

# An Exploration of Dalit Life and Identity crisis in Sharankumar Limbale's "The Outcaste: Akkarmashi"

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**Abstract**—The aim of Dalit literature is to fight-against the recognized structure which is grounded on wrong and to uncover the morally wrong and the act of pretending to have higher standards of the higher castes. The Present paper focuses on Shrivankumar Limbale's The Outcaste: Akkarmashi, as an art of examining the Dalit life and identity crisis. Dalit autobiography is one of the notable techniques of writing the individual's own being and the group of people. It is thought of as the expression of conversation within a long uninterrupted speech. The author talks on account of his groups wants, aspirations and difficulties. The self of the author is displayed as self of his/her group whose worries, problems and sources are talked. The author's involvements, his discrimination from his specific folks and group. Limbale tells his mother's story in his autobiography as a very disturbing one-it was all about body exploitation by the superior class. This paper boards upon the filthy attack made against Limbale's mother all her life in one or the other way. This story is more or less the same for all the Dalits in common and Limbale in his autobiography reasons the manner of humiliation. Limbale's story is a perfect text of life of the Dalits. The story records altered sides of public, sensible and monetary separation. Shrivankumar Limbale in his autobiography The Outcaste: Akkarmashi (2003) accepts the obligation of exposing the requirements and the difficulties of the group through his story. The difficulty of the total Dalit group developed into the troubles of his own self. The pain of the whole group became the pains of his own self. The exposure of Dalit groups is given key importance in the text and explicitly debated and unfolded by the observation of Limbale himself alongside seizing the unique duty of portraying and expressing out his groups wants and yearnings, difficulties and hardships at varied magnitude. Limbale's The Outcaste: Akkarmashi (2003) incorporates the complete truth of socio- cultural and past position of a mahar community in a rural residential community from the playwright's eye. The paper presents several situations of socio-cultural and past

position of not only mahars but also of Dalits in Bharath as the sufferers of ancient customs and practices.

**Index Terms**—Caste, Discrimination, Identity, Hypocrisy, Struggles, Sensibility, Protest, Freedom, Crisis, Search

## I. INTRODUCTION

Dalit literature is a literature position in India that started in the mid-twentieth century and it incorporates the literature activity of the Dalit community, which is considered to be one of the most excluded and distressed community in Bharath. Authority is not something that is possessed or to be held by particular group or large part of organisations, but quite a thing that is happening now in all social communications and time spent with them.

Akkarmashi is a Marathi self-narrative novel written by Sharankumar Limbale. The text is a dominant account of the background structure prevailing in Bharath's culture, besides the methods in which it has remained suppressed by persons who are reflected "outcasts" or Dalit's.

The author's denunciation is true record of the Dalit's life. It is thought that the untouchables themselves are outsiders to the culture but half-caste of an untouchable is further dejected in our orthodox Varna system. This text puts pressure on class difference and the mistreatment materialized in our civilization on outcastes in particular. The very opening of the writer's note above the main script of the autobiography gives a prominent call to the next account of a story marked by ache, shame and dishonour born out of the birth-based situation in the castes-feudal sociocultural structure. The unintentional delivery has made the author akkarmashi whose meaning, rather, can be best explained by the

words of the writer himself: The writer is constantly persistent on the information that body utilization of the Dalit women is a part and parcel of the economic and socio-cultural system called status which is fundamentally a plan of mistreatment of people by the people.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE & OBSERVATION

The book is a semi- self-narrative explanation of a child born to parents of diverse backgrounds, who is subsequently seen as an outcaste by people. The book deals with subjects of status, personality, and the fights met by people who are side-lined by people.

For instance, the hero of the book is mentioned to as an “Akkarmashi,” a word used to state to the progenies of prostitutes. This brand is used to denounce and side-line him, and to explain the discrimination he experiences. The narrator sees himself as an ‘Akkarmashi,’ a Marathi word that exactly means ‘half-caste’ and has been traditionally used to represent individuals born diverse parentages. This brand is one that carts a great deal of dishonour and side-lining in Bharath civilization, as it proposes uncleanness and illegitimacy. The narrator feels sentenced and branded as such, underlining the ways in which language is used to express and classify persons built on social theories of race, status, and gender.

