

Present Status of Dalit Writings in Haryanvi Society: Issues and Scope of Translation

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ABSTRACT

The present paper intends to explore the underlying issues blocking the ways of Regional Dalit texts in India, particularly in Haryanvi society. The non-availability of translation of the texts like those got appreciated from the literary critics of the regional as well as national level but find no way to come at the level of other regional works rest in India like the Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, and other regional languages. The paper would discern the socio-cultural issues in the translation of Dalit texts apart from the practical issues like commercialization, publishing endeavors, and academic indifference towards the translation of the regional texts discussing Dalit perspectives in the current scenario.

Keywords: Popular culture, social fermentation, publishing endeavor, commercialization, indifferent attitude.

Historical Perspective of Dalit Writings in India

The translation endeavor as a money matter in the hand of the publishing houses and an emerging trend of a particular kind of content getting translating has an impact of prioritizing practices of the publishing house sensing a good fortune in publishing a specific kind content in translation works. The popular contents and issues get going having financial prospectus at both ends (the translators as well as the publishing houses) by default get ignored the works those are specifically concerned less favored in the traditional literary practices in India. The writers and the content are concerned with the new challenges of Dalits' in their current socio-cultural dimensions. The phase of political fermentation (through which they have been passing through) neither got the attention of the mainstream writers /translators nor being taken by the reputed publishing houses as they have to maintain their reputation and financial computation. Hence, there has been a scarcity of good translation work of the regional Dalit texts that are the authentic expression of the writers' real-life experiences and fine sensibility but remained encircled either due to his/her lack of expert literary experimentation or his inability to get published the works passing through the financial support and procedural mechanism for that. That's why the Dalit writings that emerged from the Marathi regional writings come on the literary scene in the 1970s got spread in the other parts of southern India. The availability of *Writings and Speeches* of Ambedkar compiled by Vasant Moon in association with the then Government of Maharashtra established the track of Dalit writings in post Independence period in India. Thereafter, the innovative description of the Dalit issues passed through the period of the Dalit Panthers' socio-cultural movement giving impetus to Dalit writings. In Marathi literature, the writers like Daya Panwar, Urmila Panwar, Suraj pal Chauhan Shantabai Kamble, Dilip Chitre, Anna Bhau Sathe, Shankrarao Kharat, and many others are the deciding writers to establish Marathi literature. Baburao Bagul's *Jevha Mee Jaat Chorli Hoti* (When I Concealed

My Caste) made an impact on contemporary readership in the Marathi world. In the seventies, the critics began to theorize on Dalit literature and its role. Many young writers seriously started writing on Dalit issues. Namdeo Dhasal, Saran Kumar Limbale, Shankrarao Kharat, Baburao Bagul, Arjun Dangle writers give critical shape to their expression and feelings.

In Southern India, Dalit writers like Iyotee Thass (1845-1914) a Tamil scholar writer started a newspaper *Tamizhan* that exposed the hypocrisy of religious sanction to the caste system. The writers like Raj Govthaman, Imayan, Vijay Chirapaad, Siddulingaiah, Gogu Shymla, Kotiganhalli Ramesh, Arvind, Malagatti, Ravi Kumar, Dev Kumar Mahadev, and many others have described the local issues in these societies. Dalit writers seriously started writing their authentic experiences in autobiographies and fiction in the 1980s and 1990s. Sivkami, a Dalit IAS officer wrote her novels titled *Pazhainya Kazhidalun* (1989), *Aanandayee* (1992) describing many issues of the Dalits and the upper castes' oppressive practices against these people. Bama's *Karukku* (1992), *Sangati* (1994) discusses the dual oppression of caste and gender. Imayam and Dharaman also describe the concerns of Dalits in the regional societies and put forth the Dalit discourse in Tamilnadu. Kalyana Rao's novel *Antarani Vasanthan* (2000) has been considered as a sourcebook for Dalit struggle, culture, philosophy, lifestyle, history, and politics in Andhra Pradesh. In Gujrati, the reality of the Dalits is scanned through the fictional world of the writers like Praveen Gadhvi and others. In the south end of the country, P.A. Uthaman's *Chavoli* describes the prevalent practices of caste discrimination and class struggle in Malayalam. C. Ayyappan wrote short stories with a Dalit perspective to establish counter-narratives of the mainstream to emphasize Dalit identity.

