

**“DALIT LIFE IN TELUGU FICTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
SELECTED TEXTS BY DALIT AND NON-DALIT WRITERS”**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the award of Doctor of Philosophy

RATHAN KUMAR NAMTABAD



Centre for Comparative Literature

School of Humanities

University of Hyderabad

Hyderabad- 500046

India

June 2015

**“DALIT LIFE IN TELUGU FICTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
SELECTED TEXTS BY DALIT AND NON-DALIT WRITERS”**

A thesis submitted during 2015 to the University of Hyderabad in partial
fulfillment of the award of a Ph.D. degree in Comparative Literature

by

RATHAN KUMAR NAMTABAD



Centre for Comparative Literature

School of Humanities

University of Hyderabad

(P.O.) Central University, Gachibowli

Hyderabad- 500046

Telangana State

India

June 2015



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Dalit Life in Telugu Fiction: A Comparative Study of Selected Texts by Dalit and Non-Dalit Writers**” submitted by **Mr. Rathan Kumar Namtabad** bearing Regd. No. 10HCPH04 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature is a bonafide work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance which is a plagiarism free thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Signature of the Supervisor

Head
Centre for Comparative Literature

Dean
School of Humanities

DECLARATION

I, Rathan Kumar Namtabad (Reg.No: 10HCPH04), hereby declare that this thesis titled “**Dalit Life in Telugu Fiction: A Comparative Study of Selected Texts by Dalit and Non-Dalit Writers**” and submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Dr. J. Bheemaiah is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in Shodganga / INFLIBNET.

Date: 30.06.2015

Hyderabad

Rathan Kumar Namtabad

Regd. No: 10HCPH04

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Now, as I try to write an acknowledgement, I look back and count my steps through the course of my research. I see many people who walked along and to whom I owe a great debt and without whose support this thesis would not have been possible. And also those who helped me tread the path and reach my destination.

I thank **Dr. J. Bheemaiah**, my supervisor, for guiding me and shaping my thoughts into a thesis. His understanding and patience added immensely to research experience. He has always been a constant source of inspiration, encouragement and knowledge. I am indebted to him for everything, without which my dissertation would not have been completed.

My thanks are due to Prof. Tutun Mukherjee, Head Centre for Comparative Literature, for her valuable suggestions and encouragement during my M.Phil and Ph.D courses.

I thank my doctoral committee members, Prof. Sudhakar Reddy, who mentored me all these years and Dr. Murali Manohar (Department of English).

I thank Prof. Ansari and Dr. Sowmya Dechamma, for their support and suggestions. I thank Prof. Syed Mujeebuddin for his valuable suggestions.

The friendly and supportive atmosphere in CCL contributed enormously to the outcome of my studies. In this context, I would like to thank all the office staffs of Centre for Comparative Literature, especially, Balraj Anna, Rajini madam and Srisailam.

I thank my beloved friends in the campus, Vamsi, Salma, Kalyan, Bipin, Upendar, Sreedhar, Abu, Viju and Devi for their friendship and love. I thank my seniors Sunkanna for his guidance and encouragement.

My parents, who have taken all the pain in life to educate me and see me firm in the battle of life. I express my gratitude to my family, who encouraged me throughout the course of this thesis. They always stood by me in all my needs. Without their support, I would not have even dreamt of reaching this milestone.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER - I

Introduction	01-09
---------------------	--------------

CHAPTER - II

Telugu Dalit Novel: Evolution and History	10-45
--	--------------

CHAPTER - III

Dalit Life in Dalit Novels	46-72
-----------------------------------	--------------

CHAPTER - IV

Dalit Life in Non-Dalit Novels	73-101
---------------------------------------	---------------

CHAPTER - V

Tracing Comparative Perspectives	102-117
---	----------------

CONCLUSION	118-120
-------------------	----------------

BIBLIOGRAPHY	121-128
---------------------	----------------

GLOSSARY	129-130
-----------------	----------------

Chapter I

Introduction

This thesis titled “Dalit Life in Telugu Fiction: A Comparative Study of Selected Texts by Dalit and Non-Dalit Writers” focuses on the evaluation of Telugu Dalit novel and its history. It also examines Dalit and non-Dalit perspectives with reference to the selected texts. The thesis discusses the issues of caste discrimination in colonial and post-colonial India. Based on social background, the selected writers have been divided into two groups. One is the group of non-Dalit writers who are writers, academicians, poets, journalists and social activists who have studied literature in-depth and are engaged in writing creative works and teaching at various levels like universities, academic institutes. The second category writers are Dalits who are either first generation educated Dalits or the second generation educated Dalits. These writers have fictionalized their lived experiences in their writings. The reason is that they are Dalits by birth and have undergone the trauma, pain, agony, insult and oppression of being Dalits in the Indian hierarchical society. Dalit literature which emanates from the agony and anger of the oppressed sections is deeply embedded in Dalit suffering and predicament Dalit writer, Yendluri Sudhaker, in his introduction to *Mallemoggala Godugu: Madiga Kathalu* says:

In this country, in this state some lives were and are being led like this also.

They were burnt down in flames of untouchability. Pushed away from the land and village, they stagnate in the excommunicated villages from thousands of years. Hunger added untouchability and insult; my people’s lives have ended silently in this prohibited land. This is our culture, these are our experiences

I made this attempt only to tell our lives, suffering and tears.

What is important for me is what I say but not so much as how I say. For me,

Theme is important. It creates its own form and style (1994:4)

Sudhaker writes poetry and fiction. He writes about oppressed lives and suffering people. Keeping in mind, the limitations of the Dalit dialect it is important that the ideas and thoughts must be conveyed quickly. The significant aspect of Dalit writing is the spirit of protest, the emotion of anger that keeps questioning the core function of the established society which is hierarchical in all aspects, whether socio, political cultural and economic. The social issues of Dalits are explored by the non-Dalit writers. In the same ways Dalit writers too have portrayed the Dalit problems with difference. From the viewpoint, the way of portraying the characters appears different. Dalit fiction is characterized by Dalit subjectivity which embodies the protagonist. I argue that the literature written by non-Dalits about the Dalit sensibilities and who wants to take a center stage in the portrayal of Dalit experience will not be the same compared to Dalits. And in this regard this thesis hopes to make a significant addition to Telugu literature and discovering the contribution of both Dalit and non-Dalit writers in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Main focus of this thesis and research is to explore the writers of Dalit and non-Dalit writers and their contribution to Telugu literature. Many writers, poets, and academicians have expressed their humanistic and empathetic point of view in establishing the Dalit literature and main streaming it with the classical literature. Dalits novelists identified with characters deployed in the fiction. They select an incident and fictionalise of, while non-Dalit writers create imaginary characters to represent the Dalit problem. Gurram Jashva the pioneer among modern Telugu writers in his autobiography *Naakatha* (My story) He ridicules the caste Hindu and their religious philosophy when he writes:

Their faith promises rewards in the next life
For good and kind things done in this life
Feed they sugar to hapless ants

Offer they milk to venomous snakes

Yet even the goodness of justice of this faith

Shudders at the very sight of this untouchable. (Jashuva 1996:2)

The caste Hindus use the theory of Karma to justify the caste system and the practice of untouchability. They present themselves as a kind and pious people by feeding snakes and ants. The inhuman nature of caste Hindus as Jashuva tells us, is revealed in their attitude towards the untouchables. The above poem clearly shows the Dalits' struggle towards the importance of their lives rather than Hindus offering food to the animals. The last five decades have seen a shift in the Dalit movement and Dalit assertion. The distinctive nature of the new Dalit writing and the Dalit writers who started producing works after 1980s is worth elaborating. These new generations of writers come from various districts, villages, towns and cities associated with different peasant, youth, Bahujan, Dalit and other cultural organizations and especially with Dalit experience. My main focus of this thesis and research is to explore perspectives of Dalit and non-Dalit writers and their contributions to Telugu Dalit literature. Some attempts have been made in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in this direction.

Many writers, poets, and academicians from both Dalit and non-Dalit background have expressed their humanistic and empathetic point of view in establishing Dalit literature and mainstreaming it with classical literature. Poets contributed much followed by Dalit activists, women writers and women poets. In the beginning of 19th century the Brahmans were the first writers to write about the life and conditions of Dalits in India. Even in Telugu literary field the upper caste writers had their due share for a long time and could only speak about the hierarchy in the Indian caste system. Oppression of any kind is obnoxious and more so in countries that profess to be liberal, secular, and democratic. Dalit a term, in the modern age, takes on wider

connotations though, Dalits are none other than untouchables. Gradually the term is being expanded to Dalit Bahujan which assimilates Shudras too. Bonded labour was one of the crude forms of oppression. Mostly bonded labours were the Dalits and their hard work was exploited. This system was severe during Nizam regime in Telangana state. The evil system continues even today in one form or the other. In most of the villages the Dalits are not allowed to be house maids in the houses of upper castes. This may be less severe in urban areas but still Dalits work on the farms of upper caste at a fixed and meager wages for a certain period. They are deprived of all kinds of opportunities in society.

The ongoing atrocities on Dalits are the living examples of suppression by upper caste people. The lives of Dalits have been economically improved through the reservation system enshrined in the Indian constitution. However they are yet to be socially liberated. Caste genesis is the worst phenomenon in the Indian history in the post and pre Independent India. It prevented a community or a group of people from inter marriages and it conditioned their food habits too. Certain groups were associated with specific occupations. These groups were further identified with caste and among them sub castes too emerged within Dalit and non-Dalit communities in a larger group. The Dalit experience can also be approached as issues. A Dalit studies must be socially relevant and should make some positive contributions to the society. Telugu Dalit literature had made a wide contribution to the Dalits and as well as the literature by juxtaposing the society and the literature connecting it to the real life. Contribution by Dalit writers to Telugu literature is considered as a mile stone. Dalit writers under the Gandhian influence touched upon casteism and untouchability, but imitated mainstream writers in form, style and content and particularly with the nationalistic feeling. Whereas non-Dalit writers were using sympathetic grounds and writing literature highlighting issues which were pertinent only to Dalit issues of

way of living their caste system, the oppression and anguish perpetrated against them by the upper caste Hindus.

Chapter I Introduction discusses objectives of research with a brief focus on every chapter. The thesis is divided into four chapters. **Chapter II** titled “**Telugu Dalit Novel: Evolution and History**” deals with the evolution of the Telugu novel with historical perspectives. It discusses the roots of Dalit writing in Telugu and their origin and acceptance along with the main stream writers and how protest literature was different from Dalit writing and particularly the novel and poetry which came out widely during 20th century and developed itself a canon in Indian literature. The importance of the social movements and the reformers who sacrificed their lives for the sake of Dalits and the fought to prove their identity as Dalits in the post Independent India. In India sometimes Dalit writers are not acknowledged by the scholarly community for their work and social contribution. They are only few writers who received public attention. The first generation of writers depicted caste oppression from a humanist perspective. Gurram Jashuva, Boyi Bhimanna, Unnava Laxminarayana and Mahidhara Rammohan Rao and others were the trend setters for the Dalit writing. The tone of women writers and their political commitment for literary writing and Marxist revolution of post Independent India.

Chapter III titled “**Dalit Life in Dalit Novels**” *Khaki Batukulu*, *Antarani Vasantham* and *Kakka* mainly focuses on how Dalit writers engaged with caste subjective category and quest for identity, representating the Dalit struggle in the novel *Khaki Batukulu*. This chapter even extends up to the contemporary writers who do not come from higher institutions of academia, but writers work as government servants and as daily wage earners. They produced literature from their raw experiences of daily life and treatment of Dalits in the modern society. This chapter not only deals with social condition of Dalit employees but also their lived experiences as working

professionals. Social discrimination against Dalits appears not just by reason of caste but also their social and economic conditions and also their professional levels. Dalits like Malas and Madigas who used nationalism as a tool to write Dalit literature and also colonial modernity creating a space for Dalits. This chapter covers the works of Dalit writers produced till 2000.

Chapter IV titled “**Dalit Life in Non-Dalit Novels**” *Malapalli*, *Sorrajjem Kadi* deals with some of the important Dalit novels of 20th century written by non-Dalit writers. The novels of Unnava Laxminarayana’s *Malapalli*, Sannapu Reddy Venkat Ram Reddy’s *Kadi* and Akkineni Kutumba Rao’s *Sorrajjem* depict the multi-layered forms of social oppression unleashed by the dominant upper caste Non-Dalit writers have begun to write to represent Dalit issues. The Dalit writings of 20th century gave scope to alternative streams of worshipping the Gods and having faith in the religion through Arya Samaj and other different protest platforms during pre Independence and enlightened the people not only in one thought of schools but opening avenues to different streams and schools of thought by giving importance to the human and not caste based religion which has its hierarchical leanings and builds separate rooms for the Dalits. The Dalit intellectual and literary expression got some voice from some non-Dalit writers and the challenging part was the induced ideas of nationalism and the political ideology. The noble ideas and good standards of humanity were discovered in the chapter through various people who contributed to the Dalit cause and writing even though they were out of the Dalit caste fold. The second section of the chapter deals with locating Dalit themes of national reconstruction, cultural renaissance the class struggle and the ideological difference in the non-Dalit novels and the character of the novels. Gandhian passive resistance followed by the active resistance of Marxists. The indifference mindset and world view of the colonial government in making people accepting and changing religion. The chapter concentrates on locating the Mala Madiga caste themes their caste

profession and how were they losing the caste identities and caste related agricultural work with the introduction of the mechanization in agriculture in the post Independent India.

Chapter V titled “**Tracing Comparative Perspective**” This chapter attempts to analyse the similarities and dissimilarities in the representation of Dalit and non-Dalit writers. It would examine how the subjectivity, content, expression and language are used in the portrayal of Dalit social misery both by Dalit and non-Dalit writers. The ideology and social background of the writers of both category are discusses at length. The different regions of Dalit novels having wide range of creative subjects and deals with various other issues like region in Telanagana and Andhra and places like the remote village and city. The language spoken by Dalit communities and issues where non-Dalits do not want to speak about the innate qualities of Dalit writing. The ideological protest and resistance of both the writers in their novels. By comparing the first generation of Dalit writers to the contemporary writers I think I had at least found a small difference in their works which reflects not only their pain and consciousness, but also their engagement with the literature to on par with the mainstream writers and creating space for themselves in order to establish a clear understanding and the need of marginal literary writings. The Dalit writers proved that Dalit experience can also be approached as issues. A discipline must be socially relevant and should make some positive contributions to society. The challenge that Dalit studies have to take up is the issue of backwardness of Dalits and to see the relationship between caste system and Dalit experience. Dalit studies will acquire the status and significance of a discipline when researchers engage themselves in enquiries concerning a thousand questions relating to the Dalit experience of modern social life. Knowledge in itself is valuable but its value increases when it contributes to people’s struggle for a better world. Dalit studies require a methodology. The methodology of social sciences and cultural studies can be

adopted. An interdisciplinary method, combining methods of different disciplines, is in vogue now. We must begin from a broad format, we must be aware of our areas of study and the other subjects and faculties. This chapter presents my concluding arguments that Dalit studies and Dalit literature in Telugu academics is evolving not only as a literature of resistance against dehumanizing and marginalizing forces of society, but also creating its own aesthetics and beauty in itself essentially containing a Dalit backdrop portraying on the one hand the joys and sorrows, the tragic hopes and aspirations, the life values and outlook of Dalit community on the other hand it also records in all shades, the growing awareness of Dalits of their pitiable state and consequent anger, pride and assertion of the community. In a way all Dalit literature is a saga of resistance against the hegemonic forces of Brahmanic literature which pretends to be omniscient and all encompassing while presenting a narrow, biased view of reality.

Work Cited

- Adapa Satyanarayana. *Noorendla Dalitha Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust: 2009.
- Amarnath Prasad & M.B Gaijan Eds. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2012.
- Aruna. *Elli: New Syllabus Literature*. Vijayawada: Nagendra Press, 2001.
- Anand.S. *Touchable Tales: Publishing and Reading Dalit Literature*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2003
- Bharathi, Thummapudi. *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*. New Delhi: Kalpaz, 2008.
- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Chowdary, B. Bhasker. *Jashuva: Jeevitakavitha Prasthanam*. Chittoor: Navata Publications, 1979.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Dharmanna, Kusuma. *Makoddi Nalladorathanamu*. Hyderabad: Sahiti Nidhi, 1973.

Chapter II

Telugu Dalit Novel: Evolution and History

The word ‘Dalit’ comes from the Sanskrit language, which would mean “ground” “suppressed” “crushed” or broken to pieces. It was first used by Jyothi Rao Phule in 19th Century. The recent use of term ‘Dalit’ has figured in the manifesto of the Dalit Panther Movement of the Indian State of Maharashtra published in Bombay in 1973. The Dalit Panthers widely used the term in their manifestation. The manifesto defines Dalits as the members of Schedule Caste, Tribe, Neo-Buddhist, the working people, the landless poor peasants, women and all those who are being exploited politically and economically in the name of religion. Dalit literature is protest literature but all the protest literature is not Dalit literature. There is a difference between Dalit writers and non-Dalit writers writing on Dalits. The difference is not only in ideas but also in experience, content, subject matter style and language. Bama, a Tamil Dalit writer answers the questions like “Should Dalit literature be written by Dalits only?”

Need not be. Dalit consciousness can be illustrated by people from other castes. There is no hard and fast rule. Is there anyone? Anyone can write about anything. But the difference will always remain. Take the example of untouchability only an untouchable would know the pain of being one. Other people can empathize or sympathize. But the agony is always personal and it cannot be the same as something that is reflected or reported about. I don’t think anyone other than a Dalit can expose all the Brahminical lies and insult heaped upon Dalits. Others too can also write about Dalits. What is the harm? But it should always be done remembering the respectability that has been denied to us and we so rightly deserve. Their writing should be rich with the understanding of Dalits.

Otherwise let the Dalits write about themselves. There are some writers who think that only the upper castes can help Dalit come up and not the Dalits and their leaders or writers. (Bama22)

It would be a celebration of the Dalit Era for Dalit Literature with this year ending. The novel *Helavathi* which was the first Dalit novel to be published in 1913 by Tallapragada Suryanarayana Rao marks the centurion of the Dalit novel. Dalit literature always carries the burden of suffering, agony and humiliation. In addition it is encompassed by the profound objective of emancipation of all the oppressed masses. The social message of this novel was that if Hindus did not change their attitude towards the Dalits the latter would not continue as Hindus anymore.

Kukkalakanna takkuvanchu mammu vekkirinichitare
Chakkani pantalu pandistenu challaga tintare
Veetannitini muttinavariki vegate ledandi
Mammula muttagamatramu variki vegata puttunandi
(Jala Rangaswami)

People tease us that we are lesser than dogs
Same people eat merrily our hard labour grown rice
People who eat and touch these all doesn't deserve shame
People who touch us feel blissfully shame (translation mine)

Keeping in view the choice of language Jala Rangaswami journeys through an impersonal but detailed description of Dalit men and women perform ploughing, manuring, sowing, weeding, harvesting, digging wells, and collecting firewood. In this thick description which interweaves

righteous indignation at the downgrading of exacting physical labour and simultaneous pride involved in it.

Origins of Dalit Novel in Telugu

It is discussed in literary circles that prior to the publication of *Sri Rangaraju Charitramu*, Kokkanda Venkataratnam wrote *Mahashwetha*, but it did not appear in a book form. It came out as a serial and was published in a magazine. Kokkanda Venkatatnam who was a nationalist, social reformer and a writer, who wrote *Annavaravarakshetra Mahatyamu* and *Simhachala Kshetra Mahatyam*. His style was in Grandhik and it was very difficult to understand. Novel is been chosen as a means to effect the desired social change. Telugu literature was also given a new direction as the writers began to feel that it was necessary to shape the literary forms to match the contemporary demands put forth by historic situation. The inadequacy of the earlier modes of expression to order the new world experience was evident as they failed to keep pace with the redefined emphasis on society, men, women and freedom. Telugu novel emerged with characteristic force.

Though claimed to be the first novel Kandukuri Veereshalingam Pantulu's *Rajashekara Charitramu*, had hardly anything to do with political ideologies and freedom struggle, but it addressed itself to rouse social conscience against certain social evils. The novel did of course suggest that the social change was simply impossible without a corresponding political change since both were inseparably tied to each other. *Rajashekara Charitramu* (1872-79) the first novel however made it possible for creative writers to handle this literary form with competence. The writers were quick to realize its infinite possibilities and almost limitless power when put at the service of a chosen ideology.

The social climate of the region and the popular upsurge compelled the writers to reflect on different social problems As Prof Alladi Uma and Sridhar claims in the introduction to:

Mahidhara Rammohan Rao's *Swarajyam*, Narahari. GopalaKrishnama Setty's *Sri Rangarajacharitra Sonabayi Parinayamu* published in (1872) which literary historians categorize as a romance and which had therefore suffered critical neglect, is probably the first social novel that directly addresses the problem of caste.

But the first Telugu novel which portrays Dalit issues was *Helavathi* (1913), by Tallapragada Suryanarayana. Apart from *Helavathi* other social novels published in early years of 20th century revolve around the social issues of untouchability caste and religion were *Matrumandiram* (1919) by Venkata parvatheesa kavulu, Unnava Laxminarayana's *Maalapalli* (1922), Acharya Ranganayakudu's *Harijananayakudu*, (1923), Adavi Bapiraju's *Narudu* Dr. Keshava Reddy's *Banisalu*, *Smashanam Dunneru* and *Incredible Goddess*. The writers made a remarkable achievement in not only narrating the novel but also in its style, technique and theme to render the novel a powerful means of service in the cause of social conflicts of the caste hierarchy. There was, however, a spate of historical novels presenting the glory that was India.

The emergence of political novel would examine the ideology in its practical application to life in the contemporary social context. While the historical novel tried to unveil the past the political novel examines the present socio political climate. Political novel presents the social life in all its socio political factors, the force of change in clash with the upholders of caste system and hierarchy of religion and social factors of the time and date. In the beginning of the twentieth century the Telugu novel became popular with clear accent on political struggle in a realistic framework. Mahidhara Ram Mohan Rao's novels depicted the political currents in Andhra

Pradesh especially, defining the part played by the communist party of India in Andhra Pradesh were depicted realistically. The political struggle in Telangana was also portrayed by Ram Mohan Rao in some of his novels, as did Vattikota Alwaru Swami, a novelist from Telangana in his *Prajala Manishi* and *Gangu*.

Georg Lukacs in his book *The Theory of Novel* (1962) claims:

“Of course, there has always been a type of literature passionately engaged in day to day political issues. It will let us hope, continue to exist, and there is no reason why it should not aim at artistic perfection. But it is disastrous to subsume all literature under this head. Writers must be allowed to find their own point of contact with day to day politics, and be allowed to work out suitable means of dealing with it”. (43)

About 1935-36 progressive movement in literature in Andhra Pradesh started on different note and called a halt to the debate about cultural bases for change; critical realism had come into the novel. Kodavatiganti Kutumba Rao a popular novelist who wrote about the middle class life while Gopichand who wrote about the rural folk from the economic point of view. The Marxist formation of the capitalist, the bourgeois and the worker categories in society remembered the earlier debate on indigenous culture and the western influence became relevant in much of the discourses. The Rationalist movement of Tripuraneni Ramaswami Chowdhary paved the way for Marxist progressivism on the one hand and for the Buddhist philosophy and dharma on the other hand. Even the Romantic poets of earlier years like, Pingali and Katuri wrote *Soundaranandam*, a long poem about the story of men, women and love surrendering to the compassion and renunciation of the Buddha. The leader of the Progressive movement was the poet Sri Sri, Srirangam Srinivas Rao whose experimental poems appeared in journals between 1934-38 and

they were published in the book titled. *Mahaprasthanam* in 1940. His poems gave a call to the workers and the downtrodden. Some of them were like war songs and some in western imagist technique some addressed the group, some spoke about the existential anxieties of the youth in a capitalist, colonial exploitative society. Gurram Jashua, a Christian with origins in the untouchable caste, brought out effectively the sufferings of the rural untouchables. He wrote a conventional verse of a high order he was hailed by the conservative poets as one of their group and they publicly honoured him.

