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Empathy vs. Authenticity in Poetry: A Comparative Study of Voices for the Marginalised

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Abstract:

This paper looks at how poets from different backgrounds write about the struggles of marginalised communities. Poets who experience pain and oppression firsthand can express their suffering in an authentic way because it comes from their own lives. Although they might attempt to comprehend the suffering, poets who are not directly involved can only demonstrate empathy. As a result, there is a chance that the actual experience of suffering will be misinterpreted or inaccurately depicted. By contrasting the works of poets who write from personal experience, such as Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Tony Harrison, and Namdeo Dhasal, with those of poets who write from a more privileged position, such as William Blake, Elizabeth Barret Browning, Mathew Arnold, Rudyard Kipling, W.H. Auden, and Stephen Spender, this study investigates how social background influences how poets represent marginalised voices and the difficulties that accompany it.

Keywords: Empathy, authenticity, marginalised voices, privileged poets, misrepresentation, ethical responsibility, poetic expression.

Introduction

Poetry is a medium through which people can express their feelings and experiences. It encourages those who feel ignored and whose voices were unheard. Poetry is a medium for people from marginalised groups, such as those who face poverty and unfair treatment in the society to express their struggles. Poets have historically used poetry to make these issues more relatable and

understandable to others. When wealthy poets write about oppressed people, nevertheless, some problems are raised. Would it be feasible for someone who has never gone through those struggles to really understand them? Should privileged poets write about things they haven't experienced? Inaccurate retelling of these stories could lead to misunderstandings or portrayal of them as less significant than they are. It gets increasingly harder when wealthy poets, in spite of their best attempts. It is possible that the difficulties faced by marginalised individuals will be romanticized or ignored if their lives are not presented authentically. When privileged poets try to write about the lives of people who experience socioeconomic deprivation, the matter becomes even more complex. Even with the best of intentions, there is a fine line between sharing someone else's hardships and using their tale for artistic purposes. Poets must use caution to avoid misrepresenting the experiences of marginalised communities because misrepresentation is always a possibility.

By contrasting the poetry of poets from privileged and marginalised backgrounds, this essay will examine how each group's poetry demonstrates authenticity—the sincere portrayal of real experiences—and empathy—the capacity to comprehend and experience another person's emotions. We hope that this research will help us better comprehend the delicate balance that poets have to maintain when writing about the lives of other people. This study aims not only to highlight the difficulties in presenting marginalised voices, but also to take into account the wider effects that these representations have on how society perceives these populations. Poets must be aware of the moral obligation that comes with narrating another person's story when they tackle these topics. By understanding how poets handle themes like empathy and authenticity, we can gain valuable insights into the moral guidelines that should guide artists as they engage with stories outside their own experiences.

Methodology

This research takes a comparative literary analysis method, concentrating on the thematic, stylistic, and ethical characteristics of selected poems. The analysis focuses on poets from underprivileged populations as well as privileged writers. Selected poems are evaluated based on their portrayal of social justice, class struggle, and the representation of marginalised voices. The study focuses on the language and tone used by these poets to determine the level of empathy or sincerity portrayed in their work, ultimately revealing the ethical consequences of their portrayals.

Comparative Analysis:

1. Authenticity in the Works of Marginalised Poets

Poets from underrepresented backgrounds contribute vital viewpoints based on their real-life experiences, making their work feel genuine and impactful. Their profound grasp of their own problems and triumphs enables them to communicate them with real honesty. This genuineness not only draws attention to their personal and shared difficulties, but it also challenges mainstream notions, allowing readers to acquire empathy and a greater understanding for their tenacity.

1.1 Paul Lawrence Dunbar

Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poetry is a true depiction of his experiences as a Black man in America. He captures African Americans' struggles, culture, and identity with tremendous honesty. Dunbar's familial experience, as a former slave, had a significant influence on his writing. His mother was born into slavery in Maryland, while his father fled slavery in Kentucky during the Civil War. Dunbar was particularly conscious of the struggles African Americans faced since he grew up in a household that experienced the terrible realities of racism and oppression. His viewpoint was influenced by these early encounters, which inspired him to write about the difficulties of African American existence. Dunbar truly depicts these experiences through the use of vernacular, conventional poetic forms, and striking imagery. He demonstrates his dedication to providing marginalised people with a voice by delving into their innermost thoughts and feelings in poems like *We Wear the Mask* and *Sympathy*.