In Northern India, writers like Anand Rao Akela, Kanwal Bharti, Anita Bharti, De Kumar, and others are prominent in regional writings describing Dalit issues in the societies. The translation of Dalit texts particularly the autobiographies (got translated into English) of the Dalit writers like Sheoraj Singh Baichan, Om Prakash Valmiki, and Mohan Das Namoseroi was able to establish the narrative of Dalit writings and Dalit translation work as well. These translation works also got huge readerships beyond the regional boundaries as well as linguistic barriers are very crucial in analyzing the aesthetic sense of Dalit writings in a realistic portrayal of socio-cultural manifestations of the untouchables. Dalit writers from the Rajasthani society include the writers like Tararam, Ratan Lal Shambariya, Kusum Meghwal, BL Meghwal "Bhagirath", Charan Singh Pathik, Dr. Gopal Sahar, Jai Prakash Pandya 'Jyotipunj', and Shyamlal Jaidia described the sufferings of Dalits in the Rajasthani society. In the language, Guru Charan Singh Rao who wrote *Mashalchi (The Torch Bearer, 1986)*, the first Punjabi Dalit novel explicitly highlighted the practices of caste discrimination against Dalits. The writers like Lal Singh 'Dil', Buta Singh 'Ashant', Gurdas Alam, Sant Ram 'Udashi', and Mohan Lal Philoriya have portrayed the Dalit sufferings in the Punjabi language. Although Balbir Madhopuri's autobiography originally written in Punjabi as *Chhangia Rukh* was translated into English by Tripathi Jain as *Against the Night* (2010) published by Oxford University Press and other works are under process.

Dalit Writings in Haryanvi Society and English Translation:

Dalit writings describe the underlying repercussions of Dalits that can be traced in the works of the writers like Prem Singh Bernalvi, Nafe Singh Kadiyan, Ajmer Kajal, Kashmiri Devi, Daya Chand Mayna, and Rajender Budgujar have written on their very crucial issues in the Haryanvi society. More names can be enlisted in this series who have been describing the socio-cultural repercussions in this society in the rural setup as well as in the urbanized societies on the current issues. Furthermore, they

have considerably put the new challenges of the Dalits passing through the socio-political fermentations in the changed scenario in the country and the world. described the regional issues of Dalits. There has been substantial work on the issues of Dalits in Haryanvi society yet these works neither got any critical attention to get reviewed nor no translation work was initiated to find a wide range of readerships over the crucial issues of Dalits in Haryanvi society. There has been neither any Dalit text coming out from the Haryanvi writer nor any substantial work of translation of the Hindi Dalit writings from this society. There can be many issues for not having any texts in English like the English background, lack of opportunities in publishing houses, and the level of style as felt by non-English Dalit writers to express the authenticity of their emotions and feeling in a foreign language to them.

Present Socio-Cultural Turbulence in Haryanvi Society:

The Haryanvi society represents the robust culture of the mythical land of *Mahabharata* in the long back and famous battles of Panipat in the pre-Independence history of India. The agricultural output of the state has a substantial contribution to the national gross domestic product. The great contribution to the Indian defense service almost at the average of every tenth soldier belongs to this land and equally important in the sport tally paying a high percentage in the international sports events as seen in the recently concluded Olympic games organized in Tokyo in Japan. But another side of the regional socio-cultural repercussions has also big issues in the socio-political and caste and the *Khap* panchayat's dictation on caste issues and gender issues too. In such social turmoils, Dalits are the most affected section of this society that still have undying practices of caste discrimination against them. The recent social turmoils (as discussed under) shivered the international communities but did not appease any mainstream writers to express their sensibility towards the miseries of these people, which generally happens to them.

The arson and mass killing of Dalits in cold blood in caste clashes that shook the nerves of the human dignity perhaps have not been able to sensitize the mainstream regional writers in Hindi or other languages. Even the established mainstream writers have got it difficult to find pathos and tragic aspect in literary works. Such instances like the Dulina lynching of Dalits in Jhajjar district in 2002 where five Dalit youth were lynched by the cow vigilantes having a sense that that the vehicle is loaded with cows to slaughter. The incident took place in the presence of DSP, Naib Tehsildar, and almost 50 police personnel that made national headlines. For this, an inquiry under Banswal Commission found a negligent attitude of police and government functionaries' on duty to save the life of victims. The mistaken identity put the five Dalit families in social stigma and poverty at the loss of their bread earners which the court declared its decree on 15th October 2010. The bad name for the Harsola incident of Dalit attacks on the 11th of March 2003 in Kaithal District in which 270 Dalit families were beaten and forced out of the village on the flimsy ground to create tension in the village. In Parawar village of Rohtak district, the Dalit sarpanch was reported missing by his wife on 16 October 2003. Later on, the background of the story finds clues that he was being pressurised by the dominant Brahmins to provide the 20 acres of village common land for their organization. In a village named Badhram in Palwal, Dalits were ostracized and confined by the village upper caste people on the instance that Dalit entered the temple banned for Dalits. Many of the Dalits were beaten up and the mustache of an aged Dalit Bhajan Lal in his seventies was forcibly shaved. In February 2006, in a village named Mahmudpur near Kunjpura of district Karnal nearly 30 Dalits were injured when they were leading a procession of Saint Ravidas by the Rode community.

