



Department of English  
Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai – 600 034



cordially invites you to  
**Thiru. S.X. Swamikannu Endowment Lecture**  
by

**Dr Jayadeep Sarangi**  
**Writer, Translator & Principal**  
**New Alipore College**  
**Kolkata, West Bengal**



on  
**Towards Dalit Aesthetics:**  
**Texts, Contexts and Language**

***Date: April 05, 2022***

***Time: 9.30 AM***

***Venue: L.S Hall, Loyola College***

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**Head, Department of English**  
**Loyola College, Chennai – 60034**

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***"To tell the truth is revolutionary."***

***- Antonio Gramsci***



## LECTURE NOTE

Dalit aesthetics is built upon three major precepts – the artist, the artistic creation and the reader. Dalit writers are in quest of human dignity. They write with a vision and a cause. Dalit literature stands for humanitarianism, linguistic directness and plurality; it is a literary movement for social change; and Dalit panthers are optimistic of social reforms. The artistic creation binds the artist and the reader. The artist pours out his experience and inspiration in his artistic creation. Dalit aesthetics cannot fully rely on pleasure giving beauty and taste. Dalit literature calls for liberation and freedom. The fact that it shouts out loud for peace and equality makes it a revolutionary literature. The paradigm of measuring a work of art should not be only based on pleasure giving sensation but arousing a sense of social consciousness can have its own aesthetic value. Here is a translation of Kalyani Thakur Charal's poem from Chandalinir Kavita.

My grandfather  
was not allowed to enter the boundaries of the school  
My father with extreme difficulty learnt to write his name  
on palm leaves with ink made of ash powder  
My mother carried dung with her left hand  
Grandfather had to bring the offerings for durgapuja  
You have certainly not understood  
The spot on which she stood  
with her dung-filled left hand  
had to be covered  
Oh! Compared to the touch of the Dalit's feet, the faeces of a cow  
is holier  
My colleagues in the office  
call me charal, chamad, dom  
I have to listen to these insults every day  
That these gentlemen too belong to different castes  
my colleagues have somehow  
forgotten  
Even then I have to remember that  
in Bengal there is no such thing as a 'Dalit'  
Even if Dalits exist everywhere else in the world, here there are none  
Everywhere in India there may be castes  
But here there are none  
I am gagged  
and taught to say – we  
are all one, there is no divide here  
After one generation is provided jobs  
they deliberately take away the reservations  
They smother our throats and say – if in non-government jobs  
you ask for reservations then we will make you forget  
your fathers' names  
Say that you no longer require it that you  
have everything you need  
(translated from Bangla by Angana Chakraborty)

