

**Premanand Gajvee's Kirwant:
A Despicable and Ostracized Kirwant**

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Abstract:

In the post-independence era of modern Marathi Experimental Theatre, Premanand Gajvee is known as the prolific playwright of Marathi especially Ambedkarite, which is also known as Dalit theatre. Dalit Theatre as a specific movement began around the 1950s. Datta Bhagat and Premanand Gajvee are notable Dalit playwrights. Dalit Theatre depicts the pain, sorrows and sufferings of neglected, deprived and despicable people. It is the theatre of protest which aspires to get back basic human dignity for those from whom it was snatched away. The present paper entitled 'Premanand Gajvee's Kirwant: A Despicable and Ostracized Kirwant' attempts to explore the representation of Kirwant who is Brahmin by birth but by profession deprived and despicable, whose dignity is snatched away like untouchable dalit. Key Words: Dalit theatre, Ambedkarite, deprived, despicable, protest.

Premanand Gajvee is an award winning prominent Marathi playwright, writer and poet. He is a creative playwright whose name is proudly included in the list of prolific Indian playwrights such as Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad, Badal Sarkar, Mahesh Dattani, Mahesh Elkunchwar, Satish Alekar, Datta Bhagat etc. Like Vijay Tendulkar, Mahesh Elkunchwar, Satish Alekar, B.S. Shinde and Texas Gaikwad; Gajvee is ground-breaking writer with a fine sensibility and at the same time a contemplative and controversial dramatist. Premanand Gajvee has been conferred with various awards and prizes as his plays represent dalit consciousness, the life and experience of dalits. Premanand Gajvee enriched the Indian drama and particularly the Marathi Dalit Theatre by depicting the social and cultural life of dalits in Maharashtra. His famous plays *A Sip of Water*, *Kirwant* and *Gandhi-Ambedkar*, have been translated from the Marathi by Shanta Gokhale and M.D.Hatkanangalekar, and are collectively titled *The Strength of Our Wrists* in English. Gajvee's plays explore the predicaments of dalits, unforgiving indictment of the discriminations that continue to prevail within the Hindu religion and Indian society. He has presented the bitter and harsh truths of society. These plays deal with the social problem of the society. Through these plays he depicted the

social-problems, especially the exploitations of not only dalits and the lower classes but also the exploitation of Kirwants, who are untouchable Brahmins in the existing Hindu caste system.

Premanand Gajvee's *Kirwant*, first performed in 1991, which depicts the predicaments of a sub-caste Untouchable Brahmins called Kirwants (...who are despised for performing death rituals). It created sub-caste untouchable Brahmins' consciousness in the Marathi theatre when it was first performed on the stage. Sub-caste untouchable Kirwant is Brahmin by birth but by profession deprived and despicable, whose dignity is snatched away.

In *Kirwant* Siddheshwarshasti Joshi is a central character, middle-aged Brahmin but born in a Kirwant family. As per Hindu caste hierarchy; *Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya* and *Shudra*; Siddheshwarshastri is born into the highest Brahmin caste but as a Kirwant his sole function in life is to perform funeral, last rituals at crematorium for the dead of all castes in the community. Therefore this sole function of last rituals for the dead, Kirwants become a social outcaste, almost they are considered untouchables in the Brahmin community. Shriram Laggo comments in director's note,

"The irony of his predicament lies in the fact that although he is indispensable when there is a death in the family, he is shunned by the Brahmin community and his life trampled upon in the cruelest manner

possible. He cannot, for example, marry outside a Kirwant family; his children cannot take up any profession other than that of a Kirwant. While he is considered 'holiest of the holy' because he is supposed to be direct link between heaven and the dead, his social standing is hardly different from a man from any other marginalized community".

Kirwants are treated disgraced, lowly and despicable for their profession. Their presence is unwelcome and undesirable on auspicious occasions, just like the presence of untouchables. They are not supposed to perform in auspicious rituals like marriage, Satyanarayana mahapuja, Munja, Thread Ceremony etc. Therefore do they have any place at all within their creed or community? Marginalized by the entire community in general, and the Brahmins in particular, Kirwants are treated like polluting outcast.

