

**Manifestation of Humanization and Dehumanization of Dalits in the Novels of**

**Mulkraj Anand and Sharankumar Limbale**

**Darsana.S**

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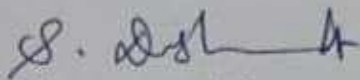
## DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Manifestation of Humanization and Dehumanization of Dalits in the Novels of Mulkraj Anand and Sharankumar Limbale** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.,)** is a dissertation carried out by me **Darsana.S.** during the period from **JANUARY 2024-MAY 2024** under the guidance of **Dr. S. Devashanthi** Assistant Professor and Head of the department (i/c) Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, and, has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.

**Signature of the Candidate**

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Manifestation of Humanization and Dehumanization of Dalits in the Novels of Mulkraj Anand and Sharankumar Limbale** submitted, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.,)** is a dissertation carried out by **DARSANA S.** during the period of her study from **JANUARY 2024 - MAY 2024** , under the guidance of **Dr. S. Devashanthi** Assistant Professor, Head of the Department of English (i/c), Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (SF), Coimbatore, and, has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associate ship, Fellowship or similar Titles in this University or any other University or other similar Institutions of Higher Learning.



Signature of the


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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyse how both authors use their narratives to manifest humanization by giving voice and agency to their Dalit characters and dehumanization by exposing the systemic injustices that rob these characters of their dignity and humanity. This dual analysis seeks to uncover deeper insights into the socio-political underpinnings of caste-based discrimination and the literary strategies employed to challenge it. Through a comparative study, the research will delve into the effectiveness and impact of these literary portrayals in fostering a better understanding of the Dalit experience and in advocating for social change. In the novel *Untouchable*, the manifestation of Dalits is vividly portrayed through the protagonist Bakha, a young sweeper who experiences the brutal realities of caste oppression. Anand's narrative delves deeply into a single day in Bakha's life, revealing the acute social and psychological repercussions of untouchability. The novel exposes the systemic dehumanization faced by Dalits through social ostracism, physical segregation, and economic exploitation, highlighting the harsh daily encounters that reinforce their marginalized status.

Simultaneously, "*Untouchable*" also illuminates moments of humanization where Bakha's aspirations and interactions reveal his intrinsic humanity. Anand skilfully juxtaposes Bakha's suffering with his dreams and desires, which resonate with universal human emotions, challenging the readers' perceptions of Dalits as mere victims. Through Bakha's engagement with figures from various socio-political backgrounds, including a Christian missionary and members of the upper caste advocating social reform, Anand suggests potential pathways for societal change and upliftment of Dalits.

In Sharankumar Limbale's *Outcaste*, the manifestation of Dalits is explored through a poignant autobiographical account that intersects personal narrative with broader socio-political analysis. The book details Limbale's own experiences as an "*outcaste*" in post-independence India, offering a raw and unfiltered look into the complexities of Dalit identity in a caste-ridden society. Limbale exposes the multifaceted nature of dehumanization that Dalits endure, encompassing not only social exclusion and economic deprivation but also the emotional and psychological trauma that accompanies such marginalization.

"*Outcaste*" not only documents the adversities faced by Dalits but also illustrates the potential for transformation through self-awareness, education, and activism, thereby contributing to the on-going discourse on caste and social justice in contemporary India. Limbale uses his life story as a tool for social criticism and change, highlighting the role of autobiographical narratives in the larger movement for Dalit emancipation.

"*Untouchable*" vividly portrays the grim realities faced by Dalits; it also embeds within its narrative strands of hope through social reform, religious conversion, and technological advancement, suggesting pathways towards dignity and equality.

"*Outcaste*" not only confronts the despair and degradation associated with caste discrimination but also promotes a vision of hope through education, literary expression, and social activism. These elements collectively contribute to a narrative that champions the potential for individual and collective agency among Dalits in their struggle for dignity and social equality.

## NOTES

In the text, abbreviation is used for the name of the primary text in the parenthetical references which are as follows:

- Untouchable            UT
- Outcaste                OC

References to the pages of the secondary sources are also given parenthetically.

## INTRODUCTION

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”

- Maya Angelou

Literature is the body of written works acknowledged for their aesthetic, cultural, or intellectual significance. The Latin word "literature," which itself derives from "litter," which means "letter," is where the word Literature originates. The definition has changed over time to refer to writings regarded as artistic, particularly poetry, drama, and prose fiction. The depth of Literature's aesthetic, thematic, and philosophical reflections on the complexity of human life and imagination makes it valuable. It includes creatively intended oral and written expression that explores a range of facets of life and the human experience using a structured vocabulary meant to arouse feelings, spark reflection, and shed light on the facts. Literature transcends cultures and eras however, the definition of literature changes from generation to generation. Identifying the significance of life is made possible through Literature.

Literature gives a chance to learn about many cultures, viewpoints, and experiences, which helps to develop a more comprehensive awareness of the world. Literature also provides a window into the human condition that enables the investigation of ideas like love, sorrow, and tenacity. It develops a more profound feeling of empathy and compassion for other people by being fully engrossed in the lives and tales of individuals. Literature is an open-ended linguistic socio-cultural entity. The meanings are extracted in various ways. There are several approaches to making meaning from any literary discourse. The approaches are mainly divided into four categories. Author-oriented, text-oriented, context-oriented, and reader-oriented.

Literature not only helps people feel better emotionally, but it also helps them grow intellectually. Improve the vocabulary by stimulating people's minds. Literature assists in

comprehending and interpreting the whole work and discovering the significance and meaning of people's lives. Life is incomplete without Literature. People learn new things and find inspiration, advice, peace, and comfort through reading. Literature makes the ability to think critically, imaginatively, creatively, and experience positive emotions possible, offering a platform for intellectual and emotional development. Henceforth, Literature plays a crucial part in altering society's worldviews. Through Literature, people investigate and comprehend their experiences, emotions, and the world around them. It educates people on hardships and victories while also assisting us in realizing the values of the human condition and empathy. Literature enables us to identify our life purpose and understand the world's complexity. Literature encourages people to ponder life's great realities, universe, and existence.

Literature serves as a vehicle for transmitting culture, traditions, and history from generation to generation. Literature delves into the complexity of human nature, emotions, and relationships. It allows leaders to explore different aspects of human life, including love, loss, courage, fear, and the quest for identity. Many works of Literature are social commentary that critiques societal norms, political systems, and injustice. Literature offers solace and understanding for the struggling community and helps to encounter alienation, which is indeed a therapy to move on from personal and psychological issues.

Literature has transcended from mere entertainment; it is a vital component of human culture and intellectual life, shaping individual consciousness and societal structure. The origin of Literature is deeply rooted in the human propensity for storytelling, which dates back to ancient times, even before the invention of writing. Early forms of Literature were primarily oral, including myths, legends, fables, and epics, recited or sung by storytellers and passed down through generations. These stories served various purposes: they entertained, preserved cultural heritage, imparted moral lessons, and explained natural phenomena or the universe's

origins. The transition from oral to written Literature began with the invention of writing systems. The earliest known forms of written Literature are from ancient civilizations around the 4th BCE. For example, *The Sumerians of ancient Mesopotamia* are credited with creating one of the earliest writing systems, cuneiform, and *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, one of the oldest known epic poems that have survived.

Ancient Egypt also contributed to early written Literature, with texts such as the Pyramid Texts and the *Book of the Dead*, which are religious and funerary writings. In ancient India, Literature flourished with the composition of the Vedas, a large body of religious texts, and epic poems like *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. Ancient China saw the emergence of profound philosophical texts during the Zhou dynasty, including the works of Confucius and Laozi. Ancient Greece played a pivotal role in developing Literature in the Western world, producing foundational works of Western Literature such as Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey* and the tragedies and comedies of playwrights like Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. These early works laid the groundwork for developing various literary genres and traditions that have evolved over centuries, reflecting the diverse cultures, languages, and historical contexts from which they emerged. Literature has since become a vast and multifaceted field, encompassing everything from poetry, fiction, and drama to essays, biographies, and beyond, continuing to shape and be shaped by human society.

Literature is a repository of human knowledge, beliefs, and values, allowing cultures to preserve their heritage and traditions. Literature transmits one generation's philosophies, moral values, and historical narratives to the following through stories, poems, and plays, fostering a sense of identity and continuity. It is a powerful tool for education, not only in language skills but also in critical thinking and empathy. It exposes readers to complex situations and moral dilemmas, prompting them to consider different perspectives and develop the ability to analyze

and question. Literature explores the breadth of human experience, offering insights into emotions, relationships, and social structures. It delves into themes of love, loss, identity, conflict, and redemption, providing a deeper understanding of the human condition and the complexities of life. Reading Literature allows individuals to live vicariously through characters from diverse backgrounds and periods, fostering empathy and emotional intelligence.

It challenges conventional thinking and encourages pursuing original ideas, contributing to artistic, technological, and scientific advancements. Engagement with Literature enriches language skills, expands vocabulary, and improves comprehension and expression. It enhances one's ability to communicate effectively, articulate thoughts and emotions, and appreciate the nuances of language.

Many works of Literature serve as social critiques, highlighting injustices, questioning societal norms, and advocating for change. They raise voices against social issues, stimulate public discourse, and inspire collective action towards a more equitable society. The origins of Indian Literature can be traced back to classical times, accompanied by roots deeply submerged in the country's rich and diverse cultural and linguistic heritage. Indian Literature is one of the oldest in the world, characterized by various languages, genres, and themes that reflect the vastness of Indian civilization.

The earliest phase of Indian Literature is the Vedic period, known as *The Vedas* (1500-500BCE), a collection of religious texts in Sanskrit. These texts, including the *Rig-Veda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda*, and *Atharvaveda*, contained hymns, rituals, and philosophies that founded Indian culture and Hinduism.

Following the Vedic period, classical Sanskrit Literature (500 BCE to 1100 CE) flourished, producing a vast array of poetry, drama, and prose. The significant works from this

period include the epic poems "*Mahabharata*" and "*Ramayana*" by Vyasa and Valmiki, respectively. The "*Mahabharata*" is one of world literature's most prominent epic poems, including the *Bhagavad Gita*, the sacred text of Hindu philosophy. The *Ramayana* narrates the life and adventures of Prince Rama.

Consequently, in the Sanskrit tradition, Tamil Sangam literature (300 BCE to 300 CE) represented the earliest body of secular Literature in South India. It is composed of poems that deal with various aspects of life, including love, valor, ethics, and governance. The Sangam literature is a significant source of information on ancient Tamil society's social, political, and cultural history. *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* were the two great Indian epics forming a crucial part of Indian literary heritage. The *Mahabharata*, attributed to Vyasa, is the longest epic poem in the world and contains the *Bhagavad Gita*, a seminal Hindu text. The *Ramayana*, attributed to Valmiki, narrates" the life of Lord Rama and his pursuit to redeem his wife Sita from the demon king Ravana."

During the first millennium C.E., Buddhist and Jain literature they contributed significantly to Indian Literature. Buddhist texts were primarily written in Pali and Sanskrit, including the Tripitaka, Jataka tales, and other philosophical works. Jain Literature, written in Prakrit, includes texts like the *Agamas* and *the Kalpasutra*, focusing on the teachings of the Tirthankaras. The decline of Sanskrit as a dominant literary language paved the way for regional languages to emerge as significant literary mediums, each contributing richly to the diversity of Indian Literature.

Medieval Literature encompasses a wide array of works produced during the middle Ages, roughly between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the late 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. It includes a diverse range of texts written in various languages and dialects, each reflecting the period's cultural, social, and religious preoccupation. Much of medieval Literature is deeply infused with Christian themes.

Works often explored religious morals, biblical stories, and the lives of saints. For instance, Dante Alighieri's "*Divine Comedy*," saw the rise of Literature in various regional languages such as Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Bengali, Marathi, Oriya, Gujarati, and Punjabi. This era was the composition of devotional texts like the Bhakti and Sufi literature, emphasizing devotion and personal connection with the divine.

Modern Literature, typically produced during the late 19th and 20th centuries, reflects various complex changes in themes, techniques, and content. It often moves away from the straightforward narratives and traditional forms of earlier periods to embrace new and experimental approaches in style and structure. The new literary forms, including novels, short stories, and essays, were influenced by Western literary traditions. This period also saw the rise of English literature by Indian authors. Indian Literature during the post-colonial periods is significant in the global cultural landscape due to its vast diversity, historical depth, and profound philosophical insights.

Indian Literature has served as a medium for social and political commentary, reflecting the societal norms, challenges, and changes occurring within the country. Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, Arundhati Roy, and many others have used their works to critique social injustices, colonialism, and other pressing issues to promote awareness and advocate for change.

Indian Literature has considerably impacted the global stage, influencing literary traditions and thought leaders worldwide. The Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Rabindranath Tagore in 1913 for his work "*Gitanjali*" is a testament to this influence. Moreover, the growing popularity of Indian English Literature in the global market has brought contemporary Indian culture, issues, and perspectives to a worldwide audience.

Much of Indian Literature was transmitted orally, particularly in its earliest forms. This oral tradition has preserved ancient stories, philosophies, and cultures passed across generations, ensuring their survival even today. Significant writers across different periods and languages in Indian Literature are from ancient and medieval periods. Kalidasa was considered one of the greatest Sanskrit poets and dramatists, known for works like "*Shakuntala*" and "*Meghaduta*." The "*Ramayana*," one of the two great Sanskrit epics of ancient India, was written by Valmiki. Vyasa is credited with composing the other major Sanskrit epic, "*Mahabharata*," which includes the "*Bhagavad Gita*."

In the Modern Period (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century), Rabindranath Tagore, a Bengali polymath, renovated Bengali literature, music, and Indian art accompanied by Contextual Modernism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was the first non-European to win the Nobel Literature Prize in 1913. Munshi Premchand, one of the greatest Hindi-Urdu writers, was known for his novels, such as *Godan* and *Gaban* short stories. R.K. Narayan, an English-language novelist, is well known for his works set in the fictional town of Malgudi, south India, including *The Guide* and *Malgudi Days*. Mulk Raj Anand, a pioneering figure in Indian English Literature, is known for his depiction of the lives of the underprivileged in his novels like *Untouchable* and *Coolie*. Kamala Das: A prominent poet and memoirist, she wrote in English and later in Malayalam, familiar for her truthful treatment of female sexuality and marital issues. In Hindi, Premchand is Renowned for his modern Hindi-Urdu literature, with notable works like *Godan* and *Mansarovar*.

Then, Harivans Rai Bachchan, known for his Hindi poetry, included *Madhushala* in Tamil Subramania Bharati. He pioneered modern Tamil poetry and is known for his works on nationalism and social reform—Kalki Krishnamurthy is known for his historical novels, most notably *Ponniyin Selvan*. Contemporary Indian Writers include Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth,

Jhumpa Lahiri, and Amitav Ghosh. Arundhati Roy acquired the Booker Prize for *The God of Small Things*; her works extend to non-fiction and political activism. Vikram Seth is best known for *A Suitable Boy*, which is considered one of the epic novels ever published in a single volume in English. Jhumpa Lahiri, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, is known for her short stories and novels, such as *Interpreter of Maladies* and *The Namesake*, which explore the Indian diaspora. Amitav Ghosh is an influential novelist and essayist known for *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace*, and *the Ibis trilogy*.

Indian Literature, with its multitude of languages and rich cultural heritage, explores various themes that reflect the diverse experiences, beliefs, and values of the Indian subcontinent. Many works delve into the complexities of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and other religions that shape India's cultural and philosophical landscape. Exploring spirituality, karma, dharma, and the quest for moksha (liberation) is central to numerous texts, including epics like the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. A significant theme in Indian Literature is the search for spiritual enlightenment and understanding. Texts like the *Bhagavad Gita*, part of the *Mahabharata*, explore complex philosophical questions and the pursuit of dharma (righteousness or duty) and moksha (liberation from the cycle of rebirth). The works delve into the philosophies underpinning Indian religions and ways of life, exploring concepts of karma, the nature of the soul, and the pursuit of truth.

Literature has been a powerful medium to critique and highlight social injustices and caste discrimination. Writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Bama, and Premchand have depicted the struggles of the lower castes and the marginalized sections of society. The impact of British colonial rule and its aftermath is a significant theme explored in the works of Rabindranath Tagore, R.K. Narayan, and, more recently, Amitav Ghosh. These narratives often focus on identity, cultural conflicts, and the struggle for independence. The partition of India in 1947

has been a poignant subject for many writers since independence, such as Sadat Hassan Manto and Khushwant Singh, who have depicted the human tragedies and communal violence associated with this event.

