

## **‘Sanatan’ – the Unsaid History of Deep Exclusion, Inequality, Injustice and Isolation**

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### **Abstract**

In human history many human groups experienced and witnessed discrimination on the name of divinity. These human groups become victim of man-made inhuman legal institutionalized social order. They become the subject of social exclusion, exploitation and violence. Sharankumar Limbale, the prominent Marathi writer, poet, critic and Dalit movement activist has contributed eight significant novels and books including short stories and an autobiography in Marathi Dalit Literature. The author of the novel 'Sanatan' has recently been honoured for his work by Saraswati Samman 2020, which is one of the most prestigious awards in Indian literature. The book was published in Marathi in 2018 and later translated into many Indian regional languages as well. *Sanatan* is a historical and social unsung saga of oppressed castes and tribes. It covers the vast period of Indian history, from the Bahamani Sultanate's fourteenth century to the establishment of British colonies and the British Empire. It takes the reader on a voyage from India to the South American continent as well. "The author has written this novel using many imaginative characters and space. He brilliantly weaved the story of a novel with history."<sup>1</sup> *Sanatan* is a socio-historical documentation of the misery of invisible human souls who were kept unnoticed and isolated for centuries in the name of social hierarchal order. Sharankumar Limbale unmasks every authority of the hierarchical order of Indian society which refused the existence to lower castes to sustain their superiority, power & position in society. The present research paper, using post-colonial lens endeavours to unmask the authority and order reflected in 'Sanatan'. Sharankumar Limbale's 'Sanatan' experiments with time, space and history. This paper also explores Sharankumar Limbale's use of history in chronological order to portray the epic story of graded inequality and exclusion including religious conversion, migration and the Diaspora of Mahar and Adivasi communities with the help of mythology and imaginary incidents and characters. The paper observes the potential of *Sanatan* in uncovering and uprooting the faces of exclusion and inequality.

**Key Words:** Social stratification, social exclusion, untouchability, religious conversion, British imperialism, Diaspora

### **Introduction:**

Worldwide many ethnic groups, marginalized communities and races have witnessed and even at present, they are subject to social and cultural exclusion as their existence was denied by mainstream society. These communities or groups have suffered and still suffering from discrimination, exclusion, humiliation and violence. The presently known 'Dalit' have an ancient history of miserable deep social exclusion in the form of untouchability. "Deep Exclusion refers to exclusion across more than one domain or dimension of disadvantage, resulting in severe negative consequences for the quality of life, well-being and future life chances."<sup>2</sup> In the second half of the twentieth-century, the emergence of

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<sup>1</sup> *Hindustan Times*. Tuesday 4 April, 2023.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/novelist-sharankumar-limbale-selected-for-saraswati-samman-20-101617150004198.html>

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Levitas, Christina Pantazis, Edlin Fahmy, David Gardon, Eva Lloyd and Patsisos. "The Multi-dimensional Analysis of social Exclusion". Department of sociology and School for Social Policy Towards Centre for the International Study of poverty and Bristol Institute for Public Affairs. University of Bristol. January 2007, P. 9.

Dalit literature came up with the theme of protest against the existing social order in India and social ostracism of deprived classes. In 'Sanatan', Sharankumar Limbale tries to bring the marginal groups to the centre. According to Gilbert McInnis - "Another 'intersection' happens between post-colonialism and postmodernism when they desire to bring the 'marginal' to the 'centre'. The 'marginal' are those who have been left out of literature in the past or history in general."<sup>3</sup> 'Sanatan' means eternal and also ancient."<sup>4</sup> Hindu religion believes in 'Manusmriti' (the sacred book of the law of conduct) and it follows the practice of the Varna system from the second century. Meanwhile, the Varna system mushrooms its root deep into Indian society in the form of a caste system. Since the Sanatan period, (ancient times) caste system becomes an integral part of Indian lives. Its complicated web of caste system becomes eternal. *Sanatan* provides the big canvas for a story of exploitation, exploiter and exploited, Brahmins and non-Brahmins. It's a story of the hegemony and power of upper-caste people and their struggle to sustain their power and position through the oppression of marginalized communities. According to Dr B. R. Ambedkar- "The Brahmin believes in the two-nation theory. He claims to be the representative of the Aryan race and he regards the rest of the Hindus as descendants of the non-Aryans. The theory helps him to establish his kinship with the European races and share their arrogance and their superiority. He likes particularly that part of the theory which makes the Aryan an invader and a conqueror of the non-Aryan native races. For it helps him to maintain and justify his lordship over the non-Brahmins."<sup>5</sup> To sustain the power and position Aryans socially excluded original inhabit of India."Social exclusion is a process, which causes individuals or groups, who are geographically resident in a society, not to participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society."<sup>6</sup> This research paper makes an attempt to understand various nuances associated with 'Sanatan'.