Dunbar faced a lot of challenges because of racism and discrimination throughout his life. He struggled with both obvious racism and more subtle forms of being excluded. This suffering helped him understand the emotional struggles of his community. His poetry expresses the hurt, strength, and hope that were part of the African American experience during difficult times. In his poem *We Wear the Mask*, for example, Dunbar talks about how African Americans had to hide their true feelings to fit into a society that treated them unfairly. The poem shows the emotional burden of pretending to be something you're not, which reflects Dunbar's own awareness of how people had to put on a front in their daily lives. In "Sympathy," Paul Laurence Dunbar shows the pain and desire for freedom of African Americans who are trapped by society. He uses strong images to show the strength and determination of people fighting for a better life. The image of a bird in a

cage stands for the struggles of many people who are silenced. Dunbar gives a voice to these people, sharing their struggles and their hope. His poem still inspires people today, reminding them to keep fighting for justice, freedom, and equality.

1.2. Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes is famous for writing about the lives of African Americans. He used his own experiences to write poems that are real and true. Hughes wrote about the problems, happiness, and culture of Black people in America. His poems show what it was like to be Black in America, not just from stories, but from his own life. Hughes also used Black music, like jazz and blues, in his poems to show how rich Black culture is. In his poem *The Weary Blues*, he talks about the feeling of a blues song, showing how important music is in Black life. Hughes didn't just show the problems of Black people; he also showed their strength. In his poem *I, Too*, he says that Black people deserve a place in society and should not be treated unfairly. He wanted to make Black people feel proud and show that they are important in America.

Hughes's poems talk about big problems like racism, inequality, and struggles between rich and poor people. In *Let America Be America Again*, he shows how the American Dream is not for everyone, especially people who are treated badly because of their race or class. He writes from his own life, so his message feels real and honest. He is determined to make people see the unfair treatment his community faces. Hughes also listens to many different voices, like the voices of poor people and women. His poems share their hopes and struggles, showing that their problems are connected. This makes his work richer and shows how different groups of people experience similar struggles. Hughes uses a unique style that connects to the culture he writes about. He uses African American speech, storytelling, and music in his poems, which makes them feel real to the community. So, it's not just that Hughes feels sorry for people, but that his own life and commitment to his community make him a true voice for marginalised people. His work continues to inspire conversations about race, identity, and fairness today, proving how important it is to hear the voices of real people in literature.

1.3. Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou's poetry authentically represent the life of underprivileged because it comes from her own life and the feelings she shares. In her poems and books, she tells her story openly, including the hard things she went through, like trauma, racism, and the struggles of being a Black woman in America. By talking about her pain, she helps readers connect with her, especially those who might have gone through similar challenges. This honesty makes readers feel understood and less alone. Through her writing, Angelou gives a voice to those who are often ignored, showing how art can help heal. Her voice is special because it speaks directly to people's hearts. Angelou writes in a way that is strong but also easy to understand, making her emotions clear and relatable. She uses repetition, rhythm, and vivid images to make her poems stand out. In "*Still I Rise*," for example, she shows both confidence and vulnerability, showing how she deals with tough situations. This mix of strength and softness helps readers see themselves in her words and gives them hope for their own challenges. Her poems inspire people to rise above their problems, no matter how hard life gets. Angelou also talks about strength, empowerment, and never giving up. She doesn't just talk about pain, but also about the power to overcome it. In "*Still I Rise*," she shows her strength and refuses to let others bring her down. Her words celebrate survival and self-worth, turning struggle into victory. This message of never giving up, especially in the face of hardship, inspires people from all walks of life and gives them hope for their own lives. Also, Angelou's poetry becomes even more powerful because she connects her own experiences to bigger social and cultural issues. She talks about race, discrimination, and fighting for justice, based on what she faced as a Black woman. Her background makes her poetry real, showing that her struggles are part of a larger fight for fairness. By sharing her culture and standing up for the oppressed, Angelou invites readers to think about their own place in society and encourages them to fight for what is right.

