

Literary Representation of Natives in Indian Regional Literature-A Vast Panorama of Indigenous Culture, Imperialism and Resistance

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Abstract

Indian English fiction writing shows the development of Indian literature which takes a dive deep into the colonial past of India along with the detail observation of the history of deviation of social strata and its psychological effects on common masses of India. Social realism was checked through the early independence period of English writing. In Indian English fiction writing, partition trauma was glorified, celebrated as the main theme and Gandhian age is also described by most of the prominent novelist like Raja Rao, Chaman Nahal, and Khushwant Singh. The women novelists took the initiative after the independent period and Kamala Markandeya, Ruth P. Jabhawala, Shashi Deshpande, Geeta Hariharan, Anita Nair and Namita Gokhale have shown the rebellious feminism through their postcolonial sensibilities. If we want to write historical, social and cultural literature of India, we do not have escapism from the history of adivasi victimization and several adivasi harassments of centuries in India.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adivasis marginalization is the dark reality of India, but hardly any Indian English writer seems serious about this theme and about their, realistic literary presentation. Indian English fiction writing shows their connectivity with the particular subject which are the issues of the largest population of this nation. Majority of the novelist writes for the interest of the Indian reader but such literature can never be a part of social revolution or gradual social transformation for the welfare state. In this regards, famous writer and novelist Sharankumar Limbale in his famous book *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: Histories, Controversies and Consideration*, opines:

There has never been a revolution in the world for the sake of pleasure and beauty.

Many governments have been overturned for equality, freedom and justice. This is history. The literature that glorifies pleasure gives central place to the pleasure of seeking aesthete. The literature that promotes equality freedom and justice is revolutionary and it emphasizes the centrality of human being and society. If pleasure-giving literature arouses joy and sympathy in people, revolutionary literature awakens the consciousness of self-respect. (Limbale: 2004: 16)

II. INDIAN BHASHA LITERATURE-CLOSE TO REALITY AND SUBJUGATION

In Maharashtra, we have massive data literature under the title *Adivasi Vimarsh* which observe the adivasi history for the last 300 years. Adivasi's revolts, existences and upbringing during colonialism, their struggle for survival in postcolonial India have presented very acutely in Marathi literature. Their stories of vanishing identities, erasing dialects of adivasis are realistically presented by many prominent Marathi writers. Marathi writers like Bhujang Meshram wrote poetry volume, *Abhujmal* depicting the adivasi hardship of survival. Dr. Vinayak Tumram is another big name in Marathi adivasi writings who is still giving justice to adivasi pathos through his writings. His books like *Adivasi Sahitya-Disha Ani Darshan*, *Rangarbhatil Jakhma* and *Gondwana Petle Ahe*. Sunil Kumare is a prominent adivasi prose writer who wrote *Jangle Jivhar*, *Kingari (Poems)*, Lataru Kavadu Madavi is a good interpreter who deals with the theme of the indigenous issue of Indian Adivasis. All these adivasi writers have given rebellious voices to century's subjugation of adivasis in this country. Tukaramji Warkhade is one of the prominent names in Marathi critical writing who wrote *Vaicharik Parivartnaccha Masuda*, *Adivasichya Astitvache Prashn*, *Lingo Ka Mithak* and *Bharat Ke Vastvik Bhumalak*. Some of the prominent academicians like Dr. Tukaram Rongate wrote *Adivasi Sahitya – Ek Chintan*, Dr. Vinod Kumre work *Adivasi Sahityatil Pravah- EK Abhyas* and Dr. Pramod Munghate wrote *Adivasi Sahitya Pravah*. This literature shows that *Adivasi Discourse* is strengthening day by day. These Bhasha literature about adivasi life are very different from the writings and perceptions of Indian English Fiction writings.

The regional literature of Jharkhand is the treasure of adivasi identities with the number of issues including subjugation, disposition and deculturization. Some of the prominent novelists of Jharkhand is Ashwini Kumar Pankaj who wrote the novel, *Mati Mati Arkati*. Mahua Manzi wrote the novel *Maram Gomke Nilkanth Hu.*, *Red Zone is written* by Vinod Kumar. Vandana Tete wrote, a critical volume, *Adivasi Sahitya Parampara and Prayojan*, Abhishek Kumar's, *Jharkhand Andhere Se Sakshatkar* deals with the critical evaluation of regional adivasi novels of Jharkhand. Novelist Reanendra wrote the novel *Global Gaon Ke Devta* Rakesh Kumar Singh's *Pathar Pe Kohara*, Sanjeev's *Paav Tale ki Doob, Dhar*, Vinod Kumar *Samar Shesh Hai*, Rakesh Kumar Singh's *Jo Itihas Me Nahi Hai* are some of the gems in regional adivasi novel writings.