#### **The objectives of the Research Paper:**

1. To contribute to the existing body of knowledge about the unsaid history of deep exclusion of oppressed communities in special reference to the Mahar community.
2. To examine the various dimensions of deep social exclusion in the lives of an oppressed community
3. To study the history of religious conversion of the oppressed community during the Muslim sultanate and British Empire.
4. To study the Diaspora of depressed workers.
5. To study the issues of religious conversion.
6. To study 'Sanatan' as social satire in Indian ancient socio-historical context

#### **Research Methodology:**

The researcher has applied analytical research methodology. The researcher has collected the required information from the secondary data available in reports, interviews, books, the internet, reviews and journals.

'Sanatan'- the novel is divided into six chapters. In each chapter third narrator explores a specific era of Indian history. The novel begins with the fourteenth-century era of the Bahamani Sultanate (five sultanates of Deccan states). Sharankumar Limbale's use of time and space reminds the reader of Amitav Ghosh's technique of time and space. In 'The Shadow Lines' the narrator travels through time and space to reveal the story of three generations and the meaning

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<sup>3</sup> Gilbert McInnis. *Political Discourse – Theories of Colonialism and Post Colonialism*. The Struggle of the Post Modernism and Post Colonialism.  
<https://www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/mcinnis1.html>

<sup>4</sup> Sadhu Vivekchand & Dr. Janakbhai Dave "Hinduism – Beliefs and impression". Swaminarayan Aksharph publication. ISBN 9788175265882. 2013. P. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches. Volum 7. Publication- Dr. Ambedkar Foundation. Ministry of social Justice and Empowerment. Govt. Of India. ISBN :978-93-5109-178-3. 1990.

<sup>6</sup> Scottish Executive (nd). "The role of the transport in Social Exclusion in Urban Scotland", Edinburgh: Centre Research Unit.

of human existence. Amitav Ghosh uses memories and flashback techniques. Sharankumar Limbale didn't use memories of characters. He travels from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth century chronologically to reveal the history of humiliation and suffering of three to four generations. *Sanatan* is not a story of an individual. It is a story of a whole community.