In short, Maya Angelou's poetry in representation of underprivileged is quite authentic because it comes from her life, her pain, her strength, and her identity. She uses her powerful voice to make readers feel understood and empowered. Her ability to express difficult emotions in a clear and beautiful way continues to inspire and uplift many. Through her poetry, Angelou gives a voice to the voiceless and reminds us all of the power of hope, strength, and community.

1.4. Tony Harrison

Tony Harrison's poetry is famous for showing the lives of working-class people. He writes about his own experiences growing up in a working-class family in Leeds, which makes his poetry feel real and easy to understand. One of his best-known poems, *V*, talks about the struggles of working-class people, like losing loved ones and facing social problems. In this poem, Harrison uses both formal and simple language to show the difference between social classes. He talks about how hard it was for his parents to make money, making a strong point about the unfairness between classes. In *The School of Eloquence*, Harrison criticizes schools and universities, saying they often ignore or look down on working-class voices. He uses easy language to connect with people from poorer backgrounds, making his writing feel honest and down-to-earth. In *Long Distance*, he talks about the strong bond between a father and son after the mother dies. This poem shows real emotions and the everyday struggles of working-class life.

Overall, Tony Harrison's poetry gives a voice to the working class. His honest feelings, use of simple language, and focus on social issues make his work important when talking about class and identity. Through poems like *V*, *The School of Eloquence*, and *Long Distance*, he tells his own story while also speaking up for the struggles of marginalised communities.

1.5. Namdeo Dhasal

Namdeo Dhasal was born on February 15, 1949, in a small village near Pune, Maharashtra, called Pur. He grew up in a poor Dalit family and faced many difficulties because of caste discrimination. His family later moved to Mumbai, where they lived in Golpitha, a rough area known for being a red-light district. Living in this tough environment greatly influenced Dhasal's writing. In Mumbai, Dhasal saw how hard life was for poor people living in the slums. Despite the challenges, he decided to educate himself by reading books. He also joined the Dalit Panther movement, which worked to fight against the unfair treatment of Dalits. Dhasal became a well-known voice for Dalits and used his poems to share their struggles. His famous poetry collection, *Golpitha*, talks about life in the slums. The poems show the difficult reality of poverty and do not try to make it look better than it is. Dhasal's poems speak about his own life and the lives of many other Dalits who suffer from caste discrimination. Dhasal's poems are known for being very honest and powerful. He used his writing to talk about the pain and anger of Dalits and their wish for a better life. His work gave

a voice to people who were often ignored by society. Through his writing, Dhasal helped challenge the unfair caste system in India.

2. Empathy for the marginalised in the Works of Privileged Poets

Poets from privileged backgrounds often try to show empathy and criticise social injustices in their poems, even though they haven't lived through the struggles of marginalised communities. However, because they are not directly connected to these experiences, their portrayals can sometimes feel less real or incomplete. Despite their good intentions, their depictions can sometimes come across as idealised, shallow, or even patronising, showing how hard it is to truly understand and express the struggles of marginalised people without experiencing them firsthand.

2.1. William Blake

William Blake's writing often reflects what he saw around him, rather than what he personally experienced. For example, in his poem *The Chimney Sweeper*, Blake writes about the hard lives of child laborers working as chimney sweeps. However, Blake was not a chimney sweeper himself, nor was he part of the marginalised groups he writes about. Instead, he learned about their struggles by observing them and imagining their lives. In *The Chimney Sweeper*, Blake shows great empathy for the children and their suffering, making us feel their pain. He points out how unfair and cruel their situation was. Still, Blake's understanding of their lives isn't from personal experience; he's an outsider looking in.

Though Blake's poems raise awareness about the struggles of marginalised people, they may not fully capture the true depth of these experiences. For example, Blake might not have shown all the family problems, social pressures, or long-lasting damage caused by their work. Since he didn't live in this world, his portrayal might simplify or even misrepresent their struggles. Even though Blake wanted to raise awareness and help, being an outsider brings up important questions. One question is whether a poet can truly understand what people from a different background go through. While empathy is important in art, it's also important for poets to be responsible when writing about others' lives. A poet's work can be moving, but it might not fully understand what it's like to live those experiences.