Women's experiences, Gender roles, and the quest for equality are central themes in writers like Kamala Das, Mahasweta Devi, and Arundhati Roy. These narratives often challenge patriarchal norms and highlight women's struggles and resilience. Their works include the transition from rural to urban life, the clash between tradition and modernity, and the impact of globalization. Vikram Seth and Chetan Bhagat explored themes like works that examine how characters navigate the changing social landscape.

Concepts of Love and relationships are often interwoven with social class, caste, and religious themes and are a staple of Indian Literature. The exploration of love in its many forms, from the spiritual to the carnal, is prevalent across genres. Indian writers frequently draw on the rich tapestry of myths, legends, and folklore that permeate the culture. These stories are reinterpreted to speak to contemporary issues or to explore timeless human dilemmas.

Indian Literature reflects on themes of environmentalism, awareness of the sacredness of rivers and forests, and the impacts of ecological degradation. The experiences of the Indian diaspora explore themes of identity, nostalgia, and cultural hybridity, which are central to the works of authors like Jhumpa Lahiri and Salman Rushdie.

The exploration in Indian writings encompasses a broad spectrum of literal and metaphorical journeys. This exploration manifests through physical travel, spiritual quests, intellectual pursuits, and the exploration of self and identity. Travelogues and narratives often describe journeys across the diverse landscapes of India and beyond. These journeys are not just about the physical act of travel but also about exploring the rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and traditions that make up the subcontinent.

Some works explore historical expeditions, including trade journeys, explorations, and pilgrimages, highlighting the interactions between different cultures and the impact of these journeys on history and civilization. Many writers use their narratives to explore and critique the rigid caste and social hierarchy structures. By examining the lives of those at the margins of society, these works expose the injustices and call for social reform. Indian women writers explore gender roles, identity crisis, and feminism, challenge traditional norms, and advocate for equality and freedom of expression. Indian writings frequently explore the complex terrain of human emotions, such as love, grief, joy, and despair, delving into the psychological aspects of relationships and individual experiences.

Dalit Literature refers to Literature written by the Dalits, a term used in India and South Asia to describe individuals at the bottom of the traditional Hindu caste system, formerly known as "untouchables." Dalit, meaning "broken" or "oppressed" in Sanskrit, was adopted by communities to refer to which were historically subjected to the caste system's lowest strata imposed upon them. It signifies a collective identity for those fighting against caste discrimination and asserting their right to equality and respect. This body of Literature emerged as a distinct genre in the 20th Century, though its roots are tracked back to earlier times. When Dalit literature emerged in the 1960s, Marathi's literary taste was dominated by a narcissistic tendency that foregrounded merely formalistic, confrontational, titillating works. One of the central debates in that era focused on an artisan's 'for art's sake,' which is a 'close extensive range of literary forms, including poetry, novels, short stories, autobiographies, and essays.

Dalit Literature seeks to articulate the experiences, struggles, and resilience of Dalit communities, challenging the caste-based discrimination and social injustices they have historically faced and continue to face. Dalit Literature provides a platform for Dalit voices to narrate their own stories, often highlighting their struggles for dignity, equality, and justice. It

serves as a means of self-representation and assertion of identity in a society where Dalit experiences have been marginalized or silenced. Dalit signifies a rich tradition of cultural and literary expression that articulates Dalit communities' agony, plight, and endurance.

As a major literary trend in India through Indian regional languages and translations, Dalit Literature is marked for the self-assertion of Dalits and subalterns. Through poetry, plays, short stories, self-narratives, and oral performances challenging inhuman treatment, atrocities, inequality, and the so-called mainstream literary and critical conventions.

Dalit Literature has emerged as an outcome of the exploitative nature of the Indian caste system. The ideology is drawn from Buddha, Charvak, Kabir, Jyotirao Phule, Karl Marx, and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. At this stage, it has been stabilized at a theoretical and critical level, considering Western critical approaches to explore the essence of Dalit literature on the contemporary literary and critical canvas. Dalit Literature, music, and art have emerged as powerful mediums for voicing resistance against oppression, challenging dominant narratives, and reimagining Dalit identity. A central theme of Dalit literature is critiquing the caste system and the social, economic, and political inequalities. Dalit writers expose the oppression, violence, and discrimination perpetuated by caste hierarchies, challenging mainstream narratives that either ignore or justify these practices.

It embodies the struggle for social justice, human rights, and equality. It documents injustices and serves as a call to action, advocating for social reform and dismantling oppressive structures. Dalit writers foster a sense of cultural and political consciousness among Dalit communities. They encourage solidarity, pride in Dalit identity, and active participation in movements aimed at social change. Dalit Literature is also noted for its innovative use of language and literary forms. Writers often incorporate regional dialects, folk traditions, and oral narratives, enriching the literary landscape with diverse voices and perspectives. Some

influential Dalit writers include B.R. Ambedkar, renowned for his role in drafting the Indian Constitution and advocating for Dalit rights. He also contributed significantly to Dalit literature through his writings. He uplifted the most inclusive logical and rational efforts. The injustice and poverty brought about by caste tyranny is a first for India.

His insightful explanation of the Dalits' position and the necessity to respect their human dignity, still regarded as a foundational contribution to the social discourse of pre-independence India, gave rise to the Dalit literary movement. Ambedkar, a Dalit born into the Mahar community, became a nationally renowned leader of Dalits in India and a social activist, educator, and legal expert. In order to liberate millions of his followers from the oppressive practice of caste discrimination, he adopted Buddhism near the conclusion of his career as a Dalit leader. His approach to the topic of religion was that of a democratic rationalist. When one thinks of modern-day inheritors of the legacy of the medieval Indian saint. Naturally, Mahatma Gandhi comes to mind. Throughout his life, he advocated against the wrongs of untouchability. He made every effort to uplift the scavengers compelled to work as latrine cleaners and people who carried the earth from the previous night on their heads. When he allowed untouchables to live in his ashram, his orthodox supporters fiercely opposed him.

Gandhi popularized the word "Harijan," which means "God's people" and refers to the supposedly lower castes. However, Ambedkar favored the name Dalit, which denotes the "downtrodden." Gandhi, in his opinion, was not ready to move far enough toward the Dalit people's liberation. Ambedkar was greatly troubled by the nationalist movement's unwillingness, spearheaded by the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi, to address the caste issue head-on and end caste prejudice completely. Ambedkar asserted in *What Gandhi and Congress have done to the Untouchables (1945)* that Gandhi never intended to harm the interests of Hindu upper-class people.

In Gandhism, the commoner has no hope. It only views humans as animals. It is true that humans have an animal constitution and perform similar reproductive, nutritional, and other tasks. However, these are not distinctly human abilities, because it makes us uniquely human. It allows us to study, contemplate, meditate, and find beauty in the cosmos. It also helps us to improve our lives and manage the animal aspects of our existence.

AnnabhauSathe, Namdeo Dhasal, and Omprakash Valmiki. Their works have played a vital role in shaping the genre and bringing attention to Dalit issues on both a national and international level. Dalit Literature is not confined to India alone. However, it is part of a broader global discourse on marginalized communities and their struggles for rights and recognition, resonating with similar movements worldwide.

The origin of Dalit literature can be traced back to the early 20th Century in India. However, the roots of Dalit expression and resistance against caste oppression existed much earlier in various forms and practices. Dalit Literature, as a distinct genre, emerged as part of the broader Dalit movement, which sought to challenge the caste-based discrimination and social injustices faced by those considered "untouchables" in the traditional Hindu caste hierarchy.

Dalit Literature has its roots in the social reform movements that gathered momentum in India in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Jyotirao Phule and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar played pivotal roles in advocating for the rights of Dalits and critiquing the caste system. Their writings and speeches laid the intellectual groundwork for Dalit Literature and articulated a vision for social equality and justice. Dalit Literature is a significant stream within Indian Literature that emerged prominently in the latter half of the 20th Century, though its roots can be traced back to earlier times. It encompasses poetry, prose, and other forms of writing by the Dalits, a term used for those in the lowest strata of India's caste system, historically subjected to

untouchability and profound social and economic discrimination. The evolution of Dalit literature has been seen through several phases, reflecting the changing dynamics of Dalit consciousness, political movements, and social reforms.

In the early- 20<sup>th</sup> Century, we witnessed expressions of Dalit Literature in the bhakti movement's works, where poets like Sant Ravidas and others challenged the caste system and advocated for equality and devotion to God as the path to salvation. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, the emergence of Dalit literature as a distinct genre was closely tied to the rise of Dalit political movements. Leaders like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar were crucial in advocating for Dalit rights and inspired a wave of Dalit writing. Literature became a tool for asserting Dalit identity and articulating experiences of caste oppression. A significant flourishing of Dalit literature was seen mainly in regions like Maharashtra, with the Dalit Panthers movement. Dalit Literature expanded in themes, forms, and languages, including autobiographies, novels, and poetry that highlighted the injustices faced by Dalits and critiqued the caste system. Marathi Dalit literature, in particular, became a prominent voice. From the 1990s to now, Dalit Literature has gained national and international recognition, with works translated into multiple languages.

The themes became more varied, including feminism' globalization, and identity politics, reflecting broader social changes. Writers like Bama in Tamil literature and Urmila Pawar in Marathi literature have contributed significantly to this phase, broadening the scope and reach of Dalit narratives. Dalit Literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a vibrant part of Indian Literature, with writers exploring new genres, including speculative fiction and digital media. It continues to evolve, addressing contemporary issues and reaching wider audiences. Dalit Literature has its roots in the social reform movements that gathered momentum in India in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

In the middle of the 20th Century, Dalit writing emerged as a separate genre, especially in the Marathi language of the state of Maharashtra. Inspired by the Black Panther movement in the United States, it rose to popularity with the Dalit Panther movement of the 1970s. This period saw a surge in Dalit writing, with poets, novelists, and essayists using Literature as a tool for activism and expression. Raw accounts of caste violence, poverty, and discrimination marked the early Dalit Literature. It sought to bring the experiences of Dalit lives into the public consciousness, challenging the narratives that marginalized or ignored them. Autobiographies and poetry were popular forms, offering visceral, first-person accounts of the struggles faced by Dalits. Over time, Dalit Literature has expanded beyond its initial regional and linguistic boundaries, encompassing works in various Indian languages. It has also gained academic and literary recognition, with universities offering courses on Dalit studies and literary festivals featuring Dalit writers. Dalit Literature is emerging as a powerful voice for the Dalit communities traditionally marginalized by the caste system in India and South Asia.

Dalit Literature in India over the past many decades has emerged as a separate and essential category of Literature in many Indian languages. It has provided a new voice and identity to the communities that have experienced discrimination, exploitation, and marginalization due to the hierarchical caste system. Dalit Literature has also made a forceful case for human dignity and social equality. Dalits are marginalized people who speak many languages and are members of several castes and social groups. Not a caste, they are. The word Dalit was also used later as Hindi and Marathi translation of the official term "depressed classes" that the British government used to describe what is now called "scheduled classes". Babasaheb Ambedkar adopted the phrase to give the Untouchables a new, robust, dignified identity. The term Dalit came into widespread use only in the 1970s concerning the political mobilization by the parties representing the interests of the scheduled caste, scheduled tribes,

and all other such groups that were discriminated against and exploited based on birth-based identity or economic reasons.

Dalit Literature aims to bring the experiences, struggles, and perspectives of Dalit individuals to the forefront. It seeks to provide a platform for voices that have been historically silenced or marginalized, ensuring their stories and lives are heard, acknowledged, and respected. Through their narratives, Dalit writers expose the realities of caste discrimination, violence, and inequality, calling for an end to such practices and advocating for a more equitable society.

It serves as a means for empowerment and identity formation. It celebrates Dalit culture, history, and resilience, helping to build a sense of pride and solidarity among Dalit communities. It also reclaims the dignity of Dalit individuals, offering them narratives in which they are the protagonists, not victims. Dalit Literature has produced many influential writers who have made significant contributions to the genre, each bringing forth their unique voice and perspective to highlight Dalit communities' struggles, resilience, and aspirations. In Hindu society, inequalities have been crystallized. In an unequal situation, the fate intertwined in life is the only equality.

A tremendous dark partition has been raised between the assumed inequalities of the elite and the existing (natural) inequalities of the oppressed. This is the gloom cast by caste. Two completely different lifestyles have emerged on either side of this darkness. On the one hand, some people have created civilization through hard work. On the other hand, people built their lives on the hard labor of the first group. They exploited labor to increase their oppressive power. That these oppressions have insulted the proletariat culture is like the flame subsuming the oil. The brightness of the flame depends on the strength of the oil. An elitist writer cannot

transcend the caste bias and talk about the oppressed people. Some may reap benefits by foregrounding the oppressed.

This is no different from the oppression of the Dalits through disregard. Great Literature cannot result from high-sounding speech. The worldview offered in Dalit literature differs from the sphere of experience made available thus far. A new world, a new culture, and a new human being have all been introduced in Literature for the first time (OC33).

Dalit Literature in India or Indian Literature is found in many native languages, such as Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindi, etc. The majority of the writers are Dalits themselves. Even some non-Dalits have started contributing to the Literature of the oppressed or the exploited. Their intentions are good; their expressions are authentic, but as far as their experience is concerned, it is purely vicarious. Dalits can put down their social and economic problems much better. They have suffered a lot and are suffering at the hands of the upper caste groups even today casually. However, they are all Indians, critical of the age-long existing or caste-based social hierarchy. Dalit writers are in quest of human dignity. They write with a vision and a cause.

Dalit Literature stands for humanitarianism, linguistic directness, and plurality; it is a literary movement for social change, and Dalit panthers are optimistic about social reforms. Even Dalit women share their vision with us and express their experiences in contemporary society. It becomes necessary and appropriate for critical evaluation measures and approaches for Dalit literature for meaning-making because Literature contains aesthetic, linguistic, cultural, and social values. A Dalit writer born and raised in a Dalit community possesses Dalit consciousness or sensibility. Though some literary forms plays depict the protagonist as Dalits, it lack the Dalit consciousness.

The revolutionary mindset associated with struggle is the Dalit consciousness seen in Dalit literature. It is an ideology that prioritizes human beings over the caste system and advocates for rebellion against it. Dalit Literature has its roots in Dalit consciousness. It exists independently and uniquely from other writers' consciousnesses. Caste is a significant diversity factor in Indian society. Dalit Literature stands against the rigidity of the caste system, which snatches the opportunities for equality in every field of life and thus becomes the instrument of exploitation. In this era of economic and social globalization, Dalit Literature is recognized as the voice of the untouchable communities from their rage against inequality and urge for humanity. Often called the "father of the Indian Constitution," B.R. Ambedkar's writings and speeches significantly influenced Dalit politics and consciousness. His works, such as "Annihilation of Caste" critically examine the social injustices of the caste system and advocate for the rights of Dalits.

Jyotirao Phule was a social reformer and writer; Phule's work in the 19th Century laid the groundwork for the Dalit movement. His critique of the caste system and advocacy for educating women and lower castes were pioneering. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule was an activist and writer; Phule's contributions to Literature include works like *Gulamgiri (Slavery)*, which critiques the caste system and advocates for equality. Namdeo Dhasal was considered the founder of the Dalit Panther movement Dhasal'; Dhasal's such in the collection "Golpitha" is celebrated for its raw portrayal of life in Mumbai's underbelly, articulating the anger and despair of Dalit communities. Omprakash Valmiki is known for his autobiography *Joothan*, Valmiki provides a harrowing account of his life as a Dalit in India, highlighting his caste-based discrimination and struggles.

Baby Kamble, an activist and writer, is known for her autobiography *The Prisons We Broke*, a vivid account of the life of Dalit women in Maharashtra. Sharankumar Limbale is an

author, poet, and literary critic known for his Marathi autobiography "*Akkarmashi*" (*The Outcaste*), which reflects his life as a Dalit in Maharashtra. Future historians of Indian Literature and society will likely acknowledge the Dalit literary movement, which has been thriving in Marathi and numerous other Indian languages for the past forty years, including Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and Gujarathi, as another such movement. Although the Dalit literary movement has forced Marathi society to reevaluate issues of justice, dignity, religion, and social relationships, caste has been the one issue on which it has focused its most significant attention. The most distinctive aspect of Indian society has likely always been the phenomenon of caste as a status marker.

Mulk Raj Anand (1905–2004) was a pioneering figure in Indian English Literature, known for his novels, short stories, essays that explore themes of social injustice, caste discrimination, and the plight of the underprivileged in India. Born on December 12, 1905, in Peshawar (now in Pakistan), Anand was a contemporary of other notable Indian authors like R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, who were collectively part of the first generation of Indian authors to gain international recognition for their work in English. The trilogy *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) are among Anand's most well-known pieces" *Untouchable* is especially well-known for its realistic and empathetic depiction of the life of India's urban poor and lower castes.

