

Writing the Self: The Process of Identity Formation in Dalit Women's Life Writings

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Abstract

The present paper focuses on the 'Self' that Dalit women try to establish for decades. The formation of self in Dalit women's writings is a historical process which is based on their lived experiences, centuries of suffering and resistance against the atrocities meted out on them because of untouchability and being women. They depict their struggle for survival and protest through the experiences from their daily lives of poverty, hunger, humiliation and exploitation. Uniquely, Dalit women's 'Self' stands for individual identity as well as the collective identity of the community they belong to. At the intersection of class, caste and gender they are considered as 'Dalit among Dalits'. In the pages of history, they remained neglected and suffered the 'triple' subjugation of caste, class and gender. Presently, they have embarked their self-identity on the literary canon through their life writings as resistance against their subordination – both caste and patriarchy. Their writings are mostly in form of autobiographies, biographies, memoirs and autobiographical fiction and most of them have been written in regional languages which lead to the formation of Dalit 'Self'. Recently, a few Dalit women's writings have been translated into English and have got access to the wider range of readers. These translated works, though few in number, have paved ways for Dalit women's formation of self and have succeeded in establishing a standpoint for themselves – a Dalit Feminist Standpoint. Taking up the analysis of three groundbreaking Dalit women's autobiographies namely *The Prisons We Broke* by Baby Kamble, *The Weave of My Life* by Urmila Pawar and *Karukku* by Bama, the focus of the paper centers around Dalit women's suffering and how they successfully combat the hegemony of their oppressors and formed a separate branch of identity for themselves on the literary canon as Dalit feminism.

Keywords: Self, Identity, Life Writings, Patriarchy, Resistance, Dalit feminism, Dalit feminist standpoint.

Introduction

Dalit women have traversed a long path of evolution and moved from the 'Margins' to the 'Centre'. Dalit women's search for self or identity through their life writings emerged in the 1990s, which stemmed out of the Dalit reformation movements led by, Phule, Periyar, Bansode and Ambedkar. First, they managed to arouse the 'consciousness' among Dalits to make them realize the indignities of untouchability which had degraded them to the lowest position in society. As a result, they started to demand basic human rights and human dignity for themselves, which ultimately led them to the formation of autonomous organizations speaking for themselves. Dalit women started to come forward with their life writings blended with political activism and resistance against their wretched social conditions. Their writings are marked by the 'difference' which is an epitome of pain, truth, real-life

experiences, resilience to fight against all kinds of ordeals as an individual, on one hand, and gain power through political activism in order to secure a safe place for their communities on the larger scale. Due to the negligence or misrepresentation in the mainstream literature, both feminist and non-feminist, Dalit women took it to themselves to recount their lives and experiences to the world through their life writings. They started writing their woes, suffering, poverty, hunger, humiliation, torture and exploitation of women and their communities. Despite the hurdles in getting education, social atrocities and exclusion from the mainstream society due to the casteism, they were always ready to embattle for their basic rights and human dignity.

The historical and political contexts of the 1990s played a crucial role in Dalit women's resistance against their subjugation at the hands of patriarchal and other forms of discrimination, and the formation of self-assertion. Their self-assertion and identities got recognition through Dalit 'Chetna' or 'Consciousness' – a consciousness marked by the struggle, resilience and revolutionary change, which a blend of individual and collective self. It was the revolutionary force behind Dalit literature to flourish. Dalit women find no recognition or misrepresentation in the literature written by their male counterparts. Patriarchal social setup kept them silent to speak for themselves. But, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his revolutionary speeches recognized Dalit women's power in order to alter Dalit condition of servitude into a revolutionary change. Dalit women started coming out of their houses and took participation in the social reform movements led by Ambedkar. Baby Kamble, the pioneering Dalit woman, herself being a participant in Ambedkarite movement, brings out that revolutionary phase in her autobiography *The Prisons We Broke*. She grew up in that charged atmosphere and the entire community was beginning to be aware of the injustice. Highlighting the inspiration of Ambedkar, she writes:

The flame of Bhim (Ambedkar) started burning on our hearts. We began to walk and talk. We became conscious that we too were human beings. Our eyes began to see and our ears to listen. Blood started coursing through our veins. We got ready to fight as Bhim's soldiers (Kamble 122).