The women novelists also had a great impact and contributed much to the Telugu fiction. During 1956-65 Ranganayakamma, Lata, SulochanaRani, Malathi Chendur, Kausalya Devi and others wrote on women's problems. These issues inside and outside home were extensively discussed on patriarchy, caste oppression and feminist issues. There was a hope that society and government would take notice and things would move towards better order. The established writers like Kutumba Rao's *Pancha Kalyani* (Five Women) Mahidhara Ram Mohan Rao's *Kattula Vantenna* (Bridge of Swords) portray the customs and laws that made marriages an ordeal to women. New trends appeared during the year 1966-75. But discontent increased among the writers reflecting the mood of the society. The tone of the women writers like Ranganayakamma and Vasireddy Sitadevi became strident and their political commitment were reflected came out in their novels. Vasireddy Sitadevi portrayed women as politicians while Ranganayakamma pleaded for strong Marxist commitment among women thinking that Marxist revolution alone could solve the problem of women and could address the issues in a tone of questioning.

Telugu Dalit literature entered a significant phase when Dalits began writing about themselves. During the independence movement, Dalit writers under the Gandhian influence, touched upon

casteism and untouchability but imitated main stream writing in form, style and content and particularly written with a nationalistic feeling. Unnava Laxminarayana, a non-Dalit writer, in his novel *Malapalli* depicts Indian men and women as individuals and social representatives of particular place and time and above all as cultural representatives of the spirit of Indian Vedanta all in one in last line of the novel he exhorts,

“Jnana and Karma may not be necessary but one’s attunement with God, through love and surrender to him, is necessary, but one’s attunement with God through love and surrender to him to be accomplished, one has to shed one’s pride, pride of caste, birth, education, learning, wealth and other things. Egoistic pride is the stumbling block for the privileged members of the society. The outcastes are the really privileged in the respect as they have nothing to sustain their egos. They are near to God. They are Harijans”.

(122)

Mahidhara Ram Mohan Rao, a leading novelist regards *Malapalli* as the first political novel because of the significance of which it lies in the fact that it emerged from the popular political movement which was in full swing in those days. He says that political situation and social movement impact the social progress of a given political situation. He says that novel should examine gradual change in social structure in the light of political ideology.

The serious novels that came about in last two decades depicting the lives of the down trodden are less in number. In spite of India being predominantly an agricultural country, they are hardly any novels dealing with the lives of peasantry. It is necessary to maintain in this context the two novels which portray the lives of nomadic tribes called Erukala which is mainly found in parts of Andhra Pradesh, which unfolds the life and habits of the pig rearing community and the

importance of tribal living and livelihood is Dr. Keshava Reddy's *Atadu Adivini Jayinchadu* (1985) and the other is Aruna's *Elli* (1992).

In the first novel the novelist describes how an old man succeeds in recovering his pig that is lost in jungle. The old man's livelihood is provided by his pigsty which was a small place in the jungle for raising his domestic pigs. The writer with his sense of understanding the life and living condition and the only survival of the pig rearing community and his pain when he sees that his pigs were lost in jungle, the old man who goes in its search is excited to see the off springs and is amused by the way the pig struggles to protect the piglets from the fox. He is eventually depressed when the pig loses two of his litters to the fox. The novel powerfully portrays various forms of struggle for survival and made the old man heroic in his struggle to save the piglets and to turn an adverse circumstance into his favour.

Aruna's *Elli* on the other hand depicts the living condition of the Erukala's and the matrix of their familial relationship and appalling conditions in which women live in that community. The novel projects the bitter truth that the lives of the women are worse than those of the pigs. Only with the exception of a few, the Telugu novel's staple subject has been the life of the urban middle class. Since most of the novelists are from this class they write about what they are familiar with. The Telugu Dalit novel in this decade expanded its frontiers in wake of not only the feminist movement, progressive movement, communist movement, but also Dalit movements.

The British term 'subaltern' meaning a low ranking position in the military was adopted by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci to primarily refer to the Italian peasant class, but of late this term has been popularized to include the oppressed classes like the Dalits, socially and

historically repressed tribals, and even marginalized women under the yoke of patriarchy a sort of umbrella term. Equations of power have definitely shifted. Dalit was the object of the study earlier in governmental records or missionary narratives or high literary texts. Dalit is the determining subject now. He is the agent of his own change, the master of his own identity.

In contrast the category Dalit is not a metaphysical construction. It derives its epistemic and political strength from the material and social experience of the community. It is the social construction of the Dalithood which makes it authentic and dynamic rather than passive and rigid. Hence the term Dalit in Gail Omvedt's opinion provides a militant alternative to the Gandhian term harijan. Finally the category harijan given its divine association is inadequate for capturing the specific realities since it also replaces the need for internal critique

Anupama Rao in her book *"The Caste Question"* reminds us and adds, thoughtfully that Dalit democratization refers to a democratic process which recognizes and works for the collective rights and group emancipation of the Dalits. It happened not because of the expansion of the liberal individualism or of any violent subaltern revolution, but because of removing caste stigma that attaches the community. But I think caste is inlaid in a predetermined hierarchy. It is something that one cannot choose, but inherits. Caste matters a lot in everyday life and marriages are negotiated on that basis. It plays a decisive role in elections and as the saying goes 'Indians do not cast their vote but vote their caste'.

Dalit was always a condition created by the upper caste, which made Dalits to struggle against the oppression. Historically it has been willed on one set of people by another. By taking away their land and denying them their language, negating their sense of self the pre eminent condition of ownership was always questioned. The most worst was erasing their memories, refusing them

a place in history or a history of their own. Even as we recount the chilling details of such crimes by man against man we are aware that we have recourse only to the language of victor to narrate them. The life world of Dalit, the aims and experiences of all his belongings, were systematically destroyed by powers that enjoy dominance.

Malayalam Dalit poem *My Soil* by KKS Das, which is published in *The Oxford India Anthology of Malayalam Dalit Writing*, puts forth these ideas in a language that only a poet has access to and which goes:

“Breaking the chest of hell
An ember the flower of thorny plants
Hurl my patrimony over the head of dharmashastras
Breaking the boundary stones of generations in the heart of my father
land. I am born again.” (12)

Victims of marginalization had to seek their own identities to make them heard. The idea of culture is definitely something challenging to define. Perhaps one could just about safely state that culture constitutes the collective ideas that human beings live by, and these cultural values differ from community to community and place to place and are altered certainly from time to time. The situation prevailed in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh for the development of Dalit literature was entirely different. It was revolutions in some places and literature in other places. However, there are certain forces that shape and define human society in historical, political, and ideological terms, and which serve the conditions and manipulate the human lives.

Victims of marginalization who are socially and politically ostracized and alienated from the mainstream culture have to seek their own voice, culture, and identities in order to make them to be heard and taken a note in the main stream literature. Such an attempt will make them in

gaining the position of their own identities towards rediscovery of their own selves. Ali Ahmed Khan in his essay on *Identity Crisis in Maharashtrian Dalit short fictions* argues that Dalit literature is for the most deeply concerned with identity formation while it endeavors to assert the self confidence and self worth of the marginalized and the underprivileged sections. Ganshyam's essay *Voice of Dalits from the Margins* echoes Om Prakash Valmiki's position that the Dalit movement is an anti caste movement and Dalit literature is certainly produced by Dalits while Non-Dalit writer could never echo the true condition of the underprivileged. In Andhra Pradesh the nationalist and pre nationalist Dalit writing had influences with the Harijan which was the outcome of Gandhian influence under the nationalist movement. The Dalit writers mainly imitated the mainstream non-Dalit writers who wrote about Dalits. It will be right to say that Dalit discourse both in literature and political movements gained more strength after Dalits started began to question the mainstream writings and their sudden deviation from the Leftist politics and ideology.

Dalits from time immemorial have been treated as untouchables in India traditionally categorized as not castes, falling outside the hierarchical ladder of the four varna caste system. They are categorized as schedule caste in the constitution adopted in 1950 as schedule caste and schedule tribe. They have been socially subjugated, politically marginalized, economically exploited and deprived of basic human dignity.

Majority of Dalits live in segregated hamlets called Dalitawadas or Veliwadas located on the outskirts of the villages or in urban slums. Most of the Dalits have no access to formal education and have been living below poverty line. According to the traditional caste structure untouchables are not supposed to become literate and educated where as Brahmins have monopoly over the field of education, Sanskrit, Vedas, Priesthood and temple related

management. The caste based division of labour has confined them to professions such as scavenging, toilet cleaning, removing night soil, leatherwork, agriculture and so on. A large men, women and children of these communities in the villages are landless labourers and poor peasants. Though Dalits have been economically exploited for centuries, economic well being alone cannot solve the caste question since it is associated with the question of purity and pollution according to traditional caste ideology. Here it must be pointed out that the history of Dalit movements and Dalit politics can be traced out through social and literary movements. Dalit struggle and Dalit movements and experiences have been documented not by mainstream writers but by Dalit writers for alternative history. This alternative history looks at the mass movement in which Dalits have written about themselves and fought against caste discrimination and subjugation.

In 1930s the first generation educated Dalits announced themselves to be Non-Aryans Mangu Ram in Punjab, Bhagya Reddy Verma in Andhra Pradesh and Kishan Bhansode in Maharashtra began self-respect movements and spread the anti Brahmin ideology across the country. In Andhra Pradesh Bhagya Reddy Verma was called the head of the movement. He declared that Dalits are non-Aryans and they are the sons of the soil. The term Harijan was always contradicted by many Dalit intellectuals during the post-Independence period. This term refers to the oppression experienced by the communities which have been subjugated for centuries and is equally subversive to refute the traditional caste position. Dalit ideologues have been critical of the term harijan as suggested by Gandhi on various counts.

Gopal guru says in his *politics of naming* “The category of harijan cannot be encapsulated within the Dalit category since it is entirely metaphysical. It imputes an element of ‘resigned fate’ to the subject and therefore can render it inactive. Second the term harijan

is an ascribed one since it does not flow from the untouchables own experience. It was artificially imposed on untouchables by Gandhi and those upper caste people who could not genuinely integrate them within their social consciousness despite its divine association. Over all the category of harijans lacks discursive capacity” (16)

Dalit literature is creative and intellectual literary expression which transforms the social realities into various literary genres. It is a recent off shoot of Indian literature and represents an emerging trend in the Indian literary scene. Dalit literature is primarily a social and a human document, which deals with the people who had been socially and economically exploited in India for hundreds of years. Caste based discrimination and atrocities are common phenomenon across India that lead to brutal killings of Dalits by the feudal, antisocial and people from upper caste mostly in villages and small towns where there is political concentration and people who rule and represent from Dalit communities. The severity of violence against Dalits and its aftermath are beyond any human comprehension. Bojja Tarakam, Katti Padma Rao, Sparatacus, Keshava Reddy Ranganayakamma Aruna, Boya Jangiah and Kalyan Rao wrote against the various forms of atrocities on Dalits.

In 1980s and 1990s, Dalit writers and critics unsettled the consensus on the possible course of social transformation based on Marxist politics of class. The “natural” and the “common sense” meanings of the terms like “caste” “casteism” “caste perspective” and castelessness changed, and new meanings were attached in public debates in the wake of pro-Mandal agitations and the rise of Dalit and caste organizations which became the powerful centers of expression against atrocities on Dalits. In an article in the *Economic and Political Weekly* in 1994, eminent social scientist, Rajani Kothari makes this insightful observation about the politics of caste “ For long, consciousness of caste was the preserve of upper Brahmanical upper caste. Today something

different is happening; the very sufferers from the system including the caste system are invoking caste identity and claims” (441).

Left modernist resolutions of caste politics are pushed into a crisis with the rise of Dalit politics of caste in the 1980s and 1990s. Dalit critics problematize the representational categories of the left. They mark terms like “common man” “oppressed caste” as equivalent to upper caste middle class poor (Ramulu “Bahujana”¹⁰). They redefine the oppressed sections as SCs, ST and minorities. Justice V.R Krishna Iyer in an article titled *Social Justice to Dalits* says that, one of the greater stumbling blocks in the path of establishing social and economic democracy is the caste system. Caste is hierarchical system in which distances are rigidly maintained through endogamy, pollution and a pervasive influence on all aspects of life from cradle to grave and it is one of the central concerns in social, political and cultural sphere of our country today. As a matter of fact, since the implementation of Mandal commission recommendations in 1990, there has been a rapid polarization of society into lower and upper caste and issues related to the caste have become central to the agenda of countries major political parties.

There has also been a big debate on caste and its interpretation in literature. It has been an issue whether the writers belonging to upper caste, realistically depict the problem of Dalits or not. In this processes there has been a discussion with the Dalit spectrum whether “upper caste” writers portray Dalits as realistic or not. Indo-Anglian novelists have also been aware of the problem of caste in Indian society. In *Hindupore*, a novel published in 1909, SM Mitra, the author observed,

“In India caste is everything” and praised one of his character’s “subtle Hindu intellects” which was the result of centuries of strict caste rules. This preference for the strict caste rules gradually gave way through political development. A study of Indo Anglian novels

gives us an insight into the changing middle class consciousness with reference to the problem of untouchability and related subjects. (54)

In Andhra Pradesh much earlier than Gurram Joshua, some of the upper caste writers delineated the problems of Dalits in their work. Their approach came out of their upbringing attitude. As Haragopal says,

an early twentieth century Telugu poem described India as beautiful cow, the Hindus as its calve, and the white man as the exploiter milking the cow by forcibly closing the mouth of the calves. This Hinduistic and integrationist tendency can be seen clearly in the Telugu novels with upper caste hierarchical ideologies. (12)

Malapalle (MalaGhetto) Unnava Laxminarayana describes the social and economic effects of commercialization in the delta region and the response of Dalits to these issues. Agricultural labourers are depicted as realizing the manipulative potential of the new wages system in eroding real wages, coercion, preventing cattle from grazing on private lands, beating of Dalits and the eviction of poor peasants from their lands are shown along with major crisis of traditional cultural values. Harogopal rightly says

“The main reason presented for the absence of class consciousness is the hegemony of the Hindu world view conditioning the consciousness of the Harijans. This prevents them revolting.” (22)

This theme is presented through a character who finds several philosophical explanation for their degenerating living conditions of his eldest who son opts for Gandhian model of resistance which broadly fits the Hindu philosophy of action. He joins the *Panchama* movement launched by the scheduled castes and attempts to organize his caste people. But the landlord who smells the potential of the movement violently kills him. This indicates not only the structural

constraints in which the poor Harijan was locked but the cobweb of consciousness that permitted them little concerted and organized action.

Harijana Nayakudu (Harijan Leader) written by N.G Ranga and published in 1933 reflected the ideological positions of the peasant leader. This hero is a harijan social reformer who agitates on various issues opposing the violence against and abuse of Dalits organizing inter caste marriages, establishing schools, fighting for entry into\ temples and use of public wells. Dalits are depicted as allying with Kamma peasants in contrast with the Kamma landlords who do not soil their hands. Haragopal, as a Marxist, critiques the reformist (integrationist) consciousness depicted Dalits falling prey to the themes of class hegemony and change of heart, in accepting their status as Hindus. But whatever the Marxist did not recognize and it is striking that even in 1980s and 1990s Marxist throughout India continued to refer to Dalits as Harijans and it was clearly understood that in 1920s and 1930s militant Dalits were thoroughly rejecting both the Panchama and Harijan identity and were organizing themselves as Adiandhras.

The struggle initiated by then Dalits for self-identity and respect was under different labels of organization. The term Adiandhra arose in the post 1917 period when Dalits all over the south, influenced by the non –Aryan themes of the Dravidian movements were identifying themselves as Adi-Dravidians and Adi-Karnatakas original sons of soil. For coastal Andhra the decisive year was 1917. At this time the reformer Guduru Ramchandra Rao called a conference in Vijaywada which was labeled as ‘First Provincial Panchama Mahajana Sabha’ with his protégé Sundru Venkaiah as chairman of the reception committee, but on the evening of the first day, its president Reddy Verma, argued that the term

“Panchama was found nowhere in puranas or other Hindu scriptures and that the so called Panchams were original sons of soil and they were the rulers of the country”. (22)

The delegates then rejected this term and constituted themselves as the ‘First Andhra Mahajana Sabha’. At the time of this conference caste tension showed up in fact, delegates had trouble to get accommodation in the town and for the three days of the conference the well known Kanakadurga temple was closed for the fear of attempted entry.

After this Adi Andhra conferences were held practically every year at Gudivada in 1921 with Bhagya Reddy Verma and Sundra Venkaiah again presiding in 1922 with Bhagya Reddy Verma and Devendrudu at Eluru in 1924 with Kusuma Venkatramaiah and Muttaki Venkateshwarlu at Ananthapur in 1925, this time a resolution was asked for the Untouchables to use water from the common wells at Venkatagiri in Nellore district Bhagya Reddy Verma with Gottimukkala Venkanna once more met at Vijaywada in 1926 with Prattipati Adinarayana and Vemula Kukayya.

But the very holding of conferences throughout the districts indicates a broad rural base to the movement. According to 1931 census 838000 were listed themselves as ‘Malas’ 665000 as ‘Adi Andhras’ and 612000 as ‘Madigas’ in Madras presidency. The Adiandhra consciousness and broad ideology of anatomy became a significant social force in Andhra Pradesh even while much of the mass based Telugu consciousness was taking on a Hindu coloring and an acceptance of Brahmanism.

Hyderabad reminds us of a different struggle of Dalits against caste Hindus and also Muslims. The autocratic Nizam’s regime also effect repressed the Dalits. Dalits faced pressure on both the sides, either to identify themselves as Hindus or with Muslims. It was clear that the Dalit leaders

split into two groups. One group supported the Muslim regime and the other Hindus. In some way there was closeness in Dalit Muslim relation in Hyderabad, yet it was characterized by ambiguity. According to a Dalit activist “Dalit colony is the place of Muslim in-laws meaning that Muslims took wives and girls from Dalit community. But this was unequal relationship. In the devadasis customs among Malas and Madigas the Basavasis or Matangis formed relation with affluent or noble Muslims in Hyderabad itself, and when the Dalit reformers moved to stop the custom in 1920s, it created Muslim antagonism. Muslims were always after our girls, was a Dalit complaint. The closeness had a clear element of sexual exploitation in it, though Muslims did not observe untouchability. It was symbolized with Hyderabad itself. A Dalit girl (Bhagyamma or Hyder Ali) was said to have been brought into the harems of the founding prince, while other exploited sections identified both Hindus and Muslims as oppressors, and still others were led into the Hindu fold, there was some Dalit attraction to Muslim culture in Hyderabad. The period between 1920 and 1940 saw a clear split in Hyderabad Dalit community on this issue.

In this narrow and communalized frame work, a small but vigorous Dalit movement developed after 1910 based among Hyderabad Malas. The particular movement has the advantage of having its organizational history thoroughly documented by a later activist P.R Venkataswamy an activist. Dalit middle class began to enter social life. The radicalization among Dalits throughout South India brought with its identification with the “Adi’ ideology.

Dalit politics was marked by intensive competitive struggle during 1920s. These were primarily between Arigay Ramaswamy and Bhagya Reddy Verma, ‘Adi Hindu’ organizations reformed caste panchayats with occasional physical confrontation and fights between the factions during 1930s. Similar battles took place between B.S Venkat Rao and Arigay Ramaswamy and later

between Venkat Rao and Subbaiah, while there were ideological political differences embodied in these disputes, the personal competition for leadership is striking evidence. Hyderabad leaders were not able to organize any mass movements actively.

During 1930s Ambedkar movement was to attain some significant mass base in Marathi speaking regions of the stat, while the communist won a foothold in rural Telugu districts using some of the same issues the Ambedkarites were using in other terminology opposition to Vethbegar and land for the landless. But the Telugu speaking Dalit leadership appeared aloof from this, when they went as Dalits to the rural areas in the 1940s. They most often went to Marathwad and there they had to speak the language of Ambedkarism, they had little organic connection of their own. Perhaps because of this for all the initial impulse towards an autonomous Dalit identity. In practical political terms, the main Dalit organizations and leaders of Hyderabad were to be divided in later years between Hindu (Congressite) and Muslim (ProNizam) subjects.

Even though Dalit movement has emerged in different forms in Andhra Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh Dalit Mahasabha was officially formed in 1985 and a large number of Dalit writers, intellectuals, educators and activists came out into as powerful Dalit force after the Karamchedu carnage.

Katti Padma Rao, Satyamurthy, Kalakaluri Enoch, Boyi Bhemanna, Boyi Jangaiah, Madduri Nageshbabu, Pydi Teresh Babu, Laxmi Narsaiah Nanumasa Swamy, D.S Ramulu, Kancha Iliiah, Gaddar, Masterji and Yendluri Sudhakar are the prominent writers. The Dalit writers who are identified with the movement have tried to show how Telugu literature by and large ignored the plight of Dalits and instead focused on upper caste minority of the society. Sharath Chandra Mukthiboda in his article “What is Dalit literature” says,

Dalit literature is the literature produced by Dalit consciousness. Human freedom is the human freedom is the inspiration behind it. That is its implied value. The nature of this literature consists in a rebellion against the suppression and humiliation suffered by the Dalits and even at the present in the framework of Varna system. As Dalits sensibilities seeks to bring about compatible changes in the social consciousness it is rebellious as well as fundamentally optimistic and revolutionary” Dalit literature is closely associated with hopes for freedom of a group of people who as untouchables are victims of social economic and cultural inequality. Their literature is characterized by a feeling of a rebellion against the establishment of negativity and scientificity. (16)

The Dalit writers have pointed out that the caste questions has been distorted and suppressed by upper caste writers and so called intellectuals. They therefore decided that they would speak out against caste oppression which continued even in the present. Further they have decided that they would write about the history and culture of their people. The main argument of Dalit writers is that Dalits should write their own experience in a language that is spoken by Dalits.

Intellectuals belonging to different social background contributed to the emergence of Dalit movement and Dalit literature is initiated by different persons belonging to different caste in Andhra Pradesh Kancha Ilaiah deconstructs the Marxist notions as saying “The people who come from Dalitwada are not people In this, there should be some Brahmins, Reddys, and Kammas who are poor or have come in the name of poor. Then only they give a certificate that there are people.” The categories of caste were consolidated in the colonial period through classification, census and other modern processes of enumeration and it is re-inscribing itself in modern politics and economy. This modern reformation of caste emerged as a challenge to Telugu literature after 1980s, during this period the two important incidents of Karamchedu and

Chunduru took place and these two incidents restructured the content of political and Dalit discourse in Andhra Pradesh. Karamchedu is a point of departure, Dalits especially in Andhra region have expressed themselves violently in the anti caste revolutions and started writing literature and slowly the caste society which was compartmentalized began to break. Dalit communists and rationalists started anti caste revolutionaries and in the meetings across the state they started raising their voice and questioning the Brahminical literature and the rights of the Dalit communities across the state. All political parties since then began to undergo metamorphosis in terms of its very political discourse and writings in literature produced by the Dalits. The term ‘Dalit’ had acquired a definite place in every political party’s agenda Karamchedu broke the silence. In the areas of culture, literature, and Dalit politics also began to break Brahminical hierarchies and started questioning the reason. The poet Challapalli Swarooparani observed that ‘

There was literature portraying the theme of caste before Karamchedu happened in 1985. But this literature is reformist both in its form and content. The Karamchedu gave us a series of “resistance poets” Nearly hundred Dalit writers, she pointed out, took up pens. That writing continued from the time of massacre until 2000. (22)

Karamchedu brought to the fore front not only literary assertion but also a series of related aspects of caste question the gross under representation of SC and STs in the highest public offices and in the leadership of political parties of the country, the legal recognition of the caste forms of violence associated with the role of caste in the electoral domain, universities and media. Karamchedu incident broke the silence and forced the revolutionary poet to write his historic song “Dalitha Pululamma. Are Karamchedu bhooswamula Toti Kale badi Nilabadi

Poruchesina Dalitha Pululamma” Dalit tigers, the tigers that fought Karamchedu land lords by standing up and facing them.

Dalit writers and critics have also discovered buried Dalit figures like Gurram Jashua and Kusuma Dharmanna to depict the oppression of Dalit subjectivities in Telugu Dalit literature. Both Jashua and Kusuma Dharmanna including the scholars of colonial Andhra were discovered after 1970s as precursors of Dalit literature. After 1970s and 1980s Dalit writers, novelists, essayists’ poets and many other intellectuals have broken consensus on Brahmanical, classical literature and simultaneously problematised the Marxist categories of “class” “new democratic revolution”. Oppression theories had become the only way to bring new discourse in Telugu Dalit literature.

