

A STUDY OF CASTING LIGHT: WRITING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING ANTI-CASTE HISTORY IN MODERN INDIA

MD Saddam Hosain, Dr. Prabhakar Pandurang Wanarase

DESIGNATION- RESEARCH SCHOLAR SUNRISE UNIVERSITY ALWAR
DESIGNATION- PROFESSOR SUNRIE UNIVERSITY ALWAR

ABSTRACT

The historical narrative follows the challenges and victories of anti-caste movements, beginning with the adoption of the Constitution of India, which prohibited untouchability, and continuing on to the modern campaigns against discrimination based on caste. Caste biases continue to exist in India, despite the fact that legal measures and progressive policies have been implemented. This presents a substantial obstacle to India's goal of creating an equitable society. This abstract encourages a more in-depth investigation of the anti-caste fight within the historical context, taking into account both the progress that has been gained and the problems that continue to influence the social history of modern-day India.

KEYWORDS: Casting Light, Anti-Caste History, Modern India, anti-caste movements.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of omission and distortion in historical writing was covered in the preceding chapter. When we alter the past, how do we do it? Exclusion and distortion throughout history have prompted a thorough examination of anti-caste history. That is to say, the prior chapter examined the erasure and misrepresentation of anti-caste movements and history. In the preceding chapter, we looked at the mechanisms of exclusion and distortion in anticaste history. Examining anti-caste historical texts used in classrooms is the focus of this chapter. In light of this, we ask: how can schools contribute to the canonization of anti-caste narratives? In order to write anti-caste history, what strategies do schools employ? In this section, we will look at the lives of anti-caste intellectuals, authors, and social scientists that belonged to lower-caste backgrounds. I meant to ask how they are handling the caste issue. Additionally, this chapter is devoted to the ideas and deeds of academics and students from lower caste social backgrounds. The same question, for example, how are they handling the

caste issue? Furthermore, the study follows the actions of chairs and centers established to research social exclusion and inclusion, in the name of social reformers' supporters. What role do these institutions play in anti-caste discourses, and how are they researching anti-caste history?

Implication of Education and Inclusive Education

The key to turning an individual into a resource for the country is education. Consequently, those nations have advanced and prospered, making education accessible to their citizens. Unfortunately, due to the country's hierarchical caste system, only a tiny fraction of the population in India was able to get access to education, especially at the university level. But after independence, many administrations introduced programs to help strengthen the country.

Notably, they argued that democratization of education is crucial to the nation's development. Educational institutions have implemented special measures to transform disadvantaged individuals into assets for the country, including reservation, scholarships, fellowships, and other facilities.

The field of education is concerned with the socially structured and controlled transfer of historically significant knowledge from one generation to the next. Training within the framework of educational institutions is the primary means of obtaining an education. On the other hand, philosophers are more divided on the concept of education. According to Socrates, "to educate means to teach a human being to be a free man," which is one of the key points of education that this chapter explores. In a similar vein, this chapter explores the many ways in which education can impact people's lives: as a tool for personal and societal development, as a part of societal transformation, as a means by which experiences can be continually restructured, and as a duty of the state (Beniwal, 2018: 76). 'Without education one can lost wisdom, without wisdom one can lost moral, without moral one can lost development, without development one can lost wealth,' (Phule, 1883: 8), is a quote from Jyotiba Phule that explains the importance of education.

As a response to the welfare state crises in Europe, the concept of social inclusion emerged and has since shaped research on social disadvantage throughout the continent. In 1970,

France was the first country to use it in an effort to help the society's outcasts. Important areas where social exclusion may be prevalent on a broader scale are the realms of education, training, and employment. There is a feedback loop between these domains; for example, unemployment is a result of inadequate training and education. Therefore, being unemployed has nothing to do with living in poverty or not having enough money to buy tangible goods; rather, it has everything to do with missing out on opportunities to make connections and reach one's full potential. Vocational education has a dual goal, enhancing economic competitiveness and fostering social inclusion and cohesiveness, in addition to its individual advantages (Robo, 2014: 200).

Constitution of India and its Special Provisions for Educational Development of Weaker Sections

India is home to the world's second-most populous population and a complex social structure that presents constant challenges to the country's leadership in maintaining social harmony in the face of cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, and multidimensional caste diversity. Making sure everyone has a fair shot at finding work, while also distributing the government's resources and riches fairly. Another major obstacle has been the provision of equal educational opportunities for all inhabitants of India, regardless of their gender, religion, caste, creed, sexual orientation, etc. In response to these threats, governments instituted reservations to facilitate the efficient running of the nation. The Indian government used reservation as a policy measure to accommodate historically oppressed or historically backward social classes by providing them with seats in government jobs (Kota) or opening doors to educational institutions and assemblies, among other things. Constitution, Statutory Law, and Municipality Rules all identify certain castes and tribes as Minorities, Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST)—the latter three of which were designated as receiving reservations (Kharb, 2018: 138).

