

## Down to the Earth from Sky Above: A Book Review

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Baburao Ramchandra Bagul, a Dalit author was born in 1931 in Maharashtra. He witnessed the entire Ambedkar Movement in his early youth. It developed his subaltern point of view towards various social structures. His literary contribution reflects the same arguments. Dr. Nilkanth Jagannath Dahale, Assistant Professor in English is originally a Marathi speaker. He has observed various Marathi literary movements including Dalit literary movement as such. He is fascinated towards Baburao Bagul's speeches and literature, the scientific reality and the sublimity in his arguments. When he observed this uniqueness in Bagul's literature, he undertook U.G.C. minor research project to observe Bagul's work more seriously. He found that Bagul argues for the ancient human race which is much more parallel to the scientific observations of various scientists. Dr. Dahale elaborately discusses Bagul's novel 'Apurva' and an anthology 'Veda Adhi Tu Hotas' in a true spirit of research. This research work is published in a book form entitled as 'Down to the Earth from Sky Above'.

This book is divided into seven chapters. 'A Word on Words!' in this first chapter, Dr. Dahale elaborates his stand on how literature reflects the author's meditation, experience and quest of certain thought. He appreciates Bagul who acknowledges that human beings are one of the entities in this universe. Humans are the reflection of Nature. Thus, human beings and their literature are not obsolete from Nature.

Raosaheb Kasabe, another prominent Dalit writer argues that Dalit literature is not limited to the agonies and sufferings of downtrodden community from India but it is extended to every exploited element in the world. Similarly, Baburao Bagul's Dalit literature goes beyond the boundaries and concerns of a country. It deals with secular thoughts about the entire human race and its communion with Nature.

Surprisingly but rightly Dr. Nilkanth Dahale compares Baburao Bagul's secular humanitarian thoughts with scientists' empirical and astronauts' observatory research. His interdisciplinary research encompasses universality in literature as well as in science. He claims how Bagul's literature deals with Cosmic Humanitarianism.

'Baburao Bagul's Humanitarian Cosmos: Down to Earth from Sky Above' is the second chapter of this book. Dr. Dahale depicts Baburao Bagul's uniqueness. In this Narcist's world, everybody is self-centered thinking about himself, caste and community. Even human beings are considered as at the center of this universe. However, Baburao Bagul is an exception who being a true Ambedkarite activist and a Buddhist thinker expands his vision to think about human race at cosmic level. He connects man with all other elements in Nature. He imagines man before any kind of literature. According to Hinduism, Vedas are the primary literature. Subsequently, he asserts that it is man who formed Vedas. Man was present before any religion. There was cosmic humanitarianism.

Dr. Dahale has keenly explained the terms like cosmos, cosmic, cosmology, humanitarians etc. in a scientific way. He refers to Stephen Hawking, Roger Penrose, Matts Roos and their predictions about the origin of the universe. He focuses on certain concepts like Big Bang theory, White Hole, Black Hole etc. Thus, he tries to bring scientists and philosophers on one common platform. He points out that Bagul argues to move with universal elements and remove religious fanaticism because it has kept the human race at the threat. It is a dire need to be human to reduce our suffering and improve our life.

In the third chapter 'Dalit literature and Role of Translation', Dr. Dahale argues how Dalit literature has its own background, completely different than the Black African American literature. Dalit literature has its own challenges in the social and cultural contexts. However, Baburao Bagul upholds progressive approach to the whole human race when he advocates cosmic humanitarianism. Thus he has brought together cosmology and humanity for the first time.

Dr. Dahale has analyzed how and why Baburao Bagul has developed such progressive mindset. He was influenced by Ambedkar Movement to get new Dalit consciousness. Dr. Dahale has discussed the origin of the caste system. So we may find it a diversion from the course but necessary for the foreign readers. He elaborates all terms like shurda, settled and unsettled community, broken men, untouchables, purity, British Regime, Queen's proclamation of 1857 and educational attainment.

He has underlined the lineage of Buddhist culture and early social reformers and their limitations of expressions. He deals with Mahatma Phule's debrahmanised theory, dislocating downtrodden in Brahmanic culture i.e. Hinduism. Dr. Ambedkar identified compact Hindu cultural structure and followed Buddhism. He anticipated secular society through the Indian Constitution. From late 1960s Dalit writers emerged exploring their experiences and asserting their identities.

Dr. Dahale has given a solid list of the books that were written originally in Marathi and then translated in English. He discusses here the importance of English as a global language. As far as translation of Marathi literature is concerned it has two trials: linguistic context and cultural context. He quotes Devy who says that a few Indian writers have capacity to translate, to transform, to transcreate from the original. However, one has to be cautious while looking at the translated work. Dr. Dahale urges here to pay equal attention towards Baburao Bagul's work as it got well attention in Marathi.