It is relevant to mention here that left critics had noticed class inequalities and exclusions in their descriptions of literature life and especially movements in modern Telugu literature in 1940s and 1950s. B.S Ramulu, a contemporary Dalit Bahujan critic and novelist criticizes the project of left modern culture, as it remained a culture of the middle class youth influenced by communist movement. He also draws our attention to criticism of the progressive literary movement and describes the progressive writers as one who accepts materialism and fights along with the oppressed people side by side. He quotes a comment by a senior member of *Abhyuda Rachitala Sangam* (ARASAM) about workers and peasants writing about their life “...simply narrating their own problems is not literature...” and “When experience coupled with intelligence then only there will be a base for literature”.

The 1980s and 1990s are often described as the decade of feminism and Dalit literary movements in modern Telugu literary history. The Dalit literary movement which emerged in the

context of massacres of Dalits in 1980s raised several new questions such as Brahminical nature of modern Telugu literature, the failure of the left to conceptualize and critique caste inequality, the dominance of Brahmanical upper caste in the intellectual domain and so on. It resurrected its own literary traditions by rediscovering buried Dalit figures and the Dalit life represented in Telugu literature.

In 1993, B.S.Ramulu contested the reading of Gurujada's *Kanyasulkam* as a text representing "modernization" (*Kanyasulkam Ippudela*) He raises a question "How does one read *Kanyasulkam* today?" This question and the subsequent debate in Telugu public sphere generated a serious controversy. Many of the progressive revolutionary writers were angry and upset with the criticism against Gurujada's *Kanyasulkam*. Ramulu asks the Telugu critics to analyse the specificity of "life" as it is represented in the play, and to mark the community that was sought to be modernised in *Kanyasulkam*. He argues that "...starting from Kandukuri and Gurajada to Vishwanatha Satyanarayana, Koku, Chalam, Sri Sri we need to ask,

Whose life did they portray and for whom? Clearly Brahmin life portrayed for Brahmins. It was designed to enable the transformation of Brahmins from a feudal setup to a family system, and then to a capitalist development. This was called middle class life till yesterday. Whose middle class life is this? It is a middle class life related to the transformation of the identity of a feudal Brahmin system to a Capitalist Marx Brahmin system for further developments. (68)

The notion of "Brahmin life" is a new one in the discussion of Telugu modern literary culture. He also emphasizes the centrality of Brahmins in the literature and society. They produce a great deal of unease among Dalit writers and poets who broke the notion of hierarchy in their writings.

Velcheru Naryana Rao, a prominent Telugu literary critic and professor of languages and cultures of Asia at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, makes an important argument in a Telugu journal in 2002. He criticizes Dalit poetry in this short critical essay and his argument is applicable to the newly emerged Dalit literary movement as a whole in Telugu. It is important to note that Velcheru, as he is popularly referred to in the Telugu literary circles, is known as a Marxist critic and his *Telugulo Kavitha Viplava Swaroopam* (Poetic Revolution in Telugu) is widely acclaimed.

Velcheru says, “Whatever may be the views or theories that literature purposes and propagates- first it should be literature In fact those who are in literary field will not judge the literary merit based on the views and proposed aims in literature. There is no one in Telugu world today who would assert –You propose whatever politic and social values you want to propose only if your work has literary merit then we recognize it as literature and respect it”. (Velcheru 23) He believes that institution of literature should be autonomous and independent. He insists that

“Literature” is a special kind of knowledge and the special should judge it “what is good poetry” Velchuru argues “should be decided only by poets”. (Sahitayam45)

Criticizing Virasam writers and literary critics as “middle class opportunists” Velcheru says that these writers have no special training and qualification to be called literary persons. Velcheru attributes the distribution of the boundaries of literature to the ineligible persons who entered literary domains and many of these persons are not poets, writers or critics and not all pundits (Velcheru 21). Arguing that there are no standards followed in publishing literary works in Telugu Velcheru points out “they (Telugu poets) publish whatever they write as it is. Those who write books themselves are publishers. Because of this, we do not have the traditions established

separately by the publishing houses” (Sahitayanni 25). These practices in Telugu literature, he says, contributed to the blurring of distinction between literature and society and also between the language of the addressing the problem in society and the language of literary criticism. Therefore literature lost its special status. (16)

Vemula Ellaiah, in an interview says:

“*Our exit from the left was the Beginning of the Dalit writing*” argues that Dalits were under the spell of revolutionary writings during *Abhyuda Rachayithala Sangam* (Progressive Writers Association) and *Viplava Rachayithala Sangam* (Revolutionary Writers Association) he says that these two frontal literary organizations were responsible for the delay in Telugu Dalit writings and I would argue that Dalits rooted in Dalit ethos alone can narrate Dalit experience. The rest of it is fiction and Dalit literature springs from experience identity and memory and Non-Dalit writers can sympathize and write Dalit experience and non-Dalit writings must not be included particularly in Dalit anthologies because the upper caste non-Dalit writers only clamour for popularity.

Dalit literature is always different from mainstream literature and it is not governed by Sanskrit or western literary aesthetics and the main important task of Dalit writings is to break these forms and write in the manner as life really is and Dalit writers must draw their experience from the great resources of Dalit forms and art like *Jambapuramam*, *Sindhuka* and should construct their rich tradition of language, symbols, myths and culture.

The distinctive character of new Dalit writings and the Dalit writers after 1980s is worth elaborating. These new generations of writers come from various districts, villages, towns and cities that are associated with different peasant, youth, Bahujan, Dalit and other cultural

organizations and especially with Dalit experience. Every individual is capable of becoming writer and it is important to have the awareness of present and past social environment for the writers and experience the forms of expression and humiliation. The writers who come from Dalit background mostly contributed for differences of class and caste back ground. Similarly, the new kind of writing that focused on village and forest and the agrarian poor and the tribal's was written in Telangana.

The new cultural movement, represented by *Jana Natya Mandali* and its popular balladeer Gaddar, reworked the folk art forms and songs and addressed the vast masses of illiterate people in the villages and towns many artists who joined the cultural organizations were illiterates and poor labourers. The new literary and cultural organization produced new writers and new kind of writing. Mahidhar Ram Mohan Rao writer and novelist say,

“The writers are not able to learn the people’s language as they are living far away from the people. The writer should respond to the thoughts, experiences and the hearts of the workers and peasants. They should learn the language from people with commitment .In fact the only way a writer can acquire proletariat culture and character is by living with the class”. (10)

The emerging Dalit literature in Telugu in 1980s and 1990s and the subaltern public challenging the exclusionary norms of Telugu literature written by non-Dalit writers about Dalits was not a miracle but happen due to various means of protest and the result of upper caste atrocities on Dalits. In the context of atrocities on Dalits and struggle over caste based reservations in the 1980s and 1990s. Dalits organized themselves as a community on a large scale demanding dignity, justice, and equality. Dalit mobilizations reveal the crisis in the modernist project of

nation state. Through these mobilizations a whole set of new group such as Dalits, OBCs and religious minorities appeared in the Telugu Dalit literature. Dalit writers and critics started elaborating new visions of democracy in Telugu literature through mapping the larger structural changes and conceptualizing the shift in the new notion of Dalit writing. The context and the emergence of Dalit awareness and new questions came into the light in 1980s. One among them is the mass killings of Dalits in Andhra Pradesh. Dalits raised their voice when their people were killed as caste groups in massacres in the early 80s and 90s.

(Srinivasulu “Caste Class” and Balagopal Probing (169-174) Dalit commentators always recall the murder of a Dalit youth named Kanchikacharla Kotesu in 1968 in coastal Andhra Kotesu was burnt alive by the upper caste land lords in broad day light. He belongs to a village called Kanchikacharla close to Vijaywada city in Andhra Pradesh. This ghastly incident attracted national and international attention Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram, the well known Dalit leader in the congress, raised the issue in the parliament. Almost all the Dalit writers and poets wrote about these killings and the subsequent protests. The other major incident of upper caste violence on Dalits is Karamchedu massacre in 1985 the dominant Kamma peasant caste land lords killed six Dalit men and raped three Dalit women in broad day light on 17th July 1985 in Karamchedu, a village in Prakasam district in the prosperous coastal Andhra. This particular incident marks the beginning of a series of similar massacres in 1980s and 1990s.

Karamchedu incident lead the large scale protest in the entire Andhra Pradesh and also at the national level. It is not that the Dalits were not discriminated against and humiliated in a day to day life in the villages prior to Karamchedu massacre, but what makes Karamchedu massacre distinct is that the Kamma landlords organized on caste lines and killed Dalits as a caste group. These specific forms of caste violence on a mass scale were a new phenomenon. Karamchedu

led to a national debate on the forms of caste violence and the role of caste in society. The central issue that Dalits raised in their movements against atrocities is self-respect. Dalit intellectuals often described Dalit struggles of the 1980s as struggle for Dalit self respect.

Karamchedu is a turning point in the history of Dalit assertion in Andhra Pradesh. The Dalita Mahasabha was formed in response to this incident of caste violence on 6th November 1985. As K Srinivasulu, a social scientist, points out while the Dalit movement especially in the context of Andhra Pradesh brought forth with clarity was the need to address the question of caste in its specificity, since the unfolding social conflict involved caste specificity: it could not therefore, simply be seen as a class question, although the class dimension were closely related to it. In other words the Dalit movement brought the urgency of addressing the question of caste to the center of political discourse in the state.

The *Dalita Mahasabha* addressed “the question of caste in its specificity.” It organized the Dalit youth and intelligentsia as a distinct social group cutting across political affiliations and foregrounding caste a critical category of social analysis and Ambedkarism as philosophical outlook of the Dalits. Several Ambedkar associations were formed throughout the state, and issues of caste violence and other discriminations were raised in public domain. Dalits continue to register their public protests and agitations against the series of incidents of massacre of Dalits at Neerukonda (1987), Timmasamudram (1990), Chunduru (1991) and so on.

Another important factor is the struggle for reservations. The constitutional provision for providing reservations in education and employment, commenting on the anti- reservation offensive, K Balagopal noted human rights activist says, “there is a little difference between anti reservation agitations and “atrocities on harijans” (185). The centrality of caste both as an

identity of upper caste arrogance and violence and as a indicator of social backwardness of the Backward classes is one of the revelations of the reservation controversy. It is for the first time in the Indian history that the politics of caste is split into two: as the upper caste politics of caste and the oppressed caste (Dalits and Backward Castes) politics of caste. The understanding that caste is pre modern identity and it is on its way out is ruled out as a myth. Caste resurfaced now as a new entity in public discourse and literature.

Yet another significance development was the rediscovery of Ambedkar, “a totally forgotten figure” to use Upendra Baxi’s term by the central government in the 1990s. The Indian government celebrated the birth centenary of Babasaheb Ambedkar in 1991. A series of seminars public functions and discussions were organized on Ambedkar in this period. The Maharashtra government declared the year 1990-91 as the death centenary year of Mahatma Jyothi Rao Phule.

The Maharashtra government published the writings of Dr Ambedkar and Mahtma Phule and these writings were distributed and circulated widely in 1990s. Some of the key texts that emerged in the context in addition to the writings of Dr. Ambedkar and Phule are Kancha Ilaiah’s *Why I am not a Hindu* and Arjun Dangle’s edited collection of Marathi Dalit literature *Poisoned Bread*. I must add that the discovery of Ambedkar and Phule as Indian national icons is in response to the consolidations various regional Dalit movements into a large pan- Indian Dalit movement in the 1980s and 1990s. In the context of Andhra Pradesh it is relevant to suggest here that the Dalit community consisting of intellectual, writers, poets, activists and students formed themselves into a distinct group under the broad category of ‘Dalit’.

K Srinivasulu rightly points out that Dalits as a category represents “a community of oppressed castes with specific experience of being treated as untouchables and being humiliated through

the conscious denial of self respect and honour by caste Hindus”. The concept of Dalit literature was available in the 1970s itself as the Dalit Panther movement of Maharashtra and Marathi Dalit literary movement spread in various states across the country. Masterjee a Dalit singer and an activist established the *Dalit Kalamandali* in 1978. Scheduled Caste Employees Welfare associations and Ambedkar organizations were established in Telangana and Andhra regions and were active in 1970s. During this particular phase the radical left movement popularly known as the naxalite movement spread widely in all realms of social life. The Dalit critic Kalekuri Prasad mentions that the dominant trend at the time of Karamchedu massacre in literature was that of the revolutionary literature of *Virasam* and *Jana Natya Mandali* of Gaddar. (24)

The formation of “Dalitha Rachayitala Kalakarula Medhavula Ikya Vedika” known as Darakame a united forum of Dalit writers intellectuals and artists in 1993 the rise of small journals like *Godavari*, *Keratalu*, *Nalupu*, *Edureeta*, *Ekalavya*, and *Gabbilam* and the formation of *Satya Sodhak* a research centre of Dalit Bahujan intellectuals are some of the significant events that shaped the emergence of Dalit Literature in Andhra Pradesh.

Dalit writing in Telugu, a new category, was posited as an “oppositional” category in the 1990s. The category of modern Telugu literature was defined as revolutionary literature in the 1970s and 1980s. Dalit critics had to contest the constitutive categories of revolutionary literature and its exclusions in order to posit the new category of Dalit writing. The category of revolutionary literature is established as the dominant mode of “modern Telugu literature” by the 1980s. Marking the Navya Samprayada Vadam (neo-classicism) and representing the poets of this school as enemies of progress Dalit critics focused their criticism against the dominant canon of modern Telugu literature represented by Gurujada, Sri Sri, Chalam, Koku Ravisastry and others. Their criticism is occasionally addressed to other liberal and traditional Telugu critics and writers

as well. Dalit writers insisted on the importance of social conditions and recorded case by case by case what they see “as it is existed,” in a dispassionate manner. The writers showed life with reality omitting nothing that is “ugly or painful, and idealizing nothing.”

Documenting social realities was an over-whelming theme in Dalit literature. Both the Dalit forums and small journals shaped the Dalit public more than novels in the 1980s and 90s. One could find many new names of writers and critics in these journals writing about Dalit politics. In the literary domain, Dalit poets and writers formed a number of new publishing forums such as Dalitasana Publications, Kala Publications, Neelagiri Sahiti, Gosangi Prachuranalu, Spruha Sahiti, Ekalavya Publications. Dalit students formed literary forums like Vispotana Madiga Sahitya Vedika and so on. Many of these publishing forums had a very short life, Lokayata Prachuranalu established by Katti Padma Rao and the Hyderabad Book Trust have been consistently publishing Dalit writings and Dalit theoretical works. It is important to note that here the mainstream press and journals slowly began to give importance for publishing critical writings on caste and Dalit politics and also on Dalit literature in the 1990s due to the tremendous pressure from Dalit mobilizations.

The liberal and traditional Telugu critics advanced their argument that modern Telugu literature is a domain of universal values whereas Dalit literature is casteist in character and is associated with narrow political goals. R.S. Sudarshanam, the winner of Sahitya Akademi Award and a reputed literary critic, argues that Dalit literature is a political slogan and it attempts to bring caste politics into literary domain (Satyanarayana *Dalithavada* 16-19). He cites Gurajada's play *Kanyasulkam* which he argues represents “human touch” and therefore, appealed to generations of readers. He rejects the Dalit contention that *Kanyasulkam* is a Brahminical play. Arguing that Dalit characterization of modern Telugu literature as Brahmin literature is wrong, Sudarshanam

suggests that literature represents “essential humanity” (*maunika manaveeyata*). He complains that Dalit literature is spreading hatred against the upper castes (Satyanarayana 18). Several other liberal upper castes critics such as R.Sitarama Rao, Dwa Na Sastry share a similar view. Dwa Na Sastry believes that “Dalitavadulu” (Dalit critics) did not forget caste and they are spreading Brahminical hatred. He suggests that our literary movements should not create gaps among human beings. Similarly, R Sitarama Rao criticises Dalit writers for producing Dalit poetry that would perpetuate the caste system. He believes that Telugu Dalit poetry reflects anti-Brahmin anti-upper caste hatred and it is “Dalit porno poetry” as it employs abusive and obscene language (Satyanarayana 121-124). Framing Dalit literature as “literature of casteism” is a modernist view of caste. The Indian sociologists voiced this view strongly on Mandal controversy in 1991 (Dirks 275-276). In modernist view, Dalit literature foregrounds caste. It is the other universal modern Telugu literature. Therefore, Dalit literature is narrow, sectarian and divisive as it reproduces pre-modern identities of caste. Interestingly, Dalit critics in the course of their struggle, successfully mark, in their writings this modernist view of approach.

The Dalit writers have pointed out that the caste question has been distorted and suppressed by upper caste writers and so called intellectuals. They decided that they would speak out against caste oppression which continues even in the present. Further, they have decided that they would write about the history and culture of their people. The main argument of Dalit writers is that Dalits should write their own literature and language that is the language spoken in villages by the Dalits. Gyanendra Pandey’s criticism of nationalist historiography points out that history is (mis)represented by proclaiming that the Hindu is hegemonic religion of the nation.

Quoting Gramsci Pandey says,

“The history of the subaltern groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic; every trace of independent initiative on the part of subaltern group should therefore be incalculable value for the integral historian... This kind of history can only be dealt with monographically and each monograph requires an immense quantity of material which is hard to collect”. (57)

Gopal Guru one of the profound scholars of caste believes that the reason behind the inter caste conflicts is the upward mobility of Dalits and their voice raised against the hegemony of the upper caste and their social, economic dominance. South Indian Dalits have experienced such rage from upper caste for their resistance towards the upper caste dominance. By examining the various cases of caste conflict, Guru says “that the worst victims of caste violence are upwardly mobile Dalits.”

When the discussion comes about the Telugu Dalit movement in Andhra Pradesh one cannot forget its contribution to the field of Telugu literature. It gave a new dimension and trend in literature after 1980s and most novels retained their charm and aura as Telugu Dalitha Navala as a particular genre for the Dalit literature. Telugu Dalit literature emerged out of friction in religion, political, economic and social fields. Arjun Dangle, a Marathi Dalit writer and thinker says that “the Dalit literature is neither a caste literature nor a literature of vengeance and not a literature which spreads hatred but it is associated with Dalit movement to bring change.

Work Cited:

- Satyanarayana, Adapa. *Noorendla Dalitha Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust: 2009.
- Aloysius, G. *Nationalism without a Nation in India*. Delhi: OUP, 1997
- Aruna. *Ellis: New Syllabus Literature*. Vijawada: Nagendra Press, 2001.
- Anand.S. *Touchable Tales: Publishing and Reading Dalit Literature*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2003
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991.
- Bharathi, Thummapudi. *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*. New Delhi: Kalpaz, 2008.
- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Chowdary, B. Bhasker. *Jashuva: Jeevitakavitha Prasthanam*. Chittoor: Navata Publications, 1979.
- Dangle, Arjun. *Poisoned Bread*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Dharmanna, Kusuma. *Makoddi Nalladorathanamu*. Hyderabad: Sahiti Nidhi, 1973.
- Ilaiah, Kancha. *Why I am not a Hindu*. Hyderabad: Samya, 2005.
- Innaiah, N. *Politics for Power: The role of Caste and Factions in Andhra Pradesh 1880-1980*. Hyderabad: Scientific Services, 1981.
- Jangaiah, Boya. *Dalitha Kathalu*, Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publish House 2011.
- Joshua, Gurram. *Gabbilam: Bat*. Hyderabad: Joshua Foundation, 1998.
- Kamble, Baby. *The Prisons We Broke*. Trans by Maya Pandit. Chennai: Orient Longman, 2008.
- Kanakaiah, *Dalitha Samasyalu*. Hyderabad: Prajasahiti Book House, 2004
- Kalekuri, Prasad. *Dalitha Sahityam*. Vijaywada: Dalitha Shtree Parishat, 1993.

- Krishnaiah. B. Ambedkar *Anantaram Dalitha Udayamala Sahityam*: Savallu. Hyderabad: Society and Education, 2011.
- Kumar Raj. *Dalit Personal Narratives Reading Caste, Nation and Identity*. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swam, 2010.
- Kalyan Rao, G *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajjem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Labab Babu. Talluri. *Madigavari Charitra* Hyderabad: Kusumanjali Prachuranlu, 2001.
- Limbale, Sharan Kumar. *Towards An Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Manohar, Murali. D. *Dalits and their Religions*. New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2010.
- Malapalli: *Triumph of Sangha*. Trans by V.V.B. Rama Rao. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Mallaiah, Kaluva, and Sadanand Sarada.Ed. *Telangana Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra, 2005.
- Margate. Aravind. *Government Brahmana*. (Trans) Dharani Devi Malgatti, Janet Vucinich and N. Subrayanam. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2007.
- Moon Vasant. *Growing Up Untouchables in India: A Dalit Autobiography*. New Delhi: Vistaar, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Early Novels in India*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Menon, Dilip. *The Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2006.
- Michael, S.M. *Dalits in Modern India*. New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1999.
- Nagaraj, D.R. *Flaming Feet: A study of the Dalit Movement*. Bangalore: South Forum Press, 1993.
- Narayana. Reddy Sunki Reddy. *Bahuvachanam: Dalitha Bahujana Kavithvam*. Nalgonda: Nilagiri Sahiti, 1996.

- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalit Visions: The anti caste- movement and the construction of Indian Identity*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1994.
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalits and Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1994
- Prasad, Amarnath. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Sarup and Sons, 2007.
- Padma Rao, Katti. *Dalitha Sahityavadam Samajika Tatvam*. Hyderabad: Lokayata Publications, 2008.
- Pinakapani, *Nippulavagu*. Kurnool: Viplava Rachayitala Sangam, 2001.
- Purushottam. K. *Black Lillies*. New Delhi: Critical Quest, 2013.
- Ramulu B.S. *Telangana Kathakulu Kathana Reethulu*. Hyderabad: Saamajika Tatvika Publications, 2008.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Navala: Puttuka Parinaamam*. Hyderabad: Abyudaya Rachaitala Sangam. 1996.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, *1980 Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003
- Reddy. K. Vishwanath. *Traditions and Trends*. Hyderabad: Prajashakti Book House, 2004.

Chapter III

Dalit Life in Dalit Novels – *Khaki Batukulu, Antarani Vasantham and Kakka*

The aim of the chapter is been to explore how the Dalit writers engage with caste as a subjective category and how they lived and experienced. The study also focused on how the Dalits life mapped the nuanced and unnoticed pains of the Dalits experience of discrimination. Quest for identity is an important aspect of Dalit novels written by Dalits, which represent the struggle of Dalits for social equality and justice. The Dalit novels in general are the narrative history of the Dalits in process of writing history of the Dalits, the writers interrogates the mainstream culture, religion, politics and the bases of exploitation. In this process, the Dalit narratives construct an alternative history by liberally drawing from their pain, culture, language and myth. The Telugu Dalit novels relocating, redefining and reconstructing the Dalit identity demand the legitimacy of the due space in history, culture, literature economy and politics. The Telugu Dalit writers always interrogated the main stream writers and highlighted their pain and agony in different writing styles and themes in the novels written during 1980s.

Many a cuckoo's note goes unheard in forest deep,
Many a musk deer sheds its fragrance on dirt heap
Many a ripple of moon shine dries up on the barren rocks
Many a pearl in bamboo groves breaks
How much luster of pearl
How much wild honey
How much fragrant breeze
How much nature serene
Goes unnoticed and unappreciated

For being born at wrong place. (Jashuva)

Both the progressive and revolutionary literary critics failed to examine the significance of the question of caste identity and untouchable life, the central theme of Jashuva's poetry always questions and hopes that there would be a literature based on equality where there is no untouchability and other forms of social discrimination. In an interview in *The Journal of literature and aesthetics*, with Professor Purushottam and Dr, J. Bheemaiah, contemporary dalit writer Vemula Ellaiah comments that:

“It is a question of diversion from caste to lands. We were diverted from fighting against the upper castes. At a time when we should have been waging struggles against untouchability and caste and for political power. We were lured by the Left with the hope of getting lands, and made us a party to their so called struggle for the lands. Drawing their cadre from the innocent Dalits, the leftist activities grew in Andhra to the extent of waging armed struggle in the thirties and forties ultimately ending in the fiasco of the Left believing in the ballet for the first time in the world. They won the subsequent elections with a thumping majority. They surrendered their struggle in lieu of power. We did not realize that there was a conspiracy of using the Dalits as the cadre, they being at the helm of affairs. Subsequently they got lands and power. And we remained where we had been earlier. It took time for the Dalits to realize this conspiracy, and come out of the jaws of the Left. Our exit from the Left was beginning of the Dalit activities and writing”. (32).