2.1. Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Elizabeth Barrett Browning was a famous Victorian poet who cared deeply about social issues, especially child labor and women's rights. Her poetry shows great sympathy for people who are suffering, using her writing to speak out about their struggles. One of her most well-known poems, *The Cry of the Children*, talks about the pain of children working in harsh conditions during the Industrial Revolution. The poem describes their suffering with powerful words and strong images, making readers feel their pain. Browning repeats certain phrases and speaks directly to the reader, urging society to see the children's suffering and do something to help. This shows her empathy and her call for change.

In another poem, *The Lady's Yes*, Browning writes about women's rights and the fight for independence. She challenges the traditional roles that society gave women and encourages them to speak up for themselves. This poem also reflects her empathy, showing her support for women's struggles in a world that often silences them. Browning's work is a call to listen to and care for the voices of those who are marginalized.

2.3. Matthew Arnold

Matthew Arnold was a notable Victorian poet who wrote on social issues. He was particularly interested in persons who were disadvantaged or different from the norm. Even though Arnold felt sad for these people, others believe he didn't truly grasp their situation because he hailed from a wealthy background. In his poem *The Scholar Gypsy*, Arnold portrays the narrative of a scholar who abandons his studies to live with Gypsies, a group of people who are frequently overlooked. Arnold believes that Gypsies live freely and authentically. The poem demonstrates that even people on the margins of society have meaningful stories to share. In *The Scholar Gypsy*, Arnold uses words and images to show that the scholar wants a deeper connection to life, which he thinks he can find with the Gypsies. This shows Arnold cares about people who are ignored by society, suggesting they have important knowledge. The poem asks readers to appreciate different perspectives and shows that marginalised people have wisdom. However, Arnold's understanding might not be fully accurate because he comes from a rich, educated background and may not truly know the life of the Gypsies. His idealised view of their lives makes us wonder if he truly understands the struggles they face. While he admires their freedom and strength, this admiration can sometimes feel distant because he views their experiences from a privileged position. This

distance might stop him from fully grasping the details of their challenges and successes. The link between empathy and authenticity in Arnold's work brings up a bigger question: how do people from privileged backgrounds describe those who are less privileged? Even though he shows care for the Gypsies in *The Scholar Gypsy*, we need to remember that his perspective is shaped by his own life. The challenge for Arnold, and many writers from privileged backgrounds, is to really connect with and represent the lives of the people they write about.

Matthew Arnold's ideas about empathy and authenticity are still important today when we talk about fairness and giving everyone a voice. He tells writers and artists to think carefully about their role when telling the stories of people who are often ignored. This helps make sure that all voices are heard. In *The Scholar Gypsy*, Arnold shows how empathy and authenticity go together when we talk about people from different backgrounds. He shows kindness, but because he comes from a rich background, we might wonder if his story is truly honest. By mixing empathy with authenticity, Arnold asks us to think about how our own privilege can change the way we tell stories. His poetry reminds us to be fair and honest when representing others, helping support fairness and justice, and to always think about our own biases.

2.4. Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling, a British author and poet known for his writings about British imperialism, often depicted marginalised characters in his poems. However, his portrayal of these individuals is complex and controversial, considering his own privileged position within the colonial system he wrote about. In poems like *The White Man's Burden* and *Gunga Din*, Kipling tries to engage with marginalised groups, but his perspective shows contradictions rooted in imperialism and his own social privilege. *The White Man's Burden* (1899), one of Kipling's most famous poems, is often criticized for its condescending tone. Written during the American colonization of the Philippines, the poem urges Western countries to take on the responsibility of "civilizing" non-Western societies. The "burden" Kipling talks about is the supposed duty of white colonial powers to control and improve the lives of colonized people, who are depicted as inferior and needing help. While Kipling may have thought he was showing sympathy for the colonized, the poem reflects his imperialist beliefs. It portrays marginalised cultures with stereotypes and reinforces the superiority of colonizers, making his supposed empathy problematic. Instead of giving an authentic voice to

the oppressed, *The White Man's Burden* focuses on the colonizers' experience and responsibility, highlighting colonial ideology.

