

The Picture of the subaltern in East India-Perception of Mahaswetha Devi's short stories

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Abstract

This paper is entirely based on the lower class people who have been dominated by the upper-class people and how the subaltern people have been marginalised by the society and the government and by the ruling politicians. Let us go back to the history of the "Subaltern". The word subaltern is derived from the Latin word Subaltern Us. Where the subaltern as a noun it means a British low-rank officer then a captain. Likewise, the marginalised people and their culture which flourishes away from the country and those were called as subaltern. Between 1700 and 1840 during the pre-colonial times in Britain when the industrial revaluation Marx divided the history into three different epochs that of slavery, feudalism and capitalism based on the way class was structured in societies. So they have shared the people into different categories as upper class, middle class, and lower class. And after separating the types, the top level became dominant to the lower class people and where the upper-class people started to grow up, and the middle-class people stuck in the middle of the society and was as the lower class people were pushed down to the community. This class difference is followed in Asia, South Africa, and some other countries around the world.

Keywords: *British, marginalised people, a subaltern in East India, Perception, mining and industrial growth,*

Introduction:

We have understood clearly that the marginalisation was the high records till now people have been marginalised by the upper-class society, the landlords and by the ruling government, they have given a name subaltern or Dalit by seeing these things the author Mahaswetha Devi starts to write in the theme of the subaltern. Mahaswetha Devi is a writer who has been writing and giving a voice for the marginalised people tirelessly for the past six

periods. She is a weird mix of an activist and an influential writer who has been doing both duties with dedication all her entire life. Out of all these things she keeps working hard for the rights and betterment of the marginalised people whom the media and the broadly accepted society keeps on forgetting. Devi's writing is disturbing because it shows the reader their real face. Mahaswetha Devi is especially famous for her works based on the study of the tribal groups of West Bengal, women and Dalit people. In her detailed

Bengali fiction, she repeatedly expresses the brutal oppression of tribal community and on the members of the low cast by the absolute obedience to the upper-class society, landlords, and government officials. Philosophically as a writer, Devi always believed that the ordinary people make the original history and she has invariably come across its reappearance in different forms of folk, ballads, myths and legends are brought out by ordinary people across a generation. Devi says that people from north India and south India mostly suffers the problem they have been given a name as lower class people sometimes racial discrimination also takes place where the black people are meant as low-class people, and there were expected to do works for the upper-class people. Many of these things started to affect her thinking of the people. Mahaswetha Devi begun to express ere anger and emotion in her writings in Kowsi(1965) a significant turning point came in life when she visited Palamau a remote area and a district which is reduced to poverty in region Bihar and she calls "a replica of tribal India" she started to move from one place to another place on foot, she witnessed the non-civilised impact on the innate society of non-existing landlordism, a robed environment, debt bondage and state neglect. In India other tribal community, device observed the same depressing conditions.

In those tribal communities, there was no proper education; no health care, no roads, and they didn't have any income. Natural rights have been neglect and reduced the people to a nonhuman existence. Mahasweta Devi had been slightly aware of these presences of tribal people, but it was the Palamau visit that brought her face to face with the sufferings of a people who have been largely excluded from official mainstream history. Mahasweta Devi further believes that mere common feelings with the poor don't help them; she planes to lives with them to show their hardship and needs to the view of a generally indifferent hierarchy and set off movements for the different modes of natural rights. Besides her vast collection in Bengal literature, the majority of Devi's works have been translated into English and many other languages in India. Devi's literary works were introduced to the English literary world by Gayatri. And Gayatri translated some of Mahaswetha devices short stories. Most of her famous works, including plays, have been translated into English. Her major translated works in English translation include BashaiTudu, Imaginary Maps Breast Stories, Mother of 1084, Bitter Soil, In the Name of the mother Rudali. Are the famous works of Devi which have been translated from Bengal?