Dalit writers rooted in the Dalit ethos alone can narrate Dalit experience. The rest of it becomes all the fiction says Vemula Ellaiah. As a true experience one must know that Dalit literature springs from Dalit experience, identity and memory I can say that non-Dalit experience cannot be true in interpreting Dalit identity and memory. The Dalit experience is bound to be different from that of the other oppressed sections. The Dalit experience is defined in terms of the fact that they (Dalits) are not only ostracized, but they are constantly made to realize their being ostracized by several means like untouchability, living in peripheries and so on. Telugu Dalit literature written by Dalits always highlighted about social inequities, injustices and indignities flowing from them have been the fate of Dalits in Andhra Pradesh. Dalit have endured them silently through the ages. It is true that violent eruptions of frustration and anger have been rare; however many voices particularly in literary forms, since 1980 have been raised against social inequalities and injustice. It also underlines the deeply felt need to remove these inequities in order to restore dignity to human existence and dignity that has been denied to Dalits.

Marathi dictionary defines the term Dalit as Ground, Broken or reduced to pieces generally. The clearest definition of Dalit in contemporary usage has been given by Gangadhar Pantwane, a professor of Marathi and founder director *Asmitadarsh*. He says:

“To me Dalit is not a caste he is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, Rebirth, Soul and Holy books teaching separatism. Fate and heaven have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution”. (79)

This remark of Pantwane suggests that Dalits reject the main stream tradition, and for Dalit literature low caste man and their sufferings are of prime importance. Another significant aspect

of Dalit literature is the deconstruction of the myths, whose very basis is questioned by the dalit writers. The Dalits treat Ekalavya as their great grand-father. Shambooka another Dalit in *Ramayana* was killed by Rama at the behest of Vasishta just because of his caste. So Dalits worship Shambooka. K.G Satyamurthy (Sivasagar) in his poem *Nadusthunna Charitra* (the present history) writes:

Ekalavya is chopping off Drona's thumb
with an axe.
With s smile on his face,
Shambooka is killing Rama.
Bali is trampling Vamana
With his small feet to hell.
Manu is piercing his eyes with needles,
Cut his tongue,
Pouring lead in his ears
Is tossing and turning in the cemeteries (translation mine)

Literature written with a sympathetic perspective on Dalit life is Dalit literature. Non-Dalits cannot convey through their imagination the caste specific experience of the Dalits. Dalits by virtue of their birth and suffering gives authentic expression to their writing. Sharankumar Limbale discusses conceptualization in his *Dalit Literature and Aesthetic*. He tries to bring out the uniqueness of Dalit literature. Dalit literature is written with the purpose of conveying the anguish and suffering of the Dalits and demands an antidote for it. Its aim is not to teach or preach. It drives its strength through the depiction of hard reality. So the basis for Dalit aesthetics is pain and agony because of social discrimination.

Limbale affirms that a materialistic yard stick must be evolved to adjudge Dalit literature. A balanced, positive, unbiased evaluation of Dalit literature is needed. But whatever be the mode of critique the targeted renaissance of Dalits seems to be only half- way through despite the Telugu Dalit literature after 1980s. The atrocities and massacres perpetrated on Dalits from various quarters of Andhra Pradesh and Telanagana were still going unabated .Kancha Ilaiah reads Dalit history in the Hegelian model which means “ the rational alone is real” but in his formulation, it is Dalit history that is original and primary. He underlines the labour based knowledge of the productive castes as true knowledge, the knowledge of the proletariat transposed. There is no doubt that a language is determined by the thematic demands made by a protest literature. In order to de-hegemonize upper caste logic and their self centeredness, Dalit literature and Dalit realism would be the better suggestion for the caste based writers and caste oriented civilization. The contemporary Telugu Dalit literature evolved as a literary genre from late eighties onwards. Dalit movements and their struggle around Dalit writers particularly, Telugu Dalit writers made them conscious of their subjective positions and in assessing the world around them objectively. The Telugu Dalit literature produced before 1975 was the literature of Dalit sympathizers, and the Dalit literature came out after 1975 particularly in Andhra Pradesh and Telanagana that is quite different from earlier one. Pydi Teresh Bbau, one of the important contemporary Dalit writer in the preface and introduction of his collection of poems *Nishani* along with other Dalit colleagues writes:

“The poet of the Dalit poems is conscious of his own pains and sufferings. The borrowed thing he cannot digest, he has to split the firmly fixed web of the orthodoxy. That’s why whatever is in the hand is the best weapon that is his policy; his art is that where he can use his hand. His miseries are immeasurable even the length of the epic is short to narrate

that and Khanda Kavya (long narrative poem) based on his life's suffering are numerous.

To destroy the every orthodox tradition from the source is his inscription that's why this is not acceptable for the Dalit poetry and the poet to depart from the right path". (12)

In the post independent India, modern state was unable to uphold the promised ideals of good life and better society to the vast number of the oppressed of this country. In the political writings of 1980's, there emerged an upper caste middle class man as a protagonist, sympathetic to the lower classes and he articulates their needs and is seen to be mobilizing the oppressed masses. There are very few writings which talk about Dalits and their life in literature. The protagonist from the non-Dalit literary writing is always from the upper caste groups. They are portrayed as shouldering the responsibilities to reform educated Dalits. This completely lacks knowledge of authentic Dalit experience. These upper caste writers have constraints to perceive the lives of other communities. In later days, the intensified struggle aspiring for the communist ideals too failed to capture the Dalit imagination and the question of caste that remained immune to their discourses. Till the 1980s, the entire Telugu literary discourse centered on the concept of the abstract human being, erosive of all cultural markers like caste, religion, and gender difference.

Khaki Batukulu

The new phase of Dalit writing seems to be more mature in its concern, more conscious of forms and themes. Telugu Dalit novels written in and around 80s and 90s reflect the segregation of Dalits and their lives, experience of violence and insult to their professional and private lives. *Khaki Batukulu* written by Mohan Rao depicts the indifference to the Dalit government

employees and their reluctance to uplift Dalit condition. *Khaki Batukulu* focuses on the Dalit entry into the modern administrative institutions established by the British,

Police department or the department of Home Ministry in Andhra Pradesh is honoured for its daring and courageous attitude and its controlling power over citizens and its stories about the department achievements, honours and history of police action during the violence and its strategies to control violence and crime. These may be the only one sided face of a coin. The trauma and tragedy among the department and within the department especially the employees facing the problems from their officers are not known to everybody and particularly when the employee is a Dalit. The problems and insults faced by the police constables and their ill treatment by their superiors. The protagonist, Prakasham's life closely follows the life of his father who was a veteran and who has experienced all the humiliation meted out to them until emergency. The novel revolves around the story of Rao's late father, Prakash Rao, who retired as head constable and the main theme of the novel is the atrocities perpetrated by lower rung police officers.

Prakasham's different aspects of humiliation and social exclusion at different aspects represent his individual world view. His assertion for the Dalit self in his department proved to be a disaster, which in turn is aimed at proving himself innocent and sincere. He fails many times and his tragic ending brings him nothing but a loss of job and many suspensions, transfers and trails. The emergence of Dalit novel in Telugu is a form of Dalit resistance. It is because; Dalits use this opportunity to assert their identities through their writing. *Khaki Batukulu* portrays the dichotomy between the senior police officers and the officials of the lower rank in their routine duties. Because of his tiredness, Prakasham falls ill and wants to go home for rest. But higher authorities deny him leave availment. It was an endless drudgery of police duty.

“Its, night two my sleeping eyes speaks about my tiredness. It was ten days back when I had a sound sleep since then I was on duty and did not have a sound sleep. When I saw my roster I was not even sleeping three days in a month at home, Prakasham went to the police station and kept his beat-book and wanted to go home. The writer in the station ordered him to come soon and attend by seven o’ clock to take the criminal to the court hearing. When Prakasham went home he felt sad when he met his sick wife His mother urged him to take his wife to the hospital and said that apart from duty did he have domestic responsibility”. (Khaki Batukulu55)

Apart from the duties in the police station, police constables have to do daily chores in the houses of the senior police officers and the most painful and humiliating aspect in the life of the protagonist is his caste humiliation. Caste blocks mobility and ensures social crystallization within specific margins of caste. As Ambedkar put it,

‘caste is a division of labours’ It ensures the hierarchical gradation of jobs, with, invisible, yet clear border lines that may not be crossed by those who do not belong. It is experienced by the Dalits and other marginalized castes as humiliation injustice and violation. In practice however caste comes to life in different ways in different societies. (62)

The most important duties of a police constable is orderly duties at the homes of the senior officers and the duties proposed on them by not only the government but also the pressure of the officers in making them scapegoats. Though it is not uncommon in government departments especially, in police departments he was at a senior police officer’s home. On duty, his heart-beat increases and this proves the bossism and the work culture of the orderly police men. While working with one of the Superintendents of Police, he says,

“It was an evening at the house of SP and the children are playing. We have to serve the ball and see whether the ball does not go out of the court. If it falls out I have to go and get it. We should not even wear shoes or any kind of footwear in front of them. If I take time in getting the ball the children may complain to Sir, If Sir gets angry, he becomes angry with us. Orderly police constable has to even give bath to the dog. One has to fetch water from the well and one has to pour water to the trees, one has to clean the bathrooms and one has to stand and wait for Sir to see the urgent letters”. (Khaki Batukulu 115)

. The reward the department gave him was transfer, harassment and a case against him. All this because he refuses to do those works at the homes of the senior officers. He even fears threats to his life. He says,

“I may be bumped off for sticking to my stand that I have done no wrong. As a constable I have seen it all. As child also I have seen my father’s travails. There is none who sympathizes with us. We are hated by one and all. But do people know what goes behind the scene? It is enslavement of a different kind once you don the uniform. It is this professional slavery and dehumanization in the department that are striking”. (45 Khaki Batukulu)

The varied experiences of caste discrimination form a pattern in Prakasham’s mind. Discrimination and humiliation are seen as a coordinated strategy. They result in helplessness, anger and disillusionment, disempowerment. Thus the Dalit has to constantly confront and surmount the social force that tries to make him feel unwanted, unvalued and worthless. Written on the basis of personal experiences the novelist covers the period between 1940-75. It had many heart rending scenes which would put every citizen feel shameful. There seems no end to his

woes either after completion of his training or probation. Mohan Rao was aware that his transformation from lathi-wielding cop to novelist would not be received well. His immediate superiors served a show cause notice on Rao for violating Rule 13 of APCS (conduct) of 1964 which says:

“No government employee shall, without the previous permission of the government, publish any book which is not purely of a literary, artistic or scientific character. While applying for a permission to publish a book, he shall submit to government a manuscript copy thereof.....”. (*Khaki Batukulu* 55)

Rao contends that his work is purely literary and doesn't violate the rule. He questions the authorities about the plight and conditions of the police constables and particularly the Dalit police Rao says,

“Have those of my IPS ranking superiors, who are engaged in writing taken permission? If not how can there be different rules for different people in the department?”(*Khaki Batukulu*58)

Reading out the rule 13, he says, It is not applicable to him as one from the force can pursue any literary, artistic or scientific endeavor without taking prior permission. He says that a dozen officers including, K Aravind Rao, head of the anti Naxalite Gray hounds unit, haven't taken permission at all. They use the language which is known to them. Prakasham uses the dialect of his people. Therefore, it gets a special attention. All these experiences could come out of writers mind without any alteration because society had fed these qualities to the Dalit writers so the readers have to receive the same language and phraseology which were heaped on Dalits since centuries. In the early days Prakasham was very humble and ardent follower of his officer's

orders. In the later part of the novel Mohan Rao, demands equal treatment of Dalit employees in are merciless towards lower rank employees. . The style of depiction, sequence of content, and the text organization are analysed to reinforce the Dalit assertion for humane treatment. Dalits considered their literature as a weapon to leverage transformation in the social and political institutions of India.

Antarani Vasantham

The denial of knowledge was a crucial part of ideology of the caste system and it was the most elementary formulation in the traditional India. It is because of the traditional exclusion from learning that Dalits choose education as a weapon to be used in the resistance of their rights and demands. *Antarani Vasantham* focuses on the oppressed sections of the society. The novelist goes back to the generation of his people. He depicts the transformation through different stages of cultural life. They get their due respects by organizing themselves as cultural troupes, Christian missionaries helping them in education and charity, Andhra Dalits accepting Christianity and the impact of westernization on Andhra Pradesh villages. The novel is set at is Prakasham district's Enneladinna, Pakkiladinna, Kolladinna, Chintalakunta and Dibbalamitta of Prakasham district with a powerful Marxist leaning the novel portrays the real alternative social movements that took place during 1920 and 1930s. While showing the Gandhian Harijan sevak activities through a critical lens, the novel highlights critique of Gandhi by Periyar's and Ambedkar's and his elite nationalist endeavors to achieve his utopia *Ramarajya*. It also brings into focus the anti caste movement of Jotirao Phule in Maharashtra. Discussion between Ruben and Ramanujam refers to the alternative political initiatives for liberation of untouchables during 1930s.

Ramanujam refers to the 1924 Vaikom Satyagraha for the temple entry of untouchables in which both Gandhi and Periyar took part. Gandhi saw it as an internal matter of the Hindus and therefore deemed it incorrect to launch Satyagraha against caste Hindus. Periyar exposes the double standards of Gandhi. Thus Gandhism is read in the light of Periyar's critique of Gandhi in *Antarani Vasantham*. Kalyan Rao, the writer of the novel, a Dalit Marxist has a critique of Gandhism and his brain child the Harijan Sevak Sangh in *Antarani Vasantham*. He travels with the critique of anti caste movements led by Phule, Periyar and Ambedkar. However, he does not take an Ambedkarite path for abolition of caste and caste based discrimination. He rather leans towards the Naxalite movement and uncritically reposes faith in the Armed Struggle for the liberation of Dalits.

“There is no shame to this country's culture. If at all there is anything that is deceit, conspiracy. Here is no truthfulness in this country. There is only cheating. In this country Vedas, Religion, Marriage, Patience and fraternity are synonyms words for conspiracy and cheating”. (*Antarani Vasantham*130)

Kalyan Rao writes about the Harijan volunteer Venkatadri who shows immense faith in Gandhi and therefore he participates in the procession for temple entry led by members of Harijan Sevak Sangh in Yennaladindi. He is upset with the purificatory ritual of cleaning the temple compounds and steps with cow dung and urine that they (members of Harijan Sevak Sangh) perform after the untouchables enter the temple premises. After this incident, he meets Ruben and Ramanujam and tells them that he would report the incident to Gandhi. Ramanujam tells him that he does not have such illusions about either Gandhi or his *shuddhi* programme. Ramanujam and Ruben discuss at length how the British rule gives a new life to caste system, the Satyashodak Mandal's activities, the Self- Respect Movement in TamilNadu and Periyar's Russian trip, while

Venkatadri listens. Venkatadri is exposed to Ruben and Ramanujam's skepticism. The missionaries opened schools during the nineteenth century and late twentieth century for various political interests. Moreover, colonial modernity produced a space for Dalits to occupy small positions in administration, military and various industries. This processes witnessed wide spread awakening of political consciousness and also lead to conversions among Dalits in order for improvement in their lives. Their egalitarian aspirations also produced several streams of movements against the strange hold of hierarchy, slavery, and feudal exploitation among the upper castes. Many other factors contributed to substantial consciousness among Dalits inspiring them to participate in the contemporary socio political movements.

At the beginning of twentieth century, two major developments induced Dalits to develop their own politics. They are in search of their history and assert their identity; the nature of British response to the rising Indian nationalism changed the context of Dalit resistance after 1910 and particularly after 1920s. In *Antarani Vasantham* Shivaiah becomes Seemonu, the Simon of the Bible, who bears Christ's cross. The symbol of Cross and passion of Christ is represented as symbols of dalit suffering, the burden of caste they are weighed down with centuries. Conversion therefore is a social reformation of the people. For them, the Christ is a dalit God who partakes in their suffering, a suffering healer. Kalyan Rao narrates Dalit experience (Chinnodu's who later becomes Martin) with the white Christian missionary thus:

A white master reached out for his hand. He touched his hand. He put his hand on his shoulder. He touched his shoulder. Till now, since he was born and knew his senses, a Madiga touched him, a Mala touched him, a Brahmin did not. For him, his body was untouchable. A Reddy did not touch him. Even for him it's the same. It's the same for other castes. His body was untouchable. It was so demeaned that the mere touch would

pollute. But the white master touched him. He was not from this village. Not of this place. He does not belong to this soil or this land. He touched him. He touched a Madiga born in this village. He said his body was not an untouchable body. He did not say it in words. He said it with his touch. He stared at the white master for a long time. He stared until the anxiety and restless emotion in his heart came under his control. Staring he shed tears. The white master said that those were Christ's tears. (Antarani Vasantham 142)

Christianity gave Dalits self-respect touchability, entry in churches, education and medical care, a Bible and a God who claims to treat everybody equally irrespective of sex, race or nationality. In *Antarani Vasantham*, Chinnodu and Polamma who become Martin and Saramma after conversions, learn to read and write in the Nellore mission compound. Later Saramma teaches Shashirekha to read and write. However, Dalit Christians did not indulge again in criticizing Christianity. Dalit novels establish religion as a site of the social and political. Dalits conversion to Christianity takes place amidst conditions of caste violence, oppression, untouchability and discrimination. However, they have to face caste Hindus backlash after their conversions. In Andhra Pradesh Dalits began to assert self-respect by refusing to eat dead cattle, they started wearing clean clothes, declared Sunday as a holiday, and got education in the mission schools and so on.

Kalyan Rao notes that the caste Hindus converts like the Brahmins and Christians who occupied the government offices were not subjected to atrocities. Similarly Reddy Christians and Chaudhuri Christians were also exempted. There were atrocities only Mala Christians and Madiga Christians. Kalyan Rao writes:

Conversions of Mala and Madigas into Christianity were taking the shape of a movement. There were incidents where thousands of people were taking baptism in a single day. Atrocities on the converts were also beginning to take place on the other side. Instead of saying atrocities on Christians, it may be apt to say that atrocities were being unleashed on Mala, Madiga Christians. There were no reports about the atrocities on Christian Chaudhuris of the Prakasham districts. There were no reports about atrocities on Reddy Christians of Nellore district. There were no instances of atrocities on Brahmin Christians who got into government jobs. Atrocities were committed only on Malas and Madigas only on the untouchable Christians. (Antarani Vasantham 150)

Writing about the Dalit consciousness Kalyan Rao took every care in moulding his characters. After a serious debate ensued sometimes through literary writing only Malas and Madigas were considered Dalits and views are expressed mostly under the influence of Marxism that liberation of productive forces automatically leads to the solution of caste problem which is considered a super structural phenomenon.

Kakka

Unnava Laxminarayan started writing using the language by 1920 in his *Malapalli*. Following the same tradition Vemula Yellaiah used Telangana dialect and projected the Telangana culture in his novel *Kakka*. Arun'a Elli Nanumasaswamy's *Mohini Kaluva* Mallaiah's *Sambaiah Chaduvu*, Keshava Reddy *Smashanam Dunneru* were the other Dalit novels which followed the style of regional flavor and made Telugu Dalit literature more close to common reader. Projecting Dalit cultural practices along with caste trades and socio economic conditions of the Dalits were projected with a sense of balance by the writer. The life of Telangana Dalits is the only central theme of the novel Dalit literature is different from the main stream literature by non-Dalits Dalit writers from Telangana now want sociological and cultural phenomenon to their writing while mainstream writers project pleasure or beauty as their aesthetics. Dalit writers reject the aesthetics of mainstream literature on the sociological grounds and their caste traditions.

“Dalit writers believe that their literature should be analyzed from a sociological and cultural approach focusing on social raw experiences than on beauty. Rejecting traditional aesthetics, they insist on the need for a new distinct aesthetic for their literature an aesthetic that is life affirming and realistic. In other words, Dalit writers have demanded different yard sticks for the literary appraisal of their works. It is the firm conviction of Dalit writers and critics that if yardsticks change the concept of aesthetics change too”. (Limble19)

An event is something significant that happens in a given space and at a given point of time. The writer responds to an event or events through his or her sensibilities. The greater the sensibility

of the writer, the more intense interaction between the event or events and the resultant literary work carries. In a study on the interaction and the raw experience of the life in literature, literature played a major role in influencing social, cultural, regional and sub regional trends in relations to different genres of literature. The events have both the time and space dimensions. Unless one is familiar with the developments that had been taking place in the agricultural life of Guntur district, its caste hierarchy, the emerging caste conflicts, and the overall influence of nationalism one cannot understand the social dynamics depicted in the novel *Malapalli*. If one is not familiar with the changing nature of middle classes after independence, the bureaucracy, the contractors, upper caste hegemony, middlemen and the corruption, one may not write one's experience in a Dalit novel. After all the interaction between the events Literature mainly depends on the creative urge of the writer. The creative urge is decided by a complex relationship between social contexts, writers experience his literary taste his perceptions and his ideological stance.

In *Kakka*, the Dalit ideological stance of Vemula Ellaiah is reflected in content, language, style and the form of the Dalit novel. *Kakka* is different from all other earlier novels and from those of its time. Unlike the earlier novels. *Kakka* is concerned with the many sided socio-economic political and philosophical problems, untouchability, and rural social relations. Yellaiah wrote *Kakka* in a distinct Telangana dialect spoken in rural Madiga Dalit households. Many speakers found it difficult to understand the language of the self publisher. K Purushottam who is translating the novel says *Kakka* is an “attempt to narrate the un-narratable”, and explains that one of the books striking feature is Yellaiah's diligent avoidance of certain letters that are characteristics of “standard” written Telugu in order to emphasize the need to overcome the non-Dalit features of the language. The main social problem that is depicted in *Kakka* is the

profession attached to the Dalits and their caste. The novel projects Madirkam (madigisation) as an alternative to the predominant upper caste ideology. It also opens up the internal contradiction and violence within the community. The novel comes from the place where revolutionary struggles prominently took place. The writer seems to be uncompromising with radical Dalit identity and indirectly criticizes the prevailing left culture and tries to critically read the left tradition. The Dalit writers may have failed to take the literary, cultural movement further. But, the questions raised through literature are fresh and haunt the political movements of our contemporary times in all possible ways. Even after five decades of India's Independence the majority of Dalit women in Madiga families of Telangana are illiterate. Dalit literature which emanates from the agony and anger of the oppressed sections is deeply embedded in Dalit suffering. Dalits themselves decide what kind of a person is a man or a woman among themselves or by some time taking the matters to the village head or the Madiga head of their communities and women are the most insulted human beings.

Once Ellaiah had visited Kamma's house as usual, Agamaiah noticed him. He thought it's the right time to accuse them of having an illicit affair. Ellaiah called out Rammallaiah, and said,

Look my sister-in-law is a whore; she sleeps with Ellaiah. Go and see it for yourself. He is very much in her house at the moment. He took him to her house, and showed Ellaiah at Kamma's house. 'You have been the chief of the caste, listen to me! We have to decide and settle the matter. Why is he visiting her? Agamaiah brought the matter to the rachabanda, (stone pedestal for the public resolution of the disputes) *Rammallaiah* the chief of the caste, gave them a week's time setting the condition. To settle what kind of a man he's and what kind of a woman she's each one has to choose four representatives for arbitrating the issue. (*Kakka*12)

It may be relevant here to talk about how Dalit women have been portrayed in Telugu Dalit novel. Most of the Indian upper caste male writers are biased towards Dalit women. Dalit women have invariably shown as the victims of the lust of the higher caste men and never as rebels to fight against injustice perpetrated against them. Even in the novels of progressive and Marxist writers especially Dalit writers with Marxist leanings Dalit women are either molested or raped by the upper caste men. Portraying such incidents in their novels, these writers have definitely gained sympathy for the victims but such gestures from the progressive writers are not enough. The author says since these women do not have a permanent source of income they have to depend on other men for their survival. *Kakka* was written in the backdrop of Madiga Dandora movement so we can see that there is too much of internal contradiction and violence within the Dalit community. The writer coming from a revolutionary back ground of Nalgonda district where struggles prominently took place. *Kakka* seems to be uncompromising with the radical Dalit identity and indirectly criticizes the prevailing left culture and tries to critically read the left tradition.

