

CASTE SYSTEM, SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND JUSTICE

**PROF. ADAPA SATYANARAYANA
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
OSMANIA UNIVERSITY
HYDERABAD**



CASTE

- **Complex Indian Realities-Economy, Society and Culture-58 billion dollar remittance –Top of world-India&Bharat divide-social issues-sensitive**
- **The unique social system? Purushasukta**
- **Compare and Contrast: Examples!!**
- **Blacks, slaves, Racism, Burakumin, Eta**
- **Origin, growth and Change**
- **Hinduism& Scriptural justification- Manu Dharamasastra**
- **Philosophical legitimacy- Rebirth&Karma theory**



www.dhammadownload.com

CASTE

- **Protest against social oppression –Buddha to Gandhi—thru Bhakti traditions...**
- **Anti-Caste social reforms in 19-20th centuries**
- **Role of Phule, Periyar, Gandhi & Ambedkar**
- **Independent India & social discrimination**
- **Socio-economic change & effect on backward classes**
- **Access to Education, employment & resources.**
- **Problems of untouchability & position of Dalits**

Dalits

- More than one reason to discuss the issues of dalits -- Who&Why Dalits. Contemporary relevance of the dalit question-Centrality and challenges. Social Exclusion&Inclusion. UGC Centres in Univ&academic discourses. It was far too complex and it also pertained to an area that is a gaping hole, a big silence in Indian public &academic discourse, GOI 11th Plan Notion of Inclusive growth &Social Justice.National Integration-- Caste, Race & Untouchability. UN report slams India for caste discrimination. The Dalit issue today is one of the worst examples of discrimination against, and the oppressive living conditions of, millions of people in India.

Dalits

- discrimination persists despite government efforts to improve the situation through affirmative action policies and land reform policies in the last 50 years which were ostensibly directed toward access to education and government jobs and geared towards improving the condition of bonded laborers. **What does it mean in terms of size? There are more Dalits in India than there are people in Pakistan. There are more Dalits in India than there are people in Brazil, marginally more. If taken as a national population they would be the fifth largest in the world after China, India, the United States and Indonesia. One is really talking about a very large section of humanity.**

- **Internationalization of dalit Human Rights & Discrimination Durban Declaration - 170 Million people (more than 16% Indian population) In December 2008, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh acknowledged there is still social discrimination against Dalits in many parts of the country, even after 60 years of constitutional and legal protection and state support. the prevalence of the practice of untouchability which is regrettably widespread even fifty years after the constitution abolished it.**

Facts of Discrimination

- **Human rights abuses against these people, known as Dalits, are legion. A random sampling of headlines in mainstream Indian newspapers tells their story: "Dalit boy beaten to death for plucking flowers"; "Dalit tortured by cops for three days"; "Dalit 'witch' paraded naked in Bihar"; "Dalit killed in lock-up at Kurnool"; "7 Dalits burnt alive in caste clash"; "5 Dalits lynched in Haryana"; "Dalit woman gang-raped, paraded naked"; "Police egged on mob to lynch Dalits".**



Facts on Atrocities

- **Nearly 90 percent of all the poor Indians and 95 percent of all the illiterate Indians are Dalits, according to figures presented at the International Dalit Conference that took place May 16 to 18 in Vancouver, Canada.**
- **Most of the Dalits are bonded workers and many work in slave-like conditions to pay off debts that were incurred generations ago. The majority of Dalits live in segregation and experience violence, murder, rape and other atrocities to the scale of 110,000 registered cases a year, according to 2005 statistics**

FACTS OF OPPRESSION

- Statistics compiled by India's National Crime Records Bureau indicate that in the year 2000, the last year for which figures are available, 25,455 crimes were committed against Dalits. **"There have been large-scale abuses by the police, acting in collusion with upper castes, including raids, beatings in custody, failure to charge offenders or investigate reported crimes,"**

Atrocities

- **The latest data from the ministry of social justice and empowerment show that five states – Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh – account for around 70% of registered atrocities against Dalits in India. SCs account for anywhere between 15% and 22% of the total population in these states.**

FACTS

Consequences of Untouchability

- Facts and figures
- Every 18 minutes:
 - A crime is committed against a Dalit
- Every day:
 - 3 Dalit women are raped
 - 2 Dalits are murdered
 - 11 Dalits are beaten

FACTS

- Every week:
- 13 Dalits are murdered
- 5 Dalits' home or possessions are burnt
- 6 Dalits are kidnapped or abducted
- 160 Million Dalits live in India
- 37 percent of Dalits
- living below poverty
- level in India

FACTS

- More than half (54%) of their children are malnourished
- 45 percent of Dalits do not know read and write in India

FACTS

- •Dalit women burden double discrimination
- (gender and caste) in India
- •About one third of Dalit households do not have basic facilities
- •Public health workers refused to visit Dalit homes in 33% of villages

FACTS

- Dalits were denied access to water sources in 48.4% of villages because of segregation & Untouchably practices
- Dalits receive poor education &
- Segregation in schools

FACTS

- The data also indicated a 10.2 per cent increase in crimes against the S.Cs and the S.Ts at the national level. Uttar Pradesh accounted for 20.5 per cent of all cases in India. The BSP's argument was that under the "friendly" Mayawati regime more S.C. members made bold to register cases against their oppressors.

