

**Portraying the Religious and Caste Discrimination:**  
**A Critical Study of SharankumarLimbale's novel *Hindu***

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**Abstract:**

All the genres of Dalit literature express the authentic form of writing it is much forceful portraying the city life with realistic description of violence and vulgarity. Some writing speaks about the fights of the Dalit against the British Raj, conversion of religion, fight against the caste Hindus with the leader Ambedkar. Dalit Sahitya started with the movement literature with polemical books, biographies, folk songs, poems, street plays, publishing small booklets about Buddha and Ambedkar. The Essays of Ambedkar brought about a great change in the hearts and minds of the Dalits. The works of Ambedkar was translated into different languages to evoke the self-assertion in the Dalits and not be as inferior to the upper-caste in the daily life and to abolish the caste was the aim of Ambedkar. Social exploitation is the root cause for the emergence of the Dalit revolution in the country. The preposition of the paper is to bring out the religious and caste based atrocities on Dalits by the upper caste people. The novel Hindu depicts the violence, hatred, vengeance and religious rivalries of the upper caste on the Dalits is brought out in this paper.

Key words: Dalits, religion, caste, exploitation.

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The struggle for power is being depicted in this novel *Hindu* and how a Dalit suffers to become a leader and what are the conspiracies made behind it and how the upper class people dominate and oppress the lower caste people to get hold of power is narrated in this novel. Finally the author proves to the society that leaders are not born by birth they are made to become leaders by the people.

Miland Kumar says that his arms shook like the branches of bodhi tree. He was dressed in monk's robe hundreds of mantras floated on his lips. Each pore of his body recited that 'I go in the name of Buddha'. His mind was steeled like vajrasana and he felt that he should become like novice Buddhist monk and devote his remaining life to religion. Rama Babar, Professor Rahul Bansode and Yaqub Sheikh were busy people but attended the function for his sake. Rama Babar was unmarried. She has devoted her life to the movement. Professor Rahul Bansode had been sacked by his college. His case was pending in high court. Yaqub Sheikh was a former municipal councilor. Though Rama Babar was dark complexioned, her features were attractive. Her unmarried status was the most discussed facet of her personality. She and Professor Rahul Bansode were working together at present. Having lost his job Professor Rahul Bansode was hard up. He worked actively for movement and became its leading light. He was called as incorruptible and honest activist. He had put Rama Babar and Yaqub Sheikh on the executive body. Yaqub sheikh gave financial help to the movement generously. There were many allegations against Yaqub Sheikh that he was a criminal, and the police stopped harassing him since he became active in the dalit movement. His hotel Delhi darbar was doing well.

He stopped by Hotel Delhi Darbar. His mind buzzed with all sorts of questions. "Hindus are the majority in this country. It is a democracy of the majority. What have the minorities got? Should dalits align themselves with the majority or the minorities?"(4). He recalled Babasaheb Ambedkar's oath that I was born a Hindu was not in my control, but I will not die a Hindu. Then he saw his brother in law KasbeGuruji coming towards him. And he asked him how his sister was? As usual they kept talking and KasbeGuruji said that whenever he meets Tatyakamble, he asks after you. He said well because he was an old friend to him. And Kasbe told that there is a talk about him becoming the next patil, the head man of the village. As RambhauKamble will retire about two years. Then "Tatyakamble will get a chance as the post will be reserved for dalit candidates as by law" (4). But RambhauKavale will never step down

the village headship which his family has enjoyed. He will make sure that his son becomes the next patil. And Miland says that anyone can be the patil but no one can replace Tatyakamble in his jalsa, his talent is the asset of the movement. Kabirkamble writes the jalsa and Tatyakamble performs it. These two are like the two eyes of our movement. PanditKanade came by they greeted each other and went to Irani hotel for tea. PanditKanade and Milandteaches in the same municipal school. Kanade, Kasbe and he got the job at same time. Being in same profession they became close friends. It was through PanditKanade efforts and persuasive power he got married to KasbeGuruji sister. And he got Kanade married to the daughter of his relative. They talked about politics and said that “our politics is like a hijra’s wife” (5)

Dalits now converted to Buddhism. They had thrown away the idols of the Hindu god and goddesses on to the garbage. Dalits were following new faiths and new ways of worship. Miland’s house though still of Hindu idols. His wife Lakshmi stealthily worships them. When an activist comes to their home the idols are to be hidden. His living room represents the portraits of Babasaheb and Buddha, and the kitchen belongs to Hindu god and goddesses.

