

la crème of academics. Dalits should take the moral lead to doing theory in the country akin to a “literature that would be revolutionary, didactic and doctrinaire”(Rai, 2009, p. 40)

What is significant about Guru's essay is one as Satya claims that Guru reexamines the relationship between social theory and Dalit experience for the first time, places it in the realm of the social sciences in India. Further, he states that Guru's view has serious implications for the existing theoretical frameworks of Indian social sciences (largely liberal and Marxist) and for a new project of Dalit theory that is universal and emancipatory, though Sarukkai does not acknowledge these larger implications(Satyanarayana, 2013, p. 400). He quotes Guru: “Experience needs to be treated as the initial condition and theory as the essential condition for producing unified knowledge” in order to construct an alternative theory(Guru, 2012, p. 123).

The essay as Satyanarayana claims fails to focus on the critical debates on experience by the feminist and Dalit activists in the 1980s and 1990s. It does not offer a critique on the reification of experience as positivist evidence, and does not debate the view that experience is nothing but a socially constructed discourse of language. Consequently, the essay has come in for criticism for uncritically celebrating experience. “Rajan Gurukkal, for instance, has said that Dalit experience is nothing but an experiential ontology and therefore cannot substitute for theory”(Satyanarayana, 2013, p. 400). What is to be insisted upon is that one cannot relegate the importance of objective criticism from outsiders and subjective criticism from insiders: it should be a marriage of both. Even Savarna critics assert that Dalit literature should be critiqued strictly eschewing recourse to the reverential or sympathetic purpose of the same just because it has been created by Dalits. It should be based on literary criteria that entails objectivity to an extent(Limbale, 2004, p. 103). Sarukkai does not take issue with Guru on his view that only Dalits have a moral right to theorize their experience. Rather, his point appears to be that theory from the Dalit point of view cannot exhaust all possible theoretical positions.(Satyanarayana, 2013, p. 400). One cannot downgrade claims to objective criticism. This can be illustrated with an example. Workers in call centres normally portray themselves as the victims of overtime and workload. The Infosys Chief Narayan Murthy recently pointed out that there were no time constraints on the employees beyond their scheduled time. In fact, they chose to stay back due to free facilities as net access, air-conditioning and other perks, and thereby minimize their personal expenditure. Another criticism frequently made against objective criticism is that it may lead to the reinforcement of stereotypes. Nevertheless, collective unconsciousness or collective suffering may also give way to such stereotypes. Hillis Miller points out in “The Critic as a Host,” the dangers of ascribing a univocal meaning to a text. The critic cannot be seen as a parasite in the conventional sense. The prefix 'para' in parasite signifies both proximity and distance. Hence, both kinds of criticism hold value, of an insider as