

# DALIT LITERARY CRITICISM



**Prashant P. Ingole**

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Preface

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## Chapter 1

# Emergence of Dalit Consciousness

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Dalits occupy the lowest position in the local hierarchy of castes. They are from the former outcaste group of untouchables who adopted the nomenclature of Dalit's following the original usage of the term by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. During British period a number of movements came into existence that showed concern for Dalit's at various levels. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Dr Ambedkar, Mahtama Gandhi, Sri Narayan Dharam Paripalan of Kerala and reform movements fought for the Dalit cause.

In the post-independence period the legal sanctions against discrimination made the lower castes accessible for political and constitutional rights. The reservation of electoral candidates for parliament and assembly also created awareness among the Dalits for the assertion of their rights. The legal and democratic rights with numerical strength made the Dalit groups make use of the existing situations. The access to power through political emancipation has strengthened the egalitarian and competitive ideologies and identity consciousness has been consolidated.

In ancient India, people were divided into four castes, namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras based on their work and not by birth. Even today, some of the most developed western nations and economies classify their workforce into four classes. The people of the advance, capitalist and progressive economies have no problem with the class system. The employees are recognized and rewarded according to their education, skills, and contributions.

Hence, the time is ripe to stop classifying people based on their birth and go back to the ancient Indian system of caste classification based on education, skills, and contributions.

Now, let us understand Sanatana Dharma, the ancient Indian Spiritual Way of Life.

Sanatana Dharma is not a conventional religion. It is an eternal (Sanatana) righteous (Dharma) way of life, based on the principles of Vedas and Upanishads. It recognizes every living being as a member of the Divine Family, called Vasu-Deva-Kutumb.

Now, let us comprehend the genesis of the caste system in India.

According to Akhand Sutra, the history of India can be divided into the following four Eras.

1. Satya-Yug, the first Era of Truth, when the Vedas were composed by the ancient Indian Sages by directly hearing the sound vibrations of the Universal Consciousness, called mantras or Vedic hymns, within their physical body without the aid of any external instrument. As a result, the Vedas are called Shruti, which means directly heard.

During Satya-Yug every living human being was in tune with the Universal Consciousness and enlightened. This Era was the most evolved period of the Indian civilization and the prime focus of everyone was on Spiritual Wealth.

**The Essence:** Brahmins, the educated and enlightened Souls.

The people of Satya-Yug were highly educated, enlightened, and empowered with the spiritual wisdom of every aspect of the ultimate, formless, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and all-pervasive Universal Consciousness called Nirakar-Nirgun-Brahman (God-Nature-Paramatma), the source of everything in the universe.

Hence, the people of Satya-Yug should be called Brahmins.

No wonder, the essence of the Universal Consciousness was beautifully and cleverly wrapped in original Gayatri Mantra of Rig-Veda, the first Veda, conceived, composed, and compiled during the first Era of Satya-Yug by Brahmins, the knowers of Nirakar-Nirgun-Brahman.

2. During Treta-Yuga, the Second Era, the people started focusing on the material wealth and administration and lost touch with the Universal Consciousness.

As a result, people could not comprehend the spiritual beauty of Vedas. Brahmins of Treta-Yug contemplated on a section of a Veda and brought out the spiritual beauty of that part in the form of Upanishads, which common public could easily understand, appreciate and follow.

**The Essence:** Kshatriyas, the educated and administrative Souls.

The ancient Indian system of Gurukul emerged during Treta-Yug. The prime focus of Gurukuls was to train, educate, enlighten, and empower the royal administrative class called Kshatriyas. The Epic Ramayan was conceived, composed, and compiled during Treta-Yug.

Ramayan brings forth the administrative qualities of an exemplary king. 3. During Dwapal-Yug, the Third Era, the consciousness of the public declined further.

The prime focus of the majority of the people was on business activities and material wealth.

As a result, they could not comprehend the wisdom of Vedas and Upanishads.

The wisdom of Vedas and Upanishads was converted into story forms of Puranas.

**The Essence:** Vaishyas, the business Souls.

The Epic Mahabharat, Holy Gita, and Maha Gayatri Mantra are the greatest contributions of Dwapal-Yug.

The majority of people believed in the give and take business policy.

4. During Kal-Yog, the present and fourth Era of Darkness, most of the living human beings throughout the world have declined to the lowest level of consciousness and cannot comprehend the spiritual wisdom of Vedas, Upanishads, Brahm sutra and other hardcore scriptures of the ancient Indian wisdom anymore.

The majority of people want to live on others.

**The Essence:** Sudra (Dalit) - layback inertia consciousness.

It is unfortunate that the majority demand birthrights without appropriate education, skills, and contributions in the name of Dalit Consciousness.

No wonder, Kal-Yug represents the lowest level of consciousness.

## The Conclusion

1. The class of people, who are educated, enlightened, and empowered for teaching, education, and research subjects can be called Brahmins.
  2. The class of people, who are appropriately educated and skilled in royal and administrative work, can be called Kshatriyas.
  3. The class of people, who comprehend the techniques of business administration, can be called Vaishyas.
  4. The class of people, who are capable of carrying out the orders of the higher officers without any difficulty and doubt, can be called Sudra or Dalit. Dalit Consciousness is not a derogatory term and should not be considered bad. After all, we need different people for different jobs.
- A person born in a Dalit family can easily become a Brahmin with the right education.
- For detailed knowledge, please download and read Akhand Sutra from Akhand Vidyashram.

## Meaning of Dalit

Etymologically, the term dalit has started from Sanskrit, dalita signifying 'abused'. It appears to have been acquired from Hindi as of late. It implies in the traditional Indian Caste System) an individual from the caste that is considered the most reduced and has the least advantages. The source of Dalits as a group might be followed back to the Rigveda, the most established Veda of Aryan amazingness. The festival of "Purnasa-Sukta" fantasy manages the

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## About the Author



The author of this book, **Mr. Prashant P. Ingole** has been working as an Asst. Professor (English) in Haribhai V. Desai College, Pune since 2020. He has completed his graduation and post-graduation from Savitribai Phule Pune University. He has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, UGC care listed journals and has presented his research at various national and international conferences. As an educator, Mr. Ingole is known for his innovative teaching methods and his ability to inspire and motivate his students. He is pursuing his doctoral research under the guidance of Dr. Sankla Mahavir R. on eco-criticism. As a writer, he is known for his ability to capture the essence of the human experience in his works. He has a keen eye for detailed and deep understanding of human emotions, which he has skillfully woven into his writing to create powerful and thought-provoking.



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