THINKING AGAINST CASTE HIERARCHIES: AN ANALYSIS THROUGH YADAV COMMUNITY

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The propensity of looking into genealogy, caste-atrocities, social boycott, and the ambition of upward (caste) mobility are consecutive features of rural societies across the country. On the one hand, the rural society has been represented in long time by deep-rooted casteism that creates kind of blind perception or faith towards his own caste and mythological beliefs for showing the pseudo superiority, and its result is being reflected by irrational practices like *Biradari Bhoj* (caste oriented commensality function) in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Although in opponent way, 'village exogamy', in which members of the same village, does not allow intermarry, sexual relationship, and villager are bounded as localized-clan. However, the concerning thing is that, on the one hand the system of village exogamy develops reciprocal 'primary relationship' among villager which ratiocinates as 'multiple-*Biradarism*' (bilateral relationship) while on the other hand, there are certain practices antagonistically (like food pattern [Kachcha and Pakka], traditional occupation [Jajmani System], untouchability, etc.) show vague scenario for ground understanding of hierarchal pattern among villagers. The paper shows how various new challenges, like '*Dual-Caste Behaviour*', 'Caste-Silencing, *Biradarism* (brotherhood), etc. have been emerged for sustainable or continuous existence of 'casteism' over the last few decades. For in-depth understanding, the two villages, namely 'Rajanpura' and 'Tandawa' have been randomly selected for data collection in which, gender, caste, education, occupation, job, etc. variables have been determined. The study has been approached to auto-ethnographic description, mutual discussion, unstructured questionnaire, and grounded theory method.

Introduction

Justice and equality are the two subjects often talk about by most of the nationalists and leaders of various political and ideological streams across the world including India. Indian was at the forefront in condemning racial discrimination particularly apartheid and also influence of super power (s) on the internal affairs of independent nations. Her commitment to secure its citizens freedom, justice, equality, and fraternity is reflected in the very preamble of the Indian constitution (Ramaiah: 2004). Whereas, the present socio-political sphere is, assumedly, being marked by democratic egalitarianism in which all citizens have equal fundamental rights and duty to achieve their goals. In this regards, some special provisions have also been made in the constitution to protect and promote the interests of the oppressed section of society who are traditionally known as 'Shudra', and constitutionally refer as 'Scheduled Caste' and 'Other Backward Caste'.

If we look the real scenarios of downtrodden section, it can find that the path of democratic right of this society is not as smooth or usual as other, because caste

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basis social setups like *Khap Panchayat*[1] and *Chittha System*[2] are phenomena against from equalitarian notion of justice and equality. After Mandel Commission,[3] that is why, identity-politics of caste have been emerged as new discourse in Indian socio-political as well in academic sphere. The result of which many pro-caste basis socio-political organizations like *All India Yadav Maha-Sabha* [AIYMS], *All India Kurmi-Kshatriya Mahasabha* [AIKKM], Kshatriya Mahasabha, Brahmins and Dalit organization etc. have been occurred.

Some Conceptual Clarification

'Agitate' and 'Organize' Ideology: An Interrogation

The basic reason behind applying the following terms (agitate and organize), it is tractable for proper understanding of caste atmosphere in daily life. In practice, the notion of social unrest comes from social inequality, social exploitation, and social injustice. We can see in rural areas, there are many caste atrocities have been inevitable parts since independence. There is no state where any forms of caste atrocity, untouchability practices, discrimination, and social exclusion is not parts of day-to-day life. For instance, the recent incidents in Laxmanpur Bathe, Dharmapuri, Villupuram, Virudhnagar, Perali (Perambalur), and Thenur Panchayat of Tamilnadu (see- The Hindu: September 4, 2011; October 11, 2013 etc.) are basic concrete phenomena of the present caste tension and conflict.