*A Day in the Life of a Young Sweeper Boy, Bakha*, highlights the social injustices and discrimination faced by the Dalit community in India. Anand was not just a writer but also an active participant in his time's cultural and political life. He was involved in India's struggle for independence and supported various social causes. His contributions to Indian English Literature and his advocacy for social reform have left a lasting legacy, making him a significant figure in the history of Indian Literature. Anand's work is celebrated for its

humanism and commitment to social reform. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award, in 1967 for his contributions to Indian Literature and culture. His writing, characterized by its simple, accessible language and its focus on social issues, has left a lasting legacy on Indian Literature and continues to be studied and appreciated globally.

Mulkraj Anand's life and career were marked by his commitment to social reform, which was deeply influenced by his personal experiences and the socio-political context of his time. Anand was part of a Hindu family in what was then British India. His early exposure to the caste system and witnessing firsthand the injustices faced by the lower castes had a profound impact on his worldview and his writings.

Education played a significant role in shaping Anand's perspectives. He attended Khalsa College, Amritsar, before moving to England for further studies, where he attended University College London and later, the University of Cambridge. His time in England exposed him to Western Literature and socialist ideas, which influenced his thinking and writing. He was associated with prominent figures of the time, including British writers E.M. Forster and George Orwell. He was involved in the Bloomsbury Group, crucial to his intellectual development. Mulk Raj Anand's writings cover many themes deeply rooted in India's social and cultural milieu. His works are characterized by a profound empathy for the downtrodden and an unflinching critique of societal injustices.

Anand's novels frequently explore the lives of the marginalized, including the poor, the untouchables, and the working class. He highlights the injustices they face due to the rigid caste system and economic exploitation, aiming to raise awareness and advocate for social reform. Anand's writings reflect on the impact of British colonial rule on Indian society, culture, and economy. He delves into the complexities of colonial oppression and the struggle for independence, as well as the internal conflicts within Indian society exacerbated by colonial

policies. At the core of Anand's work is a profound humanism. He portrays his characters with great empathy and complexity, highlighting their struggles, resilience, and the universal desire for dignity and freedom.

Despite the grim realities his characters face, Anand's narratives often carry a message of hope. He depicts acts of resistance, both big and small, against oppressive systems, suggesting the possibility of social change and empowerment. Anand's works also reflect on the beauty and hardships of rural life in India. He portrays the deep connection between people and their natural environment while critiquing rural communities' social hierarchies and economic challenges. Beyond the social and political, Anand's works delve into existential questions of the human condition, exploring themes of love, death, alienation, and the quest for meaning in life.

Sharankumar Limbale is a prominent Dalit writer, poet, editor, and literary critic from Maharashtra, India. Born on June 1, 1956, in Maharashtra, Limbale was raised in a socio-economic environment marked by discrimination and hardship due to his Dalit identity. The Dalits, historically marginalized and subjected to caste-based discrimination, are at the lowest strata of the Indian caste hierarchy. Limbale's early experiences of social exclusion and poverty significantly shaped his worldview and literary pursuits. Despite the challenges posed by his background, Limbale pursued education as a means of empowerment and liberation. His academic journey and personal experiences of caste discrimination became the foundation for his literary career. He is best known for his autobiographical work "*Akkarmashi*" (*The Outcaste*), published in 1984. It vividly narrates the experiences of growing up as a Dalit in a caste-ridden society, dealing with themes of discrimination, poverty, and the search for identity. It has been widely acclaimed for its honest and poignant depiction of Dalit life and has been translated into several languages, including English.

Limbale's work spans various genres, including autobiography, fiction, criticism, and poetry, making him a versatile and influential writer. Limbale's contributions to Literature have not only provided a voice to the marginalized Dalit community but have also played a crucial role in the social and literary discourse on caste in India. Sharankumar Limbale's life and work offer a compelling narrative of resilience, struggle, and literary triumph within the context of India's caste system. In addition to his writing, Limbale has contributed to the academic and cultural discourse on caste and Literature through his work as a professor and speaker. His efforts have been recognized with various awards and honors, reflecting his significant contribution to Marathi literature and the broader social movement against caste discrimination. Sharankumar Limbale's life story is a testament to the power of resilience and the transformative potential of Literature to challenge societal norms and advocate for change. Through his writings and public engagements, Limbale inspires and influences the literary world and India's ongoing struggle for social justice.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, published in 1935, is a seminal novel in Indian Literature that vividly portrays India's caste system. It tells the story of a single day in the life of Bakha, a young sweeper who belongs to the lowest caste in India, known as "untouchables." Through Bakha's experiences, Anand exposes the social injustices and humiliations faced by untouchables due to the rigid caste system. Anand uses the character of Bakha to depict the harsh realities of caste discrimination in India. Bakha's encounters with higher cast members and his internal reflections reveal the deep-seated prejudices and social barriers that untouchables face.

The novel highlights how the caste system affects every aspect of an untouchable's life, from access to public amenities to social interactions. *Untouchable* was part of the early 20th-century Indian Literature aimed at social reform. By focusing on a day in the life of an

untouchable, Anand sought to evoke empathy among his readers, many of whom belonged to the higher castes, and to urge them to reconsider their attitudes towards caste. The novel reflects the influence of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings on Anand. Gandhi tried to improve the conditions of the untouchables, whom he called Harijans or "children of God."

Anand portrays Gandhi as a beacon of hope for the untouchables, suggesting that social change is possible through non-violent means and the upliftment of the downtrodden. He also employs a stream-of-consciousness technique that allows readers to intimately experience Bakha's thoughts and feelings. The use of local dialects and vivid descriptions of the Indian setting also contribute to the novel's realism and emotional impact. It remains an essential work for understanding the social fabric of India and the historical context of caste-based discrimination, as well as for its contribution to Indian Literature and the global discourse on social justice and human rights.

*Akkarmashi* (English translation: *The Outcaste*), by Sharankumar Limbale 1984, is his autobiography, published when he was 25. It is being published by an internationally renowned publishing house like Oxford University Press. It is reputed as a landmark in Marathi Dalit literature. It reflects the experiences and struggles of Dalits in India. Sharankumar Limbale, a prominent Dalit writer and thinker, provides a poignant narrative of the life of an individual born into the lowest stratum of Indian society. The Book is autobiographical and sheds light on the author's journey of self-discovery and his battle against the societal norms that deem him an outcast due to his birth. The narrative delves into the harsh realities of caste discrimination, untouchability, and social exclusion faced by Dalits.

Limbale's story is one of resilience and resistance as he navigates through poverty, education, and identity challenges. The book is not just a personal account but also serves as a critique of the caste system and its pervasive impact on the lives of millions of people in India.

"Outcaste" is celebrated for its raw and honest portrayal of the Dalit experience. Limbale's writing is powerful and evocative, capturing the emotional depth of his struggles and the strength it takes to challenge entrenched social injustices.

The book contributes significantly to Dalit literature, offering insights into the complexities of caste and its implications on individual lives and society. Through "Outcaste," Limbale has provided a voice to the marginalized and has played a vital role in raising awareness about the injustices Dalits face. His work encourages dialogue and understanding, aiming to foster a more inclusive and equitable society. Humanization refers to portraying or treating someone or something in a way that emphasizes their human qualities and dignity.

Dehumanization refers to depriving a person or group of positive human qualities. This act can reduce the individual to a less dignified or inferior status, often seen as non-human or object. In the novels *Untouchable* by Mulkraj Anand and *Outcaste* by Sharankumar Limbale, humanization and dehumanization are central themes reflecting caste discrimination in India. These works provide a vivid literary insight into the lives of those marginalized by caste status.

Both novels discuss the brutal realities of caste discrimination while also advocating for recognition of the inherent dignity and humanity of those relegated to the lower strata of society. They are potent reminders of the human capacity for cruelty and empathy. These novels testify to the enduring human spirit and the fight for dignity, equality, and justice. This project discusses MANIFESTATION OF HUMANIZATION AND DEHUMANIZATION OF DALITS IN THE NOVELS OF MULKRAJANAND AND SHARANKUMAR LIMABALE.

## CHAPTER II

### **Manifestation of Humanization and Dehumanization of Dalits in the Novels of Mulkraj Anand and Sharankumar Limbale**

"By giving voice to the voiceless, Dalit literature exposes the deep-rooted prejudices and injustice of the caste system."

Humanism is the philosophy of man; it reaffirms faith in man as a man who was inferior to damned creatures by the concept of original sin. Man is the primary and central concern of humanism. To humanize is to engage with the human. Humanizing makes things more civilized, refined, and understandable. Humanism is a psychology philosophy that upholds that each person has an innate desire to achieve self-actualization and can make choices for themselves and manage their conduct. Key figures associated with humanistic theory include Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Maslow postulated a hierarchy of human needs, starting with physiological requirements and progressing to more complex demands like self-actualization and self-esteem. Unconditional positive regard was first proposed by Carl Rogers, who emphasized the value of empathy in fostering psychological well-being.

From ancient to recent days, human beings have faced innumerable crises. True humanism has been violated, if not altogether discredited. Critical humanism can be a tool to dismantle this hierarchy or structure and establish a true sense of humanism that looks at both

us and them critically by bringing them under a single rubric of humans. Humanism talks about the things and activities directly and indirectly related to humans and endeavors.

It is prevalent worldwide and intensified in the name of humanism. Critical humanism tries to address the biased concept of Orthodox humanism. It is needed to blur the gap between superior and inferior. Humanistic criticism is required to address the voice of the silenced, reveal the hidden, and resist the hegemony. Humanization aims to recognize, value, and promote individuals' or groups' total worth, dignity, and inherent humanity.

Humanization in society refers to the process and efforts to foster respect, dignity, and equality among individuals, transcending barriers like discrimination, prejudice, and dehumanization. This process involves recognizing and valuing every person's humanity, ensuring equitable treatment, and promoting understanding and compassion across diverse communities. Humanization counters dehumanizing attitudes and structures to create a more inclusive, empathetic, and equitable society.

Through its humanist perspective, Dalit literature also helps Dalit communities embrace their culture and sense of self. It honors their accomplishments, tenacity, and fortitude, restoring a sense of pride and dignity weakened by centuries of injustice. Humanism challenges the traditional social and religious hierarchies that have legitimized caste discrimination. Dalit literature, imbued with humanist ideals, critiques these structures, advocating for a society where all individuals are valued equally. By highlighting the common humanity and worth of all individuals, Dalit literature is a tool for healing and empowerment. Dalits can share their stories, process their experiences, and envision a future free from discrimination.

Dalit literature promotes social justice, equality, and the end of caste-based prejudice by emphasizing humanist ideals. It seeks to dismantle the hierarchical structures of caste that have denied their fundamental human rights. For Dalits, who have historically faced systemic

discrimination and marginalization in societies with caste hierarchies, humanism offers a philosophical foundation that challenges such inequalities and supports their fight for equal rights and respect.

Humanism often aligns with efforts toward social justice, advocating for societal structures that ensure fairness, equality, and opportunity for all. For Dalits, this aspect of humanism can support initiatives to dismantle caste-based discrimination, improve access to education, healthcare, and employment, and ensure their representation in political and social institutions. Humanism encourages critical thinking and skepticism toward unexamined beliefs and traditions. This approach can empower Dalits to question and challenge the social norms and practices that underpin caste discrimination, advocating for a society based on reason and equity rather than superstition and inherited status. These concepts are based on the essential idea that it is capable of sharing and comprehending the emotions of another.

Empathy is considered as the central aspect of humanism. It fosters compassion, understanding, and mutual respect among individuals, which is crucial for building a more equitable and just society. Empathy motivates people to act ethically towards others, considering their well-being and feelings in their actions and decisions. In humanism, this ethical behavior is foundational to creating a society where everyone can thrive. It contributes to stronger social bonds and cooperation by understanding and valuing others' perspectives.

Dehumanization deprives a person or group of positive human qualities, making them seem less human or inferior. This can occur in various contexts, often involving prejudice, discrimination, or violence, and can have profound psychological, social, and ethical implications. Dehumanization is critical in understanding many of the worst aspects of human behavior. It is also a powerful and dangerous tool that undermines empathy, compassion, and the recognition of shared humanity.

Humanization in society refers to the process and efforts to foster respect, dignity, and equality among individuals, transcending barriers like discrimination, prejudice, and dehumanization. This process involves recognizing and valuing every person's humanity, ensuring equitable treatment, and promoting understanding and compassion across diverse communities. Humanization counters dehumanizing attitudes and structures to create a more inclusive, empathetic, and equitable society.

By perceiving others as less than human, individuals or societies can justify discriminatory, violent, or cruel treatment toward them. This has been a factor in many historical atrocities, including genocide, slavery, and systemic racism. Dehumanization can be both a cause and a consequence of conflict and inequality. It maintains social hierarchies and can be used to justify maintaining oppressive systems. Dehumanization can affect virtually anyone, but it disproportionately impacts marginalized, oppressed, or minority groups within societies. These are often groups that have been historically discriminated against or are currently subject to prejudice, systemic inequality, or violence.

The specific groups affected by dehumanization can vary widely depending on the societal, political, and historical context. Throughout history and in contemporary times, various racial and ethnic groups have been dehumanized to justify colonization, slavery, segregation, genocide, and racial discrimination. Members of religious minorities often face dehumanization, which can justify persecution, discrimination, and acts of violence against them. Examples include the treatment of Jews during the Holocaust, Muslims in various contexts of Islam phobia, and many other religious communities that have been targeted over time.

People who migrate, especially those who do so under forced or desperate circumstances, often face dehumanization. Individuals who are homeless are frequently

dehumanized, which contributes to their marginalization and the justification of neglect or abuse by society and institutions. The dehumanization of people with disabilities can lead to their exclusion from societal participation, discrimination, and even instances of violence or exploitation. Dehumanization is not limited to these groups, and the specifics can vary widely from one context to another.

It is a dynamic that can affect any group perceived as "other" or outside the mainstream of society. The impact of dehumanization is profound, not only justifying harm and injustice against those who are dehumanized but also diminishing the humanity of those who dehumanize others. Mostly, violence and abuse were against the targeted group, as they are seen as deserving of less ethical consideration. Dehumanized groups may face barriers to social participation and economic opportunities, reinforcing cycles of poverty and marginalization.

Mulkraj Anand's sociological novel *Untouchable*, tells the story of a sweeper's day in an Indian city, complete with all the realistic details. The novel aims to highlight the evil of untouchables by emphasizing the deplorable circumstances, poverty, and degradation of a significant portion of Indian society. Anand's work is significant for its early and bold critique of the caste system, shedding light on the inhumanity and hypocrisy embedded within societal norms that deem specific individuals 'untouchable' due to their birth in a particular caste. "None of us are pure. We should not be alive if we were." This statement captures a critical insight into the flawed notion of purity that underpins the caste system and other forms of social exclusion.

It suggests that no one would qualify if purity were indeed a criterion for existence. This reflects a humanist perspective, recognizing the inherent flaws and complexities within every individual, regardless of social or moral standards imposed by society. It touches on

profound themes of human imperfection and the artificial divisions created by societal structures like the caste system.

Only an Indian, and an Indian looking in from the outside, could have written *Untouchable*. Mr. Anand is positioned perfectly. He is a Kshatriya by caste; therefore, it is possible that he was supposed to inherit the pollution complex. However, he played with the sweeper children who were part of an Indian regiment as a child, growing fond of them and understanding a tragedy that he did not experience.

Is Bakha an actual individual, lovable, thwarted, sometimes grand, sometimes weak, and thoroughly Indian? "Cheap sweets" in Bhaka's hand could symbolize the socio-economic status of the character or the community they represent. It may highlight the disparities between different social classes or castes, emphasizing how marginalized groups often have limited access to resources, including food. "The great catastrophe of the touching" refers to a critical incident in the novel where Bakha inadvertently brushes against a higher-caste person, which is considered a grave offense due to his "untouchable" status. This moment is catastrophic not because of any physical harm caused but because of the social and emotional turmoil it unleashes. It symbolizes the deeply ingrained prejudices and injustices of the caste system, showcasing how an innocent act can be construed as a significant transgression solely because of one's birth. The "outcaste colony" depicts the living conditions of Bakha and his community. They are forced to live on the outskirts of the town in a segregated colony that marks them as outcasts from mainstream society. This physical and social isolation is a stark manifestation of their untouchable status. Their forced residence in a separate colony underscores the deep-rooted prejudice and discrimination they face based solely on their caste and the work they do. While the colony is a place of marginalization, it also becomes a space where the outcastes share their experiences of oppression. Within this space, they find solidarity among themselves,

even as they navigate the harsh realities of their lives. This aspect of the colony underscores the human spirit's resilience and the quest for dignity amidst adversity.