Kipling's poem *Gunga Din* (1890) tells the story of an Indian water-bearer who serves British soldiers in colonial India. Despite being treated poorly by the soldiers, Gunga Din risks his life to save them. At the end, the narrator says, "You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!" This moment seems to show respect and acknowledgment of Gunga Din's bravery and goodness. However, the poem still reveals the unequal relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Gunga Din is praised for his loyalty and sacrifice, suggesting that the colonized people must prove their value by serving their British rulers. Kipling's personal experiences growing up in colonial India and later living in Britain influenced his views. Although his time in India gave him some insight into the lives of colonized people, he still believed in the superiority of the British Empire. His depiction of Gunga Din in this poem, as well as his ideas in *The White Man's Burden*, reflect this belief in British power. Though Kipling attempts to show kindness and understanding toward the colonized people, he still sees them as being beneath British rule, needing to serve or be saved by the British. In the end, Kipling's portrayal of marginalised people, while sympathetic at times, still supports the idea that the colonised are there to serve the colonisers. Even in *The White Man's Burden*, where Kipling encourages Western countries to "take up the burden" of helping colonized people, the message ultimately centers on the idea of control and superiority. Kipling's poetry forces readers to think about the challenges of showing empathy when holding power over others. While he may have felt empathy for the people under British rule, his imperialist beliefs still shaped his portrayal of them. His work serves as a reminder of the risks involved in trying to show empathy from a position of privilege without fully understanding the systems of power that keep people marginalised.

2.4. W.H. Auden

W.H. Auden's poems highlight different problems in the world, like war and how people are treated unfairly. He seemed to care a lot about those who were suffering, especially people who had to leave their homes because of war. But because he came from a rich family, some people wonder if he really understood what it was like for those people. In *Refugee Blues*, Auden tells us about Jewish refugees who had to escape during World War II. He uses simple words and pictures

to show how lonely and scared they were. The line "You cannot eat your cake and have it too" explains how hard it was for these refugees to make choices, like leaving everything behind just to survive. When Auden talks about how bad it was for them, we can feel how sad and scared they must have been.

In *September 1, 1939*, Auden talks about the fear people felt just before World War II began. He tells us that people didn't know what was going to happen next, and they were scared. He helps us feel what it was like to be worried about what might come, and that fear made people realise how much war hurts everyone. Through his words, Auden makes us think about how war makes everyone suffer, even if we don't always see it. But Auden's life was different from the people he wrote about. He came from a wealthy family, went to a famous school, and didn't have to face the same struggles as the refugees. Some people think that because of this, he might not have fully understood what it was really like for the people he wrote about. Even though Auden cared, it's hard to know if he could really feel their pain the way they did.

When we read Auden's poems, we think about how writers like him can write about people who are suffering, but maybe don't always get it completely right. Auden's poems show us that even when we feel sorry for others, we might not always know exactly what they're going through. But still, he did his best to help us understand. In the end, Auden's poems help us think about how we can care for people who are suffering, but also remind us that we should listen to their own voices, too. Auden wanted to help us see how hard life was for people like the refugees, but he also shows us that it's important to understand and respect what others really feel.

2.5. Stephen Spender

Stephen Spender's poetry is really good at showing what life is like for poor and working-class people. He helps readers feel what these people are going through, making us care about their struggles. But because Spender grew up in a privileged family, some people wonder if he really understands their lives or if it's just how he imagines it. His poems make us think about how we share the stories of others and if we can truly understand and represent their lives correctly. He helps us empathise, but it also makes us question if he really knows what it's like. In poems like *An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum*, Spender shows he really understands how hard life

is for poor kids. He uses pictures with words that make us feel their pain and how tough things are for them. Spender's words make us feel really sorry for the kids who are having a tough time. Spender brings their stories to life with vivid images and emotional words, making readers feel their agony and suffering. His descriptions evoke a deep sense of empathy, highlighting the urgency of their predicament and the importance of societal awareness. Furthermore, Spender emphasises a moral obligation to advocate for people who are less fortunate, asking readers to consider their part in resolving the neglect that contributes to these communities' suffering. Spender is excellent at making us feel for others, but it's unclear whether his stories are based on true events. He was raised in a privileged home and attended Oxford, so he may not fully comprehend the problems of the poor people he writes about. As a result, it's difficult to determine whether his stories are authentic to their experiences. His upbringing provides him a new perspective, but it may not entirely explain what these people are going through. He sometimes appears to be unaware of their daily life.