Ambedkar did not only boost their confidence, imbibed the spirit of pride, but also encouraged them to question their gender inequality. His revolutionary spirit against oppression morally forced them to write their pain, suffering and exploitation from their own perspectives. With the access to education, they aimed at resistance against all forms of oppression and fought for freedom, Dalit dignity, equality and justice.

Dalit women coming from the lowest strata of society suffer, firstly, due to caste and class discrimination and secondly, due to patriarchy, both Brahmin and Dalit. Ruth Manorama, a social activist and the President of National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), puts it as they are bearing the "brunt of triple exploitation – caste, class and gender" (Singh 17). They have to go through the patriarchal exploitation both, outside and within their houses and communities, the former being 'Brahmanical Patriarchy' and the latter 'Dalit Patriarchy'. Ruth Manorama, in an acceptance speech at the Right Livelihood Award 2006, says:

Dalit women have to grapple with the discrimination due to caste hierarchy and untouchability on the one hand and poverty on the other coupled with political, legal and religious-cultural discrimination. They are thrice alienated, by caste, being lower than others; by class, being the most poor and by gender, due to patriarchy. . . . We as Dalit women pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discrimination (*Right Livelihood Award Manorama*).

Gopal Guru, in his article, “Dalit Women Talk Differently” also puts his views that Dalit women suffer on the basis of internal and external factors. The internal factor, according to him, is the patriarchal domination within Dalit community, and the external factor is the non-Dalit forces homogenizing the issue of Dalit women. These factors do not provide access to the complex reality of Dalit women and “makes the representation of Dalit women’s issues by non-Dalit women less valid and less authentic”, says Guru (Arya and Rathore 150). Sharmila Rege presents a Dalit feminist standpoint and argues that “feminist difference is incomplete unless the difference from a caste perspective, i.e., Dalit difference, is added to it” (Arya and Rathore 10). The ‘caste’ factor makes them suffer. Since the 1990s, Dalit women have successfully managed to articulate their realities through their writings. By doing this they forge their own identity as women and fight for their rights finding solution for themselves in order to create a better space for themselves. As an outcome of such resistance, Dalit women’s construction of ‘self’ as women transcends the individual or personal sphere to the collective identity of their communities they belonged to.

Formation of the Self as Collective Identity: Against Caste Discrimination

Dalit women have a long history of oppression, suppression and humiliation. In the search of self and identity, Dalit women’s conferences and organizations such as *Dalit Stree Sahitya Manch*, National Federation of Dalit Women, All India Dalit Women’s Forum, Dalit Mahila Sangathan and many others were formed by Dalit women in the 1990s. The 1990 saw a huge growth in terms of Dalit women’s autonomous organizations across India which mobilize Dalit women from different places and make them aware of the issues they were suffering with. Dalit women’s concern started coming up on the global platform. One of such platforms is The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995, where for the first time they put forth their issues. Dalit women’s autobiographies were also the result of this mobilization in order to overcome the caste-ridden atrocities. Shantabai Kamble, an Indian Dalit activist and writer, wrote the first female Dalit autobiography in Marathi *Majya Jalmachi Chittarkatha* which was published in English in 1986 as *The Kaleidoscope Story of My Life* representing the pain, agony and suffering of a lower caste woman. She depicts their reality in the unjust society, caste atrocities, patriarchal oppression, inhuman treatment, quest for basic human rights and their quest for life of dignity. Baby Kamble in her autobiography *The Prisons We Broke* seek to inform her younger generations and readers the discrimination and degraded life they are bound to lead as sufferers, their oppressive histories and the present conditions of utmost poverty and exploitation. She depicts the truth of the pain and suffering of her community by breaking away the silence with the power of pen and education. Even the struggle to get access to education is depicted so beautifully, not only because of being Dalit, but being woman. She paved ways for future generation writers to narrate their life-stories and carry forward the path of resistance. Baby Kamble in her preface (Which Maya Pandit, the translator of her autobiography has included to the “Introduction”) to the original Marathi text, asserts:

Today, our young, educated and so-called ‘progressive’ people are ashamed of using this word [Mahar]. But what is there to be ashamed of? . . . This land is ours. . . Even the name ‘Maharashtra’ derives from my name, and though you may feel awkward using this name, I do not. I love this word – *Mahar* – it flows in my veins, in my blood, and it makes me aware of the core of my being of the tremendous struggle for truth that we have waged (Kamble xvii).

