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Bama's *Sangati*: Voice of Dalit Women

R. Praveen Raj
Assistant Professor of English
E.S. College of Education
Villupuram, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Bama's *Sangathi* is seen as a declaration of dalit consciousness. Her books are acclaimed for recognizing dalits' lives, their humor, their flexibility and their innovativeness. She explains how dalit women are mistreated. Dalit women face uncommon hardships in relation to dalit men. Since they look after all family undertakings like taking care of babies, they have minimal entryway to educate themselves. The result is that first, they are denied of the upsides of progress and second, they are seen as sub-humans. Also, there is interference of men in matters of food and clinical benefits.

Keywords: Dalit, women, caste, Christian, discrimination

"*Sangati* means news, events, happenings, and the book is one of the interconnected anecdotes These individual stories, anecdotes, memories of the personal experience are narrated in the first person . . ." (Holmstrom xvi) The author finds this unevenness in dalits, a weeping male child is given milk while the girl child is not given any attention. Patti, the central character in *Sangati* ruses this male inclination in the general public where female is viewed as appendages: "A boy is breast fed longer. With girl, they wean them quickly, making them forget the breast. If the boys catch an illness or a fever, they will run round and nurse them with the greatest care. If it's a girl, they'll do it half-heartedly" (*Sangati* 07). When the children grow up, girls have to stay at home "cleaning vessels, drawing water, sweeping the house, gathering firewood, washing clothes" (*Sangati* 07), the boys have no such responsibilities. Further, girls are restricted to play certain kinds of games which are thought to be proper for them.

The storyteller sees the vast majority of dalit men either as savage to their spouses or just mercilessly unconcerned with the overwhelming work dalit ladies needed to do in and out of their homes. Dissimilar to ladies, the work done by men closes with the day's end. In the wake of night they are allowed to linger around the alcohol shops or *chavadi*, leaving the family work to ladies. The storyteller, while acquiescing that the division of work is shifted towards guys in all cases, conveys in the event of dalit ladies, it is more intense: "Even if all women are slaves to men, our women really are the worst sufferers" (*Sangati* 65). Maikkani is a dalit lady who needs to bear the torments and separation alongside the difficult work she should accomplish for her loved ones. Soon after her introduction to the world her dad took another relationship began getting back home late, "whenever he feels like it, and goes off again, leaving her mother with a child in her belly every time" (*Sangati* 69). Maikkani had to work hard from her childhood to help her mother raise the family: "From the time she woke up, She sprinkled the front yard with water and swept it, and then carried on with all the housework: swept the rest of the house, Scrubbed the cooking pots, collected water, washed clothes, gathered firewood, went to the shops, cooked the kanji" (*Sangati* 70).

Notwithstanding these family tasks, she needs to work in the match processing plant to help her mom when she was pregnant. Her dad grabs her well deserved cash for drinking whenever he has an opportunity and beats her. She truly feels compelled to save a solitary rupee for herself. Raakkamma, who is beaten by her better half Paakkiraj in front of spectators, manhandles him and lifts up her sari

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before the spectators to disgrace him. On being condemned by individuals for her unsuitable conduct, she protects herself saying : “If I hadn’t shamed him like this, he would surely have split my skull in two, the horrible man” (*Sangati* 62). The narrator too accedes to it later when she opines: “She acted in this way because it was her only means of escape” (*Sangati* 62).

The inescapability of strange notions and mysterious customs in dalits include male centric mistreatment which along with persecution makes dalit women inclined to mental and medical affliction. Oppressive environment both at home and outside makes dalit women casualty of different mental diseases are uncovered as dream about spirits and devils, for example, ‘peys.’ The story associated with a specific pey named Esakki is described exhaustively in *Sangati* and gives an occasion for the terrorizing and hostility endured by dalit women in a male ruled society. Esakki, a darling sister of seven siblings, tumbles from dutiful elegance when she became hopelessly enamored with a kid having a place with Vannan standing and in spite of the complaint of her siblings weds him. Her siblings, exasperated with outrage, claim to accommodate her keeping in mind and bringing her back home, kills her in the timberland in a most grisly way.