In February 2007, a petty instance of goats entered the fields of a Rajput in Salwan village of Karnal district that leads to a scuffle in which Mr. Maha Singh scummed to injuries turned into the burning of 73 establishments of Dalits and the killing of Dalits. The Gohana incident finds its evocative eruption in the petty instances where a Valmiki youth was to shoot his photograph at a photography shop where some other Upper caste youth remarked on him leads to inviting the wrath of the upper caste on the Dalits. The inhuman happening in *civil* society where Dalits hamlets were torched in the area of Sonapat district on 27th August 2005 with full police protection under DSP Kuldeep Siwatch leads to the CBI probe in the matter later on. The Mirchpur killing of Dalits in Hisar district there around 1000 of upper caste people attacked Valmikis surroundings lead to alive burning of Tara Chand and his disabled daughter to death and lead to displacing 254 Dalit families 19-21st April 2010 to live a sheltered life for which 33 people were held guilty by Delhi High court. The unending process of legal proceedings and the role of village panchayat find a detailed description in *Hatya* where Shiv Kumar, father of the missing girl Suman, got humiliation.

The incident of Bhagana where four Dhanak/Dalit girls out of which two were minors in March 2014 who have been waiting for justice at Janta Mantar in New Delhi. The background of the incident was that in 2011 the gram sabha decided to distribute 280 acres of land among the villagers which the jats were agitating. Unfortunately, it was just less than the gap of two years after the Nirbhaya Case of 16 December 2012 in New Delhi. The inter-caste marriage incident of Pabnaba village in Kathal district (Meena, a Ror girl, and Suryakant, a Dalit boy) lead to the expulsion of hundreds of Dalit families from the village, Roopgarh incident of a Dalit married woman on her way to meet her relatives was gang-raped by five men in a car in Jind district on March 9th, 2015. Despite having seen the unexpected torments for Dalits in the Haryanvi society, there came out neither any humanistic approach to give space in any literary piece nor any corrective measures except playing politics on their tormenting socio-cultural oppression.

Depiction of Dalit Issues in the Selected Regional Dalit Short-Stories:

There is no substantial Dalit text is available either in English or English translation, so the selected short stories that have been taken are originally written in the Hindi language. This has added another dimension in this discussion that Haryanvi society is still out of stock to have substantial writings in comparison to the other societies in North India as discussed above. Out of these few Dalit writers, they have produced good work in the Hindi language but neither got critical appreciation or a considerable good response of translation to make available the kind of literature. Every text that gets much attention or critical appreciation is not necessarily be translated but having no substantial work either originally written in English or English translation attracts serious attention of any curious readers to hypothesize many issues to explore in the academic endeavors that one took to reach any conclusion. During the course, explored many underlying repercussions that established a literary vacuum in Dalit texts in this society. That's why neither the writers with a fine sensibility of understanding the socio-cultural issues of Dalits in the society nor any translation attempts have been made in this direction. The translation of regional Dalit texts in any literary genre comes to the literary scene only when their texts either stories or autobiographies influenced the Dalit readers and motivated them to come out with more substantial work on their issues. Substantial works in Hindi short stories were taken into consideration to find the content discussed in the selected texts.

For this purpose, if one sees the story “Vyasthata” (System) written in Hindi by Nafe Singh Kadiyan, that describes the very serious problem in getting education of Dalit children when the constitution bestows the special provisions of reservation in getting admission and jobs and any government is bound to get it implemented for them. Dalits kept illiterate got illtreat due to their dependency on the zamindars having control in all aspects of socio-economic control in Indian rural setup. This ill-treatment of these illiterate castes realizes their suffering in illiteracy. The issue of getting a scheduled caste certificate for admission has been described by Nafe Singh Kadiyan in *Vyavastha* where a Dalit youth Jeetram not only keeps moving for months but does *begaar* to the Sarpanch. Hesitantly submitting to the Sarpanch, “jee, my admission got stuck. Want to get certified for the caste certificate. These are the papers,(Kadiyan, 163)”. Over this, the Sarpanch ridiculous him saying:

Oay,...You are not going to become a Collector!... If you all got educated, then who will work for us in the fields. Put this form here. Go on cycle to the city and bring a bottle of McDowell, a dozen of boiled eggs, as a guest is there with me, by the time I put the stamp on your papers¹. (Kadiyan, 163).

