

Anna Bhau Sathe: Man and his works

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Abstract:

Anna Bhau Sathe is the glittering gold in the wealth of Dalit literature. He was a novelist, short story writer, poet, social reformer and activist. He belonged to the lower class of society according to Hindu religion. He was born in the ‘Mang’ or ‘Matang’ community in Maharashtra. His literature received world -wide popularity. His variety of themes, characters, narration and aesthetic sense make him special in writing. He wrote philosophical and artistic writings about social and economical condition of social marginalized groups that of Dalits, beggars, criminals and farmers etc.

Keywords: Dalit, Matang, Philosophical, Aesthetic, Religion, Marginalize

Introduction:

Anna Bhau Sathe, the versatile writer in Indian literature. His novels, short stories, poems are concerned with the people who are living their life out of the main stream of the social system. Anna Bhau Sathe is the son of Maharashtra, he was born in Sangli District. He has credited 32 novels, 22 short stories, 16 dramas, folk songs and poems. Anna Bhau was a literary genius; his literature depicts painful suffering of the Dalit community because of social discrimination. He holds the pen against poverty, illiteracy, exploitation, humiliation and caste. His work considered as the source of inspiration, guidance and representation for the modern generation in literary world. Though brought up in educationally backward condition, he reached at the first rank of Indian literary writers.

Anna Bhau Sathe was Communist by thought in the early phase of life. His speeches on the depressed class and untouchables were effective. In first Dalit Literary conference in Bombay, as the chairman he spoke, “The earth is not situated

on the cobra's head; it is on the hand of Dalits and workers. He admired workers who lead the country to the development. He admired the work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and followed his teaching. He praised Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and his work as "*Jag Badal Ghalun Ghav, Sangun Gele Bhimrao*" means to change the world in one stroke. Since the impact of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's thought and teaching on the Anna Bhau, he plunged into social movements.

His writings depict oppressed class of people those are scattered in the different social lower groups. They are downtrodden, ignorant, untouchable, exploited usually called Dalit community. Anna Bhau exposes the social injustice, poverty, illiteracy and superstition in writings. He has realized the importance of education and teaching of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Anna Bhau's *Fakira*, the world famous novel published in 1961. This novel received Maharashtra State Award in novel category. This novel presented the story of protagonist Fakira of 'Mang' community. Anna Bhau exhibited the realistic, honest, brave, loyal characteristic of the community. It is a story of Fakira Ranoji Mang, Anna's real maternal uncle. In his preface to the novel, Anna records that when he was born just a few days' ago, one midnight, riding a horse, Fakira came to Anna's house and from the back of the horse itself inquired about well-being of the Sathe family. When he was told that a male child (who later on came to be known as Anna Bhau Sathe) was born to her sister, he gave them two handfuls of silver coins which he had looted from the British treasury, asked them to take care of the child and the child's mother and rode away the galloping horse (*Page-85, Literature of Marginality*).

Fakira belong to the poor and depressed class, he fought to serve them. He saw that it was difficult to survive life in pandemic, fever and hunger. Downtrodden, oppressed people who lived in poverty could not manage their food. They were dying by hunger. Fakira decided to help such people; he started robbing grain storage and British treasures. He distributed looted grains and silver coins among the poor and needy of the villages. He decided to survive such people in any cost. AnnaBhau exhibited the courageous, heroic and elegant characters in writings. These characters fought against injustice, inequality, discrimination on different aspects. Characters like Fakira and others stand as a wall to save their community. Dr. P. K Atre, one of the great writers in Marathi literature divides Anna's writings into "These stories are of those who fight for livingThe blood that flows through veins of them all is of fighter type. Each one of them wants to live honorably. Against offensive forces they apply their full strength with a view to be victorious ...Their chests are always ready to receive strokes....Through all these stories Maharashtra temperament is evident."(P. K Atre, *Kulwadi*)