The prejudice towards traditional (castes basis) occupation, traditional behaviour[4] and endogamy create kind of thinking-patterns that are main causes behind the caste differences. In this regards, the ideology 'agitate'[5] is not abstract enough to maintain social justice and equal opportunity with democratic notion, because agitation can only play as role of pressure group for surpassed (proletariat in Marxian philosophy) classes. Therefore, the second ideology 'organize' comes in front as form of pro-caste movement for demanding their (suppressed) socio-political right in democratic way. For instance, the emergence of backward caste movement was based on the second ideology of 'organize' while few anti-caste movements like- *Self-Respect Movement*[6], *Satya Shodhak Movement*[7] represent to first ideology of 'agitate'. The well-known fact is that the democratic principle is mostly bounded by 'majoritarian' principle therefore in case of social equality can be achieved through certain condition which is reflected in Ambedkar's writing- *"Educate, agitate and organize; have faith in yourself. With justice on our side I do not see how we can lose our battle. For ours is a battle not for wealth or for power. It is a battle for freedom. It is a battle for the reclamation of human personality."*[8]

Moreover, the axis of caste system is structured by purities and impurities basis originated mythological tales and stories. Therefore, the anti-caste movements give main attention toward 'de-construction' in order to create equality, dignity, self-respect and justice for downtrodden section of society.

Relative Deprivation: In terms of caste, the concept of relative deprivation incorporates the virtue of Marxian analysis without accepting the caste struggle (in sense of Jajmani and Hood system), as the only ideology. It is important to realize that caste, ethnicity and class are not mutually exclusive categories. They interact, intersect and articulate either in caste, ethnic or class idioms. For instance, on the surface the conflict between the backward classes (Yadav, Kurmi, Kumahar and Pal etc.) and the upper castes *(Brahmins,Thakur and Bhumihar etc.),* look like caste conflict, but it has class underpinnings. Most of the upper castes have own land, and they exercised control over productive resources whereas backward castes are occupancy tenants, small peasants and labourers. These entire situations create kind of relative deprivations which make foreground for further caste movement.

Caste-Centric Attitude (CCA): I would like to use the term **'CCA'** to reveals socio-cultural construction where a section of society, on the basis of traditional texts (such as; 'Veda, Purana, 'Smirties, etc.) along with on the basis of local myths and tales, behaves and looks into all social phenomena in caste-line. In other words, if we try to understand the *CCA*, we can do by analyzing the everyday behavior, attitude and social lives of people/community in question. Then in this process we come across the certain behaviors of both – higher as well as so-called lower castes. Having done this, we can see that *CCA* is ingrained in the psyche of individuals during the process of their socialization. It also shows stereotype psychological and socio-cultural basis thinking pattern, in which any person enacted by family pantheon, local socio-cultural atmosphere etc., and who analyzes every social phenomena through caste basis views. For instance, caste basis matrimonial, following sub-caste title, untouchability, making caste based identity through endogamy and caste atrocity etc. are content feature of it.

On the one hand, the anti-caste movement is totally against of *CCA*. Because, the main goal of this movement is to provides healthy social-atmosphere beyond caste centric conception. On the other hand, the pro-caste movement has been following to the *path of CCA* in long time. It appears, in present, due to some political motivation the path of *CCA* is being changed into community formation.

Community Formation and Communitisation of Castes

Both terms show a new dimension of caste system. Theses expression refers positive aspect of caste system which is based on the way of *Biradarism* (the procedure of brotherhoods) beyond casteism. On the one hand, the term 'community formation' shows consciousness efforts of occupational homogeneity where few cattle herder castes groupies. This community formation process has been happening throughout organization efforts (Prasad: 2014). We can analyze by viewing few organization activities like; '*All India Yadav Mahasabha* (in Allahabad), *Sadar* festival (in Hyderabad) etc. that are providing key support for become one (polarize).

On the other hand, the term 'communitisation of castes' can be used for ritual aspects of mythological consideration (beyond secularization of caste), and it also shows the process by which few minority (numerically less strength) castes popularize few myths an ambition of new purified as well as modified identity. The process of '*communitization'* can be referred through certain and intentional change in cast**e** system**.** For illustration, we can analyze the function of *Biradari Bhoj* of Yadav community, because its main objectives, in concrete levels, are collective demonstration of his numerical strength, economic demonstration, fulfillment of ritual or religious desire, maintaining intra-caste solidarity, spreading consciousness of their mythological origin (from Krishna[9] dynasty), celebration, following vegetarianism, virtue works in the name of ancestor, knowing own caste network by Chittha custom, name, fame and getting popularity etc. and these objectives to some extant consolidate to intra-community relation. In case of Yadav community, the intra-community relation is resulted as polarization of many cattle herder caste, in umbrella term so-called Yadav.