Beyond its physical existence, the colony can be seen as a metaphor for the social exclusion and ostracism faced by the Dalits. It represents the invisible barriers erected by caste that dictate where one can live, whom one can marry, and what occupation one can pursue. The outcaste colony is considered uncongenial and describes the social environment that Bakha and his fellow untouchables are forced to inhabit. It is an environment characterized by hostility, discrimination, and exclusion, where the untouchables are subjected to constant humiliation and dehumanization solely because of their caste. These places are marked by squalor, lack of basic amenities, and a pervasive sense of despair, highlighting the uncongenial nature of their living conditions.

Lack of acceptance and belonging experienced by the untouchables, despite their essential role in the community, handling its waste and cleaning its streets, they are shunned and kept at a distance. This perpetual outsider status underscores the unkindness and inhospitality of the place they are forced to call home. The lack of a drainage system symbolizes mainstream society's broader neglect and indifference toward the needs and well-being of the untouchables. While other parts of the town may have basic infrastructure, the absence of proper drainage in the outcaste colony highlights the marginalization and discrimination its residents face.

Through the protagonist's life, the writer tries to show that the absence of proper drainage poses significant health and sanitation risks for the colony's inhabitants. The colony becomes susceptible to waterborne diseases and unsanitary conditions without a proper system to manage wastewater and sewage. They must contend with stagnant water, foul odors, and the constant threat of illness, all of which contribute to the overall hardship and suffering

experienced by the untouchable community. They are further marginalized from economic opportunities and denied the chance to improve their living conditions. This shows the dehumanization effect upon the Dalit community.

The phrase “white man's life” highlights the colonial context of India during the time the novel is set, where the British colonial rule imposed its form of social hierarchy and discrimination on top of the existing caste system. This adds layers to the social injustice experienced by characters like Bakha, who are marginalized not only by their own society's traditional caste system but also by the racial and cultural hierarchies imposed by colonialism. The cultural influence of Englishmen on the local people, the stark contrast between the glamorous lifestyle of white colonial rules and the harsh realities faced by the untouchable. The dim, one-room mud hut, about twelve feet by five feet, with a filthy blanket on the floor in the corner that depicts the poor living conditions of lower caste people during the pre-independence era of India . He begged one Tommy for the gift of a pair of trousers. The man had given him a pair of breeches which he had to spare.

Begging reflects Bakha's deep-seated desire to escape or at least momentarily transcend his social status as an "untouchable." Clothes, in this context, are not just about physical covering but are symbolic of societal standing, dignity, and identity. By wearing the clothes associated with the British or higher castes, Bakha hopes to adopt a semblance of their status and respect, albeit superficially. It is an attempt to cloak his untouchability to blend into a society that otherwise excludes him. It also shows the transactional nature of this brief connection between Bakha and the British soldier. For Bakha, the breeches are a prized possession, a symbol of hope and aspiration; for the soldier, they are merely spare clothing. Bakha seeks approval and identity by adopting colonial or Western attire, seeing it as a means

to dignity. This dynamic reflects the broader themes of colonialism, where the colonized often internalize the colonizer's values and standards as superior or desirable.

“He will look like a sahib,' he had persuaded himself privately. Moreover, I will stroll in pairs, just like they do, with Chota by my side. However, I need to be more prosperous in buying stuff.”(UT 41) The protagonist, Bakha, is enthralled by the way of life and appearance of the British colonists, known as "sahibs," and presents the aspiration, imitation, and harsh reality of economic and social hurdles Dalit people face. No matter how hard Bakha wants to rise above his social standing or become like the sahibs, his financial situation and cultural expectations act as insurmountable barriers.

There is another incident in the novel that would serve as an example of the hypocrisy of the caste Hindus. When Bakha goes to collect food, a lady throws down the bread from the fourth story, soiling it with dust and filth on the road. A minute earlier, the same lady had rushed down to welcome and request a Sadhu to bless her son, who was ill. Anand criticizes the people who are superstitious and give food to idle Sadhu as charity but hesitate to feed the untouchables.

Bakha is accused of "polluting" the little injured boy when he escorts him to his house. The indignant mother says: Vay, eater of your masters! What have you done? You have killed my son! She wailed, flying her hands across her breasts and turning blue and red with fear. "Give me my child! You have defiled my house, besides wounding my son.”(106) the lady is so hypocritical that instead of acknowledging the help to her boy by Bakha, she hurls abuses upon him. The lady does not praise him for endangering his life to save her child. On the contrary, he is condemned for polluting the child by lifting him into his lap. Society refuses to recognize an untouchable's sentiments, even his act of kindness.

In *Untouchable*, Anand is on sure ground, denouncing a practice of traditional Hindu society that deserves wholesale condemnation. However, it should only sometimes lead to the conclusion that Anand is painting a distorted picture of society. His picture of the relationship between the caste Hindus and the untouchables is objective and balanced. His condemnation of the untouchable is effective because it comes out of total control of all the aspects of the problem. He is pretty knowledgeable on the psychology of the Hindu caste and untouchables. He does not fall prey to the apparent temptation of overstating his case and dividing his characters neatly into sheep and goats. "His caste Hindus are not all bullies and tyrants; nor are all his untouchables admirable; nor yet is the lie of his untouchable hero a sage of unrelieved misery."(3)

Humanism sees man as a man who cannot be all good or all evil. Despite all his faults and weaknesses, every man deserves some respect. In *Untouchable*, Bakha is not a passive character, yet, having grown since birth in a corrupt social order, he has come unconsciously to accept it. Bakha is, after all, a somewhat passive character. Whenever he is insulted, especially when a passerby hits him, he is so deeply hurt that he feels like hitting back. However, he restrains himself, and one of the reasons for this forced restraint is that he has not yet been able to shake off the sense of servility and meekness that weighs heavy on his shoulders as an accumulated burden of centuries of tradition.

Bakha is aware of the limitations of the given social structure. He is ready to rebel against the inhuman oppression and injustice. However, he also knows that since others passively accept their lot, his protest would not change the social order recorded in Bakha's passive acceptance of his destiny. "What is the use they would ill-treat us even if we shouted." No ignorance or inertia is to blame for the prevalent sense of futility. His dominant sense of futility is not a consequence of inertia or ignorance. Nor is it a defeat of Bakha's conscience.

Saras Cowasjee praises the novelist for not showing Bakha romantically active, "Bakha in a moment of action has come and gone, and it is in his failure to act that the fidelity of the novel lies."

This does not mean that Bakha accepts the situation and sets himself according to the wave; instead, he tries to improve his lot. The novelist's achievement lies in giving his hero Bakha a deeper awareness of his societal position. Therefore, he is static and dynamic at the same time. He is static because he is alone, weak, and helpless, and his weakness and helplessness are that of all untouchables. He is dynamic because he tries to understand the causes of his plight and, in his way, wage a battle against the social and economic forces that deny him his human rights. He is a man of integrity, intelligence, and hard work and is alive as much to love and sympathy as to hate and suffering. Since he is denied education and the advantages of communion with the elite, he is mentally backward, but he shows readiness to understand everything. Bakha indeed meets some wicked persons like P.T. Kali Nath. However, in contrast to the callousness of this person is the humanity of Havildar Charat Singh, who treats Bakha kindly and asks him to have tea with him. Bakha says to himself. I would not mind being a sweeper all my life for this man. I would do anything for him. (96)

When Charat Singh asks him to put some pieces of coal in his arm, Bakha is surprised. For a moment, he doubted whether Charat Singh was conscious. Lakha tells Bakha about another incident of humanism. Once Bakha lay ill in his childhood. His Father, Lakha, ran several times to the house of Hakim Bhagwan Das to persuade him to examine the boy, who lay on the death bed medically, and to give medicine to save the life of the dying boy. However, being a sweeper, Lakha had to stand at a respectful distance. However, at last, the heart of Hakimji moved, and thus, Bakha's life was saved.

He might be forgetful and suddenly realize what he had done. Did he forget that I am a sweeper? He could not have done it; I was talking to him about my work. Moreover, he saw me this morning. How could he have forgotten? (97) When Charat Singh gives him a new stick to play with, Bakha is overcome by his kindness. "Strange! Strange! Wonderful! Kind man! I did not know he was so kind. I should have known. He always has such a humorous way about him! Kind, good man! He gave me a new stick, a brand new stick."(OC100) there is another incident of humanism which Lakha tells to Bakha. The ruling class also comes in for criticism for committing atrocities upon the poor people and compelling them to lead a sub-human life. English, after years in India, have learned only some applicable imperatives and sweet words such as "jao (go away); jaldikaro (be quick); sur ka bacha (son of a pig); Yutaka bacha (son of a dog). (114) they have not tried to understand the wounded psyche of the untouchables. The missionary's wife sums up the attitude of English people towards the natives. Anand's deep sympathy with the subaltern class shares Bakha's pain and agony. He explains Bakha's pain and suffering with these words, stated by cowasjee "My aim is not negative, merely to shock, but to stimulate consciousness at all levels."

After getting chapattis, Bakha comes back home, and his father, Lakha, scolds him because he has gotten a few chapattis. Lakha dreams of the past when he used to bring food from the marriages. He is also reminded of the incident in which the Hakimji did not allow him to enter his house when he went to get medicine for his child. It happened only because Lakha belonged to the untouchable caste, and this caste had no permission to enter any high-caste house, whether he was in pain or misery. It explains Anand's humanistic approach in the novel when Lakha recites past experiences.

"I tried to fall at the feet of every passerby and prayed to them to tell the Sarkar, your honor, that my child was suffering. However, Sarkar, this is the time of kindness; be

compassionate at this time; another time, you may take even my life. Only save my child.” (UT 73) Anand presents the untouchable condition that is continuously running from generation to generation. Being a sweeper, Lakha could not enter the medical practitioners' shop and was compelled to look at the bottles of medicines from outside. Bakha seems to struggle in society for sheer existence.

He is aware of abuses from society. Sometimes, abuses help him to regain his strength and self-respect for completing his work more efficiently, but sometimes, they cause emotional imbalance and provoke feelings of protest. He performs his duty honestly and gets only heaps of abuse as the reward. He thinks, "All of them abused, abused, abused. Why are we always abused? Since we come into contact with excrement. They detest feces. I also detest it."(43)

Some characters in the novel, like Lakha and Havildar Charat Singh, abuse Bakha only to correct his mistakes, but another character, like Lalla Banarasi Das, whom he runs into accidentally in the market, not only slaps him but also throws a torrent of abuses, "Dirty dog! Son of a bitch! The offspring of a pig!" and scolds him, "You cockeyed son of a bow-legged scorpion, do you realize that you have touched and defiled me. I guess I will have to wash myself now to purify myself. Moreover, I had put on a fresh blouse and dhoti this morning! (UT38).”

The Hindus belonging to the three upper castes would consider the water contaminated if the outcasts were to draw water from the well. Hence, they were not permitted to climb the platform surrounding it. They were also forbidden from using the neighboring brook because doing so would taint it. The existing belief of untouchables in the Hindu social system has been put untouchables in the margin. Moreover, when an untouchable walks on the road, he is compelled to seek, "Posh keep away, posh, sweeper coming, posh, posh, sweeper coming, posh, posh, sweeper coming."(42). It was an alarm to keep people away from touching a low-caste

man because high-caste people believed that the mere touch of an outcaste could pollute them. It looks like an irony when an upper-caste Hindu Brahmin gargles and spits in the stream, a wealthy Hindu businessman gives excessive food to a lazy priest and ignores an untouchable who is working for society, an orthodox Hindu worship a filthy smell bull and does not touch a human being because he is untouchable, an untouchable cleans the temple courtyard, but the doors of the temple are closed for him, the roads are cleaned by an untouchable and he is not permitted to use the roads. Such ignorance fills Bakha's emotions with rage, agony, frustration, humiliation, pain, and revenge.

The dominance of castes divides society and the human psyche. Since the ancient period, a lot of religious taboos, superstitions, and misconceptions have existed in Indian Hindu society, and they may be responsible for subalterns in society. On the one hand, high-caste Hindus dominate and exploit lower-caste because they think their birth in the high caste is the blessing of God, and they have the right to rule over the subaltern class. On the other hand, outcasts tolerate high-caste dominance and exploitation for the sake of their caste promotion in the next birth. Anand believes that such psychological attitudes toward life are challenging to eradicate and that the condition of subalterns cannot be improved. In the well, the favor done there by an upper caste Hindu Brahmin, Pandit Kali Nath, who pours the water on an empty pitcher of Sohini, sister of Bakha, not for the sake of generosity but because he was attracted towards Sohini's beauty. He calls her to the temple to clean and sweep the courtyard of the temple and tries to molest her. This is again a different satire projected by Anand in the novel on the upper-caste, who regarded the sweepers as untouchable but at the same time attracted by the beauty of an untouchable.

Brahmins are prominent in Indian society and are known for their access to religion, rituals, culture, and philosophy. This incident was unacceptable to Pandit Kali Nath because he

always talked about untouchables and preached about caste pollution that spoils human life. The condition and plight of the untouchables and subalterns can only be understood by those people who suffer in the so-called Vedic caste system. Anand aimed to expose the people and present their plight in their daily lives. He emphatically states that he creates novels not to expose his philosophy of humanism but to portray human beings in their wholeness, interior and exterior life.

Gandhi's lecture on untouchables and his will in which he said, "I prayed that, if I should be born again, I should be so, not as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, but as an outcaste, as an untouchable."(UT138), builds the self-confidence and energy in Bakha and for a moment he forgets the incident which happened in the morning. The soothing impression on the mind of a person whose journey began in the morning stumbling through the stones of caste hierarchy, Bakha relaxed in the evening when he mainly listened to Bapu. Moreover, the poet's introduction of a flush system machine, which would be able to clear the dung without touching it, is another support to Bakha. This machine would be a permanent solution to untouchability because earlier, the problem was based on the work that Bakha and his class had been doing for centuries.

Through this, Anand imagines a secular, cooperative, and egalitarian society that can help uplift the social condition and position of the subaltern class. Although it was the evening when Bakha listened to Gandhi, it seemed the dawn of Bakha's life from where he gets a breath of fresh air about his future, and after using this machine, he and his caste could breathe the fresh air of dignity and freedom.

The remark by the sahib of Mukti about the equality of all, regardless of caste or economic status, directly challenges the prevailing social norms and ideologies that justify the segregation and oppression of people based on their birth. No god is needed to rescue

untouchables, no vows of self-sacrifice and abnegation on the part of more fortunate Indians, but simple and solely the flush system. Introduce water closets and main drainage throughout India, and all this wicked rubbish about untouchability will disappear. The only people who are not sweepers are the outcasts and Hindus. I am an untouchable sweeper for them! Untouchable! Untouchable! That is the key phrase! Untouchable! "I am an Invincible!"(43). It reflects the protagonist Bakha's despair and frustration with the caste system that deems him untouchable simply because of his occupation as a sweeper. This occupation, tied to his caste, marks him and his family as untouchables.

*Outcaste* by Sharankumar Limbale is a seminal work that delves deep into the heart of caste oppression and the struggle for identity within the Dalit community in India. This work not only offers a window into the harrowing experiences of caste oppression faced by Limbale himself but also serves as a reflective mirror for a society deeply entrenched in caste hierarchies. Limbale's work emerges as a personal story and a potent symbol of Dalit resistance, articulating a narrative that had long been suppressed under the weight of systemic injustice and social neglect. "My mother is an untouchable, while my Father is a high cast from one of the privileged classes of India. Mother lives in a hut and Father in a mansion. Father is a landlord, and mother is landless. I am an Akkarmashi (half-caste). I am condemned and branded illegitimate (OC ix)." Akkarmashi," which means half-caste, reflects the stigma and social rejection faced by those born from unions that cross these rigid caste boundaries.

Being labeled "illegitimate" reflects not only societal disapproval but also personal turmoil and identity crisis, as individuals like the speaker are often not entirely accepted by either community neither the higher caste of the Father nor the lower caste of the mother. This dual rejection stems from traditional views that uphold caste purity and condemn relationships

between different castes, especially those involving a higher-caste individual and a lower-caste individual.

