

Abstract

Female Sexuality at Large?:

Reading Dalit Masculinity in the contemporary texts

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Female sexuality has long been the object of control under male-dominant power structure of gender. In Indian social context, it symbolizes the status of a community the female belongs, therefore becomes the object of control by her fellow castemen; and/or the target of sexual attack or lure by the males of other castes. This results in severe subordination of womenfolk to male members of a caste or a family. It creates even harsher situation for the Dalit women who has to suffer double subordination under upper-caste suppression and Dalit patriarchy.

I attempt to examine the attitudes of Dalit males towards 'their' women in this paper. While reading a few selected texts of contemporary Dalit male authors, I will try to find out their masculinity (or masculinities) in the different forms and in the different context. The overt and covert manifestations of masculinity revealed in the texts reflect the attitudes towards female sexuality of the authors. Their notion of their own masculinity and womenhood, and attitudes towards female sexuality are important because they provide the basis of male-female relationship in the existing power structure of gender, patriarchy.