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Anna Bhau Sathe

Anna Bhau Sathe is one of the most prominent writers of Marathi literature. If we look at Anna Bhau's Life with the point of view of his own literature, we will find that every episode of Anna Bhau Sathe's life was filled with tons of tragedies. Anna Bhau Sathe, a twinkle star in the sky of Dalit literature, was born on 1st August, 1920 in Matang community. Matang community is a social formation by the religious caste system which dates back thousands of years and is prominently seen even today in our Indian Culture. The people of this community were considered as criminals by the then existing British Government. He was born in a village named Wategaon in the Sangli district of Maharashtra. His father's name was Bhau and mother's name was Valubai. He had an elder sister Bhagubai, brother Shankar, Madhukar and a younger sister Jaibai.



Although he was not much educated, Anna Bhau Sathe had created a writer inside himself by doing various works from his childhood till his youth. Despite of being a self-educated, without any formal education and swam deep into the ocean of literature to bring out many literary unique diamonds. Being unlettered, yet penned down many novels and plays in Marathi literature, is probably the rarest of rare example in the universe, unfortunately unexplored by the mainstream literary readers and critics. Anna Bhau Sathe is the founder figure of the most powerful Dalit novels and short stories in Dalit literature. Initially Anna Bhau Sathe was influenced by communist ideology and his literature reflects most inclusive philosophy of Humanism. Anna Bhau clarifies his literary stand and says, "The writers who concern society, society concern them. I have a lofty dream that my nation will prosper, be

happy, and be descent.” Later Anna Bhau Sathe left communism and attached to Ambedkarian ideology and wrote abundantly.

He penned for the downtrodden, disregarded section, and the working-class people. His stories project life of Dalits and workers. Anna Bhau Sathe inaugurated the first Dalit Sahitya Sammelan (Literary Conference) held at Mumbai in 1958. In his inaugural speech he emphatically expressed two uniquely powerful ideas that the “The earth is not balanced on the snakes head but on the strength of Dalit and working-class people”. Anna Bhau here underlines the supreme importance of Dalit and working-class people in the world set up. Using the Hindu popular mythological image of snake bearing the globe as the popular symbol to underscore a scything critic and strong rejection of Hindu ideology and thereby bringing in Dalit/human/workers hands as the controller and supporters of this world is most powerful realistic, visionary analysis of the so-called Dalit condition. Sadly, neither the so-called Dalit nor the mainstream readers and critics dwelled upon Anna Bhau Sathe’s this only one of its kind deliberations.

Anna Bhau Sathe wrote novels, dramas, short stories, poems, powadas, folk dramas, film stories and a travel narrative. The quality and quantity of the writing of Anna Bhau Sathe is so high that no mainstream writer could ever reach. All the characters given in Anna Bhau’s literature were best examples of humanity, parity, justice, idealistic and votive personalities. They were portrayed as the ones who fought against the malpractices, which existed in our society. His famous novels are Fakira, Warnecha Wagh, Makdicha Maal, Sangharsh, Chitra, Vajanta, etc. The Characters of Anna Bhau Sathe are so alive that the rattle of sword of Fakira and the sound of dancing bells of Vajanta dwell in the memory of readers forever. Anna Bhau Sathe has succeeded in creating alive picture of the plight of contemporary so called lower castes. He, in his famous novel Fakira, projects the life of so-called Dalits and their strong will to live on with self-respect. Fakira, the protagonist, revolts against the rural orthodox system and British rule to save his community from utter starvation. He loots the godown of grains and distributes it among the depressed people. However, his family, the relatives and whole community were arrested and tortured by the British officers. He, eventually, surrenders and is hanged to death. But his strife becomes a memorable treatise of self-respect and sacrifice to his community.

The most eminent works of Anna Bhau Sathe ‘Fakira’ successfully depicts the social reality of how historically Dalits occupied the social periphery, and have been excluded from the core of politics and economy. It is the most encouraging, moving, realistic delineation of the Dalit life, troubles, tortures, their exploitations by the upper caste so called authorities in the villages and yet the intact moral values among so called Dalits, the strong fervour to live life and not to give up hopes are the aspects of novel ‘Fakira’.

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Reference:

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