Siddheshwarshastri Joshi a Chittpawan Brahmin "Kirwant", who is a central character of the play, the story revolves around him, his wife Revati, Madhu, son of Siddheshwarshasti; and Vasudeo, who is Siddheshwarshastri's younger brother. Vasudeo is a member of *Sarva Hindu Eksangh'* directed by Keshav Abhyankar. This organization believes that all Hindu castes as well as the Brahmins are equal. The family of Siddheshwarshastri is untouchable for all the people in the village because they belong to the "Kirwant" community. Siddheshwarshastri's brother Vasudeo opposes the social annihilation of his family. Revati's wish seems that, her only child Madhu, who is studying in a school, should get education, get a job and give up this life of a "Kirwant".

By profession a Kirwant, Siddheshwarshastri performs funeral rites for the dead. He quite innocently performs a public Satyanarayan Mahapuja in the town. He was refused the *Prasad of Satyanarayan Mahapuja* because Digambershastri and other Brahmins, who consider the Kirwant and the low-caste as having the same abominable status and drive away unceremoniously dismissed by Digambershastri and other Brahmins.

Vasudeo: *You think that you perform sandhya according to the brahman dharma? But people know you as a brahman meant to perform last rites. Brahman by birth, but by profession a lowly and despicable Kirwant. Your presence is unwelcome on*

auspicious occasions, just like the presence of untouchables. Do you have any place at all within your creed? Have you forgotten what happened just yesterday when Prasad was being distributed at the Satyanarayan Mahapuja? You were refused the Prasad and unceremoniously dismissed by Digambarshastri. You walked away meekly without uttering a word.

Siddheshwar: *Digambershashti? I don't follow what you are babbling about?*

Vasudeo: *Well, well, it is I who is babbling is it? Do you mean that you did not go that Mahapuja?*

Siddheshwar: *No.*

Vasudeo: *And yet Digambershastri resoundingly announced that Siddheshwarshastri Joshi should walk from the Puja.*

Siddheshwar: *Who told you?*

Vasudeo: *The wind in the street! It's all over the locality. How could you stand this humiliation?*

Siddheshwar: *Do you mean to say that I should have fought with him there?*

Vasudeo: *Of course! You should have demanded an explanation.* (Gajvee, p.23)

Siddheshwarshastri humbly leave the *Satyanarayan Mahapuja* without uttering a single word of protest. He did not speak about the incident to his wife Revati or to his younger brother, Vasudeo. However, Vasudeo, a radical youth comes to know about the humiliation of his elder brother and strive for a clarification from his brother himself. Siddheshwarshastri puts up the defense that he didn't have the strength to ask Digambarshastri and his flatterers for an explanation. However, for Vasudeo, it is more a question of one's conscience than strength.

In scene Six Siddheshwarshastri's son Madhu is also humiliated by the family members of his fellow friend Nanu, who is son of Narayanrao Tilak. At Narayanrao Tilak's home Nanu's mother asked to Madhu, take the cup from the niche. Tea is poured to Madhu in the cup without handle, without touching it.

Madhu: *The cup had no handle and my hand was burnt. The cup slipped from my hand and tea spilled on my leg.*

Revati: *These people don't even know how to serve tea to children. Do they use cups without handles?*

Madhu: Only my cup was like that. I was about to refuse when Nanu's mother said, you are Nanu's friend. Take that cup from the niche over there. I took that cup and his mother poured tea without touching it. (Gajvee, p.47)

Madhu was given tea in a cup that was kept aside. In the school Madhu's classmates are teasing him as a 'son of kirwant'. Madhu has made a clean breast of everything on his way to school. Madhu's leg was scalded. Madhu was beaten and cow dung smeared all over him by his fellow schoolmates.