Affirmative action is widely used in India's educational institutions, just as it is in other nations. In the Hunter Commission, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule requested free and compulsory education for everyone and proportional reservation or representation in government employment in 1882. This was the beginning of affirmative action in India. Nevertheless, there have been several efforts to include historically marginalized groups into the

educational system since then. However, its constitutional implementation in 1950 and its active implementation after 1960 marked a turning point. It was largely because to the tireless work of SC/ST leaders, particularly Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who oversaw the Constitution Drafting Committee (David, 2016: 186).

One way that India's reservation system helps out marginalized communities is via positive discrimination, another name for it. Articles 15 (1) and 29 (2) of the Indian Constitution provide the basis for the country's reservation policy, which aims to empower economically and educationally disadvantaged groups of people by designating them as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Nevertheless, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration, economic inequality has been included into the fundamental principles of reservation. Caste or social/educational backwardness, rather than economic inequality, became the stable foundation of the quota system.

Prior to its extension to Other Backward Classes at the national level in 1993 in response to the recommendations and highlights of the 1991 Mandal Commission Report, reservation was thus only offered to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The quota system, which is now in use throughout the country, allocates 15% of seats to SC, 7.5% to ST, and 27% to OBC (David, 2016: 186). Some exceptions have been granted to the excluded society from time to time under the policy of special provision for employment and advancement from educational institutions. What this means is that the reserve was given possibilities in the areas of education, politics, and administration as a result of the unique provisions.

India is home to the world's second-most populous population and a complex social structure that presents constant challenges to the country's leadership in maintaining social harmony in the face of cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, and multidimensional caste diversity. Making sure everyone has a fair shot at finding work, while also distributing the government's resources and riches fairly. Another major obstacle has been the provision of equal educational opportunities for all inhabitants of India, regardless of their gender, religion, caste, creed, sexual orientation, etc. In response to these threats, governments instituted reservations to facilitate the efficient running of the nation. The Indian government used reservation as a policy measure to accommodate historically oppressed or historically backward social classes by providing them with seats in government jobs (Kota) or opening

doors to educational institutions and assemblies, among other things. Constitution, Statutory Law, and Municipality Rules all identify certain castes and tribes as Minorities, Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST)—the latter three of which were designated as receiving reservations (Kharb, 2018: 138).

Educational Institutions and Writing Anti-Caste History

When it comes to India's backward classes—the SCs and STs—and their educational opportunities, there are two main schemes that laid the groundwork for an inclusive system. Chairs named after notable figures, such as Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and other social reformers, were first established. It offers a correct answer to society's problems and has brought about a sea shift in the accepted conventions of perceiving such problems. Secondly, a number of research centers should be set up at academic institutions to examine social exclusion and inclusion. Campus social exclusion has been better understood, and initiatives like these are necessary to create a more welcoming environment where people from all walks of life can come together to address the severe discrimination and social inequalities that exist in Indian society. The following section discusses several initiatives that have been put in place to include underrepresented groups in educational institutions.

Pursuit of Anti-Caste History in Academic World

Scholars, authors, and philosophers from lower castes who oppose castes are searching for their own narratives, mythologies, interpretations, and histories. That is to say, they are making a statement about who they are, where they came from, and the problems they experience. The state did not honestly carry out its obligation when one looked at the implementation of the rights granted by the Indian Constitution to the disadvantaged or backward castes. But the state has stripped the rights of individuals from backward societies due to their battles. Even if they were successful in robbing him of his rights, they would still feel his weight. Members of oppressed groups sought to address their issues in the face of limited resources and legal protections. Which is to say, they cut down on food intake and increased their labor output. This is one way that members of India's historically oppressed castes are fighting for equality in the academy. How did they persevere in the face of overwhelming odds while battling the many challenges faced by Indian academics? Their thoughts, lectures, poems, and publications reveal such attempts? Put another way, how did

those who migrated from the Dalit Bahujan community to academia make caste the central issue? What was their take on the caste problem? Then, how can we end caste and what are the paths to its complete elimination?