Humanism in "*Outcaste*" is evident in Limbale's emphasis on empathy, dignity, and the quest for identity beyond caste-imposed limitations. The narrative affirms individuals' inherent worth and humanity, which are often denied to Dalits. Through personal anecdotes and reflections, Limbale humanizes the Dalit experience, challenging readers to confront deep-seated prejudices and recognize the universal human desire for respect, love, and social justice.

Dehumanization, however, is a stark and recurring theme throughout the book. Limbale vividly depicts the degrading treatment and inhumane conditions faced by Dalits, who are often seen as "untouchable" and subjected to extreme forms of discrimination and violence. This dehumanization is not only physical but also psychological, stripping individuals of their self-worth and identity. The systemic and institutionalized nature of caste oppression ensures that dehumanization pervades every aspect of a Dalit's life, from education and employment to social relations and personal dignity.

The way that humanism and dehumanization interact in "*Outcaste*" is a potent indictment of prejudice based on caste. It draws attention to the pressing need for societal reform while simultaneously showcasing the human spirit's tenacity in the face of unrelenting injustice. Limbale's writings serve as a call to action, imploring readers to adopt humanism by vehemently resisting dehumanization and advancing the creation of a more just and equal society.

The dominating classes rape their women whenever they assault and take advantage of the weak. Men who are among the malevolent exploiters get credibility for their sexual adventures, which undermine their authority, money, society, and religion. However, what

about the mistreated female? The rape must remain inside her womb. It was necessary to bear, feed, and raise that rape. Limbale claims that his experiences speak for it.

Humanization is evident in the portrayal of Dalit relationships and community bonds. Limbale explores the nuances of family, friendship, love, and solidarity, presenting a rich tapestry of social connections that sustain the characters amid adversity. He shows characters as complex individuals with dreams, thoughts, and personalities, challenging the monolithic stereotypes often associated with Dalits.

“The high-caste girls from our village offered us their curry and bakers without touching us (12).” reflects the complex interplay of compassion and the perpetuation of caste-based discrimination and untouchability practices within Indian society, particularly in rural settings. Offering food to someone from a lower caste could be seen as a gesture of goodwill or charity. On the surface, the high-caste girls offer help and kindness to the less fortunate. The condition of not touching them while giving food signifies that the rigid norms of caste purity and pollution constrain the gesture. This reveals that compassion is limited by social norms that view lower castes as "untouchable" or impure. By offering food without physical contact, the high-caste girls inadvertently reinforce the notion of untouchability. This act, though seemingly kind, perpetuates the idea that Dalits are not to be touched, thereby maintaining social distance and hierarchy.

The teacher asked high-caste boys and girls to collect leftovers on a piece of paper to give to lower-caste students. The teacher's directive to collect leftovers for lower-caste students normalizes and institutionalizes caste-based discrimination within the school environment. It implicitly teaches students that such segregation and unequal treatment are acceptable and expected. When discrimination comes from an authority figure like a teacher, it gains an official

sanction, further entrenching the notion that lower-caste individuals are deserving of lesser treatment. This undermines the principle of equality that education is supposed to promote.

Lower-caste students are stigmatized through these actions, being publicly marked as inferior and undeserving of equal treatment. This can have profound psychological effects, including feelings of shame, low self-esteem, and a sense of alienation. It dehumanizes them, treating them as less than equal human beings deserving of respect and dignity. It objectifies these students, reducing their worth to that of recipients of charity rather than equal participants in the educational process.

Like a famine victim, she said, “Why didn't you get at least a small portion of it for me”? Leftover food is nectar. Poignantly encapsulates themes of poverty, desperation, and the human will to survive under dire circumstances. The plea for a share of leftovers shows the physical hunger and symbolizes a more profound longing for inclusion and equality.

The reference to an "epidemic of cholera" serves as a potent symbol and a stark reality that highlights several critical themes and issues related to social inequity, public health, and the intersection of disease with caste discrimination. It hit hardest among populations living in inadequate water and sanitation conditions. It underscores the vulnerability of marginalized communities, particularly Dalits, who are frequently forced to live in the most unsanitary conditions due to systemic discrimination and poverty. This makes them disproportionately susceptible to waterborne diseases like cholera in a society where caste discrimination is prevalent; the metaphor of cholera associated with impurity and contagion can reflect the stigmatization of Dalits. It parallels how Dalits are often unjustly treated as "social contaminants," further marginalizing and excluding them from mainstream society.

Bhakar is the size of a man. It is as big as the sky and just as brilliant. Hunger surpasses the human race. “A man can only be as large as a bhakari. And only to the extent of his appetite.

Hunger has greater power than humans. One stomach is comparable to the entire planet. Hunger can be as huge as your open palm, but it has the power to belch and consume the entire universe. If there had been hunger, there would have been as large as a man. It is as vast as the sky and bright like the sun. What about stealing and fighting? What would happen to sin, virtue, heaven, and hell without hunger? This creation of God without hunger, how could a country, its borders, citizens, parliament, and Constitution come into being? The world is born from a stomach and the links between mother and Father, sister and brother (OC51).” The opening pages of Limbale's *The Outcaste* portray the grade school life of Sharankumar, which makes him. He is mindful of being a distant Dalit as he has a place with the Mahar people group. Here, unconsciously, he acknowledges the contrast between the higher station understudies and him (an understudy of the Mahar people group) as a result of isolation and forced separation of each perspective like dietary patterns, dressing even in the diversions, the Wani and Brahmin boys played kabbadi. Being marked as Mahar, we could not join them. So Mallya, Umbrya. Parshya, all from my caste, began to play touch and go. We played one kind of game while the high-caste village boys played another. The two games were played separately, like two separate whirlwinds.

The segregation and contrast towards the Dalits are conceived from the Indian rank framework. The standard station framework in contemporary India is so profoundly established that it cannot be crushed despite the different sacred arrangements of defensive segregation approaches. Dalits still endure the shame of distance, even after standing separation has been announced as an offense under the law. Standing framework pursues certain religious authorizes and forces marvelous forbiddances by thinking about the higher position as hallowed by the Masters and Dalits as unapproachable or profane; the specialist organization Dr. BR Ambedkar, the prime designer of the Indian constitution who advocated for the Dalits likewise believes position framework to be the purpose behind isolating people. By citing

Ambedkar, Zakir Abedi succeeded in idealizing the real and realizing the ideal, "Caste is divine, Caste holds inviolable status. The caste system encompasses more than just the division of labor." (Abedi) it also involves the segregation and pollution of Dalits. A Dalit gets the tag of distant is entirely on his introduction to the world, in a low position, and all types of embarrassments become the heritage he acquires.

Limbale portrays occurrences where Mahars are not permitted to enter the sanctuary, not contact the open well, or attract water to extinguish their thirst despite being burrowed by them. Limbale states, "The space and scoops of Mahars were utilized to burrow the well. The Mahar gave their perspiration for it. They, the Mahars, are the motivation behind why there is water in the well. However, these points indicate that the equivalent Mahars are not permitted to draw water from it, notwithstanding drinking water." (OC81) There are sure authorized conventions to which the Dalits are constrained to pursue and to which they cannot defeat inside the casing of Caste segregation. Limbale portrays the treatment of a higher-standing Shivram for a Dalit Rambaap in a scene of Shivram's coffee bar in his collection of memories.

Before he composed, besides drinking tea, Rambaap washed the tumblers before returning them to their proper places. Since it was improper for a Mahar Mang to give money to someone personally, he placed the tea money on the ground and dropped it into the owner's hands from a height. Rambaap remarked, "We are low castes," as he saw me observing him perform all of this. You have witnessed a lengthy custom that our ancestors passed on to us. How can we address this? How can we defy the traditions of the village? (76). Most significant issue concerning the fowls of the standing framework is the treatment of the Dalit ladies in the general public. The lip services of higher-ranking individuals are obvious to Dalit ladies.

The life of Masamai was demolished by Hanmanta Limbale, a Patil who made Masamai separate from her Husband Ithal Kamble, which later on made Masamai a keep of Hanmanta

so that she cannot wed again as man does. Sharankumar Limbale portrays the oppression of sex in the context of his mom: "Ithal Kamble remarried. A man can eat paan and spit as often as he prefers, yet the equivalent is not feasible for a lady. It is viewed as wrong if a lady does that. "When her celibacy is lost, it can never be reestablished."(36) Furthermore, he talked about the reason for being a courtesan of a higher rank, Patil, to spare her youngsters from starvation.

Masamai and Santamai are not the only examples. They sold themselves to be loved and cared for by someone. They had not sled their bodies to appease their lust. "Do we exist just for the sake of hunger? Beyond hunger lies a vast life. There is life beyond bread. However, I had no life experience beyond this ghetto."(OC64) the following concentration in Limbale's *The Outcaste* is on the Identity of a Dalit. A Dalit is recognized by the jobs relegated to him by the general public. The jobs here represent modest work and as a specialist co-op to the higher standing with no wages.

A Dalit resembles a captive to the upper-standing individuals. They can arrange him/her as indicated by their desire, and the Dalit needs to execute the equivalent with no disdain. Also, the essential examination of Limbale's *The Outcaste* characterizes the personality from four noteworthy viewpoints: First by birth, second by dad's name, and finally by the standing to which he/she has a place. Throughout his account, Limbale presents the emergencies of character and is dependably baffled concerning his reality. Birth characterizes the personality of an individual in an absolute first stage, yet Limbale trusts that his introduction to the world is the revile for him since he was conceived out of an ill-conceived sexual connection of his mom with Hanmanta.

"My first breath must have threatened the morality of the world. With my first cry at birth, milk must have splashed from the breasts of every Kunti. Why did my mother say yes to

the rape which brought me into the world? Why did she put up with the fruit of this illegitimate intercourse for nine months and nine days and allow me to grow in the fetus? (OC36-37).”

Limbale portrays an individual's character development by his/her Father's name. It is incredible that upper position Hanmanta Limbale had Masamai "like a pet pigeon (36) yet would not like to acknowledge her tyke. He did not recognize Sharankumar as his posterity. Later, Hanmanta leaves Masami, and Sharan turns into a youngster with no name of his dad. The general public remembers one regarding his dad as opposed to a person. When Sharankumar Limbale needs an endorsement from Sarpanch, he addressed Limbale's personality; The Sarpanch was in a real fix about how to identify me. However, I, too, was a human being. What else did I have except a human body? A man is recognized by his religion, caste, or Father. I had neither a father's name nor any religion nor a caste. I had no inherited identity at all. (59)

Limbale's *The Outcaste* is the caste that lends him his identity. The caste designates the position of every person in the society. It is the caste that only tells the history of the forefathers. Constructing a person's identity is impossible without history because it places the person in contemporary society with his religious and traditional sanctions. Limbale also suffers identity crises concerning caste; he writes; “my ancestors came from the Lingayat. Consequently, I am also one; my mother was Mahar. I am a Mahar because my mother's Father and ancestors were Mahar. My grandmother Santamai raised me from the day I was born until today. Does this imply that I, too, am a Muslim? So why is it that the Jamadar's affection cannot claim to be Muslim? I come from an untouchable mother; how can I be high caste? What about my upper caste father if I am untouchable? Like Jarasandh, I am. I am divided into two parts: the village-dwelling half and the excommunicated half. Me? Who am I? Whom does my umbilical cord belong to? (OC38).” With every one of these references, the inquiry emerges as to why

Sharankumar Limbale is having such difficulty with his personality. Why has he endured the circumstance of not being a character? It is because of the having placed his mom in a Dalit network. She has been persecuted and explicitly abused on account of being a Dalit, which further destructed the life of her tyke (Sharan), who endured the embarrassments and insults of higher position individuals just like an ill-conceived distant (outcaste) of the general public.

Next, a significant issue in Limbale's *The Outcaste* is the economic deprivation of a Dalit. The Dalits are landless and follow the traditional occupation, which hinders any economic upliftment in the life of the untouchables. They work as laborers in the fields of high castes for a small amount of grain. Due to such prevailing oppression, the Dalits have to face hunger and starvation. For them, food is God. A Dalit agrees to any work to fill his or her stomach. Limbale, in his *The Outcaste*, writes. Every bus meant bread and butter for us. We waited at the bus stand for a bus as a prostitute waited for her customers. When I saw a bus distance, I became excited, hoping this would provide at least a few Anna and Dada to buy me a cup of tea. (41)

In a nutshell, by questioning the society, Limbale wants to mark out the Dalits' life in the post-independent India of the sixties, which is full of humiliation and suffering. It highlighted the hypocrisies and mentality of those who call themselves higher castes; despite safeguard measures in the Indian constitution, the Dalits have been exploited and oppressed due to their low caste; they are socially frail. Economically needy and politically powerless. However, with time, the conditions of the Dalits have improved due to reservation policies. Now, they are becoming economically independent and have professionally strengthened their position under government patronage, but the question remains the same: When will they remain downgraded and unaccepted socially? When will society overcome the stigmatized identity of the Dalits? These questions are still unanswered even today.

In Sharankumar Limbale's "*Akkarmashi*," the use of the mother as a metaphor for rape is a powerful literary tool that highlights the violent subjugation and exploitation inherent within the caste system. The character's mother, belonging to the "untouchable" caste, symbolizes not only an individual who suffers under systemic oppression but also the broader exploitation of her entire community. The high-caste man's relationship with her, which results in the birth of the protagonist, can be interpreted as emblematic of the forced and non-consensual usurpation of the lower caste's autonomy and dignity.

This metaphor deepens the critique of the caste system, showing it as not merely a social division but an active form of domination where the bodies and lives of lower caste individuals are considered accessible and expendable by those of higher caste status. The illegitimacy and stigma faced by the protagonist, born from such a union, underscore the pervasive cruelty and injustice that stem from such power imbalances.

It extends beyond personal trauma, reflecting a historical pattern of oppression where the dominant classes exploit the vulnerable under the guise of tradition and social hierarchy. Thus, Limbale's narrative, through this metaphor, condemns not just individual acts of violence but also the entire cultural and social system that enables and perpetuates such acts. This literary depiction forces readers to confront the harsh realities of caste oppression and its dehumanizing effects on individuals and communities.

Limbale found himself in the school, just like the garbage thrown outside. "There is a saying, children are the flowers of God's abode,' but not us." We are the trash that the village discards. There are so many caste factions in our school. We had grown up like aliens since our infancy. Limbale is right when he remarks that it is a man who is a hindrance to religion' or caste. Right from birth to death in the caste-ridden Hindu society, there is no escape from rites and rituals on various occasions, such as after-childbirth celebrations, marriage ceremonies,

mundane (head-shaven) Zanskar, after-death ceremonial rites and rituals, and so on. Religious dogmas and spiritual fascist forces cause disintegration in the existing social setup in India.

Moreover, because of a lack of caste identity, even the village barber, Ishunath, refused to cut his hair or shave his head. Even Shivram, a tea stall owner, displayed social discrimination in his small shop; Shiva owned a small tea shop in our village where separate cups and saucers were kept for Mahars and Mangs. Everywhere we condemned, our caste was thrust upon us even before we were born. However, to their dismay, he failed to enjoy a socially harmonious life, a lack of caste identity, and a socially valued hierarchy. He seemed not to be even a human being, not to speak of his being a social being. Limbale expressed his agony very indignantly. However, a man is recognized worldwide by his religion, caste, or Father. I had neither religion nor caste. I had no inherited identity at all (OC27).

Brahmins, the most minor population, sit atop the social pyramidal structure. Just below them comes Kshatriya, further followed by Vaishyas. Shudras stand on the lowest stratum. Among the conventionally recognized four Varna's, outcastes have no place at all. The protagonist profoundly feels the pain of being excluded from the caste system. The life of a guy who endured suffering from the caste system as well as the agony of being denied entry into it. He was inferior to everyone else and an outcast!

In India, caste plays a key role, from electing a village sarpanch to forming the government, state, and central. For a solid social bastion, one must be the essential part of caste or class, lower or middle or higher, so that he might not only exercise his or her franchise with pride but also live a societal life properly. The caste equation plays a vitally decisive role in Indian politics. The significant role of caste identity establishes that one's self-respect always remains on the wane if one fails to assert oneself with no identity crisis. Limbale was suspended

in the absence of his social and caste status. He would like to know, asking a volley of questions that are still unanswered.