Siddheshwarshastri's brother Vasudeo a radical youth and rebellious by nature, who is a member of *Sarva Hindu Eksangh* directed by Keshav Abhyankar. This organization believes that all Hindu castes as well as the Brahmins are equal. It is because of its popular slogan "All Hindus are one". As a radical youth and rebellious by nature he is still unmarried because he wish to marry with upper caste Brahmin girl instead of Kirwant.

Vasudeo: in that case, it is not possible for me to marry. I shall never marry a Kirwant girl. Never. (Gajvee, 62)

Vasudeo opposes his brother to perform the funeral rites at the death of Venkatasastri's mother. Dhabushastri tries to peruse his mind, but he fails to change Vasude's progressive thinking. Vedantshastri and Dhabushastri approach to Digambarshastri who leads the Brahmins. They plan to teach a lesson to Kirwant's family. Digambarshastri, Dhabushastri, Vedantshastri and other Brahmins decided to call another Gokarnashastri Kirwant from the neighboring town Sawantwadi to perform the funeral rites at the death of Venkatasastri's mother.

Vedant: But what about the last rites of my mother?

Digamber: Don't worry. The last rites of your mother will be performed by Gokarnashastri Kirwant of Sawantwadi.

Dhabu: Gokarnshastri of Sawantwadi? He deserves to be kicked in his hindquarters! This duty is a pious deed, but that background doesn't enter crematorium unless he is paid first. (Gajvee, 58)

Digambarshastri, Dhabushastri, Vedantshastri and other Brahmins decided to boycott Siddheshwarshastri and his family once and for all, as well as those people also who will help Kirwant's family. Siddheshwarshastri's family excommunicated

from society by Brahmins and villagers, moreover grocer refuses to serve food- material, and the village begins to torture Siddheshwarshastri, kirwant's family.

Dayaram:Vasudeo came to the grocer's shop. The grocer refused to serve him. Vasudeo wanted to know the reason. The grocer said, "if I was to serve a kirwant, the other Brahmins would boycott my shop" (Gajvee, 68)

Due to this harassment, Siddheshwarshastri was begging for pity and forgiveness to Digambarshastri, but he intentionally rejects the proposal of reconciliation with the Kirwant family. In addition, Digambarshastri cunningly advises Siddheshwarshastri that he should kill his own brother Vasudeo.

Siddheshwar: But what do I do?

Digamber: Kill. Kill Vasudeo.

Siddheshwar: What did you say? Kill Vasudeo

Digamber: Yes, that is the only way out.

(Gajvee, 73)

Dhabushastri is cunning and selfish Brahmin. He advises Siddheshwar that he should perform an atonement ritual and be rid of that mess. Also, he should prepare a gold doll of Vedantshastri's mother and perform the last rites by chanting the appropriate mantras otherwise Vedantshastri's mother would be a witch and torment him and entire village.

Dhabu: I think you should perform an atonement ritual and be rid of this whole mess. Prepare a doll of Vedantshastri's mother, go to the crematorium, perform the last rites by chanting the appropriate mantras, get away from the place, don't turn back even once-but you will have to make a doll of gold.

Siddheshwar: Gold?

Consequently, Siddheshwarshastri becomes anxious and frustrated due to harassments and humiliation. Siddheshwarshastri trapped between the Shastris and Vasudeo, and continually dogged by poor Revati who feels utterly helpless. Unable to bear the shock, Siddheshwar begins to have hallucinations and due to psychological tension eventually dies of a sudden massive heart attack. Revati is the hapless and widowed, who accepts the bitter truth of Kirwant's life, they are part of her brahmanical clan, and continues cremation rites with giving the lesson of last rite to Madhu and hands

over to him the book on funeral rites 'Garud Purana'. Madhu would have to lead the rest of his life as a Kirwant. Vasudeo becomes helpless in front of her. He pledges never to marry because he doesn't want the Kirwant's lineage would continue. Generally at the end, progressive Vasudeo lost his battle against so called socio-cultural system of dominated Brahmin class.