“Whenever I feel weak and helpless, I stand before the Hindu gods and goddesses with folded hands. And when I am bloated with self-confidence and dreaming of revolution, I go and stand with a bowed head before BabasahebAmbedkars and Gautama Buddha’s figurines”(6).

With the deep thoughts in mind he was walking and a car stopped by his side it was Manikchand and Gopichand they were twins. As son in law they lived in father in law’s household. As Sitaphale didn’t accompany them he asked Miland to be with them. Gopichand cajoled him saying can you enjoy lust after your youth is over? And Manikchand said that we did good deeds in our past life so now we want to sin. And Gopichand teased Miland by saying that “You must have sinned in your past life. That’s why you were born a Mahar” (7). Manikchand forced him to get into the car and he said that as Sitaphale was not coming today, there won’t be women either. But we will have fun drinking and dining. And Sadananad the watchman will arrange everything.

The car crossed Bhimnagar decorated with buntings and banner. Suddenly the headlight of the car showed the agitated crowd and ‘Murder ‘shouted Manikchand. Tatyakamble’s blood

soaked body was twitching by the roadside get the car moving shouted Manikchand. And car speeded up to RambhauKavale's house. Miland said to him that there has been a Murder. And asked where was his son Prabhakar? For which patil told that he has gone to Pune to visit his brother Madhukar. Then he said to Kavale that he saw him in the crowd. Kavale's face turned pale. Behind him stood his eldest son Sudhakar making odd gestures. He was mentally retarded. But hiding his emotions Kavale called them to dine with him tonight because they were his guest. For which Miland got shocked his eyes filled with tears and thought of Tatyakamble. He was like a lion. The killers have erased the identity of the village as 'JalsakarTatyakamble's village' forever. He felt that "This was an attempt to teach a lesson to ordinary dalits by killing a dalit. Who was respected for his talents and had made a name for himself. It was the disfigured face of social terrorism. Dalits have been murdered for thousands of years."(12).

Manikchand said that Tatyakamble was murdered and who knows where his brother SadananadKamble might be so we came for nothing tonight he said. "Kavale has removed the thorn called Tatyakamble. Now he can have his son anointed as patil" said Gopichand. (12). Then Miland felt that now the law is on the dalit side and the person who murdered him will surely go to jail. But paying the money they will get bail said Manikchand. Then Miland asked himself many questions was he dead or alive? Is he an activist or not a man? How can he be quite for the murder of Tatyakamble? The car entered the farmhouse. SadananadKamble came running to open the gate. He was Tatyakamble's brother he was not aware of the murder. He felt like holding him and weeping on his shoulders. But Manikchand strictly said to him not to say it to Sadananad because when he comes to know about the murder he will run into the village and he too will be killed so Miland kept quite.

Alachpur was tense. Journalist activist, political leaders were making a beeline for Alachpur. The amicable social relations for thousands of years among the different communities had now cracked. NarendarPatil addressed the large crowd of the village savarnas the government pampers the dalits. That's why they have become insolent nobody gives a damn for the savarnas. The police came and appealed people to stay calm. The people lobbed tear gas shells and did a lathe charge. The police visited Kavale's Bara and every one were nervous. Then constable Marathe asked RambhauKavale about Prabhakar but he told that he was in pune. And the police told them that he was caught and kept in the prison. And police confiscated the sword

hidden in the Bara. And the Mahadev temple constructed out of carved Blackstone was very beautiful. Vishnu Pujari was the temple priest. The plan to kill Tatyakamble was hatched in the temple. Shankar Pujari, Vishnu Pujari's son had a major role in conspiracy. He was also handcuffed by the police. Few men escaped and were hidden in the hangman's hills. The mob has set Dalits' house on fire. The villagers of Achalpur stopped Manikchand and Gopichand's car and broke its windows. After this incident Sadananad moved with his family into the farm house of Manikchand and Gopichand and it was written in the newspaper and they were considered as the protector of Dalits. Manikchand and Gopichand started taking over the proceedings. New houses were built for the Dalits and government started visiting that place regularly. The wives of the jailed men were in foul mood. Constable Marathe and Gautama Gangurde laid a clever trap and caught Jaganath Pandit at his farm for the first time people responsible for committing reckless atrocities against Dalits were behind bars.