The Madigas of demand for the sarpanch post in the village from the Madiga community. Venkat Reddy with his cunning and clever politics gives the post to Goundla Sayanna who does not qualify to serve as sarpanch. After the tenure the seat of the sarpanch post according to the reservation policy it falls under the female category. It goes to Papi Reddy's wife, Andamma. If there is any educated and progressive females in Madiga community the chances of getting the seat for them was quite sure, because earlier it was Madiga who was sarpanch. (*Kakka* 33)

Apart from the control of their parents, Dalit women also suffered from several other social disabilities, which mostly emanated from the practice of Dalit patriarchy. Some scholars who are

doing research on Dalit communities are divided on the question of Dalit patriarchy. One group of scholars emphasize that Dalit communities are egalitarian. In order to prove their point they cite some of the democratic social arrangements such as equal division of work between Dalit men and women, a Dalit women's right to divorce and remarriage of the widows. But another group of scholars do not accept this. Beating wives and other kinds of domestic violence are so rampant in Dalit families; there definitely exists a patriarchal social order. In the novel *Kakka* the writer clearly says that Dalit women are often looked down upon by their male counterparts. Like the upper caste Hindus the Madigas prefer male children only because they believe that they will supplement in family income by working hard.

Dalits go into Yousuf Miya's cultivable land to get mud for the cooking ceremony of his marriage. Venkat Reddy Patel along with him takes some shudras and attack on Kakka's family. "Mud? Why are you fighting for just some mud from the land? Even if we give a handful of rice to you people it's a sin because you prostitutes will demand the land and say that these lands are yours on any day". (*Kakka*77)

This incident clearly proves that the upper caste patels always attacked the Dalits cultural way of life and were never happy about their Dalit culture and customs which were almost all the same along with the caste Hindus. Dalit protests can be perceived in two ways: first as an ideological effort to counter the hegemony over the original inhabitants through the caste system. In this process, Dalits rebelled against the exploitative character of upper caste Hindus and the institution of caste and expressed their ideological protest by questioning the upper caste landlords in the village. Second their refusal to perform the traditional duties. Since the medieval period, Telugu speaking people of Telangana region and Deccan have witnessed and questioned untouchability. Dalit movement in Telanagana launched a radical movement of Dalits from the

clutches of caste domination and discrimination. In the process which is not only expressive of ideological protest but cultural resistance as well. The basic thrust of this literature was to critique the ideology of Brahminical Hinduism and counter the socio cultural hegemony of upper caste. The counter cultural movement and ideology propagated by the organic Dalit intellectuals was well represented in the literary and cultural traditions, particularly in 1930s and 40s. The first generation of Dalit intellectuals projected the cultural and ideological articulation of Dalit identity and sensibility in literature. The inspiration to this rebellious protest literature was the growing consciousness of Dalits since the early decades of Nizams rule in Telanagana and the Deccan.

“The states provinces and towns have gone into their hands of (rich) patels. With a difference of big robber and small thief, all is robbers. By occupying the lands of Yousuf Miya they have made convenient laws to perpetuate hereditary hold on it” Pakeru tata is the sarpanch of the village but he did not even know that he was a sarpanch. Venkat Reddy manages the sarpanchship so skillfully that Pakeru tata become only a puppet in the hands of the proletariat. (*Kakka*104)

A clear understanding of the social transition of Telugu society can be arrived by the incidents happening in *Kakka*. From the eighties onwards a few novels and short stories have appeared in Telugu literature wherein the exploitation of the poor by the land and money lenders and the resistance of the ryots and coolies leading to the killing of Dalits are portrayed. The image of the landlord gives the impression that he is more a rapist and opportunist than the controller of the productive forces in the village. The rapid survey may not fully help one in assessing the influence of Marxism on Telugu literature comprehensively. But it may help in assessing how

our writers are seriously concerned with understanding of the realities of life from a materialistic point of view.

Keeping the limitations of the language, it is more important that the idea or the thought should be conveyed correctly. The empowerment of Dalit literature and the Dalits language is clearly understood in *Kakka*. The writer has articulated the deep sense of pain and the language spoken in the Telangana State.

Work Cited

- Satyanarayana Adapa. *Noorendla Dalitha Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust: 2009.
- Aruna. *Elli: New Syllabus Literature*. Vijawada: Nagendra Press, 2001.
- Anand.S. *Touchable Tales: Publishing and Reading Dalit Literature*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2003
- Braj.B Kachru. *Language in South Asia*. University of Illinois: 2008.
- Bharathi, Thummapudi. *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*. New Delhi: Kalpaz, 2008.
- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Dangle, Arjun. *Poisoned Bread*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Dharmanna, Kusuma. *Makoddi Nalladorathanamu*. Hyderabad: Sahiti Nidhi, 1973.
- Gopal, Guru. *Dalit Cultural Movement and Dalit Politics in Maharashtra*. Mumbai: Vikas Adhyan Kendra, 1997.
- Ilaiah, Kancha. *Why I am not a Hindu*. Hyderabad: Samya, 2005.
- Innaiah, N. *Politics for Power: The role of Caste and Factions in Andhra Pradesh 1880-1980*. Hyderabad: Scientific Services, 1981.
- Jangaiah, Boya. *Dalitha Kathalu*, Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publish House 2011.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe. *Dr.Ambedkar and Untouchability: Analyzing and fighting Caste*. Delhi: Oreint BlackSwan, 2005.
- Joshua, Gurram. *Gabbilam: Bat*. Hyderabad: Joshua Foundation, 1998.
- Kamble, Baby. *The Prisons We Broke*. Trans by Maya Pandit. Chennai: Orient Long Longman, 2008.
- Kanakaiah, *Dalitha Samasyalu*. Hyderabad: Prajasahiti Book House, 2004
- Kalekuri, Prasad. *Dalitha Sahityam*. Vijaywada: Dalitha Shtree Parishat, 1993.

- Krishnaiah .B. Ambedkar *Anantaram Dalitha Udayamala Sahityam*: Savallu. Hyderabad: Society and Education, 2011.
- Kumar Raj. *Dalit Personal Narratives Reading Caste, Nation and Identity*. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swam, 2010.
- Kalyan Rao, G. *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajjem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Labab Babu. Talluri. *Madigavari Charitra* Hyderabad: Kusumanjali Prachuranlu, 2001.
- Limbale, Sharan Kumar. *Towards An Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Manohar, Murali. D. *Dalits and their Religions*. New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2010.
- Malapalli: *Triumph of Sangha*. Trans by V.V.B. Rama Rao. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Mallaiah, Kaluva, and Sadanand Sarada.Ed. *Telangana Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra, 2005.
- Malgatti. Aravind. *Government Brahamana*. (Trans) Dharani Devi Malgatti, Janet Vucinich and N. Subrayanam. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2007.
- Moon Vasant. *Growing Up Untouchables in India: A Dalit Autobiography*. New Delhi: Vistaar, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Early Novels in India*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Menon, Dilip. *The Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2006.
- Michael, S.M. *Dalits in Modern India*. New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1999.
- Nagaraj, D.R. *Flaming Feet: A study of the Dalit Movement*. Bangalore: South Forum Press, 1993.
- Narayana. Reddy Sunki Reddy. *Bahuvachanam: Dalitha Bahujana Kavithvam*. Nalgonda: Nilagiri Sahiti, 1996.

- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalit Visions: The anti caste- movement and the construction of Indian Identity*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1994.
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalits and Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1994
- Prasad, Amarnath. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Sarup and Sons, 2007.
- Padma Rao, Katti. *Dalitha Sahityavadam Samajika Tatvam*. Hyderabad: Lokayata Publications, 2008.
- Pinakapani, *Nippulavagu*. Kurnool: Viplava Rachayitala Sangam, 2001.
- Purushottam. K. *Black Lillies*. New Delhi: Critical Quest, 2013.
- Ramulu B.S. *Telangana Kathakulu Kathana Reethulu*. Hyderabad: Saamajika Tatvika Publications, 2008.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Navala: Puttuka Parinaamam*. Hyderabad: Abyudaya Rachaitala Sangam. 1996.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Chillara Devvulu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publishing, 1998.
- Ranganayakulu. *Harijana Nayakudu*. Nidubrolu: Thata Mudraaksharasaala, 1993.
- Rao, Anupama. “Who is the Dalit? The Emergence of a New Political Subject” in Manu Bhagwan and Anne Feldhaus. ed. *Claiming Power from Below*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Rajashekar. *Caste: A nation within the Nation*. Bangalore: Books for Change, 2007.
- Rajawat, Mamta. *Encyclopedia of Dalits in India*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2012.
- Ramakrishna Rao, Adapa. *Telugu Navala*. Hyderabad: Yuvabharathi, 1975.
- Rege Sharmila. *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonies*. New Delhi: Zubaan, 2006.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, 1980 *Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003.
- Reddy. K. Vishwanath. *Traditions and Trends*. Hyderabad: Prajashakti Book House, 2004.
- Reddy. K.V.Ramana. *Modern Trends in Telugu Literature*. Hyderabad: AILRC, 1999.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Atanu Adavini Jayinchadu*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1985.

- Reddy, Kesava. *Chivari Gudise*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1993.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Moogavani Pillanagrovi*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1995.
- Rao, Varavara. *Prajalamanishi Oka Parichayam*. Hyderabad: Yuga Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Rao Mohan. *Khaki Batukulu*. Tenali: Pratyusha Publications, 1996.
- Rodrigues, Velerian. “*Untouchability, Filth, and the Public Domain*” in Gopal Guru Eds. *Humiliation: Claims and Context*. New Delhi: OUP, 2009.
- Satyanarayana S.V. Ed. *Dalithavaada Vivadaalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalaandhra, 2000.
- Satyanarayana, A. *Dalits and Upper Caste: Essays in Social History*. Delhi: Kanishka, 2005.
- Sitapati, G.V. *History of Telugu Literature*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1968.
- Srinivasulu.K. *Caste, Class and Social Articulations in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories*. London: Overseas Development Institute, 2002
- Shah, Ganshyam. *Dalit Identity and Politics*. Sage Publications, 2001.
- Shyamala, Gogu. *Nallpoddu Dalita Strila Sahityam*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust, 2003.
- Shyamala, Gogu. *Nallaregatisallu*. Hyderabad: Sabbanda Maisawa Publications, 2006.
- Sarkar, Sumit. *Writing Social History*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Schmitthenner, Peter. *Telugu Resurgence C.P Brown and cultural consolidation in Nineteenth Century South India*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2001.
- Sharma, Ursula. *Caste Concepts in Social Sciences*: Delhi: Viva Books, 2002.
- Sharma, K.L. *Caste and Class in India*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 1994.
- Sujatha Reddy. Mudiganti. *Telangana Tolitaram Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Rohnam Publications, 2002.
- Sudhaker, Yendluri. *Mallemoggala Godugu: Maadiga Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Dandora Prachuranalu, 1999.
- Sudhaker, Yendluri. *Nalla Draksha Pandiri*. Secendrabad: JJ Prachranalu, 2002.
- Srinivas, M.N. *Social Change in Modern India*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswam, 1966.

- Swami. *Gaddaladatandayi*. Ananthapuram: Literary meet Prachuranalu, 1991.
- Uma. Alladi, Suneetha Rani, & Muralimanohar. Eds. *English in the Dalit Context*. New Delhi: Orient Black Swam, 2014
- Uma, Alladi. “Why teach these texts?” in Azagarasan, R. Bruce Bennet, et al Ed. *New Bearings in English Studies: A Festchrift for C.T Indra*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2008.
- Vidmahe, Kathyayani. *Telugu Navala Kathanika Vimarsana Parinamam*. Hyderabad: Charita Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Yagati Chinna Rao, *Andhra Pradesh Dalitha Udyama Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust, 2007.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Kakka*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2000.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Siddhi*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2005.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Mulki*. Nalgonda: Gumpu Sahiti, 2011.
- Zelliot, Eleanor. *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Untouchable Movement*. New Delhi: Bluemoon Books, 2004.

CHAPTER IV

Dalit Life in Non-Dalit Novels – *Malapally, Kadi and Sorrajjem*

In his *Imagined Communities* (1982) Benedict Anderson argues that “nation is a imagined political community” According to him it is imagined because the members of even smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. It is imagined as a community because “regardless of actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship” such tendency can be observed among them as they attempt to make their political national identity. The notion of “belonging” lies at the heart of all communities, real and imagined whether they be those of birth, blood, proximity or of choice. Everyone belongs and a sense of belonging is often crucial to a person’s well being. At the same time we dispute belonging, vociferously. Such disputes can be competitive in the sense of “my community is better than yours” or they can occur when different ideas of belonging intersect and overlap, with different ideas of belonging competing for primacy.

Babu Rao Bhagul in his essay, *Dalit Sahitya*, writes:

“Dalit Sahitya is not a literature of vengeance Dalit Sahitya is not literature which spreads hatred. Dalit Sahitya first promotes man’s greatness and man’s freedom and for that reason it is an historic necessityAnguish, waiting, pronouncements of sorrow alone do not define Dalit literature we want literature, we want literature heroically full of life for the creation of the (new) society”. (12)

Kashibhatta Brahammaya Shastri expressed his opinion in a journal *Vivekachandrika* and told that the new genre which was called as *Vachana Prabandham* till now and to rename it as Navala would be sensible and said:

“*Navanvisheshan lati Gruhanteeti Navala*”

(Newness in writing is nothing but Novel) (translation mine).

In the starting of 19th century, the publishers of literary magazine *Chintamani* understood the importance of the novel and advertised for writing novels and encouraged the readers to contribute. In 1894 Chilakamarthi wrote *Ramachandravijayam* and won prize in *Chintamani* magazine. It was inspired by Kandukuri's *Rajashekara Charitramu*. It was about the life of Brahmins in Konaseema depicted in *Ramachandravijayam* followed by the novel *Ganapathi* by the same writer portraying social and other aspects of the society. Tallapragada's *Helavathi* (1913) and Venkataparvateeshakavulu's *Matrumandiram* (1919), Unnava Lakshmi Naryana's *Malapally* (1922), Adavi Bapiraju's *Narudu* (1946), Dr. Keshava Reddy's *Smashanam Dunneru* (1979), *Incredible Goddesses* (1979) and Illendula Saraswathi's *Nee Banchan Kalmoktha* (1976) were some of the non-Dalits novels that depict the Dalit life in Indian villages when, Gandhi did not even start Harijan movement. This proves that these writers were ahead of Gandhi and his ideology of equality. In the larger context of Dalit literature in India and especially Telugu Dalit literature written by non-Dalits and mainly upper caste writers. Literature was much ahead of dalit writers. Non-Dalit writers projected, portrayed and wrote well on the dalit subjects and the social ostracism which they had under gone for centuries in India in the multi layered system of social oppression, by locating the ultimate victims and also the forms of emancipation, describing victims and processes of victimization. Revolutionary literary movement had a single agenda; it believed that Marxist ideals and armed struggle were the

answer to all the questions and problems. The movement and the literature produced then, spoke only about the class conflict and ideology.

It disregarded caste and gender, members of the revolutionary movement included only educated Dalits and some non-Dalit writers. Non-dalit writers argued that class alone is not the point of division for the society. Revolutionary literary movements did not give many non-Dalit writers to write from the real problems and in-depth knowledge of Dalits and vent out their feelings. Non-Dalit writers also found new voices from Bahujan and other marginal forms of literature new voices and new writers have produced unique literature with new content and new expressions on behalf of dalit voice portraying the other dimensions of caste and the miseries of dalit life and victimizations of their life in different forms and exploiting the themes and narration in different novels in Telugu literature.

Meanwhile from mid 1989 onwards a socio-political journal *Nalupu* (Black) a fortnightly was started with Bojja Tarakam in Andhra Pradesh. Though the editorial board also consisted people belonging to upper caste, but all of them were politically and ideologically sympathetic to Dalit cause. The journal was financed and circulated by Hyderabad Book Trust, a popular organization setup for translating popular and progressive literature from English to Telugu. The argument whether Dalits have to write their own experience or it has to be written by others is not the priority of the chapter. I am exploring the chapter in terms of writing as a genre and particularly the Telugu novels with the dalit themes and dalit consciousness. However one cannot stop or prevent somebody from producing a fine piece of literature and exposing the facts that are in the Indian social structure and I would think that literature would be the right platform for anybody who can expose the facts and create a humane world.

Many Non-Dalit writers both male and female have produced great Telugu literature for the past 134 years of Telugu Novel's birth and its centenary celebrations in Andhra Pradesh. The first Dalit experience and the life of a Dalit was written by Kandukuri Veereshalingm in his novel *Sri Rajashekaracharitra*, even the early novels like Tallapragada's *Helavathi* and other novels like *Matrumandiram* highlighted the plight and the conditions in which the Dalits were living and experiencing the life but, only after 1980 there was a surge and people started debating literature and questioning the tenets of the Indian society and the caste hierarchy and the structure of the social ladder in the society.

Literature became a powerful tool in the hands of educated Indians and creative thinkers and writers started looking the Dalit issues in various dimensions and started debating with the upper caste writers and challenged the Brahmanic hegemony in Telugu literature. Literary historians neglected Dalit novels written parallel to the mainstream novels Kusuma Dharmanna for instance wrote against caste oppression, untouchability and discrimination focusing on Adiandhra, Boyi Bheemanna claimed that the Dalits were descendants of Arundhati and Vashista, Jala Rangaswami denounced the Aryan conquest that enslaved the Dalits, and wrote about the glory of pre-Aryan conquest past and Gurram Jashuva, who declared caste and poverty his enemies was critical of the complaisant and self serving writers who were unmindful of the socio-economic problems existed then in the society.

In the post Independence period some of the main stream writers were attacked and questioned by a group of poets who were all from non-Dalit background but wrote exceedingly well than the mainstream writers. These poets who were named Digambara Kavulu (Naked Poets) attacked every aspect of the Indian caste and society structure re-linking literature to the society. Digambara poets in Telugu free-verse are free from ideological influences. Their concern is

mainly for human spirit. Nagnamuni, Nikhileshwar, Jwalamukhi, Cherabandaraju, Bhairavayya and Mahasvapna these, six poets inspired resurrection of human values in the present decadent society. They emphasized on unmasking the pure and natural conscience. It is visualized as “free from dust dirt and immortal atmosphere” as an ideal for mankind. In this way Digambara free verse, played its role in human upliftment for better society. The poets craved for human values no doubt, in bitter and offensive tone. They dedicated their 1968 anthology to a Dalit boy Kanchikacherla Kotesw who was burnt alive by the upper castes accusing him of theft.

Dalit literature was also supported by strong Marxist followers and Marxist sympathizers, journals like *Arunathara* and *Prajasahiti* were the central organizations and they supported the Dalit cause and literature contributing to the growth of dalit intellectualism and growth of the Dalit academia. Telugu dalit literature has travelled a long way from the early beginning right from tentative half form narrations of life to more advance and standards that match with the mainstream novel writing. Telugu Dalit literature having specific having specific local characteristics of its own flavor and taste and yet have commonalities that make for Pan Indian solidarities possible.

The first thing that we have to get out of our thinking is that dalit is a homogenous category it is a monolith. There are multiple possibilities of dalit writing, by now there are contending voices and alternative perceptions of solutions to various challenges. They are significant commonalities with the literature of oppressed in different corners of the world like Black America, Palestine or Khurdistan, which Dalit literature gains strength from the specific location and experience from which it emerges it certainly gestures the universal canon of the world literatures in every corner of the world.

Locating the Dalit Themes in Non-Dalit Telugu Novels

The God of small thing a Booker prize winning book which brought Arundhati Roy into international limelight, established her as a champion of the Dalits and the down trodden. She has very aptly portrayed the ostentation and the hypocrisy of big Man and small man's tireless efforts to seek an identity in the callous society. The novel shows the transgression of the rules in the world of small thing and big thing, which make the life of small thing miserable and more sinned than sinned against. In one of the interviews to the press, Arundhati Roy is reported to have said:

“Fiction for me has been a way of trying to make sense of the world as I know it. It is locked very close to me.... If I had to put it very simply, it is about trying to make the connections between the very smallest things and the very biggest things and to see how they fit together”. (Roy 5)

Telugu Dalit literature has emerged as a literature against dehumanizing and marginalizing forces of the society which tend to suppress and make their identity, their way of living and depicts their strengths which have helped them survive centuries of brazen exploitation. Telugu Dalit literature is path breaking in the sense that it gave voices to the hitherto silent sections of the society through a presentation of their side of the story by rewriting the history from the vantage point of the sufferer. Containing essentially a dalit backdrop, Telugu Dalit literature portrays on the one hand the joys and sorrows, the tragic hopes and aspirations, the life values and outlook of the dalit community. There is long past in creating dalit consciousness in Telugu literature. Perhaps the exploitation of life.

Rural Life and Nationalism as Theme in Unnava Lakshminarayana's *Malapally* (1922)

Malapally is a great novel. It is not great just because of its length which runs over six hundred pages in print. It is not great because it belongs to our past. It is great because it is a classic in Telugu fiction in many respects. *Malapally* was the first major novel, which may be called an epic, as it depicts the emerging new economic, political and social dimensions of the early 20th Century in the rural setting of Andhra Pradesh. It is a novel written by a non-Dalit writer about the dalit experience and oppression and the caste rigidity.

The writer portrays Harijan section of Indian society in contrast with the land upper caste gentry. Also, the different social strata, castes and realistic rural life sketches were vividly created for the situation then prevailed and to induce the spirit of Nationalism and the spirit of freedom. It has all the qualities of a socio-political and caste based differences especially in Indian villages during Independence struggle. There was a long past in the creation of Dalit consciousness in Telugu literature. Exploitation of life, reaction, pleading, protest, reform, progress and revolution are the causes in the creation of Telugu Dalit literature. *Malapally* which fearlessly denounces various facets of British administration was banned twice by the British authorities.

The novel clearly states Unnava's legacy of noble ideals and high standards. The first and second part of the novel were published in 1922 and the book was banned in March 1923 based on a note prepared by the official Telugu translator to the government who had opined that socio-political novel not only denounces unsparingly the system of criminal settlements, Police, Jails, Courts etc, but also jealously preaches at some length the principles of Bolshevism and the creed of non-cooperation in such a manner and in such language as would assuredly bring government into hatred and contempt in the country.

Renowned Telugu scholar C.R Reddy and his interest and intervention with the help of the Legislative Council members the ban was lifted after the author had agreed to revise some portions of the novel even as he maintained that even it was not wrong to preach Communism or to encourage the union of labour capital and refused to delete a poem. It was banned for the second time when the revised edition was published in 1935. On the grounds that there were still some objectionable portions wherein capitalists and bureaucrats are made out to be the tyrants and there were rebellious statements about the Police Magistrate, and Jail departments.

Non-Dalits have written about the dalit experience either in full swing or as a matter of passing issue. In that case Unnava's *Malapally* though written in early stages of novel's inception it had all the style and the essential element of dalit experience. In this novel Ramadas, the protagonist is a dalit and the story revolves around a dalit and a dalit colony Ramadas was happy with a small piece of agricultural land and animals. His son Venkatadass is presented as a member of the Progressive Association, He works for the poor and kills the rich and distributes the wealth among them. Though it is judged by the critics as a Dalit novel published even before Dalit movements started. Dalit activists like Bojja Tharakam refuses to see it as one of the first dalit writing and he states that this novel did not present *Malapally* in a realistic way. Dalit literature is an ideological discourse which provides literary and intellectual expressions to the depressed classes. It is the literary depiction of the marginalized groups with sympathetic perspectives. Sharan Kumar Limbale rightly defines dalit literature as "precisely that literature which artistically portrays the sorrows, tribulations, slavery, degradation, and poverty endured by the Dalits".

Malapally is different from all other earlier novels and from those of its time around hundred years back and the novelist being a non-Dalit and a nationalist in outlook mainly concentrated on

socio economic, political, philosophical problems like untouchability, rural social relations, tensions, poverty, religion, conversions, settlements, freedom struggle and jails. The novel was a significant trendsetter in those times during the post Independence period.

Locating the Themes of National Reconstruction and Cultural Renaissance

Dalit literature has two streams one is Gandhian path and the other is Ambedkarite outlook. Dalit literature emerged and sustained only in Indian national scope. Marxist ideology, in fact, took note of Dalits and extended support in certain stages of class struggle; but it could not concentrate on the cause of Dalits only as it had other national and international issues and commitments. Moreover, there were ideological restrictions and practical compulsions in tackling the problems. As a resident of Malapally Sangadasu works as a coolie on the farm land of Chowdharyyya, literate and well read Sangadasu also attends talks by travelling scholars on religious issues, Ramanaidu, Chaudhuri's son becomes a friend of Sangadasu and they discuss abstract spiritual issues with great passion.