The relationship between empathy and authenticity in Spender's work is part of a larger discussion regarding representation in literature. While his poetry effectively evokes compassion, it also asks readers to evaluate how persons from privileged backgrounds can appropriately represent marginalised voices. Spender highlights the significance of leveraging privilege to advocate for the less fortunate, while remaining cognisant of its limitations. By interacting with marginalised individuals' concerns, authors might strive for more authentic representations that acknowledge their intricacies. In other words, Stephen Spender's poetry emphasizes the critical link between empathy and authenticity in representing marginalised people, prompting us to consider the role of privilege in literature and the responsibilities that come with it.

3. The Intersection of Empathy and Authenticity: Poets Bridging the Divide

Some poets mix empathy and honesty by revealing personal experiences and recognizing the problems of oppressed communities. Their work bridges the gap between privilege and marginalization, bringing people from various backgrounds together. Poets such as Gwendolyn Brooks, Derek Walcott, Jayanta Mahapatra, and Alice Walker expertly represent these concepts in their work.

3.1. Gwendolyn Brooks

Gwendolyn Brooks Gwendolyn Brooks was born in Chicago at a time when many African Americans were migrating from rural areas of the South to northern towns in search of new opportunities. Growing up in a primarily Black area during this critical moment shaped her understanding of the issues that African Americans experience. Brooks' close relationship to urban Black life enabled her to accurately reflect their realities in her poetry. Brooks' famous poem *We Real Cool* employs everyday language and striking images to depict the lives of young Black people facing societal challenges. Her ability to accurately reflect the voices of her people stems from her thorough understanding of their lives. Brooks's work effectively bridges the divide between her own background and the struggles of marginalised communities, allowing readers to empathize with the lives and challenges faced by those she writes about.

3.2. Derek Walcott

Derek Walcott was born in Saint Lucia, a beautiful Caribbean island with a rich colonial history. His family had both African and European ancestry, giving him a distinct perspective on identity. Growing up in a place still affected by colonial rule, Walcott faced problems due to his ethnicity. Despite the fact that he had the benefit of a solid education that exposed him to European literature, he always felt connected to his Caribbean roots. *In A Far Cry from Africa*, Walcott discusses the issues brought by colonialism, as well as the perplexity he feels as a result of his connections to both colonists and colonized people. He grew up with roots on both sides, so he understands how difficult it is to discover your identity in a culture influenced by colonial past. His poetry expresses how he feels detached from his own culture and encourages readers to appreciate the hardships of people from other origins. His work explores both his personal identity and the hardships of many individuals.

3.3. Jayanta Mahapatra

Jayanta Mahapatra is a poet from Odisha, India. He grew up seeing poverty and caste discrimination. This made him aware of the struggles of marginalised people. Though he received some education and had some privilege, he still understood the social problems around him.

In his poem *Hunger*, Mahapatra tells the story of a fisherman who is so poor that he offers his daughter's body in exchange for food. This shows the pain of hunger and the cost of poverty.

Mahapatra feels for those who suffer. He understands India's social and political issues. His poems give a voice to people who are often ignored. Through his poetry, Mahapatra connects the privileged and the oppressed.

3.4. Alice Walker

Alice Walker grew up in the segregated South of the United States, where she faced the harsh realities of racism and poverty. As a Black woman, her personal experiences gave her a deep understanding of the oppression faced by marginalised groups, particularly Black women who often suffer due to both race and gender. Walker's involvement in the Civil Rights Movement further connected her to the struggles of marginalised communities. In her poem *Be Nobody's Darling*, Walker encourages people to embrace their uniqueness and resist societal pressures, especially those imposed on marginalised women. Her writing reflects her own life experiences and her commitment to social justice. By drawing on her own history and empathizing with others' experiences, Walker creates poetry that resonates on both personal and universal levels.