In Mahaswtha Devi's introduction to Agnigarbha, Devi visualised her mission thus: After thirty-one years of freedom, she finds many people still in sorrow and toil under hunger,

landlessness, and heavily laboured. A fit of anger, brightly burning and blazing directly against a system that has failed to liberate ordinary people from the terrible constraints is the only source for stimulating all my writing. All the members to the Left as well as to the Right have failed to keep up their promises to the ordinary people. I do not hope to see in my career any reason to change this conviction of mine. Hence I'll go on writing to the best of my capacity for the people so that I can face myself without any sense of guilt and dishonour. For a writer meets opinions in her lifetime and remains answerable. She questioned to the society and the politicians that have the subaltern people been uplifted in the community and if they have been uplifted why their upliftment isn't are not seen or heard in the community? Do those people have any powers in the community? Till now is just used and thrown away like garbage bags.

This paper is entirely based on the subaltern life the low-class people, and it is wholly focused on the life of the subaltern people daily life and there suffering. The author tries to give us the unobstructed view of the subaltern life how poor they have been and how they have been dominated and used by landlords and by the government. So she focuses to write short stories based on their life staying with them and understanding there needs she wrote Bitter soil, outcast, and imaginary map, and few other minor stories all of them have the same theme which focuses on showing the needs and suffering of the subaltern people and some stories like breast givers have many short stories based on subaltern women who face any hard and painful situation in their life.

The acid soil is one of the famous short stories of Devi's which has four short stories in it Little Once, Salt, Seed, and the Witch and the salt. All the four short stories are based on the centralised theme of the subaltern. The first story Little Once is based on the lower class tribal people who have been living in Aagariya at Lohri in Bihar. The story tells us about the incidents the relief being robbed by little thieves in disguise of children. It is only after the bit that the relief head officer came to know that the little thieves are men and women who are dwarfs stunted growth due to starvation and their tribe has been wiped out by destroying their natural resources for mining and industrial growth. This story shows how the government has robbed their wealth and how they have been forced in their lives to steal and to survive. It is to show a symbol of revenge and to stay away from their land and to stop destroying their wealth as the people don't have any other place to live.

The Salt is the next short story which is written to express grief pain over a material that is consumed by a human by man regardless of his status. In this, the salt is a symbol of love. In 1930 Gandhi marches to break the salt laws. Likewise, these tribal people steal the salt lick to form a new reserve forest to create a social history in salt. And this story focuses on speaking about the love that these rejected people deserve and that should be demonstrated by equality and social, political and economic advantages. Salt it added taste to the food and gives us the feeling of eating a meal. Likewise, the subaltern people are like salt trying to express their love, and they are in need of love from society and the government.

The Seed is also one the short story which happened in the life of a low caste man Dulan and Lachman Singh who is the landlord of Dulan's land. Dulan was taken as a slave to Lachman to cultivate his land which Lachman gave to Dulan was an unfertile land, and every month Dulan used to get seeds from government instead of tilling the land he cooked and took a revenge on Lachman and they were treated as animals to work for Bachmann these things show the powerless of the subaltern people and the dominant of the upper-class people. Hora another low-class man worked like an animal for Lachman and Lachman stayed in home watching them. And many tribal people were killed by Lachman henchmen and buried in Dulan land. Due to there, Ashe's the land became fertile and green grass started to grow up. These things show how influential the upper-class people are towards the subaltern people till now.

Outcast there are three others stories in outcast and Sanichari is the one which expresses the more detailed view of the subaltern people. Sanichari is a lower class woman marginalised by the upper-class people and the society and it also realistically represent the fate of the marginalised women Life and there suffering and their pains have been visualised by Devi short story Sanicharia woman who is marginalised like a Dhouli in her society with a child in her womb. The upper-class people forced her to this situation, and she was helpless starving, and she was sold to Brickkiln owner by a middle-aged woman, and she was taken to Barasat that is in West Bengal. In there she faces many sexual problems leading her to unwanted pregnancy. Then she was sent back to her native village has she faced ostracism. This story clearly shows us that how the subaltern women face their hardship how the society has marginalised them and how they have been forced to pleasure the upper-class people. These things represent that they have been treated like slaves with no humanity.