In Brahmanical clan Kirwants, who are Brahmins by birth, not only deprived, despicable and ostracized, but also they are treated impure disgraced and lowly, like untouchable dalits, whose dignity is snatched away. Gajvee attempts to expose the inequality of the Hindu social system. Like Dalits, Kirwants have no exit from the inequality of the Hindu social and cultural system.

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(VI) The American Scholar

Ralph Waldo Emerson

ABOUT THE TEXT

“The American Scholar” was originally delivered in the form of an oration at the annual meeting of the Literary Society; Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard College near Cambridge in the USA, on August 31, 1837. It was published in 1837 and again in 1838. It was published in London as well in 1844 under the title, *Man Thinking: An Oration*. Oliver Wendell Holmes called this speech, “Our Intellectual Declaration of the Independence”. The lecture begins with an address to the President and the audience of the Society. It explores Emerson’s philosophical ideas. Emerson was highly influenced by Plato and his idea of Man. He has described the three source of the education of the American Scholar – nature, book and self-action. Emerson delivered this lecture with an express purpose to acquaint the audience with the influence and duties of American Scholar. This essay is regarded as an eye-opener for the Americans.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ralph Waldo Emerson was born on May 25, 1803 in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. His father Reverend William Emerson died in May, 1811 when Emerson was only eight years old. Emerson attended the Boston Latin School, and thereafter Harvard College from where he graduated in 1821. From 1821 to 1825, he worked as a teacher at William’s School. In 1829, he became the associate pastor to Henry Ware in the Second Church of Boston. R W Emerson married Ellen Tucker in 1829 but she died in 1831. He travelled to Europe (Italy, France and England) and stayed there for almost a year (1832-1833). In England, he met Coleridge, Wordsworth, Alcott, Margaret Fuller and Thomas Carlyle. In 1835, he married Lydia Jackson. His literary career began in 1836 with a delivered lecture on English Literature. He died at Concord on April 27, 1882.

to the individual man and the function of the scholar, which is to study and deal with the individual, as an independent unity or entity, and not a part of some system or institution.

To sum up, "The American Scholar" is a manifesto of intellectual declaration of American independence from literary colonialism of European culture. Emerson acknowledges the contribution of intellectual and cultural heritage of Europe but now he wants the American self-distinctively American. Emerson sponsors the cultural nationalism of America. He appeals to the American scholar to educate the society the humanitarian religion of peace, tolerance and abolition of slavery.

EXERCISES

I. Short answer type questions.

1. How does Emerson say about the division of Man into Men?
2. What is Emerson's idea of Man Thinking?
3. What is the influence of Nature on the scholar?
4. What does Emerson say about the influence of books on the scholar?
5. How is action influential in the life of the scholar?
6. How is self-trust important for the scholar?

II. Answer the questions given below in about 300 words each.

1. "'The American Scholar' is our intellectual declaration of Independence, and manifesto of literary independence of America." Elucidate.
2. What are the duties and functions of the American scholar?
3. Discuss the major ideas as expressed in "The American Scholar"?

III. Classroom activities.

1. Elaborate in detail on "The Contemporary Indian Scholar and his Duties."
2. In the class play the audio clip of "The American Scholar."
(<https://youtu.be/S56FHxmK03Y>)

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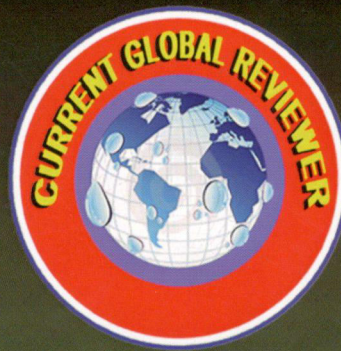
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Active Resistance and Revolutionary Activism in MeenaKandasamy's Poetry

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Abstract:

MeenaKandasamy is a poet, writer-activist and translator with Ph.D. in Sociolinguistics. Her works focus on caste annihilation, linguistic identity, political agendas, sexuality, violence and gender oppression. Kandasamy believes that writing, translation and active resistance or revolutionary activism are ways in which she can confront and come to terms with her Womanness, her Dalitness and her Tamilness, these three categories of belonging that continue to enshrine a history of resistance to oppression. The present paper attempts to explore the active resistance or revolutionary activism in MeenaKandasamy's Poetry.