Chapter four deals with finding out the link between Astrophysical Theory and Baburao's literary Psyche. Human beings have studied the origin of the universe with its own point of view i.e. putting mankind at center. Subsequently, certain wrong notions are developed. If we look at the universe with a scientific approach of physics, we find that man is evaluated and he has evaluated all other concepts in the universe. Baburao Bagul argues the same in his literature. When Bagul imagines the universe with rational and scientific approach, he goes beyond all the religious identities where there is no clash. Almost all the crisis in the present world are rooted in the fact that different religions support different fantasies of the universe with numerous transcendental theories. Consequently, it is important to follow secular and scientific methods to think about the universe. Baburao Bagul advocates the same method. He rightly argues in his literature

that if human beings existed before religions then we have to go beyond all religious identities. It resulted in the Humanitarian movement. The words human and humanity are explained in the context of Greek culture and Roman Republic. Humanitarianism was invented by the Red Cross International Committee in the 19th century. Now it has become an approach for the betterment of mankind at cosmic level.

The basic principle of the universe is 'everything seems related to everything else. Anything in isolation loses its place and status. It is the destiny of all the isolated religions. So that human beings have to understand interdependence in the universe i.e. cosmology. Humanitarianism also deals with interdependence of human beings. There is a link between humanitarianism and cosmology, so that cosmic humanitarianism will be everlasting because it is connected with the entire universe i.e. nature. In short, the scholastic journey should be from 'Nature to academia'. Bagul's mature progressive consciousness leads him to conceive cosmic humanitarianism. Alike all other Dalit writers, Bagul goes beyond lifelong agonies of the downtrodden but considers human race at cosmic level and this is the main source of his greatness. Dr. Dahale elaborately discusses this point. I quote him,

'Bagul's vision of cosmic humanitarianism matches with the observatory study of the cosmic evolution process of these scientists' closely.'

Bagul describes connections, classification and common evolutionary framework in his literary creation. His cosmic humanitarianism inculcates rational values of Buddhism and criticizes irrationality, superstition, supernatural beliefs which have been foundation stones of many religions. Baburao Bagul always clearly upholds his rational stand that man presides over every religion. It is the man who has established the religious institution. His cosmic humanitarianism argument shows his matured state of descent spirit.

In the fifth chapter Dr. Dahale has analyzed the novel Apurva that appeared in 1980 in Jwala, a Diwali magazine. Like Thomas Hardy's novel, universal elements are treated as characters in Apurva. These universal elements contain Buddha's ecclesiastical sense as well as Marx's social sense. There are two stories indicating two approaches to love. In the first story Nazam is loved by three women belonging to three different strata of the society. There is no detail of their caste or community. It ends with union of true lovers i.e. Nazam and his beloved Roopa. Another story of a king and Janaki, his queen, reveals the dirty and unfaithful side of love. The queen is in love with Pandit Shridhar, a court poet. These two stories represent Buddhism and Hinduism respectively. Nazam stands for Buddha's principles of karuna and the king stands for the lecherous pleasures of social hierarchy.

Baburao Bagul has explored his opinion about Atmans in the sub-plot of the novel. They have celestial existence and beyond worldly limitations. He has projected cosmic humanitarianism here. The Atmans are in search of the elements that had made their physical life miserable. There are characters like Life and Death. Bagul highlights the peaceful living of Nature and Man. He argues for extraterrestrial life. Even NASA has undertaken a project called 'Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence'. There is the uniformity of laws of nature throughout the universe. Bagul celebrates the existence of human species before 'religion' and their communion with the universe. Bagul tries to

show how the idea of Atmas could have been born among humans. He focuses on the natural elements like spring and its communion with humans. All the elements of Nature communicate with Nazam. His union with Roopa is a great celebration of cosmic behavior.

In the sixth chapter Dr. Dahale has discussed Bagul's other literary work 'Veda AdhiTuHotas'. Being a true Ambedkarite, Bagul denies chronological superiority of Veda that tends to credit Hinduism as an ancient religion. He argues equality among all men i.e. universality of man. Besides, after a deep theoretical discussion right from Plato, Aristotle to Sinnige, Dr. Dahale has proved how Baburao Bagul's poem 'Veda AdhiTuHotas' put a theoretical connection between cosmology and Humanitarianism. All the 48 poems in this anthology progress from Dalit thought to cosmic humanitarian thought. The very first poem 'Veda AdhiTuHotas' argues how the notion of religion precedes much later to human existence on this earth.

'You named the entire universe  
And everybody agreed.'

Another poem 'SuryachaSangati' depicts the age oldness of human beings. The poem 'AhinduHoto' expresses his detest for Vedic religious cult. The principle of karuna is at the core of Bagul's cosmic humanitarianism.

To conclude, Dr. Dahale has made certain expert comments. He rightly comments that Bagul's work has uplifted Marathi literature to a higher stage as well as his lineage to a tradition of sublime poets. His Dalit literature has sublimity to cover entire universe in it. He goes beyond the pleas of discrimination at level of race, caste, gender and nature. He acclaims human beings as an entity in the universe so that they have to live in communion with Nature. He is really appreciated for his translations of certain pieces of work from Bagul's literature.

#### **Reference:**

1. Dahale, Dr. NeelkanthJagannath. *Down To The Earth From Sky Above*. Pandharpur: Samiksha Publication, 1921. English.