I would like to comment on the description of dalit experience. There should be description as how they live, how they are ill treated, and how they have been punished and discriminated against. Unnava maintained a line of tolerance and was so inclusive and fair that he never went on describing Dalits as inferior to anybody. One fine day Sangadasu hears the news that the workers in *Malapally* will be paid in cash rather than grains, he gets alert and organizes the workers to demand their wages and rights Shocked Ramanaidu pledges to work with Sangadasu, both of them go to workers convention in Vijaywada. When Sangadasu, returns to Chaudharayya he kills him. Chaudharraya pays of the authorities to cover up his crime. Sangadasu's own parents are out of fear and refuses, to blame anyone.

The true theme of the novel *Malapally* was an ideal national reconstruction and cultural renaissance. Unnava touched upon mainly political, economic, social and religious material. The Harijan movement led by Sangadas, Ramanaidu and Venkataiah the Sanatana revolt of Venkatadas, alias Takkala Jaggadu and the non-violent resistance to Christianization advocated by Ramdas and non-resistance movement by Narayana Rao. In all these movements we see the undercurrents of Gandhi's ideology of non resistance.

“The Harijans depend on the upper caste for their daily wages and their lives. Thus how could they afford to dig a well on their own? In name of religion which is a social condition, the Harijans economic condition is not improved when the Harijans cannot afford to get the groceries from the shop due to their economic condition they eat whatever grains the upper caste gave them and they never question then Why?”.(Laxminarayana125)

The economic problem was that of economic reconstruction. Unnava realized that social rights even if they are given to depressed cannot be exercised, unless economic reconstruction takes place. While depicting economic issues in the novel Unnava could visualize in his work the breaking up of ancient foundations of peasant economies and peasant life. Unnava had also his share of his contradictions he was attracted to Hindu philosophy and seemed to believe in its virtue and permanence. He was also attracted to Gandhi's economic reforms. It is quite evident in *Malapally* from the speeches of Sangadas and Venkata Reddy in spite of their half knowledge of the philosophy of the socialist economy. This is evident from the words of Ramadas the protagonist of the novel. Ramadas say:

“India has to give a lead to the world by establishing the efficacy of path of non-violence. Political Independence in itself is not our only aim. Self government (swarajya) must be a heavenly government (swargarajya). This won’t be possible through violence, bloodshed”. (Laxminarayana 133)

Interestingly Unnava tried to portray the other side of the picture also. Ramadas’s son Venkatadas enacts a new drama by his Robinhood escapades, by waging war against the rich to establish Samatha Dharma or Krtayugadharma. His Burrakatha and speech in the court after his arrest, contains the rudiments of Bolshevik thought and terrorist ideology. This perturbed the British government the Raj banned the novel within a few days of its publication. However as expected, the violent Venkatadas does not succeeded in the novel.

In *Malapally*, Unnava tried to portray two contradictory theories and policies the Gandhian passive resistance on the one hand and the active resistance on the other. The two theories and policies are represented by the protagonist. Non-violent father, Ramadas and his violent elder son, Venkatadas. While Ramadas follows the path of non-violence to achieve self-government (swarajya). Venkatadas alias Takkela jaggadu enacts a new drama by his Robinsons escapades. His son wages a war against the rich to establish ‘Samatha Dharma’ or Krtayugadharma. The social and political views expressed by him in one of his talk he says:

“The states, provinces and towns have gone into their (rich) hands. With a difference of a big robber and a small thief, all are robbers. By stealing the property of the society, they have made convenient laws to perpetuate their hereditary hold on it”. (Laxminarayan123)

“Stealing the fruits of labour of the proletariat, by arguing that the land belongs to the rich and by investing capital they are employing the poor in the industries, they say it not cheating. They say it is not robbery”

If the poor exercises the right, it is robbery!”

“If my virtue is followed by the people, each working according to his capacity, eating to his needs, without fear of tomorrow, taking education, they can lead voluntary life without fear of hunger without luxuries, diseases, crimes and courts”.

(Laxminarayana156)

Unnava Laxminarayana clearly portrays conceptual framework of the behavior and action of Venkatadas, based crudely on Bolshevik ideas of class struggle. There is also a reference in the novel to the Soviet Union. It is no wonder that these ideas provoked the established colonial order. The British imperialist government banned the novel immediately within five months of its publication. However the novel written by a non-Dalit writer could not exercise a significant influence on the Telugu Literature. By writing a novel in Telugu, Unnava Laxminarayana explores new and important aspects of literature and social consciousness, and invents the narrative styles required to deal with them that are true to the theme and the times in which he writes.

Socio Political Themes in Sannapu Reddy Venkatram Reddy's *Kadi*

In recent years, non-dalit writers and critics have developed more specific definition of dalit writing by creating 'dalit consciousness and creating socio political conditions prevailed in the society at that particular time. The practice of reading and writing dalit literature by non-Dalit writers have made them responsible for highlighting the issues and creating awareness of their rights and duties towards society and making them participate actively in the nation building. The idea of writing about Dalits by non-Dalit writers shows their responsibility towards inclusive literature. As Sharan Kumar Limbale defines this consciousness by non-Dalit writers "as the revolutionary mentality connected with struggle and the distinctiveness of dalit literature lies in the consciousness whose objective is to make slaves conscious of their slavery". For him, as with all Dalit critics and writers, this consciousness makes Dalit literature a creative effort on the path of emancipation. The thoughts of Ambedkar remain a persistent source of inspiration of struggle and emancipation in Dalit literary imaginations. As Omprakash Valmiki writes, 'Dalit chetna obtains its primary energy from Dr Ambedkar's life and vision. All dalit writers are united with respected to this truth' There are other literary critics in Telugu literature who are engaged in an analytical reading of various literary texts, basing their critical analysis on the concept of dalit consciousness. Professor Murali Manohar in his book *Dalits and their religions* clearly says:

"Why there should be a description as how they live their lives; how they are ill treated; how they have been punished; how they have been discriminated; how they have been prevented in entering the temples; how they have been brutally killed".(Manohar25)

Sannapureddy Venkatrami Reddy understands the problems of Dalits. With his sensibility, creative urge and socio political understanding he published *Kadi* published in 1998. He examined the caste and class occupational dimensions, changes and subsequent tensions caused in the villages of Andhra Pradesh especially drought hit Rayalaseema districts. The novel locates the irrigated lands and land landless Dalit labourers who depend on agriculture. He depicts the village life and four or five decades of historical back ground of the novella.

The writer gives a brief description about the customs, traditions and other social obligations among caste hierarchies. *Kadi* (Yoke) a basic implement in tilling the land among the village Madigas was used for serve the lands of the upper caste people in Rayalseema villages. As change in agricultural pattern and the living styles the of the Madiga people. Dalits took to other jobs because of the poverty and landlessness and their inability to work with their own yokes. The upper caste people started buying their own yokes and slowly the yoke goes into the upper caste hands leaving Dalits alone and jobless and not using the yoke much as their source of employment at the harvesting time. Balaiah, the protagonist of the novel, who was using his yoke for tilling the lands of landlords, lost his employment due to mechanization in agriculture. The tractor replacing the human force. He not only changes his profession but also his style of living and working conditions. Balaiah always in his heart feels for the yoke and wonders as to why his yoke is taken away from him. He feels humiliated by the village head he says:

“Heart does not agree to ask Madigas for yoke. Agriculture is always a hard work I will never allow my children to work on farm lands in this dusty soil and mud. I feel insulted and humiliated to ask for yoke from Madiga farmers and others in the village, which is beyond my dignity, because I was the owner of yokes and I

never a borrowed them earlier in my life. It's a sheer insult for me to go and beg for yoke from the madiga neighbors". (Reddy 57)

The protagonist in the novel longs for his own yoke but he is forced to depend on his fellow Dalits for cultivation Balaiah is portrayed as the traditional agriculturist who is not prepared to lose his self esteem in front of other. It shows that his self esteem, dignity, and pride can never be challenged in front of other madiga brethren. Balaiah, who is always disturbed and worried about the circumstances in his life, decides not to get not to get his daughters married to a person from the village. His thoughts always take him to a person who works and has a permanent job in the city and keeps his daughter happy. His heart always longs for his son-in-law in a handsome salary. He shares his intimate feelings with a Madiga pujari on the bank of the river. He says:

"I am ready to spend any amount of money on my daughter Rama's wedding. I will not even think twice to sell my land. All that I need is a salaried husband and I am proud of my eldest daughter in the city as she enjoys her life and is happy with her modern life style. On hearing Balaiah's conversation her youngest daughter asks him what guarantee you have that he will not cheat me after taking dowry and runs away with the money. If my husband sits and eats every day at home without working what will the society say and it is an insult on the part of a female".(Reddy59)

As a major sub theme, his elder daughter's irreconcilable marriage and younger daughter's uncompromising attitude to marry an employee from the town that takes dowry is depicted in an uncompromising way. The major issues analyzed in the novel include emergence of Dalits, Madigas and Malas emerged as small farmers and their quest for caste identity and democratic life, the process of upper caste landlords slowly loose the traditional caste authority and the

resultant violent tensions between dalit assertion and upper caste reluctance to accept the others as equals, and the growing problem of alienation. The difference between Malas and Madigas are seen not only from the humiliation of each others, but also hierarchy and hierarchy within the hierarchy of caste system. In a terrifying situation when police chases Balaiah and Rangaiah both of them run and hide on the banks of Sagileti voddu, Madiga pujari is shocked to see them and says:

“I am doing my duties as a temple priest and I am happy, now take this coconut prasadam as offerings and you will be blessed if you touch this incense sticks offered to the God. Come and take blessings. On knowing that Balaiah’s sons sells footwear in the town market every week Madiga pujari says; Anything at the end has to reach the market and to be sold whether it is a small or big shoe making and stitching is always done by us but, finally it is you people who has to sell them in the market by displaying. We do not have the custom, tradition and guts to sell them. We are only makers it is you people who are kings in the business and always sell them”. (Reddy 62)

. The Rayalaseema village where the novel takes place interweaving several incidents from which one can deduce that the major changes in the village include a shift in the pattern of agriculture, both cultivation wise and crop wise. Occupational diversion and mobility, decline of caste stigma attached to certain occupations continued. Famines, lifestyles and food habits the people irrespective of caste hierarchy. Rampadu, where the story of the novel takes place, the relations in its adjacent villages, in agriculture and its social relations are based on the modern methods of cultivation and crop rotation. In Rampadu village, the number of bullocks for ploughing land got reduced to few pairs in less than a decade. Though a tractor was available it was not sufficient to till all the lands. Malas and Madigas have only thirty seven pair of bullocks.

The traditional farmer shows no interest in agriculture and they take to other profession and business. Even those who were doing farming they were behaving like absent landlords without participating in the labour. The attitudinal change in the bridegrooms mindset with urban jobs is preferred to those engaged in agriculture Balaiah, with his traditional back ground regrets the changes that have taken place in the rural life. Since it is irreversible historical processes, he reconciles himself to the changing situation including his approach to the Madigas for bullocks to plough the land and his son trading in footwear. When almost all the land holders were tilling lands during the rainy season, Balaiah could not do so for he did not have the 'Yoke' to do so. It was his tension. He belonged to the older generation of agricultural class who loved the land and who laboured on the land. Balaiah was unable to reconcile the fact that he may have to approach Madiga for a Yoke. Balaiah observed the transformation of rural agriculture economy, social mores and cultural life.

Most of the educated Malas migrated to towns. The Malas those who were weaving also left making the upper caste farmers depending on Madigas for their assistance in farming. They did not hesitate to complain freely if any land holder did not pay the rental charges for the Yoke in time. The Madiga Dandora movement created an atmosphere of assertion and unity and the dalit consciousness was the result.

Balaiah was undergoing a change in him, but still a duality existed in him. He was unhappy over the changes in agriculture as the son of soil, but he wanted to give his second daughter also to an employee. This clearly shows that the changes were ripening in him. Ultimately, he compromised with socio political changes in the village amidst all the post independence electoral politics and factionist tendencies. The major sub themes relate to the marriage of Balaiah's daughters. Lakshmi the elder daughter was married to an employee but was not happy.

The younger one, Rama wants to stay in the village and expresses her desire that she loves the village and does not want any luxuries. The village comprises several upper, middle and lower castes including tribals and minorities. They are Komati, Reddy who constitute are in upper castes, Golla Yadava, Muttarasu are middle castes Hindu Malas and Christian Malas Hindu Madiga and Christian Madiga Yaanadi tribe and Muslim minorities are part of the village.

Caste hierarchy is common in any Indian village. It has been politicized in the novel. When we closely follow the novel almost all the incidents and episodes depict that a major socio-economic and political transformation is going on in rural areas and it has its own contradictions too. The caste and landed hegemony was shaking and forced to the democratic way of living. Political democracy still remains a mirage. Social democracy has never even been seriously contemplated in India society. Indian hierarchical society frequently doubles as a dictator and victimizes individuals guilty of the slightest deviation from the established ways of thinking. Even a faint sign of defying social codes or feeble or weak protest against an unfair social practice is sure to result in harassment and ostracism. In Andhra society, especially the villages social codes are heavily loaded in favour of upper castes. The upper caste members of the society turn into unofficial enforcers of the dictatorial social norms.

Rural Realism in Akkineni Kutumba Rao's *Sorrajjem*

Dalit Novels written by non-Dalit writers always occupied a significant place in dalit themes. The themes of these novels focus on the reality of Dalit life. *Sorrajjem* is a novel written by Kutumba Rao, a non-Dalit writer speaks about the post Independence struggle by the Dalits in the India. Dalits participation in the freedom was marginalized due to their immediate socio-economic constraints. The upper caste leadership also failed to evolve a systemic programme to

ensure their socio economic emancipation and the aspiration and the emotional feelings of the dalit masses did not become an integral part of nationalist ideology and program. Thus the two fold struggle of Dalits against the imperialist British and the hegemonic upper caste native ruler was reflected in their ideological expression. *Sorrajjem* was in and round August 1947 and the post- Independence movement and the established situation in the independent India

Malapally in Krishna district is the centre of the novel which depicts the various incidents that took place during 1948 and later days. The village as a center *Sorrajjem* speaks about the incidents and the conditions of the Dalits and how they were exploited socially, economically and culturally by the village heads. The protagonist of the novel *Sorrajjem* is unable to change the condition of her family and Malapally's Brahman and his underlying politics. He tries to gain sympathy and enjoys the respect in the village.

The Telugu speaking region of India has witnessed and is witnessing diverse movements that have expected loyalty, determination and commitment from their and leaders like, Brahman. In the novel he tries to make the opportunities in his favour. He follows Gandhian principles and controls all the people in Malapally. He not only protects the upper caste people but also pretends to help Dalits and gain sympathy from them in order to control everybody. Women go through trying times not only because there is a demand for them to make their stand or alliance clear but also because at any given point of time they had multiple identities and ideological alliances. Caste discrimination in Telugu literature can be perceived in the debate regarding the first novel in Telugu *Sri Rangaraja Charitramu*(1872), was not given that credit by the critics and historians for the reason that the novel is a tribal girl and that it is not proper for a novel to have a tribal girl as the heroine. Interestingly in *Sorrajjem* the writer takes much care of the female character, *Sorrajjem* and creates a wonderful reality and through her he creates the dalit

consciousness in the novel. Non-dalit writers may not write about the anguish and pain of Dalits but they can express the plight and living conditions of Dalits. To experience how was the socio economic conditions of Dalits during 1950s and the landlords enjoying major holdings in the village. Enkkadu in a conversation with Paddalu reflects the socio economic conditions of Dalits prevailed during 1950s and how major holdings remain in the hands of the dominant comments:

“Freedom! Freedom! Says, Brahman, last month we removed the sleepers on the railway track shouting Vandemataram Vandemataram. Did the British leave our country? After the birth of Sorajjam, new improvements happen in Malapally. Freedom was the priority but the conditions of Dalits deteriorated day by day with no improvements in their life. Socially and economically they were the worst sufferers of the independent India. Brahman is dora and he is our land lord. He speaks about Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Sri Krishna and Gita. At last, he displaced us on our stomach and made us to fight among ourselves.” Brahman dora got a tractor in the village and it has arrived to snatch our livelihood and rendered us jobless. He promised that he will increase our daily wages but immediately he gets labourers from Nizam for less wages and makes them work in his lands. (Reddy 122).

The cunning landlords in the name of nationalism and nation never compromised with the dalit communities and they always made them suffer and lead a miserable life. In these circumstances the Dalit started raising voice against the landlords. They demanded identity of their own. The caste composition of the village in *Sorajjam* can be deduced from the plot. Malapally has different castes such as Kamma, Reddy, Brahmin Mala and Madiga. The novel mostly depicts

the life of Malas they are firm on upholding the lands and cultivate them on their own. Dalits life and their desire to uphold the lands and cultivate them with their own hands. The novel takes forward the nationalistic ideas and Gandhi's Harijan movement together. It was a custom or tradition during the post-Independence movement to name the newly born babies after the freedom fighters and national leaders. When Ekkanna's daughter was born on the night of August 15 1947 Brahman becomes happy and shouts in his emotion and shouts: "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai, Jawahar Lal Nehru ki jai" In those days people accepted the names of national leaders like Swarajyam, Gandhi, Nehru, Bapuji etc, Upper caste people also kept the names but, they added their caste names to it and made them Bapuji Chowdhary, Subash Chandra Reddy, Andhra Reddy and names such as Bharat Kumar. The nationalistic outlook of the pre independence spirit was always there even among Dalits and upper castes in Madigapalle. There is a crucial turn in the novel which leads to the death of Bojigadu and all the Mala and Madigas are enlightened after his death. This death becomes the focus of the inherent contradiction in the transformation process. When Sorrajem calls everybody to watch the animals in the circus, her friends keep running to her and cries without stopping when Sorrajem asks her about the reason. But it was painfully to now to Bojigadu.

"Break the hands of the bastard. He is not even matured enough to do this act; if we leave him alone, he will even rob the whole Gudivada mandal and become a dacoit. One fine day all the landlords pounce on him and said, 'you bastard we will kill you' Bojigadu's face turns pale and starts crying and asking everybody to excuse him. Seeing the situation his sister, brother and Sorrajem starts pleading with the landlords and also starts crying, when Bojigadu's mother pleads with the landlords and asks them for excuse. They even use abusing words. When somebody says that all Mala bastards are coming to attack the

landlords, Nallachanttabai gets furious and abuses that the Mala bastards have come I will kill all of them at a time". (Reddy77)

As one goes through the creative works of Dalits, it may be noticed that they have used the language of quarters rather than the standard language. The writer was aware of the Krishna districts slang and that is the reason he has done justice to the Dalits and other people living in Malapalle. Standard language smacks of a class, which has been rejected by Dalits writers. Some people and writers who think they are cultured people in the society consider standard language to be the proper language for writing. Dalit writers have rejected this validation of standard language by the so called educated and cultured classes as it is felt conceited. The language of Harijanawada is more familiar to them than standard language. In fact, standard language does not include all the words of dalit dialects. Besides the ability to voice one's experience in one's mother tongue gives much effectiveness to the expression.

Akkinenei Kutamba Rao has skillfully used the language. Dalit writing was questioned by many non-Dalit writers, conservatives, Marxists and feminists for various reasons such as lack of aesthetic values, strong caste identities, subjectivity, and use of derogatory language against women and so on so forth. In all the debates and counter debates of dalit writings people of the underprivileged or less privileged sections were highlighted. Telugu literature has come in for criticism for accommodating writers, characters and critic's only men and women from upper caste or upper classes would have the opportunity to publish because of contacts. Like reform movements, literature both traditional and dalit writing has revolved around upper caste writers for the most part. A reason for this could be that these non-Dalit writers have written from their experiences and location. Whether it is Kandukuri Vereshalingam a major reformer and writer of the nineteenth century, or twentieth century writers like Sri Sri, a major leftist poet, Chalam, the

first male feminist writer from the privileged sections. They have not talked about Dalits or lower caste literature in a big way.

The writer has taken great care of the protagonist Sorrajem. Everywhere she seems to be so innocent and clever with her ideas thoughts, execution of plans and her immature innocence. She was always the centre of attraction and the novel revolved around her leaving her alone till the end. She faced the trauma and torture of her family members and more tragic were her father becoming mad and Sorajjam living her native village. The novel was centered on Sorajjam. She was not only humiliated at school but also at home when her mother always comments against her saying:

“Those who are born from the Mala’s womb how will they get rice grains, it’s their fate whatever is written for them. It is final. We have to leave our life to our fate. When Sorajjam hugs her mother, Paddalu and says that she wanted to study her mother gets happy and thinks that she may become a teacher like Krupavathi. But she is female, if she does not work for one day she cannot collect food grains and cooking food becomes a problem. When her brother promises her to send school, she becomes happy and there is no limit to her happiness”. (Reddy 111)

With the kind of awareness and commitment non-Dalit writers have tried to achieve solidarity with the Dalits and particularly the women. The unique identity, location, the socio-political movements and literature was challenged by the non-Dalit writers. The writer tried to establish the differences between lower caste men and upper caste women. It is mostly to counter the feminist movement by saying that lower caste women do not require feminism as they are not, Vinodini a Dalit Christian writer says that feminism has mostly revolved around surface issues.

Non-Dalit writers have written extensively in support of feminism. But there is no evidence of feminist writing in support of Dalit movement in all these years. There have been collective attacks on Dalits when feminism was strong. There have been instances of gang rapes on Dalit women and disrobing them. But there has been no strong declaration of solidarity except a couple of writings.

Sorajjam captures the village with all its caste hierarchy, love and affection of Dalits to their families and children, especially the decadent social fabric of Malas life style and their hard working nature. The novel reveals the avariciousness of the landlords and the plight of the Dalit poor specially the Malas. The wages, water, education and corrupt revenue officials are controlled by the landlords of Malapalle. The shift in the commercial crops in the name of progress has marginalized. The Malas made them to migrate to far off places in search of livelihood. The story depicts the changes from 1948 to 1960. The graphic study of the village Malapalle gave an impetus for working on similar rural themes and plots by different regional writers. An interesting episode in the novel reveals the cultural gap between the less developed rural Telangana and developed rural coastal Andhra. landlords getting workers from Nizam area to work in the rural areas for lesser wages. The geographical differences between Telanagana and coastal Andhra also can be seen in the novel.

The long identified Dalit women attempts to define and describe not only herself but also the women of the privileged sections as well as the system itself. Thus this statement stands for the empowerment of Dalit women and her reiteration of her individuality as well as her self esteem. Sorrajjem at her young age in the novel by extending her hand in solidarity and understanding, she is taking an initiative in formulating alliances against oppressive forces and also signaling a

mature stage in the movement where slogans but constructive suggestions and substantive moves become the important aspect in the *Sorrajjem*.

Work Cited

- Satyanarayana Adapa. *Noorendla Dalitha Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust: 2009.
- Aruna. *Elli*: New Syllabus Literature. Vijawada: Nagendra Press, 2001.
- Anand.S. *Touchable Tales: Publishing and Reading Dalit Literature*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2003
- Bharathi, Thummapudi. *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*. New Delhi: Kalpaz, 2008.
- Chakravarthy, Uma. “*Through another Lens: Men Women and Caste*” Translating Caste: Stories, Essays, and Criticism. New Delhi: Katha, 2002.
- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Dangle, Arjun. *Poisoned Bread*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Dharmanna, Kusuma. *Makoddi Nalladorathanamu*. Hyderabad: Sahiti Nidhi, 1973.
- Gopal, Guru. *Dalit Cultural Movement and Dalit Politics in Maharashtra*. Mumbai: Vikas Adhyan Kendra, 1997.
- Ilaiah, Kancha. *Why I am not a Hindu*. Hyderabad: Samya, 2005.
- Joshua, Gurram. *Gabbilam: Bat*. Hyderabad: Joshua Foundation, 1998.
- Kamble, Baby. *The Prisons We Broke*. Trans by Maya Pandit. Chennai: Orient Long Longman, 2008.
- Kanakaiah, *Dalitha Samasyalu*. Hyderabad: Prajasahiti Book House, 2004
- Kalekuri, Prasad. *Dalitha Sahityam*. Vijaywada: Dalitha Shtree Parishat, 1993.
- Krishnaiah .B. Ambedkar *Anantaram Dalitha Udayamala Sahityam*: Savallu. Hyderabad: Society and Education, 2011.
- Kumar Raj. *Dalit Personal Narratives Reading Caste, Nation and Identity*. Hyderabad Orient Black Swam, 2010.