After that he says him to write the name of Sarpanch on his own otherwise, (Sarpanch's) wife would put him on washing the dishes and other domestic odds to do. Although the Sarpanch not only rebuked the Patwari over “keep rolling the children of our *Kameens* to Ambala, in not doing a good satisfactorily” and then went to the SDM court to get the formalities done to get a certificate but “not free of cost” every time. Hence, getting an education for a Dalit youth makes him get exploited and humiliated in the worst circumstances being created by the official as well as social levels are one of the most common practices nowadays.

Rajender Badgular published as *Kasak-Ek Dalit Tees* (2003) and *Hamari Jameen Hum Boange* (2012) describe the serious issues of Dalits in the current socio-cultural circumstances in the Haryanvi society. One of the much sought-after issues of the mainstream Haryanvi writings gets a very different treatment in his texts. The issue of village common land allotted for SCs /BCs in many villages Haryana but usurped by the zamindars. The story titled “Hamari Jameen Hum Boange” presents the fact and figures when the protagonist says:

You can see the case of your village that zamindar has been usurping half and twelve acres of agricultural land. In other villages like Balbehra, it is eighty acres, in Patty Afgan, it is fifty acres, Khuran it is half and eighteen acres, in Deewal village it is fifty-five acres, and in Khanoda twelve acres. There are 68759 villages in Haryana that all make on an average of ten acres in each village 67590... Even at least with the minimum benefit of 10000 Rupees per acre amounts up to 50 crores is usurped by the zamindars annually.² (Badgular, 22).

The village common land was provisioned for the solution of hunger and danger of Dalits got a receiving end in the practical aspect of life in the state. The story got a prize at the state level function on the regional writings but find no wider range of readership and to influence the government functionaries to take cognizance of the Dalit issues in the state. His other story “Tonic” (written in Hindi) also describes the protagonist who was made to undergo a discouraging and disastrous life. The story describes that how the village zamindar sitting in his big Darwaza makes fun of the Dalit child to see him passing in the uniform of a private school on his way to school. He cracks a joke giving vent to his traditional low mentality towards these people. He makes a sarcastic remark saying that “*now the*

¹ Self Translated.

² Self Translated.

*pups of Dheds used to wear the pent shirt³! (Badgujar,6)”. The autobiography is written by S.K.Chahal titled *Jakhm Abhi Bhra Nahi* (2021) describes the Dalit issues before other substantial texts make an appearance in the literary world in the Haryanvi regional writings. The scarcity and variety of Dalit literary texts in Haryanvi society are yet to come out from its infancy stage to reach the other stage.*

Conclusion:

Many issues underly in not getting a translation of Dalit texts including the socio-political activism of Dalits in this society, academic indifference to the Dalit contents in the cultural studies and human rights studies, and sensing no profit-making entrepreneurship calculated by the mainstream intellectuals as well as the publishing houses for this. The ever-growing profit-making approach of the publishing houses has pushed those creative minds concerned the less-attractive, not very popular among the high intellectuals, not attracting mass appeal to sell purposes discourages the social innovation and critical interpretation of the socio-culturally outworn-practices. The issue of non-acceptance of the critical appreciation of the much-popular practices and getting endorsed in the mainstream literary canons in the name of either myths or cultural narrative have instead minimized the literary scope for the writings on gender issues, science fiction, and human rights. Hence, Dalit writings are critique-centric of socio-cultural outworn practices on one hand and promote the humanistic aspect of civil rights for the all neither get fit in the popular cultural narrative nor the profit-making publishing houses. Securing a market and commercialization, and digital and online mode of publication has added more miseries for Dalit writers to overcome other barriers of literary experimentations. Furthermore, the indifferent attitude of the publishing houses towards the less popular content is a serious issue apart from evolving Dalit aesthetic to maintain readers’ response in the changing scenario of socio-political and environmental circumstances as can be visualized in the post-Corona age.

Generally, mainstream publications are concerned with popular cultural tracks and the profit-making endeavors in literary enterprises prefer that for marketing. If somehow the regional Dalit writings come to the literary world, they found neither the translators to expand their readerships nor the new readers in the targeted language of translation finding ‘their objective–correlativity unconvincing’ to the regional issues. The rigidity of caste practices and traditional approach keep continuing with the outworn practices are still the pre-dominant factors in rural societies in even the literary world and profit-making publishing houses due to that the general reader gets the popular content and Dalits’ literary endeavors don’t fall in this domain. Although the big challenges are there yet there are ample opportunities and scope for Dalit texts (from the Haryanvi society) for English translation as well as in other regional languages due to the present government’s policies that have made special provisions for the translation studies in India.

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