Anna Bahu Sathé expresses the power, strength and attachment of the characters to their community. The stories depict the characters of good human beings; they are workaholic, courageous, caring to nature which makes them more conscious about their family, class, community, village, land and animals. The community lived outside the village surrounded by natural diversity. They are close to the nature; know herbal medicine, conservation of grain seeds and cultivation of land. They are physically and emotionally attached to work and land but they are landless. They are working on the land from the ages possessed by landlords. Anna Bahu was worried about the condition of Dalits, he had experienced the inhuman caste system, poverty, pandemic and famine in rural area. He faced and experienced worse life in Bombay. He saw hunger, poverty, slum, crime become the part of life of the urban people. They worked like machine with fewer wages. They could not manage their daily needs for family. Company workers did not receive primary facilities like shelter, water, education, medical and food. The condition of the rural is similar to urban Dalit. They are exploited by the social and religious obligation in villages and company owner in cities. He believed on the Marxist theory of equal distribution of profit. His active participation in Marxist movements in early period was significant.

Anna Bahu wrote literature for transformation in society. He tried to eradicate caste system, social injustice, and economical differences. *Fakira* is the story of brave warrior of the Dalit community against brutal ruler, poverty and famine.

Anna Bahu's *Chandan, Chitra, Mayura and Chikhaliatil Kamal* are novels and its stories based on the caste discrimination, socialism. Anna Bahu says, "Don't live like animals, believe on your wrest and fight against social injustice". He has incorporated his courageous and powerful thought into literary writings.

Anna Bahu's *Vaijayanta* published in 1961. He has presented Maharashtra folk music and dance (*Tamasha*). In this group, there are actors from different social classes like Mahar, Mang, Bramhin and Maratha. This novel narrates the female artists in tamasha who were physically, sexually and emotionally exploited. They performed on stage unwillingly due to family care and helplessness. In the novel Gajarabai is a tamasha dancer but as she gets old, she is unable to perform as she did in youth. Because of old age, she is insulted by rival dancer namely Chandra. Gajarabai's daughter Vaijayanta forced to perform and defeat Chandra once to take a revenge of mother's insult. Vaijayanta defeated Chandra but continued performance in Tamasha due to shortage of money. Gajarabai tried to keep away her daughter from Tamasha but unfortunately Vaijayanta continued. At the end Vaijayanta managed to leave Tamasha and marry with Uma and live happy life. Tamasha is the group of actors, lady dancers of different social classes. They performed together in folk

music; they live and eat together as family. This is the best example of social integrity. Anna Bhau's folk song, music and art are popular form in Maharashtra's culture. It was neglected in British rule but got fame and publicity in recent time.

He has attempted different story in "*Alguj*" which was published in 1974. There is a love story of Rangu and Bapu Kharwate. Rangu belong to the rich family whereas Bapu is a servant. Rangu loves Bapu and his flute melody. They have many difficulties to get marry. At the end they succeed and live happily.

Anna Bhau's novel "*Chitra*" published in 1945, narrates the story of dreadful condition of Bombay city. It shows the effect on the sexual morality of the people in city. The story covers the story of women trafficking in sexual business. Women were physically exploited in industrial city to make money by the gangs of goon. The business is increasing as industry increases. Chitra, the protagonist escaped from the hand of her maternal uncle who forced her into prostitution. She managed to marry with a communist activist and saved her life. Anna Bhau depicts realistic, terrible condition of Dalit women in the novel.

Anna Bhau's "Ramoshi" in *Kulwadi*, "Savala Mang" in *KrishnaKathachya Katha*, "Farari" in *Jivant Kadtus* and in *Swapnasunday*, "Nilu Mang" in *Jivnt Kadtus* is pen-portrait of a courageous but basically a humble person.

Anna Bhau has social consciousness; he tried to aware marginalized people in writings. His writings depict real and awful life of marginalized people of society. His literary work is real presentation of poverty, exploitation, social injustice and industrialization in one side and education, awareness, bravery, loyalty, love and social activist in another side.

Conclusion

Anna Bhau revolts against the class and caste discrimination through writings. He believed that social revolution is possible with the thoughts of Dr. Babsaheb Ambedkar and his social movements. His writings expose social discrimination, religious bondage, social slavery, hunger and women trafficking. He expresses pain, curse and injustice of marginalized class.

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