Polarization of Castes and Yadav Community

The term polarization of castes is appeared among traditionally cattle herder castes where they seem to be groupiesed for community basis identity formation. One of my respondents namely Ram Aasare said, 'on the basis of *Yadu* Mythology and tales, many cow herder castes believe that they belong to 'Yadu' and 'Krisna' ancestry, and farther he argued 'few decades back, Ahir, Gwal, Gop, Ghantiha, Haridwar and Ghurpita caste etc. were divided on the hierarchy or layer basis like 'Onion Shape'. During that period these castes were not allowed to intermarry. They felt superior or inferior on the basis of occupation and mythological origin'. Whereas, due to some consciousness organizational activities, such as; *Ahir Yadav Kshatriya Mahasabha* (1910)[10], *All India Yadav Mahasabha* (1921)[11] and ritual activity like *Biradari Bhoj*, probably cowherd castes have taken decision to unite and intermarry without hierarchy feeling. Popularly, in present, they pursue communitarian ideology of *Yadu* mythology, and they believe that their community belongs to Krishna dynasty. Due to organizational (AIYMS and its native branches) efforts as a movement, now within Yadav community neither have old caste hierarchy feeling (in Hindi speaking belt) nor they (branches of Yadavs) are giving much more preference for their old caste identity. Through the response from my responded, it can be argued, in present, they (Ahir) can intermarry with Ghurpita, Gwala, Haridwar, Ghantiha, Gop, etc. castes without any taboo. Nowadays, they have been following only 'Yadu mythology' on basis of Krishna/cow herder identity. In sum, due to stereotypical thinking towards minority castes, polarization of castes is a new dimension of caste mobility with ritual notion.

For proper understanding of human behavior on the basis of caste, it is also very essential to know the basic pattern of caste phenomena in rural scenario

including theoretical as well as contextual way. For fulfilling this purpose, few interrelated research papers, books etc. I would like to analyze.

Theoretical and Textual Understanding of Caste

The discourse on caste is begins with Majumdar and Madan's (1958) writing where they pointed out 'caste is a close group' which is characterised by endogamy and biometric scale. While, I would like to argue the phenomena of second decade of Indian independence, due to the freedom of religion[12] people (mostly followers of Hindu religion) were more oriented towards ritual activities like wearing the Janeo (sacred thread), and mythological purification (identifying behavior into caste or religious line), etc. for an ambition of social mobility. In this regard, few social thinkers referred to this process as *Sanskritisation* (Srinivas 1963), *Politicisation* of caste (Ghurye 1932), *Ambedkarisation* (Sau 2001), so on so forth. However, relative deprivation was the reason behind this caste mobility during the first and second decade of independence. Because, for the long time citizens (mostly lower and backward castes) could not get the fundamental right to perform such ritual activities.

Few other contemporary (accordingly time and situation) sociologist had also intended to know caste mobility in Srinivas' line, for example *De-Sanskritisation* (Majomdar 1958), *Tribalisation* (Kaliya 1961), *Civilisational* approach or *Rajputisation* (Sinha 1957), etc. Apart from this, the thinker like Ketkar (2010) asserts *inter-caste commensalities restriction* is a responsible factor for sustaining caste system. But his idea of 'inter-caste commensality restriction' is not able to explain how 'village *Biradarism'* exists together in antagonistic way. Whereas, eminent social thinker Louis Dumont (1970) pointed out: the relative opposition of pure and impure, on the basis of 'beliefs, value and behaviour', is determinant factors for 'homo hierarchy'. He supposed to mention a purely relative non-competitive ranking oriented to a single idea of higher and lower…and further he argued [caste] rests on one fundamental conception and is reducible to a single true principle namely the opposition of the pure and impure. This opposition underlines hierarchy, which is the superiority of the pure to the impure must be kept separate, and underlies the division of labour because the pure and impure occupations must likewise be kept separate. But, his analysis of 'opposition', on the basis of purity/impurity, multiple hierarchy/single hierarchy, does not lie to the modern existence of bilateral relation among middle strata caste group.