When we study this huge body of Adivasi literature in regional languages with the treatment of all the

theories of literature including Colonialism, Postcolonialism, deconstruction, metanarrative, Marxism, Neocolonisation and Postglobalization but on the other hand mainstream Indian English fiction writing does not show such a vast maturity of 'ism' and its literary presentation through their novels. Indian English fiction writers find out them with ease when they use the word *Subaltern* but they never think adivasi women from this perspective, nor they have presented the community of Indian adivasi from subaltern point of view but the most striking and surprising reality is that the Adivasi-Abongional are the most wretched soul, most destructed cultures in contemporary independent India. We remind the title of Gayatri Chakraverty Spivak when he asks *Can subaltern Speak*, as the adivasi is the victim of neo-colonization and post-globalization.

In Indian social hierarchy, we notice that the ruling class is center in every sphere of national life including political terms, economic policies and the social circumstances. They have every authority that they make a dance to the ruling class on their tunes because the ruled class has no voice in power structure or oppressive state apparatus. In this regard of subaltern concept, Dipesh Chakraverty opines,

“Subalternity, the composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of domination and hierarchy is characteristic of class relations in our society, where the veneer of bourgeois equality barely marks the violent, feudal nature of much of our systems of power and authority” (Chakraverty: 1985:375).

III. BHASHA LITERATURE AS MOUTHPIECE OF INDIGENOUS CULTURE AND SWYMBOL OF RESUISTANCE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

Adivasi life, culture, identity and geographical particularities could never be a part of Mainstream Indian English literature. A historical novelist like Manohar Malgonkar deals with colonial Indian societies without taking adivasi life in consideration. He praised and abuses the both about the princely state of pre-independence India in the novels like *The Princess*, *The Distant Drum*, *The Bend in the Ganges* and *The Devils Wind* but he could hardly give justice to the Bhil adivasi in his novel. Political victimization of adivasi could not present with sufficient detail. If Postcolonialism rewrite the nation with nationality, but in this concept of nation adivasi seems nowhere.

Postcolonial mainstream woman writers of India speaks about the marital or extramarital women relations, struggling identities of upper cast women in male-dominated patriarchy but women longing, her physical desire and rebels about stereotype traditional Indian mentality becomes the most distinct part of literary conferences but the seduction of adivasi girl Rima in *The River Sutra* or body celebration of Bilasia in *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas*, lustful attitude of Augustya towards adivasi women Para in *The English August* could never become the topic of their literary discourse on subaltern feminism. Mainstream Indian novelist should judge and rejudge the place of adivasi women, her matriarchy in a male-dominated society and her subjugation during colonialism, postcolonialism and in the contemporary period of new colonization. The relationship of adivasi women to her husband, their family problems could also be a major topic of third world feminism. In this regard Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explores the concept of subaltern women when she opines:

Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the women disappears not into a pristine nothingness but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of “The Third world Women” caught between tradition and modernization... There is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak. (Spivak 306-07)

Indian English fiction writers barely treated the land disposition of adivasi. In the novel *The Princes* when Indian Government wants to build a big dam in Bulwara which is a major adivasi territory in the state of Begwad, adivasi apposed them, because the government was not giving them compensation to migrate from their own land. Adivasi was promised for a better life, but the political victimization of adivasi is a major topic of discourse during their pre-colonial and postcolonial existence in adivasi territory. In the recent scenario, adivasi are forcibly driven out from their native soil without any promises of rehabilitation and without any certainty of compensations. The landlords in the adivasi area are grabbing their lands and turning it into dumping zone by intoxicating them. C. K. Janu has a make a serious comment on this contemporary subjugation of adivasi,

“They would get him drunk on arrack. Only then would be prepared to enter the forest and cut down trees. When one drinks arrack continuously, a stage comes when one cannot live without it.

That is how the overseers make money corrupting their bodies and mind” (Janu: 2004:44).