Kamble’s work reflects the tales of extreme hunger, poverty, humiliation, suffering, pain, exploitation, resilience and every minute detail of Dalit people without any shame or awkwardness which in the past

found no consideration at all. She asserts that the future generations must know all those ordeals and humiliation that Dalits have passed through. She tries to inculcate a sense of pride and self-respect among the present and future generations of the people of her community. Kamble emphasizes the basic human need to hope for change and assert identity. Resisting against the caste hegemony in order to form the self, Baby Kamble reveals the courage of the community saying:

We did not accept this shameful state of being – we were forced to. A particular community forced it upon us . . . Today we have crossed those barriers and left them behind. Today we live a better life . . . Consider, what was our condition fifty years ago, and what is our condition today? . . . How did that change come about? (Kamble xviii)

Kamble asserts, “for me, the suffering of my community has always been more important than my own individual suffering. I have identified myself completely with my people. And therefore, *Jina Amucha* was the autobiography of my entire community” (Kamble 157).

Similarly, Urmila Pawar’s *The Waves of My Life: A Dalit Woman’s Memoir* translated from Marathi *Aaydan* by Maya Pandit, recounts the weave of pain, suffering and agony of a Dalit women and her community. The title “*Aaydan*” is the generic term that refers to all things made from bamboo. The other meaning of *aaydan* is “utensil” and “weapon”. Bamboo was the most common material used to make baskets, containers, and other things of general utility in households. Similarly, like weaving bamboos, Pawar uses her pen as a weapon weaving to draw her lived experiences that she has one through her childhood in the village and her adult life in an urban setting. This weaving is done to expose the reality and triple burden of patriarchy, caste and class faced by Dalit women.

Urmila Pawar in her Forward to Bijender Singh’s *Dalit Women’s Autobiographies: A Critical Appraisal* says: “Being women, the female autobiographers are attached to every pain of a woman. they themselves bear every atrocity and humiliation. Thus, every autobiography by women writer presents the pain and agony of their lives” (Singh 11). She further says:

I believe that a society of country like India where people of various castes and creeds live in harmony, in that country there is nothing like personal. Everything is related to society. Due to this belief, I wrote my personal experiences . . . other Dalit women writers like me, are raising their voices against casteism. It is not only our voice but of all the women of the past centuries also who have remained invisible on the pages of history (Singh 12-13).

Pawar tries to show Dalit women’s existence who due to casteism, poverty and patriarchy were thrown away at the lowest level of the society.

Bama’s autobiography *Karukku* reflects her suffering as a woman within and outside her community. She represents Dalit women and the reality of her Dalit community, the struggle for survival, they everyday have to go through. Bringing out the harsh reality of a Dalit life Bama writes:

In this society if you are born into a low caste, you are forced to live a life of humiliation and degradation until your death. Even after death, caste-difference does not disappear . . . If you are born into a low-caste, every moment of your life is a moment of struggle (Bama 26).

Bama vehemently condemns all forms of oppression – be it caste, class or gender. Besides, she highlights the caste oppression within religion, Christianity she belonged to. Bama’s experiences as a Dalit Christen expresses the same untouchability within Christianity. The Dalit are untouchables for the Christens as well. Religious conversion hardly brought improvement in the lives of Dalits. Dr. Ambedkar also reveals this religious discrimination in his autobiography *Waiting for a Visa*. Ambedkar, based upon his own experiences, finds that “a person who is an untouchable to a Hindu is an

untouchable to a Parsi . . . person who is an untouchable to a Hindu is also an untouchable to a Mohammedan” (Ambedkar 27). When Bama becomes a Catholic nun, she finds obstacles being a lower caste woman. She realizes that the church authorities form the upper caste deliberately discriminate against lower caste people. Having realized the truth, when Bama resigned from the job, she went back to her village, but she was treated as an outsider by her community members, which further adds to her difficulties. Being a Dalit woman, she has to struggle even to get acceptance within her own community. After becoming the part of her community, sharing their pain, she got her freedom. Bama celebrates her freedom saying, “I feel a certain contentment in leading an ordinary life among ordinary people. I can breathe once again independently and at ease, like a fish that has at last returned to the water, after having been flung outside and suffered distress (Bama 104).