Few contemporary discourses like 'secularization of caste' (see- Sheth: 1999), Yadavisation (Michelutti 2004), 'communitisation of castes' (Prasad: 2014), etc. are issue which give basic reflection on the modern tendency in caste system.

Few other sociologists like Deshpande (2014) Gupta (2005), Rao (1979), Khare (1972), Christophe Jefferlot (2003), Jassal (2001), Edward (2008), Bhattacharya (2011), Survansi (1962), Opler and Singh (1952), Chaudhari (2004), Bayly (2001)

Karve, Beteille, Kothari, Roy, Thorat, , Guru, Omvedt, Desai, Balgopal, Pai, Teltumbde, Jodhka, Shah, Galanter, Samarendra, Deshpande, Rege, Pandian, Illaiah, Badari Narayan, and Michelutti, etc. have given insight to understand the caste phenomenon in various aspect.

Methodology

Methodology is an approach to the study of the social world which seeks to describe and analyze the behaviour of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied (Bryman 1988: 46). In qualitative research, there are three basic tenets which give more reasonable and argumentative weight for qualitative inquiry. These fallowing three tenets are-

1) Locating as a researcher.
2) Experiential baggage of researcher.
3) Getting closer to research participant.

A theoretical sampling method has been certain in the field. The rationale behind the employment of this sampling is that; in theoretical sampling researcher purposely chooses persons who in his judgment keep appropriate characteristic. The interview has been taken from two villages namely Tandawa and Rajanpur in which research participants were from Yadav, Thakur, Gaderiya, Kumhar and Chamar castes. In the first phase, researcher met one of the Chaudharies (head of the caste) who belongs to Yadav community. With the help of him the researcher built a rapport with the respondents. This visit helped as a pilot study. In the second phase, preliminary information was gathered through informal discussion with the research participants who belong to different castes. Along with this, researcher met one famous writer and singer of Birha folk lore namely Madhav Das Yadav (his famous book name is "Shyam Charit Manas"), who gives me some idea regarding network and communication pattern among their community.

Field Experience and Rapport

The major data collection for the present study was based on the extensive field work at Tandwa and Rajanpur village which was conducted from 9th January to 28th October, 2014. For the purpose of data collection, first, I visited as outsider in both villages as stranger and I met few people who were working in the field. They told me, "Bhaiya, aap kaha se aaye hain aur kisse milna chahte hain?" (Brother, from where you came and do you want to meet someone [in suspected way]). I replied, my name is 'Devi Prasad', and I am research scholar in…so on so forth, and I came here for understanding problem of the people and rural life. This conversation was going on at least more than 30 minutes. I was feeling obstruct during this conversation because they were hesitating to share their emotion and perception. The reason behind this, I intentionally introduced only my name (Devi

Prasad). While, indirectly, many times they wanted to know my caste identity therefore it was asked to me "aage kya lagate ho?" (It means after your name what title you use). I was surprised these people want to know my caste subtitle, why? The curiosity of "aage-lagana" (knowing caste title) became prime objective of this paper. In this regard, I found many caste basis behavior-patterns that were fallowed by villagers. However, my pilot study was quite successful.

After one week of the pilot study, once again, I reached at Tandawa village, and I met few Chaudharies who were considered as Pasi, Ahir (Yadav), Gaderiya and Chamar caste. With the help of them I developed a rapport with the local leaders like Village Pradhan, and I collected more insightful information from the participants. I also participated in few social occasions like 'Barhi (12th days of new born baby), Terhi (death ceremony), Biradari Bhoj, and Chittha System (caste basis congregation) as insider while in Birha folk-lore as outsider. During the conversation with them I came to know about the role of the caste system in this area.