- Kalyan Rao, G. *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Labab Babu. Talluri. *Madigavari Charitra* Hyderabad: Kusumanjali Prachuranlu, 2001.
- Limbale, Sharan Kumar. *Towards An Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Manohar, Murali. D. *Dalits and their Religions*. New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2010.
- Malapalli: *Triumph of Sangha*. Trans by V.V.B. Rama Rao. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Mallaiah, Kaluva, and Sadanand Sarada.Ed. *Telangana Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra, 2005.
- Malgatti. Aravind. *Government Brahamana*. (Trans) Dharani Devi Malgatti, Janet Vucinich and N. Subrayanam. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2007.
- Moon Vasant. *Growing Up Untouchables in India: A Dalit Autobiography*. New Delhi: Vistaar, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Early Novels in India*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Menon, Dilip. *The Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2006.
- Michael, S.M. *Dalits in Modern India*. New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1999.
- Narayana. Reddy Sunki Reddy. *Bahuvachanam: Dalitha Bahujana Kavithvam*. Nalgonda: Nilagiri Sahiti, 1996.
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalit Visions: The anti caste- movement and the construction of Indian Identity*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1994.
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalits and Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1994
- Prasad, Amarnath. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Sarup and Sons, 2007.

- Padma Rao, Katti. *Dalitha Sahityavadam Samajika Tatvam*. Hyderabad: Lokayata Publications, 2008.
- Pinakapani, *Nippulavagu*. Kurnool: Viplava Rachayitala Sangam, 2001.
- Purushottam. K. *Black Lillies*. New Delhi: Critical Quest, 2013.
- Ramulu B.S. *Telangana Kathakulu Kathana Reethulu*. Hyderabad: Saamajika Tatvika Publications, 2008.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Navala: Puttuka Parinaamam*. Hyderabad: Abyudaya Rachaitala Sangam. 1996.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Chillara Devvulu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publishing, 1998.
- Ranganayakulu. *Harijana Nayakudu*. Nidubrolu: Thata Mudraaksharasaala, 1993.
- Raj M.C. *Kakapee: The self actualized Operation That Challenges the Genes of a cow's Shit*. Publish America, 2009.
- Rajashekar. *Caste: A nation within the Nation*. Bangalore: Books for Change, 2007.
- Rajawat, Mamta. *Encyclopedia of Dalits in India*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2012.
- Ramakrishna Rao, Adapa. *Telugu Navala*. Hyderabad: Yuvabharathi, 1975.
- Rege Sharmila. *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonies*. New Delhi: Zubaan, 2006.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, 1980 *Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003.
- Reddy. K. Vishwanath. *Traditions and Trends*. Hyderabad: Prajashakti Book House, 2004.
- Reddy. K.V.Ramana. *Modern Trends in Telugu Literature*. Hyderabad: AILRC, 1999.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Atanu Adavini Jayinchadu*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1985.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Chivari Gudise*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1993.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Moogavani Pillanagrovi*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1995.
- Rao, Varavara. *Prajalamanishi Oka Parichayam*. Hyderabad: Yuga Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Satyanarayana S.V. Ed. *Dalithavaada Vivadaalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalaandhra, 2000.

- Satyanarayana, A. *Dalits and Upper Caste: Essays in Social History*. Delhi: Kanishka, 2005.
- Sitapati, G.V. *History of Telugu Literature*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1968.
- Srinivasulu.K. *Caste, Class and Social Articulations in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories*. London: Overseas Development Institute, 2002
- Shah, Ganshyam. *Dalit Identity and Politics*. Sage Publications, 2001.
- Sarkar, Sumit. *Writing Social History*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1997. .
- Sharma, Ursula. *Caste Concepts in Social Sciences*: Delhi: Viva Books, 2002.
- Sharma, K.L. *Caste and Class in India*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 1994.
- Sujatha Reddy. Mudiganti. *Telangana Tolitaram Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Rohnam Publications, 2002.
- Sudhaker, Yendluri. *Mallemoggala Godugu: Maadiga Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Dandora Prachuranalu, 1999.
- Srinivas, M.N. *Social Change In Modern India*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswam, 1966.
- Uma. Alladi, Suneetha Rani, & Muralimanohar. Eds. *English in the Dalit Context*. New Delhi: Orient Black Swam, 2014.
- Vidmahe, Kathyayani. *Telugu Navala Kathanika Vimarsana Parinamam*. Hyderabad: Charita Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Zelliot, Eleanor. *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Untouchable Movement*. New Delhi: Bluemoon Books, 2004.

CHAPTER V

Tracing Comparative Perspectives

The impact of literature on society in the present context of Dalit and non-Dalit writing in India is necessarily political and ideological. The emerging Dalit literature is used as a means of unity among men and women. In other words it unites the marginal sections of the society. Telugu novels among other literary genres have always been projected as forces seeking social and political change. All the writers and the novelists have found the marginal literature to be aesthetically pure. Telugu novelists have been unambiguous in their political commitment sometimes their novels express their ideological bias. Post Independence impact on Telugu literature was given a new direction as the writers began to feel that there was the need to shape literary forms and genres to meet the contemporary demands put forth by the historic situation. The inadequacy of the earlier modes of expression saw a draw back in the literary trends and giving emphasis on human being and freedom and respect for one's dignity and decency of life. The Dalit novels emerged as a characteristic force and subjects which are live and experiences which cause human nature to feel shame and insult in terms of dignity of a human life and values in Indian hierarchical society

Unnava Laxminarayana's *Malapalli* is the first of its kind marked by epic expanse and frank unconventionality of the theme and technique. Published partly in 1922 the novel has remained a classic. It was the first novel to employ ordinary spoken Telugu announcing a total break from the conventional literary style. Thematically too, it was the first to create the protagonist belonging to the Mala community to represent the Dalit misery. The novelists states in the 'Preface' that his "First attempt to write a book in the language as it is used. There are no works

to guide me”. (11). The novel takes its theme its theme from the contemporary political and social life providing comprehensive historical analysis of the Dalit issues. The novel has painted on a wide canvas the life of the socially deprived classes, the soulless exploitation of the labourers by the landlords, the callous attitude of the government and the harrowing experiences of jail life.

By 1920 Unnava Laxminarayana had returned from England as a Barrister. He soon became an ardent Gandhian and took to constructive social reform in a quiet and self effacing way. *Malapalli* examines the ills of the Indian society that beset the Indian society during pre-Independence movement. Dismissing caste as of no relevance, he concludes that higher caste inherits certain measures of pride by birth. They cannot reach God. The Harijans have no pride at all. Therefore they are nearer to God or *Mukti*, since they inherit the total absence of pride by birth. Sangadasu, a Harijan tells Rama Naidu, a land lord in the novel:

You do not know the torment of hunger, even the great sages could not bear it
They stole dirty meat from the chandals. One need not advise these poor coolies
Not to eat the dirty meat. They do not simply eat it when they are properly fed
with good food. In the absence of food, they eat not only stale meat; they will
even bite the dry bones. (Laxminarayana 8)

In answer to Naidu’s question whether there was any way out, Sanga Dasu says:

I see there is about one way. If we could dethrone God and put Satan
in his place, we can hope to be free The leader of Harijan movement refers
to Italy, Lenin, Bolshevism and also the essence of Soviet form of
government. He says, “Everybody works, everybody gets according to his
need. Only the lazy ones suffer”. (11)

He further comments:

The teaching of Jesus Christ fit in with this scheme of things.

They say that in ancient India, the hermitages adopted the same method. The old village life was like this. (Laxminarayana15)

The Harijan leader emphasizes that the Government of the people is considered the best form of government. The system tells us that the best administration is possible only when a coolie votes to run the government. Although all the reformers from Buddha to Dayananda struck at the root of this age old tree of caste, it persists. The caste system is like the broken walls of dilapidated fort, the old order is still around in ruins. There is search for concrete social matrix and the urge to change the Indian society during this period

Unnava Laxminarayana has dared to question the ethos of the country from his novel. The message of *Malapalli* has inspired the subsequent political novels of the Telugu Dalit literature in the early fifties. The impact of the novel has been reflected on other writers who have reflected deeply on the socio political changes in a creative form in Telugu Dalit literature.

Dalit writers of early seventies and eighties followed the trends in writing and came out with powerful subjects of humiliation and insults faced by the marginal communities. Dalit ideology presented in the novels during the last three decades is implicit and explicit in interpretation. It is implicit in the life of the characters and explicit in interpreting the historical context in which they are involved. *Malapalli*'s impact was shown on all the other writers who came from both Dalit and non-Dalit backgrounds.

In recent years non-Dalit writers have given a specific definition of Dalit writing by creating Dalit consciousness. *Malapalli's* literary circles and writers who did not copy the same but approach and themes were changed in the later years. Mahidhara Ram Mohan Rao a leading political novelist himself defines the novel as that which depicts the impact of a given political situation on the social movements. *Malapalli* is the first political novel. Its significance lies in the fact that it emerged from the popular political movement nearly five decades later, the Dalit novel came of age and established itself as a genre.

The novel *Kadi* runs around the same time and with a continuing modernity around Indian rural background. The novel speaks about the professional practices and caste identity. *Malapalli* portrays the contemporary political and social life as its theme and provides a comprehensive historical analysis of pre-independent India. Whereas *Kadi* brings out the difference between them. New spaces and voices were heard within the Dalit communities.

Kadi mainly focuses on the issue of employment in rural India. The novel is set in the semi irrigated dry lands of Rayalaseema. The issues of Madigas are prioritized in the novel. The novel discusses the relevance of *Kadi* stating that even higher castes have to depend on the yokes of Madigas and their hard working nature. Telugu novels written by both the Dalit and non-Dalit writers replete with the Dalit oppression, women centered themes, widow related issues and child marriages.

Several novels on Dalit literature depicted the hardships on individuals and the several angles of the caste and oppression that was in the Indian society. The nature of the novel in *Kadi* differs entirely from its traditional view of understanding the problems of the Dalit community.

Hinduism justifies the caste based society rooted in intellectual and spiritual inequality. These inequalities work as the back ground of Dalit novels. When we go to macro levels study of Dalit novels we find varied themes and problems which emanate from the contemporary situation. and the present generations. In the context of the social movements and modernity that happens in agriculture. Dalit writing was questioned by Marxists, Conservative sand Feminists for various reasons such as lacking aesthetic values, strong caste identities, subjectivity and use of derogatory language against women, especially Dalit women. In the novel, when Rama the younger daughter of Balaiah expressing her views says:

“I am not interested in the city life, I wanted to stay in the village and I am happy for it. Life in cities is not good and the huge employment problem is a major issue. I wanted to stay in the village. I do not want any luxuries black top roads and consumerism of the town life. I wanted to marry a person who does not see a women as a mere object of commodity and like to walk on a mud road. (Kadi 22)

Thus the long identified Dalit women attempts to define and describe not only herself but also the women of oppressed sections and the system itself. Thus this statement of Balaiah’s daughter stands for the empowerment of Dalit women and her reiteration for individuality and self respect.

Balaiah always regrets the traditional changes that have taken place in the rural villages, and Rayalaseema was one of the most drought prone areas in Andhra Pradesh. The novelist rather than using the caste based discrimination against Dalits he challenges the other problems in pre Independent India. Displacement and unemployment opportunities that the Dalits have lost in the rural villages. The rural transformation is shown not in terms of oppression. Several Dalit novels

written by non-Dalit writers depict the oppression of higher caste on them and various other atrocities and humiliation on Dalit communities in different situations. In *Kadi* Balaiah's daughter Rama questions the veracity of marriage and the city life in future which shows that the author is ahead of his times and makes the characters think beyond rural life style. Several novels portray modern educated youth as ideal. Another interesting aspect in the novel is a woman marrying a boy of her choice. Most of the Dalit novels did not come up with the issues relating to economic and self dependency where as in *Kadi* the writer made the characters to that the important problem more than humiliation is the settlement and a decent life style of a human being.

Balaiah yearns for city life. It is evident from his plan that he is very fine about his daughter's marriage with a city boy with a government job. He thinks of his daughter's comfort which would be possible when his son-in-law is government employee. As tool of Dalit literary representation and the person who closely observed the transformation of the rural agriculture economy, social mores and cultural life wondered why the upper caste and the middle caste that use to assist the land in the agriculture now went into other professions. Several other changes in the novel reveal the cultural gap between the less developed Rayalaseema drought prone area and the developed city where Dalits want to live a happy life. Unnava Laxminarayana 's nationalistic ideology in *Malapalli* mainly focuses on India's freedom struggle and the problems of untouchability.

The series of events in the novel *Kadi* shows marginality of untouchability untouchability and religious conversions. Introduction of machinery in agriculture deprived several marginalized sections including Dalits of employment as agricultural labourers. Venkatram Reddy relies heavily on imagery He relies heavily on imagery as a stylistic device to highlight the immediate

appeal and accessibility of the non-verbal medium for representational purpose. It mimes with more beauty and imaginative power than the ideas contained in the novel, occasionally extending them beyond the range of his immediate verbal utterance. Venakatram Reddy explores poverty and exclusion through the use of images. Describing the operation of caste prejudices while Balaiah insists on a yoke to the Mala community even though he comes from the same community, but the hierarchy within the Dalits is a close correspondence between the human and the natural element. After a few pages in the novel Reddy again uses evocative images and figures of speech to describe of Balaiah's poverty. He writes

“A small lamp without oil and proper match sticks in the house was very expensive and it was also a extra consumption of oil and when I lit the light the flies and mosquitoes keep flying out of fear because of the light. Rats and cockroaches were common in the house they too were disappearing out of sight”. (Reddy55)

Here, yet again, the writer depends upon implicit and explicit comparisons to delineate the degrading conditions of the Madiga Dalit communities due to the lack of resources Dalit Novels by the non-Dalit writers have been a preferred medium of the subaltern articulation due to its groundings in the claims of verifiability. Therefore, it is careful on the part of the non-Dalit to uphold the facts of Dalits life. Non- Dalit writer have to understand the reality of Dalits life is a part of the constructed social structure that has been concretised by the dominant upper caste communities and the Brahmanical order. The non-Dalit writers mostly hold the idea of changing and naturally ordained hierarchical society, which empowers them to claim that however much a Madiga or a Mala member of Dalit community might be educated she will still remain a tiller or a worker of the estate. *Kadi* replaces the stereotypical thinking of non-Dalit writers. It creates caste identities and prioritizes the Dalit communities in making nation's

agriculture prosper. As in my understanding, there is a very fine line between a desire to better and to patronize, between speaking with and speaking for, and finally, between the impulse to empathize and the instinct to sink. Venakat Ram Reddy being a non-Dalit writer strikes a fine balance in the modern Dalit thinking and associates himself in the nation building and makes him part of the progress of the country. The rural and urban divide is explicit in *Kadi* where as *Malapalli* is confined to a rural space. It inspires the people to work for the nationalistic cause. Balaiah's ability to transform himself as a modern thinker and understand the problem of survival is clearly seen whereas Sangadasu in *Malapalli* discusses the abstract spiritual issues with great passion.

When compared to Unnava's *Malapalli* and Sannapu Reddy Venkat Reddy's *Kadi* presents entirely different pictures in terms of narration. There is geographical difference between Telanagana and costal Andhra which is brought into the novel too. The interesting aspect in the novel is the character of Sorrajem. The writer has a visionary and progressive mindset in portraying a female character chosen from the Dalit community. Sorrajem becomes the protagonist in the novel. Sorrajem was born on the eve of Independence Day. Everybody expected in the Dalit communities that their lives will be changed in the Independent India. But nothing was changed much and the agony of Sorrajem increased day by day. Brahamam represents the new Independent India after the British rule. In parallel he connects and creates the character of Sorrajem to fight against the oppression and shows us the female sensibilities of the character.

The social construction of poor Dalit women along patriarchal norms always had a negative impact upon women's cultural expression, status and lives. Sorrajem as a protagonist appears character is so painful till the end of the novel. That she is not only dependent on her own labour

but she labours outside the home from morning to evening. Kutumba Rao chooses Sorrajem's character by appropriating the inner conflicts of her family and juxtaposing it with the society and the Mala community with the atrocities committed by the Kamma caste landlords and their total indifference on the Dalit communities. The Kamma's are powerful and they always commit atrocities on the Mala communities in the village. The Telangana armed struggle (1947-1951) was responsible for the emergence of peasants and workers association (Rythu Coolie Sangams) and agrarian revolts in Telangana which were influenced by political events and Marxist ideology where as in Andhra it was the Nehruvian concepts of discovery and the Gandhian ethical ways over rebuilding of the nation by locating the Indian villager as the center of human development was the major difference in the novel Brahmam in guise of the Gandhian philosophy and morals, exploits the villagers and even try to control them and supporting the entire Kamma community and its atrocities against Dalits.

Some critics argue that Feminism in Telugu novel had no base and it was just a trend that was imported from the West and superimposed. However, the Telugu novel was a confluence of individual freedom and the fight against the upper caste hierarchy. Akkineni Kutumba Rao has chosen the Dalit characters from different backgrounds. The strong positive and negative undercurrent of the Nationalist movement is also visible in the novel. The changing middle class and the gradual alienation of the working classes provided subjects for thematic depiction of social transformations. While writing about the sharp economic disparities between the rich and the poor Dalit masses.

The writer examines the psychological depths of the human mind. Sorrajem had a quest for identity. Patriarchal authority, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, child labour and subjugation were dealt by Kutumba Rao during the eighties. Dalit writing is always a social document non-Dalit

writers who are conditioned by the socio-politico economic circumstances of their times. Therefore events in the novel are serious and are created within the frame work of the existing social relations. It is not only a living document of atrocities committed against Dalits by the Kamma communities of Andhra Pradesh. Literature develops along with the life as writers try to meet the challenges of their time, tell the readers truth about the world, current events as also about themselves, and they voice their concern about the future. Societies are however layered and hierarchical. Thus their literary outputs signify differently at various times, to various groups beginning with the family, clan, caste, ethnic group, and nation and beyond. Also societies are constantly changing and evolving new themes and modes of narration.

Malapalli and *Kadi* portray the prevalent social condition in pre and post Independent India. Both Dalit and non-Dalit writers bring out social problems of Dalits through nationalism and the underlying politics of upper caste leadership in rural and urban India. They show how Dalits are Dalits economically and socially exploited. There is no adequate portrayal of women in the novels. Although both texts center round Dalit woman, she was not given much importance as protagonist or at least as the leading person in the novel. Dalit writing in the processes of freeing itself from the novel mode evolves primarily in Telugu and particularly on women as subjects of oppression. But a large body of Telugu Dalit writing is still stuck in the old themes of not allowing to draw water from the village wells, prohibiting entry into Hindu temples, refusing admission of Dalit children into schools, and brutal exploitation of Dalit women. Dalit consciousness in the novel is based on ideas of equality, liberty, justice and solidarity. In every age, the imaginary of beauty or theme is linked to the prevailing ideas.

At one part of the history the mythological characters were the subject of beauty and discussion, but the themes and subjects changed during the past fifty years huts situated outside the

boundaries of the villages. Women from the marginal section of the society, the depressed classes and the poor have become the subjects of the Dalit literature. Dalit writings started in Andhra Pradesh individually in an unorganized manner through the publications of different magazines like *Nalupu* and *Edureetha* by non-Dalits and from various non-Dalits in the beginning of the 20th century. But in late eighties it was imbued with Dalit conscious and outlook. Questions raised by non-Dalit and Dalit Feminists regarding the representation of women in the Dalit novels. Women from marginal sections of the society started raising their voice. *Sorrajjem* as a novel portrays the inevitable conflict that rages between the cultural and social ideology of a feudal society and the ideology of a society that is politically modern. Kutumba Rao presents the feudal and bourgeois ideology during the early years of twentieth century Brahamam becomes the landlord in disguise speaks about the ideals of Gandhi and his non-violence, but practice he encourages the violence and feudalism in the Gudivada mandal of Andhra Pradesh. Brahamam acts a police informer. In that he informs the police about Subba Rao's whereabouts. People started speaking about his noble presence and his ideal thoughts of helping people to fight against the feudal landlords. When Subba Rao takes shelter in adjoining villages of Katuru and Elamaru the military, police comes and searches him *Sorrajjem* out of fear says:

“Subba Rao is our guiding light and wisdom of our villagers and a noble person who helps us in fighting back against the landlords whenever we had a problem he also helped us in saving our friends. He was a visionary and wanted to help all the people whenever they are in trouble irrespective of caste and religions Subba Rao is collecting fund by visiting all the Telangana and Andhra regions for Telangana Porata Nidhi and educating

people to fight against the atrocities committed by the feudal landlords. He sacrificed his life and property to for the cause and police killed him brutally in front of our eyes”. (85)

The police killed many innocent people under the rule of feudal landlords in villagers. All people of the village witnessed the killing of Subba Rao and were shocked to see the incident. Broad day murderers by the police and picking up innocent people who questions the feudal landlords to increase the wages were artistically portrayed by the writer. Tirupathi who was a little educated in the village questions Brahman to increase the wages of the farmers who work in the lands of the upper castes. He becomes the target to the village landlords and his voice results in his death. The death of Subba Rao and Tirupathi also is a underground plan and crafty work of Brahman. Brahman never shows his feudal attitude to anyone and in the name of Gandhi and Sri Krishna he always tries to hide himself. He safe guards the interest of Kamma landlords in Malapalli.

Unnava Laxminarayana's *Malapalli* has been declared as one of the first realist novels to present an authentic picture of the life of untouchables from the Gandhian understanding and representation of Dalit life where as Kutumba Rao's *Sorrajem* a head of his times speaks about the disguise Gandhism and practicing violence in the name of Gandhian principles and Brahman as its central character in the novel and *Sorrajem* undergoes all the oppression and sufferings of a Dalit women. The Marxist influence was clearly seen in the novel in different characters those who questions the feudal landlords and educate the Dalits from both the Mala and Madiga community and the result is their silence death without any details and evidence by the Kamma landlords. When we juxtapose Unnava's *Malapalli* with *Kadi* and *Sorrajem* Malapalli In Malapalli Gandhi elaborates the notion of hard work, dignity of labour, self sacrifice, hygiene as new cultural paradigms are discussed where as *Sorrajem* gives the picture

of Dalits emancipation and how they were exploited socially, economically and culturally. Sangadasu and Ramadasu are followers of Gandhian principle and noble savages of non violence and truth. Brahman in *Sorrajjem* is a Gandhian in disguise and a complete violent and feudal landlord who will even plots and kills people and makes enmity among the Dalit Mala and Madiga communities projecting himself as a pure Gandhian. Most of the incidents in *Malapalli*, *Kadi* take place during the pre-Independence struggle. with nationalism as pride and subject matter of the novels. In *Sorrajjem* the plight of a Dalit woman and the series of incidents which take place immediately after the Independence struggle. It was around mid 1980 that Dalit writing by the Dalit writers in Telugu literature had a new beginning and made its powerful presence felt through the fiction writing in Telugu. Many writers who were from the non academic and non literary back ground started writing about themselves and the real and lived experience of Madiga and Mala communities.

The Telugu Dalit literary world immediately recognized the arrival of new world of experience and a novel style. Before these new writers of generation there were very few Dalit writers and even they could not be described as Dalits, for their sensibility had very little in common with these new angry young men in Telugu literature it had sprouted a new genre of writing. The literature produced was written by Dalits class and the writers have the reality, innocence, and the straight forwardness of expression.

The writers came from different back ground and with different creative methods of subjects and expressive language of Dalits. In all the non-Dalit novels we have comparatively assessed the experience came from outside. We can call these writers as emotional and sympathetic human beings who are outsiders. They work on emotions, sympathy, pity, anger and melancholy was in

Malapalli, Kadi or Sorrajjem. Sometime even the value system of Dalits is interpreted wrongly in literature if it is written by non-Dalits. .

