



CENTERING THE MARGINS
ESSAYS ON
DALIT LITERATURE

Edited by
Dr Bijender Singh
Dr S. Chelliah



Centering the Margins: Essays on Dalit Literature

Edited by

Dr Bijender Singh & Dr S. Chelliah

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Annihilating the Wall of Violence: Rereading Women's Lives in Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke*

Dr Suruchi Sharma

Dalit women's autobiographies have a special place in Dalit Literature. Though Dalit men's autobiographies came much earlier and won much popularity but among them, there are few Dalit women's autobiographies which are now globally famous. Urmila Pawar's memoir *The Weave of My Wife* has been published by Columbia University Press, USA. *I Phoolan Devi* and *Viramma: The Life of an Untouchable* have been translated by foreign translators. Yashica Dutt's memoir *Coming Out as Dalit* has been published by Aleph Book Company and Bama's *Karukku* has been published by Oxford University Press. Likewise Baby Kamble's autobiography *The Prisons We Broke* has been published by Orient BlackSwan. This book was originally published as *Jina Amucha* in 1986 and it was translated and published as *The Prisons We Broke* in 2009. It is called the first Dalit autobiography in Marathi by a woman as Shaily also writes, "*The Prisons We Broke* is a lively self-narrative by Baby Kamble and it is the first autobiography by a Dalit woman in Marathi" (Shaily 307).

In this autobiography Baby Kamble describes that children love their maternal grandparents' home. The autobiography opens with the following words, "Children love their

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Any intelligent survey of present literary scenario brings home the fact that the voice of protest, Dalit consciousness or subaltern voice is found to be out and out an indispensable theme solely with an avowed social purpose, thereby touching upon some sweeping revolt against economic exploitation, subjugation of women, suppression of the underprivileged and the oppression of the downtrodden and the Dalits. Not only lovers of literature but also literary critics and social scientists are really very anxious and even curious to study these literary insights and perceptions related to Dalit or protest literature. This anthology does neatly acknowledge the aspirations of marginalised people in their pursuit of equal rights, freedom of expression, liberty and fraternity, oppression of women and the marginalised and the exploitation of the lowborn and the neglected, all of which get projected in this volume which includes insightful essays on such themes as caste, deprivations, hunger, traumatic realism, improbable imbalance, subalternity, untouchability, Dalit discrimination, marginalisation, Dalit feminism, Dalit exploitation, caste discrimination, voice of assertion, gender politics, multi-axial intersectionality, violence, repression, resistance, Dalit subjugation, patriarchal voice, resistance, identity crisis, humiliation, heartbreak and post-partition trauma. This anthology entitled *Centering the Margins: Essays on Dalit Literature*, consisting of thirty critical essays on diverse aspects of Dalit Literature, will be of immense current literary use and value to both scholars and teachers and will no doubt be well received by the social critics, intellectuals, writers and thinkers of both India and abroad.

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