FACTS

- The National Crime Record Bureau's (NCRB) statistics for 2007 for crimes against members of the S.Cs and the Scheduled Tribes (S.Ts) corroborated the presentations made at the seminar. The figures showed that Uttar Pradesh topped the list on atrocities against the S.Cs and the S.Ts, with 2,113 cases out of a total of 9,819.

FACTS

- The gaps in its implementation could be studied at two levels – the executive and the judiciary. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) noted in its 2002 report: “Under-reporting is a very common phenomenon and the police resort to various machinations to discourage S.C./S.T. [persons] from registering their cases, to dilute the seriousness of the violence, to shield the accused persons from arrests and prosecution.”

FACTS

- A study done by National Dalit Movement for Justice (NDMJ), part of the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), showed that between 1992 and 2007 only 33 per cent of the atrocity cases were registered under the S.C./S.T. Act. The majority of the cases were registered under IPC sections and 1 per cent under the PCRA. It also showed that the conviction rate of cases under the S.C./S.T. Act was just 3.3 per cent for the country as a whole.

FACTS

- Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh topped in atrocities against the tribal population as well. Of the 5,880 cases registered, 60% (3,505 cases) were from these states.
- **Cases of atrocities against Dalits are characterised by their high rate of pendency and low rate of conviction, a tendency officials term as “very worrisome”.**
- **As per the National Crime Records Bureau, the pendency of SC-related cases in courts during 2008-10 was 80.6%. In eight states, the percentage is above the national average – 90% in Gujarat and 88.2% in West Bengal.**

FACTS

- The figures at the level of the judiciary are equally pathetic. Between 1992 and 2007, as many as 80 per cent of the cases heard by the special courts (created under Section 14 of the Act) were not registered under the Act. In 95.1 per cent of the cases charge sheets had not been filed. The monitoring advisories set up in States on an ad hoc basis by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MSJE) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) noted that in many cases the police willfully neglected the S.C./S.T. Act and did not register first information reports (FIRs).

FACTS

- The Ahmedabad-based Council for Social Justice (CSJ) has collected documents of 400 cases pertaining to 2004 filed under the S.C./S.T. Act in Gujarat. There are some startling revelations in them. Despite Section 18 of the Act restricting anticipatory bail in atrocity cases, anticipatory bail had been granted in 320 of the 400 cases.

FACTS

- **No one believes these numbers are anywhere close to the reality of crimes committed against Dalits. Because the police, village councils, and government officials often support the caste system, which is based on the religious teachings of Hinduism, many crimes go unreported due to fear of reprisal, intimidation by police, inability to pay bribes demanded by police, or simply the knowledge that the police will do nothing**

Facts

- **As modern education and socio-political consciousness spreads to the Dalit-subaltern classes and their demands for a share in economic resources and political power increases, the brahmanical forces have brought forward the politics of religious symbolism to the center-stage and caused religious polarisation. The targeting of “the other” namely minorities meant a systematic plan to silence the dalitbahujan articulation and urge for equality, because a vast majority of minorities in India are drawn from among the subaltern castes. The Hindutva forces allied with the upper caste anti-reservation movement, which sought to deny the democratic demand of the dalit bahujans.**

FACTS

- **The latest controversies regarding reservations in higher educational institutions is a clear instance of dominant castes backlash against dalitbahujan assertion for equitable distribution of opportunities. The debate and discourse on protective discrimination as one of the affirmative action policy measures in India has prominently centered around issues of “merit and efficiency”.**

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **The Prof. Thorat Commission, UGC, Chairman regarding Castes based harassment against SC and ST Students at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi(AIIMS)**
- **It brought out the horrors of caste discrimination suffered by the students of SC, ST category by the upper castes faculty members. The example of Balmukund Bharathi a final year M.B.B.S Dalit student committed suicide on 3rd March, 2010.**

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Bal Mukund had probably not grown inured to prejudice and its various abusive forms, but he couldn't give up. He had this spark in him that couldn't be smothered. **It took him to a Navodaya school first and then earned him a 'certificate of merit from the President himself!'**
- In the year he had appeared for the AIIMS admission test, he had also taken three other entrance exams. And he had excelled in all four! 'CPMT, IIT, AIIMS..', his sister recalls all the challenges he had overcome in the Exams.

