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Women in Dalit literature with special reference to Baby Kamble and Kaushalya Baisantri

Joyeeta Das*

Abstract— Although as an ideology Feminism has assumed a global significance, it has been accused of being typical urban middle class concept and merely a record of upper caste Women alone. Dalit movements too have not bothered about patriarchal domination. Dalit women are doubly marginalized and Dalit feminists aim at bringing out the Dalit Women's experiences of dual marginalization of caste-based atrocities and patriarchal violence that Dalit women suffer from within as well as outside their community. Dalit women's literatures are a portrayal of the socio-economic, cultural, and political conditions of Dalit community under the control and influence of upper caste hindu society. They demonstrated their life stories and experiences of trivial exploitation based on caste, class and gender. The paper aims to focus on the writings of two Dalit women authors of Maharashtra, Baby Kamble and Kaushalya Baisantri, whose writings are a depiction of their battles not only for existence but also for constitution of self-identities for which these women fight every day. Moreover it also focuses on the scope of both the author's autobiographies, how they are similar and distinct from each other

Methodology :- The method used in the study is Content Analysis and Documentary Research Method in which the primary sources of information are the autobiographies, short stories, poems, essays, interviews and multiple other works of Dalit women authors. The secondary source of information are the different articles, books and various other sources related to Dalit feminism and Dalit women writings in Maharashtra.

Objectives

1. To reflect on socio-economic and political condition of Dalit women.
2. To compare the writings of both Baby Kamble and Kaushalya Baisantri.
3. To look into the impact of Dalit women writings on Dalit community as a whole.

Introduction :- Dalit women are positioned at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy, subjected to inhumane living conditions, violence and discrimination which deprive them of all kinds of opportunities, choices and freedoms in all sphere of their life (Nageen Rather, 2017). Dalit women's literature holds a mirror to the agony experienced by an individual, gives a voice against casteism and wish for an egalitarian society (Kavya, 2016). Off late Dalit women writers are trying to make their footmark all over India and their writings came pouring in many regional languages in the form of autobiographies, short stories, poems, novels, etc. The paper is a reflection on their socio-economic struggle for existence to the constitution of self-hood and self-identities for which these women fight every day. The self in Dalit women's narratives is presented before the readers through the shared experience of the community.

Baby Tai Kamble is the first Dalit woman in Maharashtra who, in her autobiography *Jina Amucha* (The Prisons We Broke in English translation), gave a realistic picture of the oppressive caste and patriarchal beliefs of the Indian society. The book deals with two major problems of society: firstly, the oppression and exploitation of Dalits by the upper castes: secondly, the discrimination towards women in a patriarchal society (Ghodwadikar, 2018). Though it is assumed that discrimination based on gender inequality exist as same to all Indian Women, for Dalit women, the situation is even worse, as they suffer from triple oppression because of their gender, economic condition and low caste (Rajput, 2014). Kamble's narrative is an exploration of women's life in Dalit Community. She narrated her and her community's shared experience of breaking prohibitions—'the prisons'—that excluded them. It is the prison of hunger, illiteracy, untouchability, patriarchy, economic dependency, and social disability related to caste and gender that they

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