

Serfdom of Outcast Women at the Crossroads in Kalyana Rao's *Untouchable Spring*

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Abstract- *Kalyan Rao, is a contemporary Dalit writer, dramatist, and ideologist. His main idea convenes about the outcast (Dalit) and their struggle to earn their identity in society. His first novel was written in Telugu Antarani Vasantam(2000) that is later translated into English as Untouchable Spring (2010) and into Tamil as Theendatha Vasantam (2014). In English, Untouchable Spring depicts the historical documentation of the painful life faced by untouchable outcasts (Dalits) in a narrative style. In the Indian ideology, women are more responsible for caring out all the family duties than men in society, outcast women are trained to be obedient and patient against women suffering in their own families and society. Sometimes they need to torment the brutal behavior of the male chauvinism society which underestimates women's power as comparatively weaker than men and gives no importance to raise up their voice in front of men and society specially in case of outcast women. Women of the same lineage are victims of social discrimination. Some women emancipate their voices and others remain passive in the hope of change. This article deals with the outcast community, especially the women who are humiliated and marginalized due to the cast group they belong.*

Indexed Terms- *Emancipation, Humiliation, Male Chauvinism, Marginalization, Outcry*

I. INTRODUCTION

Dalit life is exploited mainly to gain equal positions in work, shelter, food, education, and social status comparatively. Those people's miserable lifestyles and social evil against them are portrayed in Dalit

literature. Dalit writers brought the women suffering for identity, independence in thoughts, exploration of talents, and becoming society representation that are totally negligible for Indian outcast women which are clearly picturized through these Indian Dalit writers work and narrative style. These outcast people are named as untouchables which means "touch me not" and quite upper cast men and women are named touchable due to their social standards.

The novel *UntouchableSpring* connects seven women characters from different generations on the same lineage which depict them as brave, lovable, devoted wives, responsible and humble, etc. The quality they care about them in a society that never provide freedom to talk and brutally underwent domestic violence, separation, and even being killed cruelly for being outcast women. Women are stronger in mental strength than physically is proved by certain outcast women like Boodevi and Subathra portray as valiant characters in the novel in which they present themselves in a society where women are oppressed and dominated, they raise their voices against injustice ,their families or for their community people. Because their community has been treated like slaves by the upper cast people and segregated as untouchable. They realise their life given to them is to suffer and be submissive of all their rights over to Karnamas's and Reddy's people. Boodevi belongs to the first generation she becomes furious when her niece Yellanna is chased out of the village for moving near the tent of drama crew he is bitterly beaten, humiliated and chased out of the village. It is rightly portrayed as,

coming to know of it, Boodevi was not able to tolerate it. She set out saying she would see the end of them. Elders dissuaded her. People of her age restrained her. then she shouted and

commanded them, 'bring my child back'. She berated the elders, wondering how they could be called elders. (Uma & Sridar, 45)

Boodevi is the first outcast woman to raise her voice in the village meeting of elders which is considered disrespectful to the men in the upper cast society. It is evident through that, "He pulled boodevi by her hair. He fell on her one like one enraged and kept beating"(45). The aggressive men's behavior makes women under their control by beating them by her husband. On the other hand, Subhathra marries Yellanna with the blessing of the elder lady of the family Boodevi, She is not treated like a daughter-in-law but as a daughter who has an affectionate family. As her husband is interested in composing new songs and also an excellent trained urumula dancer. To pursue his passion he leaves behind his family and moves from village to village to showcase his talent ,which makes Subathra take up the family role as head of the family in his absence. She a lonely mother brings up her son and gets married him to the girl whom he is affectionated and her character reflects Subathra towards family. She starts longing for her husband's love and care but only they get united before his death. It is highlighted through,

Subathra was amidst that blood .subhadra was amidst those tears .she picked up the spade next to her. All were watching .she tucked her saree tight between her legs. Everyone was looking at her with wide-open eyes. She swirled the fringe of her saree and tucked it in. She was like the yellow-golden wire glowing in the sun. Eyes were like a burning furnace. She moved forward with the spade(115)...Arun with vengeance...She looked like kali at

Atchireedy's men who were looking wonderstruck at the sunshine over the flowing water dancing on her golden body. (Uma & Sridar, 116)

When upper-class aggression grows on untouchables like hurting till bloodshed is enormous and she raises against it as goddess Kali and stands before them with that attitude of fearing upper cast men.

The next four women characters are not brave like their ancestors they are reminded of silent suffering and immensely thoughtful to fight against untouchability in a new way. As they believe that conversion, revolution, and independence are the pathway to get rid life of torment which is caused by superiors in the society. Sasirekha is the first woman character in the genealogy of untouchables to convert to Christianity along with her husband from upper-cast domination over Mallai and Madiga people. They as immigrants from their place suffer from lack of food, shelter and she along with her family burned alive with other untouchables for inheriting a place of upper cast that resulted in showing their brutality against them. Ruth's character connects with this family through her husband Reuben. She suffers from reminisces about the unbearable pains of their ancestors confronted by the inhuman attitude of superiority in society.

As this novel narrates the struggle of the untouchable through this women's perspective and the first woman to be portrayed as a widow and her loneliness without her man who fills her memory with compassion and love for her ancestors. Additionally, she is the first woman writer and educated daughter in law in Boodevi's family. Mary Suvarta daughter-in-law of Boodevi. Mary Suvarta's life defines the struggle between her life and society. Due her husband belongs to nexalite movement and is killed by policemen which remains a great loss in her married life. She never likes to cover herself with grief but instead to give her contribute to outcast people's life by joining the movement. Her daughter-in-law Ruby carries this legacy on her time. She leaves behind her comfortable and rich lifestyle she leads with her parents but prefer to marry Jessie son of Mary Suvarta dedicate her life to bringing independent and liberal life for the downtrodden outcast.

In contrast, viewing Dalit women's resistance through the prism of representation shows the disconnect between actual experience and present reality. Boodevi, Subhadra, Sasirekha, Ruth, Mary Suvarta, and Ruby are all Outcast women who are confronted the nature of Dalit masculinity gets, resisted with their arms, or persevered in reserved ways to challenge the gender and caste norms of their society.

The obstacles faced by Dalit mothers are evidence of their tenacity and personality, not of their being victimized.

CONCLUSION

The outcast women represent in the novel are subjugated in lot of ways by the dominated upper cast men in the marginalized society. In which they need to empower those women by means of education and liberate them to raise their voices that would evoke the sense of new transformation in their life and they need to understand their potential and generate the best ideal model of women to the next upcoming generations which brings respect and honor on any outcast women.

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