Bama’s *Karukku* is a sharp and bold attack on the traditionally carried caste system. The title ‘Karukku’ itself is significant which refers to ‘the palmyra leaves’ having sharp edges on both sides. One side is the caste which cuts down the oppressed, they bleed and die. While the other side edge is used to use their resilience, courage and knowledge to stand against and cut through the system. The leaves are used as metaphor which on the one hand cuts down both the oppressed and other answering back to the oppressors in protest. Besides, the word ‘Karukku’ means ‘embryo’ or seed which signifies freshness and newness. Bama refers to the embryo as the “Dalit consciousness and the new revolution, which aims at bringing a new social order into the Indian society” (Kumar 232). As Bama writes, “There are other Dalits like mine, with a passionate desire to create a new society made up justice, equality and love. They, who have been oppressed, are now themselves like the double- edged karukku, challenging the oppressors” (Bama xiii). She evokes the collective self of entire Dalit community. She calls upon all Dalits to wake up and bring about a change.

By telling their personal stories blending with collective identity, Dalit women present their own realities, the agony and pain of their communities, the situation of a group’s oppression and struggle. By doing this, they offer a significant difference to traditional autobiography. Traditionally, autobiographies are about the author’s uniqueness or her achievements. The writer’s individuality is celebrated. ‘Self’ or ‘I’ is the main focus of the autobiography, celebrating the selfhood, achievements and success. But the ‘I’ in Dalit autobiographies, both men and women, frequently stands for ‘we’ as a “documentation of a community’s life” (Kumar 260). Dalit writers clearly announce this shift from the “I” to the community through using ‘We’. Moreover, their autobiographies reflect the psychological trauma of Dalit lives as an individual and community. As a whole, they represent the history of agony and memories of bondage, slavery and hateful past. Life writings by Dalit women are significant to understand how the individual subject is placed within a collective identity.

Sharmila Rege in her book *Writing Caste/Writing Gender* terms their narratives as ‘testimonies’ because their life writings does not only reveal the personal self but speak for and beyond individual and presents the caste oppression, struggles and resistance. Rege comments:

Dalit life narratives became testimonies that summoned the truth from the past; truth about poverty and helplessness . . . A testimonio is a narrative . . . told in first person by a narrator who is also the protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts and whose unit of narration is usually a ‘life’ or significant life experience (Rege 13).

‘I’ always symbolize ‘we’. The individual seeks collective affirmation to challenge the hegemony of their oppressors. Their life narratives, according to Hemanth M. are “rooted in the philosophy of commune, which gives them the necessary potential to survive during physical and psychological

trauma” (Bala and Sengar 22). This harmonious blending of collective identity with that of personal is the recurring theme in Dalit women’s life writings, which forms their ‘self’. Gopal Guru in the afterward to Baby Kamble’s *The Prisons We Broke* asserts:

This self is partly constituted by the life-story and acquires larger meaning only in the context of the narrative of the community. . . This self is both the individual and also collective. This self in the dalit women’s autobiographies is historically located and sociologically constituted. It is this normative link between the individual and the community that empowers dalit women to offer dispassionate criticism of community practices. Dalit women’s stories, unlike dalit male’s autobiographies, are more inward looking as they tend to interrogate the evil practices of dalit community (Kamble 160).

The communities’ suffering thus, empower them to stand against the oppression and form their self-identities through their narratives. It is to be noted that what is important in them “is the exposition of self that suffered . . . from the vantage point of self that feel the urgency to document that suffering and therefore Dalit narratives not just talk differently they emote, aspire, exhibit and serve differently” (Singh 236). The history of untouchability, inhuman treatment, resistance and resilience shown by Dalit women in their struggle for emancipation and the formation of self is needed to be acknowledged.

