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The Ideology of Marginality



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ABSTRACT

The idea of marginality is contradictory in itself. Basically marginality is defined as underprivileged class/es in the society. But we find that there are minority people in every community. This paper tries to raise the issue of this dichotomy that is inherent

in the idea of marginality people from some communities hold an upper hand on the majority of the sections of society, so the concept of marginality is not basically related to the number theory.

RESEARCH PAPER

INTRODUCTION

Majority or marginality is not simply confined to the mathematical theory of numbers or political theory of domination of hegemony or anthropological and socio-economical theories of suppression or oppression of the voices from marginality by the voices from majority. The ideology of marginality involves much deeper polemics; even the marginal people from upper elite classes in the society can have an upper hand over the majority underprivileged and deprived masses of the society. If the concept, 'Cultural Brahminism' which is very apt in this context, borrowed from cultural anthropology can change the agenda of this national seminar topsy-turvy.

Marginality is of two types i.e. in the case of numbers i.e. the marginal people in each community, caste, religion, creed, race, gender, language, culture, sect who hold an upper hand on the majority number of the masses for the sake of their benefit and profit. There is another type of marginality which is very basic one i.e. ideological or philosophical marginality, it can be illustrated with the following examples like the sacrifice which the Greek Philosopher Socrates had to consume hemlock for his visionary philosophical and controversial ideas which were very ahead of his time and so the polity, religion and the society could not accept it. Same case happened in Indian philosophy with the Sankhya or Charwak Darshan which was against the existing philosophies like Dwait and Adwait Darshanas by Adi Sankaracharya and others. Sankhya or Charwak Darshan was and is still marginalized today because it is a totally materialistic and worldly ideology and so it could not and cannot appeal to the masses. Deviprasad Chatopadhyaya. in his philosophical works like '*Lokayat*' and others has thrown light on this issue. Similarly Jainism and Buddhism in India were and are marginalized because they were against the existing Vedic philosophy which was full of sacrifices on the alters of the pantheistic deities and gods. These sacrifices were gory and various animals were sacrificed in these rites and rituals. Jainism and Buddhism were a revolt against the Vedic majority philosophy, which inculcated violence in the name of spirituality in the minds of people but the various Tirthankaras of Jainism and Lord Gautam Buddha upheld the values of Ahimsa or Non- violence which we find of utmost importance today even after many centuries. Various examples can be cited like this but a brief example from Maharashtra like Warkari Sampradai and Basweshwara's Lingayat sect are sufficient to demonstrate the point. Warkari Sampradai

which worships Lord Vithoba at Pandharpur who is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, was actually started by various people from different communities from the society who upheld simplicity of life, singing Abhangas in the name of Lord Vithoba, having direct spiritual dialogue with Him through Abhangas which were composed in a simple and day to day language, having vegetarian meal and wearing Tulsi Mal. The people who began Warkari Movement like Tukaram, Namdeo, Janabai, Chokhamela, Gora Kumbhar, Dnyaneshwar, Eknath did not belong to upper caste only, some of them were from lower and downtrodden castes like Mahar, Chambhar, Kumbhar, Kunbi, Shimpi and others. The major contribution of this movement which I think later inspired Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi is to eradicate untouchability in an informal way. Dr. Ambedkar's work '*Who were the Shudras*', Comrade Sharad Patil's various works and Mahatma Gandhi's major contribution and the works in the field of eradication of untouchability by other social philosophers like Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and others can be traced back to this movement.

But this controversial issue is not the theme of the seminar the voices from marginality in literatures in English are racial, ethnic, religious, caste, creed and sect based ideological and philosophical linguistic and gender based. They can be summed up in gist as follows: Voices from racial marginality are found in Jewish and African-American literature. Diaspora, the root of this world is a Greed one and which means spreading of seeds. The Jews migrated in the various countries in the world. They have not their homeland. The latest example in the 20th century can be given of the German holocaust in the Second World War in Germany in which the issue of racial superiority of the Aryans led Adolph Hitler to ruthless massacre of the Jews. '*The Diary of Ann Frank*' is a classic work of these experiences depicting the intricacies trauma and agonies of the small innocent girl Ann. Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer and other Jewish American writers depict the Jewish victims as the protagonists hero of their works. In African-American writing the Negro slavery which started in 1619 with the 'First Cargo' of African slaves brought to the American Colonies dehumanized them turned them into beats, sold them on the auction blocks; they were wrenched of each and every human right so reading and writing was a dream for them but they kept the taper of their native African culture burning through their folk songs, music, quilt making and when Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. sacrificed their lives to emancipate the Negroes from slavery and when the Blacks became literate, through along span of time they developed a special canon of literature called African American literature which is very proud of writers like Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison,

Alice Walker, Paul Marshal, Richard Wright, Alex Haley and others. Here voices from racial as well gender marginality is also concerned as the Jews are marginalized on the base of race. Negro men are marginalized on the base of race and class thus they are caught in 'double jeopardy' but the African American women were caught in 'triple jeopardy' of race, gender and class. The .above mentioned African American women writers' voice their issues through their works.

Ethnic, caste and creed based voices from marginality are found in many works works Salman Rushdie, Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* and *Untouchable* and others in Indian Nobel Laureate of V.S. . To conclude voices from marginality are from the underprivileged and deprived sections of the society who are depicted in the literary works.

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