*Sanatan* is a social satire on inequality, exploitation, and oppression of the Indian social order. Chapter one begins with the period of the Bahamani Sultanate of the fourteenth century. The third omniscient narrator describes the miserable living conditions of Mahar Ghetto located at the outskirts of the village. In March 2015 the ruling government of India passed the ordinance to ban cow slaughter in India except few states. Since then, various cases of cow vigilante violence occur all over India. In the name of the protection of cow, this cow vigilante brutally killed or beat Muslims or Dalits as many of these people associate with the traditional work of cow carcasses. "Dalit groups particularly vulnerable to such attacks, as they are frequently responsible for disposing of cattle carcasses and skins."<sup>7</sup> Due to this law many people become unemployed. Many families have been in this business for many generations. They are unable to find any other job as they are not skilled at any other job. The writer mentioned the incident of cow vigilante violence in the fourteenth century. The Mahar community is being accused of the sudden death of a cow in upper caste people's residency. They blamed Ambarnak, Yesnak, Bhootnak and Sidnak, Mahar for the death of their holy cow and a crowd of upper caste people beat them brutally and inhumanly. Navnath Jakikore and Brubwan Kharate tied the hands of all Mahar with rope.... they all were shivering, shouting, begging.... hadn't done anything... Arjun Katal knocked him around, beating on his hips with long stick. Sidram kore holds Bhimnak's legs and beats on his foot till the stick breaks down. Sindram Kore throws Yesnak on the ground and peeing on his face. Brubwan Kharate beats Bhimnak and spits on his face.... gathered mob was enjoying the scenario and were laughing at Mahar... You killed a holy cow... Devram Patil raised his voice with anger... The cow is a holy animal. Thirty-three crore gods and goddesses stay in her stomach. You kill the holy cow. You eat the flesh of a holy cow. You hurt the sentiments of Hindus."<sup>8</sup> Since ancient times till date Dalit people are the subject of victimization, violence, beating, lynching and murder. From ancient times, Dalit and Black are subject to lynching. Black American writer John Oliver Killens and many black American writers portray the incident of lynching and violence against black in their writing. The Mahar were prohibited to enter the village without the permission of upper-caste villagers. They were prohibited to enter a temple, water bodies etc. They were considered polluted, untouchable and impure. They were given low tasks to perform like disposing of animal carcasses, and human waste. They were aware that the Mahar community has no employment sources to earn for livelihood. They are completely dependent on the villagers. They cannot work without the willingness and permission of villagers. On the outskirts of the village, they are living a life like dogs, cats, crows, and animals. When their holy cow died, they thought Mahar killed their cow for their meal for their survival. They brutally beat Mahar for feeding her poison and also told them to dispose the dead cow as soon as possible. Mahar community is very happy about the death of the cow; it is a sort of relief to get a food for few days. This was the very pathetic condition of the socially excluded Mahar community. On the one hand upper caste community keeps them deprived of work and employment. These people tried to survive at any cost even if they got accused and punished. These oppressed communities lived restless, humiliated life for centuries. Even after humiliation and oppression, they don't feel anything wrong; in fact, they consider their selves inauspicious to be born as untouchable, ill-fated. Marathi Dalit writer Sahnkarrao Kharat also depicted the suffering of the Paradhi community in his novel 'Paradhi'. Social exclusion of Paradhi community unwillingly gets into burglary for survival as they are excluded from employment, food and water. Shnkarrao Kharat's other novel 'Mi Mazhya Gaonchya Shodhat' (In Search of my village), portrays the upheaval and suffering of excommunicated Mahara community. Sharankumar Limbale and Shankarrao Kharat tried to expose the naked reality of social injustice. Dhondnak mentioned with rage – "Paradhi theft maize from the farm to satiate the hunger, so for this hunger, how can they kill him?"<sup>9</sup> The upper caste communities kept these depressed communities deprived of basic

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<sup>7</sup> Cow vigilante violence in India.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cow\\_vigilante\\_violence\\_in\\_India#Background\\_and\\_history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cow_vigilante_violence_in_India#Background_and_history)

<sup>8</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 34.

<sup>9</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 24.

needs of human life like water, food and employment. Sharankumar Limbale uses 'historical imagination'<sup>10</sup> and fictional stories to create a huge canvas of historical events. He uses Hindu mythologies and imagination to create fictional stories. "Cow had four children. They all loved her equally. One day she asked them a question. She wanted to know their feelings. She asked – 'How will you all honour me after my death?' Her three children replied – 'We will honour you like divine godlikeness.' Cow gets satisfied with their answer. She asked the same question to her younger son. He replied – 'Mother, I was born from your womb, I will keep you in my womb.' All elder sons got angry and said – 'How will you keep her your stomach? 'Will you eat dead mother's flesh?'. ..... They called younger brother Big (Maha) Hungry (Ahari). Ravenous. In this manner we become Mahar. Understood."<sup>11</sup>

Sharankumar Limbale mentioned the pathetic social and mental condition of oppressed Mahar before 1956. He portrays the pitiful and inferior mindsets of Mahar who make themselves habitual to their miserable, oppressed environment. The writer describes – "These people knew how to face the eyesight of upper caste people. But they were not aware of how to see their own pathetic lives. Mahar had a human body with an animal's heart. Corpse. By birth, they learnt to swallow the humiliation. They believed it was their fatal destiny to be born as Mahar. They wouldn't have believed if anybody may ask them to destroy this silence of thousands of years. The villager's routine life was smoothened due to social violence and inequality. Mahars were not aware of resistance. They never unrest against villagers.... they never fought against their fatal destiny."<sup>12</sup> Their Destiny was written by Brahmins in 'Manusmriti' in the second century. Saharankumar Limbale ironically mentioned- "Mahar-Brahmin's Sanatan relations- Holi bonfire started burning."<sup>13</sup> Followers of Hindu Sanatan Dharma are following the caste Varna and caste system for centuries. The caste is not only the hierarchical social order of Indian society but it is also the notion which developed in the psyche of every Indian. Each upper caste developed the notion of superiority over other subordinate or lower castes, and every lower caste developed the notion of inferiority over the upper or superior caste.