Jamabathi mother is one of the Herat melting short story Jamabathi her people who have been looked as garbage who is blocking the growth and path of success. And it is also a tool to criticise the Morden consumerist society which is unsympathetic even to the standard and basic needs of the poor people and considers them as garbage which is destroying the beauty of the cities. Jamabathifamily her father and mother belong to a low-class section of the society, and they do low works for the daily live hood. And they look skinny and time, and there were not able to provide proper nutrition food for there one and only daughter Jamabathi. And she too grew up in the same way as her parents thin, and she was not healthy, and she always dreamed of a doll, so her mother saved little money to fulfil her daughter wish. But unfortunately Jamabathi got sick, and she was admitted, and her mother spent all the money that she kept forgetting her doll. All the money was paid for her treatment, and she again started to collect money for her red dress. But Jamabathi passed away, and her dream got hurried with her. These things show how the subaltern people suffer to get there daily needs and the forced to do work a lot, and they become weak, so their lives remain unchanged. And the modern consumers think this person as garbage for the cities. And they waste a lot of food and money for unwanted things. If they share the waste food with some

poor people they will concede it as a treasure and eat it. This is the significant difference between low-class people and the upper-class society. They should remember the subaltern people stop doing their work there beautiful cities will turn into a wasteland.

Souvlaki is a short story it is a life of a woman named souvlaki who is a low cast serving women who were called as a Dasi which means a prostitute women who gives her body for her daily survival and forgetting her needs. She was forced into this prostitute work. Souvlaki was born in a Vaishya family, and she was taken to Dhritarashtra to serve as a Dasi and Dhritashtra used her for his sexual needs and thrower her and she got pregnant and got a son Souvalya. Due to her mother, he was called as a Dasiputra. Her it shows the life of a marginalised people and how the elite group exploits them. And these marginalised people raise and develop resistance against the elite group. The name which they gave for the women Dasi she satisfies the upper-class men by hiding her pain in her to feed her son and herself after the death of Dhritarashtra she feels the religion and freedom to do her work and to live the life which she wanted to live. These things show how the upper-class people and society are dominant and against the subaltern people.

If we compare all these short stories, we can understand these short stories are similar and have the same theme which focuses on the life of the subaltern people. During the Stone Age period, there was not cast, and religion people lived a happy life with nature. When the civilisation started to grow the cast also began to grow up with them, and the people got divided into groups. The low cast people were treated as slaves. And all the people started to think money minded and turned towards the practical needs and people who stayed with nature was divided as tribal people and the higher class people began to cut down the tree and destroyed quality and took these poor people as captives to do works for them. Mahasweta Devi used an excellent narrative way to express the feeling of the people. It makes the readers feel the pain, anger and emotion of the low-class people. Even though Mahasweta Devi was from a middle-class family, she moved to tribal and low-class areas and stayed with them absorbed there pains and hardships to live there daily life and projected those works as here short stories. In this world, every human being is created equal and should also be treated equally. And the government should change the caste system and makes this country free from the cast and the subaltern people must be given freedom to speak their rights and needs. The upper-class people should have fearless communication with the tribal and low-class people so that they can easily communicate and understand there pains and needs of the typical lower class people.

Conclusion:

Mahasweta Devi has left a numerous collection of novel and short stories based on the life of the subaltern people and the tribal people. And most of them motivate the students to reach the low-class people and study there lifestyle. And many of her works are translated in various languages like Italian, Japanese, and some other India languages. This is all due to her involvement in fighting for the rights of the subaltern people and tribal women, and other

low-class people had made her an icon of an influential woman writer. Who motivates the young writers to change the system and lifestyle of the subaltern people? And she told in an interview that even though if she writes the suffering of the subaltern people the government and society pretend to change for a specific time and again they will start treating this low-class person as slaves. Until this entire class and marginalisation problem gets over the subaltern people will always fight for their need and there lands and it never ends. And it passes from one origination to another. And her works made me inspired to do my article based on the suffering of the subaltern people, and her nothing clearly says one thing in the society and the politicians keep on failing to understand the needs of the poor low-class people, but they fill their pockets with their money. And now the subaltern people also have started to fight against their life for their freedom and independence in their life and some of them really educated well, and they have been marginalised communities, but they still fight that what makes them stronger in the society. They give respect to everyone in this society, but the society and upper-class people always treat them as slaves with no humanity. Even animals are treated with kindness in this country where there is no humanity for these poor people.

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