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## Destitutionalised Reading of Gender and Caste in Baburao Bagul's Short Stories

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### Abstract

In this research paper, I analyze the effects of institutionalised ways of reading 'gender' and 'caste' in Marathi literature with reference to Baburao Bagul, one of the important Dalit writers, short stories with the help of some notions and arguments from Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks, Jacques Derrida's essay "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences", Aniket Jaaware's essay "Destitute Literature" and the book Practicing Caste: On Touching and Not Touching. Baburao Bagul's short stories re-validated the established institutionalized reading practices of gender and caste in literature set by the Marathi writers and critics, mostly upper-caste, before the 1960s. However, other Dalit writers did not venture to re-validate the representation of gender and caste in literature. Before the concept of 'Destitute Literature' was propounded by Aniket Jaaware, most of the reading/analysis of Marathi Dalit literature followed institutionalized ways of consumption of literature. The dominant practices of reading literature in academia as well as out of it did not spare even the scholars who claimed to be different from the hegemony. The descriptions and analysis of gender and caste were mostly on the grounds of identity politics. For example, all the essays in the Marathi book *Samagra Lekhak: Baburao Bagul* (Complete Writer: Baburao Bagul) edited by Dr. Krushna Kirwale offer the institutionalized readings of Bagul's stories, their form, content, and the characters. I attempt to critique such earlier writings and criticism written on Baburao Bagul's stories and re-read the stories in destitutionalised way.

**Keywords:** Destitution, Gender, Caste, Baburao Bagul, Antonio Gramsci, Jacques Derrida.