1956 is a period known for the mass conversion of Mahar and oppressed communities into Buddhism. Sanatan highlights the history of the conversion of the oppressed Hindu community into Muslim and Christianity. This is the situation before the conversion to Buddhism. They accepted their fate. On the contrary, Sharankumar Limbale also depicted the incident of a dead cow in his novel 'Zhund'. The writer depicted the post-conversion period, where the Mahar community denied disposing of the dead cow. Sharankumar Limbale depicted the transformation in the thoughts after the religious conversion.

Chapter two covers the implementation period of Lord Dalhousie's policy - 'the Doctrine of Lapse'<sup>14</sup> Chapter mentions the treaty between Peshwe of Pune and the British East India Company. It describes the journey of the migration of Bheemnak Mahar to America. All labours were exported to America to work on plantations. It highlights the battle of Koregaon between the British Army and Last Maratha Peshwa Bajirao and the treaty of Vasai. Sharankumar Limbale describes the worst and most pathetic condition of untouchable soldiers in the British Army. "Carrying the war casualties of war, carrying the wooden log, carrying consignment from water bodies. Sit beside the horse to hold him. Do we call it soldier? They always kept away the untouchables from weapons and ammunitions."<sup>15</sup> John Oliver Killens also mentioned the similar pathetic condition of black soldiers in his novel 'Then We Heard the Thunder', America recruited black soldiers in the Army of the United States of America. Black soldiers face discrimination and humiliation. Black soldiers were used as labour. They never get weapons to handle even during First World War. The

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<sup>10</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 34.

<sup>11</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 28.

<sup>12</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 15.

<sup>13</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Doctrine of Dalhousie  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/doctrine-of-lapse>

<sup>15</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "*Sanatan*". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 108.

atrocities and humiliation reached the hie during the Peshwai period. "Untouchables should not spit on the road so they tied mud clay in their neck. To wipe out the footprints of untouchables they tied broomsticks on the back of vest."<sup>16</sup> The Mahar fought against Peshwai in the Bheema Koregaon battle. The writer ironically mentioned the victory of Mahar- "Peshwa was terrified to see the weapons in the hands of untouchable Mahar. They saw an inauspicious and discourteous scene. Mahar was showing courage and bravery. Peshwai tied broomsticks on their vest and hung the mud clay on their neck. They never imagined that untouchables can act so bravely"<sup>17</sup> "Mahar fought with determination and courage. They inflict a crushing defeat on Peshwai. Defeated the Sanatani power. Defeated the existence of Sanatan."<sup>18</sup>

The writer mentioned many incidents from mythology. Sharankumar Limbale uses 'historical imagination'<sup>19</sup> and fictional stories to create a huge canvas of historical events. He uses Hindu mythologies and imagination to create fictional stories. "Cow had four children. They all loved her equally. One day she asked them a question. She wanted to know their feelings. She asked – 'How will you all honour me after my death?' Her three children replied – 'We will honour you like divine godlikeness.' Cow get satisfied with their answer. She asked the same question to her younger son. He replied- 'Mother I born from your womb; I will keep you in my womb.' All elder sons got angry and said - 'How will you keep her your stomach? 'Will you eat dead mother's flesh?'. ....They called younger brother Big (Maha) Hungry (Ahari). Ravenous. In this manner we become Mahar. Understood."<sup>20</sup>