In sum, generally the interview with the respondents was always started with description of family, occupation, recent changing scenario in village like education system, participation in marriage ceremony, mutual reciprocity etc. However, surprisingly, respondents commented at the end of the interview that this was the first time they expressed a lot their thoughts and feelings regarding their everyday activities. In addition to the interviews of villagers, the data collection process was also supplemented by the collection of ethnographic studies and longitudinal data.

Native Consensus and Teleology: An Overviews

Duel-Caste Behaviour

In both villages, the main economic activity of Yadav community is the production and selling of milk. It is found that those who are engaged in purchasing and selling of milk or milk-production, they need to go across Dalit Basti or Purawa (hamlet) for collecting milk. During that time they use the milk-pots of all castes, but they never feel untouchability, because of business matter. According to one of the respondents "Dhandhe me Jati aur achhotpan nahi chalata" (In business matter, there is no untouchability and caste feeling). Although in case of same Dalit (milk seller), if he comes Yadav's home, Yadav generally practices social distance because of untouchability, and offer water in separate pots. It shows 'dual-caste behavior' of Yadav community. On the other hand, if any Dalit teacher, leader or officer visits their (Yadav's) home, they serve usually in their own pots; it means in such situation there is no discrimination because of 'position' matter. This phenomena show there is no unified system in caste behavior, and it depend on time and situation.

One respondent who belongs to Yadav community shared his experience, 'in case, if I go to urban areas with a Dalit person, we live, coke and eat together,

and during that time there is no separation on the basis of caste but after coming back home both persons maintain 'distance' because of 'social presser''. Farter, I asked to him, what do you mean by 'social presser' and from where it comes? He replied, 'I am not able to answer this question but I would like to say however time has changed therefore it became necessary for me to fallow these steps'.

One respondent namely Ram Narayan a post-graduate student who belongs to Dalit community says that 'in case of blood donation, an untouchable caste gives blood to an upper caste people but he is never considered by society as untouchable. It shows double-slandered of society because here blood is also not slandered for mapping untouchability'. I asked to him, who is responsible for this (untouchability), and do you have some idea how to come out from this practice? After long discussion, he says the social distance on the basis of caste is our mental construction and for come out of this situation 'education' and 'economic stability' become very important.

However, through all these conversations I wanted to know how 'duel-caste behaviour' is operating there with social acceptance which also indicates towards 'caste-silencing' in rural scenarios, and here 'place' and 'position' become more important for social adjustment.

Inter-Caste Reciprocity

In both villages, the interaction system can be seen through some occasions like birthday parties, *Barhi* ceremony of new born child, *Deeh* or *Kali-Mata Puja* (deity worship) as well as few festivals like Holi[13] (festival of colour), Deepawali[14] (festival of light) etc. but this type of interaction is happened occasionally. Although apart from this, there are two other practices like *Jajmani* system and *Hood* system through which the pattern of inter-caste relation can be analyzed.

Jajmani System

This is a traditional based mutual cooperation within a village in which few castes have been identified for services. Jajmani system is also a symbol of economic reciprocity in which Praja (working castes) perform with mutual dignity. It is working as a part of rural culture, such as, the *Purohit* (Brahamins priest) organizes *'Hawan'* (fire bases ritual)*, Nayee* (Barber) caste works as hair-cutter, he also plays important role as a helper of priest and as a messenger to inform all villagers. Few other Prajias like *Kahar* caste (main work to provide water), Kumhar caste (main work to provide mud pots), Banmanus caste (main work to provide leaf plates), Badhyi (main work to provide carpentry related labour), Dhobi and Chamar caste (cleaning related works) etc. are playing very important role in Jajmani systems. However, now it old spirit has been lost. Now, people try to sustain it in rational way almost in monetary form with symbolic way.

Caste Consciousness among Prajas

After mutual discussion with the people of Tandawa and Rajanpur, it is found there are multiple factions among same strata's castes. Few factions can be differentiated on basis of ideological structure; few factions can be divided on the basis of interest group; few factions can be divided on the basis of caste. There is no such unified structure which can be argued in liner way. For instance, in Tandawa village there are few families (they belong from deferent strata/castes) can be included in one ideological structure because these families are keeping mutual relation with socio-political interest. In sum, it can be argued the inter/intra-caste relation is depended on faction, interest, position of the family, business and strata.