These poets each bring their unique backgrounds into their work, skillfully navigating the interplay between empathy and authenticity. Whether they draw from personal experiences or engage with the struggles of others, they successfully bridge the gap between privilege and marginalization. Through their powerful poetry, they create connections that resonate across social boundaries, inviting readers to reflect on their own experiences and the lives of those who face oppression. Their work not only highlights the struggles of marginalised communities but also fosters a deeper understanding of the human experience, emphasizing the importance of empathy and authenticity in art.

Ethical Responsibilities of Poets

When poets explore empathy and authenticity in their work, they must think carefully about their ethical responsibilities, especially if they come from privileged backgrounds. Poetry is a powerful way to share voices and experiences, so it's important for poets to be mindful of how they depict marginalised communities.

As poets write about social justice and the struggles faced by those who are often ignored, they need to recognize their own privilege. This means understanding that their life experiences might not fully reflect the realities of the people they want to represent. Acknowledging this helps them avoid misrepresenting others or reinforcing harmful stereotypes. To write ethically, poets should listen to the stories of marginalised communities and treat those experiences with respect. Instead of assuming they know what someone else is going through, they should seek to understand and accurately portray those realities. This may also mean collaborating with people from those communities, giving them the chance to share their own stories.

Additionally, poets should strive to be honest in their writing. They need to be willing to face their own biases and question how their backgrounds affect their perspectives. Writing about difficult truths, even when it's uncomfortable, is part of this honesty. In short, poets have a responsibility not just to create beautiful words but to promote social justice and respect the stories of others. By being aware of their privilege and aiming for authenticity, poets can help shed light on the experiences of marginalised individuals and encourage understanding among different audiences. This way, poetry becomes a powerful tool for advocacy and positive change.

Conclusion:

This research paper shows the important connection between empathy and authenticity in poetry that talks about marginalised people's struggles. Poets from marginalised groups, like Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Tony Harrison and Namdeo Dhasal who write from their own experiences with discrimination, poverty, and social exclusion. Their poetry feels real and powerful because it is based on personal pain, survival, and resilience. They can speak about hardships like caste discrimination, racism, and gender inequality in a way that makes readers feel the depth of those struggles. These poets don't just focus on suffering; they also highlight the strength and hope that marginalised communities show in their fight against oppression.

On the other hand, poets from privileged backgrounds, like William Blake, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mathew Arnold, W.H Auden and Stephen Spender, often write with empathy. They care about the suffering of others and try to show it in their poetry. However, because they

haven't personally lived through these struggles, their portrayals may not always be as deep or accurate. Their distance from the hardships they describe can sometimes lead to simplified or romanticized versions of what marginalised people go through. Even though empathy is important, it cannot always replace the authenticity that comes from first-hand experience. The study highlights the challenge for privileged poets: while they can feel for marginalised people, they may unintentionally misrepresent or overshadow their voices. To avoid this, poets must recognize their own positions of privilege and be mindful of how this affects their writing. It's essential for these poets to research, listen, and sometimes even collaborate with marginalised groups to ensure they're representing these voices truthfully and respectfully.

The paper concludes that the best poetry about marginalised experiences strikes a balance between empathy and authenticity. Empathy helps poets connect with the emotional pain of others, while authenticity ensures that their work reflects the true realities of marginalised people's lives. When these two elements are combined, the poetry can both move readers and raise awareness about social injustices in a meaningful way. Poets have a responsibility to handle these stories carefully, ensuring that their portrayals uplift and respect the voices of those who have been oppressed. Ultimately this research paper emphasizes that poetry is a powerful tool for change. Poets can help shape how society understands and cares about the struggles of marginalised communities. However, with that power comes a duty to portray these lives with accuracy and respect. As society becomes more aware of issues like representation and social justice, it's crucial for poets to reflect on their own biases and limitations. By doing so, they can create poetry that not only fosters empathy but also promotes genuine understanding.

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