

Voice of Protest Through the Selected Poems of Daya Pawar and Arjun Dangle

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Mostly people are marginalised in the name of sex, religion, race and caste. Caste plays a major role in all the nook and corner of India. The four tiers in the Varna system are based on the profession the people undertook. The four tiers of Varna system are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Among the four tiers, Shudras who are the laborers and service providers occupy the least cadre. Communities that come under the four tiers of Varna are termed as Savarna. Dalit and Scheduled Tribes who do not belong to any of the four tiers of Varna system are referred as Avarna. These people are commonly called as marginalised as they suffered a lot in the name of untouchability. Many writers echoed their agonies. The famous Dalit poet Daya Pawar expressed the sufferings of Mahar community that he belongs to. This paper is an attempt to convey the plight of marginalised people through the translated poems of Daya Pawar and Arjun Dangle. These writers wrote their experiences as they belong to the same marginalised community. Hence these translated poems vividly describe the sufferings of the marginalised community.

In Marathi, the word 'Dalit' refers to "the spurned" . The term was specially coined to refer Untouchables in 1930. Dalit Literature refers to the works that talk about the people who were looked down by others. They faced many sufferings and spurned in the name of 'Untouchables'. Now, this term also indicates Harijans (Mahar), Mangs, Mallas, Chambar and Pulayas. The sufferings of the people are unimaginable. The sufferings of the people are unimaginable.

The poem "You wrote from Los Angeles" is penned by Daya Pawar. He is an Indian Marathi author. He is a poet who is known for his contributions to Dalit literature. He has gained fame from his autobiographical novel Baluta (1978). In this poem "You wrote from Los Angeles", Daya Pawar shows his anger towards the people by whom the Dalits were suppressed and ill treated. The Poet feels satisfied by seeing the Indians being ill treated as curs by the white people in a foreign land. He feels good that the same abuse was experienced by an upper class man when he is alive. The Lower class people were treated as dogs. Now the poet feels relief and happy on seeing the Indians going to foreign countries and suffering under the domination of white men.

When the poet remembers the days of suffering under the upper class people, He feels like thousand scorpions stinging him. Now he feels like he has taken revenge on them and so he feels satisfied.

*“Now you’ve had a taste of what we’ve suffered
In this country from generation to generation.”*

Such were the agonies of Dalits. Another renowned Marathi writer Arjun Dangle also has poignantly penned it in his poem “Revolution”. It registers a harrowing picture of their wretchedness in this poem. If a Dalit man walks in an upper class area, he has to be tied with a broom on his butt to wipe away his footprints.

*“We used to be their friends
When, clay pots hung from our necks;
Brooms tied to our rumps;
We made our rounds through the Upper Lane
Calling, “Ma –bap, Johar, Ma-bap”
...
Burn burn those who strike at tradition”*

Such was the cruelty Dalits have faced and the Marathi Dalit writers have recorded it in their own language.

The Poem “Oh! Great Poet” by Daya Pawar also talks about the sufferings of marginalised people. Here, Pawar attacks the great poet Valmiki, who is well known for his epic poem “Ramayana”. Valmiki belongs to Dalit Community. But Daya pawar chides Valmiki that he failed to register the sufferings of Dalit community. He is angry towards Valmiki that he knew the plight and sufferings of his people but failed to write a single verse in favour of the community that he belonged to. In “Ramayana”, Valmiki lamented for the death of Heron, but he hasn’t written a single verse for Dalit people. The poet recalls the sufferings of Dalit people. They are not allowed to mingle with others. They haven’t tasted happiness or seen colourful days in their life. Valmiki very well knows that his people are fighting for their freedom. But he hasn’t written poems that talk about their sufferings. So, Daya pawar reprimands Valmiki that he cannot be considered a great poet.

*“Oh great poet,
How then would we call you a great poet?
Had you written jus a single verse
Exposing this injustice, this outrage-
Then would your name have been carved in our hearts.”*

The poet also talks about the historically inaccurate slaughter of Shambuk, who is a Shudhra saint. It was said that Shambuk underwent penance and devoted his life to God and so Lord Rama Killed him. Rama belonged to an upper class society and he killed Shambuk as he performed penance being a man of lower class. The poet questions Valmiki for writing poems for the upper class people. The poet finally ended the poem that if Valmiki had written a single verse for them, they would've carved his name in their hearts.

In the poem 'Hiroshima', the poet compares people's anger to the atomic bomb blast at Hiroshima. Marginalised people are kept in a separate place which has no bright light. They long for love and care which are rejected to them. They are able to experience only the cruelty. They have none to guide them. They at times laugh out of their hearts, but their happiness do not last for a long time. It is quickly wiped off by the upper class people. They are given a place to walk which seems to be a meadow but actually it is a moss. They are left in an infertile place. They are made to stay in a small space where they feel like someone strangling them. They long for good air but they are choked to death. They do not even have freedom to breathe. The poet says that they are ready to die in mass instead of suffering alive amidst the inhumane people of upper class society.

*"A wave of superficial laughter
Even this is wiped away
...
In lush green moss
My feet are deceived."*

The Marathi poets Daya Pawar and Arjun Dangle have fumingly penned their torments as a Dalit under the suppression of upper class people. They expressed their pain in thier mother tongue and they are translated by various translators. Though these poems of Daya Pawar and Arjun Dangle are translated, the readers are able empathize the pain of the Dalits. This shows that these poems were translated by efficient translators who are able to reproduce the essence of the poem. These poems are good examples for a good sense for sense translation.

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