

It also delves deep into different cultural productions to prove the political interventions of Dalit feminism. The book interrogates specific questions about the representation of Dalit women. It problematizes the representation of Dalit women by mainstream Indian feminism and the Dalit representation of Dalit women. By highlighting the inefficiency of mainstream Indian feminism and Dalit politics in representing Dalit women, the book reaffirms the need for an intersectional and inter-categorical approach. The book extensively discusses the different dimensions of the agency of Dalit women. Unlike mainstream Indian feminism and Dalit politics, Dalit feminism develops a distinct way of looking at the agency of Dalit women. Instead of inflicting the victimized self to Dalit women, it explores the novel method of procuring agency through negotiation and solidarity. As an epistemological project and a transformative, interventionist theoretical framework, the Dalit feminist standpoint revisits history and reconstructs historiography.

This well-knit text neatly dissects Dalit feminism and explores how it produces knowledge about Dalit women. It also instils a novel enthusiasm for an insightful examination on the question of who can be/become a Dalit feminist. From the beginning to the end, the book keeps inspiring its readers to ask themselves questions about their positionality and their standpoint. Undoubtedly, this thoughtful study will open up an arena for critical insights and discussions.

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G.J.V. Prasad (Ed.), *Reading Dalit: Essays on Literary Representations*. New Delhi: Pencraft International, 2021 ISBN 9789382178040, Rs. 600

Reviewed by Provakar Palaka

Reading Dalit: Essays on Literary Representations, edited by G.J.V. Prasad, is a compilation of fifteen well researched papers. Though most of the chapters have already been published in various journals in the first

decade and a half of this century, the editor does a brilliant job to string them together under the common theme of multiple ways of reading Dalit/s. This book is a sincere attempt to address some of the key issues involved in reading Dalits: how Dalits are represented in the mainstream literature, how Dalits represent themselves in literature, about theorizing Dalit writings, problematics of translation, question of discrimination in India and other South Asian countries regardless of religions. Reading Dalit is an important constituency of this nation and according to the editor, it holds the 'future of the nation' (p. 7). Therefore, a volume such as this on the various contours of Dalit discourse, becomes very significant.

The word 'Dalit' has been defined and redefined over and over again. While some of the essays in the volume, like that of Devender Chaubey, interpolate the definition of Dalit to 'all the exploited people of the world' by comparing the Dalit narratives with the Japanese novel like Shimazaki Toson's *Hakai*. Such an idea goes beyond the broad definition of Dalits by the Dalit Panther Movement by including all the exploited people of the world. But at the same time, some of the essays like "Embedded Hierarchies and Subjugated Differences: A Study of Tamil Dalit Women" by K.A. Geetha, "Caste, Gender and Dalit Women's Discourse of Difference: Reading Bama's *Sangati* and Sivakami's *The Grip of Change*" by Arunima Roy, argue against the standardized voice of the Dalits. Dalit women are victims of 'double marginalization' (p. 145) and 'multiple oppressions' (p. 147) under the caste hierarchy. While K.A. Geetha exposes the meaninglessness of binary divisions of the oppressor and the oppressed (p. 127) through the subcaste rivalry among the Dalit communities represented in the texts, *Sangati* and *Beast of the Burden*. Therefore, she talks about the presence of multiple Dalit voices rather than a unified Dalit voice.

Talking about the emergence of Dalit literature, it is often linked to Ambedkar and the Dalit Panther Movement that followed. But, through various essays in the volume, the authors are trying to find a 'missing link' (p. 153) to trace the history of Dalit literature. Tamil Dalit literature often positions Bama's *Karukku* as the first Dalit autobiographical narrative in Tamil. However, Mangalam argues that Seenivasan's *Jeeviya Churukkam* and Panditar Ayotidasar's *Dravida Pantian*, published a good five decades before Bama, can be viewed as early articulations of Dalit assertion. Without bridging the 'missing links' study of Dalit

literature remains incomplete. Even Rohini Mokshi Punekar, in her article, *Was it Possible to be Dalit in Medieval India*, studies Chokhamela and other Bhakti poets in this connection. Finding the 'missing links' will empower reading Dalit/Dalit literature.