This sad young lady Esakki should have turned into a pey and has ladies while requesting support and winnowing plate from them. In her examination of the instance of ladies, they are moved by peys, the storyteller wonders how a woman, and that too a dalit woman, are moved by peys and spirits and not by other person. She appropriately reaches to the resolution that it is their own psychological chronic sickness because of oppressive daily practices all through the homes that makes them casualties of such dreams.

From the second they are awake, they set to work both in their homes and in the fields. At home they are bothered by their spouses and kids; in the fields there is extremely difficult work other than the badgering of the property manager. At the point when they get back home at night, there is no time to draw their breath of rest. Furthermore, whenever they have gathered water and kindling, they cooked a kanji and took care of their ravenous spouse and kids, and still, at the end of the day they cannot hit the hay in harmony and rest until day break. Ladies are overpowered and squashed by their own nausea, fatigue and depletion, on account of this. The more grounded ones some way or another figure out how to endure this. The ones who do not have the psychological strength are completely persecuted; they surrender to mental medical affliction and go about as though they are moved by peys.

The presence of casteism in Church becomes the point of convergence with *Karukku*. *Sangati* too. The qualities engendered by chapel stand in change with their real practice. While in principle church perceives no distinction of class, caste and orientation, there are profound problems in biases inside its domain. One of such orientations is uncovered in its precluding follow up on stage in organization of men. Because of it, at whatever point the need emerged, men must be projected in the job of ladies. The storyteller and different ladies cannot comprehend the bipartisan job the supporters of chapel play in this. Indeed, even a child young lady is not viewed as a reasonable decision to play in this. Indeed, even a child is not viewed as a reasonable decision to assume the part of child Jesus. With these conspicuous qualms against women who are taken as possible ruining force, the ministers are likewise incapable to give moral power against, rank qualifications and orientation abuse. Bama makes a searing assault on the philosophy of chapel which panics individuals for the sake of paradise and damnation to sustain their subjection: “At chapel they should lick the minister's shoes and be his slaves while he compromises them with stories of God, Heaven, and Hell” (*Sangati* 35).

One more gorge among practice on the regions of Church has been the ceaseless victimization of dalit Christians. Regardless of its advanced standpoint and proclaimed correspondence, cleaning in Churches is done generally by dalit Christians. Notwithstanding its futuristic viewpoint and pronounced equity, the broad and cleaning in Churches is done for the most part by dalit Christians, while the upper caste Christians stand to the side and watch. This training gets undercover as well as plain help of nuns and ministers who tell dalit women that they will “gain merit by clearing the Church,” the contention inquisitively sounds very much like the proclaiming of Brahmins to dalits with respect to their handiness

where God has arranged them. Further, however the Church declares to empower between rank relationships, practically speaking the clerics “themselves are continuously impeding them” (*Sangati* 108). When a parayar young lady falls in love for a Palla kid, she moves toward her ward minister for the consent, the cleric opposed to aiding her, educates her family concerning her and “kept her running between the congregation and her home like a dog” (*Sangati* 108). Obviously there is a noticeable hole between the lessons and practices in the congregation and the riter unsparingly reprimands it.

Bama finds a lot to commend in dalit culture and its lifestyle. Rather than being self-reproachful, she places it interestingly, with the Brahmanic culture and does not think that it is inadequate. Rather, she is by all accounts taking all in all a pride in having a place with dalits. She tracks down different places of flights among Brahmanism and dalitism. The first among them is the more noteworthy balance in dalits among young men and young women in issues of birth. In contrast to upper positions, in dalits the introduction of young ladies does not turn into a shocking occasion. The act of female feticide has been obscure to them, besides in a miniscule neo-rich privileged dalits who gorilla upsides of upper stations. The justification for it tends to be followed in the way that in dalits “the two genders go to work and procure a business” (*Sangati* 115). The dalits overall are not unduly stressed over her introduction to the world confirms that in her town “they had no effect among young men and young ladies upon entering the world” (Yadav 3). While it is considered to bring karma on the off chance. The very truth that the kid should be young woman in it remains at difference with the privileged assumptions where the introduction of first child as young lady is considered to be upsetting, if not our properly unfortunate.

