



**POSTCOLONIALISM AND
SUBALTERN STUDIES:
AN INTRODUCTION**

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**MARGILIZATION AND OPPRESSION OF DALIT WOMEN IN SHARAN
KUMAR LIMBALE'S AKKAMASHI**

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ABSTRACT

Akkamashi is written by Sharankumar Limbale in 1984 in Marathi version. It is translated as the out caste by Santhosh Bhoomkar in English in 2003. It is about an untouchable family in general and community struggles, Akkamashi means one who is an outcaste illegitimate and used only for an abuse. Whenever the boy is born with the parents of different caste or religion, he is Akkamashi. Sharankumar Limbale is regarded as the most prolific writers of contemporary literature. The outcaste exposes the undermining role of women in so called male- dominated society. It also highlights the crucial circumstances in which women are sexually abused and exploited.

Keywords: Outcaste, Abused, Exploited, Illegitimate, Contemporary

Dalit feminism mainly focuses on the number of the dalit women who are dually oppressed on the basis of caste and gender in the society. It analyses oppression of dalit women as triple oppression by double patriarchies e.g. Discriminative patriarchy of their own caste and overlapping patriarchy of the dominant upper caste people in the society. The most common phenomena is that women have the second position in the society compared to men and they are voiceless and submissive the main cause is due to their subjugation and harassment. The so-called high-class women are also marginalized in the society. But the difference here between the dalit women and the upper-class women is that the dalit women are double marginalized by the society because of her gender and caste. The lower caste women have raised their voice in their writings and depicted their own violent and brutal experiences in the society. Their resistance against the male dominated society can be seen in their own literature known as Dalit Feminist Literature.

Dalit literature is to emphasize women as the victims of sexual exploitation. The women particularly the dalit women are molested, raped, assaulted and burnt alive in the society without a proper reason. The author narrates about how the couple Kamble and Masamai are discriminated and exploited. Kamble is the mother of two children. Masami's husband is a farm worker who works on a yearly contract for eight hundred rupees to Hanmantha Limbale, an upper caste land lord. Hanmantha ruined the poor family and it led to the separation of the couples. Hanmantha and Masamai lived together and she gave birth to Sharan kumar Limbale. She was given a rented house at Akkalkot. After the birth of Sharan, Hanmantha started neglecting her. So, Masami had to take shelter in the house of Shantama. Later Masami becomes the wife of Yeshwantro patil. Masami is portrayed as the victim of social disorder. Which makes the dalit women an easy prey to the licentious upper caste landlords. Masamai's life speaks about how the poor dalit families were destroyed and women were exploited under the patriarchal system.

Devki, the midwife who helps in the abortion of children in the society born due to illegal affair. She finds herself pregnant and could not operate. She gave birth to a baby and buried it under the garbage. The author comments " I could see the resemblance between a sow eating her own piglet and Devki"(67). Sharan Kumar exposes the bitter tragedy of lower caste women. He portrays the mute voices suppressed under the mansions in rural areas. Santamai is another humiliated and ill-fated woman. She is mother of Masami. Though Widow she loves Mohammad Dastagir Jamadar. He has illegal relationship with her. He works as porter at the bus stand. Santamai is Mahar and he is muslim. Starvation is the common concept which keeps them together throughout the life. It becomes difficult for Sharan Kumar to explain their relationship to his relatives after marriage and friends during college days.

The sexual exploitation of daughter by father would be the worst kind of exploitation in Hindu society. Dhanava, the young daughter of Shankar. Her husband had died due to lightning. She was living with her father. Dhanava becomes the victim of lust and becomes pregnant. His illicit act is justified " I have sown the seed from which she has grown as a plant, Now why shouldn't eat the fruits of this plant?"(67). In this process women are the ultimate sufferers since they have to carry the fruit of conception to their womb thus making it visible and thus face the wrath of the community. Dhanava pleaded Devi to abort her, she had kept her pregnancy secret for

a long period. But Devki could not help her. She used to cry and sense of guilt couldn't allow her to live a happy life. Shankar had broken the future of his own daughter. It explores how women are not secured at their home. Women have the subject of exploitation.

Akkamashi portrays the real picture of down trodden women who are used as the sex satisfying objects. Sexual politics is highly charged for women are seen in the act of Hanmanta Patil, Yeshwantrao and Shankar. The position of women is pitiful and humiliating. It is a worldwide Dalit autobiography written by Sharan Kumar Limbale. He described about the pathetic condition of not having an identity, a home or place of belonging.

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