Formation of Self as an Individual: Against Patriarchy – Dalit and Brahmin

The question of ‘other’ is an eternal truth that every woman has subjected to. Women have always been silent and holds the secondary position in male dominant society as ‘other’. Dalit women’s writings are primarily concerned with the injustice and inequality prevalent in the Indian society at the hands of patriarchy and caste discrimination. There is resistance against this ‘other’ and an intense longing for defining the self in the Dalit women. Maya Pandit in her Introduction to Baby Kamble’s *The Prisons We Broke* points out as:

If the Mahar community is the ‘other’ for the Brahmins, Mahar women become the ‘other’ for the Mahar men. Baby demonstrates how caste and patriarchy converge to perpetuate exploitative practices against women. It is here that the urge to define the self becomes most evident in women. Baby Kamble shows how the remarkable dignity and resilience of Mahar women in their struggle through which they have emerged as the agents of transformation in their community (Kamble xv).

Dalit patriarchy have always been an obstacle in Dalit women’s liberation. Baby Kamble and Urmila Pawar reveal in their respective autobiographies how they remained silent about their men’s superiority complex and kept their writings secret for years. Kamble exposes that how she even got beaten for any task of writing. She hid everything she wrote because of her husband. Dr. Aparna Lanjewar Bose in an essay on Dalit women says, “Patriarchy is so deeply entrenched in the Dalit male psyche that the same “oppressed” turns the “oppressor” when it comes to his women and disallows her participation in both public and private spheres” (Singh 235). Kamble doesn’t only depict “the hypocrisy of Dalit masculinity but also their female counterparts who have internalized the philosophy of patriarchy” (Bala and Sengar 24). Kamble puts it, “And we too desired to dominate, to wield power. But who would let us do that? So, we made our own arrangements to find slaves – our very own daughter-in-law! If nobody else, then we could at least enslave them” (Kamble 87). Upper caste women in this process subjugate Dalit women, and Dalit women torture their daughter-in-laws in order to wield power and dominance against their subordinates.

Kamble recounts many incidents of suffering and violence against Dalit women. She shows how the women of Mahar community were crushed under the hegemonic structures of power in their domestic

and social sphere. At the hands of the hegemony of upper caste, Dalit women easily fall prey to both privileged men and women. Mahar women work for upper caste people, bring them firewood, work in their fields and get extremely inhuman treatment. Addressing the upper caste people as ‘*Appasab*’ or ‘master’ and getting the treatment like lepers, as if their bodies dripped with dirty blood or as if pus oozed out of rotten flesh, as depicted by Kamble (108), clearly exhibits the inhuman practices and hegemony of the upper caste or class. To add this, the community had sunk deep in the mire of superstitions, religious processions, and Hindu philosophy which is passed down from generation to generation exhibits their mental servitude. Kamble remarks:

Hindu philosophy had discarded us as dirt and thrown us into their garbage pits on the outskirts of the village. We lived in the filthiest conditions possible. Yet Hindu rites and rituals were dearest to our hearts (Kamble 18).

Following the Hindu rituals, Kamble refers to the *Kumkum* (red *bindi* or vermilion) which they wear to protect their husbands, eating only the leftovers after all the family members and such other practices are so deep delved that they forget to protest against. And above all “the worst part of it is the Mahar women’s humble submission to all these inhuman practices” (Saxena 17). The Brahmanical patriarchy adds restriction on Dalit women which have been internalized as a normal act. But with the arrival of Ambedkar and access to education, they realized wrongs done to them and tried to come out of the. Till the new beginning, Kamble writes, “We were imprisoned in the dark cells, our hands and feet bound by the chain of slavery” (Kamble 49). Ambedkar’s speeches, teaching and guidance led them to follow a different path towards liberation.

Sexual assault and rape of Dalit women and girls also occur within their own communities. For Dalit men, the suppression and rape of women could be a way to compensate for their own lack of power in society. The ‘husbandness’ would be the same in every man says Kamble (Kamble 155). Kamble in *Prisons We Broke* says:

The root cause of this was the male ego. . . their male ego gave them some sense of identity, ‘I am a man, I am superior to women, I am somebody. If the whole village tortures us, we will torture our women’. Fathers used to teach their sons to treat their wives as footwear! A wife’s place was near her husband’s feet. That was their way of asserting that they too were nobody! (156-7).

Besides, Kamble recounts the process of writing her life as a journey of speaking out as a woman. Her autobiography depicts the journey toward becoming a writer despite the ordeals she faced in the patriarchal setup, as she was not allowed to read or write. Because of such restrictions she kept her writings secret for 20 years from her husband. She, however, managed to publish her work and established herself as a pioneer in the history of Dalit women’s writings.