“She (Masamai) will die blemished, an object of someone's lust, but what about us? Will anyone marry my sisters? Will society accept us? When we die, will people from the Maharwada undertake our funerals?” (OC64) If the question of caste identity gets its proper solution, we will bill to cure many social diseases quickly. However, it appears to be a pipe dream in India's sociopolitical circumstances. Limbale, worst acquainted with the ruthless rigidity of the caste system in the Hindu society and the riotous attitude between Hindus and Muslims, took his refusal under the calm and serene shade of Buddhism. Inspired by the revolutionary ideology of Dr. BR Ambedkar, Limbale not only embraced Buddhism but also participated actively in the Dalit Panthers Movement to awaken the people of his likes. He explicitly revealed, "Because I was unable to inherit my Father's caste and religion, I was terrified of my caste. I was not a Mahar because I had high caste ancestry running through my veins. (82) Who, other than Limbale himself, an outcaste, can understand the humiliation interns of marriage when no one in his community was willing to give his daughter away to him? 'When there came time for marriage, he could not get even married to an outcast girl because his blood is not pure.

Eventually, a drunkard who offered Limbale his daughter would allow her to leave after the wedding because of Limbale's background. Limbale expresses a dig at Hindus' social morals and behavior. He is dead against solemnization of his marriage, following Hindu rituals and customs. He candidly opines, “I do not believe in Hindu rituals. We are going to be wedded according to Buddhist rituals.”(99)

After getting a job as a telephone operator, Limbale faced many problems finding a house to rent in a new town for his accommodation. Castes chased him there, too, like his foe.

He said, "I faced the problem of finding a house in a new town, and my caste followed me like an enemy. Every town and person was caste conscious. This caste has dehumanized me everywhere."(106)

When Kusum, his wife, informed him that she had given birth to a male baby, Limbale, as if predetermined, christened his child with Anarya. This is a culmination of his anger and indignation at the hegemony of the elite of Indian society. He avowed, I got the news that my wife Kusum had had a baby boy; I have already thought of a name for him. It was Anarya, which is the culmination of his anger and indignation at the hegemony of the elite of Indian society. He avowed, "I got the news that my wife Kusum had had a baby boy; I have already thought of a name for him. It was Anarya."(112)

Limbale wants the coming generation not to suffer the brunt of caste discrimination and oppression because caste is a prominent status marker in Hindu society. However, the Outcaste Akkarmashi tells an untold tale of a Dalit who rose from penury to privilege. The struggle of the protagonist instills in other Dalits radical thoughts to wage a silent war against the rotten, stinking caste system that has maimed and paralyzed the cordiality and harmony among the people in general.

In this novel, some male characters are responsible for wrecking females' married lives. It was because they divorced, and since then, she had been the keep of another man. This is almost a tradition a Patil, always a prominent landowner, has a Dalit woman as his whore. There is at least one such house in every village. Montaging herself to one owner after another and being used as a commodity. Children born to such a whore have no legal father because there is an unbridgeable gap between such a father and son. The prestige of the Father is at stake!

In many cultures, the head of the family, often the Father, symbolizes the family's social standing and moral reputation. Therefore, any threat to his prestige can have broader implications for all family members, potentially leading to social ostracism or diminished status among their peers. This is particularly emphasized in societies where family honor is tightly interwoven with individual actions.

Limbale's mother, Masamai, was a victim of dirty village politics. To be born beautiful among the Mahars is a curse. Both Santamai and Masamai were exploited sexually by the village Patils. Hanmanta Limbale plotted with the 'Caste Council' to separate Masami from her husband and her suckling babies and ultimately forced her to be his keep. Bound by the cobweb of caste ideology, Masami's husband, Ithal Kamble, could not protect his wife. The author reflects, "The upper caste men in every village had made whores of the wives of Dalit from laborers, and Masamai was one among them."<sup>(37)</sup> Driving one out from work was very common. When Ram became the Sarpanch, he started making decisions against the Dalits. He removed Dada from his work and appointed his people instead. After losing his job, Dada became an alcoholic and abused his family members for protesting Patil's son's sexual liaison with Nagi, his sister.

The Victimization of Dalit women in the hands of Patils was accepted as legitimate and standard. Girls from Dalit Mahar families were often offered to the temple service. Such girls were known as Devdasi, which means maidservant of God. Devdasi were often exposed to sexual exploitation by the preachers. The children born to the Devdasi were considered impure and were compelled to live on begging. Limbale's registration of protest in the autobiography, Limbale quoted, "What sort of life had she been living, mortgaging herself to one owner to another and being used as a commodity? Her lot has been nothing but the tyranny of sex."<sup>(59)</sup> Is indicative of the asserting Dalit consciousness in him.

Untouchability goes hand in hand with the Dalits. Limbale comments in his book on Dalit literary criticism, *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*, “Dalit literature is born from the womb of untouchability” (29). Untouchability was thoroughly practiced in the village where Limbale was brought up. Caste people never dined with the Mahars or exchanged food. The Mahars could only draw water from public wells if they 'polluted' water. Whenever a Dalit happens to come to cities to rent a room, one faces uncomfortable questions regarding his caste identity by the house owner. Limbale recollects: "I went to Latur. I faced the problem of finding a house in a new town, and my caste followed me like an enemy. Latur was such a big place with huge buildings, houses, and bungalows, but I was turned away wherever I went” (OC106).

However, the Mahars, except for the author and his friend, never protested against this. They used to drink tea in separate cups allotted for them or stand calmly in the queue of the Dalits while collecting water. The education received by the Untouchables in the army gave them a new vision and a new value; they became conscious that the low esteem in which they had been held was not an inescapable destiny but was a stigma imposed on their personality by the cunning contrivances of the priest. However, the education path took much work for them.

Limbale's autobiography portrays the difficulties Mahar students face in academic institutions. The Headmaster was not ready to admit him to the school. He was beaten several times by the upper-caste students. Teachers neglected him and often abused him with dirty words, "You son of bitch, come on, start writing! You like eating an ox, don't you?" (4). He remembers the school picnic, where upper caste boys played with teachers, and the narrator and his Dalit friends were busy playing touch and go among themselves. Their coarse food brought from home was hardly enough to save them from hunger and shamefulness. His question to Sobhi is, "Your water gets impure if we touch it; if that is so, then why doesn't this river turn impure? If a human being becomes impure by our touch, then why did your color not

change to green or yellow, as happens when someone is sick or poisoned?"(71) Expresses his explicit anger and voice of resistance. His attempt to problematize the existence of God: "What kind of God is this that makes human beings hates each other? If we are all supposed to be the children of God, then why are we considered untouchables?"

"We do not approve of this God, religion, or country."(62)Through this novel, Limbale refers to God and Goddesses such as Khandoba, Masoba, and Mariaai, who are the Maharsworship. Sharankumar remembers, "Every year, our village suffered from an epidemic of cholera. We called it Mariai's wind, believing it to be the Goddess's curse".(46) the author happily reflects on the festival Vitthoba. Dalit culture became impure with time and, in many ways, imbibed and imitated the mainstream culture. Santamai fasted on Tuesday in the name of the Goddess Ambabai and on Friday for the Goddess Laxmi. A corner of her room was dedicated to the Goddess Ambabai. Dalits often begged for alms in the name of the Goddess. Mahars' family disputes, anxiety, anger, use of explicit words, drunkenness, as well as pictures of the family bonding, simple village life, use of dung paste in the daily household, etc., have been portrayed minutely.

The superstitious nature of the Mahars, resulting from illiteracy and poverty, gets literary representation. When Masamai gave birth to a newborn baby, Santamaria said: "A ghost could follow our footsteps."(OC19), and she took many precautions to save the newborn. The Mahars believed in black magic, and someone would throw stones at the Maharwada; Santamaria used to abuse the stone palter because there was a belief that "such abuse afflicts the one who performs black magic."(8).

Many eminent Dalit critics like BaburaoBagul, Arjun Dangle, etc., think that Dalit writers should give up myths and symbols associated with destiny, Hindu gods and goddesses, and Hindu culture. They feel they should use new words, myths, and symbols in their literature

in tune with their Dalitvatva. Dalit writer Om Prakash Valmiki observes, “Karna, Eklavya, Shambuk, Sita have become the symbols of Dalit’s desire to live and protest. The burning conditions of Dalit life have been projected with the help of myths from Ramayana and Mahabharata.”(88) Limbale, being a well-read, has employed various myths to bring out Dalit alienation, ostracism, and the question of identity in an effective manner.

Due to the peculiar circumstances of his birth, he could identify with Karna, the deprived and neglected lowborn character of the Mahabharata, “I was growing like Karna in the Mahabharata”(37). Masami has been depicted as Sita or as an unwed mother, Kunti. He has employed Buddhist myth in his reference to Mayadevi, Siddhartha's Mother. Many questions were raised in Limbale's mind. Are we kept away from other human beings? Why are we kept out of ourselves? Why is there discrimination between one human being and another? After all, is not everybody's blood red?' (62)

Most of the time, the Dalits used to hide their caste identity for the mere sake of their livelihood. Limbale reminds a girl, Shevanta, from his village who was married to someone from Sholapur. They lived in a dreary slum and among utterly poor people. Shevanta worked as a maid in the bungalows around her slum. Whenever Limbale met her on the road, she gave him ten paise and would say, 'We have met on the road. How can I offer you tea here? Take this ten paise coin and drink tea as I offered it to you.' (83) This incident suggests what history Limbale could read on her face.

Getting an education amid dire poverty and suppression made Limbale harsher in his thoughts about high-caste people. Whenever he heard that reservation facilities for Dalits were about to be canceled, it used to scare him. He openly challenges the high caste people, 'If these facilities. Canceled, give us our own Dalit, then. We are educated only because these facilities exist. Those who say that facilities must be canceled should first face caste-ism themselves.

They must share the life of the untouchables. Let them live outside the village, ostracized like us. They should experience what it means to study while their Father is lying drunk beside them. They would not then protest against injustice."(89) Thus, the search for identity haunted Limbale throughout his life. His mother had once appropriately been married, but her husband had left her and taken their two sons. She began sleeping around, especially with the high-caste men of the village.

Limbale was born to a Dalit mother and a father who was a village chief. He could not get specific papers signed for school because he could not correctly identify his caste by his mother or father, and they would not accept his grandmother as his guardian because she lived with a Muslim. When it came time for marriage, he could not even get married to an outcast girl because his blood was not pure; he was not wanted anywhere. Eventually, a drunkard who had offered Limbale his daughter would not allow her to leave after the wedding because of Limbale's background. The clouds of doubt and identity hung over this poor outcast boy his entire life. He writes: "I am twenty-five years old now and cannot recognize my brothers or Father. They are all alive. We may not recognize each other even if we happened to travel on the same bus. That is what this journey of life is like. (91)

However, in several acts of incredible strength and bravery, he did not allow these socially constructed walls to stop him from getting an education and eventually publishing his story. He came to realize the depth of division caused by the conflict between Hindus and Muslims and chose a separate path for him in what he considered to be the warm embrace of Buddhism. He also accepts that the influence of Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Panther Movement changed his life thoroughly. He was not the only Mahar to overcome the repressive system; his friend Mallya also prevailed, and both men live happily today despite the horrors they faced as children and young adults.

“Mahars have become bold these days. They are now daring to walk straight up to you. Can't you see I am carrying drinking water?” It encapsulates a critical dialogue and shows the dehumanization effect based on caste discrimination and the social perceptions surrounding purity in Indian society. Presumably from a higher caste, it addresses a Mahar, historically considered a lower caste, indicating their boldness merely by walking closely or potentially contaminating what is considered pure, like drinking water, simply by their presence. This interaction starkly highlights the deeply ingrained prejudices and the rigidity of caste boundaries. Sometimes, they try to get revenge and raise d questions against them. If your water gets impure if we touch it, if that's so, then why doesn't this river turn impure? If a human being becomes impure by our mere touch, then why did not their color change from green to yellow, as it happens? Character shobi stood before them as a symbol of the caste system. Her feet, thighs, arms, and face were part of the system she belonged to.

Even the Dalit community is also fragmented along the caste lines. The author speaks about two separate castes among the Dalits. These are Mahar and Mangs, who drink water from two reservoirs. Once, Santamai beats him up and warns him to avoid the company of a Mang boy, who is considered to be even a lower caste as compared to Mahars. "If you play any more with the Mang boys, I will stop feeding you."(20)

The caste system extricates a Dalit in all spheres of life. Even a barber who shaves the buffalos in the village refuses to shave a Mahar's head. A Mahar has to decide a long way to get his head shaven. The cobblers do not repair the broken strap of a Mahar. Separate cups and saucers are kept in a tea stall for the Mangs and Mahars. Latur is a big city in the Maharashtra state with huge buildings and bungalows, yet there is no single room for rent to a Mahar or a Muslim. Limbale questions the very concept of untouchability in Hindu society.

"I used to clean clothes, bathe every day, and wash myself clean. I took daily showers, cleaned myself with soap, and brushed my teeth with toothpaste. I also wore clean clothes. There was nothing dirty about which I was. Then how could I be untouchable? Even a filthy high caste was regarded as approachable! Castes formed up herds in this metropolis. Castes were used to identify even localities."(OC107) A Dalit body is marked by caste, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other identities. However, not all Dalit bodies are the same; neither are female bodies the same. The Dalit panthers distinguish between a 'Dalit' and a 'woman.' Dalit ideologues did not want to include Dalit women in the movement as they thought women's sexuality would pose a threat to Dalit men.

They also assumed that including Dalit women may divert the attention from the more significant concern of the movement. However, the propaganda of Dalits remains unaccomplished without referring to Dalit women who are marginalized in a threefold manner, such as along the class, gender, and caste lines, when it comes to realizing the status of Dalit women. "Men are at the top, and women of that caste are on the bottom like crushed and wasted powder, states Gail Mowed. The Dalits are at the bottom, followed by the oppressed Dalit women." The author narrates how an innocent Dalit couple, Kamble and Masamai, are discriminated against and exploited by an upper-caste landlord, Hanmanta Limbale, for whom the poor couple used to work day and night. Ithal Kamble, Masamai's husband, is a farm worker on a yearly contract to Hanmantha Limbale, and it was a job worth seven or eight hundred rupees. Ithal Kamble toiled on the farm of Hanmantha and was helped by him during hard times. Hanmantha Patil ruined the low-income family, leading to the forever separation of Ithal Kamble and Masamai. After the divorce from Masamai, Kamble left the place with two sons, Suryakant and Dharma, and remarried a woman who was also a widow. Masamai remained a keep of Hanmantha Limbale and gave birth to Sharan Kumar Limbale. Masamai was given a rented house at Akkalkot.

“After my birth, the mansions of the Patil community must have become tense. My first breath must have threatened the morality of the world. With my first cry at birth, milk must have. Splash from the breasts of every kunti.”(36) Limbale states that to be born beautiful among Dalits is a curse. As Masamai was beautiful, she was lured by Hanmanta. She was made separate from her husband and suffered a lot in her post-widowed life. Though Hanmanta enjoyed the beauty of Masamai, he was self-conscious that Masamai was a Dalit and tried to avoid her. He also commented that Bhondya, the potter, looked after the newborn child. Limbale writes, "Finally my mother and I come to stay with Santamai, my grandmother. Only a mother and the earth can accommodate and stomach everything." (37) The upper caste men in every village had made whores of the wives of Dalit farm laborers, and Masamai was one among them. Many Dalit women writers have emerged on the horizon and give literary expression to their deep feelings in their autobiographies.

Sharankumar Limbale, in his autobiography, expresses his deepest sympathy towards Dalit women. He further sheds light on the marginal and victimized condition of Dalit women, of which his Masamai (mother) and his Santamai (grandmother) are glaring examples. His Masamai and Santamai are independent women working outside their homes to earn their livelihood. Santamai wakes up early in the morning to sweep the village street. Masamai set up a homemade liquor business and served liquor to the customers.

Being beautiful in a Dalit community is a curse. It is customary among the high caste Patils to make whore from the Dalit community and to bring children into this world from a Dalit Woman out of wedlock. His Masamai is a victim of such oppression and has been caught between the games of lust and hunger. Hanmanta Limbale, a Patil, wrecks her home, separates her from her loving husband and suckling babies, and makes her his 'keep' to satiate his lust. She gives birth to a baby, and later on, he leaves her. Later, another Patil from another village,

Yeshwantrao Sidramappa, accepts her as his concubine, and they have eight children out of wedlock. After getting divorced, Masamai debases herself from the status of a wife to a 'whore' to have a family and to serve them food because a divorced Dalit woman is never allowed to remarry while her divorced husband can remarry multiple times. Limbale very beautifully explains this gender politics in the following lines,

"A man can eat pain and spit as many times as he likes, but the same is not possible for a woman. It is considered wrong if a woman does that. Once her chastity is lost, it can never be restored." (36) The upper caste Hindus objectifies a Dalit woman's body as a sexual plaything. Limbale's writing exposes the hypocrisy and corruption of the so-called high caste people and the lascivious misdemeanor of the landlords and priests in the garb of religion and caste. A Dalit man even goes to the extent of sacrificing his woman on the night of the Patil mansions. It is a tradition among a few Dalit communities to dedicate a girl child to God. These girls devote the rest of their lives to worshipping gods or performing certain rituals. Such women are known as 'devadasis (a dancer- prostitute dedicated to the deity and the patrons of a temple). Later, they are branded on the thighs of the priest, and the children, borne out of 'devadasis,' are considered children of impure blood.