Key words: Resistance, Revolution, Dalit struggle, Harijan, Aggression, etc.

A woman in a Dalit community is a "Dalit among the Dalits". In spite of being far more sidelined than men, Dalit women have also contributed sufficiently to Dalit literature. One such young, energetic and rebellious young woman is MeenaKandasamy, who is known as a poet, activist and translator. MeenaKandasamy and her poetry embody a long withstanding fight against the stringent subjugation and atrocities undergone by the non-dominant caste community. While her poetry revolves around issues of caste, sexuality, political agendas, violence, gender oppression and language, her work mainly urges her readers to act. Active resistance or revolutionary activism, the discourse which seeks to analyze what needs to change and set it right, is the core theme of Kandasamy's raw and out rightly unbridled poetry. Hailing from a caste-conscious background, her poetry reflects a society that grants inhuman sanction to caste discrimination and violence on Dalits. In 2002, Kandasamy edited *The Dalit*, a bi-monthly English magazine that reflected the voice of Dalits. Kandasamy was the youngest person who represents India as a writer-in-residence at the University of Iowa's International Writing Program 2009. She has been a featured poet at poetry festivals around the world. Two of her poems, *Mascara* and *My Lover Speaks of Rape*, have won first prizes in pan-Indian poetry competitions. Her poetry has been profiled in numerous publications internationally. Her debut poetry collection, *Touch* (2006), is a collection of eighty four poems divided into seven categories: *Bring him up to worship you, Touch, Add some spice, To that more congenial spot, Lines of control, Slander in a slaughterhouse, and Their daughters.* KamalaDas has praised Kandasamy:

"Once again after long years of search I came into contact with the power of honest poetry... Revelations come to her frequently and prophecies linger at her lips. Older by nearly half a century, I acknowledge the superiority of her poetic vision." (Kandasamy, 7)

Kandasamy adopts an anti-caste and feminist lens to retell Hindu and Tamil myths in her second collection of poems, *Ms. Militancy* (2010). It focuses on caste oppression and women issues. The poems in the collection focus on women empowerment and psychological pressures of women and how the poet plans to grant the women an identity.

MeenaKandasamy attempts to explore the problems of women, dalits and their rights through the multidimensional poems, novels and essays. Her poems explore the revolutionary activism and there is active resistance in her discourse. She is courageous and confidently expresses her ideas without fear or favor. She expresses strong will power and determination. For her freedom is only through rebellion. One can feel her anger and sarcasm while reading her poems. She never advocates Gandhian philosophy. In her poem, *Mohandas Karamchand* she explores the active resistance against the fundamentals of the caste system, which according to Gandhi, was the "genius of the Hindu society". Her scathing rebuke of Gandhi and his ideals is well reflected:

Aggression is the best kind of trouble-shooting. (Poem Hunter-05)

Dalits, Women, Minorities have been struggling for their dream. The endless struggle and postponement reformed into aggressive state. The suppressed dreams, desires, passions and emotions would become true, but it is impossible with all. Their dreams come true. Consequently she believes that aggression is not just a stressed state, for it leads to a positive change.

To sum up, MeenaKandasamy's poetry represents active resistance and revolutionary activism. Her poems attacked on the social discriminations enduring in the society such as caste system, cultural hegemony and suppression of women. Her poetry is a literary document of the humiliations, dilemmas, and barbarities experienced by Dalit women. Also she deconstructs the mythical heroes and shows how the epics can be read between the lines. She believes that there is immense discrimination and violence in today's world. She raised voice with aggression against patriarchal, predominant society for their rights, their image, their independence and their existence.