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- The Dalit Students were frequently abused, humiliated, harass by professors beaten up by senior students in the name of raging alienates them from the main stream campus life.
- The Camus life makes the Dalit students suffocating as they have to undergo extreme humiliation dehumanization and violence on the campus

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- On page 19 of its report, the Committee mentions –
- *In survey, the questions were asked, whether SC/ST students face discrimination in one to one teaching session, laboratories and practical demonstrations and the extent of consultation with teachers by SC/ST students and the general problems faced by them. Besides we also talked to a cross section of students through personal discussions/interviews.*

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **While deposing before the committee, an overwhelming majority of Dalit and Adivasi students spoke about the lack of consultation and interaction with their teachers and narrated on how they completely avoided students from particular social background while teaching.**

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- On page 20, the Committee writes –
- *It emerged from these responses that the SC/ST students do not receive the kind of support that the other students received from their teachers. Non-cooperation is experienced by students in various ways. Given the dependence of students on teachers for learning and skill, the lack of adequate support to the SC/ST reflect in performance and psychological problems, which further leads to lower performance and frequent failure.*

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Dr Jaspreet Singh: The Death of Merit--Vedio**
- Dr Jaspreet Singh (1987-2008) was a school topper and quite bright Dalit student, from a very humble background.
- He used to clear all his papers without fail, in 4 years of his MBBS, till he met a professor whose criteria of merit was not Jaspreet's performance but his 'caste'.
- caste-based discrimination is prevalent in Indian higher education system resulting in large number of suicides of Dalit students in Indian campuses.

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- About **88 percent of Dalit and Adivasi students**, in their responses to Prof Thorat Committee, told that the teachers do not give them marks that they deserve in written exams and their papers are not examined properly.
- **The students alleged that during practical and viva voice, the discrimination is quite blatant and open. About 92 percent of SC and ST students who deposed before the Committee mentioned about casteist behaviors of faculties and told of being routinely humiliated in practicals and viva exams.**

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **84 percent of the SC and ST student respondents reported that the examiners had asked about the caste background of the students either directly or indirectly and their grades were affected because of it.**
- The Internal assessment comprise of 50% of Marks in the final examination. Hence there is a potential and scope for faculty to misuse the privilege.

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Rejani S. Anand**, a Malayalee student of Institute of Human Resource Development (IHRD) Engineering College at Adoor in south Kerala committed suicide on 22nd July 2004.
- **Senthil Kumar**, a Tamil student hailing from an interior region in the state, admitted for PhD in the School of Physics, University of Hyderabad, took his life on 24th February 2008.
- **Ajay Sree Chandra**, a Telugu boy and an Integrated-PhD scholar at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, committed suicide the year before, on 27th August 2007.

CASTES DISCRIMINATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- It is based on the testimonies of parents and family members of **Dr Jaspreet Singh**, 22 years, who was a student of Final Year, MBBS at **Government Medical College, Chandigarh**. He committed suicide on **27th January, 2008**, by hanging himself on the 5th floor of his college's library
- After completing his MBBS from Government Medical College, Chandigarh, Dr Jaspreet wanted to become a surgeon. However his dreams were cut short by a professor who not only humiliated him on caste lines but failed him twice in the same paper and threatened to further keep failing him.

FACTS

- . In fact, in the context of growing knowledge and information based industries and technologies, the gap between the Brahmin and allied castes and the rest is getting wider at the national and corporate levels. The Silicon Valleys and Cyber cities emerged as New Agraharams- as elite institutions-- **A study of the caste composition of top corporate executives showed that out of 2000 whose caste could be identified, 77.6% were Brahmins and other upper castes like Khattris and Vaishyas; only 4.2 % were Shudras of any type.**

Facts

- **A noted Supreme Court judge remarked: “What is merit? Is not a child of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes or other Backward Classes who has been brought up in an atmosphere of penury, illiteracy and anti-culture, who is looked down upon by tradition and society, who has no books, newspapers or magazines to read at home, no radio and TV to listen and watch, no private tuition, no one to help him with his home work and no one to advise him because his parents themselves are illiterate and ignorant**

Facts

- **and who has to trudge to the nearest local board schools or colleges, has not this child got merit, if he with all his disadvantages, is able to secure the qualifying marks of 40% or 50 % of the total at a competitive examination, whereas the children of the upper classes who have all the advantages, go to the Sacred Heart Convent and St. Stephen's college and who have perhaps been especially coached for the examination may secure 70, 80 or even 90% of marks. Surely a child who has been able to jump over so many obstacles may be expected to do better and better as he moves along in life."**