Even the farmers sometimes beat up the Dalit women and sexually harassed them if their cattle trespassed the boundary of grazing. These downtrodden women wail for emancipation, but their desperate cry remains heedless. 'Rape' is a common phenomenon among the Dalits, whether the women are raped by the high caste landowners or by their men. Sharankumar gives an instance of a Dalit woman Dhanavva whose Father deliberately rapes her after the death of her husband. That shameless man does not feel remorse; instead, he boastfully acknowledges his deed.

"I have sown the seed from which she has grown as a plant. Now why shouldn't I eat the fruits of this plant?" (67) In Indian society, the speaker uses the metaphor of planting and harvesting to assert a claim over another person presumably a woman comparing her to a "plant" that he has cultivated and therefore believes he has rights over. This sentiment reflects a patriarchal viewpoint where women are often seen as property or commodities. The speaker's claim to 'eat the fruits' of the plant he has 'sown' might echo the upper caste's justification for their privilege and control over the lower castes, whom they might consider lesser or subservient. In this sense, it confronts the unjust social structures sanctioning such control and exploitation.

Limbale shares a glimpse of the political activism and the formation of militant groups among Dalits in 1972. Dalits worship Babasaheb Ambedkar like a god, and instead of saying 'namaskar,' they greet each other with 'Jai Bhim.' They protested to rename the Maratha Wada University as Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar University and were successful in doing so. During this time, many Dalits converted to Buddhism as Buddhism condemned the unequal code and believed in the doctrine of egalitarianism. Sharankumar, a Dalit activist, married according to the Buddhist rituals and actively participated in the Dalit Panther Movement.

Once, a Dalit youth dared to look lasciviously at a high-caste woman from the village. This is considered a severe crime. Suppose she went back and told them. The whole village turned against the young man and attacked the Maharwada. Later, the whole village went to court against Dalit men who were sentenced to prison for a year. Every man's wife had a baby when they returned after serving their term. The Dalit women had been raped when their husbands were in prison. A village always acts atrociously like this against the Dalits.

Whenever Dalits found a piece of candy wrapper, their mouth watered. A clean sheet of paper made them happy. If anything was interesting to read, they kept and read it. It shows

the eagerness towards education. One day, before the classes started, Limbale and his mates had to assemble on the school grounds to sing the national anthem and take an oath together. While paying this homage, all the teachers and students were paying attention. After the prayer, Limbale went to their Headmaster, told him about the money he had found, and handed it to him. Limbale was very happy with his honesty, announced his name on the loud speaker, and congratulated him. Through this incident, Limbale's humanization has been proved.

Whenever an animal in the village died, the villagers grew annoyed. They consider the Maharwada responsible for it. They tied them to a pole and beat them like animals. They accused Dalits of having poisoned the animal. Their women and children cried and shrieked. All the men in the Maharwada were severely beaten. The village then ostracized the Maharwada for a few days. They should not get any work on the farms. They were denied any provision at the shops, although they had the money and were ready to pay. They have reached a dead end. Such humiliation was agonizing.

Farmers did not even allow Dalits to come near the boundaries of their fields. When Dalit women approached the boundaries to graze the cattle, the farmers drove them away, shouting, do not gaze at their cattle there. They need grass for their own. The Mahar community is considered monstrous. They consider Dalit's cattle to spoil their crops. Dalit women suffered severe insults. They endured beatings akin to those of enslaved people. Some farmers even dragged them into the cornfield, raped them, and subjected them to sexual harassment. These all show the miserable life of the Dalit community. Their tears were like an epic. Injustice done to them was not just today's phenomenon but had a long history. The roots of this injustice have been deeply rooted in history for many thousands of years.

Limbale's ancestors used to be security guards at the Patil's mansion. Whenever Patil had to go away to town on official work, his forefathers were so naive that they did not consider,

even once, the possibility of Patil's sleeping wife. On the other hand, they sacrificed their daughters, wives, sisters, and daughters-in-law for nights in Patil's mansion. When the cornerstone of a structure was being laid, they were sacrificed similarly to animals. The Patil's leftover food was something their ancestors took great pride in feeding them. Sacrificed like animals is the time for laying the foundation stone of a building.

However, another insulted incident that takes place in the life of Limbale is when he tries to help a high-caste woman; her husband unknowingly beats him without knowing the actual situation. He began to shout against Limbale. His wife tries to explain the situation, but he grows angrier as said he is a Mahar. He is Santamai's grandson he took off one of his shoes and threw it on Limbale. She needs to satisfy the sexual desires of men from the dominant castes.

Cows have cultural significance in Hinduism, where they are revered and often treated like mothers. The distinction between how a human mother's body is treated and how a cow's body is treated emphasizes the special status that cows have in Hinduism. The Mahar community is regarded as being at the bottom of the caste structure in Hindu society. Hence, it is significant that the Mahar, who is in charge of getting rid of the dead cow, is mentioned in the context of Dalit literature. According to Judith Butler's idea of gender performance, gender is something we act in response to social norms and expectations rather than something we are born with.

Furthermore, it is possible to interpret the cow owner as sobbing and the cow pan's dejected appearance as a gendered performance of loss and attachment in which the cow is personified and elevated to a mother figure. Overall, it makes a strong statement about how caste and gender interact to affect how animals are treated and how oppressed groups are treated in Hindu society. The expression of the cow pan can be similar to this; Hinduism's treatment

of cows can be understood as a type of performative culture in which members of Hindu society act out the social customs and beliefs related to cows.

The Mahar community in Hindu society is a marginalized and oppressed group, as demonstrated by their gendered ritual of grieving and attachment in which the cow is personified and elevated to the position of a mother figure. Overall, it offers a potent reflection on how caste and gender interact to affect how underprivileged groups and animals are treated in Hindu society. He is afraid of his caste because he cannot claim his Father's caste and religion. In a sense, he was not a Mahar because high caste blood ran through his blood. High-caste people never bother about their future in front of God. Everyone is equal, and everyone's life will be ended in the sand.

To appease their hunger, they tried to steal, beg, fetch dead animals, and eat them. Dalits are mentally flamed. Their poverty did not allow them to enjoy the luxuries of life. Poverty causes agony that knows no bounds. It defines a man as such. They all knew that they existed like grains crushed in a stone grinder. Nagi has gone astray; she is going around with the son of the senior Patil this day. In some communities, relationships or interactions deviating from traditional or accepted norms might be viewed negatively.

The phrase "gone astray" suggests that her social context perceives Nagi's behavior as improper or unconventional. Her actions might be considered problematic or controversial if such relationships are frowned upon in their community or if there are existing tensions between families or social groups. The reference to the "son of the senior patil" highlights the social status of the individual Nagi is associated with. This could imply that her actions are under greater scrutiny because they involve a person of notable status. Everyone sees that woman as a prostitute. Through all his experience, he felt his blood flow like hot lava through his body.

Due to his caste, he lost all the marriage proposals. Everyone believed that he was not of pure blood. These people love conventions more than they do human beings. He may not recognize his brothers or his Father. They are all alive. Their eyes are blindfolded, and we wander, not knowing where, like Dhritarastra and Gandhari or Karna and Kunti, Eklavya and Ashwathama. Life is like a battlefield. Some people gain their aims, but some people lose. All this is because all are controlled by caste. He is ashamed of his culture and angry at its customs, but he is helpless. He had suffered the pain of insult.

The custom of dedicating one's children to God is practiced only among the backward communities Ambabai, Yallama, and Laxmi. Khandoba are the gods and goddesses worshipped by the Mahars. Masoba, Maryai, Khokdas, and Satwai are a few more names that can be added to the list. If someone did not have a child, they made various sacred vows. If a daughter is born after offering a vow to Goddess Ambabai, that girl is named Ambabai after the Goddess; if it is a son, he is named Ambadas. If they make their vow to Goddess Laxmi and a daughter is born, that girl is named Laxmi, and if a son, his name will be Laxman. They also dedicate their children as Potraj in the name of the Goddess Laxmi. There is also a custom of dedicating children to God Khandoba. A boy born as such is called Waghya, and a girl is called Murali. For Yallama, a boy is called Jogtya, and a girl is called Jogtin.

A girl dedicated to God is never married because she is supposed to have already married God. Such a girl called a devadasi can live with a man she loves after performing certain rituals. The children born to devadasis' are considered impure by blood and are not entitled to trade or work in a village. They live by begging. Limbale drank water to fill his stomach and blunt his hunger. She had put a big stone inside it to make it heavy. It symbolizes the poverty which deals with the harsh realities and discrimination faced by Dalits in India.

Buddhist rituals hold significant importance, particularly as a source of spiritual and cultural affirmation for Dalits who convert to Buddhism. This practice, deeply embedded in the historical and social context of India, reflects the quest for dignity, equality, and identity among those traditionally marginalized by the caste system. Conversion to Buddhism and the adoption of Buddhist rituals often represent a rejection of the Hindu caste hierarchy, which places Dalits at the lowest rung. These rituals, which emphasize moral upliftment, compassion, and equality, offer a stark contrast to the oppressive social order that many Dalits are escaping. Through these practices, Dalits find a new sense of community and solidarity, which is crucial for their collective empowerment and offers solace and peace to those who have endured generations of humiliation and injustice.

Hindus and Muslims are both born in this country. Both are human beings. The blood of both people is red. Only their religions are different. However, they are after each other just because they have different religions. Bloody slaughter, riots, and crusades are carried out in the name of religion; they do not display any compassion for a person who practices a different religion. If you cut out his religion, a man is still a man. So why does not a human being from one religion love a human being from another? Why does religion hinder them? Why do conventions imprison a man? The intense hatred between Dalits and high caste was engendered in the minds of both groups. In his blood, echoing like a fetus, was an agitation. Issues were taking place. The Hindu community was hurt because, with the facilities given to them, Dalits were getting an education and becoming aware of their rights.

The campaign also produced a generation of violent teenagers who endangered Hindus, and the idea of untouchables having happy lives and occupations made available to them irritated them and denied to do the lowly jobs that they once did for Hindus. Such changes in the Dalit community occurred with their conversion to Buddhism. The thought that the

community, which had lived the life of cats and dogs for thousands of years, was now behaving as equals was unacceptable to the high-caste Hindus. Limbale thought it safer to be secretive about my caste in such a terrible situation.

The most memorable element of Limbale's life story is his attitude to women. There are many women characters in it, and not one of them without a severe complication in her life. There are widows, childless women, deserted women, and the ultimate of all this divine and social injustice, Limbale presents his mother who has been cheated again and again, exploited most blatantly in every relationship she strikes, burdened with a roll call of children and their upbringing.

## CHAPTER III

### CONCLUSION

"Through Dalit literature, we witness the emergence of new identities that defy the traditional boundaries imposed by caste."

Mulkraj Anand's "*Untouchable*" illustrates the unworthiness of the caste system in Hindu society because it divides society into numerous sections. To narrate the worst effect of untouchability on Hindu society, Anand chooses his protagonist, Bakha, from a subaltern class background. He discloses all the frustration, agony, aspiration, misery, compassion, and depression of his protagonist, which are the result of his daily struggle with society.

As a great disciple of Gandhiji and influenced by Marx's ideology, he believed that a democratic outlook would help subaltern classes to uplift their social condition. Better opportunities for subalterns can improve their socioeconomic status. He also believes that modernity and scientific approach can eradicate age-old traditions, superstitions, religious taboos, castes, and classism from society. After using modern and new scientific equipment, no untouchable will wait for the mercy of high castes for water; no untouchable will clean human excreta manually, and will not carry the human excreta on their heads. The poor socioeconomic condition of the subaltern class is the main reason for their suffering.

Democratic outlook supports those getting better education and job opportunities to improve their socioeconomic condition.

Anand has applied humanism as an instrument to dispel the darkness of ignorance, eradicate a hackneyed culture, tradition, and rituals, abolish untouchability, and give a dignified social status to the untouchables. In this novel, Anand has shed attention on the agony inflicted upon the outcasts by the Hindu caste system. Even though Bakha is associated with a filthy occupation, Anand portrays him as a man of dignity and grandeur. His choice of Bakha, a character from the lowest social class, demonstrates his unwavering belief in human dignity, the cornerstone of his humanism. He wants to be treated like a human being and is incredibly sensitive and tender. All that society gave him was hurt and disgrace. Through the many events, he understands his role in the world.

Anand offered the three untouchability remedies. Anand describes Bakha's exposure to Colonel Hutchinson, chief of the Christian Missionary. The encounter between Bakha and Colonel Hutchinson, the head of the Christian missionary, leads to Bakha's conversion to Christianity at the book's conclusion. Bakha, however, firmly believed in the Hindu gods and ideals. He was also afraid of losing his caste and being kicked out of his community. He was unable to replace Hinduism with Christianity because of all these ideas. As Bakha was a devout Hindu, he refused to convert, arguing that "the religion which was good enough for his forefathers was good enough for him." (UT144) Thus, the missionary did not persuade Bakha to convert to a different religion.

The second solution was stated in Mahatma Gandhi's speech. Untouchables are people he wishes to share his sufferings with, but he also views them negatively because of their negative behaviors. Bakha is deeply hurt by Gandhi's accusation that their behaviors are their fault. He was moved by Mahatma's final address when he proclaimed, "All public wells,

temples, roads, schools, and sanatoriums must be declared open to the untouchables". Practically speaking, Bakha found it less fulfilling because he had to take on a little role in order to be released. Modernization was the third option. Bakha was ecstatic when he learned about a device that cleaned toilets without needing hands. He believes that the machine is the one thing that can solve all of his issues. At last, he acknowledges that the machine holds the key to his issue and heads back to his residence. His love for man urges Anand's writings.

Anand's humanist philosophy will help one comprehend his writings more fully. Importantly, Anand is a humanist who stands up for the weak and oppressed. He sees it as the answer to every problem in the world. He brought back the fundamental qualities of man, regardless of his low caste, lack of wealth, or lack of education. He conveys his message of hope via the tragic tales of his lowly people. His deep love for humanity is evident in all of his writings. His background in philosophy has imbued his work with profundity and a fundamental sense of purpose; it displays man's essential dignity and nobility. His philosophy of man holds that he is a creative being with limitless potential. Anand expresses this way of thinking in his writings. He is a humanist who highlights the victims of Indian society's fundamental decency.

Anand is the champion of truth. He has exposed all he has experienced about the realities of human life. It is true that he has seen life very closely and felt deeply; he interprets the problems of man and society and comes out with adult views of life with his fixed belief in the appropriateness of man. His devotion is to man and his integrity by determining and concentrating on their feelings to overcome all obstacles. Anand is a novelist with work, and his work exposes his writing for the betterment of the downtrodden, which he wanted to take up at the highest place so that they will be honored by the members of the Indian society as free human beings and no longer as enslaved people.

The novel touches upon various aspects of Hindu philosophy, including ideas from the Upanishads and concepts of Maya, Vedanta, and Nirvana, although there are other themes. Instead, these philosophical elements are woven into the story's fabric to enrich its social and cultural tapestry. Vedanta, a significant school of Hindu philosophy, builds upon the doctrines of the Upanishads and focuses on the nature of reality and the individual's identity with Brahman. While "*Untouchable*" is a work of social realism rather than a treatise on Vedanta, the novel's depiction of Bakha's struggles and his yearning for a life beyond the constraints imposed by his birth resonate with Vedanta inquiries into the nature of the self and the ultimate liberation from worldly suffering.

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The Upanishads' teaching that all living beings share the same divine essence contrasts sharply with the harsh realities of the caste discrimination depicted in the novel, offering a silent commentary on the injustice of such divisions. Maya, in Hindu philosophy, refers to the illusionary nature of the world and the differentiation it imposes, which veils the true unity of Brahman. In "*Untouchable*," the social constructs and the rigid hierarchy of the caste system can be seen as a form of Maya, misleading individuals to adhere to false notions of purity and pollution. The novel challenges these illusions by exposing their cruel impact on the lives of individuals like Bakha, who are marginalized and dehumanized.