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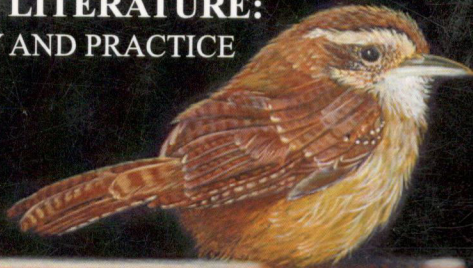
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Special Issue On
**WORLD LITERATURE:
THEORY AND PRACTICE**



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Dalit Literature: Discourse of Change and Revolution in World Literature

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Dayanand College of Arts, Latur

Abstract: Dalit Literature is mainly considered as the Post-Independence literary phenomenon. The emergence of Dalit literature is mainly associated with the causes and effect of the very long struggle and oppression. Dalit literature first found its voice in Marathi in the 1960s and 70s, and then soon appeared in other languages like Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada. Using autobiography as a literary genre, writers could share personal experiences of caste discrimination, making its existence undeniable for the middle classes. In the light of the growing importance of the study of Dalit literature the present paper aims to explore, how Dalit literature is part of world literature. It should not consider as external or outside literature. It has emerged from Indian society, so it is a part of the mainstream literature. The rise of Dalit writings not only marks a new chapter for India's marginalized class but also for the mainstream of world literature.

Key Words: Dalit Literature, World Literature

Dalit exclusion is asserted in the statements and literature of the Human rights movements, its goals, actions and plans. During pre-independence days the examples of Dalit exclusion were many. Mahatma Gandhi gave a new term "Harijan" to address these hapless people. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who came from a Dalit community and organized a mass revolution to bring awareness amongst Dalits and emancipate them from the Brahmanical caste system implemented by the Law of "Manusmiriti", Dr. B. R. Ambedkar rejected the notion that the cast system is God made and launched a revolution not only against the tyranny of the Brahmins but also against the tyranny of a man. He said that if society wants to liberate man from the shackles of discrimination and dominative nature of man, one should give equal importance to dalits. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Jotiba Phule started a political movement for the freedom of equality of dalits. This movement played a very significant role as a shaping spirit of Dalit Literature.

Writers from outside the mainstream and within the mainstream have written about Dalit life and their conditions. Many revolutionary writers,

“The circulation of Dalit literature in America is important to deconstruct an idea of India that is pervasive, and one that many diasporic Indians seek to cultivate: India as non-violent, Hinduism as mythological, anti-orthodoxy and benevolent, and both as peace-loving,” says Toral Gajarawala, an associate professor at NYU. “The knowledge of India that circulates in the West is caste-free. Dalit studies offer a corrective to this ‘idea of India’ in an important way.”

The significance of Dalit literature has been immense; it effectively threatened the Brahminic hegemony from literature, it concentrate Dalit masses from assertion, protest and mobilization, and it stirred up thinking in the Dalit intellectuals and catalyzed creation of organic intellectuals of Dalits, it given that the level of literacy been particularly low among Dalits, the emergence of Dalit literature where both the writers and readers are mostly Dalits, is itself an evidence of a profound change taking place in Indian society (Sohan Lal). Arjun Dangle in his article, “*Past, Present and Future of Dalit Literature*” writes:

“The creation of Dalit literature is inevitable until the structure of society change and as long as exploitation exists.” (Dangale, 266)

In the future, Dalit literature has to create its own myth and develop dalit literature to cross the boundaries of national literature and has to create a space in world literature like Black literature.

