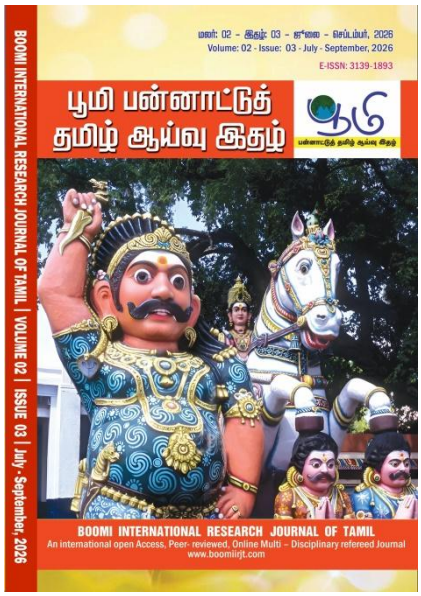
The Burden of Caste Society's Waste and the Marginalised Human: A Dalit Philosophical Study Centred on the Short Stories "Annaiya" and "Ragasiyathil Paayum Nathi"

சாதியச் சமூகத்தின் கழிவுச்சுமையும் விளிம்புநிலை மனிதர்களும்: அன்னையா மற்றும் ரகசியத்தில் பாயும் நதி சிறுகதைகளை மையமிட்ட தலித்திய மெய்யியல் ஆய்வு



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நெறியாளர், இணைப்பேராசிரியர் மற்றும் கல்லூரி முதல்வர், டாக்டர் புரட்சித்தலைவர் எம்.ஜி.ஆர். அரசு கலை மற்றும் அறிவியல் கல்லூரி, செல்லூர், குடவாசல், திருவாரூர் - 613705.

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Abstract

Centring on Athavan Theetchanya's short stories "Annaiya" and "Ragasiyathil Paayum Nathi" (the River that flows Secretly), this paper examines, through a Dalit philosophical lens, the waste-handling labour that caste society imposes on Dalit bodies, along with the resultant social ostracism, alcoholism, and denial of education. "Annaiya" reveals how mortuary labour, ghetto life, and caste occupations continuing from generation to generation construct the Dalit body as both waste and instrument, while "Ragasiyathil Paayum Nathi" foregrounds the fearlessness, ecological ethics, compassion, and spirit of resistance that a Dalit man displays against caste malice amid poverty and natural disaster. Reading the two stories together, the study establishes that although caste society seeks to mark the Dalit body merely as a sign of impurity, the same bodies transcend pain, fear, and poverty to enact courage and ethical conduct. In doing so, this study shows, these short stories accomplish the twin tasks of Dalit literature: documenting oppression and generating resistance.

Keywords

Dalit Philosophy, Caste Oppression, Mortuary Labour, Spatial Segregation, Ecological Ethics, Dalit Resistance.

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