The writer says that his mother is a low caste; however, his dad is from a high status, from one of the fortunate classes of Bharath. Mother lives in a hut, dad in a big house. Dad is a landlord; mother, landless. He is an akkarmashi, (halfcaste). He is judged, named illegal. The status-based Bharath civilization used to mistreat the low castes by making them do the utmost impractical jobs to receive their day-to-day food. Animals were given more respect than that of a low caste. They were not permitted to enter into the public places. They were asked not to spit on the grounds but to tie a jar on their collar to evade spoiling the streets by their spit and to fix brooms to their belly so as to clear their paths from the public streets.

Chiefly, Akkarmashi highlights the fragmented individuality of the writer who is born to an upper status father and to a lower status mother. The writer goes on a quest for his personality whether he is fitting to a superior caste family or to a subordinate caste family. The big task that we find in the life of the writer

is searching out his self itself. Status system has become a psychic problem to the lower- castes. It has developed a huge obstruction for the Dalit’s to mature and develop. Caste mentally subdues the intellectuality of Dalit’s and makes them lower, unrepresented and helpless.

Dalit’s carry the status problem in number of ways like in institutes they are made to be seated alone from upper status boys and girls, Dalit’s are not permissible to enter temples, Dalit’s are not allowable to draw water from the wells of upper caste, Dalit’s are compulsorily made to live separately in the settlement, Dalit’s are not permissible to get the pleasure from the unrestricted ordinary resources, Dalit’s are not permissible to have wealth, Dalit’s are bodily misused by the superior caste, Dalit’s are forced to practice poverty, Dalit’s are not permissible to read sacred manuscripts, Dalit’s are treated eviler than animals, Dalit’s are not given reasonable salaries for their donkeywork and Dalit’s are not permissible to take part in public banquet and so forth.

One more noteworthy side to be contemplated is the poverty and underprivileged socio-economic situation of Dalit’s lives and tribes of Limbale. In specific, the clan of the writer fights completely to emerge out of poverty. The tribe fights and combats with starvation from start to finish. The tribe goes to any degree to do any type of activity to fulfil their starvation. Santamai, the grandma of the writer works very hard throughout the day but she gets very little sum of cash. She makes cash as sweeper of roads and other community places. She also occasionally gathers the indigestive grains which are taken from cow dung. Masamai, the mother of the writer goes to a level that she gives her physique to earn cash in order to feed her kids. Dada, is a Muslim associate but stays with the writer’s people. The family of the writer relies on his cash. If he does not make any cash that day, the entire household goes for starvation. Dada makes cash by carrying loads. Then we have the author and his sisters. The author and his sisters couldn’t get anything for they are small. So, they habituated to theft of possessions from community places. The author provides a rational reply that their work is admissible and appropriate for hunger in them makes them to do such things. He also explains his mother’s activity for being disloyal. It is because of her poverty she forces herself into that filthy work. It is neither desire nor yearning but

poverty. It is not only the household of the writer which faces poverty, the entire tribe faces poverty.

One more representation is seeing Dalit women as sensual items. It is taken for granted that a Dalit woman is born for an upper caste man. Masamai, the mother of Limbale is the target of sexual annoyance. She is a very beautiful lady in the maharwada; her beauty invites upper caste men to have sex with her. She is required to have sex, if she refuses, she earns penalizing. Dalit women are made to undergo such abominable action decreed by upper caste men. Limbale throws a question that if Dalits are thought untouchables how can upper caste fellow touch the physique of Dalit females and have physical pleasure. He writes: Santamai and I went to a moneylender. He was drunk. Santamai and I stood at some distance from him. Santamai's blouse was torn exposing her breast. The moneylender kept staring at the peeping breast, but he refused to lend us the money. His look spread like poison in my heart. I wished that the blouse of this money lender's mother or sister was torn so that I could stare at their breasts. I burned within. Our poverty was hateful. I wanted to rebel against such humiliation. (82) Another aspect to be considered upon is shaming Dalits on caste lines.