How Egalitarian Are Social Sciences in India?, written by Gopal Guru in 2002, suggests that cultural hierarchy is the foundation upon which India's social science has been built. The first category includes social scientists who are actively seeking for empirical evidence for their claims, while the second category includes the more privileged scientists who are seen as intelligent theoretical commentators with strong reflecting capacities. According to this classification, the latter is better than the former. The result is a schism between the more theoretical Brahmins and the more pragmatic Shudras in India's social science community. Guru documents such facts from the anti-caste perspective, which was unquestioned a few years ago, and he also investigates the cultural hierarchy in knowledge formation. The idea of humiliation, as described in Guru's 2009 book *Humiliation: Claims and Context*, takes on many forms in different social contexts yet always persists. The premise of this book is that the social and cultural setting dictates the kind, degree, and severity of criminal behavior. In essays, ideas such as humiliation, hate, prejudice, debasement, and solitude are crucial to conveying message and meaning. Consequently, it is a major factor in the concretization of scorn, bigotry, and prejudice against lower caste individuals. Written in 2012, *The Cracked Mirror* explores the connection between theory and reality in the Indian social sciences via a discussion centred on untouchability and the experiences of Dalits. Sundar, while discussing the manifestation of suffering,

SOCIAL HISTORY OF CASTE IN MODERN INDIA: PRESERVATION AND INSTITUTIONALISATION OF ANTI-CASTE HISTORY

Both primary and secondary sources formed the basis of this chapter. Additionally, this chapter makes an effort to decipher the anti-caste past by examining historical documents in vernacular languages, Dalit memoirs, memorials, sculptures, pamphlets, folklore, folklore, folklore, folklore, folklore, diaries, and recollections. Additionally, it is grounded on research that was conducted in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The article delves into the significance of archiving literature that challenges caste systems. It makes an effort to delve

into the processes and methods of anti-caste history preservation and creation. The goals, origins, and development of anti-caste history are better comprehended.

This chapter is structured with four parts. Monuments, parks, memorials, gardens, sculptures, renaming institutions, policies and programs, etc., all have a role in the first segment, which asserts and preserves anti-caste heritage. In the second part, we'll look at how literary works like Dalit memoirs, pamphlets, periodicals, and journals have contributed to the canon of anticaste history. Buddhist mission songs in Bhojpuri and Birha patterns, as well as other cultural programs like Ambedkarite, demonstrate, explore, and articulate anti-caste history in the third half of this chapter. The empirical data analysis portion, which covers the oral history approach, describes and attempts to analyze primary data gathered from different districts of Uttar Pradesh in the fourth section. In this portion, we want to learn what prompted and motivated the respondents to join the social movement. The chapter also intends to address the question of how they see Indian mainstream history and historical literature. It goes on to provide a detailed explanation of how anti-caste history has been preserved via oral traditions. In an effort to rewrite the history of anti-caste movements, the Uttar Pradesh government, headed by chief minister Mayavati, has set up several memorials and commemorations to remember and honor anti-caste subaltern ideas and leaders. Examining them is necessary due of their importance.

- **Dalit Literature and Anti-Caste Movement**

The literary works of prominent Dalit authors in North India's Hindi professional press, including memoirs, short tales, and critical essays, have recently come to be acknowledged as a significant new literary trend. Dalit authors have been a significant obstacle to accurate portrayal of lower castes in Indian society throughout the cultural period. A new university in North India has begun to incorporate Hindi Dalit literature in its courses, and there have been many successful English translations of memoirs and short tales written by Hindi Dalits that have been published in recent years (Hunt, 2014: 1). In this literary work, Dalit authors contended that the prevailing cultural portrayal of Indian society exposes an especially upper-caste viewpoint masquerading as universal principles, a viewpoint that is in reality neither representative nor attainable.

- **Anti-Caste History Project and Demarginalisation**

In the Hindi belt, there has been a massive effort by intellectuals and Dalit groups to rewrite their own history. The Dalits are gaining demarginalization through these histories and new narratives, which is allowing them to integrate into modern Indian society, build self-confidence, enhance their present, and ensure a better future for their children. It is the Brahminical conceptions of history that have contributed to the cultural narratives that portray Dalits as social outcasts, banished to the margins of society because of their low birth and particular caste-based 'unclean' jobs, and this group is using its historical imagination to imagine a different past (Narayan, 2008: 169-70).

The multi-tiered DE marginalization of India's Dalits, as Badri Narayan has shown, persists until now. Using this specific form of the popular and widely disseminated manual, which the newly educated Dalit community has embraced, there is a drive towards DE marginalization via new narratives and the creation of what amounts to an alternative history and language. It is believed that the Dalits' existential need is the driving force behind the production of this alternate history via these new writings. The assertions contained in popular books about lower-caste heroes who battled against high-caste tyranny and injustice are being weaved into holy Brahminical works via it. Stories of local Dalit liberation warriors, which are now part of the demarginalization drive, have also become myths. The language is significantly distinct from standard Hindi since it makes use of local dialect syntax and vocabulary in addition to traditional proverbs, idioms, and symbols. As a result, many South Asian marginalized groups may be constructing the histories of their future via the creation of new literary works and new sources (Narayan, 2008: 169).