When Urmila Pawar started writing about the plight of Dalit women there were protests from Dalit men. Many of them told Urmila, “You write, but write about how the upper-castes misbehave with us. But it is not nice to point out the shortcomings of our men” (Pawar 24). Dalit women never hesitate to write about the nature of exploitation they generally face both within their communities and outside. They have to defy several traditions to assert their individual identities. Dalit women narrators are quite frank about the patriarchal social order that exists in Dalit communities and how they are the direct victims of such a trivial order. They document both mental and physical tortures that Dalit women have to go through in their day-to-day lives. Such a frank documentation of a community’s life is very rare in the history of autobiographical writings (Kumar 260). They bravely face the caste and patriarchal atrocities. The suffering of their communities greatly inspired them to write about their conditions. They “emote,

aspire, exhibit and serve differently . . . They attempt to make constant reminder to a generation that needs to be in sync with the past in order to understand their present in a better way” (Singh 236). They have established their self-identities as revolutionary women. Education empowered them, made them stronger and confident.

Bama, emerges as a strong Dalit woman. Bama bring out the indomitable spirits of Dalit women who withstand various social discrimination. She brings out the role played by Dalit women as laborers in the fields, working tirelessly inside the homes, bearing the subjugation and their strength to stand against the atrocities. By establishing an identity for herself as a woman, she establishes an example for all Dalit women to stand for themselves.

Conclusion

Dalit women writers narrate their wounded self and assert identity through their writing which is constituted by the ‘difference’. At the intersection of caste, class and gender, their struggle for survival, human dignity, and truth are something unique. Their self is an epitome of pain, suffering, truth and real-life experiences, not only of an individual, but of a community. Baby Kamble, set forth the path for protest against the caste and patriarchal oppression. Urmila Pawar and Bama carried forward the path of resistance against the hegemony of caste, Hindu religion, and their march towards new assertion. Like, Kamble, they found shelter in the religion like Buddhism that dragged themselves out of their degraded statuses and torture. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s constant guidance and direction towards liberation, self-respect, and dignity is what forms the basis for these women writers. They take pride in their Dalit identities. Their narratives are the powerful critique of caste-based atrocities meted out on Dalits. They not only portray the plight of Dalits but strongly resist against the hegemony of their oppressors. They established strong grounds of protest for their successors which encouraged them to celebrate their Dalit identities they always longed for. They provide an insight into the resilience and perseverance of Dalit women in their daily lives and how they struggle against the ordeals and stand strong against all odds. The deeper complexities of Dalit women’s subjectivities both ‘victims and transgressing agents’, as Shailaja Paik brings out, their struggle against their victimhood to their “capacities to recognize, reflect, reorganizing . . . both as individuals and as a part of a larger community . . . their networks of negotiations, abilities, and skills to perform relationships of social injustice were constituted, and enabled through their specific subordinated positions” (Paik 3). Dalit women’s agency belonged to them and their particular location on the fringes facilitated them to establish their Dalit feminist perspective in the academia and Dalit feminism as a theory and perspective.

Dalit women writers of contemporary times, looking at their predecessors rediscovering their past celebrate the Dalit identities. Their narratives are forging new Dalit womanhood. Dalit women’s emergence as proud and dignified individuals as well as their communities, assertive identities are the new subjects coming to the fore in modern times, which they have gained through unendurable pain and suffering. Yashica Dutt’s *Coming Out as A Dalit* aptly portray the progression from defying the caste-based rule and regulation to the new Dalit womanhood. Her memoir, a recent writing by a Dalit woman, clearly highlights the progression in Dalit woman writers’ attitude and approach towards identity formation. In the present-day matrix, the access to internet, social media and online platforms of Dalit women’s organizations, as Dutt argues, have turned up Dalit women to raise their voices and establish feminist narratives in more diversified forms in India. The new Dalit woman, according to her do not “need traditional print and T.V. news outlet” (Dutt 176) to speak for themselves. Rather, they boldly

stand for their rights and have created much safer grounds for themselves in form of their own Dalit feminist perspectives.

Dalit women's autobiographies and memoirs, therefore, present experiences and facts of Dalit women's suffering, their communities' suffering, their struggle for dignity and rights, protest and ultimately, establishing their identity as human being, and on the literary canon as a separate branch as Dalit Feminism.

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