There are many males who longed to have sex with Masamai as she is a good-looking woman in the maharwada tribe There is also another woman called Laxmi who gets pregnant by an upper caste man and she is left by him. This indicates that a Dalit female's physique as a place for higher caste men to satisfy their sensual craving as mark of power. The question of Identity and search for meaning in life is the most important part of life of the author which is permanently a fantasy for Dalits that never came to be real as in the situation of the author. Limbale gazes at his ruined personality. The author asks: Does this mean I am Muslim as well? Then why can't the Jamadar's affection claim me as Muslim? How can I be high caste when my mother is untouchable? If I am untouchable, what about my father who is high caste? I am like Jarasandh. Half of me belongs to the village, whereas the other half is excommunicated. Who am I? To whom is my umbilical cord connected?" (38) This is a big challenge for the author to choose his identity. The writer is not liked and harassed by his own community who is born to an upper caste man. He is probed several times about his identity for example whenever he is in an institute he was probed by his

tutor as well as learners. The writer belongs to two bloods. One is mahar blood and other is Patil blood, due to this he is disallowed for admission in an institute and later in university. Though the writer knowingly aware that he is son of a Patil, never acknowledged himself with an upper caste community. He strictly prepared his mind to ascertain himself with a mahar community, however it gives him the least respect in the society.

The Patils in every village have made whores of the wives of Dalit farm workers. A poor Dalit girl on reaching adolescence has customarily been a target of their covetousness. There is a whole class born to illicit Patils. There are Dalit families that live by pleasing the Patils sexually. The whole village reflects such a house as the house of the Patil's prostitute. Even the children born to her from her husband are considered the children of a Patil.

Dalit life rotates around the standard of classlessness, where Dalit thinks in terms of safety of all groups. Still Dalits are ill-treated by higher caste men, they certainly not rebelled against them rather Dalits are submissive enough to their immoral practices. For example, in the case of the writer who has seven sisters from diverse fathers, but with the same mother. He never showed any variance to them and he likewise adored them all. All the kids adored each other. They are supportive to their mother. This shows how a Dalit family creates a society in affirmative mode, whereas a higher caste family splits the society. Besides, this thought of the writer shows his love for his brothers and sisters. He considers that he is lucky to have such brothers and sisters. Dirty Homes of Dalits is another side which can be anticipated. The houses of Dalits were awful and unclean. Dalits were made to reside at the outskirts of a village or town. Most of the residing places of Dalits were in a trash yard or a junk yard or besides the toilets or in burial grounds. Dalits are forced to occupy such places due to their caste.

### III. CONCLUSION

Dalit self-narratives are written with the purpose of getting a transformation in the culture. The major purpose of writing Dalit autobiography is to highlight the boiling socio-cultural and ancient issues through which Limbale experiences a hurtful practice to bring a public transformation. The writer Sharankumar Limbale points out the socio-cultural and historical

aspects of Dalits through his personal account approach and involvement. *The Outcaste: Akkarmashi* (2003) has roused Dalits at huge to be mindful of their rights and to attack the age-old caste system. It vividly presents the unacceptable condition of Dalits who have been deprived of of the basic self-respect of fellow human being. *The Out Caste* in a way represents the Dalits hullabaloo and torn and crushed lives of the Dalits. Like the writer, there are many dalits who are in a state of identity less, half caste and outcaste. Furthermore, Like Limbale's mother there are many dalit women who face sexual atrocities, harassment and urge by higher caste men. Thus, it firmly objects against the social problems of the system.

This self- narrative rendition is an authoritative representation of the authority arrangements that exist in Bharath and the ways in which they spread caste-based discrimination. It shows the authority structures that exist in Bharath built on caste. The hero of the story is an outcaste and is thus regarded as substandard and filthy by people. Limbale's *Akkarmashi* stresses the damaging nature of the caste system and the ways in which it spreads unfairness and subjugation. The authority structures that exist in Indian civilization based on caste are severely deep-rooted and hard to uproot. This echoes the connections of caste and gender subjugation, where Dalit females are treated as sexual items while being socially hated. The paper concludes by confirming the implication of Dalit literature as a powerful tool for social transformation. *Akkarmashi* is not just an individual story but a historic and social rendition that represents the harsh truths of caste domination in Bharath. It pinpoints the financial lacks, gender-based violence, and social rejection that Dalits face, while stressing their resilience and fight for justice. Through its critical study of *Akkarmashi*, the paper highlights the significance of self-narratives in challenging universal discrimination and promoting for a more unbiased society.

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