In *Sangathi*, what Bama shows, in spite of their diligent effort and procuring all alone in the midst of numerous difficulties, these women are underestimated in all circles. Women are defenseless for abuse and are trashed not just by ladies. It is baffling that “. . . Ladies showed no pity or sympathy towards different women” (*Sangati* 40). While a woman will be openly attempted and rebuffed remorselessly on the off chance that she is seen as at fault for misconduct, a man is permitted to go without any consequence for a similar responsibility.

The instance of Mariamma, the casualty of aggressive behavior at home and orientation and standing separation uncovered this destiny of the lower rank ladies. Pathima regrets: “Assuming that a ladies is criticized, that is generally her destiny. Individuals will not consider regardless of whether the allegation is valid, nor will they permit the lady to stand up” (*Sangati* 42). Mariamma remains as a declaration to this. The ladies are sufficiently insightful to figure out the purpose for their menfolks’ overbearing mentality towards them. The men can show their solidarity and courage just before their ladies and not before the upper cast men. Their vulnerability causes them to act fiercely with their ladies. As Susaiamma notices accurately: “they never permit us to take a seat at the town gatherings. . . . But it’s just to us that they will gloat. Ask them just to stand up the ‘mudalaali’ (boss). Not at all, they will cover their mouths and their rears and behave irrationally” (*Sangati* 24). The town “nattamai” finished his “procedures” with an inferred advance notice just to the ladies: “you female chick should be unassuming and unobtrusive. A man might complete hundred things nevertheless pull off it. You young ladies ought to consider what you are left with, in your stomach” (*Sangati* 26). The haughtiness of a male prevailing in society is brought out in this autoethnography.

“The true privilege of man is not to be the master of his world, but to be liberated from it; his mandate is not to employ other creatures as instruments for his own needs and desires, but to use himself, his own human existence, as a vehicle of self-transcendence.” (Halbfass qtd. in Dallmayr 132). However, in the man centric culture, even to question their thought process as right is viewed as a characteristic of lack of respect when Pathima discusses what was “truly scraping” inside her psyche, her patti says: “Whether it is correct or wrong, it is better for ladies not to open their mouths. You simply take a stab at talking about what you accept is correct. You will just get kicked and beaten and slogged on for your torments. . . . It’s a similar all through the world. Ladies are not given that sort of regard” (*Sangati* 29). Indeed, even in kids’ play young men started to lead the pack roll and “they were the once in power” (Rathna 31). In their town, men never permitted women to participate in dramas placed on celebration

days. The actual men did the role of women they are not permitted to go anyplace as they wish, even go to the film they go for their work in the fields are as home grown workers and aside from that they need to “attempt truly hard” (*Sangati* 13). Women are so used to this man centric subjugation that they track down wellbeing and security in this framework and are different to emerge from it. As Pattima’s grandma put it: “. . . what these men say seems OK as well. Could we at any point go about as openly as they do, all things considered? Some evil individual are other is holding on to assault us” (*Sangati* 14). A woman turns into a simple prey for the desire, unfairness and clever of man. Anything that works, the women do, any place they go, they are paid not exactly the men. They need to battle with the normal bad guys like wild creatures which represent a danger to them when they gather kindling or work in the field and human miscreants at home like their tipsy dad, spouse or sibling, and at the external society like their upper rank experts. Regardless of whether they become sick they can't sit at home, as they need to acquire for their everyday live hood.

The storyteller says: “I could see that here and there I was fortunate to be paraichi. Then again, I couldn't resist the memorable urge the times I was grieved and embarrassed that I was naturally introduced to this local area” (*Sangati* 113). She doesn't neglect to feature the freedoms the womenfolk appreciate in the dalit local area which are denied to the upper standing ladies. Dalit ladies partake in every one of the exercises connected at the hip with men. They even go with their men to cemetery and do the ceremonies when there is a demise.

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