

Dalit Aesthetics – Narration Chronicals From The Margin

What is aesthetics..?

'Aesthetics' has restricted itself for a long time to questions concerning art - and more on conceptual than sensuous issues of art. This tendency began with Kant's *Critique of Judgment* of 1790 and was definitely established through Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics* between 1817 and 1829. Since then aesthetics has been understood exclusively as a philosophy of art. For centuries this conception remained the dominant understanding of aesthetics, shared by philosophers as different as Hegel and Heidegger or Ingarden and Adorno. Today the mainstream of aesthetics still follows this conception. The academic discipline tends to restrict itself to artistics - no matter how uncertain the notion of art itself may have become in the meantime

But now many aesthetics did not aim at art but at alternative forms of life. for example, of Schiller and his shift first from artistic to political and then to pedagogical art and finally to the "art of life" ("*Lebenskunst*") - an idea picked up on by Marcuse's advocacy of a new social sensibility; or think of Kierkegaard and his description of aesthetic existence, or of Nietzsche's fundamentalization of aesthetic activity, and finally of Dewey's integration of art into life.

So Use of the concept of aesthetics applies to created symbolic genres, or dynamic structures within which human experience, meaning, and value are constituted or emergent.

Aesthetics has been defined as sense—perception—, the study of what is immediately pleasing to one's visual and auditory perception or to one's imagination. It is also defined as the study of the nature of beauty, the theory of taste and criticism in the creative and performing arts. However, Alexander

Baumgarten used the term aesthetic. His analysis referred to an element of feeling or sensation as the ultimate ground of judgment in questions pertaining to beauty.

Politics Of Aesthetics

The birth of aesthetics as a regime of identification of art signifies the overthrow of a set of hierarchies that determined the status of artistic practices and the very nature of their sensory perception: a hierarchy of the arts and genres determined by the lowliness or nobility of their subjects, that is, ultimately by the rank held by the characters and activities they represented; the subordination of works and practices to social destinations defined within an hierarchically structured world; the definition of taste as a form of sensibility that was the preserve of an elite; the definition of the very practice of art according to the scheme of an active form commanding passive matter-Jacques Rancière

“Deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which political hegemony is currently maintained is a necessary prerequisite of effective political action, and this is one kind of insight which I believe an inquiry into the aesthetic can yield” Terry Eagleton *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990

Aesthetical sense taken as it is natural and unbiased. Aesthetical sense understood mainly the sense of privileged and elite. Later it is widely questioned. It is understood that aesthetics also construction than real experience. As any other construction it also controlled by power relations in the society.

Concepts always carry buried within them, even when they look entirely abstract, the traces of bodily pleasure or suffering, fear or desire, and that critically interpreting a conceptual idea can be a way of critically interpreting one's real social experience(Adorno)

So even aesthetical judgment we have look from the social experience from which it emerge and maintains.

Challenging the White liberal aesthetics from black position

White aesthetics, here, is defined as the tradition of aesthetic judgments and thoughts based on the Eurocentric canon of philosophical thinkers. Though not discussed in this study, examples of this canon include Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, and Hegel.

Black Aesthetic is the result of Afro-American desire for self-determination and nationhood that resurfaced in the form of artistic expression in the 1960s. It is unified in its embrace of all members of the African diaspora, although also characterized by varying rhetoric among poets of the Black Arts project.

Countering The Indian Aesthetical Sense: Towards a Dalit aesthetical sense

Dalit means Oppressed or broken is not a new word. Apparently, it was used in the 1930s as a Hindi and Marathi translation of 'depressed classes'. The word politically adapted by Ambedkar to define untouchable sections of India as a community. So Dalit is not a caste. It is a symbol of change and revolution. Dalit experiences are deliberately silenced and oppressed by Brahmanical forces as it is a 'polluted low culture'.

Indian mainstream aesthetical sense was deeply brahmanical, feudal and very sensory in nature. Most of the narration was around kings, priest or upper/middle caste heroes and it hinted its historical roots towards Sanskrit vedical tradition, dalit life and experiences relegated and stereotyped. Reformist liberals also treated Dalit as mere object to save. Their paternal attitude often negates the subjectivities of dalits.

Dalit aesthetics emerged to counter this mainstream in its essence and form. The aim of Dalit Literature is to protest against the established system which is based on injustice and to expose the evil and hypocrisy of the higher castes. There is an urgent need to create a separate aesthetics for Dalit literature, an aesthetics based on the real experiences of life

The history of Dalit literature can be traced back to centuries (Bhakti movement oral traditions, folks). But Dalit literary/cultural expressions were never taken into consideration due to the hegemonic nature of the field of literary production. The emergence of Dalit as a political category and identity coincide with the emergence of Dalit literature. Current researches by scholars reveal the widespread character of Dalit writings in various parts of India. Research also shows that Dalit literature had long before acquired a distinct language through its heterogeneous and plurivocal character which challenged dominant literary canons. Dalit literature acquired a recognizable identity towards the middle of the twentieth century.

Dalit writing in its formative years has been largely about articulating protest, self-respect, angst, identity, dignity, critiquing religion, politics, patriarchy, dalit patriarchy and the demand for space for dalits in social, cultural, and political spheres looking for social change, undisciplined, replacing good with bad words.

Based on experience, importance to memories, self and community, oral, fiction, imagination and romanticization in prose writings are replaced by documentary kind of narratives, blurring the distinction between realism and fiction. Stylized syntax, pretentious diction and standardized styles have now made room for dialect and sociolect, which have earned respectability them. Folk theatre forms are now resources for prose narratives. Hindu icons, imagery and value systems are now being replaced by dalit deities, rural imagery and upturned value system. The notion of beauty and truth for example, has undergone a drastic change now, privileging the individual and his/her felt experiences rather than an abstract notion of imaginary beauty and archetypal experiences

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Methodology

This study will try to locate dalit aesthetics and its historical formation.

It will also try to look how “different’ the dalit aesthetical sense in terms of their formation and reception. For this study will also explore the social origin, form, content and function of selected dalit writings.

Different here means in Lytordian term..he defined “different as a case of conflict between at least two parties that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of judgment applicable to both arguments||”