In *Antarani Vasantham* Dalits choose alternative methods to escape from oppression and caste identities through conversion and organizing themselves as cultural troupes. *Antarani Vasantham* is often the product of new generation of militant Dalits whose rejection of Hindu society is total. This point becomes clear when we compare Dalits now with Gandhi's Harijans in *Malapalli*, where Dalits are so staunch, naïve and non violent with their philosophy of life. In other words Sangadasu, in *Malapalli* or Balaiah in *Kaadi* or Sorrajjem in *Sorrajjem* represent entirely different sensibilities when compared with the characters in *Antarani Vasantham*. While Sorrajjem is soft and shrewd Prakasham in *Khaki Batukulu* is pure fire and defiance. Dalit writing is now a product of Ambedkarite vision of life. A strong sense of self respect and dignity informs the new style of writing among Dalits with using Dalit language and their culture as expressed in *Kakka* by Vemula Ellaiah. A feeling of intensity is created in his novel. *Kakka* underline caste identity and protagonists willingness to continue his profession by caste. The novel on Madiga community finely portrays the Madiga life and the writer opts novel as a tool of expression. *Sorrajjem* which was written during the Independence movement has the nationalistic spirit but *Kakka* written with the spirit of Madiga Dandora movement projecting Madigisation as predominant (Dalitisation) as an alternative to the upper caste ideology. The dialects used in the novels discussed in Dalit and non-Dalit perspective is in some form or the other is similar to languages spoken and written in Rayalaseema Andhra or the typical coastal Andhra dialect. The dialect employed in *Kakka* is written purely in Telangana dialect. The idea of being Dalit in *Kakka* is different. The social imaginary in Dalit intellectuals ignites the sense of identity to recapture their own history which is marginalized so far. The Dalit writers may

have failed to take the literary, cultural movement further. But the questions raised through literature are fresh and haunt the political movement.

As long as caste system continues, social discrimination too continues, and Dalit writing would also continue to be produced both by Dalits and non-Dalits in Indian society.

Work Cited

- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Kalekuri, Prasad. *Dalitha Sahityam*. Vijaywada: Dalitha Shtree Parishat, 1993.
- Krishnaiah .B. Ambedkar *Anantaram Dalitha Udayamala Sahityam*: Savallu. Hyderabad: Society and Education, 2011.
- Kalyan Rao, G. *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajjem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Labab Babu. Talluri. *Madigavari Charitra* Hyderabad: Kusumanjali Prachuranlu, 2001.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Manohar, Murali. D. *Dalits and their Religions*. New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2010.
- Malapalli: *Triumph of Sangha*. Trans by V.V.B. Rama Rao. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Mallaiah, Kaluva, and Sadanand Sarada.Ed. *Telangana Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra, 2005.
- Ramulu B.S. *Telangana Kathakulu Kathana Reethulu*. Hyderabad: Saamajika Tatvika Publications, 2008.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Navala: Puttuka Parinaamam*. Hyderabad: Abyudaya Rachaitala Sangam. 1996.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Chillara Devvulu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publishing, 1998.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, *1980 Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003.
- Reddy. K. Vishwanath. *Traditions and Trends*. Hyderabad: Prajashakti Book House, 2004.
- Reddy. K.V.Ramana. *Modern Trends in Telugu Literature*. Hyderabad: AILRC, 1999.
- Rao Mohan. *Khaki Batukulu*. Tenali: Pratyusha Publications, 1996.

Sujatha Reddy. Mudiganti. *Telangana Tolitaram Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Rohnam Publications, 2002.

Yellaiah, Vemula. *Kakka*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2000.

Yellaiah, Vemula. *Siddhi*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2005.

Yellaiah, Vemula. *Mulki*. Nalgonda: Gumpu Sahiti, 2011.

.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have tried to explore various responses and themes of suffering, struggle for social emancipation in the Telugu fiction produced by Dalit and non-Dalit writers. The theme used in pre and post-colonial Indian society examines evolution of the Telugu Dalit novel from the historical perspective. The thesis discusses portrayal of Dalit life in the Telugu fiction by the novelists with different social background. The novelists' ideology of social concern for the oppressed, time and space has impacted the themes chosen by them. The problem of social discrimination can be understood through close observation and interaction with the victims. Fictionalising the issue is an attempt of representation which is done by the non-Dalit writers through their literary works. At a later period Dalits as victims of social discrimination by caste reason have attempted to present their lived experiences through fiction in the language known to them. The thesis has explored different perspectives in the representation of the same social problem.

The process of dehumanization becomes more pronounced, corroding the entire society and establishing the supremacy over other values. The down trodden and marginal sections of the society are shown defying, silently or aggressively in the structure that oppresses them. These structures may be of the family, society, landlords, government or caste stigma. The themes and concepts are located in the context of oppression and exploitation with regard to marginalised communities. The experience of discrimination based on caste, especially the stigma of untouchability, never formed a part of the socio cultural and intellectual history of modern India. This thesis argues that the ideas against caste prejudices, the themes of self suffering and the lived experiences of Dalits provide ground for social protest. The writers also engaged with anti-

colonial nationalism of their times and other issues which are mainly juxtaposed with the caste and oppression.

The selected novels were written in different periods. The existing political condition also influenced the writer to fictionalize the issue. Malapally was written with the spirit of National Independence movement. The social issue is viewed through political lenses. Though factionalism, religion, nationalism, elections, droughts, the plight of Dalit women, children and child labour and other issues are common for all categories of society, Dalits were worst sufferers. The weak and oppressed were shown to defy the strong oppressing groups while being steeped in their cultural, social and individual pressures. The characters are as varied as the themes ranging from farmers, factory workers, unskilled workers, police department officials and landlords. Very often the protagonists of the novels are dynamic with a suggestion of change coming about as a result of their growth. The thesis also proposes that categorizing Dalit and non-Dalit works or writers, sometimes, may not look appropriate because all the novels of colonial period cannot be called the colonial in the ideological sense. During the colonial period, Dalit novels were written to suit the reader's sensibility. Similarly every Dalit novel in post colonial India cannot be called 'post-colonial'. One may still find the colonial Dalit novels in post-colonial India. Many of these novels do not necessarily create a counter discourse but create a representation as a change in Dalit writings in India. After India became independent, a very small section of Dalit population received modern education in schools and colleges.

The educated Dalits, though in a humiliating social environment, acquired knowledge. They had a great vision about their communities in political terms. Ambedkar's political critique of the Brahminical ideologies and Indian caste system provided a basis for a new world. Moreover,

Dalit consciousness in Telugu fiction cannot be said to have remained isolated from the 20th century itself. The mainstream literature has focused by and large on the social segregation of Dalits. The Dalit writers and activists have mobilized masses for assertion and protest in every social institution. Dalits have produced autobiographies and short stories apart from poetry.

Dalit writers choose direct method of presentation of their issues. Short stories and autobiographies are predominantly chosen for representation of their suffering. Literature produced by non-Dalit writers out of their sympathy cannot be true Dalit literature, which is not recognized as Dalit literature. True Dalit literature is one which is created by Dalits themselves in a way against caste prejudice. The thesis suggests further research investigations in Dalit writings and their receptions in different languages in India even which are unexplored and not reached the masses. Many scholars, more familiar with languages represented and unrepresented could trace the possibilities of finding new avenues of research in Dalit writings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

- Kalyan Rao, G. *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajjem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Rao Mohan. *Khaki Batukulu*. Tenali: Pratyusha Publications, 1996.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, *1980 Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003.
- Reddy, Venkatarami Sannapureddy. *Kadi*. Hyderabad Vishalandhra Publications, 1988
- V.V.B. Rama Rao. *Malapalli: Triumph of Sangha*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Kakka*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2000.

Secondary Sources:

- Ahmad, Aijaz. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature*. New Delhi: OUP, 1993.
- Adapa Satyanarayana. *Noorendla Dalitha Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust: 2009.
- Amarnath Prasad & M.B Gaijan Eds. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2012.
- Aloysius, G. *Nationalism without a Nation in India*. Delhi: OUP, 1997
- Aloysius. *Dalit Subaltern Emergence: Religion- Cultural Subjectivity*. New Delhi: Critical Quest, 2004.
- Aruna. *Elli*: New Syllabus Literature. Vijawada: Nagendra Press, 2001.
- Anand.S. *Touchable Tales: Publishing and Reading Dalit Literature*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2003
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Commuinites*. London: Verso, 1991.
- Braj Ranjan Mani. *Debrahamanising, History Dominance and Resistance in the Indian Society*, New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 2005.

- Braj.B Kachru. *Language in South Asia*. University of Illinois: 2008.
- Bharathi, Thummapudi. *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*. New Delhi: Kalpaz, 2008.
- Chakravarthy, Uma. “*Through another Lens: Men Women and Caste*” Translating Caste: Stories, Essays, and Criticism. New Delhi: Katha, 2002.
- Chava, Shivakoti. *Asuraganam*. Vijaywada: Srisaradha Publications, 1986.
- Chandra Shekar Reddy, Rachapalem. *1980 Taruvatha Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Rachana, 2002.
- Chowdary, B. Bhasker. *Jashuva: Jeevitakavitha Prasthanam*. Chittoor: Navata Publications, 1979.
- Chatterjee, Mary Searle, and Ursula Sharma.Eds. *Contextualising Caste Post Dumontion Approaches*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 2003.
- Dangle, Arjun. *Poisoned Bread*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005.
- Devaputra, Chilukuri. *Panchamam*. Hyderabad: Book Trust of Hyderabad, 1998.
- Dharmanna, Kusuma. *Makoddi Nalladorathanamu*. Hyderabad: Sahiti Nidhi, 1973.
- Ganguly, Debjani. *Caste and Dalit Lifeworlds: Postcolonial Perspectives*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2005.
- Gopal, Guru. *Dalit Cultural Movement and Dalit Politics in Maharashtra*. Mumbai: Vikas Adhyan Kendra, 1997.
- Ilaiah, Kancha. *Why I am not a Hindu*. Hyderabad: Samya, 2005.
- Innaiah, N. *Politics for Power: The role of Caste and Factions in Andhra Pradesh 1880-1980*. Hyderabad: Scientific Services, 1981.
- Jangaiah, Boya. *Dalitha Kathalu*, Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publish House 2011.
- James, Messy, *Indigenous People: Dalits*. New Delhi: Deluxe Universal Traders, 1998.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe. *Dr.Ambedkar and Untouchability: Analyzing and fighting Caste*. Delhi: Oreint BlackSwan, 2005.
- Jafferlot, Christophe. *India’s Silent Revolution: The rise of the Lower Castes in North India*. Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Joshua, Gurram. *Gabbilam: Bat*. Hyderabad: Joshua Foundation, 1998.

- Kamble, Baby. *The Prisons We Broke*. Trans by Maya Pandit. Chennai: Orient Longman, 2008.
- Kanakaiah, *Dalitha Samasyalu*. Hyderabad: Prajasahiti Book House, 2004
- Kalekuri, Prasad. *Dalitha Sahityam*. Vijaywada: Dalitha Shtree Parishat, 1993.
- Krishnaiah .B. Ambedkar *Anantaram Dalitha Udayamala Sahityam*: Savallu. Hyderabad: Society and Education, 2011.
- Kumar Raj. *Dalit Personal Narratives Reading Caste, Nation and Identity*. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swam, 2010.
- Kalyan Rao, G. *Antaranivasantham*. Hyderabad: Viplava Rachayeethala Sangam, 2008.
- Kutumba Rao Akkineni, *Sorrajjem*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Book House, 1981.
- Labab Babu. Talluri. *Madigavari Charitra* Hyderabad: Kusumanjali Prachuranlu, 2001.
- Limbale, Sharan Kumar. *Towards An Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2004.
- Laxminaryana, Unnava. *Malapalli*. Vijaywada: Jayanthi Publications, 1922.
- Manohar, Murali. D. *Dalits and their Religions*. New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2010.
- Malapalli: *Triumph of Sangha*. Trans by V.V.B. Rama Rao. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2008.
- Mallaiah, Kaluva , and Sadanand Sarada.Ed. *Telangana Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra, 2005.
- Malgatti. Aravind. *Government Brahamana*. (Trans) Dharani Devi Malgatti, Janet Vucinich and N. Subrayanam. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2007.
- Moon Vasant. *Growing Up Untouchables in India: A Dalit Autobiography*. New Delhi: Vistaar, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Early Novels in India*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Menon, Dilip. *The Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*. Pondicherry: Navayana, 2006.

- Michael, S.M. *Dalits in Modern India*. New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1999.
- Nagaraj, D.R. *Flaming Feet: A study of the Dalit Movement*. Bangalore: South Forum Press, 1993.
- Narayana. Reddy Sunki Reddy. *Bahuvachanam: Dalitha Bahujana Kavithvam*. Nalgonda: Nilagiri Sahiti, 1996.
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalit Visions: The anti caste- movement and the construction of Indian Identity*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1994..
- Omvedt, Gail. *Dalits and Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1994
- Prasad, Amarnath. *Dalit Literature: A Critical Exploration*. Sarup and Sons, 2007.
- Padma Rao, Katti. *Dalitha Sahityavadam Samajika Tatvam*. Hyderabad: Lokayata Publications, 2008.
- Pinakapani, *Nippulavagu*. Kurnool: Viplava Rachayitala Sangam, 2001.
- Purushottam. K. *Black Lillies*. New Delhi: Critical Quest, 2013.
- Ramulu B.S. *Telangana Kathakulu Kathana Reethulu*. Hyderabad: Saamajika Tatvika Publications, 2008.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Navala: Puttuka Parinaamam*. Hyderabad: Abyudaya Rachaitala Sangam. 1996.
- Rangacharya, Dasarathi. *Chillara Devvulu*. Hyderabad: Vishalandhra Publishing, 1998.
- Ranganayakulu. *Harijana Nayakudu*. Nidubrolu: Thata Mudraaksharasaala, 1993.
- Rao, Anupama. “Who is the Dalit? The Emergence of a New Political Subject” in Manu Bhagwan and Anne Feldhaus.ed. *Claiming Power from Below*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Raj M.C. *Kakapee: The self actualized Operation That Challenges the Genes of a cow’s Shit*. Publish America, 2009.
- Rajashekar. *Caste: A nation within the Nation*. Bangalore: Books for Change, 2007.
- Rajawat, Mamta. *Encyclopedia of Dalits in India*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2012.
- Ramakrishna Rao, Adapa. *Telugu Navala*. Hyderabad: Yuvabharathi, 1975.

- Rege Sharmila. *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonies*. New Delhi: Zubaan, 2006.
- Reddy Rachapalm Chandrasheker, 1980 *Telugu Dalitha Navala*. Hyderabad: Laxmi Graphics, 2003.
- Reddy. K. Vishwanath. *Traditions and Trends*. Hyderabad: Prajashakti Book House, 2004.
- Reddy. K.V.Ramana. *Modern Trends in Telugu Literature*. Hyderabad: AILRC, 1999.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Atanu Adavini Jayinchadu*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1985.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Chivari Gudise*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1993.
- Reddy, Kesava. *Moogavani Pillanagrovi*. Hyderabad: Reethika Publication, 1995.
- Rao, Varavara. *Prajalamanishi Oka Parichayam*. Hyderabad: Yuga Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Rao Mohan. *Khaki Batukulu*. Tenali: Pratyusha Publications, 1996.
- Rodrigues, Velerian. "Untouchability, Filth, and the Public Domain" in Gopal Guru Eds. *Humiliation: Claims and Context*. New Delhi: OUP, 2009.
- Satyanarayana S.V. Ed. *Dalithavaada Vivadaalu*. Hyderabad: Vishalaandhra, 2000.
- Satyanarayana, A. *Dalits and Upper Caste: Essays in Social History*. Delhi: Kanishka, 2005.
- Sitapati, G.V. *History of Telugu Literature*. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1968.
- Srinivasulu.K. *Caste, Class and Social Articulations in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories*. London: Overseas Development Institute, 2002
- Shah, Ganshyam. *Dalit Identity and Politics*. Sage Publications, 2001.
- Shyamala, Gogu. *Nallpoddu Dalita Strila Sahityam*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust, 2003.
- Shyamala, Gogu. *Nallaregatisallu*. Hyderabad: Sabbanda Maisawa Publications, 2006.
- Sarkar, Sumit. *Writing Social History*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Schmitthenner, Peter. *Telugu Resurgence C.P Brown and cultural consolidation in Nineteenth Century South India*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2001.
- Sharma, Ursula. *Caste Concepts in Social Sciences*: Delhi: Viva Books, 2002.

- Sharma, K.L. *Caste and Class in India*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 1994.
- Sujatha Reddy. Mudiganti. *Telangana Tolitaram Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Rohnam Publications, 2002.
- Sudhaker, Yendluri. *Mallemoggala Godugu: Maadiga Kathalu*. Hyderabad: Dandora Prachuranalu, 1999.
- Sudhaker, Yendluri. *Nalla Draksha Pandiri*. Secendrabad: JJ Prachranalu, 2002.
- Srinivas, M.N. *Social Change In Modern India*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswam, 1966.
- Swami. *Gaddaladatandayi*. Ananthapuram: Literary meet Prachuranalu, 1991.
- Uma. Alladi, Suneetha Rani, & Muralimanohar. Eds. *English in the Dalit Context*. New Delhi: Orient Black Swam, 2014
- Uma, Alladi. "Why teach these texts?" in Azagarasan, R., Bruce Bennet, et al Ed. *New Bearings in English Studies: A Festchrift for C.T Indra*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2008.
- Vidmahe, Kathyayani. *Telugu Navala Kathanika Vimarsana Parinamam*. Hyderabad: Charita Prachuranalu, 1995.
- Yagati Chinna Rao, *Andhra Pradesh Dalitha Udyama Charitra*. Hyderabad: Hyderabad Book Trust, 2007.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Kakka*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2000.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Siddhi*. Nalgonda: Gosangi Publications, 2005.
- Yellaiah, Vemula. *Mulki*. Nalgonda: Gumpu Sahiti, 2011.
- Zelliot, Eleanor. *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*. New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1996.

Web Sources

Articles:

Balagopal, K. 2000. A tangled web. Subdivision of SC reservation in Andhra Pradesh. *Economic & Political Weekly*, March 25, pp 1075-81.

The Dalit Movement and Democratization in Andhra Pradesh KY Ratnam East West Center Washington

<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/ewcwwp013pdf>. Vikalp Alternatives Aug 2005

Contextualising Dalit Movements in South India Selfhood, Culture, and Economy
<http://www.vakindia.org/archives/vikalp-Aug2005pdf>

Dalit and Naxalite Movements in AP Solidarity or Hegemony? Ajay Gudavarthy
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4417554>

Social Movements and Human Development in Andhra Pradesh
<http://www.aponline.gov.in/APportal/HumanDevelopmentReport2007>.

Perspectives on Dalit Cultural Movements Duke University Press
<http://cssame.dukejournals.org/cgi/pdf>

Writing caste <http://writingcaste.wordpress.com/2011/04/29>

Electronic web sources:

Aravind, Pillalamari “Charting New Territory Unnava’s Experiment in Telugu Realism”
<http://ata2006.eemaata.com>

The Dalit Movement and Democratization in Andhra Pradesh K.Y Ratnam East West Center Washington:

[http:// www.eastwest center.org/fileadmin/stored/html](http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/html); accessed on 2-03-11: for information on Dalit literature.

Contextualising Dalit Movements In South India, Selfhood, Culture and Economy:
<http://www.vakindia.org/archives/Vikalp-Aug2005/html>; accessed on 16-03-11 for information on Dalit literature.

Social Movements and Human Developments in Andhra Pradesh:
<http://www.aponline.gov.in/APportal/HumanDevelopmentReport2007/html>;
accessed on 2-05-11 for information on Dalit literature.

Perspectives on Dalit Cultural Movements: <http://cssame.dukejournals.org/egi/pdf/html>; accessed on 25-05-11 for information on Dalit literature.

Writing Caste: http://writingcaste.word_press.com/20/11/04/29/html; accessed on 28-05-11 for information on Dalit literature.

Dalit and Naxalite Movements in AP, Solidarity or Hegemony? Ajay Gudavarthy: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44417554/html>; accessed on 12-06-11 for information on Dalit literature.

Untouchables: The Children of Indi's Ghetto. <http://www.ambedkar.org/ambcd/22A.Untouchables%20orthe%20children%20of%20India's%20Ghetto%20PART%20I.htm>

Charsley, Simon R. & I. Narasaiah 2004. Jamba Puranam: a preliminary reading of a published 'caste myth'. http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/sociology/units/anthrop/dalit/jamba_puranam.htm

GLOSSARY

<i>Adiandhras</i>	: Adi-Andhra is a synonym for MALA or MADIGA.
<i>Chandals</i>	: A sub-caste amongst the shudras taken to be the lowest in the traditional Hindu caste hierarchy.
<i>Dalit</i>	: The "oppressed" in Marathi, is the self-chosen political name of the castes who were formerly considered "untouchable" according to the Hindu varna system. Though the name Dalit has been in existence since the nineteenth century it was Dr.B.R. Ambedkar who popularised the term. India's caste system assigns individuals a certain hierarchical status according to Hindu beliefs. Traditionally, there are four principal castes (divided into many sub-categories) and one category of people who fall outside the caste system—the Dalits.
<i>Dalitwada</i>	: Dalit hamlet or the Dalitwada in Indian village.
<i>Devadasis</i>	: A hereditary female dancer in a Hindu temple. 'Devadasis are a cursed community' Southern India's devadasi system, which 'dedicates' girls to a life of sex work in the name of religion.
<i>Dora</i>	: Uppercaste village cheif.
<i>Harijan</i>	: Harijan (translation: "Child of Hari/Vishnu") is a term popularized by Indian revolutionary leader Mohandas Gandhi for referring to Dalits, traditionally considered to be Untouchable.
<i>Jambapuram</i>	: The ancestral Madiga, and is generally termed the Jamba Purana.
<i>Kamma</i>	: Kamma (caste) is a South Indian Dravidian caste. During the British Raj, the Kammas were considered to be "upper Shudra", along with the Reddy and Velama castes, under the varna system of Brahmanic ritual ranking.
<i>Karma</i>	: In Hinduism and Buddhism, the sum of a person's actions in this and previous states of existence, viewed as deciding their fate in future existences.
<i>Lathi</i>	: In South Asia, a long, heavy iron-bound bamboo stick used as a weapon, especially by police.
<i>Madiga</i>	: Madiga (also known as Maadiga, Maadigar, Maadar, Maatangi, Makkalu, Madigowd and Madigaru) is a Scheduled Caste that is found primarily in the southern Indian states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharastra and Tamil Nadu.

<i>Mahasabha</i>	: Mahasabha (Sanskrit) [from maha great + sabha assembly, gathering, collection, bundle].
<i>Mala</i>	∴ Mala or Malla (different from the family/last name Malla from Andhra) is a social group or caste mostly from the south Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Mala is derived from the Sanskrit malla, which means wrestler. They are one of the dominant Dalit castes in Andhra Pradesh, the other being Madigas.
<i>Mandal</i>	: A tehsil or tahsil/tahasil, also known as taluk (or taluq/taluka) or mandal, is an administrative division of some countries of South Asia.
<i>Matangis</i>	: Matangi is one of the Mahavidyas, ten Tantric goddesses and a ferocious aspect of Devi, the Hindu Divine Mother. She is considered to be the Tantric form of Sarasvati, the goddess of music and learning.
<i>Naxalite</i>	: In South Asia, a member of an armed revolutionary group advocating Maoist communism. A Naxal or Naxalite is a member of any of the Communist guerrilla groups in India, mostly associated with the Communist Party of India (Maoist).
<i>Panchama</i>	: Dalits were considered by upper castes to be outside the Varna or caste system. They were considered as Panchama or the fifth group, beyond the upper caste proposed fourfold division of Indian people.
<i>Patel</i>	: Patel is a trade name and previous caste of landowners, farmers and village leaders.
<i>Pujari</i>	: A Hindu priest.
<i>Reddys</i>	: Reddy (also transliterated as Reddi, Reddiar, Reddappa, Reddy) is a caste that originated in India, predominantly settled in Andhra Pradesh. They are classified as a forward caste.
<i>Sarpanch</i>	: The head of a village.
<i>Shudras</i>	: Shudra is the fourth varna, whose mythological origins are described in the Purusha Sukta of the Rig veda, one of the sacred texts of Hinduism, and later explained in the Manusmriti.
<i>Yoke</i>	: A wooden crosspiece that is fastened over the necks of two animals and attached to the plough or cart that they are to pull.