Hood System (Exchange of Labour-Work)

Hood system is a type of exchange of labour-activities within own strata people in the study of area. It is appeared as symbol of inter-caste relation where people are connected with reciprocal way through sharing their labour. One of the respondents said, 'those who are not able to pay the money for labour they are keeping such exchange system'. In addition, it can be said, this types of 'exchange system' is creating new boundary to get proper phenomenological understanding of inter-caste relation either might be in the forms of labour, gods, money, Neota (invitations) or participation in many occasions.

However, 'exchange' is a unique phenomenon in rural society. It is fond villages exchange labour-work, goods, Neota (invitations) and participation in many occasions in reciprocal way in the study area. Through the proper understanding of this exchange phenomenon, it might be help-full to get proper reason in which way rural community keeps mutual relation and social distance. In this regard, Dumont (1970) pointed out Blunt's work where he listed seven kind of 'taboo' to know mutual relation among villagers through following questions: with whom one eats, who prepares the food, what sort of food, what are the ritual observances, from whom one accepts water, with whom one share pipe, and what vessels one use. I addition to know new hierarchal patterns, my point is that it is also important to know with whom one keep exchange including the exchange of labour, exchange of gifts, exchange of Neota (invitation), exchange of goods etc.

The Multiple Reciprocities

After participation in many occasions, it can be said both villages represent many types of social cohesions and relation with the notion of brotherhood. In addition, the phenomena of 'multiple reciprocities' can be defined through various possibilities of socio-cultural relationship among villagers which is exercised with the help of few institutions like family, marriage, Khap (customary body of caste), Jajmani system, Hoond system etc. For instance, in case of social-reciprocity that can be seen in-between villagers with participation in different occasions like in

marriage ceremony, *Biradari Bhoj, Deeh Puja* (worship of village deity) and *Mela* (fairs), etc. These social activities create the mutual understanding and kinds of interaction pattern, and the result of which villages are manifested overtly as 'unified commune' with primary relationship. Terminologically, all these activities can be identified as 'social-Brotherhood'.

Apart from this, it is found such reciprocal relationship which keeps dominancy on social life and influence in daily life can be distinguish into two deferent streams, so-called, traditional and modern. On the one hand, traditional reciprocity is being functioned through few institutions like *Khap Panchayat, Chittha* system and caste association with the help of *Chaudhari* (caste head), *Mukhiya* (family head) and *Panch Parmeshawara* (five members of customary body). In addition, the traditional political-reciprocities are mostly being followed by aristocratic, non-democratic, harsh punishment, irrational and illegal social practices. On the other hand, modern political-reciprocities are existed through democratic institutions like- 'village panchayat', 'block panchayat' and 'district panchayat' with the help of election commission of India.

The paper also looks into few economic activities which are functioning with the help of few families in reciprocal way without caste boundary. Often, this kind of reciprocity is found in all societies (including tribal, rural and modern). Such activities can be examined through institutional support, productions relation, exchanges and redistributions. In the study area mostly three types of economic-reciprocities is being functioned. First, SHGs are functioned with the help of governmental body like National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) as well as local people. While, second, Jajmani system (see- Wiser 1958), and third, *Hoond* system (labour sharing group). These systems are functioning with reciprocal way in both villages. One respondent said sometimes internal disputes and unrest are also occurred but not on the basis of caste.

Apart from this, it can be observed that most of the villagers are engaged in cattle herding, agriculture, and forestry as well as fishery activities. So, the probability of dependency on nature is more. We can observe among villagers during the flesh flood, natural hazards or any natural incidents, they help each-other without caste or community interest. These phenomena can be identified as 'situational-reciprocities'. However, the mutual cooperative tendency and the notion of reciprocity among villagers create a kind of 'brotherhoods' (including social, political and economic etc.) that can be identified as whole 'multiple-reciprocities'.