In Indian English fictions, postcolonial responses deal with the rewriting of history, sociology and political upheavals but the issue like displacement of adivasis hardly takes any place. Kamala Markandeya’s *The Coffer Dam* deals with the theme of displacement where the team of British Engineers with their families comes to adivasi village, they displace adivasi hut and built their own tents there. The western outlook towards adivasi is only as of the jungle. While depicting adivasi as romantic, superstitious, ignorant and uncivilized, the mainstream novelist has presented them from the matriarchic point of view. Female is given much respect in the adivasi family but the modern, urban, elite English writers look uninterested to depict this civilized and splendid side of adivasi. As the adivasi comes in contact with sophisticated city life the subjugation of their women increased. Explaining this point C. K. Janu comments:

What happens among our women is not what happens in civil society. In our case, unity in everything originates from our women. They have something in common that shelters us from meaninglessly adopting the ways of civil society. They have enough resilience in them to stand for what they feel is right even though they may have to suffer a lot for it. It is among our women that our traditions and the ways we dress live on even now. All our struggles have been struggles to establish the ownership rights of the real owners of this land for the right to live on it. (Sengupta: 2015:26)

IV. RESPONSIBILITY OF MAINSTREAM LITERARY CANON TO EXPLORED THE UNEXPLORED VOICES OF SUBJUGATED COMMUNITIES

Postcolonial Indian English novels have given voices to suppressed sections of society. The above-mentioned novel deals with poverty, hunger, famine, subjugation colonial and neocolonial traits but we hardly find that they have given voice to adivasi in their novel but on the other side C. K. Janu, a adivasi activist is well known for her adivasi fight for their land and forest. It seems that the issue of adivasi is not taken seriously by our Indian English fiction writers. Indian English fiction writing seems far away from adivasi reality but regional novel writing is

very convincing about their pathos. Disorientation of Adivasis, marginalization of Adivasis has been depicted authentically by Raja Shekhar Pateti in his volume, *Exploring Fourth World Literature* when he writes:

The struggle for land spearheaded by C. K. Janu was not merely a struggle for land by the landless. In fact, it was the resistance against dispossession. The Adivasis were trying to reclaim land on which they have existed over the millennia. The law passed during the colonial period and subsequently affected a kind of erasure of their existence and declared the land on which they live as 'forest' out by giving that nomenclature appropriated it for a specific purpose and excluded them from it. (Pateti: 1998:279)

Another regional novel, *Kocharethi* deals with the disposition of adivasi from their land. The exploited machinery of landlords has shown with its ugly reality through this novel. This novel is another example which shows a better understanding of adivasi life than the mainstream Indian English fiction writers. In the introduction of this novel, Catherine Thankamma opines:

The novel maps the Adivasis changing perceptions of land and its ownership. Its account that traces the possession and disposition of land, the innocence of a people who did not even have a notion that land was property and that they could be alienated from it. To the Adivasis, the first inhabitants, there was no question of acquiring individual rights over the land. The land was not separable from their sense of collective identity they were one with it and celebrated this union on all rites of passage. (Narayan: 2011: Blurb)

V. CONCLUSION

Disposition and land grabbing of Adivasis are not the modern issues, this is a process which is running down from the period of colonialism. The landlords were the wretched peoples who used to grab the adivasi land with or without their permissions. By taking benefits of adivasi illiteracy or by taking benefit of their helplessness, they were used to grab the land. Gopinath Mohanty, another novelist from Orissa, has presented the striking picture of dispossession of Adivasis in his most celebrated novel *Paraja*. Novels sympathetically deal with adivasi ethos, their customs, and struggle for survival. Mohanty's other novel

Ancestor again deals with adivasi ancestry. Many beliefs, tradition, customs, with their primordial powers have been kept in this novel. Regarding the theme of the novel Bikram Das opines:

The novel *Paraja* is much more than sociological or anthropological documentation. Sukru Jani is not merely the primitive tribesman ensnared by the predator money lender from the city he is also quintessential man, waging heroic but futile war against holistic universe. The choice of the adivasi canvass, whether by accident or design, becomes singularly appropriate to Mohanty's theme; the primeval consciousness of his adivasi protagonists reflects perfectly the situation of the archetypal human being their stark joys and interwoven anguish embody the complexity of the human condition. (Mohanty: 1997:06)

India regional novel writing is much relevant and representative with the reality in the tribal heartland of India. Issues like dispossession, acculturation and dehumanization of tribal and other marginal communities have been represented with poignant observation. Mainstream writers can derive a good inspiration from the writings of Mahashweta Devi and can give voice to the voiceless people of India. Issues of disimpact of colonization, decolonization and globalization can be explained in a very acute manner by the novelist of Indian writing in English

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