Sharankumar Limbale was impressed by the Marathi Dalit writer's novel 'Amrutnak' and Sanjay Sonawane's novel 'Panipat' and decided to write 'Sanatan'. He used the imaginary storyline of 'Amrutnak' in 'Sanatan'. In Bahamani Sultanate Amrutnak serves Sultan Muhammad Shah. Once his queen was abducted by burglaries in the deep forest. Sultan's army searched for her everywhere. They didn't get succeed. At that time Sultan Muhammad Shah gave a task to Amrutnaak to bring his highness safe and sound. Amrutnak brought her back. People started gossiping about his loyalty. At that time Amrutnak proved his innocence by asking the Sultan to open a box which he gave him before the departure. The king was amused to see Amrutnak's manhood in the box. Satirically writer mentions that many Mahar shows their loyalties to their master to this extent. John Oliver also criticizes (Uncle Tom- the subservient) the loyalty of black people towards white masters in 'Mississippi'. A writer describes the tradition of the hereditary system of twelve trades, the Bartered system in India (Bara Balutedar). Mahar performs the role of the watchman (watchman).

During the period of the establishment of the East India Company, the British recruited Mahar in British Army. Once they got employment opportunities, they proved their bravery and loyalty to the British. They fought the Battle of Bheema Koregaon. The writer describes later how their recruitment was stopped in British Army under the influence of upper caste people. Upper caste people didn't like the recruitment of untouchables in the British Army; it was a big crack into the frame of traditional hierarchical social order. They couldn't bear the up-gradation of the lives of untouchables. Upper cast hierarchy always wants untouchables to serve them as das, servants.

The novel reveals the issues of religiously converted Mahar and other oppressed communities. During the Muslim sultanate, the Mahar people converted to Islam religion just to overcome their suffering and humiliation. They wanted to be treated like humans. Christian missionaries also played a significant role in the conversion of oppressed communities. "Muslim sultanate opens the door of religious conversion to untouchables.....religious conversion of untouchables would have brought down their traditional dominance was the real pain of upper caste people."<sup>21</sup> It was a

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<sup>16</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "Sanatan". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 103.

<sup>17</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "Sanatan". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 113.

<sup>18</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "Sanatan". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 113.

<sup>19</sup> David J. Staley. Historical Imagination.

<https://history.osu.edu/publications/historical-imagination#:~:text=In%20history%2C%20imagination%20means%20using,is%20considered%20%22too%20much%22.>

<sup>20</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "Sanatan". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 57.

<sup>21</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. "Sanatan". Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 57.



new hope for untouchables to get new identities and new life. After retirement, Philip comes back to visit his old and childhood friends. Many of his friends died, migrated, and a few converted to the Muslim religion. Philip met Veeru Dhangar, a shepherd. Veeru Shepherd asked Philip does he convert. Philip said yes. Veeru asked him does he got money after conversion. Philip said no, but he gets human treatment. The conversation is a satire on the unequal stratification of society and the writer reveals how these untouchable Mahar face humiliation and lives pathetically. They are so desperate to change their identity for better treatment.

“You are right we treat you like footwear. You all change your religion.

In the coming time that will definitely happen.

It’s good.....the dirt of Hindu religion will get vanished.”<sup>22</sup> Veeru Shepherd ironically mentioned that if all untouchables will convert to other religions, automatically Hindu religion will become pure. Once upon Philip encounters the burglar, while crossing the forest. They threaten him to hand over the treasure. When Philip mentioned that he is Mahar and possessed no treasure, their leader said- “Let him go, He is Mahar. His touch may pollute us!”<sup>23</sup>

In the Hindu religion inter caste marriage is strictly prohibited. People of one group of the community cannot marry with person of another group. Exogamy is forbidden in India. If anybody dares to marry in another group, the community punishes the couple and boycotts their whole family. In India honour killing. “The National Crime Record Bureau’s report for 2020 revealed that 25 cases of ‘Honour killing’ were reported in the preceding year. .... But Evidence, an NGO, revealed in November 2019 that as many as 195 known cases of honour killing were reported from Tamil Nadu alone in the past five years.”<sup>24</sup> Religion-converted people do not get a spouse for marriage either from the newly converted religious communities or from previous religious communities. Sharankumar Limbale ironically mentioned that during the British establishment, Christian missionaries motivate all lower-class people to get converted in Christianity. The majority of converted Dalits realized Christian missionaries trying to annihilate untouchability from the Hindu religion but failed to annihilate the Christian caste.