Gender Substance

At the end of this paper, one of the important issues which need to be discussed in order to understand the role of caste on gender sensitivities and substance. Throughout common discussion and personal narratives, the gender sensitivities can be revealed into two ways, first; the role of women in *Biradari Bhoj*, and

second; the role of women in *Chittha* system. The pattern of *Biradari Bhoj* and *Chittha* system is fully occupied with patriarchal norms and values where, on the one hand, women are not allowed to participate in *Chittha* system while on the other hand, there are certain rituals (in local terminology- Yazna, Pinddan etc.) that cannot be performed without participation of women. However, this necessity of participation shows substance and sensitivity towards women in Indian culture. For instance, if any widowers are willing to organize *Biradari Bhoj,* he must go through the principle of *Biradari Bhoj,* and he needs to make a symbolic doll (representative of his wife). Behind this phenomena the basic conception is that, before organize the *Biradari Bhoj*, they (organizer; wife and husband) must go Kashi (Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh), and Gaya (Gaya district of Bihar) to perform some ritual and religious activities (like *'pind-dan', 'yajna'* and *'pitra-visarjan'*) at least for fifteen days. After coming back, he organizes the *Shrimad-Bhagawat Katha.*[15] For successful completion of the *Shrimad-Bhagawat Katha* couple (wife and husband) participation is must therefore for fulfilling this desire widower makes a doll that represents to his wife in symbolic way. In sum, the necessity for making symbolic doll shows the gender sensitivities in public sphere while restriction from participation in *Chittha* system shows the gender based segregation of women in antagonistic ways.

Notes

1. Khap panchayat is the union of a few villages, mainly in north India though it exists in similar forms in the rest of the country. Lately they have emerged as quasi-judicial bodies that pronounce harsh punishments based on age-old customs and traditions, often bordering on regressive measures to modern problems.

2. *Chittha* system is a managerial body of *Biradari Bhoj* (commensality program) that is being operated by *Chaudharies* (appointed male member).

3. The Mandal Commission was established in India in 1979 by the Janata Party government under Prime Minister Morarji Desai with a mandate to "identify the socially or educationally backward".

4. To give more importance, honor, right etc. accordingly caste position in native setup.

5,6. The terms 'agitate, educate and organize' ware more popularized by B.R. Ambedkar's writing on 'inhalation of caste'.

7. The movement was initiated by Addiyar in south India.

8. It was founded in 1874 by great social activist Jyotirao Govindrao Phule.

9. These are probably the most frequently quoted words of Dr. B. R. Ambedker. You see them on the banners, T-shirts, websites, leaflets and books of Dalit activists.

10. Krisna is a mythological leader in Mahabharata epic (sacred text of Hindu) who played a significant role during the war between Pandav and Kaurav.

11. see- Jaffrelot, Christophe (2003) in India,s silent revolution: the rise of the lower castes in North India. London: C. Huest & Co. pg.189.

12. see-Mandelbaum, David, Goodman (1970) Society in India: Change and continuity, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, pp. 443.

13. Right to freedom of religion has been covered in articles 25, 26, 27 and 28 of Indian constitution which provides religious freedom to all citizens of India.

14. Holi is a popular festival in north part of India which is celebrated with color in the month of 'Falgun' (March).

15. It is a Hindu festival in which people worship to goddess Luxami with light.

16. Srimad Bhagwat is parochialized form of Bhagawat Religion (see- "Hindi Sahitya kosh" pubisher: Gyanmandal Publication Limited, Varanasi). Mostly, organizer believes that Bhagwat gives a tremendous insight, a profound vision, and an entirely new perspective to the person who hears the narrative and tales. On hearing, a person is never the same. There is a complete metamorphosis, a complete transformation, literally in terms of separation has known a new birth. Atman (soul or parts of god) by its own nature is sovereign – it cannot by nature be bound – whatever bondages felt are sheer illusions of the mind. Another respondent says, 'Bhagwat provides that light which enables Jeeva (human being) to experience the wonderful freedom of liberation... One feels, "Yes, I am free! Bhagwat elaborate this philosophy through the narration of the life stories of 24 incarnations of Lord Vishnu (native myth lord Krisna or Gopal)."

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