REVIEW OF DALIT STUDIES: KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS EDITED BY MAHITOSH MANDAL AND SANJIV KONDEKAR

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Abstract :

Since many years Dalits have been faced scars of discrimination in Indian society . In the name of caste Dalits have encountered severe problems; oppression, violence , issues of atrocities , identity formation and social marginilization. The book review analyzes the nature of Castesim in India , its roots , the prolonged struggles of anti caste thinkers and present condition of Dalits in India. The book titled Dalit Studies: Key terms and Concepts examines the history of Dalits , anti catse movements in India , unheard voices of Dalits , Anti caste thinkers , media and Dalits ,and Dalit music.

Key words : Dalit, Casteism atrocities , Anti caste movement and Anti caste thinkers.

"Religion is for man. Man is not for religion"

(Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar)

The term "Dalit" refers to marginalized communities in India who have historically faced caste-based discrimination and oppression. In India, casteism has long been ingrained and has adversely influenced Dalits. Dalits have labelled as outcastes in Indian society. Their experiences of suffering, humiliation, agony and social exclusion and along with relentless struggle for identify, dignity and equality become a subject of Dalit studies.The latest published book entitled Dalit Studies: Key Terms and Concepts edited by Mahitosh Mandal and Sanjiv Kondekar is undoubtedly a masterpiece in the field of Dalit stuides. The book addresses Dalit issues with new insights that are useful to understand who were Shudras, strugglea of Dalits , their humiliation and their poltical existence.

Mahitosh Mandal and Sanjiv Kondekar are known for their critical insights and deep engagement with psychoanalysis and Dalit literature, perspectives that are thoroughly reflected in their scholarly works. Mahitosh Mandal is the author of Jacques Lacan: From Clinic to Culture (2018), while Sanjiv Kondekar has authored History of Tukaram Studies: A Critical Survey (2022) and Jivanvadi Nittitatve (2025).

The editors of the book *Dalit Studies: Key Terms and Concepts* rightly observed that Dalits are labelled as objects and passive victims.(2) The editors have attempted to bring together the social, cultural and political dimensions of the marginalization of Dalits in this

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book.

The Dalit voices are truly reflected in Dalit studies. The book "Dalit Studies: Key Terms and Concepts" edited by Mahitosh Mandal and Sanjiv Kondekar is truly one of the scholarly gems in the field of Dalit studies. It exhibits a canvas for understanding the vocabulary of Dalit studies. The book is intricately woven into forty-seven chapters, exploring the depths and breadth of daily studies. The chapters offer a thoughtful examination of the roots of casteism in India, the struggles of Dalits, and the rise of Hindutava politics**.** The book contains a realistic account of Dalits. What strikes Dalits is the brutal humiliation involved: discriminated, twisted, molested, with a large number of Dalits moving around mainstream.

It explores the enduring contributions of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Periyar in challenging caste based discrimination and lawless Manuvad and fighting for human values. The forty-seven chapters are categorized into eight themes; defining the field of Dalit; identity constructions; cased based discrimination; Dalit history and politics; anti-caste thought; Dalits, media, and culture; intersectionality, and praxis.

Dismantling the caste system in India and emphasizing the domain of social justice and equality, the works of crusaders for humanity and anti- caste thinkers could be at the center of Dalit studies. This volume begins a chapter titled "Annihilation of Caste" is dedicated to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. In this chapter Debdas Reddy closely underlines the notion of Caste - annihilation as formulated by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in his undelivered speech tilted "Annihilation of Caste". The chapter also examines Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's indictments of caste system and ideas on liberty, equality and fraternity". Palash Biswas's chapter "Anti caste thinkers" offers teaching and vision of Lord Buddha, Kabir, Ravidas, Gurunanak, Mahatma Jyotrao Phule, Basavana, Harichandra Thakur, Guruchand Thakur, Jyothee Thass, Periyar, Dr.Ambdekar , Kanshi Ram and Kancha Illiah in illuminating the casteless society and how did they fight to abolish caste-based discrimination. The chapter on "Self-respect movement of Periyar" by Dhivya Sivaramane explores the deeply rooted caste system in India and how it was controlled through Brahminical social and religious order. The paper examines how the Self-Respect Movement emerged as a social reform movement under the leadership of Periyar. The movement challenged caste hierarchy, religious dogma and Brahminical dominance. Surajkumar Thube's chapter "Satyashodhak Samaj" is dedicated to Mahatma Jyotrao Phule. The chapter "Satyashodhak Samaj" focuses on the significance the Satyashodhak Samaj founded by Mahatma Phule in 1873 in Pune. It explains how Phule sought to promote social justice, equality and human dignity through establishment of the Satyashodhak Samaj. The core of the Indian society is graded inequality. The chapter on "Graded Inequality" by Abdul Najeeb Noorul Ameen discusses Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's theory of Graded Inequality and its relevance in contemporary India to understand caste-based violence. The chapter on "Educate, Agitate and Organize" by Abdul Najeeb Noorul Ameen observes Ambedkar' s strong emphasis on education as a means of empowering Dalits. The paper traces Dr. Babasaheb Amedkar's life and his outcry for Dalit empowerment in post-independence India. In this volume four chapters clubbed under the nature, scope and approaches to Dalit Studies. Rajdeep Mondal' s chapter on "Dalit Experience" exhibits caste-based suffering, humiliation and discrimination faced by Dalits. The chapter senses the lived realities faced by Dalits. Highlighting the theory by social scientist Gopal Guru it is believed that "Lived experience" of

