ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There are certain terms, rituals, practices, attitudes, behavior, policies, preferences, traditions, and ideologies all over the world which separate society and humanity. These give rise to marginalization in the society. In case of Indian culture, such marginalization is wide spread and deep rooted. Unfortunately this practice is supported by Hindu scriptures like ‘Manu Smriti’ which supports the division of four ‘vernas’ like Brahman, Vaishya, Kshtriya and Shudra based on birth.

The division on the basis of class is a universal phenomenon but the characteristic of Hindu caste system is that it is based on birth and not on skills or aptitudes. Because of this caste based hierarchy, Shudras are considered outcastes, down-tordden, polluted, marginals and are continuously being targeted and exploited by the higher class and castes.

With the emergence of new sensitivities towards these margins, leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Babasaheb Ambedkar tried to give a new identity to them. Dr. Ambedkar rejected the notion of caste based parity and raided the voice against these so called ‘God-made’discrimination. The trem ‘Dalit’ emerged as a new identity for them which were supported by the people like Mahatma Phule and Baba Saheb Ambedkar. A distinct political movement was started for the freedom and equality of Dalits.

Dalit literature is an extension of Dalit ideology. When Dalit writers rejected all role models, traditional literature, eastern and Western critical theories and decided to create a literature of their own, an identity of their own emerged in the form of Dalit literature.

Gujarati dalit literature has started as an apt response to the other Dalit literatures like Marathi Dalit literature and Tamil Dalit literature. For centuries, these people were socially, economically and educationally backward. They were the victims of unbearable injustice of untouchability. Their pains are of thousands of years old.

Joseph Macwan is among the most influential Gujarati writers. He has explored dalit themes in an artistic and innovative mannerin a bid to prove mainstream writers that
dalit writers are capable of writing in the ‘master language’. His writings are dalitists and his themes were hallmark of dalit literatures. He is of the firm opinion that commitment is the prerequisite to being a Dalit writer.

Similarly the concept of ‘race’ is equally prominent in the other part of the world with the similar segregation pattern which is based on skin colour. Black American writings, just like Dalit writings in India has gained momentum as a collective consciousness of the black people but found its culmination in many mainstream writers like William Faulkner. Faulkner remains one of the key figures in American fiction. Before Faulkner’s arrival on the literary scene, American fiction was mostly confined to social and political issues, mostly of the non-controversial type.

The arrival of Faulkner brought about a revolutionary change in the literary scenario. Mustering more courage than his predecessors who felt afraid to deal with controversial and shameful realities like racism, miscegenation etc.

Faulkner brought literary treatment of the social and psychological aspect of the racism to the forefront. Through his acclaimed novels like ‘sartoris’, ‘The Sound and the Fury’, ‘Absalom, Absalom’!’, ‘The Unvanquished’ and ‘Intruder in the Dust’. Faulkner jolted his white readers, making them aware of the harsh realities of racial segregation and racial exploitation in their so-called progressive society, thought to be a model society for the entire world. It required extraordinary courage for a white novelist like Faulkner to expose the racial misdeeds of his own white brethren.

Inspite of some initial opposition from racist critics and readers who believed in the doctrine of white supremacy, Faulkner succeeded in his noble task of drawing sympathy from his readers towards the sorry plight of the Blacks in the predominantly white American society.

Through his novels, Faulkner made his readers conscious of the fact that even though after the civil war the blacks had gained official recognition as equal citizens, yet they were subjected to racial abuses and exploitation in the field of education and employment. Faulkner’s novels thus become important not only from the literary point of
view but also from the social and racial point of view for succeeding to a large extent in creating awareness for the urgent need of a racially integrated society.

Personally, the plight of dalits and Blacks and the amazing similarities between their writings have made me take this study up for the further research. I owe a special sense of gratitude to my guide Dr. Mrs. Sujatha Rao without whose cooperation and regular guidance I would not have been able to complete this work. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the help and support I have received from my parents, family members and friends. Here I would like to make a very special mention of Adi and Bittu, who were my major inspiration throughout my research project.

Place:

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