

प्राक्का या घाँ (Anna Bhau Sathe, (Odia Translation, Sahitya Akademi, 2020) by Dr Bajrang Sukhdeo Korde, Translator (Odia): **ଢ଼ୁଣା ଖାଣ୍ଡେ** (Sweta Mohanty), Publisher: **ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଏକାଡେମୀ** (Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi), Year: 2020, ISBN: 978-93-89778-07-6; Price: Rs. 50/-.

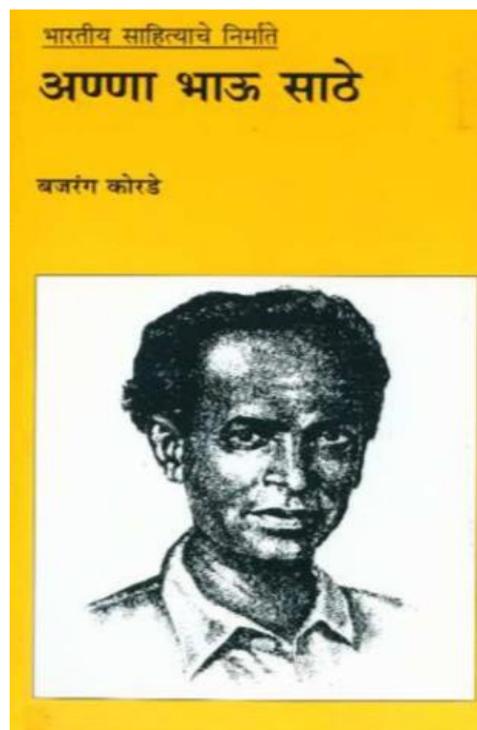
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Bajrang Sukhdeo Korde's monograph on Anna Bhau Sathe, now available to Odia readers through Sweta Mohanty's translation published by Sahitya Akademi (2020), provides a concise yet meaningful introduction to one of the most influential voices in Marathi Dalit literature and cultural movements. Although short, the book plays an important cultural role. It introduces Sathe's literary and political impact to a new linguistic audience and expands the reach of a writer whose work is vital to both public life and literary history.

Translation As Cultural Mediation

The prefatory materials, including the translator's note, present translation as a form of cultural mediation rather than just a technical task. In a multilingual context like India, where many canonical and subaltern writers circulate unevenly among languages, such a project is more than incidental. It is a deliberate intervention in the politics of readership. The book portrays Sathe not only as a skilled author but also as a representative consciousness shaped by the lived realities of labouring communities, hunger, migration, caste humiliation, and the daily discipline of survival.

For Odia readers, this portrait no longer feels geographically distant. The social textures described here, including poverty, exclusion, street speech, and the dignity of work, resonate with similar histories closer to home. Therefore, the translation serves as more than just a bibliographic addition. It becomes an ethical and intellectual encounter that encourages the reader to see how literary cultures communicate across regions through shared structures of marginality and resistance.



Structure and Scope

A key strength of Dr. Bajrang Sukhdeo Korade's study is its well-organised structure. The book moves from a general introduction to a detailed biographical account, then to a genre-based mapping of Sathe's work.

The arrangement makes the text accessible to first-time readers while maintaining its serious tone. In summary, the book offers:

3. Supporting tools like a glossary (ଗୁଣ୍ଡ) and bibliography (M) improve the book's usefulness for students and general readers.

Including a glossary is especially helpful. It shows awareness of linguistic and cultural details, recognising that Sathe's world is influenced by community references and political terms that may require careful explanation for new readers.

Sathe As Writer of the Public Sphere

Prof. Korde's treatment of Anna Bhau Sathe avoids romanticisation. Instead, it depicts him as a writer influenced by history, whose creativity is connected to social struggle. The biographical sections clearly demonstrate that Sathe's literary life is closely tied to the material realities that shaped it. Throughout the monograph, Sathe appears less like a solitary "great author" and more as a reflection of a collective condition that finds language, rhythm, and form. One of the most compelling features of the book is its focus on Sathe's multi-genre creativity. Readers who mainly know Sathe as a novelist or a Dalit icon are reminded that his work also significantly belongs to performance traditions and popular forms. The section on folk theatre, drama, and short plays highlights how his imagination travels through spoken and performative forms, art intended for public gatherings and everyday audiences as much as literary institutions. The discussion of poetry, with its genre-specific listing, similarly suggests Sathe's mastery of a song-like power, in which language is meant to mobilise and bear witness rather than decorate.

The Odia Translation

Sweta Mohanty's translation is characterised by clarity and restraint. The prose remains accessible, the tone stays consistent, and the translator avoids prioritising stylistic flair over clear communication. This approach is suitable for a monograph aimed at introducing a major public writer. The translation keeps Sathe at the forefront while allowing Odia readers to engage with the book without feeling overwhelmed by density or rhetorical excess.

Similarly, the translation does not reduce Sathe to a generic symbol of literary greatness. By preserving the documentary seriousness of the narrative and anchoring the discussion in social realities, the Odia text maintains Sathe's ideological sharpness and his ethical emphasis on human dignity.

What could have been added?

Considering the brevity of the monograph, some readers might desire a few extra features. Including short translated excerpts from Sathe's key works could have made his voice more immediate within the Odia context. A brief chronology might have allowed for quick reference, especially for classroom use. Slightly expanding the contextual note to connect Sathe to broader histories of Dalit literature and working-class movements would also aid readers new to this area. These suggestions are best viewed as extensions of the book's ideas rather than flaws.

Conclusion

As an Odia translation, ଅନାଭାଉ ସାଥେ (Anna Bhau Sathe) provides a valuable and accessible introduction to an author whose work is deeply connected to issues of labour, caste, and cultural identity. For students and teachers of modern Indian literature, Dalit studies, translation studies, and cultural politics, this volume serves as a reliable starting point. For general readers, it offers a thoughtful and engaging overview of Sathe's public awareness.

Most importantly, the book demonstrates what it means for literature to travel responsibly across languages. It introduces a Marathi life and literary heritage to the Odia reading community without spectacle, and with a seriousness that honours the world from which Anna Bhau Sathe wrote. In that sense, the translation opens a quiet yet meaningful door, enabling shared recognition across regions and drawing attention back to voices that history has too often tried to silence.