Another highlight of the book is that it deals in depth with the problematic of translating Dalit texts. Questions like who will translate Dalit texts? Should only Dalit scholars translate Dalit texts?, etc. have surfaced time and again. Alladi Uma, a translator-scholar, strongly feels that Indian writing in English is inadequate to translate Dalit experiences into the texts. Therefore, it is very important to translate Dalit texts to 'break the wall between the classroom and the world' (p. 37). Otherwise, students remain disconnected with the social reality of a nation. Regardless of who translates, it is the ethical responsibility of the translator to faithfully and humbly bring Dalit experiences into English (p. 37). At the same time, M. Sridhar, another translator-scholar, talking about translating Dalit texts into English, a language, which is 'borrowed robes' (p. 106), keeping the emotions, cultural and linguistic nuances of the original texts, is like 'birth of a new language' (106).

A few essays in this volume also question the labelling of a 'Dalit' writer. A writer is first a writer. One should be read and studied in this perspective. In the context of Namdeo Dhasal, primarily known as one of the pioneers of Dalit writings in Maharashtra, K. Satchidanandan argues that Namdeo Dhasal, keeping his radical intent intact, he should be read first as a poet rather than looking at him with a narrow perspective of Dalit writing or writer. Then if Dalit writers and their writings do not become part of a new category as it is now today, there is fear of Dalit literature being subsumed within the mainstream literature.

That caste discriminations are limited to only Hindu religion is a myth. A few essays like that of G.J.V. Prasad, dismantle this myth through the reading of *Karukku*. A few essays sincerely attempt to build up Dalit literature from a theoretical perspective.

The effort to compile fifteen classic chapters on reading Dalit and various contours of the Dalit discourse is like serving the delicious food for thought on a single platter for the readers to relish. *Reading Dalit* is truly a scholarly work which will benefit research scholars and academicians equally. As this book prophesies that Dalit discourse is going to be the 'future of this nation', *Reading Dalit* is going to be another milestone in

this direction. I wish all the potential inherent in this book may be truly enjoyed by the readers.

Provakar Palaka teaches English at Swami Shraddhanand College, University of Delhi. His areas of interest are, Dalit Literature, Odia Literature, Post-colonial Literature and Cultural Studies among others. His books are: Politics of Writing: A Study of Dalits in Odia Literature (Authorspress, 2015) and Reading the Margins: History, Culture, Literature (People's Literature Publication, 2020).

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R. Bolitho & R. Rossner, *Language Education in a Changing World: Challenges and Opportunities, Multilingual Matters, 2020*

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Reviewed by Nupur Samuel

Rod Bolitho's latest book offering with Richard Rossner offers a glimpse of challenges and opportunities that are an intrinsic part of the language education landscape. Rod has worked in language education as teacher, teacher educator and manager for over 50 years in both the public and private sectors, working as a trainer and consultant on various ELT projects, many of them funded by the British Council. Richard Rossner, too, has spent many decades of his career in the field of English language teaching. The experience of these authors is amply evident in the breadth and scope of *Language Education in a Changing World: Challenges and Opportunities*.

Increased travel across the world has made the unknown accessible to many and social media with its ubiquitous presence gives moment by moment commentary and access which impacts language like never before. How is language education changing in this novel and complex world? That is the question Bolitho and Rossner set out to answer in this 175-page book. Part of *Multilingual Matters'* series, 'New Perspectives on Language and Education', it provides a sweeping overview of a range of perspectives on how languages are taught and learnt; the way in which language permeates the curriculum, and impacts educational achievement. The only problem in making it accessible to interested stakeholders across the world is the price: about Rs. 8,500 for a hardcover and Rs. 2,800 for a 175-page paperback.