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CASTE AND UNTOUCHABILITY: DENOUNCING, HUMILIATION OF OUTCASTES IN THE  
MAHABOBNAGAR- DISTRICT OF TELANGANA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Recent research has abundantly proved that caste in British India was not totally a rigid Institution. Indeed, it was possible for strategically located groups to move up in the local hierarchy through the capture of political power, acquisition of land, through trade and through migration to other regions. But, such analyses often ignores the experiences of a large number of communities who were regarded as “antyajas”, “asprisyas” and “panchamas”, who were considered to be polluting and were assigned a place outside the boundaries of the caste Hindu society. The caste based oppression and discrimination to which these groups, now commonly known as Dalits, subjected are believed to be of historical in origin, dating back to the later Vedic period. The experiences of the dalits in contemporary India strongly establish the links between caste and the centuries old tradition of untouchability. Interestingly, the ideas of stigma and pollution have been internalized by the dalits from their childhood and such ideas reinforced through constant practice have profoundly shaped the Dalit identity and consciousness for more than a Century. It is this daily reminder of their stigmatized status that provides the context for the dalit protest and struggle in contemporary India. I would argue that caste and untouchability constitutes a complex of discriminatory practices that are responsible for the imposition of social disabilities on a sizeable populace, because of their birth in certain castes. Such practices included various forms of exclusion and exploitation, like denying access to state services or remunerating occupations or forcing the dalits to perform demeaning occupations. In fact, it is all pervasive in the sense that it governs all aspects of life, classifying people in terms of a hierarchy and prescribing how they should interact. In other words, there would be an attempt to bring out how this Dalit subordination is reproduced in the public as well as the private sphere. I would be trying to explain whether the Indian state charged with a constitutional mandate to remove in equality and promote social justice, has failed to be a state system for removing the practice of untouchability.

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**INTRODUCTION**

The word caste is of European origin and is too often used to describe the social groups that many South Asians recognize as a social mechanism in distinguishing one human being from another. The term caste is also linked to the Sanskrit term *jati* which is used to describe not only the different kinds of groups of the human beings, but also applied to animals, minerals, vegetables, gender, seasons etc. Human *jatis* or castes are often seen as Endogamous units and this explains why people tend to marry within the caste to which they are born. However, the term caste is sometimes confused with *Varna*, which to many Indians is of ancient textual origin and actually provides the framework of the fourfold division of the Hindu society into Brahmins (priests and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and kings), Vaishyas (commoners including businessmen and farmers) and Sudras (servants of the other three castes). But, while there may be four *varnas*, there are thousands of castes throughout the corners of South Asia.

Untouchability is the low status of certain social groups confined to menial and despised jobs. It is usually associated with the Hindu caste system, but similar groups exist outside Hinduism, for example the Burakumin in Japan, Black South Africans, and Hutu and Twa of Rwanda. At the beginning of the twenty-first century there were over 160 million untouchables on the Indian subcontinent.

**Denouncing the Outcastes in Mahaboobnagar-district**

The evil of untouchability in India has an ancient history. It originates from the Hindu caste system which classifies the Hindu community in four groups or sects; they are the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sudras. The Brahmins are supposed to be the highest among them, commanded profound reverence and veneration. The Kshatriyas represented the warriors who deployed to defend against foreign aggression. The third in hierarchy of caste system is represented by the Vaishyas consisting of the business communities and producer of wealth and the means of life. The Sudras, representing the lowest of all in the social hierarchy consisting of workmen and laborers who are assigned to perform lowest degree of works. They were sweepers and scavengers regarded as untouchables because they had to clean dirt and public toilets. It was a common belief among the caste Hindus that a touch of the untouchable would pollute the caste Hindus. Untouchables were entitled for severe punishment if they committed the offense of touching a caste Hindu. The savagery and brutality of the caste Hindus seemed to be endless and ceaseless.

In the region of Mahaboobnagar District, Telangana State, still the caste and untouchability are prevalent, all the politicians and upper caste people are trying to protect the caste and untouchability for the sake of their vote bank policy. The upper caste people unite the group of people belonging to particular lower castes at the time of election. The people being in illiteracy, lower caste and inequality, they are unable to find the conspiracies of the upper caste. Still they are facing endless sequence of tyranny and cruelty and injustice has turned them anti-caste Hindus. They are eager to voice their protest against the upper caste political system but they have their own limitations and vulnerability. Their birth in an out caste family makes them defenseless. Being an out caste people they cannot think of justice and equality. They have to accept every act of injustice done by the caste Hindus as the will of the Almighty. The upper castes violating the right of untouchables, showing lot of discrimination and partiality towards the dalits in most the villages of the district. Though the dalits have been given constitutional rights politically. In the name of dalits, the upper caste people are enjoying the fruits of it and using them as dalit idols. The untouchables, who are called as dalits are still not allowed into the Hindu temples in many villages of the Mahaboobnagar. They are being crushed under the laws of upper castes.

**Untouchables Condemns Inhuman caste system**

Untouchables have condemned and disapproved the inhuman caste system. They have expressed their detest abhorrence for this savage and inhuman social practice. Because they have a sense of self respect and self consciousness and they perform their work with extraordinary devotion, commitment and alacrity. They are quite dextrous and dynamic at work. But centuries of servility have made them static and morally degenerate. M.K. Naik remarks "Weakness corrupt and absolute weakness corrupts absolutely" and besides giant and titanic physique they have not the courage to revenge or to protest. They submit themselves to the

circumstances and accept everything as their lot although they do not approve it. Their conscience is alive and aware to savagery and brutality of caste system. They are conscious of their pathetic plight, and they are subject to misery and wretchedness. They could protest against the evils of society but they know that they are alone and cannot launch a revolution because they are aware of the fact that the caste Hindus are much more to crush them. The Sun of the morning is not the same the Sun of the evening. Their life remains the same, but during the course of the day there is a sea change psychologically. They attained some measure of self realization and self knowledge.

**Conclusion**

The recent research has abundantly proved that caste in India was not totally a rigid institution. The caste and class are still alive in India. As Dr. B.R Ambedkar said, "mahatmas have come, mahatmas have gone but Untouchables remains as Untouchables". The hierarchy in the country keeps the common enemies of impoverished people are, caste, class, poverty remains the same in the country but instead of that the contemporary society is to be found on the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice. The untouchables and people of this country should get emancipation from shackles of discrimination, classism, classism, racism. In the place of it, the system should be developed that, what makes the man human.

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