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Mahatma Jotirao Phule's *Tritiya Ratna* : The First Modern

Dr. Shivkumar Bhimrao Rautrao

Dayanand College of Arts, Latur

Mahatma Jotirao Phule was an activist, thinker, social reformer, writer, philosopher, theologian, scholar, editor and revolutionary not only in Maharashtra but also in India, in the nineteenth century. As a revolutionary thinker, he was bold and courageous and put his thoughts into practice. While many others talked of reforming the society, Phule stood for total rejection, for complete revolution. He tried to go the root of the unequal social situation. According to him, the Brahmin deprived the natives such as non-Brahmins, Shudras, and ati-Shudras of education, establishing and strengthening their superiority through religious scriptures and rituals. As a result the ignorant masses started to look upon themselves as inferior. In a way, Phule was stating the principle of hegemony. Mahatma Jotirao Phule started a school for girls of all castes in 1848, and an orphanage for the children of Brahmin widows. He formed the *Satyashodhak Samaj* in 1873. He can be described as 'the father of the Non-Brahmin Movement'. He looked upon the British rulers as saviours of Shudras and ati-Shudras. An all-round revolutionary, he dealt with diverse issues like caste, stood for emancipation of not only the lower castes to which he belonged, but also of the most downtrodden, the untouchables. He stood against injustice to women, including those from the Brahmin caste, and pointed out the economic exploitation of farmers, arguably for the first time in India. His wife Savitribai supported him in his activities and suffered the consequences. Jotirao Phule initiated social change in nineteenth century India, especially in Maharashtra, through his philosophy. The nineteenth Century was an Era of Social Criticism and transformation that focused on nationalism, caste and gender. All major questions taken up by the reformers were connected with women's issues such as female infanticide, child marriage, forbid on women's education, Sati, tonsure of widows, prohibition on widow remarriage etc. At the same time, reformers concentrated more on reforming the social institutions of family and marriage with special emphasis on the status and rights of women. Jotirao took up the issue of gender and caste. He revolted against the unjust caste-system under which millions of people had suffered for centuries. His revolt against the caste system integrated social and religious reform with equality. He emerged as the leader of the depressed classes in Maharashtra and he was recognized as a leader of downtrodden class in all over India. He was influenced by American thinker Thomas Paine's Ideas of 'Rights of Man'.

Mahatma Jotirao Phule's well known works are '*Tritiya Ratna*' (1855), '*Brahmanache Kasab*', (1869), '*Powada : Chatrapati Shivajiraje Bhosle Yancha*' (English life of Shivaji, in Poetical Metre), (1869), '*Powada : Vidyakhatyatil Brahman Pantoji*', (1869), '*Manav Mohammand (Muhammad)*



युगप्रवर्तक क्रांतिबा

searching for an answer to who am I? Under the changed circumstances, Phule went a step ahead and tried to deal with a bigger question 'how should I be?' No doubt there are many external reasons behind the subjugation of a country, such as political ambitions and dominance of imperialist nations, their technical excellence, superiority in tools of production and social structure, etc but as G. P. Deshpande puts 'it, there are internal reasons too when a society gets defeated'. (Sathe.32) A play with socio political content, a play in which this realization comes out clearly was written in Maharashtra in 1855. This was the first renaissance play with revolutionary and satyashodhaki content. It was the first consciously political play in India. As Datta Bhagat puts it *Tritiya Ratna* is also the First Dalit Play. Rege puts it as a first modern play which is an indication of the prevalent social conditions. It also explains why the play was never staged. There should be no need to highlight the importance of Phule writing this play in 1855 against the background of such caste discrimination. This play belongs to the era when even though the elites felt the pinch of subjugation of the country, an articulate analysis of the nature of the colonial was still far away. It took forty more years for such an awareness to trickle down to the Brahminical Middle Class Theatre. The conflict in the play is concerned with the exploitation due to the cast dominance of Brahmins at all levels such as political, social, financial and cultural.

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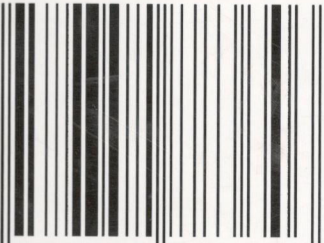


॥ अखंड ॥

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