Sharankumar Limbale mentioned glimpses of Matadin ‘Bhangi’ and Zhalkari Bai in the unrest of Mangal Pandey, Queen of Jhansi. These people remained unnoticed in Indian history. Chapter five describes how the Queen of England gives assurance to upper caste authorities that the British will not interfere in the Indian social life and restricted the Military recruitment of Mahar and Muslims. At the beginning of the twentieth-century writer highlights the contribution of social reformers like Pt. Mahadev Govind Ranade, ShivramJanabaKambale (1903) and Chatrapati Shahu Maharaj.

In the last chapter Sharankumar Limbale goes across the ocean to narrate the lives of immigrant Dalit workers, who were exported to many British colonies in America to work as plantation workers in sugar or other plants, miming, road or train route construction etc. Writer describes the pathetic conditions of workers exported from all over the world including black. In foreign land also, depressed communities face exclusion from other workers.

## Conclusion:

The writer reveals the history of social and cultural exclusion and exploitation of the Mahar community, the real inhabitants of India. As far back as ancient times are concerned, Sanatan refers to carrying on from generation to generation. Mausmuti divided Indian society into four varnas. According to Hindu Mythology and beliefs, Brahmin is at the topmost position of the head of the human body, Kshatriya is in the second position of the chest, Vaishya held the third position and Shudra held the last position, feet of the human body. This unequal stratification of society brought

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<sup>22</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. “*Sanatan*”. Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 118

<sup>23</sup> Limbale, Sharankumar. “*Sanatan*”. Dilipraj Publication. Pune. 2018. ISBN-978-93-84171-03-2. P. 118.

<sup>24</sup> Love in Crosshair: Honour killings still continue in India  
<https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/india-news-love-in-the-crosshairs-honour-killings-still-continue-in-india/305349>

the fatal destiny to all Shudras. They are being treated as inferior, inauspicious, inhuman and untouchables for thousands of centuries. "Being excluded from social relations can lead to other deprivation as well, thereby further limiting our living opportunities. For example, being excluded from the opportunity to be employed or to receive credit may lead to economic impoverishment that may, in turn, lead to other deprivations (such as undernourishment or homelessness). Social exclusion can thus, be constitutively a part of capability deprivation as well as instrumentally a cause of diverse capability failures."<sup>25</sup> As a result of unemployment, people may suffer from poverty, psychological harm (damaged self-esteem, a sense of belonging, a sense of meaning in their existence), depression, aggression, melancholy, and moral loss. The writer penned down the story of the suffering of this exploited and excluded Mahar community from the Bahamani Sultanate till the establishment of the British Empire. 'Sanatan' is a social satire by Sharankumar Limbale on the unequal stratification of society that his works examine. It is a social documentation of the lives of untouchable communities who are socially excluded. The social exclusion of Mahar and other communities results in multiple dimensions of deprivation, including emotional deprivation, financial deprivation, political deprivation, health deprivation, educational deprivation, capability deprivation, and mental deprivation. The author uses reality and imagination to show the suffering of depressed communities. According to Sanatan, the entire community lived a humiliating life for centuries and accepted it as their fate. This is a period prior to their conversion. For centuries, these historically marginalized communities lived in isolation from society, but now they are attempting to search for their identity. Gene Edward Veith Jr. wrote in 'Post Modern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture (Volume 15) that postmodern writers play a significant role in bringing the marginalized to the centre. "by rewriting history in favor of those who have been excluded from power...women, homosexuals. Blacks, Native Americans, and other Victims of oppression"<sup>26</sup> It is the voice of the broken. For centuries, Shudras have been denied employment and education due to an unequal stratification of the Varna system. There was a strict policy that all employment and educational opportunities were to be allocated to the upper Varnas. By excavating the Dalit community's past, bringing their consciousness to the surface and sensitizing the whole world to their sufferings and humiliations, Sanatan is an attempt by the author to make the reader aware of the Dalit community's present.

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<sup>26</sup> Veith Jr, Gene Edward. "*Post Modern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*" (Volume 15). Ed. Marvin Olasky. February 1994.