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depiction of Bakha's struggles and his yearning for a life beyond the constraints imposed by his birth resonate with Vedanta inquiries into the nature of the self and the ultimate liberation from worldly suffering. Nirvana, more strongly linked to Buddhism than Hinduism, represents the pinnacle of freedom from the cycle of rebirth and the end of suffering. Ana, a concept more closely associated with Buddhism than Hinduism, represents the last condition of being freed from the cycle of reincarnation and the end of misery. Within the context of "Untouchable," the pursuit of Nirvana can be metaphorically related to Bakha's quest for dignity and freedom from the societal chains that bind him. His interactions with characters that represent various religious and social perspectives offer glimpses of potential pathways to liberation, both personal and collective.

Mulk Raj Anand does not explicitly explore the philosophical depths of the Upanishads, Maya, Vedanta, or Nirvana; these concepts indirectly inform the novel's critique of social injustice and its exploration of the human spirit's resilience. The primary aim of Dalit Literature is to create social awareness among the Dalits to bring about a revolution. Sharankumar Limbale's autobiography is an escape valve of his pent-up rebellion against caste oppression. In this book, he presents the unpleasant picture of caste discrimination, its resultant poverty, the quest for identity, and the plight of Dalit women. As Black literature deals with the pain and sufferings of the Negroes, Dalit literature creates a space of its own by reflecting on the problems and sufferings of the marginalized groups in their native languages.

Sharankumar Limbale represents the collective resistance of his community, which copes with difficulty at every step and emerges with dignity. Through the publication of his autobiography, he has succeeded in rebelling against the degraded Hindu setup and its relentless caste prejudices and also in constructing a Dalit selfhood. Sharankumar Limbale's autobiography is not only a story of an individual, but the history and the present status of the

Dalit community itself form the plot of the story. Thus, Sharankumar Limbale's autobiography is a delightful exposition and a powerful embodiment of Dalit society in the present context.

“I am not the polluter, but the polluted.”(21) Limbale's statement reclaims dignity by rejecting the imposed identity of being a polluter and instead highlights the victimization and degradation imposed by the caste system. It is a cry for social reflection and transformation, demanding an end to prejudice and an understanding of each person's intrinsic value, independent of caste.

The protagonist is a small child born in rural Maharashtra to a lower-caste family. He battles to accept his caste status and the prejudice he encounters throughout the story. When the protagonist refuses admittance into a temple due to his caste, it is one of the pivotal moments in the book, in which he performs his caste identity. “I questioned my mother about why I could not go inside the temple. She explained that it was because we were outcasts, Akkarmashi. I did not get the meaning of that. However, I knew it was a negative thing that caused people to despise us (OC15).” It demonstrates how society forces the protagonist's caste identification upon him rather than something he chooses. His caste is the only reason he is not allowed into a sacred space, which upholds India's social system. Sharankumar recreated rather than set. The affluent socioeconomic standing of their father and mother's caste has molded Limbale's identity.

The father belongs to a wealthy class, but the mother of the speaker belongs to India's historically disadvantaged and marginalized caste, the untouchables. With the father residing in a mansion and the mother in a shack, their living arrangements likewise reflect the disparity in caste and class. The speaker refers to oneself as a "half-caste" or "Akkarmashi," implying that their mixed caste and class heritage make them illegitimate. The speaker's classification as

illegitimate is a performative act that upholds India's prevailing caste system and class hierarchy.

"We were all of one womb and blood. We shared a common mother but different fathers. I was born from her affair with Hanmantha Patil. Masamai had Nagubai, Nirmala, Vanmala Sunanda, Pramila, Shrikant, Indira, and Sidram from Kaka, whose name was Yeshwantrao Sidramappa Patil, the head of the village named Hanoor (OC92)." "A life is not mine, but it is a slavery imposed upon me." This negative attitude is the central idea of Sharankumar Limbale's autobiography; Sharankumar was identified as illegitimate by his community because he was born of a sexual relationship outside marriage between an upper caste man and a Dalit woman. The usage of the word illegitimate is not specific to the circumstances of Sharankumar's birth alone but also encapsulates a significant facet of the Dalit's situation of marginality. That makes him Akkarmashi: The Outcaste.

Due to Limbale's fractured identity, the narrator suffered his entire life because he had no identity, home, or place of belonging. He could not get specific papers signed for school because he could not correctly identify his caste by his mother or father, and they would not accept his grandmother as his guardian because she lived with a Muslim. When it came time for marriage, he could not even get married to an outcast girl because his blood was not pure; he was not wanted anywhere. The clouds of doubt and identity hung over this poor outcast boy his entire life. However, in several acts of incredible strength and bravery, he did not allow these socially constructed walls to stop him from getting an education and eventually publishing his story. He came to realize the depth of division caused by the conflict between Hindus and Muslims and chose a separate path for him in what he considered to be the warm embrace of Buddhism.

"My ancestry does not extend any farther back; at most, it reaches my grandmother's life. My father belongs to one of India's elite strata, but my mother is an untouchable. The father resides in a mansion, but the mother lives in a shack. Their speaks their mother tongue as a landlord. I belong to the Akkarmashi caste. I am declared illegitimate and condemned (OC9)."

This claim illustrates how performative activities create and perpetuate identities by reflecting the junction of caste, gender, and class. The speaker's identity as an Akkarmashi illustrates the power relationships in India among various castes and social strata. An essential figure in this autobiographical book is the narrator's mother, whose personal encounters with caste prejudice influenced the protagonist's conception of himself. Her language is one of the ways she expresses her caste identity.

Mother's remarks demonstrate how language in India is a potent signifier of caste identity. Despite having the ability to communicate in the language of the higher castes, the mother of the protagonist purposefully uses terminology that labels her as an outsider. It also emphasizes how linguistic and cultural norms play a role in caste discrimination in addition to outward signs.

In conclusion, *Akkarmashi's* characters use a variety of expressions to convey their caste identities, including language, occupation, and outward signs. The social hierarchy that prevails in India is reinforced by these performances, which also emphasize how widespread caste prejudice is. "My birth is my fatal accident". Here, Limbale touches on the theme of fate and the arbitrary nature of birth in a caste-based society. Being born into a lower caste has predetermined his social status and the associated hardships, framing it as an 'accident' that has irreversibly dictated the course of his life. This highlights the cruelty of a social system that assigns value to individuals based solely on their birth. Everyone is equal to god; humans created their own life with poison.

In "*Outcaste*," as in real life, Buddhist rituals thus symbolize a transformative journey for Dalits, providing them with a framework to renegotiate their place in a society that has long excluded them. These rituals are crucial for fostering community, dignity, and resistance against oppression. Like Bakha, Hutchinson is an outsider, estranged from the British citizens of the city and banished from his house by his intoxicating and card-playing spouse. Like Anand, other Indian social reformers had strongly condemned the practice of untouchability, the most essential expression of the Hindu caste system. Gandhi also condemned it, saying: "Untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism." It is against the Shastras. It goes against the core values of humanity. It is against the laws of reason for man to be considered an untouchable for eternity only because of his birth. Hindu references have concluded that they have no support for the Hindu Shastra taken as a whole.

Therefore, very much influenced by Gandhi's ideas, Anand too heard the cry of untouchables who want to escape from exploitation, which they have to undergo because of religion and society in which they are firmly rooted, but cannot do so. Anand believes in the dictum of 'art for the sake of man. The novel, for him, is an instrument for the enlightenment of man and the betterment of his lot, a means for expressing his love, sympathy, and compassion.

Inconsonance with Shelley and hope for a better future and Tennyson's aphorism "The old order changed, yielding place to new" is Anand's more immense belief that the dated and decadent institutions have in any case to go from our society, which of course, does not mean that all tradition is meant to be thrown overboard. Unfortunately, even after years of independence, the lot of people with low incomes untouchables in India has not much improved; they are still discriminated against and used almost literally as beasts of burden by

the upper-caste people. Sometimes, they are butchered like sheep and goats in large numbers in some parts of our country.

There is, of course, nothing in the situation today that would either counter or improve upon the ingenious way out offered by Anand's novel as long back in the thirties. There is also nothing to eclipse the ray of hope for a better future that Bakha perceives in the introduction of the machine. Furthermore, his tribe may have to remain untouchables for many more years to come, but a new sense of self-respect has been ushered in, bringing luster and dignity to the Bakha's of tomorrow. E.M. Forster succinctly captures the novel's resolution when he says that Baba returns to his obese wife and miserable bed, thinking alternately of the Mahatma and the machine. His Indian day is ended, and the following day will be the same, but something is about to shift on Earth, if not beyond the depths of the sky. Forster aptly sums up the ending of the novel.

Bakha returns to his oversized woman and miserable bed, contemplating the Mahatma and the machine alternately. His Indian day is ended, and the following day will be the same, but something is about to shift on Earth, if not beyond the depths of the sky. It is simple and quite persuasive when weighed against the previous chapters in the book. The flush system alone rather than any deity or promises of self-sacrifice and abnegation from more wealthy Indians is all required to save the Untouchables. When major drainage and water closets are installed across India, the evil myth of untouchability will vanish.

Although the book's last portion may seem overly flowery and complex to some readers, given the lucid observation that came before it, it is a crucial component of the author's plan. This is the essential culmination, and it has tripled in impact. With thoughts of the Mahatma and the Machine, Bakha returns to his father and his miserable bed. His Indian day

is done, and tomorrow will be the same, but something is about to shift, if not entirely on Earth, then at least on the sky's surface.

In Anand's novel *Untouchable*, various narrative techniques are employed to vividly portray the life of Bakha, a young sweeper from the untouchable caste, highlighting themes of oppression, injustice, and social reform. Using the stream-of-consciousness approach, he explores Bakha's innermost thoughts and feelings. This method allows readers to experience the immediate reactions and emotions of the protagonist, providing a deep and personal insight into the psychological impacts of social ostracism and discrimination. Realism brings to life the harsh realities faced by the untouchables. The detailed descriptions of the physical settings, the daily routines, the social interactions, and the systemic injustices Bakha encounters immerse the reader in the societal structures of pre-independence India.

Various symbols are used throughout the novel to enhance the thematic depth. For example, Bakha's fascination with the British soldier's uniform symbolizes his desire to escape his caste-imposed identity and his longing for a better, dignified life. The use of symbols like the latrines Bakha cleans reinforces the dehumanization faced by untouchables. The dialogues in the novel are crafted to reflect the stark contrasts in the language used by different characters, representing their social standings and attitudes. The crude language directed at Bakha by upper-caste characters and his own more subdued responses highlight the societal norms and the accepted dehumanization of lower castes. He effectively uses the novel as a tool for social critique.

Through Bakha's experiences and discussions with other characters on caste and sanitation, Anand comments on the need for social reform. This includes advocating for changes like eradicating untouchability and adopting technological solutions like flush toilets. The novel is structured around a day in Bakha's life but comprises various episodes that expose

different facets of untouchable life and broader social issues. This episodic approach helps to build a detailed portrayal of daily life and the cumulative burden of caste discrimination. These narrative techniques combine to create a powerful, empathetic, and multifaceted portrayal of the protagonist and his challenges. Anand's storytelling raises awareness of the plight of untouchables and encourages reflection on the possibilities for social change and human dignity.

Sharankumar Limbale's *Outcaste* (also known as *Akkarmashi* in Marathi) provides profound insights into the life of a Dalit in post-independence India. Limbale employs several distinctive narrative techniques to portray his experiences and critique his time's societal and caste dynamics. Limbale uses a first-person narrative style that aligns closely with the autobiographical form. This approach allows readers to experience the personal and emotional dimensions of being an 'outcaste' through Limbale's life story. It gives the narrative a sense of immediacy and authenticity, making the social commentary more impactful.

The narrative structure of *Outcaste* is somewhat fragmented, reflecting the disjointed experiences of discrimination and hardship that define the protagonist's life. This technique mirrors the tumultuous and often disrupted life course of those living on the margins of society, enhancing the reader's understanding of the protagonist's emotional and psychological state. Like Mulkraj Anand and Sharankumar Limbale delves into the protagonist's innermost feelings and thoughts by employing the stream-of-consciousness style. The protagonist's complicated feelings of rejection, identity, and belonging are especially well-represented by this narrative style.

Limbale employs vivid imagery and symbolism to express alienation, struggle, and resilience. For example, the recurrent motif of dirt and cleanliness symbolizes societal attitudes towards Dalits and reflects the internalized stigma experienced by the protagonist. *Outcaste*

incorporates references to other literary works and historical events, weaving them into the personal narrative. This technique broadens the scope of the narrative, connecting personal experiences with larger social and political contexts. It also positions the protagonist's struggles within a broader caste oppression and resistance narrative.

The use of dialogue in *Outcaste* helps convey the stark language differences that reflect social hierarchies and power dynamics. Dialogue effectively illustrates the confrontations and often demeaning interactions the protagonist endures, enhancing the narrative's realism. Limbale introduces multiple voices and perspectives within the narrative, providing a polyphonic texture to the storytelling. This includes the perspectives of family members, other community members, and oppressors, which enrich the narrative and underscore the complexity of caste interactions.

These techniques combine to create a compelling narrative that not only narrates a personal story but also serves as a powerful critique of the caste system and its enduring impact on individuals and their identities. Through *Outcaste*, Limbale provides a poignant exploration of life as a Dalit, marked by exclusion and striving for dignity and equality.

In *Untouchable*, Mulkraj Anand depicts the humanization and dehumanization of its protagonist, Bakha, an "untouchable" young man. Anand humanizes Bakha by delving deep into his interior life, giving readers access to his thoughts, feelings, and aspirations, which are universal and relatable. Bakha is portrayed as a fully developed character with dreams, frustrations, kindness, and moments of introspection. He is not merely a victim but a young man with dignity and depth who reflects on his social status and dreams of a better life. His fascination with the life of the townspeople, his love for hockey, and his curiosity about the ways of the British soldiers depict him as a regular person with desires and interests beyond his caste-imposed limitations. Anand allows the reader to empathize deeply with Bakha's

experiences, from his shame and anger when publicly humiliated to his moments of joy and pride.

Despite the unique oppression Bakha faces, his day-to-day experiences, family dynamics, interactions with peers, and youthful desires make him relatable to readers from any background. Anand also starkly portrays the dehumanization of Bakha and others of his caste, highlighting the brutal reality of the caste system. Bakha is constantly reminded of his place in society. People shout, "Posh, posh, sweeper coming!" making him announce his presence to avoid contact with higher castes, which underscores the social exclusion and marginalization he faces daily. Bakha and other untouchables suffer from both physical and verbal abuse throughout the novel. This abuse is often brutal and degrading, serving to strip them of their dignity and humanity in the eyes of the caste society.

Then, it highlights denying fundamental rights to untouchables, such as using public water sources or entering temples. This denial not only marginalizes them but also reinforces their status as "less than human" in the social hierarchy. The systemic nature of their oppression is portrayed through various societal interactions and the legal and cultural frameworks that perpetuate their low status. This includes the caste-based division of labor that confines them to menial, degrading jobs.

Sharankumar Limbale's *Outcaste* (Akkarmashi) provides a stark and poignant depiction of humanization and dehumanization in the life of its protagonist, based closely on Limbale himself. Limbale humanizes his protagonist by detailing his profound, often painful, internal experiences, illuminating his desire for identity, acceptance, and dignity. Limbale provides a direct, intimate glimpse into the protagonist's thoughts and feelings, presenting him as a complex individual with desires, fears, and dreams. This narrative style encourages readers to empathize with his struggles for identity and self-worth in a society that views him as inferior.

The protagonist's emotions are vividly portrayed, allowing readers to feel his pain, embarrassment, and occasional joys. This emotional connection is facilitated through descriptive language that captures the nuances of his experiences, from the scorn of his peers to his longing for his father's acceptance.

Limbale does not merely focus on the protagonist's oppression but also highlights his intellectual and cultural aspirations. His quest for education and understanding, along with his reflections on literature, politics, and society, humanizes him further by showing his efforts to transcend his circumstances. The dehumanization that pervades the protagonist's life is depicted with brutal honesty, emphasizing the cruelty and exclusion enforced by caste discrimination:

The protagonist constantly faces systemic barriers reinforcing his "untouchable" status. This includes restricted access to education, healthcare, and even essential social interaction, which are depicted as everyday aspects of daily life, thus underscoring the dehumanizing nature of caste-based discrimination.

Limbale illustrates how the protagonist is stigmatized not just by those outside his community but also within it due to his half-caste status. This dual rejection from both the upper castes and his community amplifies his isolation, effectively stripping him of his social and cultural identity. Through characterization, setting, and plot development, Mulkraj Anand effectively uses "*Untouchable*" to tell a compelling story and critique and question the inhuman practices of the caste system, making it a significant work in Indian English literature.

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