Books published by Dalits and about Dalits are distinct from those produced by trained historians. When compared to Dalit historical accounts published during the Maharashtra Dalit movement in the 1960s, they vary in both style and substance. The histories of the Shudra castes, as documented by empirical-analytical Marxist historians, diverge from these accounts as well. The latter sought to find additional groupings within a class system. Marxist accounts of the lower classes' past include economic and social factors. But re-creating counter-sociocultural history was more of a focus in popular Dalit history. Written in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, this history of the Bahujans and Dalits has transformed the annals of Indian social history into a straightforward and powerful narrative (Narayan, 2008: 174). The

past that has been passed down via Dalit popular literature has been ingrained in the underlying memory, shaped by Bahujan politics.

CONCLUSION

In addition, it is anticipated that the anti-caste movement will have an impact on policies across a variety of levels. It is expected that there will be an increase in the amount of pressure placed on governments to develop and enforce anti-discrimination laws as more individuals become outspoken about the need of social justice legislation. It is possible that the movement's focus on affirmative action and reservations as a tool of addressing past injustices may lead to the design of policies that are more sophisticated and successful in their quest to elevate populations who have been in disadvantaged positions. The anti-caste movement will most likely argue for a curriculum that critically explores the historical foundations of caste prejudice and recognizes the efforts of leaders who battled against it. This will be done in the context of education. The implementation of this educational reform is essential for the development of a society that is more equal, one in which future generations are equipped with the knowledge and empathy necessary to demolish biases that are founded on caste. Specifically with regard to the economy, the anti-caste movement is well positioned to become a champion of the cause of economic justice, pushing for equal opportunities in employment and business ownership. Important emphasis areas will include measures to rectify economic imbalances among various caste groups as well as affirmative action in the business sector. A more inclusive society in which people are not impeded by their caste background is the goal of the movement, which tries to achieve this by removing economic obstacles. With a vibrant and broad future, the anti-caste movement in India is poised to make significant progress. It has its origins in a long and illustrious history, but it is undergoing change in order to accommodate the intricacies of modern life. The movement is poised to bring about a more equitable and just society by utilizing a combination of grassroots activism, technological advancements, policy advocacy, and educational reforms.

REFERENCES

1. Beniwal, R. (2018), "Pragmatism in Education", Conference Proceeding International Conference on New Frontiers of Engineering, Science, Management and Humanities pp.: 74-79.

2. Benjamin, J. (2008), "Dalit and Higher Education in India", Indian Political Science Association, Vol. 69, No. 3, Pp: 627-642.
3. Bhagat, Rajni. (2022). Caste Discrimination and Social Change in India. Journal of Social Responsibility, Tourism and Hospitality. 2. 1-6. 10.55529/jsrth.21.1.6.
4. Bhanot, K. (2016), "Hatred in the Belly: Interrogating Internalized Prejudice and Supremacy", Round Table India" For an Informed Ambedkar Age, retrieved on 14.11.2020,
https://roundtableindia.co.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8886:hatred-in-the-belly-interrogates-internalised-prejudices-and-supremacy&catid=119:feature&Itemid=132.
5. Borgese, A. P. (2013), "Why Preserve History?", Integrata: Architecture and Construction, retrieved on 19.11.2020, <http://www.integrata-ac.com/whypreserve-history>.
6. Commission, U. G. (2008), XII Plan Guidelines for Establishment of Centers in Universities for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, retrieved on 15.12.2020, https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/2118716_social-exclusioncolleges.pdf.
7. Damaraju, Naga Lakshmi & Makhija, Anil. (2018). The role of social proximity in professional CEO appointments: Evidence from caste/religion-based hiring of CEOs in India. Strategic Management Journal. 39. 10.1002/smj.2787.
8. Das, K. (2015), "Subaltern Historiography to Dalit Historiography: Tracing Heterogeneity in Dalit Subalternity", EPW, Vol. L, No. 7, pp: 60-65.
9. David, S, A. (2016), "Social Responsiveness of Higher Education: Access, Equity, and Social Justice", Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities, Vol. VIII, No. 4, Pp: 181-193.
10. Dehariya, A. (2015), "A Concrete Introspection of Social Injustice in Omprakash
11. Deshpande, A. (2017), "Past, Present, and Oral history", EPW, Vol. LII, No. 29, pp. 38-43.



12. Deshpande, Manali. (2010). History of the Indian Caste System and its Impact on India Today. Social Sciences.
13. Dwivedi, Prajwal. (2021). Argument For And Against The Reservation In India. 02. 1-21.
14. Dyson, Jane. (2019). Rethinking education as a contradictory resource: Girls' education in the Indian Himalayas. Geoforum. 103. 10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.03.021.
15. Editorial Board (2018), "Distorting history another form of terror, says historian", The Tribune, retrieved on 17.11.2020,