Dalits must theorize by Dalits only. The Dalit experience serves as a powerful means of expression, revealing hidden wounds, deep-rooted casteist scars, the pain of humiliation and marginalization. Nivea Thomas K.'s chapter "Dalit Studies" explores the history of Dalit studies, examines its position in the world, and discusses how it has emerged as a significant critique of modern sociopolitical narratives. Resistance is a key thread of Dalit studies. Dhanesh Mankulam's "Dalit Historiography" explores how Dalit resistance offers a counter-narrative to the dominant Brahminical interpretations of Indian history. The chapter also highlights the tendency of mainstream historiography to prioritize Brahminical viewpoints. While sidelining Dalit experiences and modes of resistance. The chapter Dhivya Sivaramane's "Critical Case Studies" examines how CCS is emerging a new approach in the field of Dalit studies. The five chapters in this volume explore the repercussions of caste-based discrimination, the social and legal dimensions of Dalit identity in Indian history. The chapter on "Caste" by Priyanka Choudhary examines caste as a social institution and explores how it has evolved into a significant tool of social and political mobilization in Indian society. In "Scheduled Caste" Proggya Ghatak presents a kaleidoscopic status of and experience of Scheduled castes in per-independence and post-colonial India. The chapter on "Dalit" by Mahitosh Mandal presents a multifaceted account of Dalit genealogy, tracing its evolution form its origin to its growing political significance in the context of the anti-caste movement in India. The chapter on "Bahujan" by Biswas strongly pleads for the socio-political inclusion of SCs, STs and OBCs in Indian society. Priyanka Choudahry's "Kshatriyaization" traces the roots of the sociological terms Kshatriyaization and Sanskritization to the caste based social structure of India. The author elucidates how the cultural hegemony and ideology of Savarna perpetuate and reinforce caste-based discrimination within social hierarchy. In India, Casteism has persisted in various forms for centuries. It has been associated with the emergence of and influence of Manuvad in Indian society. India has witnessed widespread discrimination, against Dalits, cased inequalities and social hierarchies. Five chapters in this volume critically expose the oppressive ideologies and practices associated with Brahmanism against Dalits. Mohitosh Mandal's chapter "Caste Atrocities" examines the growing incidence of atrocities against Dalits and Adivasis in contemporary Indian and raises concern about the media's silence on these issues. The chapter on "Caste Microaggressions" by Rejoyson Thangal studies how Caste based microaggressions have become increasingly common in India and explores their physical and psychological consequences for Dalits. Rishi R. Gune's chapter on "Casteism in the Indian Diaspora" explores the discriminatory experiences faced by Dalits in the diaspora across the world. The chapter senses unheard voices of Dalit diaspora. Sruti M. D's chapter on "Manuvad" examines the foundations of Manuvad and its relationship with the caste system in India. The chapter "Brahmanical literature" studies how Dalit and tribal discourses have been overshadowed by Brahminical literature. In Dalit studies anti-caste movements played important roles in demonstrating protest against inequities, discrimination and liberty. In this volume there are ten chapters deal with Dalit history, Dalit politics and socio -cultural Dalit movements. The chapter titled "Dalits and the British Raj" highlights the impact of British rule on the lives of untouchables and examines how British did expose the oppressive nature of Hindu caste system in India. Fundamental rights Denial is closely associated with Dalits' existence in Indian society. As Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar strongly asserted the public water resources should be equal to all during Mahad satyagraha in 1927 at Mahad water tank. The chapter on "Mahad Satyagrah" analyzes Dr. Babasaheb Amedkar's crucial step towards establishing social justice in Indian society and rise of Dalit community against casteism. The

