Dalit aesthetics. The scholarly works of the Western aesthetics genealogies explained in it. He analyzed Immanuel Kant's work the critique of judgment; Karl Marx the sociology of art; Levi-Strauss and Structuralism; Derrida and Deconstruction. He attempted to map all these with Dalit aesthetics. He further described in his thesis that the universal and subjectivity; reason and Hums theory of Morality; Self and Society or the Ideology of aesthetics; the experience and aesthetics and caste. The basic philosophical thought of Dalit aesthetics, he explained at final.

Chapter three described on Historical attendants of Dalit Aesthetics. The thought of Dalit leaders Jotiba Phule, Ambedkar, M. K. Gandhi, and Periyar whose belief system has led Dalit masses into social movements. He analyzed the power and dominance of caste especially Dalits in India. He believed that the Dalit aesthetics foundation can be seen in the great leader's philosophical works.

Chapter four dealt with the modern expressions of Dalit aesthetics identified in various formworks. Aesthetics of Dalit is on the basis of Dalits' life experience. Dalits are struggling for bread in their life. Further, he explained in his thesis that the morality of an inclusive aesthetics. Next, he described the socio-politics of the aesthetics of Dalit. There are many resistances and negativity can be seen in the critics. Then he explained in the thesis the unique characters of Dalit literature. He concluded that with the mention of Dalit writers Annbhau Sathe, DayaPawar, NamdeoDhasal, and Dalit panther manifesto.

The fifth chapter describes the aesthetics of Dalits. In the beginning, he explained the criticism of enlightenment values. The politics of resistance described in Dalit aesthetics. He analyzed the Dalit aesthetics formation from

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the Neo-Buddhist; Dalit panthers and Dialectical progressive. He explained political protest and cultural expression; social formation; literary expression; personal philosophy; aesthetics of self; political rationality. He concluded with the evaluation of the idea of the Dalit.

In his thesis, he tries to define the aesthetics of Dalit in India. He says in that theory, experience and practice of Dalit aesthetic need certain plans. The aesthetics of Dalit has been manifested by various Dalit writers in their literary works. Those works have to bring out with the help of Dalit literature. The ideas all together have to collect and form a theory. That theory can be leading the approach of the Dalit literature.

**CONCLUSION**

In this article explored various foundations of Dalit aesthetics by different scholars. The three main pioneers of the Dalit aesthetics concept were historically studied in this research paper. Based on this research a logical conclusion brought that Dalit literature needed a scale for measure its artistic values. Dalit aesthetics theory can accommodate better understanding of Dalit literature. This research paper analyzed on the foundation of Dalit aesthetics in critical literary theory in Indian English literature. In this modern era English literature in India searching new paths to find its existence. Dalit aesthetics is going to be the destiny for the new research scholars in Dalit studies. This concept needs more research in future. Further studies on Dalit aesthetics by various research scholar are doing at present across the world.

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