The school reopened KasbeGuruji was teaching a lesson on BabasahebAmbedkar's. The news spread in the village, NarendraPatil and other people went into the school and they tore the pages of that book. KasbeGuruji applied for transfer and felt that was a casteist village and he felt unsafe there. And he asked to transfer him to another place. Soon the news reached villages. And they were also waiting for his transfer but God bole Guruji and KasbeGuruji were engaged in a heated discussion that not all Hindus are casteist. Hindu religion is tolerant religion to. Then Kasbe told him that "you are right. We should consider the cow holy and the untouchable unholy. Offer milk to the poisonous snake and murder the untouchable. Is this what you call tolerance?"(36). Then God bole's stop came and he got down.

Tatyakamble's family and music was entwined for generations. His father PirajiraoKamble was a famous tamashagiri. He sang in both male and female voice he brought a car and he went around it carrying tents, curtain, a wooden stage, light after his first son his second son was born after ten years he named him Sadananad because he seemed very happy. Tatyakamble enhanced the family tradition in a novel way. Instead of performing for the entertainment of the rich and powerful he used the tamasha to awaken his community. Many people took active part in the play his own son Rohit and his brother Sadananad also joined and enacted. People who went to here bajanas at Shiva temple now started to see jalsa. This infuriated Vishnu Pujari and he and other people who disliked Tatyakamble's growth thought to put an end to him and he

said. “Those who challenge our gods should be cut into pieces” (42).MadhukarKavale was upset because he feared that Tatyakamble would become the next patil. Vishnu Pujari felt that people were losing eternal faith as they were going to see jalsa and the collection of the money in the temple was becoming low and JaganathPandit felt that because of Tatyakamble only he lost his job. All of them were unhappy with Tatyakamble for one reason or other.

In the evening the programmed about the dhamma chakra parivarthan, the day Dr. Ambedkars and thousands of dalits converted to Buddhism began with everyone praying to Buddha. Tatyakamble gave speech about Ambedkar by quoting his words

“Why do you stay in a religion that does not allow you to enter the temple? Why do you stay in a religion that does not acknowledge your Humanity? Why do you stay in a religion that does not allow you even water? A religion that forbids the treatment of human as human is not a religion but naked domination. A religion in which touching of unclean animal is permitted but touching of human is prohibited is not a religion but insanity” (50, 51).

The people were waiting to murder Tatyakamble at the village square. PrabhakarKavale, GunvantPatil, JagannathPandit, Balshetwar were hiding and they came running out with weapons in their hands, and pounced upon Tatyakamble. But somehow he got out of their clutches but Shankar Pujari grabbed him as he started to scream the village doors began to close one after the other, Prabhakar had a sword, Gunvant had a spear, JagannathPandit an axe and others had knife. Sonalis heart sank as she saw the massacre. At that precise moment Manikchand and Gopichand car arrived on the scene and the violent crowd dispersed. Tatyakamble fell on the ground. Sonali froze and she walked down the stairs slowly. The crowd broke out and they were scattered in different places. Manikchand car came near the gate of Rambhau and told that he saw his son murdering Tatyakamble.

The hearings of Tatyakamble murder case began and received wide coverage in the newspaper. The witness turned hostile and the case became weaker by the day. KabirKamble and RohitKamble sat under a banyan tree and were speaking and KabirKamble told that it is hard to fight the social orders with weapons because the enemy is hiding in the scriptures. And RohitKamble replied him by saying that “you can use a weapon to murder, but not to bring about

change. The savarnas too are victims of the caste system. Their castist mindset is thousand years old. We will have to fight against them deeply ingrained beliefs” (102). Many people were on their way to the city to hear the judgment. The court compound was crowded. The Dalit activists were present in large number to hear the judgment. The law supported the villagers and Kavale’s families were happily waiting to see PrabhakarKavale. The parade was nearing the Bara. PrabhakarKavale was puffed with pride. Sonali stood facing Prabhakar, performing arti. Suddenly people saw PrabhakarKavale’s body fall on the ground. It was KabirKamble who rained his bullets at PrabhakarKavale.

The religion which never encourages the lower caste people to live with dignity is not going to enhance the living of them. As per the words of Ambedkar the Dalits started to convert themselves to other religion which will give them growth, development and self-respect. In the same way the Dalits are not given way to be a leader or a president in their living area. If a Dalit tries to come out of the social boundaries either he is being subdued or killed. The author of the novel Hindu has depicted the political and religious atrocities of the upper caste on the Dalits through effective characterization.

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