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chapter titled "Separate Electorate" discusses How Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar insisted upon British India to give separate electorates to depressed classes. The chapter on "Gandhi-Ambedkar Debate" delves into ideological differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar on democracy, untouchability, education and representation and religious dogma. The chapter "Reservation" critically underlines the axis of caste- based reservation in education and Jibs for SCs, STs and OBCs as per Indian constitution. The chapter titled "Dalit Political Parties" analyzes the role of various socio-political parties, from Justice party to Bahujan Samaj party in Indian history. Sanjiv Kondekar' chapter on "Dalit Panthers" explains the emergence of the Dalit Panthers movement in India its relation with Black Panthers. The chapter vividly discusses the controversial manifesto of Dalit Panthers. The chapter on "Jay Bhim" is a reflection of Dalit consciousness. It explores the socio-political significance and usage of the term Jay Bhim and examines how it is closely associated with Dalit culture, identity and social consciousness. The chapter on "Dalit Activism" by Nivea Thomas K. underlines the emergence and evolution of Dalit activism in India, particularly its transformation through social media campaigns that challenge caste-based discrimination and Dalit humiliation. Dalit studies is profoundly connected with the issues of gender, race, class and disability. In this volume there are eight chapters argue the grave condition of caste -based oppression.

The chapter on "Caste and Race" by Puspa Damai examines the complex relationship between caste and race through three major perspectives; the racial theory of caste, anti-racism theory and the global theory of caste. By drawing on the views of Mahtam Jyotirao Phule, Dr.B.R. Ambedkar, and W. E B. Du Bois on caste and race, the paper aptly concludes that caste exist across the globe and is ultimately, a state of mind. Surajkumar Thube's "Caste and Class" exhibits the deeper relationship between caste and class in Indian history through Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's scholarly views on caste and class. The chapter titled "Disability and the Dalit "explores the meaning and experience of disability from Dalit perspectives. The chapter tilted "Dalit Feminism" reveals the position of Dalit women and their lived realities in Indian society. The chapter on Dalit Aesthetics" examines literary and artistic dimensions of Dalit expression and how these expressions challenge and reshape conventional literacy standards.

The chapter on "Dalit converts" by Amit Titare examines the history and evolution of Dalit conversion across three major phases: the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. The chapter "law and Caste" offers a critique of Hindu Dharmashastra and examines Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's views on religion, caste and law. The chapter on "Dalit Environmentalism" insists that Natural resources should be equally accessible to all. The author is concerned about the "Eco-casteist treatment of Dalits and anti-environment practices of upper classes" (176). The chapter on "Queering Caste" provides a broader framework for understanding the challenges faced by queer Dalits in India.

In "Dalit Cinema" Subhayu Bhattacharjee examines the representation of Dalit subjects in Indian cinema. The author critically addresses the stereotyping of Dalit actors in Indian cinema and emphasizes the need for their equal representation alongside upper -caste actors. The chapter on "Dalit Music" focuses on the importance of Dalit music within the diverse traditions of Indian music and its role in expressing resistance to casted based discrimination in Indian society. The chapter on "Dalit Media" argues that Indian mainstream media is

dominated by Brahminical power, which often lead to underreporting of caste-based violence and discrimination against Dalits

Three chapter in this volume as critical directive toward the transformative gestation of Dalit emancipation and consciousness. The chapter on "Dalitiazation"by Sanjiv Kumar Vishwakarma critically engages with and foregrounds the concept of "Dalitiazation" introduced by Kanch Illiah. The paper observes the ways in which Dalitiazation evolves into a consciousness emancipatory movement, challenging and seeking to dismantle the entrenched foundations of the caste system in India. The chapter "Debrahminization" by Dhanesh Mankulam critically examines the concept of Debrahminization and identifies the wings of Debrahminization through the lens of remarkable theory of Revolution and Counter-Revolution propagated by Dr.B.R. Ambedkar. The chapter on Anti-Catseism"foregrounds the transformative efforts of Amedakarite movement to uproot the caste system in India. This book presents the harsh realities of caste-based discrimination in Indian society and records the inequalities and injustices faced by Dalits. The book has a diversity of Dalit perspectives , approaches and tentacles useful for academicians and researchers for Dalit literature. The book endoreses the human values and adovactes the rights of margnilized community.

References :

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